Africa Voluntary Local Review Guidelines

United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa

UCLG AFRICA
United Cities and Local Governments of Africa
Cités et Gouvernements Locaux Unis d'Afrique
CGLU AFRIQUE

UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

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Foreword

The need to accelerate progress towards inclusive and resilient development in Africa is more urgent than ever in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The devastating effect of the pandemic on African countries is expected to reverse sustainable development progress while deepening extreme poverty, fiscal deficits and gender inequality, among other challenges.

At the same time, it offers an opportunity for countries to scale up efforts towards implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the context of the current decade of action and delivery for sustainable development and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, of the African Union, for a resilient, green and just future. What has become increasingly clear is that the success of both agendas depends on the action taken at the subnational and local levels of government. Subnational, city or district governments in Africa are at the forefront of realizing global, regional and national development targets in an environment marked by the impact of COVID-19 and post-COVID-19 recovery imperatives. Their actions will be critical in the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals and the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the Paris Agreement, among others.

The COVID-19 pandemic clearly demonstrates the efficacy of a localized approach to responding to crises and the need to build resilience to withstand future shocks. Most COVID-19 cases have occurred in cities, and local governments have had to bear the primary responsibility for immediate responses. Their role remains central to the recovery and rebuilding of livelihoods, communities and businesses in Africa.

To strengthen the ability of local and regional governments to accelerate progress towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 and their role in the COVID-19 recovery process, increased attention must be focused on implementation, follow-up, monitoring and review of both agendas, and the climate and biodiversity agendas. To that end, they should develop a multi-stakeholder collaboration for the implementation of these agendas and for better alignment between national, subnational and local processes. Voluntary local reviews are increasingly recognized as being critical in this regard.

In 2019, the Economic Commission for Africa began providing technical advisory support to African cities in preparation for their first VLRs, namely: Accra (Ghana), Harare and Victoria Falls (Zimbabwe), Ngora District (Uganda) and Yaoundé (Cameroon). Their experiences demonstrated the usefulness of the reviews as a tool to enhance dialogue with and among citizens on ways to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals and their targets, and the goals and aspirations of Agenda 2063, and to ensure ownership, accountability and

commitment from all stakeholders, including vulnerable and marginalized groups. The reviews revealed a high degree of interest and commitment from local governments in the region to advance progress on both the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. In addition, the VLR process contributed to enhancing coordination, alignment and coherence with the voluntary national review processes.

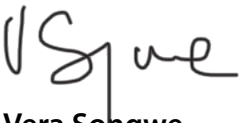
During the sixth session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, which was held in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, from 24 to 27 February 2020, member States collectively welcomed VLRs as a tool to support local and regional governments in implementing the 2030 Agenda, Agenda 2063 and the other global agendas at the local level, and in monitoring and reporting progress at the subnational and local levels. They also requested that ECA design regional guidelines and a common template to suit the African context, offer best practices to further VLR preparation in the region and provide a common approach for local and regional governments to prepare a review. That request was reinforced by the call issued by member States during the seventh session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, held in Brazzaville, on 26 and 27 February 2021, to integrate VLRs into the regional and national monitoring and review of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 to foster local ownership, commitment, and action.

In response, ECA and its partners – United Cities and Local Governments of Africa and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme – have developed the Africa Voluntary Local Review Guidelines, drawing on the expertise and work of all three organizations. In 2020 and 2021, UN-Habitat and UCLG-Africa had come together to develop global guidance on VLRs. As ECA does in Africa, UN-Habitat has been providing support to a number of local and regional governments on all continents, to implement the Sustainable Development Goals at the local level and to develop their VLRs. As the foremost body bringing together local governments in Africa, UCLG-Africa has been central in calling for and enabling the implementation of the continent's development agenda at the local level. It supported Benin, Kenya and Mozambique (2020) and Cabo Verde, Tunisia and Zimbabwe (2021) in producing their VLRs. In addition, it encouraged the involvement of national associations of subnational and local governments in those processes.

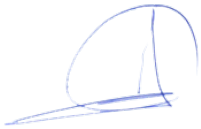
The Guidelines serve as a practical tool to support the preparation of VLRs by African local governments. They draw on both global best practices and specific experiences from African cities, towns and districts to set out key guiding principles and to define a detailed VLR template that can be adapted by local governments. A variety of specific tools are included to facilitate the mapping of local priorities against the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, data sourcing and analysis and stakeholder engagement. A framework is also provided to promote peer review among localities to promote learning and exchanging of best practices and lessons on implementation to foster more inclusive sustainable development on the continent. Better integrated policies and multi-stakeholder engagement, as advocated in the Guidelines, will ensure that no one is left behind, especially women, young people and marginalized groups.

Together, ECA and its partners are committed to building the capacity of local and regional governments to scale up the production and enhance the quality of VLRs as critical instruments for advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

Strengthening the linkages between voluntary local and national review processes will considerably advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 at the local level, which African member States have been pursuing as a part of their commitment to the two agendas. In so doing, ECA, UN-Habitat and UCLG-Africa are engaged in bolstering the role of local communities and local and regional governments and their national associations in the sustainable development processes in Africa.



Vera Songwe
Executive Secretary and Under-Secretary-General
UN Economic Commission for Africa



Jean Pierre Elong Mbassi
Secretary General
United Cities and Local Governments of Africa

Maimunah Mohd Sharif
Executive Director and Under-Secretary General
UN Human Settlements Programme

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The report team was led by Edlam Abera Yemeru, Chief of the Urbanization Section, and Nassim Oulmane, Chief of the Green and Blue Economy Section. The main research and drafting were undertaken by Lusungu Kayani, urban policy expert. Substantive inputs, contributions and revisions were provided by Charles Akol, John Robert Sloan and Gebremedhin Tadesse Gebrezgiher (ECA); Martino Miraglia (UN-Habitat); and Rahmatouca Sow and François Yatta (UCLG-Africa). Editing, translation, graphic design, and layout were provided by the Publications and Conference Management Section of ECA.

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Abbreviations

COVID-19	coronavirus disease
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
GDP	gross domestic product
UCLG	United Cities and Local Governments
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
VLR	voluntary local review

Preface

Local and regional governments play a key role in sustainable development. The 2030 Agenda encourages regular reporting on the progress made towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals at both the national and subnational levels. The critical role of cities, local authorities and communities was acknowledged by member States at the Sustainable Development Goal Summit, held at United Nations Headquarters in 2019, during which a commitment was made to support and bolster localities in their pursuit of fulfilling the 2030 Agenda. Since then, an increasing number of subnational authorities have begun utilizing the VLR mechanism to track implementation at the local level. In Africa, local authorities have been using VLRs to highlight and boost local action towards the implementation of both the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

Engaging in a local review is a journey and the process is one of deep engagement with stakeholders. The goal of producing a local review is multifaceted and distinct. Before initiating a review, local governments should question why a review should be conducted, what resources and stakeholders are needed, what data and information are available and how results from the review will be integrated into local actions and national strategies. The process of carrying out a review can lead to better coordination between local action and national outcomes, and it can promote a grass-roots approach that engages communities and local stakeholders, further the adaptation of goals and indicators to the local level, and structure concerted action to accelerate the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals. Accordingly, a VLR can have a great impact on subnational governments and cities, towns or districts at the global, regional and national levels.

Working together, ECA, UN-Habitat and UCLG-Africa have looked at VLRs beyond their reporting and monitoring function. The VLR process has the potential to critically accelerate the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 at the local level, which is why ECA and its partners have joined together to support and strengthen the VLR movement in Africa. To foster the production of VLRs and accelerate the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in the region at the local level, the three organizations have prepared the Africa Voluntary Local Review Guidelines as a facilitation tool. They represent a launching pad for local and regional governments wishing to embark on the journey of conducting a local review by easing the process of getting started. The tool provides practical step-by-step suggestions on the process and instruments to facilitate the collection of data for further analysis. Drawing from a rich set of resources to illustrate the range and diversity of how and why VLRs are produced, the tool provides global and regional examples on best practices and approaches for conducting a review and includes a common template to encourage peer review and to facilitate the preparation of the review. The

following points are a proposed set of guiding principles for local and regional governments to consider as they commit to the process.

A. Guiding principles

1. **Start with what you have.** Get started with what you have. Each locality will be at a different stage of achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Focus on consolidating which contributions are being made at the subnational level towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 by identifying which public, private, grass-roots and community institutions and stakeholders are involved in the implementation of the two agendas to ascertain where action has been taken and where there are gaps. Surveying the current landscape reveals the output and activity that each stakeholder makes towards overall sustainability plans and goals to define who is involved and which groups are left out.

2. **Find out where you are and define a way forward.** VLRs are not only a tool for monitoring and measuring progress; they are also a mechanism for planning local action. A key activity of the VLR process is to identify accelerators that can advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. It is critical to chart the desired outcomes in the review and the impact and results emanating from the review on local planning efforts and national strategies. The design of future local and national interventions should directly respond to the gaps and challenges identified in the review process.

3. **VLRs are a tool for telling your local story.** VLRs allow for local and regional governments to tell their story and to present local priorities. Localities have room to articulate their unique journey and specific context by assessing the level of alignment and harmonization the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 with local policies and programmes. The process allows for an examination of local challenges and priorities in meeting the two agendas at the subnational level, which, in turn, provides a more complete narrative of the national development story.

4. **VLRs represent a process, not just a product.** The review is a process and not just a report. The process is engaging, participatory and unbound by a defined start and end date. During preparation and after publication, the local review should be depicted as a dynamic and living tool for sharing experiences, sparking dialogue, promoting mutual learning and disseminating lessons learned. The peer review checklist accompanying the Africa Voluntary Local Review Guidelines is meant to capture lessons, challenges and opportunities at each step of the process to allow for iterative adjustments between phases and to share experiences during peer review sessions. The Guidelines provide options for local and regional governments so the process remains flexible and adaptable to local contexts. The VLR process has been proven to result in new partnerships and strategies that galvanize stakeholders and mobilize resources towards the implementation of global and regional goals.

5. **A lack of data should not hold you back.** Initial mapping assesses not only which stakeholders are involved or should be involved, but also determines the gatekeepers of data. It is central to get a sense of which types and quality of data are available and identify any gaps. Quantitative, qualitative, and primary and secondary data can all be used for analysis to complement the review in different ways. The VLR mechanism has proven to be a useful catalyst in furthering coordination with national statistical

offices to deepen efforts aimed at implementation at the local level and to improve local indicators for Sustainable Development Goal monitoring, including the capacity to collect and use national data at the local level. The Guidelines contain suggestions on standard data collection techniques and practical examples of methodologies applied by localities in the region and beyond.

6. **VLRs should promote multi-stakeholder engagement that incorporates the principles of human rights, gender equality and leaving no one behind.** Given their nature, VLRs engage grass-roots stakeholders and civil society. The stakeholders represent marginalized groups and are made up of the community. They help to ensure that those who are often excluded are consulted and that their needs are incorporated into the review during each phase of implementation. Involving community stakeholders leads to improved accountability and transparency in the implementation process.

7. **Integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development.** The 2030 Agenda incorporates three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Each of the goals and targets are interconnected and are meant to be attained as a whole. Local and national governments must ensure that these aspects are integrated into the review.

8. **VLRs enhance linkages between national and local levels of government**. VLRs have the potential to complement and inform national Sustainable Development Goal processes by improving monitoring and coherence in implementation. Input from local reviews can strengthen the quality of voluntary national reviews by adding to the scope and detail in national reviews, such as the inclusion of grass-roots voices in national dialogues. Joint sharing of results and co-ownership of processes can lead to improved overall strategies towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. The national reviews serve as key entry points for connecting national and local reviews and scaling up VLRs countrywide. Subnational authorities should be mindful and kept informed about voluntary national review timelines to guarantee better alignment with national planning processes. The preparation and development of local frameworks for sustainable development in the region rely on strong linkages between voluntary local and national reviews, which ensure greater symbiosis between local and national development planning, which, in turn, increases resources and accelerated implementation of the two agendas.

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Summary

The Africa Voluntary Local Review Guidelines are the result of a specific request made by African member States to the United Nations system for a tool to support VLR preparation in the region. At the 2020 African Regional Forum for Sustainable Development, a twofold commitment was made to assist in the development of common guidelines and a template for VLRs to improve the coherence of reviews and to enable peer review. The overall goal of the Africa Voluntary Local Review Guidelines is to enable VLR preparation in the region and to provide a common approach for local and regional governments to draw on in preparing a review. The best practices and common template contained in the Guidelines are intended to foster local ownership, commitment and action on the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063. The Guidelines include a comprehensive introduction, a template and an annex with a compilation of tools and resources to facilitate the production of a local review.

The first part of the introduction in chapter I presents background information on the 2030 Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goal, and the evolution of the global VLR movement before setting out the status of VLR preparation, local achievements related to the Sustainable Development Goals and implementation of Agenda 2063 in the region. It contains a discussion on the impetus behind the Guidelines, the contextual specificities for Africa and the regional commitments for sustainable development, including an introduction and overview of Agenda 2063, the continent's blueprint for development. The second part of the introduction sets out a summary of three suggested phases of the VLR process: phase I involves vision, preparation, stakeholder mobilization and goal prioritization; phase II includes data collection, write-up and analysis, and validation; and phase III comprises publication, dissemination and integration, as well as monitoring and implementation. Global and regional examples are provided throughout the introduction to illustrate the scale of and best practices on the process of VLR production.

The second chapter contains a discussion of the VLR template, which is designed to address the key content that should be included or covered in the VLR report and to provide direction and guidance on how to conduct a review. The Africa VLR template is drawn from current handbooks and guidelines for VLRs published by both United Nations and non-United Nations entities. A full list of resources has been provided at the end of the Guidelines. The template is not meant to be prescriptive but to provide a framework to guide local reviews. The first part of chapter II contains an outline of the preliminary sections of the review, along with tips for preparing a foreword and setting out the main highlights of the review, including the key local priorities, overall progress in implementation, linkages with national processes and identified accelerators to drive implementation. Divided into the three phases of VLR production, the template is intended to lead local and regional governments through each phase.

The first phase defines the methodology for conducting the review, coordinating stakeholder involvement, linking local priorities with global and regional goals, and ensuring that the key principles and dimensions of sustainable development are incorporated into the review. The process of conducting a peer review is introduced and a template for peer review assessment is provided for each phase of the local review, including pre-VLR preparation.

The second phase of VLR preparation is focused on data collection and processing, adaptation of the indicators to the local level, and the write-up and analysis on progress made towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the goals and aspirations of Agenda 2063. The section contains suggestions on presenting data and options for undertaking the review with regard to the number of goals needed to measure progress. Suggested templates for structuring the analysis are also provided to ease preparation and standardize the process across reviews from the region.

The third phase covers integration, monitoring and reporting. In this part of the template, local and regional governments are requested to demonstrate how findings from the review are to be communicated and integrated into local and national efforts, the means of implementing findings and the plans for future VLR preparation.

Each section of the template concludes with a set of guiding questions to assist with structure and to ensure that local and regional governments provide a baseline of similar content across reviews.

At the end of the template, space has been allotted for a statistical section in which metadata for indicators can be presented. The annexes contain a number of tools to assist with VLR preparation, including policy and stakeholder mapping and engagement, and a checklist to assess each phase of the process.

I. Introduction

In September 2015, Heads of State and Government from around the world adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (see figure I) and 169 targets. It represents a global commitment to end poverty and achieve sustainable development by 2030. The 2030 Agenda combines three dimensions of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental – and is designed to leave no one behind. Represented by a holistic and comprehensive interconnected platform, each of the Goals and targets are linked and are meant to be attained as a whole. Under the 2030 Agenda, there is a follow-up and review mechanism to allow nations to assess the impact of their actions towards meeting the Goals and targets. At the global level, this review is overseen by the high-level political forum on sustainable development. At the regional level, the process of review is supported by the regional commissions of the United Nations.

While the Sustainable Development Goals were created for and adopted by national Governments, as noted in paragraph 79 of the 2030 Agenda, Heads of State and Government encouraged member States to conduct regular country-led reviews of progress at the national and subnational levels. Furthermore, in paragraph 89, they called upon major groups and other stakeholders, including local authorities, to report on their contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Progress towards achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals has primarily been evaluated at the national level through a process known as voluntary national review. Using the national review, member States volunteer to report on selected Goals at the annual high-level political forum on sustainable development held in New York.

However, with less than 10 years left to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, critical action is needed at all levels to accelerate progress, in particular at the level of local and regional government. While the Goals are global in nature, they are ambitious, and meeting them will depend on local action, and specifically on action taken by local and regional governments, as they are at the forefront of public service delivery affecting the attainment of most Sustainable Development Goal targets. In accordance with commitment 27 included in the political declaration of the high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the General Assembly in 2019 (General Assembly resolution 74/4), the General Assembly committed to empowering and supporting cities, local authorities and communities in pursuing the 2030 Agenda and recognized their critical role in realizing the Sustainable Development Goals (see box 1). The declaration calls for "bolstering local action to accelerate implementation". The Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, underscored how critical local participation is for the decade of action – the last 10 years

Figure I : Sustainable Development Goal icons

Source: United Nations.

remaining to deliver on the 2030 Agenda – by insisting on "the creation of an enabling environment that maximizes the potential of cities and local authorities" in order to advance the 2030 Agenda.1

UN-Habitat acknowledges in its New Urban Agenda2 that up to 65 per cent of Sustainable Development Goal targets risk not being met if local and regional governments are not assigned a clear implementing

1 United Nations, Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, remarks at the high-level political forum on sustainable development (New York, 24 September 2019).

2 The New Urban Agenda, the global agenda guiding international efforts towards sustainable urbanization and development at local level, was adopted at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) in Quito, Ecuador, on 20 October 2016. It was endorsed by the General Assembly at the sixty-eighth plenary meeting of its seventy-first session on 23 December 2016.

Box 1: Key commitments to accelerate Sustainable Development Goal implementation during the ongoing decade of action

Heads of State and Government and high representatives committed to empower and support cities, local authorities and communities in pursuing the 2030 Agenda and recognized the following critical roles in their implementation and realization of the Sustainable Development Goals:

- Leaving no one behind;
- Mobilizing adequate and well-directed financing;
- Enhancing national implementation;
- Strengthening institutions for more integrated solutions;
- Bolstering local action to accelerate implementation;
- Reducing disaster risk and building resilience;
- Solving challenges through international cooperation and enhancing the global partnership;
- Harnessing science, technology and innovation with a greater focus on digital transformation for sustainable development;
- Investing in data and statistics for the Sustainable Development Goals;
- Strengthening the high-level political forum.

Source: Under commitment 27 (a)–(j) from the political declaration of the high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the General Assembly, 2019 (General Assembly resolution 74/4).

role. The important role local governments play in sustainable development, from participating in national coordination and follow-up mechanisms at the local level to contributing to overall policy coherence, is also highlighted in both the New Urban Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.3

To respond to the challenges of implementing the Sustainable Development Goals at the local level, fostering local action and supporting multilevel coordination for the Goals, the United Nations created "Local 2030" – the United Nations system-wide initiative on implementation of the Goals at the local level. Local2030 is a platform of networks bringing together local and regional governments and their associations, national governments, businesses, community-based organizations and other local stakeholders, and the United Nations system. The platform is intended to foster collaboration, incubate innovation, share solutions and implement strategies that advance the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. In partnership with local and regional stakeholders, Local2030 is aimed at strengthening the efforts made by the entities of the United Nations system through the resident coordinator system. As part of the efforts of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group during the decade of action, Local2030 serves as a one-stop shop for efforts aimed at implementing Sustainable Development Goals at the local level to leverage current initiatives and alliances that strengthen bottom-up action on the Goals. It provides support to local stakeholders in fully embracing the Goals and systematically monitoring and reporting on them – including though voluntary local and national reviews. Coordinated and co-chaired by UN-Habitat, the Local2030 platform relies on the close involvement of sister institutions of the United Nations and key stakeholders in both its governance structure and in the implementation of its activities and mandate.

3 For more information on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, see https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2051AAAA_Outcome.pdf.

Such global processes, recognizing the importance of a local approach to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, have provided important foundations for VLRs. Since 2018, there has been growing momentum and buy-in around the value of VLRs. Seen as an effective tool for monitoring progress at the subnational level, the review takes the local context into account in setting goals and targets, and in determining indicators for measuring and monitoring progress attained through local actions.[4] At the time of writing, 69 local reviews from 61 different local governments have been published, all with varying formatting, content, scope, duration and purpose.[5] Differences in population size, location, GDP, level of development, resources and capacity, as well as the lack of an official template, have all contributed to the highly varied nature of current VLRs. According to the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, most local reviews prepared to date have been from medium-sized localities with populations of between 500,000 and 1 million and the majority of them have originated from developed countries.

Notwithstanding the fact that VLRs have been around since 2016 under different names,[6] in 2018, New York was the first city to present a local review at the high-level political forum on sustainable development and took the lead in defining a declaration on VLRs (see box 2). In Japan, the cities of Kitakyushu and Toyama and the town of Shimokawa presented their VLRs at the local and regional government forum, which was co-organized by the Global Task Force of Local and Regional Governments, the Department for Social and Economic Affairs, UN-Habitat and Local 2030 at the 2018 high-level political forum on sustainable development.[7] In 2019, the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development incorporated a discussion on how to integrate VLRs into voluntary national reviews during their voluntary national review session, a first for the regional forums.[8] Most of the local reviews prepared have been from cities and towns, but many local monitoring reports and local and regional government reviews have been carried out by States and regional governments, including: Oaxaca (Mexico), Santana de Parnaíba and São Paulo (Brazil) in Latin America, and Wallonia (Belgium) and Basque Country in Europe.

While there are considerable differences in the structure of reviews, a consistent trend is emerging around the focus of VLRs – a shift from a product prepared for and presented at global conferences to a process that is highly engaging and effective at the local level with high potential to advance local efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.[9]

The benefits of producing a local review are numerous and are reaped at multiple levels (see table 1). Local reviews provide a space for local and regional governments to report and share their progress on attaining the

4 Global Task Force of Local and Regional Governments, UN-Habitat and United Nations Development Programme, "Roadmap for localizing the SDGs: implementation and monitoring at subnational level".

5 Data as of 28 February 2021. At the time of writing, at least 110 VLRs and 15 VSRs have been counted, either already published and publicly available, or currently being drafted to be published in 2021 and 2022. For more information, see UN-Habitat and United Cities and Local Governments, Guidelines for Voluntary Local Reviews, vol. 2. Towards a New Generation of VLRs: Exploring the local-national link (Nairobi, 2021).

6 UN-Habitat and United Cities and Local Governments, Guidelines for Voluntary Local Reviews, vol. 1. A Comparative Analysis of Existing VLRs (Nairobi, 2020).

7 Fernando Ortiz-Moya, and others, "State of the voluntary local reviews 2020: local action for global impact in achieving the SDGs", Institute for Global Environmental Strategies Working Paper (Japan, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, 2020).

8 Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development 2020 (virtual, 20 May 2020), see www.unescap.org/apfsd/7/.

9 Fernando Ortiz-Moya and others, "State of the voluntary local reviews 2020: local action for global impact in achieving the SDGs", Institute for Global Environmental Strategies Working Paper (Japan, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, 2020).

Box 2: New York City voluntary local review declaration

In September 2019, New York launched a voluntary local review declaration for local and regional governments worldwide to formally commit to reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals using existing resources. The declaration is made up of the following three key commitments:

Commitment 1: To identify how existing strategies, programmes, data and targets align with the Sustainable Development Goals

Commitment 2: To provide at least one forum where stakeholders can come together to share experiences, lessons learned and information gathered using the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals

Commitment 3: To submit a voluntary local review to the United Nations during the high-level political forum on sustainable development

In 2019, the declaration had 24 signatories. In 2021, some 218 signatories have signed on to the declaration, a figure that is testament to the growing momentum on VLRs around the world.

Source: Mayor's Office for International Affairs, NYC and World Cities Unite to Join Voluntary Local Review Declaration (New York, 2019).

Sustainable Development Goals, the challenges they encounter and their future plans for implementation. For cities that have undertaken a local review, the process has helped to garner new partnerships and means of implementation. Identified as an effective vehicle for driving meaningful engagement, VLRs are critical in promoting inclusive processes that allow for improved coordination around data collection and resource mobilization in tackling local challenges and priorities.

In 2019, ECA supported five local governments (see box 3) in conducting their VLRs (Accra, Harare, Ngora District, Victoria Falls and Yaoundé). Their experiences clearly demonstrated the value of such reviews.

At the national level, VLRs provide valuable inputs towards national review preparation and enhanced vertical coordination between national and local processes. National Sustainable Development Goal coordination mechanisms, if countries have them in place, help to cement this interaction. In implementation monitoring and follow-up, VLRs contribute to promoting transparency and accountability at the local, national, regional and global levels. In doing so, VLRs enable multilevel governance in the implementation, follow-up and review of the Sustainable Development Goals (see box 4).

A. Voluntary local reviews in Africa

At the time of writing, nine VLRs have been produced in Africa. In Kenya, through the Kenya Council of Governors, the counties of Busia, Kwale, Marsabit and Taita Taveta have carried out voluntary county reports on their progress in taking local action on the Sustainable Development Goals. As of February 2021, ECA has supported five cities in preparing their VLRs, namely, Accra, Harare, Ngora District, Victoria Falls and Yaoundé (see box 5). ECA is in the process of working with additional localities to produce further reviews. At present, the African region has the lowest number of VLRs, compared with other regions, giving further impetus to increase efforts to scale up such reviews.

Table 1: **Benefits of producing a voluntary local review**

	Benefits										
	Breaking down silos	Data-led policy	Shared language	Stake-holder mobiliza-tion	Multi-stake-holder part-nerships	Highlight strengths and weak-nesses	Monitoring progress	Transparent accountability	Peer review	Boost production	Global citizen-ship
Subnational government	♦	♦	♦			♦	♦	♦			
Subnational gov-ernment-wide			♦	♦	♦		♦	♦			
Global		♦	♦	♦	♦		♦	♦	♦		♦
Regional		♦	♦	♦	♦		♦	♦	♦	♦	
National		♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦		

Note: The table expands on best practices found in the VLR Guide for cities in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Box 3: Feedback on impact evaluation of the five voluntary local review localities

The VLR process has created opportunities for local governments to analyse how interventions implemented by local authorities are ensuring that no one is being left behind. As a result, gaps in the implementation of policies and programmes have been identified and recommendations have been made for remedial actions.

In carrying out the process, an opportunity was provided for local stakeholders to gain more awareness on key issues relating to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to acquire an understanding of the capacity gaps in collection and data management for reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063. This led to an agreement for the local governments to closely coordinate and engage with national statistical offices and with other stakeholders in building a good statistical system to generate timely and reliable data that strengthen evidence-based decision-making. In addition, a platform was created for the national institutions responsible for monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 to coordinate efforts in monitoring and implementing the two agendas at the local level.

In Ngora District, Uganda, the Office of the Prime Minister, jointly with the national planning authority, engaged in the VLR process and the results were fed into the national review that was being conducted by the Office of the Prime Minister. Similarly, in Accra, the VLR report was discussed by the High-level Ministerial Committee on the Sustainable Development Goals, which is the apex ministerial body for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, and the results were incorporated into its national report.

The local review has served as an important resource mobilization tool by bringing in new partners from the private sector to contribute towards accelerating the implementation of the two agendas and as an important tool for coordinating resources among partners. The recommendations from the VLR reports have informed annual action plans and budgeting of local authorities.

The local reviews represent a valuable addition to the continent's monitoring and reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals through voluntary national reviews. Since 2015, when member States began reporting on the frameworks and policies in place for inclusive growth and development following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, some 46 African countries have completed at least one national review, with 11 of the countries completing two national reviews and 4 countries completing three national reviews. The VLR process involves close consultation with government, civil society and other stakeholders and partners that are central to policymaking and the implementation process, culminating in the presentation of the national review at the annual high-level political forum on sustainable development. There are substantial benefits to improving the link between local and national reviews and processes pertaining to the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 in Africa, which has already been emphasized by member States as part of their guidance on the future of VLRs in the region.

B. Why are Africa voluntary local review guidelines needed?

With the increasing number of VLRs being produced globally, a number of guidelines and handbooks on conducting local reviews have been published. A multiplicity of guidelines on conducting reviews on different levels (global, national and regional) or on world regions or components of the VLR process have also been published. The definition of VLR has been broadly applied covering a variety of types of

Box 4: Connecting voluntary local reviews and voluntary national reviews: enhancing multilevel governance for implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals at the local level

A global VLR movement is under way. In the past year alone, the number of VLRs has increased from 35 reviews in 2020 to 67 reviews in 2021. As a result, the relevance of local reviews for national Sustainable Development Goal monitoring, reporting and implementation has also increased exponentially, placing multilevel governance and coordination at the very heart of the Goal monitoring discussion, specifically how multilevel governance is key to mainstreaming the Goals into national and local plans, strategies and initiatives. Furthermore, VLRs have catalysed dialogue on the role of local action in meeting the Sustainable Development Goals.

The critical connection between voluntary local and national reviews has been evolving and is now widely acknowledged as a sign of healthy cooperation in advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. There is growing evidence of the impact that local reviews have on national reviews and national monitoring processes. Representatives of local government have joined national delegations to present voluntary national reviews at the high-level political forum on sustainable development, and the "local government sections" in voluntary national reviews are becoming more complex and detailed and are often co-produced, such as in the cases of Finland, Malaysia, Mexico, Spain and the United Kingdom. In other cases, lessons learned from VLRs on how to engage stakeholders have been useful in the preparation of voluntary national reviews, as seen in Uganda where the Ngora District VLR was used to help inform the country's national process.

National coordination structures help to ensure further alignment between the two reviews by providing mechanisms for VLRs to feed into the preparation of voluntary national reviews. With both processes engaging broad stakeholders and tracking progress under differing jurisdictional boundaries, there are complementary bottom-up and top-down elements. Subnational governments are at the forefront of local data collection and have the potential to develop innovative and collaborative projects with communities to tackle gaps in the implementation process. Given the role subnational governments play, improving their inclusion at the level of national coordination is critical.

While there has been some progress on cooperation between local and national reviews, the link between them is still not fully institutionalized and has been effective only in a limited number of countries. Nevertheless, the linkages between national and local reviews are evolving, with plenty of room to test, learn and improve in the coming years.

National-level support in developing localized data and indicators has proven essential for the preparation of local reviews. Linked to this, participatory processes have complemented the mismatch between "official" indicators at the national level and local data analysis. Nevertheless, despite some key achievements, a large gap remains between the potential for local action and the resources at the disposal of the local level to fully achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, specifically to develop VLRs.

Considering these points, UN-Habitat and UCLG, in the second volume of their global guidelines for VLRs, provide the following key recommendations to local and national governments, and to international entities, on how to move forward in strengthening cooperation:

(a) Promote a national enabling environment for subnational reporting by:

  (i) Including adaptation to local contexts as a substantive dimension in national development strategies;

  (ii) Mainstreaming Sustainable Development Goals into national and local processes – including monitoring;

  (iii) Developing a multilevel collaborative culture of governance;

Box 4 (*continued*)

(b) Enhance the connection between local and national reviews by:

(i) Mobilizing adequate support and resources to strengthen local reporting capacities;

(ii) Facilitating collaborative and multilevel data environments;

(c) Strengthen voluntary local reviews and their environment by:

(i) Creating local mechanisms for structural and periodic review;

(ii) Promoting inclusive participation;

(iii) Strengthening the data environment at the local level;

(iv) Encouraging the capacities of local government associations;

(d) Create an international environment to support subnational reporting by:

(i) Strengthening cooperation between agencies of the United Nations system and institutions;

(ii) Supporting the participation of local governments in regional and global international processes;

(iii) Continuing to develop, refine and disseminate voluntary local review guidelines.

Source: Guidelines for Voluntary Local Reviews, vol. 2: Towards a New Generation of VLRs: Exploring the local-national link (Nairobi, UN-Habitat and UCLG-Africa, 2021).

Box 5: Technical review of pilot voluntary local reviews in Africa

In 2020, ECA commissioned a technical review of five pilot Africa VLRs to assess the quality, clarity and robustness of the reviews and to identify common issues presented across all reports. The review was based on an analytical framework developed from discussions held during the sixth session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, and from a technical consultation meeting held in Addis Ababa in January 2020. The analytical framework was used to carry out an examination of the extent to which policies and programmes were aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063; the rigour and robustness of the research process; the level of stakeholder consultation; and other recommendations provided by the Department for Economic and Social Affairs on conducting reviews. A three-step strategy was applied to analyse the completeness of each VLR through a number of pre-established questions under each category of analysis.

Findings from the analytical assessment were used as a guide to inform sections of the Africa Voluntary Local Review Guidelines, including the need for: comprehensive mapping of local processes and programmes; robust research processes; consultative stakeholder mapping and engagement; and identification of accelerators for implementation. Each of the local governments made a considerable effort to map local policies to the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 in their pilot VLRs, but a critical analysis between the Goals and local efforts was incomplete or missing across the reviews. While limited quantitative data was stated as a challenge for VLR production, results from the assessment revealed that substantial qualitative and quantitative data were gathered for each review. However, there was inadequate rationale on the methodologies used and data were presented in absolute numbers rather than percentages, proportions and ratios, which help with analysing trends in implementation over time.

Source: David Lopez-Garcia (working draft), Pilot Voluntary Reviews (VLR) in African Local Governments: Review of VLR Reports from Accra (Ghana), Harare (Zimbabwe), Victoria Falls (Zimbabwe), Yaoundé (Cameroon), and Ngora District (Uganda) (Addis Ababa, ECA, 2020).

subnational Sustainable Development Goal processes and reviews.[10] Even so, the need for Africa Voluntary Local Review Guidelines was apparent for a number of reasons.

First and foremost, the Africa Voluntary Local Review Guidelines are the result of a specific request made by African member States for ECA to produce a common VLR template. The 2020 Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development stressed the role of voluntary local reviews by local and regional governments in accelerating the implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 (see box 6). Member States underscored the potential of VLRs in ensuring ownership, accountability and commitment from all stakeholders at all levels. They further noted the value of VLRs in promoting meaningful engagement and the mobilization of resources and capacity in order to accelerate the implementation of the two agendas. Accordingly, member States requested ECA to design a template for peer-reviewed VLRs in Africa that was aligned with voluntary national reviews.

Second, there is a need to align the implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda with the continent's own policy priorities and commitments through Agenda 2063. In addition to the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda, the region has committed to achieving the aspirations and goals of Agenda 2063 (see table 2).

Prior to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, Heads of State and Government of the African Union adopted "Agenda 2063: A Shared Strategic Framework for Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development" in January 2015. Developed through a people-driven process and 18 months of extensive consultations with all formations of African society, the agenda is based on seven aspirations centred around socioeconomic development, culture, democratic governance and peace and security, inclusive societies and the empowerment of women and youth. Strong democratic institutions and leadership are considered to be the enablers for achieving the aspirations and goals of Agenda 2063. Five 10-year plans are to be developed for the implementation of Agenda 2063; the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan (2014–2023) of Agenda 2063 was adopted in 2015. The plan is intended to accelerate the continent's political, social, economic and technological transformation while continuing the pan-African drive for self-determination, freedom, progress and collective prosperity.[11]

The greatest convergence between Agenda 63 and the Sustainable Development Goals is at the level of goals, while the weakest link is seen at the level of indicators. An assessment conducted by ECA (see table 3) revealed that 66 per cent of the Goal indicators overlapped either strongly or weakly with those of Agenda 2063, as opposed to 69.8 per cent and 100 per cent at the target and goal levels, respectively.

10 For example, the UCLG and UN-HABITAT Guidelines for Voluntary Local Reviews adopt a broad definition of VLRs, including strategic documents of local and regional governments that are not entitled VLRs but that contain an assessment of their development strategies against the Sustainable Development Goals. In addition, local and regional governments that have undergone the VLR process are encouraged to submit a copy to the Sustainable Development Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs for review and inclusion in their database. At the time of writing, this includes a mix of municipalities, counties, provinces, regions or federated States.

11 African Union, Agenda 2063. First Ten-Year Implementation Plan, 2014-2023 (Addis Ababa, September 2015).

Box 6: Key messages from the sixth and seventh sessions of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development

As documented in the Victoria Falls Declaration and the final key messages adopted at the sixth session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, member States committed to support the VLR process by:

(a) Integrating voluntary local reviews into voluntary national reviews;

(b) Assisting local authorities with reliable and consistent data and statistics collection;

(c) Establishing local review mechanisms to support peer review;

(d) Promoting effective devolution to local authorities to empower them to localize and implement the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063, respectively;

(e) Promoting partnerships, especially with vulnerable groups;

(f) Engaging young people as key stakeholders;

(g) Integrating local development and urban issues into national and key sectoral development plans, policies and budgets.

With regard to the United Nations system, the commitment was twofold:

(a) To assist in the development of a common template for VLRs for ease of integration and standardization of reviews;

(b) To design a template for peer-reviewed VLRs in Africa that is aligned with voluntary national reviews to better standardize key principles.[a]

Source: Sixth session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development: summary, key messages and Victoria Falls Declaration. ECA/RFSD/2020/16; and the seventh session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development: summary, key Messages (draft). ECA/RFSD/2021/15.

[a] ECA/RFSD/2020/16.

Table 2: Aspirations of Agenda 2063

Agenda 2063
1. A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development
2. An integrated continent, politically united and based on the ideals of Pan-Africanism and the vision of African Renaissance
3. An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law
4. A peaceful and secure Africa
5. An Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, shared values and ethics
6. An Africa, whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children
7. Africa as a strong, united, resilient and influential global player and partner

Source: Our Aspirations for the Africa We Want (Addis Ababa, African Union, 2015).

Table 3: Comparison of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063

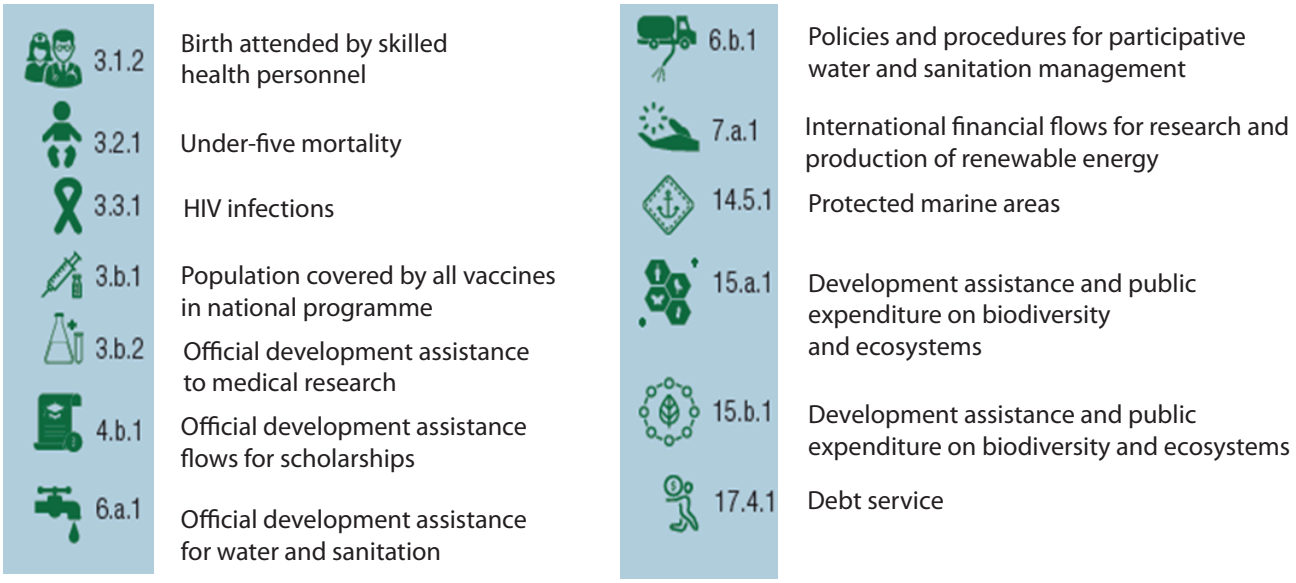
Sustainable Development Goals	Strongly matched	Weakly matched	Total	No association
Number of Goals	11	6	17	0
Percentage of Goals	64.7	35.29	100.0	0
Number of targets	62	56	118	51
Percentage of targets	36.7	33.13	69.8	30.2
Number of indicators	96	66	162	79
Percentage of indicators	39.8	27.4	67.21	32.8

Source: Integrating Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development into national development plans: emerging issues for African least developed countries (Addis Ababa, ECA, 2017).

Third, there is an urgent need to accelerate progress towards achieving Sustainable Development Goals and the goals of Agenda 2063 in the region. While there has been some progress (see figure II), the region is not on track towards achieving the Goals of the 2030 Agenda (see figure III) nor the aspirations of Agenda 2063. For example, one in three Africans (427 million people) are still living in extreme poverty.[12]

Figure III shows the 12 indicators that are on a reverse trend in the region. Overall, Africa needs to accelerate its progress across all the Sustainable Development Goals (see figures IV and V).

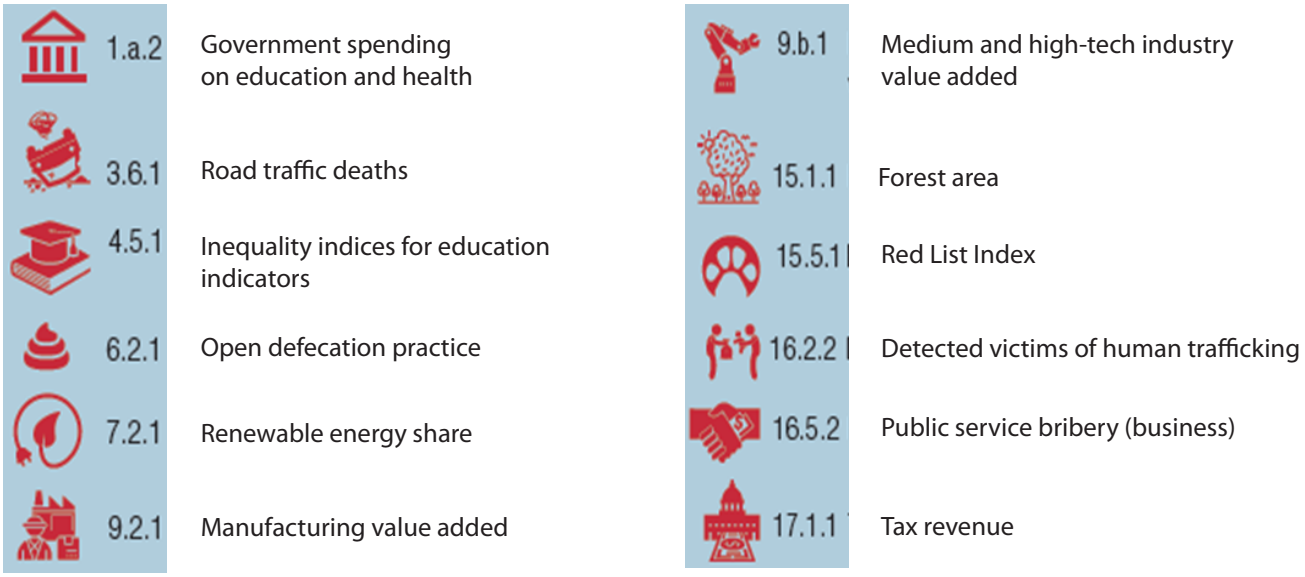
Figure II: Sustainable Development Goal indicators on track



Source: Report on progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in Africa (Addis Ababa, ECA, 2020)

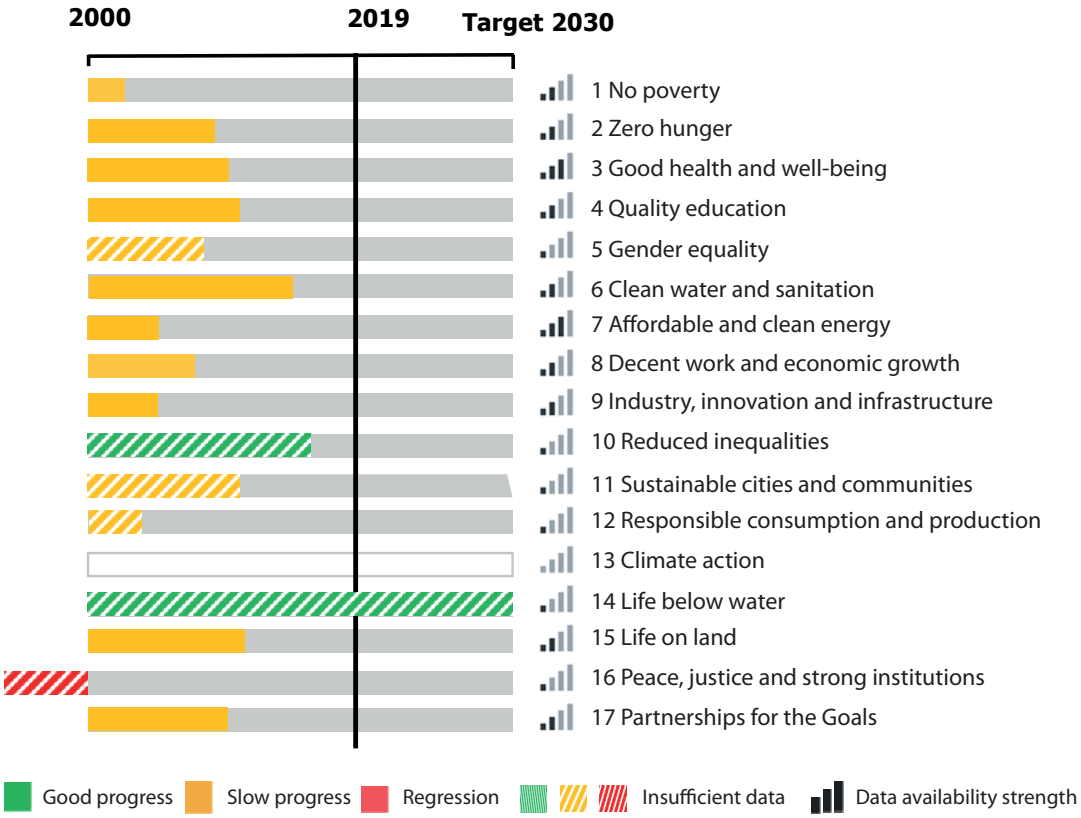
12 World Data Lab, "The World poverty clock"; see www.worlddata.io (accessed December 2020).

Figure III: Sustainable Development Goal indicators on reverse trends



Source: Report on progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in Africa (Addis Ababa, ECA, 2020).

Figure IV: Progress made since 2000 towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in Africa



Source: Report on progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in Africa (Addis Ababa, ECA, 2020).

Figure V: Where should Africa accelerate progress?

1.1.1 International poverty
1.2.1 National poverty
1.3.1 Social protection
1.4.1 Access to basic water and sanitation

2.1.1 Prevalence of undernourishment
2.2.1 Prevalence of stunting
2.2.2 Prevalence of malnutrition
2.a.1 Agriculture orientation index
2.a.2 Official flows to the agriculture

3.1.1 Maternal mortality
3.2.2 Neonatal mortality
3.3.2 Tuberculosis
3.3.3 Malaria
3.3.5 Interventions for neglected tropical diseases
3.4.1 Cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes or chronic respiratory disease
3.4.2 Suicides
3.5.2 Harmful use of alcohol
3.7.1 Family planning satisfied with modern methods
3.7.2 Adolescent births
3.8.1 Coverage of essential health services
3.8.2 Household expenditures on health
3.9.3 Unintentional poisoning
3.c.1 Health worker density
3.d.1 Health capacity and emergency preparedness

4.2.2 Organized learning before primary entry age
4.a.1 schools with access to basic services
4.c.1 Organized teacher training

5.5.1 Seats held by women in national parliaments and local governments

6.6.1 Permanent water body extent

7.1.1 Access to electricity
7.1.2 Reliance on clean energy
7.3.1 Energy intensity

8.1.1 Real GDP per capita growth rate
8.2.1 Real GDP per employed person growth
8.4.2 Domestic material consumption (12.2.2)
8.5.2 Unemployment rate
8.10.1 Commercial Bank branches and automated teller machines
8.10.2 Adults with a Bank account

9.2.2 Manufacturing employment
9.3.2 Small-scale industries with a loan or line of credit
9.4.1 CO2 emission intensity
9.a.1 Official international support for infrastructure
9.c.1 Population covered by a mobile network

10.b.1 Total development assistance
10.c.1 Remittance costs

11.1.1 Population living in inadequate housing

15.1.2 Sites for terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity
15.2.1 Sustainable forest management
15.4.1 Sites for mountain biodiversity

17.1.2 Domestic budget funded by domestic taxes
17.3.2 Personal remittances
17.6.2 Fixed internet broadband subscription by speed
17.8.1 Internet users
17.9.1 ODA for technical cooperation
17.10.1 Worldwide weighted tariff-average
17.12.1 Average tariffs
17.19.1 Financial resources to strengthen statistical capacity in developing countries

Source: Report on progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in Africa (Addis Ababa, ECA, 2020).

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery processes are expected to result in the reversal of progress on the Sustainable Development Goals, further deepening poverty, inequality, unemployment and a host of other challenges (see box 7).

Box 7: Impact of the pandemic in Africa

The toll that the COVID-19 pandemic continues to take across Africa is immense, with livelihoods severely affected both directly through tragic loss of life and indirectly through the ensuing economic crisis and its many side effects, interrupting the progress the region has been making towards sustainable development over the past two decades. At the onset of the pandemic, there were hopes that, owing to an organized and concerted public health response and unified measures across borders, Africa might avoid the dire infection and death rates of other regions. However, the global economic crisis hit African countries hard, with Africa suffering an immediate loss of between 1.8 per cent and 5.4 per cent of GDP, losing more than 30 million jobs and facing its first recession in 25 years. It is estimated that the number of Africans living in poverty will increase by between 49 million and 161 million as a result of the pandemic.a Foreign direct investment to Africa is estimated to have contracted by 25–40 per cent in 2020.b Government budgets – already constrained before the pandemic – are caught between public health and social welfare spending needs and dwindling tax receipts, leaving the continent's stimulus packages much smaller than programmes in other regions. Meanwhile, subsequent waves of infections and variants of COVID-19 in 2021 have been ravaging populations, leading to more serious and widespread health effects, and severely straining health systems.

Compounding this situation, entrenched global inequalities are being replicated in the securing and roll-out of vaccines, with fewer than 2 vaccines administered for every 100 people in sub-Saharan Africa as of June 2021, compared with 68 vaccines administered for every 100 people in Europe and North America.c The pandemic and its effects have also exacerbated inequalities within Africa, with the average Gini coefficient for emerging markets and developing countries increasing by 6 per cent.

In response to these unprecedented threats, innovative approaches have been adopted at the national and local levels across Africa. For example, the statistical service in Ghana has been commended for assisting the response to the pandemic by providing the needed service delivery through diverse data collection, analysis and dissemination methods.d Furthermore, other cities, such as Tétouan (Morocco), have accelerated the transition to online services and have switched to digitalization of their services and benefits on behalf of users; Harare (Zimbabwe) increased the production of water from 173 megalitres to 240 megalitres per day since 20 April 2020; and Dori (Burkina Faso) set up a communal solidarity fund that provides support to people who are no longer active following containment measures.e Vaccine disparities have put a renewed focus on building the continent's research and manufacturing capabilities in pharmaceuticals, with significant capacity already seen in Senegal, South Africa, Tunisia and elsewhere.

In recent local and national reviews, African countries have captured information on the impact that COVID-19 has had on their sustainable development trajectory and, as a result, have laid out road maps for a COVID-19 recovery that are both inclusive and environmentally friendly. In this sense, cities and districts across Africa recognize that policies to recover from the pandemic, and to progress towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, are not mutually exclusive, but rather mutually reinforcing.

[a] ECA, Building Forward for an African Green Recovery (Addis Ababa, 2021).

[b] ECA, Building Forward Together: financing a sustainable recovery (Addis Ababa, 2020).

[c] United Nations, Sustainable Development Goals Report 2021 (New York, 2021).

[d] Ibid.

[e] UN-Habitat, COVID-19 in African cities. Impacts, Responses and Policies Recommendations (Nairobi, 2020).

To accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, African member States at the 2019 high-level political forum on sustainable development and at both the sixth and seventh sessions of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (see box 8) underscored the importance of local action and leadership. As a reporting and monitoring tool, VLRs are extremely useful for tracking implementation at the local level. With few VLRs in the region, there is an expressed need to accelerate progress in this area and the Africa Voluntary Local Review Guidelines are expected to spur further VLR production in the region.

Box 8: Key messages from the seventh session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development

As documented in the Brazzaville Declaration and the final key messages adopted at the 2021 Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, the Forum agreed on the following key messages:

(a) Member States are urged:

- (i) To integrate voluntary local reviews into the regional and national monitoring and review of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 to foster local ownership, commitment and action;
- (ii) To promote coherence and coordination between voluntary national and voluntary local reviews;
- (iii) To strengthen public and private sector partnership through voluntary local reviews, with a view to leveraging finance and investment;
- (iv) To tackle the digital divide in Africa in order to harness the untapped potential of youth innovation and creativity;
- (v) To reinforce and rebuild local fiscal space, in particular in the context of COVID-19, so that local authorities have the means to implement the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063;
- (vi) To improve the planning and management of the urban transition of Africa;

(b) The United Nations is requested:

- (i) To support member States in the local disaggregation of data and statistics for effective planning, investment and implementation relating to the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063;
- (ii) To compile best practices on the response and recovery measures taken by local authorities to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular in support of the informal sector;

(c) The United Nations system, in partnership with the Africa Section of United Cities and Local Governments, is requested:

- (i) To promote more local reviews informed by the Africa Voluntary Local Review Guidelines;
- (ii) To facilitate peer reviews informed by the experience in the use of the African Peer Review Mechanism.

Furthermore, during the 2021 high-level political forum on sustainable development side event held on the theme "Scaling up voluntary local reviews in Africa: responding to COVID-19 and meeting the needs of the decade of action", partners acknowledged the importance of the Guidelines as a tool to guide VLR preparation in the region and to ensure that linkages are made between local and national development planning. Delegates at the 2021 high-level political forum on sustainable development discussed how VLRs are a critical enabler of the adaptation of efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals to the local level and urged wide dissemination of the Africa Voluntary Local Review Guidelines in the region to encourage countries to consolidate their efforts in national and local Sustainable Development Goal attainment and to promote peer reviews, accountability and best practices in data monitoring and evaluation.

Source: ECA/RFSD/2021/15.

Fourth, the region's contextual specificities need to be considered. The region is characterized by some trends and conditions that define the context within which VLRs will be conducted. For example, undertaking VLRs in a data-poor environment where data and evidence need to be built incrementally calls for dedicated guidelines. As reported by ECA, out of the 244 indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals, only 81 of them have enough data for progress to be measured and projections done in 2030, and 77 indicators have no data for Africa.[13] Furthermore, the region only has data on approximately half of the indicators under four Goals: Goal 3 – Good health and well-being; Goal 7 – Affordable and clean energy; Goal 9 – Industry, innovation and infrastructure; and Goal 15 – Life on land. In Africa, no indicator under Goal 13 has enough data. At the local level, there is a severe gap in the availability of locally disaggregated data on Goal indicators, with VLRs providing an opportunity to tackle this situation progressively. Beyond data, the planning and fiscal capacities of local governments in the region are considerably constrained, which has specific ramifications for VLRs. Tailored and detailed VLR guidelines thus become essential under such circumstances.

Finally, the Africa Voluntary Local Review Guidelines can be an enabler for peer review, learning and cooperation across governments. African member States requested ECA to support peer review among local governments conducting VLRs. The Guidelines provide a specific tool for this purpose. Opportunities for sharing experiences and exchanging information can be generated through systematic peer review processes at the regional level. Peer review can enable various subnational governments to co-create and establish joint programmes to tackle areas of mutual concern. The year 2020 has seen examples of regional cooperation necessitated by the need to reinvigorate an economy rattled by the COVID-19 pandemic. Regional leaders came together across the globe to jointly strategize on how to increase testing, lower the spread of the virus and deal with the needs of the most vulnerable populations during the crisis. While regional peer review mechanisms assist in mobilizing local leaders to respond to challenges, these structures are useful for sharing best practices that can be replicated elsewhere, such as the production of VLRs, which can boost regional production.

C. Voluntary local review: process and product

To scale up the conduct of VLRs in the region, the Voluntary Local Review Guidelines provide a description of a clear process that subnational governments can draw on as they undertake their reviews. The Guidelines are not meant to be prescriptive but rather to serve as a guide for African subnational governments to adapt efforts to attain the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 to their own respective contexts.

Figure VI illustrates how the Africa VLR process can be divided into the following three phases:

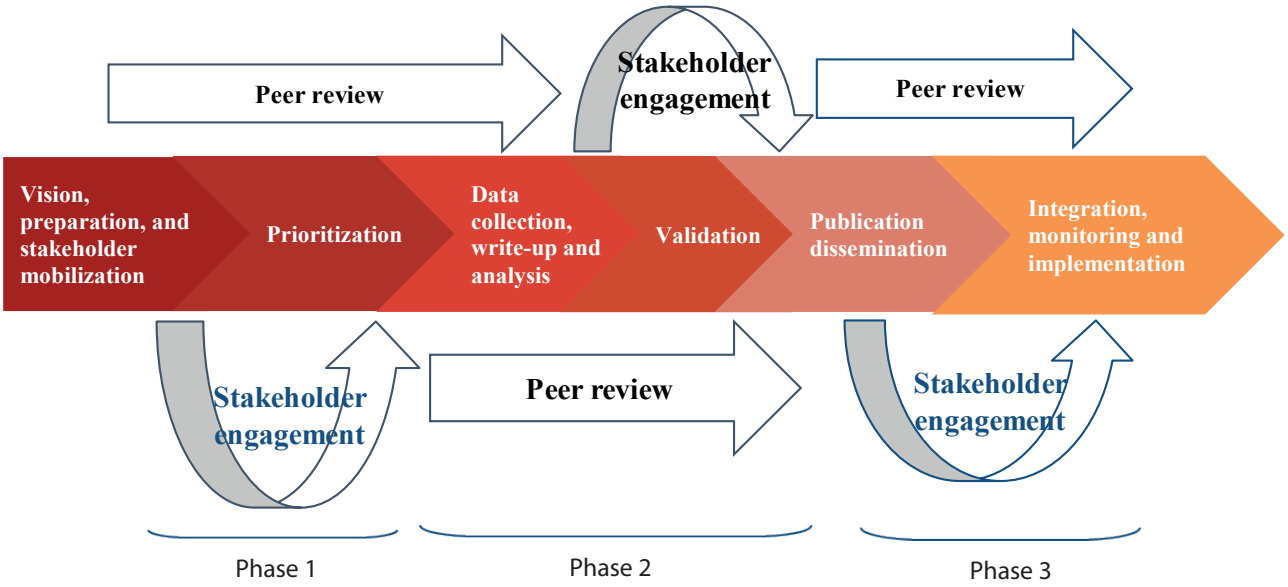
Phase I involves vision, preparation, stakeholder mobilization and prioritization.

Phase II includes data collection, write-up and analysis, and validation.

Phase III consists of publication dissemination, integration, monitoring and implementation. Stakeholder engagement and peer review processes will inform each stage of the VLR process.

13 ECA, "Africa SDG progress and data availability report: highlights" (Addis Ababa, 2020).

Figure VI: Africa voluntary local review process



1. Phase I

The first phase – vision, preparation and stakeholder mobilization – involves the planning and institutionalization of the review. The subnational government identifies the institutional lead(s) or collaborator(s) for the preparation of the review and the process of mobilizing stakeholders, or said owners of policies and initiatives. Stakeholder engagement, at this stage, may involve awareness-raising among partners and citizens on the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063; the local authority can use this process as an opportunity to communicate the benefits of producing a local review and to mobilize communities around shared goals.

Another key step in the first phase is identifying how the local review will be institutionalized and who will lead the coordination of the review. Institutional models are highly dependent on local context and capacity and will vary from review to review. Dominant models include: city-led with one key office leading; hub-and-spoke model with one central coordinator; city and external partnership-led, which may involve an academic, non-profit or private institution; or an inter-agency model that may apply a steering committee approach. In certain cases, a hybrid of these models has been adopted.

In the state of Hawaii (United States of America) for example, the 2020 VLR was produced by the Hawai'i Green Growth Local2030 Hub, a network of public, private and civil society partners led by the State Governor, all four Hawaiian county mayors, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs and the State legislature, together with business and civil society. The Green Growth Local2030 Hub is one of eight global hubs established under the Local2030 Initiative to identify local priorities and innovative solutions towards attaining the Sustainable Development Goals.[14] The Hawaii VLR is the first State-wide local review conducted in the United States.

14 More information on the Green Growth Local2030 Hub is available at www.local2030.org/local-action.

As there are usually neither dedicated resources nor funding mechanisms in place to source the research and production costs of a local review, a partnership-based approach, with the private sector, academia and others, is therefore recommended to defray the costs. Dominant financing and models of production for VLRs tend to fall into one of the following categories: city government resources, usually the office of the mayor; academic partnerships; philanthropic or donor support; state level or national funding streams; or funding from development organizations. In Buenos Aires, Helsinki and New York, their respective mayors' offices took the lead. In Los Angeles (United States), the mayor's office took the lead and partnered with four academic institutions and the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation to conduct its review. In Bristol (United Kingdom), a partnership was forged between the Cabot Institute for the Environment at the University of Bristol and the Bristol City Office, which funded and prepared the local review. In Japan, Kitakyushu and Toyama (cities) and Shimokawa Town all collaborated with the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies and city agencies to conduct their reviews. In São Paulo (Brazil), the local review was financed by the Union of Ibero-American Capital Cities, a partner in international cooperation. The German cities of Bonn, Mannheim and Stuttgart received financial support from the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development; in Stuttgart, national support came from Engagement Global, co-financed by its Service Agency Communities in One World. Dominant models of partnership are detailed in chapter II of the present document.

While stakeholder mobilization commences during phase I, actual stakeholder engagement will take place on a continuum throughout the VLR preparation and implementation process. Depending on the phase of VLR preparation, dissemination or integration, and on the nature of the relationship with a stakeholder, engagement can be informative, consultative or collaborative. A stakeholder engagement strategy is a key output of phase I (see annex II, table 5).

With challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, the use of online tools can help when in-person consultations are not possible. Online surveys, however, do require resources and capacity that may not be available to all but, they can help with increasing the number of stakeholders contacted. Citywide surveys have been used to assess the scale and scope of activities carried out by organizations that are knowingly or unknowingly contributing towards the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals through their activities. Translating surveys into local languages can increase the diversity of inputs received. To ensure an inclusive process, the town of Shimokawa incorporated the Sustainable Development Goals into public school curriculums and hosted public lectures on the Goals for junior high school students. To reach the broader citizenry, the town distributed posters on the Goals and established local Sustainable Development Goal awards to enhance the linkages between sustainability and local culture.[15]

The cities referred to in the present section offer useful examples on how to structure inclusive engagement across diverse stakeholders. A useful diagram on stakeholder mapping is provided in annex II, table 4 for further guidance.

In this planning phase, the development of a draft road map and action plan with clear modalities for production may also be established. The road map could include a list of key tasks and deliverables along with timelines for delivery. A useful example from Ngora District in Uganda is presented in annex III, table 1.

15 Hirotaka Koike and others, The Shimokawa Method for Voluntary Local Review (VLR). A Blueprint to Localise the Sustainable Development Goals (Japan, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, 2020).

Prioritization through data collection, write-up and analysis constitutes the next and key component of the first phase, in which a systematic review and analysis of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 are mapped to local policies, strategies and plans (see annex II, table 2). Mapping policies and initiatives to the Goals and Agenda 2063 determines how local actions are aligned with relevant goals and targets and where there are gaps in implementation. This exercise may also reveal jurisdictional challenges and key lessons on the level of decentralization and devolution at the subnational level. Many of the Sustainable Development Goal targets and indicators relate to global or national dimensions of sustainable development. Hence, the many local and regional governments that have embarked on Goal-monitoring using the local review have adapted indicators to correspond to their local contexts and realities. For city authorities, the Global Urban Monitoring Framework (see box 9) may provide further guidance in defining a data framework for urban VLRs.

Box 9: Global urban monitoring framework

UN-Habitat is mandated by the General Assembly and the Statistical Commission for Africa to lead in the development of a harmonized set of indicators to track the progress on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the implementation of the New Urban Agenda at the local level – the global urban monitoring framework.

Informed by Goal 11, the proposed framework is intended to harmonize current urban indexes to measure urban and local development, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda, while incorporating rural-urban linkages and the principle of leaving no one behind. It provides guidance on the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable urban development, while acknowledging the importance of culture and governance.

The proposed framework supports the mandate of the United Nations system-wide framework on the implementation of the urban Sustainable Development Goals and responds to requests by member States for greater coherence in measuring progress and reporting on the urban dimensions of the Goals. In addition, it will serve as a monitoring tool for the UN-Habitat flagship programme, Sustainable Development Goals Cities. The framework will be a useful tool for the preparation of VLRs and the preparation of urban data for the common country assessments with the United Nations country teams.

The urban monitoring framework is currently being finalized by the urban monitoring framework task team, which is composed of different partner institutions. It will then be reviewed, discussed and agreed on by the United Nations institutions and partners involved in its design.

Source : UN-Habitat, available at https://data.unhabitat.org/pages/urban-monitoring-framework.

To adapt the Sustainable Development Goal targets to its local reality, the city of Pittsburgh (United States) translated the 169 targets into themes instead of targets; the intention of the targets remained but the review became applicable to the city's specific context. In Los Angeles, the city revised the Sustainable Development Goal data framework in collaboration with local stakeholders to determine the following: if the target is not relevant; if the target as written is relevant to the city; if the target as written does not apply, but can be revised to fit local context; if the target as written does not apply, but can be replaced with a target for the city with similar intents; or if a new target should be added for the city. Once a target had been identified, the city determined the best way to measure it locally. As a best practice to be followed in other subnational governments, when possible, Los Angeles further investigated the "success" of implementation by disaggregating data by geography and demography to fully understand its "success" for the whole community. In other cases, academic institutions have been engaged to assist with indicator development. For example, the Local2030 Hub in Hawaii has been working with researchers at the University of Hawaii and the Hawaii Pacific University to identify locally appropriate metrics and indicators to reflect the unique context of the island State.

Local and regional governments may choose to review local actions against all 17 Sustainable Development Goals, Goals that are specific to the high-level political forum on sustainable development, or a set of specific Goals most relevant to their local context. For the first VLR, some cities may choose to be as exhaustive as possible and review all 17 Goals to establish a baseline on where they stand. In Ghent (Belgium), for example, in the first VLR, all 17 Goals were examined, and the review was seen as a starting point for dialogue.[16] Subsequent reviews for Ghent will constitute an annual review that is focused on six Goals at a time. Two years before the release of its first VLR, the city of Montevideo jointly participated with the cities of La Paz, Praia and Sucre in a project to adapt efforts to attain the Sustainable Development Goals to the local level. The project was aimed at promoting inclusive and peaceful cities in Latin America. Financial support for the project was made possible through the United Nations Development Programme and the Madrid City Council. Regional bilateral partnerships such as these allow for coherence and the ability for regional and local governments to share experiences and knowledge about such processes, as well as joint programmes and projects, while increasing their visibility (see box 10 for an example of a similar process being implemented in Africa).

There may be further opportunities to tap into the sister city network or other global city networks, such as the UCLG, C40 Cities and the Partnership for Healthy Cities, to name a few, to jointly establish regional priorities and coherence on goals that may be transboundary or too challenging to tackle by one subnational government alone.

In other instances, subnational governments may choose to briefly link their medium- or long-term strategies to all 17 Sustainable Development Goals through a mapping exercise but prioritize their review on just a few of the Goals. The city of Guangzhou (China), for example, broadly mapped all 17 Goals to its long-term development strategy but its first review was focused on 5 priority Goals. Similarly, Los Angeles focused on 8 Goals while prioritizing 2 Goals; its annex included a mapping template for all 17 Goals. Buenos Aires contextualized its review within the COVID-19 pandemic and prioritized 6 Goals in its VLR while providing a mapping of all 17 Goals in its annex. The city used the local review as an opportunity to highlight how local actions under each of the Goals were responding to the crisis.

16 Locally identified as a sustainability report.

Box 10 : Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals at the local level in Africa

The Global Task Force of Local and Regional Governments and the UCLG annual report to the high-level political forum on sustainable development entitled Towards the localization of the Sustainable Development Goals provides a comprehensive overview on global and regional actions in this regard, including in Africa. Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, a number of Goal awareness-raising workshops and campaigns have been held by local government associations in Africa and these associations have made tremendous efforts across the region to assist subnational governments with Sustainable Development Goal alignment (see annex II, table 1).

In Africa, the greatest momentum is seen in South Africa, where the South African Local Government Association has worked with municipalities to develop integrated development plans that improve national-level coordination and local-level Sustainable Development Goal alignment, with Cape Town and eThekwini-Durban leading. In 2019, the city of Cape Town produced a report on the topic in collaboration with the African Centre for Cities at the University of Cape Town under the Mistra Urban Futures Knowledge Transfer Partnership. The city is in the process of linking the Sustainable Development Goals to its preliminary resilience assessment. At the metropolitan level, eThekwini has aligned its budgets and investments with the Goals; approximately 75 out of 98 indicators were strategically aligned with investment projects and a benchmarking system for improved monitoring and reporting on progress was developed in 2018. In addition, the city has developed toolkits as well as training and other awareness-raising materials to share lessons with other municipalities. In Botswana, the cities of Francistown and Gaborone have held training workshops, with support from UN-Habitat and ECA, to improve their capacity for monitoring and producing disaggregated data and reporting on Sustainable Development Goal 11.

In West Africa, processes to undertake such efforts to the local level are under way in Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire. In Burkina Faso, 13 intermediary cities and 4 regional capitals are reviewing master plans and land-use plans against the Sustainable Development Goals, respectively. In Sierra Leone, 22 local councils have integrated the Goals into local development plans from which an inclusive model of planning known as the "people's planning process" has been adopted. The model places chiefdom and village-level planning at the centre of planning decisions. In Ghana, four metropolitan, municipal and district assemblies are adapting the Goals to local realities. In the Niger, the Ministry of Budget and National Planning at the national level has prepared a guide for planning and monitoring Sustainable Development Goals at the local level to be integrated into communal and regional development plans. In Nigeria, the process of alignment is being promoted in the Anambra, Benue, Delta, Ebony, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Taraba and Yobe States. In Cabo Verde, such efforts are being conducted in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme; to date, eight municipalities have been trained. In Benin and Togo, a number of municipal departments and communes, respectively, have integrated the Sustainable Development Goals into their local plans. In Mali, the Goals were localized in 100 municipalities over a 24-month period.

In East Africa, six secondary cities in Rwanda have been working to adapt the Sustainable Development Goals to local plans by focusing on capacity in areas such as planning, inclusive local economic development, services and gender-inclusive policies. In the United Republic of Tanzania, Goal integration is being promoted in local development plans and projects and a strategy for implementation of the Goals at the local level has been presented to planning officers. In Kenya, all 47 county governments have aligned their integrated development plans for the period 2018–2022 with the Sustainable Development Goals. The Council of Governors in the country is working with the National Monitoring and Evaluation Department to develop a county monitoring evaluation handbook that incorporates Goal indicators. Handbooks have already been produced for the following counties in Kenya: Kericho, Kilifi, Nakuru and Taita Taveta. Further efforts have taken place in Burundi, the Comoros and Madagascar. In Burundi, several communes are in the planning stages. In the Comoros, some of its cities and town, namely, Foumbouni, Iconi, Mitsamiouli, Moroni, Mutsamudu, Niouma Chuoi, Ouoini and Wella, are aligning their local plans with the Goals. In Madagascar, the Association of Mayors of Large Cities is raising awareness and organizing consultations on the Sustainable Development Goals. Similar awareness-raising efforts are taking place in Pemba in Mozambique through the support of the European Union. In Malawi and Zambia, regional workshops are being held to review local development plans.

Source: Summarized from the Global Task Force of Local and Regional Governments United Cities and Local Governments, Local and Regional Governments' Report to the 2019 high-level political forum. 3rd Report: Towards the Localization of the SDGs (Barcelona, 2019).

Note: Further examples of such efforts being undertaken in cities can be found in the 2016 Roadmap for Localizing the SDGs: Implementation and Monitoring at Subnational Level, available at www.uclg.org/sites/default/files/roadmap_for_localizing_the_sdgs_0.pdf.

2. Phase II

Data collection, write-up and analysis support the prioritization process. Data collection could be kicked off with the development of a data collection methodology that includes a list of instruments for gathering information such as surveys, questionnaires, interview guides, focus groups sessions and other tools. Validation should take place through consultations with key stakeholders through a workshop or a series of targeted presentations.

In Germany, the federal, State and local levels of government plans are systematically aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals. In 2017, following the global adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the federal Government and many States in Germany developed strategies that were geared towards the attainment of the Goals, including the creation of State-specific guidelines for sustainable development. At the local level, municipalities have been engaged in measuring quantitative progress through the Sustainable Development Goal indicators for municipal projects. A group of seven organizations – the Association of German Cities, the German County Association, the German Association of Towns and Municipalities, the German Institute for Urban Studies, the Federal Institute for Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Research, the Service Agency Communities in One World of Engagement Global, and the Bertelsmann Foundation – all took part in a nationwide project to map out the status of sustainable development at the local level. The State capital of Stuttgart was one of the first municipalities in Germany to test the Sustainable Development Goal indicators for municipalities. Future strategies and objectives of sustainable urban development in Stuttgart will build on this current baseline study. Data collected in the first phase, which took place between June and October 2018, were updated in the second phase in September 2019. For the first time, the baseline study provided a cross-sectoral instrument for regular, comprehensive monitoring of social, economic and ecological sustainability in Stuttgart, including recommendations and actions to further the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals by local government and stakeholders. As a first step, the baseline study itself provides a useful example for other localities on how to incrementally plan for a review; depending on local context and data availability, it may make sense to pursue a baseline study before engaging in a full local review.17

3. Phase III

Phase III involves publication and dissemination. Dissemination should be wide and could involve the press and media to share key messages.

Integration, monitoring, implementation and follow-up of the local review is carried out on a continual basis. Monitoring commitments in the review and further integrating them into national and local processes have an overall impact on Sustainable Development Goal achievement. This final, but continual part of the process allows for greater alignment and accountability and offers opportunities for real-time data collection. Throughout the VLR process, national and local structures should be set up to facilitate the process of preparation and enhance linkages between the national Sustainable Development Goal agenda and local actions.

17 State Capital of Stuttgart, Stuttgart – a Livable City: The global Agenda 2030 at a local level. Baseline study depicting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Executive Summary. Available at https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-10/2020%20VLR%20Stuttgart%20eng.pdf.

The mechanisms for monitoring VLR follow-up can take various forms, but the following principles should guide the process: transparency, inclusivity and empowerment of local authorities. Empowered local coordination structures allow for follow-up in collaboration with the central Government. As UCLG highlights in its report to the 2019 high-level political forum on sustainable development entitled Towards the Localization of the SDGs, follow-up "coordination relies directly on the existing planning system which must be enhanced or reformed to ensure the follow-up of both the plan and the SDGs with adapted targets and indicators."[18]

Following the preparation of its first VLR, Los Angeles established platforms for reporting and monitoring the progress of implementation across the city, including a new website to track both city and community Sustainable Development Goal-aligned activities and a local data reporting platform to source and visualize data responding to the Goal indicators. Hawaii has an open data dashboard and scorecard to monitor progress on all 17 Goals, 37 targets and more than 200 indicators. The metrics used on the dashboard were co-developed through an initial four-year stakeholder engagement process, which started in 2014, bringing together government, business, academia, philanthropy, civil society and community partners in meetings across all four counties. The open data dashboard encourages accountability and transparency along with coordination of efforts involving officials from both county and State. Data from the Hawaii VLR are being used to inform State-wide COVID-19 recovery efforts.

An important caveat to keep in mind when considering undertaking a local review is that the process of preparation often begins well in advance of when the review is published. Once published, it becomes a living document that informs actions at the local and national levels. For New York, the launch of the first VLR in 2018 was a result of a three-year process of engagement between the city and the wider global community. Following the launch of the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015, the NYC Mayor's Office for International Affairs recognized the overlap between its local strategy and the Goals and committed to the principles of growth, equity, sustainability and resiliency through the OneNYC strategy, a model for sustainable development at the local level. In Bonn, a two-year process preceded the publication of the city's first VLR in 2020, from which a road map for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals was developed. Representatives of departments developed a sustainability strategy in cooperation with political bodies, civil society, and the scientific and business communities. In Montevideo, regional mechanisms through the Euro-Latin American Alliance for Cooperation Among Cities supported the city in preparing its first VLR. In this case, the process began a year before (in 2019) the first VLR was published with the formation of an ad hoc working group and leadership from the Planning Department and Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Division, which helped to define the methodology and analysis for the review.

Peer review

As more local governments conduct VLRs in Africa, there is much learning and exchange that can take place to strengthen the processes and impact of such reviews in the region. This is especially important given that the region is at an early stage of VLR production with only a few having conducted such reviews to date. During the sixth session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, held in 2020, African member States specifically requested ECA to support peer review and exchange between local governments conducting VLRs.

18 More information on the process is available at www.uclg.org/sites/default/files/towards_the_localization_of_the_sdgs_0.pdf.

Accordingly, a checklist template has been included in the Africa Voluntary Local Review Guidelines to document lessons learned, challenges and opportunities at each phase of VLR implementation (see annex II, table 6). The proposed approach is for a peer review tool to be incorporated during each phase of VLR preparation. This allows for documentation and creates feedback loops at each phase of the VLR process to facilitate an iterative and flexible approach to conducting a VLR while also promoting accountability. The checklist provides space to detail steps and tangible follow-up actions towards implementation. In addition, it serves as a basis for peer review discussions as it tracks progress at every stage of the VLR phases, marked by key activities and milestones that offer insights and best practices around engagement, coordination, data collection and more.

Furthermore, ECA will continue to utilize the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development as the main platform for regional dialogue, exchange and sharing of experiences. The Forum presents an ideal platform on which VLRs can be presented alongside voluntary national reviews to define the continent's key messages for the annual high-level political forum on sustainable development, held at the global level. It fosters dialogue and coordination between national and local governments in Africa around the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063, and related peer review opportunities. In addition, ECA will continue to work with partners to support systematic VLR learning and exchange among local governments, including at the subregional level. Other platforms, such as the sister city platform, could also provide opportunities (see box 11).

The peer review of VLRs in Africa can further draw on the opportunities and experiences relating to the African Peer Review Mechanism. In January 2017, at the twenty-eighth ordinary session of the Assembly of the African Union, Heads of State and Government endorsed and assigned the African Peer Review Mechanism a stronger role and the task of supporting the monitoring the implementation and evaluation of key governance initiatives, which encompass, among other things, the Sustainable Development Goals, Agenda 2063 and the 2023 targets within the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan (2014–2023) of Agenda 2063.[19] Through the African Peer Review Mechanism structures, or building on related experiences, subnational governments could map out opportunities to present their VLRs at various national and subnational platforms for peer review.

Box 11: Global Sister Cities International initiative

Through the global Sister Cities International initiative, the city of Accra has been building its capacity and know-how through relationships with Cape Town in Africa, Bristol in the United Kingdom, and Akron, Cheyenne and Chicago in the United States. As sister cities, cities in this network promote mutual cooperation along with cultural, educational, information and knowledge exchange.

The Sister Cities International initiative could provide an additional platform to leverage capacity for VLR development across borders. Localities that have already undertaken a local review could exchange experiences and lessons learned through mutual knowledge channels.

19 See, African Union, The First Ten-Year Implementation Plan (https://au.int/en/agenda2063/sdgs).

II. Voluntary local review template

A. Introduction

The template presents the key components of content that should be included or covered in the VLR report and provides direction and guidance on conducting a local review.

VLRs continue to gain global momentum, the Guidelines will evolve and be updated as needed. As highlighted in chapter I, the template draws heavily on current sources and is not intended to reinvent the wheel but to serve as a resource to guide the local review process in the region. While the Africa VLR template is not meant to be prescriptive, there are fundamental areas to be considered for inclusion in every review. They include stakeholder mapping and engagement plans, data collection methodology, and Sustainable Development Goal and Agenda 2063 mapping. Lengthy mapping templates can be included in the annex of the local review, while analysis on priority goals, targets and indicators should appear in the body of the review. Finally, it is essential to highlight accelerators for implementation with a list of future steps for local governments to take towards implementation. These elements are critical for guiding the review and analysis of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 implementation at the subnational level.

Foreword

In the opening statement or foreword from the subnational government authority, highlight key priority areas that emerged from the local Sustainable Development Goal and Agenda 2063 mapping and adaptation processes. Offices responsible for preparing VLR could be acknowledged here along with any significant support received from regional or international bodies. The opening statement provides an opportunity to situate the local review in the overall national Sustainable Development Goal review process by mentioning the number of voluntary national reviews and VLRs (when relevant) produced for the country. This space may also be used to highlight the unique priorities of the subnational government in the national context. The opening statement will connect the VLR process to the overall subnational vision and the key driving policy agenda(s). The subnational government may wish to provide key takeaways from participating in the process.

Voluntary local review template at a glance

Preliminaries:

- Foreword, abbreviations and acronyms, list of tables and figures, and table of contents

1. **Executive summary**
   - Highlights from the review

Phase I

2. **Voluntary local review methodology – getting started**
   - Literature review
   - Institutional mechanism
   - Stakeholder mobilization
   - Policy and enabling environment
   - Vision
3. **Sustainable Development Goal and Agenda 2063 prioritization**
   - Linking priorities
   - Integration of three dimensions and "leave no one behind"

Phase II

4. **Data collection**
   - Data methodology and processing
   - Sustainable Development Goal ownership
5. **Write-up, analysis and validation**
   - Progress on goals and targets

Phase III

6. **Publication and dissemination**
7. **Integration, monitoring and implementation**
   - Outcomes and follow-up
   - Means of implementation
   - Conclusion and next steps
8. **Annexes**

Abbreviations and acronyms

Provide a list of the abbreviations and acronyms mentioned in the review.

List of tables and figures

Provide a numbered list of tables and figures used in the review.

Table of contents

Provide a table of contents for the review.

B. Executive summary

Highlights from the voluntary local review

In this section, reflect on the content and process of preparing the review. Highlight issues and key priorities that have emerged in the review on, but not limited to, national and local coordination mechanisms, local agency coordination and new partnerships formed, the integration of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 into local development processes, resource mobilization, data limitations, and overall progress on the implementation of both agendas and key recommendations for accelerated implementation. In the analysis, consider the opportunities provided by the VLR process to monitor progress and define follow-up actions for the implementation of the two agendas.

Policy coherence. Identify key local institutional frameworks and policies referenced in the review and how aligned these frameworks are with national Sustainable Development Goal strategies. Briefly present the vertical and horizontal coordination structures that support the harmonization of policies.

Discuss linkages to the voluntary national review process. Highlight how national review and local review preparations are complementary and how coordination could be further improved. Mention how national and local coordination mechanisms were strengthened and any coordination mechanisms that were established as a result of VLR preparation.

Local agency coordination and stakeholder engagement and partnerships. State the overall office or department in charge of preparation and supporting units. Mention the key national and local government agencies involved and other significant stakeholders. The methodology for full stakeholder engagement is set out in subsection II.C. of the present document. Provide details on new and innovative partnerships that resulted from the review and explain the significance of partnership(s). Detail how partnerships with stakeholders have added to the content of the review. New partnerships may involve the private sector or non-traditional partner(s). Define the focus of the partnership and new programmes, activities, merged duties or departments, data collection modalities and monitoring mechanisms resulting from said partnership.

The 2030 Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063. Provide a summary of how local development processes have integrated the two agendas into planning, financing, monitoring and evaluation frameworks. Include an analysis on budget development, indicator definition and data collection. Mention the main planning documents used to map the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 goals. Identify the key priority areas for the locality under both agendas that emerged from prioritization exercises.

Building forward better. For Africa, the trajectory of COVID-19 and the cases of mortality have significantly differed from other regions. However, owing to the emerging nature of the pandemic, the impact it has had on financial streams, trade and reduced remittances is not yet clear. Any insights on the impact of COVID-19 that can be gleaned from the local level on both the health of the population and the economy as they relate to attaining sustainable development should be added to the review and summarized in this section of the review. In the review, reflect how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, and include the types of measures that have been

undertaken to make the recovery more sustainable and greener, along with their impact. Describe how the pandemic has affected preparations of the local review.

Data limitations and resource mobilization. Highlight the key lessons learned from the review process and the challenges encountered during preparation, as well as difficulties in financing and other areas that are applicable. Messages from this section could assist with the design of VLRs and make future review preparation more efficient or participatory.

Overall progress on and challenges in implementing the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. Briefly mention the Sustainable Development Goals, including areas in which the subnational government is making progress and areas that need great attention. Keep this section brief as subsection F will provide an opportunity for greater detail.

Accelerators for implementation. Identify accelerators for implementation and demonstrate the steps that need to be taken to accelerate implementation in the most challenging areas. List any programmes or activities that need scaling up to meet lagging goal progression.

Guiding questions:

- Was the Sustainable Development Goal framework adopted by the subnational government? If so, when and how?
- Were the 2030 Agenda 2030 or Agenda 2063 used to inform, update or revise existing development plans? How are such plans being updated and monitored with the frameworks of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063?
- What percentage of the 17 Goals is reflected in the local plan?
- What are the main drivers, tenets or guiding principles of the local government's main planning policy pegged to the Goals and Agenda 2063?
- Is there a local dedicated entity or office within the local government working on Sustainable Development Goal achievement?

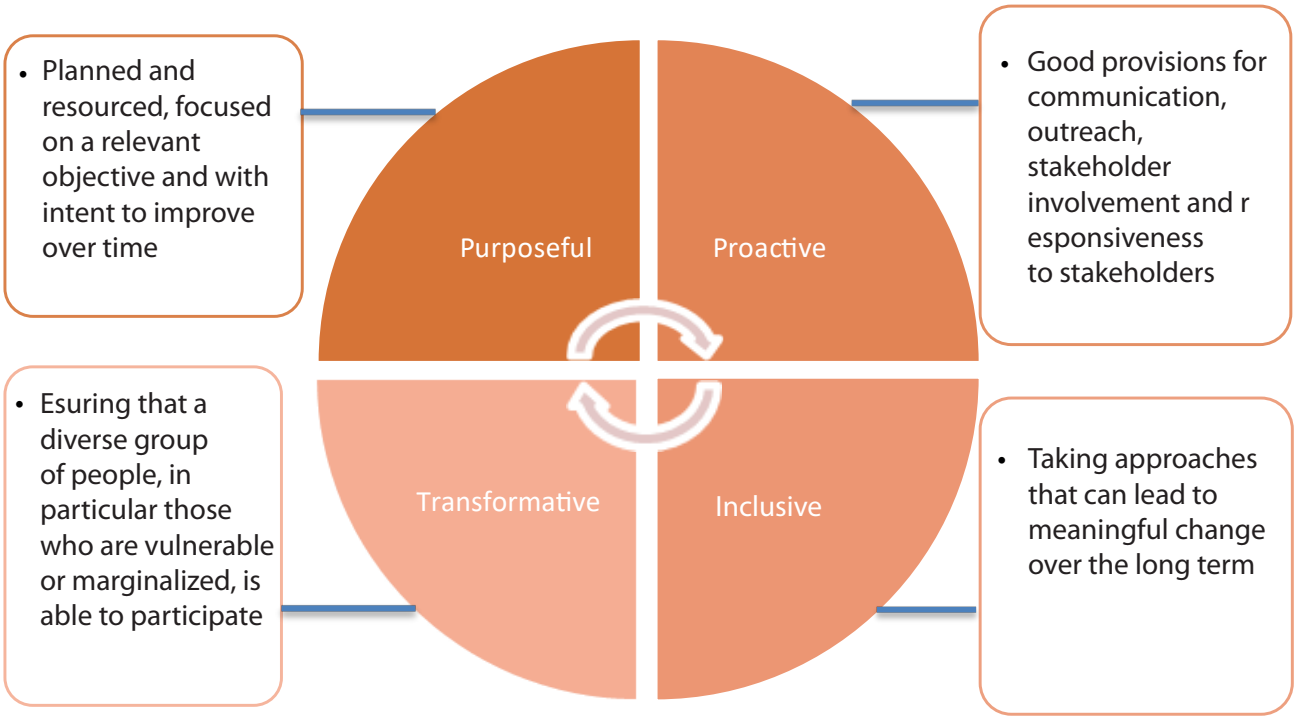
C. Voluntary local review methodology and process

Preparation, vision and stakeholder mobilization

Getting started

The methodology for VLR preparation should be outlined in this section. In the introductory paragraph, provide a general outline of the methodological approach and the scope and depth of the review. In the following subsections, the review can present a summary of the literature review, the process of stakeholder engagement (see figure VII), quantitative and qualitative data collected, including limitations, and the methodology for mapping the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 to local plans and programmes.

Figure VII: Participatory stakeholder engagement



Source: Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and International Association for Public participation, 2019. Reproduced from United Nations, Asia-Pacific Regional Guidelines on Voluntary Local Reviews: Reviewing Local Progress to Accelerate Action for the Sustainable Development Goals, figure 12: Four dimensions of meaningful stakeholder engagement for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

1. Literature review

The literature review should document the reports, strategies, policies and plans reviewed at the national and local levels, such as Sustainable Development Goal frameworks, development plans, annual workplans, physical plans, midterm reviews, budget frameworks, budget estimates, project profiles, census data, civil society organization reports, statistical reports and audits. Mention the Guidelines and handbooks referenced for preparation. The literature review will help to identify the vision for the review, which will be further refined and validated through stakeholder engagement.

2. Institutional mechanisms

In this section, identify the institutional model used for organizing the review. In considering which model to use, table 4 highlights the benefits and drawbacks for each model, while further examples are provided in the guidelines portion of the present document.

Table 4: Models of institutional arrangement

Model	Function
One lead office or team	Completes and communicates internally
Hub and spoke	One coordinator with outreach to relevant offices
Inter-agency	A collaboration among different units led by a steering committee
Partnership	A partnership between the city office and an external organization

Source: Adapted from Pipa and Bouchet, "Next generation urban planning: enabling sustainable development at the local level through voluntary local reviews (VLRs)" (Washington, D.C., The Brookings Institution,2020).

The dominant institutional models for VLR preparation globally are: (a) one key office; and (b) hub-and-spoke model.

Under the one key office and hub-and-spoke models, a designated individual or office is charged with leading the process. This ensures consistent information-sharing across government departments and with stakeholders. However, these models take a long time to coordinate and may lengthen the time it takes to produce a review as well as increasing the burden of coordination on one or a few individuals. Generating momentum and sustaining enthusiasm through political transitions may be more challenging under the one key office and hub-and-spoke models.

The two emerging models include: (a) inter-agency; and (b) partnership.

The inter-agency or partnership models help to generate momentum quickly. These models are useful for mobilizing resources to produce the review and in contributing towards the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals and established goals. In addition, given their nature, these models are useful for engaging more stakeholders, helping to break down silos and integrating priorities towards sustainable development.

Regardless of the model chosen, building local leadership is important, as is creating communication channels among partners and stakeholders around shared values and goals. Retaining local ownership over the VLR process during implementation is also critical for success. While these are the most common models, there are opportunities for new models of coordination to be developed (see box 12).

Box 12 : Ngora District voluntary local review: model of coordination

The Ngora District VLR utilized already-existing coordination and stakeholder mechanisms at both the national and district level. The Ngora District planner, the focal person for the coordination, worked in close collaboration with the Office of the Prime Minister and the Minister of State in Charge of General Duties, who coordinates the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals within the established Sustainable Development Goal secretariat. Planning at the district level, led by the District Planning Unit in which the focal point sits, brings together all district heads of departments and sectors, civil society, the private sector, local leaders and counsellors. Plans are generated from the village level to the subcounty then the district level, where they are consolidated into one plan by the planning department. This coordination not only ensures harmony and integration of the Goals at the local level but also allows for opportunities for joint monitoring and mainstreaming.

Source: Ngora District Draft Voluntary Local Review (Uganda, 2020).

3. Stakeholder mobilization and vision

The 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 both require comprehensive coordination at multiple levels of government and stakeholder engagement. Awareness and ownership of the Sustainable Development Goals at the local, people level is a first step. To build a holistic and integrated vision, broader engagement is required with various groups and multiple levels of government. The local review provides opportunities to engage residents, organizations, the private sector and governments on the priorities of the subnational government, while also highlighting challenges and opportunities. As noted by the Brookings Institution, "the positive agenda and common language of the SDGs provides an opportunity to energize support and community buy-in."[20] Preparing a stakeholder engagement plan is a useful first step in guiding this process. Using the stakeholder engagement plan also helps the subnational government to outline the strategic purpose of consultations; set up a process or mechanism for identifying stakeholders to be consulted; establish techniques and methods to be used for consultation; and determine how the whole process will be documented.

In this section, provide details on which consultations took place and who was engaged in preparing the review. Elaborate on the method used, who was consulted, the organization represented and the rationale behind each group contacted (see box 13). The Division for Sustainable Development Goals of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research have created a publication entitled Stakeholder Engagement and the 2030 Agenda: A Practical Guide for local governments and officials seeking to enhance their participation and engagement in implementing the 2030 Agenda. While the guide is intended for national-level engagement, the frameworks provided can be easily adapted to the subnational government level. Templates for stakeholder mapping and engagement are provided in annex II.

Stakeholder engagement during the pandemic

Stakeholder participation has been greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. While online participation has increased engagement for some stakeholders, COVID-19 has decreased the participation of the most vulnerable and marginalized groups. According to the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, older persons and persons with disabilities have been the most affected and are at risk of being left further behind. The pandemic has highlighted how the digital divide severely limits the participation of women,

Box 13: Ngora District voluntary local review: stakeholder engagement

The Ngora District VLR utilized innovative tools for stakeholder engagement. In addition to focus groups with special interest groups (vulnerable populations) and informant interviews, Ngora District gathered feedback through radio talk shows and television programmes. These shows attracted participation from key leaders including the District Chairperson, Members of Parliament and the Chief Administrative Officer. Through these platforms, government figures were able to provide information and receive feedback on development plans. This example serves as a useful reference for other subnational governments preparing a review in 2021, when in-person engagement may not be possible owing to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Source: Ngora District Draft Local Government voluntary local review (Uganda, 2020).

20 Anthony Pipa and Max Bouchet, "Next generation urban planning: enabling sustainable development at the local level through voluntary local reviews (VLRs)" (Washington, D.C., The Brookings Institution, 2020).

children and young people, homeless people, slum dwellers, migrants and displaced persons who have limited access to online meetings and methods of engagement.

4. Policy and enabling environment

A number of local frameworks and plans, such as city development strategies, comprehensive strategies, sustainability frameworks and resilience plans, have been designed or updated or are being revised to complement the Sustainable Development Goal framework. Subnational governments can use the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 in their VLRs to present its unique narrative and, from this, describe how the process of preparing the review and the product has been valuable to them (see box 14). This analysis will provide a discussion on how grass-roots involvement has added to the review. In this section, include an introductory paragraph, briefly summarizing the following points: how the subnational government has created ownership of the goals; how the social, economic and environmental dimensions are integrated into the review; how the local government has considered the principles of leave no one behind; and the institutional mechanisms chosen for conducting the review. An opportunity to expand on each of these sections follows below.

5. Vision

To conclude this section, subnational governments can discuss the process for establishing a local vision for implementation. After the literature review and the institutionalization of the process, present how initial engagement has empowered local citizens and institutions to own the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063. It would be worthwhile to demonstrate if new local commitments and priorities have emerged as a result of the preparatory work that defines where the locality would like to see itself by 2030. Questions to guide this visioning process (as presented in the Shimokawa VLR) are provided in the guiding questions below.

Box 14: Victoria Falls Municipality: methods of strategic coordination

Victoria Falls Municipality has mainstreamed the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 into its five-year 2018–2022 strategic development plan. The plan is currently being implemented through planned projects, policies, programmes and procedures. The strategic development plan demonstrates a model of inclusive growth, with a focus on providing quality infrastructure, improving the health of the community, creating employment opportunities and mainstreaming the green growth of Victoria Falls as a tourist destination. More than 75 per cent of the Sustainable Development Goals are reflected in the strategic plan.

Horizontal inter-agency coordination and communication mechanisms between the national level and Victoria Falls Municipality have been made possible through a national steering committee for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and local subcommittees established for mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals into the plan and attaining them. A series of participatory workshops with a number of agencies, including city authorities, administration, residents and private businesses have helped to create the subcommittees. Dialogue and alignment have been enhanced across municipal levels and with civil society, the private sector and development agencies.

Source: Victoria Falls Town, Draft voluntary local report on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 for Sustainable Development (Zimbabwe, 2020).

Guiding questions:

- What is the objective of stakeholder engagement and consultation?
- What do you want input on?
- What do you need input on this?
- Whom do you need to consult to get this? Are there umbrella groups or bodies that can be consulted or do you need to create a targeted consultation process?
- Where are the stakeholders geographically located?
- When is the best time to consult in the process?
- How will you engage and get feedback?
- What was the rationale for choosing the tool used for engaging stakeholders?
- What mechanisms are available for stakeholders from civil society and the private sector to contribute to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and how will you develop feedback loops?
- What do you want more of in your city by 2030?
- What do you want less of or do you not want in your city by 2030?
- What are the subnational government's top priorities and goals for 2030?
- How are vulnerable groups defined and identified?
- Which groups are being left behind and what are the reasons for their vulnerability?*
- Which disaggregated data sources are available and where have data gaps been observed?
- What actions are being taken to determine the needs of the vulnerable and the furthest behind?
- What is being done to support vulnerable groups and empower them socially or economically? *

Note: * Questions on leave no one behind were adapted from the Voluntary National Review Handbook (2018-2021) of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Included in the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific Guidelines on VLRs, table 5 is a useful adaptation of the International Association for Public Participation–2 Public Participation Spectrum, which details each level of engagement.

D. Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 prioritization

1. Linking priorities

In this section, map the Sustainable Development Goals and targets and Agenda 2063 aspirations and goals to existing local frameworks, strategies, policies and planning documents. The purpose of the mapping exercise is to conduct a policy and programme gap analysis with the Goals and Agenda 2063 to better understand the areas in which progress is being made, to identify challenges and to determine any additional actions and resources that are needed. It is important to look at which of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 goals and indicators are related to the current planning documents of local governments (see box 15). Conducting the mapping from the perspective of the Goals and Agenda 2063 to planning documents shows not only the convergences but also the areas in which critical gaps exist. Refer to the strategic Sustainable Development Goal and Agenda 2063 mapping template tools in annex II, tables 2 and 3, to carry out this exercise.

As an example, table 6 shows a template of a rapid integrated assessment tool that is used for the alignment of existing plans, strategies and policies with the Sustainable Development Goals. All templates need to be adapted to conform to the policy areas or sectors contained in the country's national development programme, subnational development plan or sectoral plan being analysed. All relevant Sustainable Development Goal targets for the country being analysed should be included in the template. The columns on the far left identify key policies and strategic pillars for the subnational government and should be customized to the local context. The items appearing under the policy areas/strategic pillar column are purely illustrative. These should be updated to the priorities of the local context using the guiding local framework for Sustainable Development Goal attainment. The tools are to be completed and included in the VLR annex. The information gathered will be used to complete the analysis for the review.

Guiding questions:

- Which Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 aspirations and goals did the subnational government focus on in the local review and why?
- In general, did the subnational government adapt any of the Sustainable Development Goals or Agenda 2063 goals to the local context to match jurisdictional boundaries?
- How has the VLR process influenced local development plans or processes?

Table 5: Levels of stakeholder engagement

Inform			
Level of stakeholder engagement	May be appropriate when:	May not be appropriate when:	Example tools
• This is a one-way communication, where governments inform stakeholders of their plans for implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. There are no expectations of a two-way dialogue.	• The process is beginning, and there is deeper participation to come. • Stakeholders have a low level of understanding of the 2030 Agenda (for example, an introductory session to communicate the details of the 2030 Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063).	• Stakeholders want more active involvement. • Decisions have a meaningful impact on stakeholders. • Stakeholders are already well informed about the 2030 Agenda.	• Fact sheets • Open houses • Newsletters, bulletins, circulars • Websites • Webinars • Radio • Newspapers and official media
Consult			
Level of stakeholder engagement	May be appropriate when:	May not be appropriate when:	Example tools
This is where governments present plans and options for implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 and receive feedback from stakeholders. The plan is intended for others to benefit from the experience and knowledge of stakeholders. Decision-making authority remains entirely with the government.	Clear plans exist, and there are a limited range of options for change. Governments want to improve their existing plans and are able to use the feedback to do so. Stakeholders can understand and relate to the plans and options. Governments are committed to providing feedback to stakeholders on how their input influenced the outcome.	• Plans have been finalized, and feedback cannot be incorporated. • Clear plans do not already exist, and a wide range of opinions are sought. • Stakeholders need to be mobilized and empowered for long-term engagement.	• Focus groups • Surveys • Internal and public meetings • Webinars • Social media chats • Web-based platforms for discussion and inputs • Radio

Involve			
Level of stakeholder engagement	May be appropriate when:	May not be appropriate when:	Example tools
• This is where stakeholders are meaningfully engaged with governments in generating plans and options for implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 and carrying out actions based on decisions emerging from this input. Participation falls short of sharing formal decision-making authority.	• Governments need the expertise and contacts of stakeholders in order to effectively implement decisions. • Governments are committed to incorporating inputs received into their decisions, and to providing feedback to stakeholders. • Stakeholders have an active desire and demonstrate the capacity to be engaged in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.	• Governments do not have the resources or the time to meaningfully engage stakeholders in implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda. • Governments do not have the political space to meaningfully incorporate inputs from stakeholders. • Stakeholders do not show willingness to be actively engaged in the implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda.	• Deliberative polling • Solicitation of recommendations and proposals • Workshops • Forums • Provision of data • Webinars • Social media chats • Web-based platforms for discussion and inputs

Collaborate			
Level of stakeholder engagement	May be appropriate when:	May not be appropriate when:	Example tools
• This is where governments and stakeholders decide together on the implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. It is long-term, complex and demanding, requiring resources.	• It is important that stakeholders feel ownership of the process of implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. • There is an identifiable extra benefit of all parties from acting together. • There is enough time and resources to make the collaboration meaningful. • Governments and stakeholders demonstrate the political will, desire and commitment to develop a meaningful partnership around implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. • Governments recognize the need for stakeholders' advice and innovation to create the best solutions and are committed to shared decision-making processes.	• Time and resources are limited. • Commitment is low, for example, if a government holds all the power and plans to use the collaboration to impose solutions. • Stakeholders don't have a long-term interest in carrying out identified solutions, they only want to be part of the decision-making process.	• Guiding or advisory bodies • Working groups • Joint planning and shared projects • Standing or ad hoc committees • Facilitated consensus building and decision-making forums • Training and capacity-building to support joint action

Table 6: Rapid integrated assessment tool: mapping Sustainable Development Goals to local policies and strategies

Policy areas/ strategic pillar	Goal 1: Poverty							Goal 2: Food security							
	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1a	1b	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2a	2b	2c
Health strategy	X				X ↓										
Water sector policy	X														
National biodiversity strategy												X	X		
Land Policy Act	X				X										
National smallholder policy					X		X		X	X					
Justice Systems Reforms Programme					X	X									

Source: Mapping of existing policies to the Sustainable Development Goals (adapted from the rapid integrated assessment tool of the United Nations Development Programme, 2017) from the *Voluntary National Review Handbook for the Preparation of VNRs* (New York, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2020 edition).

Box 15: Integration of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 into local plans in Accra

The Accra Metropolitan Assembly medium-term development plan, based on the national medium-term national development framework, which is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, is driven by a resilient city strategy focused on three pillars: pursuing an integrated approach to infrastructure planning and service provision; optimizing new and existing resources with accountability and transparency; and embracing the contributions of an informal approach to building resilience. The central objective of the development plan is to reduce poverty and improve the social well-being of residents. Contextually relevant Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 indicators are incorporated into the development plan's monitoring framework to track progress and support evidence-based decision-making. In addition, all budget lines have been mapped to the Sustainable Development Goals, as required by the national budget guidelines issued by the Ministry of Finance of Ghana.

Source: The City of Accra Draft VLR Report on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and African Union Agenda 2063 (Ghana, Accra Metropolitan Assembly, 2020).

2. Integration of three dimensions and the principle of leave no one behind

In this part of the review, discuss interlinkages among the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Given the integrated nature of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, subnational governments have the opportunity to highlight in their reviews the synergies and trade-offs in policies and strategies. Examples used in this section will highlight how policies can contribute to multiple benefits spanning across the goals and targets of both agendas (see box 16). Mapping planning and strategies to the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 aspirations and goals will assist in identifying these synergies and trade-offs. The mapping will also help in identifying which government agencies have responsibility over Sustainable Development Goal targets and how to integrate the agendas across sectors.

Box 16: Accra: sustainable development initiatives

In Accra, the municipality collects about 70 per cent of the total solid waste generated on a daily basis, while the remaining 30 per cent is handled by informal waste collectors and communal systems. To promote household reuse and recycling, a number of educational and behavioural change initiatives are under way, including waste segregation in schools and citywide awareness-raising on the links between air pollution, illegal burning and the use of solid fuels for cooking. Joining a network of cities through the BreatheLife campaign, Accra also benefits from international support in the monitoring and sharing of best practices on air pollution.

Source: The City of Accra Draft VLR Report on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and African Union Agenda 2063 (Ghana, Metropolitan Assembly, 2020).

The Sustainable Development Goals are guided by the principle of leave no on behind (see box 17). Ensuring that no one is left behind requires prioritizing the most marginalized in the engagement process. According to the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, subnational governments should be encouraged to go beyond social policies and include macroeconomic policies and technology that could have an impact on the situation of those farthest behind – with particular attention paid to women and girls. In addition, governments should include actions to end extreme poverty and policies that are aimed at reducing inequalities, including those that arise from geography, as well as efforts to ensure inclusive and effective participation in implementation.[21]

21 Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Handbook for the Preparation of Voluntary National Reviews (New York, 2021 edition).

Box 17: Sustainable Development Goals: principles

The 2030 Agenda is guided by three key principles: human rights-based approach, leave no one behind, and gender equality and women's empowerment. The principles are operationalized through four areas: alignment with international norms and standards, equality and non-discrimination, active and meaningful participation and robust accountability mechanisms.

1. Human-rights based approach. This is a conceptual framework based on international human rights standards to protect and promote human rights. The approach is aimed at understanding the root causes of inequality and rectifying discriminatory processes and unjust distributions of power that slow down progress and leave groups of people behind. United Nations development cooperation should be guided by universality, indivisibility, equality and non-discrimination, participation and accountability, while focusing on the development of "duty bearers" to meet their obligations and "rights-holders" to claim their rights.

While there is no universal recipe for a human rights-based approach, agencies of the United Nations system have nonetheless agreed to a number of essential attributes in the 2003 Common Understanding on HRBA to Development Cooperation,[a] which indicates that:

(a) All programmes of development cooperation, policies and technical assistance should further the realization of human rights as laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments;

(b) Human rights standards contained in, and principles derived from, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments guide all development cooperation and programming in all sectors and in all phases of the programming process;

(c) Development cooperation contributes to the development of the capacities of "duty bearers" to meet their obligations and/or of "rights-holders" to claim their rights.

2. Leave no one behind. This is the central promise of the 2030 Agenda. It commits States Members of the United Nations to "eradicate poverty in all forms, end discrimination and exclusion, reduce inequalities and vulnerabilities that leave people behind and undermine the potentiality of individuals and of humanity as a whole". The principle of leave no one behind strives to reach the poorest of the poor and address rising inequality resulting from discrimination. At the country level, operationalizing the commitment to leave no one behind requires a comprehensive approach with a series of steps, including identifying who is being left behind and why; identifying effective measures to address root causes; monitoring and measuring progress; and ensuring accountability for leaving no one behind. The United Nations Sustainable Development Group's Operational Guide for UNCTs on Leaving No One Behind provides a framework for further operationalizing the principle of leaving no one behind.[b]

3. Gender equality and women's empowerment. The Economic and Social Council describes this as "a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of design, implementation and policies and programmes in all political, economic and social spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetrated".[c] Two accountability mechanisms have been instituted:

(a) The United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP 2.0)[d] provides an accountability framework that defines commonly agreed standards and coordinated approaches for each entity in the United Nations system. The rating system consists of five levels and allows the entity to self-assess and report on its standing with respect to each indicator, and to move progressively towards excellent performance. As such, the rating system is intended as an aid to promote leadership and direction and enhance coherence;

Box 17 (*continued)*

(b) The United Nations country team-SWAP gender equality scorecard is a standardized self-assessment of country-level gender mainstreaming practices and performances. It is aimed at ensuring accountability of senior managers and improving country team performance. Based on a set of indicators, it implies a management response that could be used as a gender road map during the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework exercise.e

Source: United Nations Sustainable Development Group, Universal Values. Available at https://unsdg.un.org/2030-agenda/universal-values.

a See https://unsdg.un.org/resources/human-rights-based-approach-development-cooperation-towards-common-understanding-among-un.

b See https://unsdg.un.org/resources/leaving-no-one-behind-unsdg-operational-guide-un-country-teams-interim-draft.

c See https://unsdg.un.org/2030-agenda/universal-values/gender-equality-and-womens-empowerment.

d See https://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/un-system-coordination/promoting-un-accountability.

e For more information on the Global Normative Framework, see https://unsdg.un.org/resources/global-accountability-framework-gender-equality-and-womens-empowerment.

Leave no one behind

Leave no one behind is a critical tenant of the 2030 Agenda. This principle ensures that the needs of the most vulnerable are mainstreamed into local sustainability agendas and plans. Leave no one behind is a lens that encourages full inclusion of the most marginalized groups in the region and is an essential reminder for subnational groups to highlight how their actions tackle inclusivity and inequality and bridge the gaps in such fundamental sectors as education and health. The lens of leave no one behind looks at equity gaps that need to be closed and how low-income groups are incorporated in the provision of services (see box 18). This section of the review should provide information identifying the vulnerable groups, according to local definitions, and indicating where they are located, and specific needs and actions to prioritize their needs.

The concept of leave no one behind is especially unique for the African region, where evidence of highly uneven growth prevents people from having access to such basic infrastructure as sanitation, water and energy. As noted by the Sustainable Development Goals Center for Africa and Sustainable Development Solutions Network,[22] the leave no one behind lens highlights the following obstacles for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and implementing Agenda 2063 in the region: demographic imbalances, data gaps, inequalities and discrimination, geographical location, limited resources, socioeconomic status, shocks and fragility, and governance challenges. The poorest and most vulnerable in the region lack access to basic needs and are consequently being further left behind as their needs and voice are not adequately incorporated into decision-making processes. In addition, poor data collection systems reveal a lack of data disaggregation for vulnerable groups, including children, young people, persons with disabilities, people living with HIV, older persons, indigenous peoples, refugees, internally displaced persons and migrants.[23] Such shocks as conflict, extreme weather events, the COVID-19 pandemic and environmental degradation

22 The Sustainable Development Goals Center for Africa and Sustainable Development Solutions Network, Africa SDG Index and Dashboards Report 2020 (Kigali and New York, SDG Center for Africa and Sustainable Development Solutions Network, 2020).

23 Statistics Commission, SDG Indicators metadata repository (New York, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, n.d.).

Box 18: Victoria Falls: leaving no one behind

Support for women in the informal sector

Victoria Falls Municipality has played a significant role in confronting the needs of the most vulnerable in the municipality. The informal sector in the municipality, driven by female migrants, grew rapidly between 2013 and 2018. Partnering with private stakeholders and civil society organizations working on gender issues, the municipality established Zhima markets for women. Zhima markets provide low-cost and low-tax operating spaces for women vendors. The Zhima markets are safe working environments that encourage women to officially register with the municipality. By establishing these markets, the Victoria Falls Municipality has played a significant role in formalizing the informal sector by putting in place registration processes and relaxing taxation. As a result, more than 500 women were operating in 2019 and earning an income to afford basic food, health and education. Worker protection has been improved through efforts from labour organizations that have trained and educated workers on the right to decent work and the socioeconomic rights of workers.

Sustainable Development Goal accelerators in Africa: science, technology and innovation

Participants in the 2020 Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development discussed the important role of science, technology and innovation transforming Africa and noted that science, technology and innovation can play a catalytic role in accelerating progress towards attaining the Sustainable Development Goals in the region. To do so, there is a need to narrow the gaps in technology by understanding the barriers and challenges that exist and outlining avenues for innovation. Industrialization has been identified as an accelerator for Goal achievement in Africa and leaders are redesigning education around science, technology and innovation skills, and capacity in basic sciences and engineering. Investment in research and development at the university and research centre level can inspire local initiatives and reinforce national priorities around these skills.

Promoting science, technology, engineering and mathematics

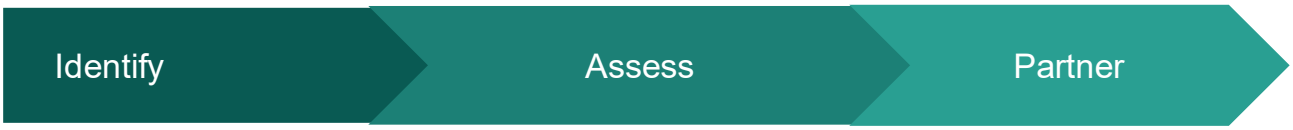
To promote participation in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, the Government of Zimbabwe introduced a science, technology, engineering and mathematics programme. The programme offers tuition payment for students who enrol in these four subjects at any public government school in the country. As a result of this initiative, a noticeable increase in the number of girls participating in science, technology, engineering and mathematics has been observed in the Victoria Falls Municipality. Influenced by the principles of leave no one behind, the science, technology and innovation agenda can serve as an accelerator towards achieving goals that address inclusion, gender and education.

Source: Victoria Falls Draft Voluntary Local Review. Victoria Falls Town's Implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 for Sustainable Development (Zimbabwe, 2020).

all contribute to the further marginalization of the most vulnerable. However, notwithstanding these challenges, there are vast opportunities to be garnered. For example, capitalizing upon the youth dividend could reap massive economic rewards while promoting inclusive growth.

In the context of conducting a local review, and through the leave no one behind lens, subnational governments should undertake an examination of spatial inequalities (see table 7). In cities, this could refer to the urban poor and those living in informal settlements to better understand the needs of the vulnerable and most marginalized. The stakeholder engagement plan must include mechanisms to include vulnerable groups to better understand what makes them vulnerable and where they are located.

Table 7: Leave no one behind: process of engagement



Identify	Assess	Partner
• **Left behind and disadvantaged groups** • **Less visible "left behind" groups**	• **Data gaps** • **Intersecting disadvantages**	• **Left behind and disadvantaged groups** • **Civil society organizations and universities**
Map 1. Who is left behind? 2. Which groups are the hardest to reach- those not represented by civil society organizations? 3. Why are they left behind? 4. How are they left behind? 5. Why are they excluded from public discourse or regular data collection on Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 targets, indicators and goals? 6. Which local organizations support marginalized groups?	Determine 1. What are the available statistics? 2. What further data should be collected: a) How will data be collected? b) How will data be disaggregated? 3. How can existing statistics be complemented with qualitative data: a) To capture challenges faced by marginalized groups? 4. Are groups facing multiple disadvantages: a) What are the disadvantages? b) Are there any intersecting or overlapping disadvantages?	Engage 1. How can civil society organizations and universities help? a) To identify and access groups not represented by these organizations? b) To conduct qualitative research? c) To identify appropriate indicators and relevant data sources? 2. To ensure participation of groups left behind in planning, implementation and follow up phases of VLR?

Note: The content of table 7 is a summary of findings from a draft paper by Graham Long, "Recognising and reaching marginalized communities: leaving no one behind in voluntary local reviews", presented at the Voluntary Local Review Series workshop of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, held on 15 April 2021 in New York.

E. Data collection

1. Data methodology and processing

In this section, provide the data collection methodology used in preparing the review. Data collection is key to a successful VLR. It also provides a mechanism for coordination between agencies involved in the process. To embark on this process, an understanding of current Sustainable Development Goal data points need to be gathered. At this stage, it is important to coordinate with national statistical offices. The purpose of mapping data indicators to the Goals is to determine which internal and external partners have Sustainable Development Goal-related data. Exploring strategic planning documents or comprehensive plans can be a first step. It could be helpful to use current sources such as the 2020 Africa Sustainable Development Report or the First Continental Report on the Implementation of Agenda 2063.[24]

24 African Union and African Union Development Agency-New Partnership for Africa's Development, First Continental Report on the Implementation of Agenda 2063 (Addis Ababa and South Africa, 2020).

For the overall data approach, state whether a quantitative, qualitative or mixed-method approach was taken. For both qualitative and quantitative data, indicate how data were obtained by stating the instrument used, the source of data analysed and the rationale for the tool used (see tables 8 and 9).

Include a section on data limitation encountered along with opportunities for increased data collection and collaboration between government agencies and with external stakeholders. When possible, present data in percentages, proportions or ratios. It would also be useful to present time series data to show more than one point in time. Present data in a visual format whenever possible.

Participatory data collection processes at the local level help to provide non-traditional and qualitative data. Understanding the pre-review data environment is a necessary step, as well. Given the multidisciplinary nature of Sustainable Development Goal-related data, accessing data can be a challenge and extracting data across agencies may require personal outreach with key staff. Any previous work undertaken in the preparation of comprehensive strategies, sustainability plans, district plans, city development strategies, local planning frameworks and other goal-setting efforts serve as a great starting point. Include the metadata sources in the annex, for example, for financial data, census and level of disaggregation (gender, age, ability, geographic location).

Table 8: General data collection: methodologies

Qualitative data collection methods (primary and secondary)	Quantitative data collection methods (primary and secondary)
Focus group discussions. Focus group discussions are designed to stimulate free discussions, fresh ideas and new insights in the groups. They are also effective for accessing a broad range of views on a specific topic, as opposed to achieving group consensus. Commonly the number of discussion participants is limited to between 8 and 12 people for a session and the participants are selected from the same socioeconomic group or with a similar background and experiences in relation to the issue under discussion.	Quantitative data can be collected in a survey through structured questionnaires with a representative sample of respondents from the community (women, young people, elders, etc.).
In-depth interviews and key informant interviews. These are useful for learning about the perspectives of individuals. They are effective qualitative methods for getting people to talk about their personal feelings, opinions and experiences. They also present an opportunity for gaining insights into how people interpret and order the world. This can be accomplished by being attentive to the causal explanations participants provide for what they have experienced and believe and by actively probing them about the connections and relationships they see between particular events, phenomena, and beliefs.	Data can be extracted from existing large databases at the national and local levels and existing surveys and census data.
Desk-based research. Desk-based research is used to collect factual information and hard data to complement information gathered through the other methods. Such data can be extracted from secondary sources, such as government official reports; policies and strategy documents; reports or studies of local and national governments; reports of civil society organizations; publications at the local, national and regional levels; and other relevant sources.	Data can be extracted from administrative recordings.

Table 9: Matrix on methodologies used by voluntary local review localities

Locality	Data collection and analysis	Sustainable Development Goals covered
Accra	a. Quantitative data for VLR preparation were obtained from the Ghana Living Standard Survey (GLSS 7), administrative data were collected from the City of Accra Authority, Ghana Education Service, Ghana Health Service, and the National Disaster Management Organization; b. Review and analysis of the city's medium-term development plan (2018–2021), programme and project documents has been completed; c. Participatory consultations were held with different stakeholders, such as National Development Planning Commission, Ghana Statistical Service, Accra Metropolitan Assembly management, heads of departments and units, and representatives of submetropolitan areas. Other groups engaged in the process were: fisherfolk, traders, drivers, traditional authorities, persons with disabilities, and schoolchildren in the city of Accra area; d. Interviews were conducted with key informants including the mayor of Accra, members of the Accra Metropolitan Assembly's management team, the city's planning and budget officers, and the Sustainable Development Goals focal person at the National Development Planning Commission.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17
Harare	a. A detailed desk review of the relevant literature and current situation (including the relevant official policy documents, central Government and City Council reports and reports by agencies of the United Nations system) was implemented. The desk review also included case studies to identify good practices in terms of Sustainable Development Goals attainment. A meta-analysis was used to weigh and compare and to identify emerging patterns and relationships. Data were collected from the national statistical office and other sources; b. Consultations with government ministries, development agencies, the private sector, unions, civil society organizations, communities and citizens were held; c. Interviews with key informants and stakeholders representing Harare city authorities, local government ministries, residents' associations and the private sector were carried out; d. Analysis yielded graphs and figures presentable for city government.	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 11

Locality	Data collection and analysis	Sustainable Development Goals covered
Ngora district	a. Consultations were held with key stakeholders, such as civil society organizations, the private sector, government officials, management committees and local leaders, both at the district and national levels; b. Desk review and analysis of relevant literature from existing reports and national frameworks, such as the Sustainable Development Goals implementation framework, the second and third national development plans, and Sustainable Development Goal reports prepared at the national level, were undertaken; c. Quantitative data collection was done through analysis of census data of 2014, statistical abstracts and district financial reports for the period 2015–2019; d. Focus group discussions were carried out and discussions centred on key targeted groups of women and young people, mainly to collect their views and perceptions on the development of their communities and their participation in the development processes. Radio talk shows were utilized to engage stakeholders in this regard; e. Key informant interviews mainly targeted the District Chairperson (LC 5), the Chief Administrative Officer, the Resident District Commissioner, District Executive Committee members, heads of institutions, including schools and health facilities, heads of departments, civil society organizations, the private sector, parliamentarians, to mention but a few, while the face-to-face interviews targeted mainly the health unit management committees, school management committees, water user committees, development partners, the private sector and opinion leaders; f. Analysis of data was done based on such themes as leaving no one behind, linkages between the district and national and regional frameworks to measure progress against the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063, which made it easier to categorize and interpret the information collected and to report the situation on the ground.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 16 and 17
Victoria Falls	a. Quantitative data were collected from the Victoria Falls Municipality database. Data were also obtained from the Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency, Child Labour Survey, Labour Force Survey, Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, and District Health Information System; b. Qualitative data were obtained using survey questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions; c. Telephone interviews were used for quick responses, clarity and follow-ups; d. Data and information from those interviews, desk reviews and focus group discussions were disaggregated, analysed and integrated into the VLR report of the city to track the progress of the selected indicators.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17

Locality	Data collection and analysis	Sustainable Development Goals covered
Yaoundé	a. Desk reviews of various documents were undertaken; b. Series of quantitative-type questionnaires, each designed for a particular category of stakeholders – civil society, the private sector, development cooperation providers, public administration, and the Yaoundé City Council – were distributed to collect quantitative data; c. Qualitative data obtained through questionnaires were analysed and integrated into the VLR report.	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 16 and 17
Bristol city	a. Data were collected from different institutions; b. A survey was disseminated through key networks of city stakeholders, including the Bristol SDG Alliance, Business West, Voscur, Bristol Green Capital Partnership, and the University of Bristol Cabot Institute for the Environment. The survey was further shared with the Black Southwest Network, the Inclusive Cities Network, LGBT Bristol, Bristol Interfaith Group, and local news media; c. Consultations were held with relevant organizations; d. Data were organized and disaggregated to the local level. Analysis yielded graphs and tables for the report, and a mapping of SDGs onto the One City Plan.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17
Buenos Aires	a. Data were collected from relevant institutions; b. Graphs and tables were produced to measure the progress on the selected Sustainable Development Goal indicators.	4, 5, 8, 10, 13 and 16
Los Angeles	a. Data were collected from different relevant institutions, such as a local data action solutions initiative, Los Angeles SDG Data and the Mayor's Office of International Affairs; b. Mapping and alignment of local indicators and Sustainable Development Goal indicators were performed; c. Graphs and tables were produced to measure the progress on the selected SDG indicators.	4, 5, 8, 10, 11, 13 and 16
Taipei city	a. Quantitative data were collected from relevant institutions; b. Alongside the Sustainable Development Goal indicators, the city included other local indicators in the report; c. Graphs and tables were used to analyse and present the data.	3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13 and 17
Turku city	a. Review of relevant documents was carried out goal by goal, supported by surveys, interviews and workshops; b. Indicators and statistical information were collected from such sources as Statistics Finland and the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare; c. Graphs and tables were produced to measure progress on the selected Sustainable Development Goal indicators.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17

Guiding questions:

- Which Sustainable Development Goal-related data do local government agencies have?
- Which gaps are observed in the way Sustainable Development Goal-related data are collected?
- Which inefficiencies are seen in the Sustainable Development Goal reporting process?
- Which other data sets (local programme data sets or data from individuals or stakeholders) could be used in analysing data related to the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063?
- Are data disaggregated data available by location, gender or ability?
- Have new partnerships emerged in the data collection process?
- How could VLRs contribute to strengthening statistical capacity?

2. Sustainable Development Goal ownership

Adapting indicators to the local context

The Sustainable Development Goals are defined by specific targets and indicators. As the 2030 Agenda was adopted by member States, most indicators are set at the national level and are available to national statistical offices. For most regions, most indicators are not disaggregated at the local level. For this reason, many of the local reviews produced globally have involved a process of adaptation to define indicators to their local context (for examples on this, see box 19).

Box 19: Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 at the local level in Africa

- Victoria Falls Municipality established the Sustainable Development Goal Monitoring and Evaluation Framework 2019–2023 to better track and monitor progress in implementation. Prior to 2019, the municipality did not have a local statistical agency; therefore, all data were provided by the Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (ZIMSTAT), and data were only disaggregated to the provincial level. A Sustainable Development Goal data gap analysis conducted by ZIMSTAT to understand the nature and extent of limitations of data for monitoring the Goals demonstrated an overall gap of 44 per cent.

The Monitoring and Evaluation Framework provides baseline data for each Goal indicator for which data are available, with the aim of adopting a national framework for prioritizing goals and monitoring and evaluating progress and adapting it to the local context. As a result of the local review, a local data office was set up to compile and consolidate numerical information relating to demographic, economic, financial, environmental and social matters according to the national statistical standards and procedures.

Source: Draft Voluntary Local Review. Victoria Falls Town's Implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 for Sustainable Development (Zimbabwe, 2020).

- Ngora District has integrated the Goals of the 2030 Agenda and the aspirations of Agenda 2063 into district development processes, feasibility studies, budgets, local-level objectives and performance monitoring indicators. The Ngora District voluntary local review has been used as a tool to inform the district development plan for the period 2021–2025; issues identified from the review have been incorporated into the plan, which prioritizes food security and better livelihoods, quality health care, increased tree cover, quality primary and secondary education, and increased access to clean water.

Source: Ngora District Draft Voluntary Review (Uganda, 2020).

After target goals have been defined, subnational governments should identify whether they are defining their own indicators or adopting a specific set of already defined indicators and the methodology used for doing so. As highlighted in the Asia-Pacific Regional Guidelines on Voluntary Local Reviews,[25] in defining local indicators, the following steps could be followed:

(a) Subnational governments should first be mindful of the indicators' relevance, the level of influence that they have over the indicators and data availability. Local indicators need to be relevant to the local context and representative of the demands of the subnational governments' constituents. They should also have a certain degree of control over the indicators so that they can be influenced by local and subnational policies. There should be data that are generally easily available for the indicators, as this could reduce additional administrative burdens and increase the chances of subnational governments actually working on monitoring their progress;

(b) Subnational governments should try to distinguish the indicators based on their nature;

(c) Subnational governments may consider using a combination of both quantitative and qualitative indicators; qualitative indicators, for example, could be the level of innovation within the administration, the level of engagement with different stakeholder group, and the efforts put into raising awareness around a certain issue;

(d) Subnational governments need to decide how frequently the indicators will be monitored, as measuring the process at set intervals results in accrued insight and ensures that the monitoring framework encourages people to take initiatives.

After indicators have been defined, subnational governments can collect data, including the metadata, and demonstrate how it was collected. Local data may be available within the local administration or across several subnational governments agencies. Accessing the data will depend on the institutional arrangement that the subnational government utilizes for conducting the review.

Once relevant indicators have been established, the subnational government would identify the institution responsible for managing administrative data. This exercise could help to set up mechanisms for better data collection among agencies. In addition to internal coordination, data collection will require coordination with external stakeholders that may be able to provide data sets or additional sources of data, especially on marginalized groups traditionally omitted from official data sources. In the urban context, this could refer to the urban poor.

25 Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Asia-Pacific Regional Guidelines on Voluntary Local Reviews. Reviewing local progress to accelerate action for the Sustainable Development Goals (Bangkok, 2020).

Guiding questions:[26]

- Do local subnational government priorities differ from national-level priorities and, if so, how?
- When analysing progress towards achieving the Goals, how did the subnational government establish a baseline?
- How did the subnational government analyse trends, progress and challenges over time?
- How can the subnational government meet challenges, maintain or improve progress in years to come?
- What lessons can the subnational government share with other localities and how can VLR data be used to tell this story?

F. Write-up, analysis and validation

1. Progress on goals and targets

This section constitutes the bulk of the review. The subnational government will report on the progress, successes and challenges in implementation, and the next steps for accelerating implementation.

The introduction to this section could provide an overview of implementation across all 17 Sustainable Development Goals. This is meant to be brief and could be displayed in the form of a visual aid. The dashboard from Ngora District in Uganda in figure VIII is a useful example of how to present such information.

Figure VIII: Ngora Sustainable Development Goal progress dashboard

Source: Ngora District Draft Voluntary Review (Uganda, 2020).

26 Adapted from Niki Deininger and others, Cities Taking the Lead on Sustainable Development Goals: A Voluntary Local Review Handbook for Cities (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Carnegie Mellon University's Heinz College of Information Systems and Public Policy, 2019).

The following section provides guidance on how subnational governments can proceed with their review. The first section provides a structure for those local governments that have the resources and capacity to review all 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The second option is for governments wishing to review Goals that are specific to the high-level political forum on sustainable development. The third option is for local governments that want to select their own set of goals to prioritize in their review.

Through the exercise of prioritization of Goals, targets and indicators, the subnational government should now be able to determine which one of the following review options will be utilized:

(a) A review all 17 Sustainable Development Goals, including select targets and indicators under each Goal;

(b) A review of Sustainable Development Goals that were assigned high priority at the high-level political forum on sustainable development, selecting priority targets and indicators under each Goal;

(c) A review of priority Goals selected by the subnational government, including relevant targets and indicators;

(d) A comprehensive review of priority Goals, targets and indicators in the local review with an overview of all 17 Goals in the annex of the report.

The mapping templates will be helpful tools in understanding and identifying the areas of overlap between the Sustainable Development Goals, Agenda 2063 and local priorities. As seen in the VLR examples, subnational governments may choose to map all 17 Goals and Agenda 2063 aspirations to local policies and programmes but only focus their review on select priority goals (see annex II, tables 2 and 4; and annex III, figure 2).

The following three options for suggested structures for review are presented below. Each Goal and target selected should be stated before launching into the local context, progress and next steps for implementation.

Option 1: All 17 Sustainable Development Goals

This option involves a review of all 17 Goals. Select the indicators and targets relevant to the local context and analyse the progress, challenges and status of implementation. Depending on local data availability, subnational governments can select one or more of the indicators to review per Goal. Option 1 is comprehensive and will require adequate resources and capacity in terms of labour, coordination and stakeholder involvement. It may be beneficial to undertake a comprehensive review for the first VLR produced to establish a baseline, then to limit the number of Goals analysed for subsequent reviews.

Such a comprehensive review may result in more data collection and increased participation across government agencies and community members. The option to review all Sustainable Development Goals is ambitious and may demonstrate the subnational government's willingness to achieve all the Goals. It is important to report progress and challenges to understand the areas in which work needs to be done. This analysis could signal the need for new partnerships, better and targeted data collection, opportunities for

collaboration with stakeholders and increased knowledge generation. Undertaking this option may mean the subnational government chooses to prepare a review every three to four years instead of annually.

Suggested structure

Sustainable Development Goal: state goal
Target x.x: state target reviewed
Localized indicator x.x: state indicator or indicators measured
Local context: highlight local policy or programme addressing target

Progress:
Successes – what were the successes?
Challenges – what are the challenges?

Next steps:
Repeat the above for each target reviewed.

If there is an alignment with Agenda 2063 goals, mention this in the review of the local context and in the mapping template provided.

Option 2: High-level political forum on sustainable development

The high-level political forum on sustainable development "facilitates the sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned and provides political leadership, guidance and recommendations for follow-up. It promotes system-wide coherence and coordination of sustainable development policies".27 Each year, the political forum undertakes annual thematic reviews of the Sustainable Development Goals, including cross-cutting issues, and select Goals are chosen for member States to review at the national level. Member States report progress in their national reviews. Subnational governments may choose to align a local review with Goals selected at the political forum and work closely with their national counterparts to do so. There are definitely advantages to aligning with national reviews but local reviews do not have to be linked with national reviews. A local review is a useful tool to uncover local priorities that may not reflect national challenges. Each subnational government has unique characteristics that can be presented in its local review. The rationale for targeted Goals and indicators should be provided. For the Goals that do not have data, a plan for collecting data could be provided.

Suggested structure

Sustainable Development Goals: state goal
Target x.x: state target reviewed

Localized indicator x.x: state indicator or indicators measured

27 United Nations, Introduction to the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development; see, https://archive.uneca.org/sites/default/files/uploaded-documents/ARFSD/2020/introduction_to_the_hlpf.pdf.

Local context: highlight local policy or programme addressing target

Progress:
Successes: what were the successes?
Challenges: what are the challenges?

Next steps:
Repeat the above for each target reviewed.

If there is an alignment with Agenda 2063 goals, mention this in the review of the local context and in the mapping template provided.

Option 3: Subnational governments prioritize Sustainable Development Goals

For this option, subnational governments may choose priority Goals only.

Suggested structure

Sustainable Development Goal: state goal
Target x.x: state target reviewed

Localized indicator x.x: state indicator or indicators measured

Local context: highlight local policy or programme addressing target

Progress:
Successes: what were the successes?
Challenges: what are the challenges?

Next steps:

If there is an alignment with Agenda 2063 goals, mention this in the review of the local context and in the mapping template provided.

G. Publication and dissemination

Dissemination should be wide and could involve the press and media to share key messages. This section should include a brief outline of the publication and dissemination plan.

H. Integration, monitoring and implementation

This section details the monitoring and review processes following the production of a local review. Establishing structures for monitoring and reporting will ensure effective follow-up and implementation

of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 at the local level. Monitoring local progress on the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals requires collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of reliable, timely, accessible and disaggregated (when possible) data. The global Sustainable Development Goal indicator framework can be used as a tool for monitoring.

1. Outcomes and follow-up

This section provides room for subnational governments to demonstrate how VLRs will be a dynamic tool. Detail specific follow-up steps by identifying the accelerators for implementation and actions going forward. The monitoring strategy may involve establishing a website, dashboard or online platform to monitor and track progress.

Subnational governments can outline plans for VLR dissemination and the organization of in-country meetings with coordinating institutions and stakeholders, including donors and the private sector, to generate follow-up support; and plans for presenting the local review at the national level. In this section, subnational governments can present any plans for preparing future VLRs.

Guiding questions:

- How can the process be scaled up to other localities in the country?
- What is the coordinating and monitoring mechanism for implementing the local review?
- How can the local review be used to influence actionable policies and inform budget planning?
- What are the accelerators identified in the review?
- In thinking about accelerators in your subnational government, can you highlight how national and local priorities address science, technology and innovation? Reflect on the presence of and investment in innovation labs, incubators and common equipment centres collaborating with academia and industry.
- How can local reviews contribute to strengthening statistical capacity?
- How will the local review be disseminated?

2. Means of implementation

This section reflects on the means of implementation, the difficulties faced and the resources needed to implement the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. Examine public, private, local, national and international resources and non-financing means of implementation, such as capacity development and data requirements, technology and partnerships. Detail resources needed, how finances will be mobilized and the difficulties that might be encountered in this process. In conducting the analysis, subnational governments should consider the following points during the amount of time that Sustainable Development Goals funding allocation is available: own source revenue, or locally raised revenue; central Government transfers, both conditional and discretionary; and donor funding, if applicable. Presenting this information in a table would be useful for ease of review.

Highlight gender-responsive, participatory budgeting and other innovative forms of budgeting, if relevant. In this section, subnational governments could provide information on the Sustainable Development Goal financing strategy and the policies in place to support the strategy (see box 20). Highlight any inter-agency

Box 20 : Yaoundé and Accra: strategies for resource mobilization

In Yaoundé, as required by law, the Yaoundé City Council prepares a three-year forward-looking budget known as the budget programme. Resources for programme implementation of activities come from the Special Council Support Fund for Mutual Assistance, locally administered taxes and external donors.

In Accra, to increase private sector involvement and leverage funding for Sustainable Development Goal attainment, the Government of Ghana has put in place a dialogue platform called the Chief Executive Officers Forum on the Sustainable Development Goals. At the national level, the Ministry of Finance has also put in place an annual Sustainable Development Goal investment forum to mobilize private sector capital for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Sources: Yaoundé Draft Voluntary Local Review Report on the implementation of Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063 for sustainable development (Cameroon, 2020); and Accra Draft Voluntary National Review Report on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Ghana, 2019).

mechanisms for financing and any linkages to national streams for Goal attainment and the leave no one behind principle. Subnational governments are encouraged to identify science, technology and innovation sector needs.

Suggested tables for this section are: local revenue sources, financial allocation for Sustainable Development Goals and national-level budget distribution by sector.

Guiding questions:

- What are the domestic resource flows, official development assistance and additional sources of funding, such as remittances, and foreign direct assistance for attaining the Sustainable Development Goals?
- What private sector or other partnership sources exist at the subnational level?
- How are national government transfers allocated towards the Goals?
- What is the Sustainable Development Goal financing strategy at the subnational level?
- Does a Sustainable Development Goal fund exist at the national or local level?
- What steps have been taken to identify capacity development, financing or data gaps for the subnational government?
- How can resources at the subnational level be aligned with supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063?

3. Conclusion and next steps

The conclusion and next steps section provides a space for subnational governments to summarize the key takeaways from the review and state how the review will be used to inspire and establish a road map for the future. The new partnerships, opportunities for collaboration across government agencies and external stakeholders and the challenges to deliver the regional and global development goals are to be mentioned here. This section also provides space to announce plans for future VLR reporting goals and to communicate how the VLR preparation status will be updated and communicated.

Annexes

Annex I

Statistical data

In this annex, include the metadata for indicators used in the text of the report. The metadata should provide links to the original data sources, when possible.

Annex II

Tools

The table is to be used to map out local policies, initiatives and programmes to the Sustainable Development Goal framework. Subnational governments are to fill in their relevant local planning tools and activities in the columns to the right of the Goal targets. The table can be adjusted as needed.

Table 1: Sustainable Development Goal alignment

Sustainable Development Goals	Local sustainability policy	Other relevant local policies?	Local initiatives and projects
GOAL 1: No poverty – end poverty in all its forms everywhere			
1.1 By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than $1.25 a day.			
1.2 By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions.			
1.3 Implement locally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable.			
1.4 By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance.			
1.5 By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters.			
1.a Ensure significant mobilization of resources from a variety of sources, including through enhanced development cooperation, in order to provide adequate and predictable means for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, to implement programmes and policies to end poverty in all its dimensions.			

1.b Create sound policy frameworks at the local, national, regional and international levels, based on pro-poor and gender-sensitive development strategies, to support accelerated investment in poverty eradication actions.			
Sustainable Development Goals	**Local Sustainability Policy**	**Other relevant local policies?**	**Local initiatives and projects**
GOAL 2: Zero hunger – end hunger, achieve food security, and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture			
2.1 By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round.			
2.2 By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons.			
2.3 By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment.			
2.4 By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality.			
2.5 By 2020, maintain genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants, farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at national, regional and international levels, and ensure access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge as internationally agreed.			

2.a Increase investment, including through enhanced international cooperation, in rural infrastructure, agricultural research and extension services, technology development and plant and livestock gene banks in order to enhance agricultural productive capacity in developing countries, in particular least developed countries.			
2.b Correct and prevent trade restrictions and distortions in world agricultural markets, including through the parallel elimination of all forms of agricultural export subsidies and all export measures with equivalent effect, in accordance with the mandate of the Doha Development Round.			
2.c Adopt measures to ensure the proper functioning of food commodity markets and their derivatives and facilitate timely access to market information, including on food reserves, in order to help limit extreme food price volatility.			
Sustainable Development Goals	**Local sustainability policy**	**Other relevant local policies?**	**Local initiatives and projects**
GOAL 3: Good health and well-being – ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages			
3.1 By 2030, reduce the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births.			
3.2 By 2030, end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age, with all countries aiming to reduce neonatal mortality to at least as low as 12 per 1,000 live births and under-5 mortality to at least as low as 25 per 1,000 live births.			
3.3 By 2030, end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases and other communicable diseases.			
3.4 By 2030, reduce by one-third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being.			
3.5 Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol.			
3.6 By 2020, halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents.			
3.7 By 2030, ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes.			

3.8 By 2030, ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes.			
3.9 By 2030, substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination.			
3.a Strengthen the implementation of the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in all countries, as appropriate.			
3.b Support the research and development of vaccines and medicines for the communicable and non-communicable diseases that primarily affect developing countries, provide access to affordable essential medicines and vaccines, in accordance with the Doha Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health, which affirms the right of developing countries to use to the full the provisions in the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights regarding flexibilities to protect public health, and, in particular, provide access to medicines for all.			
3.c Substantially increase health financing and the recruitment, development, training and retention of the health workforce in developing countries, especially in least developed countries and small island developing States.			
3.d Strengthen the capacity of all countries, in particular developing countries, for early warning, risk reduction and management of national and global health risks.			
Sustainable Development Goals	**Local sustainability policy**	**Other relevant local policies?**	**Local initiatives and projects**
GOAL 4: Quality education – ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all			
4.1 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.			
4.2 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education.			
4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university.			

4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.			
4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations.			
4.6 By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy.			
4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.			
4.a Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.			
4.b By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries.			
4.c By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States.			
Sustainable Development Goals	**Local sustainability policy**	**Other relevant local policies?**	**Local initiatives and projects**
GOAL 5: Gender equality – achieve gender equality and empower women and girls			
5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.			
5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.			

5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.			
5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate.			
5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.			
5.6 Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences.			
5.a Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.			
5.b Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women.			
5.c Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.			
Sustainable Development Goals	**Local sustainability policy**	**Other relevant local policies?**	**Local initiatives and projects**
GOAL 6: Clean water and sanitation – ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all			
6.1 By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all.			
6.2 By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations.			

6.3 By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally.			
6.4 By 2030, substantially increase water-use efficiency across all sectors and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity and substantially reduce the number of people suffering from water scarcity.			
6.5 By 2030, implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation as appropriate.			
6.6 By 2020, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes.			
6.a By 2030, expand international cooperation and capacity-building support to developing countries in water and sanitation-related activities and programmes, including water harvesting, desalination, water efficiency, wastewater treatment, recycling and reuse technologies.			
6.b Support and strengthen the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management.			
Sustainable Development Goals	**Local sustainability policy**	**Other relevant local policies?**	**Local initiatives and projects**
GOAL 7: Affordable and clean energy – ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all			
7.1 By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services.			
7.2 By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.			
7.3 By 2030, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency.			
7.a By 2030, enhance international cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technology, including renewable energy, energy efficiency and advanced and cleaner fossil-fuel technology, and promote investment in energy infrastructure and clean energy technology.			

7.b By 2030, expand infrastructure and upgrade technology for supplying modern and sustainable energy services for all in developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and landlocked developing countries, in accordance with their respective programmes of support.			
Sustainable Development Goals	**Local sustainability policy**	**Other relevant local policies?**	**Local initiatives and projects**
GOAL 8: Decent work and economic growth – promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all			
8.1 Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances and, in particular, at least 7 per cent gross domestic product growth per annum in the least developed countries.			
8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labour-intensive sectors.			
8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services.			
8.4 Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production, with developed countries taking the lead.			
8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.			
8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training.			
8.7 Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms.			

8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment.			
8.9 By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products.			
8.10 Strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all.			
8.a Increase Aid for Trade support for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, including through the Enhanced Integrated Framework for Trade-related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries.			
8.b By 2020, develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the Global Jobs Pact of the International Labour Organization.			
Sustainable Development Goals	**Local sustainability policy**	**Other relevant local policies?**	**Local initiatives and projects**
GOAL 9: Industry, innovation, and infrastructure – build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation			
9.1 Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and transborder infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all.			
9.2 Promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and, by 2030, significantly raise industry's share of employment and gross domestic product, in line with national circumstances, and double its share in least developed countries.			
9.3 Increase the access of small-scale industrial and other enterprises, in particular in developing countries, to financial services, including affordable credit, and their integration into value chains and markets.			
9.4 By 2030, upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable, with increased resource-use efficiency and greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes, with all countries taking action in accordance with their respective capabilities.			

9.5 Enhance scientific research, upgrade the technological capabilities of industrial sectors in all countries, in particular developing countries, including, by 2030, encouraging innovation and substantially increasing the number of research and development workers per 1 million people and public and private research and development spending.			
9.a Facilitate sustainable and resilient infrastructure development in developing countries through enhanced financial, technological and technical support to African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States.			
9.b Support domestic technology development, research and innovation in developing countries, including by ensuring a conducive policy environment for, inter alia, industrial diversification and value addition to commodities.			
9.c Significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2020.			
Sustainable Development Goals	**Local sustainability policy**	**Other relevant local policies?**	**Local initiatives and projects**
GOAL 10: Reduced inequalities – reduce inequality within and among countries			
10.1 By 2030, progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40 per cent of the population at a rate higher than the national average.			
10.2 By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.			
10.3 Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard.			
10.4 Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality.			
10.5 Improve the regulation and monitoring of global financial markets and institutions and strengthen the implementation of such regulations.			

10.6 Ensure enhanced representation and voice for developing countries in decision-making in global international economic and financial institutions in order to deliver more effective, credible, accountable and legitimate institutions.			
10.7 Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.			
10.a Implement the principle of special and differential treatment for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, in accordance with World Trade Organization agreements.			
10.b Encourage official development assistance and financial flows, including foreign direct investment, to States where the need is greatest, in particular least developed countries, African countries, small island developing States and landlocked developing countries, in accordance with their national plans and programmes.			
10.c By 2030, reduce to less than 3 per cent the transaction costs of migrant remittances and eliminate remittance corridors with costs higher than 5 per cent.			
Sustainable Development Goals	**Local sustainability policy**	**Other relevant local policies?**	**Local initiatives and projects**
GOAL 11: Sustainable cities and communities – make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe resilient and sustainable			
11.1 By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums.			
11.2 By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons.			
11.3 By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries.			
11.4 Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage.			

11.5 By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations.			
11.6 By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management.			
11.7 By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities.			
11.a Support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning.			
11.b By 2020, substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels.			
11.c Support least developed countries, including through financial and technical assistance, in building sustainable and resilient buildings utilizing local materials.			
Sustainable Development Goals	**Local sustainability policy**	**Other relevant local policies?**	**Local initiatives and projects**
GOAL 12: Responsible consumption and production – ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns			
12.1 Implement the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns, all countries taking action, with developed countries taking the lead, taking into account the development and capabilities of developing countries.			
12.2 By 2030, achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources.			
12.3 By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses.			

12.4 By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment.			
12.5 By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse.			
12.6 Encourage companies, especially large and transnational companies, to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle.			
12.7 Promote public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities.			
12.8 By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature.			
12.a Support developing countries to strengthen their scientific and technological capacity to move towards more sustainable patterns of consumption and production.			
12.b Develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products.			
12.c Rationalize inefficient fossil-fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption by removing market distortions, in accordance with national circumstances, including by restructuring taxation and phasing out those harmful subsidies, where they exist, to reflect their environmental impacts, taking fully into account the specific needs and conditions of developing countries and minimizing the possible adverse impacts on their development in a manner that protects the poor and the affected communities.			
Sustainable Development Goals	**Local sustainability policy**	**Other relevant local policies?**	**Local initiatives and projects**
GOAL 13: Climate action – take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts			
13.1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate related hazards and natural disasters in all countries.			
13.2 Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning.			

13.3 Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning.			
13.a Implement the commitment undertaken by developed country parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to a goal of mobilizing jointly $100 billion annually by 2020 from all sources to address the needs of developing countries in the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparency on implementation and fully operationalize the Green Climate Fund through its capitalization as soon as possible.			
13.b Promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing States, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities.			
Sustainable Development Goals	**Local sustainability policy**	**Other relevant local policies?**	**Local initiatives and projects**
GOAL 14: Life below water – conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development			
14.1 By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution.			
14.2 By 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans.			
14.3 Minimize and address the impacts of ocean acidification, including through enhanced scientific cooperation at all levels.			
14.4 By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics.			
14.5 By 2020, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on the best available scientific information.			

14.6 By 2020, prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, eliminate subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and refrain from introducing new such subsidies, recognizing that appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries should be an integral part of the World Trade Organization fisheries subsidies negotiation.			
14.7 By 2030, increase the economic benefits to small island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism.			
14.a Increase scientific knowledge, develop research capacity and transfer marine technology, taking into account the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission Criteria and Guidelines on the Transfer of Marine Technology, in order to improve ocean health and to enhance the contribution of marine biodiversity to the development of developing countries, in particular small island developing States and least developed countries.			
14.b Provide access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets.			
14.c Enhance the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which provides the legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources, as recalled in paragraph 158 of "The future we want".			
Sustainable Development Goals	**Local sustainability policy**	**Other relevant local policies?**	**Local initiatives and projects**
GOAL 15: Life on land – protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and half and reserve land degradation and halt biodiversity loss			
15.1 By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements.			
15.2 By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally.			

15.3 By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation neutral world.			
15.4 By 2030, ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, in order to enhance their capacity to provide benefits that are essential for sustainable development.			
15.5 Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species.			
15.6 Promote fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and promote appropriate access to such resources, as internationally agreed.			
15.7 Take urgent action to end poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna and address both demand and supply of illegal wildlife products.			
15.8 By 2020, introduce measures to prevent the introduction and significantly reduce the impact of invasive alien species on land and water ecosystems and control or eradicate the priority species.			
15.9 By 2020, integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies and accounts.			
15.a Mobilize and significantly increase financial resources from all sources to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity and ecosystems.			
15.b Mobilize significant resources from all sources and at all levels to finance sustainable forest management and provide adequate incentives to developing countries to advance such management, including for conservation and reforestation.			
15.c Enhance global support for efforts to combat poaching and trafficking of protected species, including by increasing the capacity of local communities to pursue sustainable livelihood opportunities.			

Sustainable Development Goals	Local sustainability policy	Other relevant local policies?	Local initiatives and projects
GOAL 16: Peace, justice, and strong institutions – promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels			
16.1 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere.			
16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.			
16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.			
16.4 By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime.			
16.5 Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms.			
16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.			
16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.			
16.8 Broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance.			
16.9 By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration.			
16.10 Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements.			
16.a Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime.			
16.b Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development.			

Sustainable Development Goals	Local sustainability policy	Other relevant local policies?	Local initiatives and projects
GOAL 17: Partnership for the goals – strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development			
17.1 Strengthen domestic resource mobilization, including through international support to developing countries, to improve domestic capacity for tax and other revenue collection.			
17.2 Developed countries to implement fully their official development assistance commitments, including the commitment by many developed countries to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance (ODA/GNI) to developing countries and 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of ODA/GNI to least developed countries; ODA providers are encouraged to consider setting a target to provide at least 0.20 per cent of ODA/GNI to least developed countries.			
17.3 Mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources.			
17.4 Assist developing countries in attaining long-term debt sustainability through coordinated policies aimed at fostering debt financing, debt relief and debt restructuring, as appropriate, and address the external debt of highly indebted poor countries to reduce debt distress.			
17.5 Adopt and implement investment promotion regimes for least developed countries.			
17.6 Enhance North-South, South-South and triangular regional and international cooperation on and access to science, technology and innovation and enhance knowledge-sharing on mutually agreed terms, including through improved coordination among existing mechanisms, in particular at the United Nations level, and through a global technology facilitation mechanism.			
17.7 Promote the development, transfer, dissemination and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed.			
17.8 Fully operationalize the technology bank and science, technology and innovation capacity-building mechanism for least developed countries by 2017 and enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology.			

17.9 Enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all the Sustainable Development Goals, including through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation.			
17.10 Promote a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system under the World Trade Organization, including through the conclusion of negotiations under its Doha Development Agenda.			
17.11 Significantly increase the exports of developing countries, in particular with a view to doubling the least developed countries' share of global exports by 2020.			
17.12 Realize timely implementation of duty-free and quota-free market access on a lasting basis for all least developed countries, consistent with World Trade Organization decisions, including by ensuring that preferential rules of origin applicable to imports from least developed countries are transparent and simple, and contribute to facilitating market access.			
17.13 Enhance global macroeconomic stability, including through policy coordination and policy coherence.			
17.14 Enhance policy coherence for sustainable development.			
17.15 Respect each country's policy space and leadership to establish and implement policies for poverty eradication and sustainable development.			
17.16 Enhance the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in all countries, in particular developing countries			
17.17 Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships.			

17.18 By 2020, enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing States, to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts.			
17.19 By 2030, build on existing initiatives to develop measurements of progress on sustainable development that complement gross domestic product, and support statistical capacity-building in developing countries.			

Table 2 is to be used to map out local policies, initiatives and programmes to Agenda 2063 aspirations and goals. Subnational governments should update the strategic pillars and policy area column to match local priorities. As a simple tool, use an X to mark where there is alignment.

Table 2: Mapping Agenda 2063 to local policies and strategies

2063 aspirations Health strategy Youth livelihood strategy Environmental management strategy Land policy	Aspiration 1: A prosperous Africa, based on inclusive growth and sustainable development							Aspiration 2: An integrated continent, politically united, based on the ideals of Pan Africanism and the vision of Africa's Renaissance			Aspiration 3: An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law		Aspiration 4: A peaceful and secure Africa			Aspiration 5: Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, values and ethics	Aspiration 6: An Africa whose development is people driven, relying on the potential offered by African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children		Aspiration 7: An Africa as a strong, united, resilient and influential global player and partner	
2063 Goals	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Health strategy																				
Youth Livelihood strategy																				
Environmental Mgmt. strategy																				
Land Policy																				

Table 3 is to be used to see the convergence between Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals with local priorities. As a simple tool, use an X to mark where there is alignment.

Table 3: Linking Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals

Sustainable Development Goals	Agenda 2063 goals	Local policy area or strategic pillar
1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere in the world	1. A high standard of living, quality of life and well-being for all 5. Modern agriculture for increased productivity and production 7. Environmentally sustainable climate resilient economies and communities 17. Full gender equality in all spheres of life	
2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture	1. A high standard of living, quality of life and well-being for all 3. Healthy and well-nourished citizens 4. Transformed economies and job creation 5. Modern agriculture for increased productivity and production 7. Environmentally sustainable climate resilient economies and communities 8. United Africa (federal or confederate)	
3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	3. Healthy and well-nourished citizens 7. Environmentally sustainable climate resilient economies and communities 17. Full gender equality in all spheres of life	
4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	1. A high standard of living, quality of life and well-being for all 2. Well educated citizens and skills revolution underpinned by science, technology and innovation 16. African cultural renaissance is pre-eminent 17. Full gender equality in all spheres of life 18. Engaged and empowered youth and children	
5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	3. Healthy and well-nourished citizens 5. Modern agriculture for increased productivity and production 10. World class infrastructure criss-crosses Africa 17. Full gender equality in all spheres of life	
6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	1. A high standard of living, quality of life and well-being for all 7. Environmentally sustainable climate resilient economies and communities	

Sustainable Development Goals	Agenda 2063 goals	Local policy area or strategic pillar
7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	1. A high standard of living, quality of life and well-being for all 6. Blue or ocean economy for accelerated economic growth 7. Environmentally sustainable climate resilient economies and communities 10. World class infrastructure criss-crosses Africa	
8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	1. A high standard of living, quality of life and well-being for all 2. Transformed economies and job creation 12. Capable institutions and transformed leadership in place at all levels 16. African cultural renaissance is pre-eminent 17. Full gender equality in all spheres of life 18. Engaged and empowered youth and children	
9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	1. A high standard of living, quality of life and well-being for all 4. Transformed economies and job creation 5. Modern agriculture for increased productivity and production 6. Blue or ocean economy for accelerated economic growth 8. United Africa (federal or confederate) 10. World class infrastructure criss-crosses Africa 19. Africa as a major partner in global affairs and peaceful coexistence	
10. Reduce inequality within and among countries	1. A high standard of living, quality of life and well-being for all 8. United Africa (federal or confederate) 16. African cultural renaissance is pre-eminent 20. Africa takes full responsibility for financing her development	
11.Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable	1. A high standard of living, quality of life and well-being for all 7. Environmentally sustainable climate resilient economies and communities 10. World class infrastructure criss-crosses Africa 12. Capable institutions and transformed leadership in place at all levels 16. African cultural renaissance is pre-eminent	

Sustainable Development Goals	Agenda 2063 goals	Local policy area or strategic pillar
12. Responsible consumption and production	1. A high standard of living, quality of life and well-being for all 4. Transformed economies and job creation 5. Modern agriculture for increased productivity and production 7. Environmentally sustainable climate resilient economies and communities 12. Capable institutions and transformed leadership in place at all levels 16. African cultural renaissance is pre-eminent	
13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	5. Modern agriculture for increased productivity and production 7. Environmentally sustainable climate resilient economies and communities 12. Capable institutions and transformed leadership in place at all levels	
14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development	4. Transformed economies and job creation 6. Blue or ocean economy for accelerated economic growth 7. Environmentally sustainable climate resilient economies and communities	
15.Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss	7. Environmentally sustainable climate resilient economies and communities	
16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	11. Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law entrenched 12. Capable institutions and transformed leadership in place at all levels 13. Peace, security and stability are preserved 17. Full gender equality in all spheres of life 18. Engaged and empowered youth and children	

Sustainable Development Goals	Agenda 2063 goals	Local policy area or strategic pillar
17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development	1. A high standard of living, quality of life and well-being for all 4. Transformed economies and job creation 10. World class infrastructure criss-crosses Africa 12. Capable institutions and transformed leadership in place at all levels 19. Africa as a major partner in global affairs and peaceful coexistence. 20. Africa takes full responsibility for financing her development	

Source: Adapted from Africa Union, "Linking Agenda 2063 and the SDGs",, see https://au.int/en/agenda2063/sdgs. See also Agenda 2063: First Ten-Year Implementation Plan (2013–2023), Core indicators Profile Handbook for Member States, March 2017, available at https://iprt.uneca.org/agenda/alignment-agenda2063-sdg.

Table 4 is to be used to map out consulted stakeholders, their Sustainable Development Goal and Agenda 2063 focus area(s), level of impact and awareness of the Sustainable Development Goal(s) and Agenda 2063 and to organize contact information.

Table 4: Stakeholder mapping tool

Stakeholder mapping									
Major groups									
Stakeholder constituency (refer to "major groups" in Notes)	Organization/ group name N/A if does not apply	SDG focus area	Agenda 2063 focus area	Impact How much does the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 implementation review affect them (low, medium, high)	Level of awareness of 2030 Agenda (low, medium, high)	Level of awareness of Agenda 2063 (low, medium, high)	Contact person	Email/ website	Phone
Other stakeholders									
Stakeholder constituency (refer to "other stakeholders" in Notes)	Organization/ group name N/A if does not apply	SDG focus area	Agenda 2063 focus area	Impact How much does the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 implementation review affect them (low, medium, high)	Level of awareness of 2030 Agenda (low, medium, high)	Level of awareness of Agenda 2063 (low, medium, high)	Contact person	Email/ website	Phone
National stakeholders									

Stakeholder	Department N/A if does not apply	SDG focus area	Agenda 2063 focus area	Impact How much does the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 implementation review affect them (low, medium, high)	Level of awareness of 2030 Agenda (low, medium, high)	Level of Awareness of Agenda 2063 (low, medium, high)	Contact person	Email/ website	Phone

Notes: "Major groups" include women, children and young people, indigenous peoples, non-governmental organizations, local authorities, workers and trade unions, business and industry, the scientific and technological community, and farmers. "Other stakeholders" include local communities, educational and academic entities, faith groups, foundations and private philanthropic organizations, migrants and their families, older persons, parliamentary networks and associations, persons with disabilities and volunteer groups.

Abbreviations: SDG, Sustainable Development Goal.

Table 5 is to be used to assist subnational governments to develop a stakeholder engagement plan at each stage of the VLR process. The tool provides a guide to the methodology applied, including tools used, evaluation of engagement and resources required to carry out the engagement.

Table 5: Stakeholder engagement strategy

Stakeholder engagement									
Stage	Which stakeholders will be engaged at this stage? (e.g. women, children, non-governmental organizations, national Government)	Purpose of engagement at this stage Inform, consult, involve or collaborate	Desired outcome from engagement	Strategy/ tool for engagement	Evaluation: what methods will be used at this stage? (survey, feedback form)	What resources are required (human/ financial)	When will this take place?	Email/ website	Phone
Phase I									
Phase II									
Phase III									

Table 6: Voluntary local review peer review checklist

VLR:
Prepared by:
Peer reviewed by:
Date:

Pre-voluntary local review								
	Initiated	**In progress**	**Satisfactory/ fulfilled**	**Not started**	**Opportunities**	**Challenges**	**Comments**	**Peer reviewer comments**
SDG and Agenda 2063 awareness-raising with local stakeholders	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Localization of SDGs through the production of a localization report or some sort of SDGs report for local context	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Organization of survey or questionnaire to be distributed locality-wide that captures inputs to the SDGs and Agenda 2063	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Determine resources needed to conduct local review	☐	☐	☐	☐				
	Initiated	**In progress**	**Fulfilled**	**Not Started**	**Opportunities**	**Challenges**	**Comments**	**Peer reviewer comments**
Phase I								
Conduct a literature review of local policies, strategies, plans and programmes responding SDGs	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Organization of survey or questionnaire to be distributed locality-wide that captures inputs to the SDGs and Agenda 2063	☐	☐	☐	☐				
SDG awareness-raising and public outreach with local stakeholders	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Identify organizations collecting data for the indicators and determine whether established local targets exist	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Determine institutional mechanism to lead the production of VLR	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Map stakeholders contributing to the SDGs and Agenda 2063 in the locality	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Prepare a stakeholder engagement plan for each phase of the local review outlining the purpose of consultations and ensure no one is left behind	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Set vision for local implementation on what the locality wants to see happen by 2030 and prepare a road map with deliverables	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Simple mapping of SDGs to local plans and strategies	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Simple mapping of Agenda 2063 goals and indicators to local plans and strategies	☐	☐	☐	☐				

Alignment of local global SDGs through extensive research and review of existing policies and projects implementing SDGs	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Comprehensive review of the global SDGs, their targets and indicators, and available subnational data	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Develop a comprehensive table, outlining all the metrics currently being measured by the city that lend to alignment with SDGs	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Identify gaps in SDG-related indicators	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Discuss interlinkages between the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Reflection on SDG principles on human rights, leaving no one behind, gender equality and women's empowerment	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Phase II								
	Initiated	**In progress**	**Fulfilled**	**Not started**	**Opportunities**	**Challenges**	**Comments**	**Peer reviewer comments**
Prioritize goals, targets and indicators for review. Define the number of goals locality wants to measure and monitor	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Continue identifying organizations collecting data for the indicators and determine whether established local targets and indicators exist	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Develop proxy indicators where needed	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Finalize the definition of local targets and indicators	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Where possible, data has been presented in terms of in time series, percentages, proportions, ratios	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Develop data collection methodology and approach identifying list of instruments for data collection, sources of data, rationale for selection, and limitations encountered	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Review progress against each identified priority SDGs and localized targets and indicators highlighting successes and challenges	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Carry out review of draft VLR internally	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Establish validation period and how to conduct	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Carry out review of draft VLR with key stakeholders	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Incorporate comments and feedback from key stakeholders to VLR	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Validate VLR from relevant parties through identified mechanism	☐	☐	☐	☐				

Phase III and post-VLR								
	Initiated	In progress	Fulfilled	Not started	Opportunities	Challenges	Comments	Peer reviewer comments
Publish VLR	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Consider translation into local languages, if applicable	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Wide dissemination of VLRs to stakeholders	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Presentation of VLR with relevant national Government authorities	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Integration with VNR processes	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Develop a communications strategy around the main messages and lessons learned of the local review to share and engage with local media	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Develop road map to follow up plan on key accelerator goals and action items as identified in VLR	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Identify impact of VLR process and report (using ECA template on VLR impact and lessons learned)	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Contribute to national SDG and Agenda 2063 monitoring mechanisms including VNR processes that assist national government in the comprehensive reporting of goals, targets and indicators	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Collection, maintenance and use of local data to inform service delivery	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Collaboration with local stakeholder in local decision-making and planning	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Continued involvement of stakeholders, especially vulnerable groups in the follow up actions	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Follow-up meetings with regional and global stakeholders	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Address lessons learned from first VLR	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Participate in peer review exercises with other regional subnational governments	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Participate in the Africa Regional Forum for Sustainable Development, national urban forums and other related forums and events to share the VLR experience and lessons learned from the process	☐	☐	☐	☐				
Planning for a future VLR	☐	☐	☐	☐				

Abbreviations: SDG, Sustainable Development Goal; VLR, voluntary local review; VNR, voluntary national review.

Annex III

Additional resources

Table 1: Ngora District voluntary local review road map

	Deliverables	Ngora District voluntary local review road map												Total working days
		Month 1				Month 2				Month 3				
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	
1.	Literature review and inception report													
	Review sector and policy documents													5
	Finalize methodology													5
	Desk review of documents													4
	Produce the inception report													5
	Share with Ngora District													3
2.	Development of tools for assessment													
	Development of interview questionnaire													3
	Development on in-depth interview guide													3
	Development of focus group discussion guide													3
	Development of key informants guide													3
3.	Field work consultative meetings													
	Consultative meetings with district heads													5
	Consultative meetings at subcounty level													5
	Community consultative meetings													4
	Preparation of presentations													5
	Consolidated draft report													5
	Merge components into one draft report													4

4.	Report dissemination													
	Disseminate findings to stakeholders													4
	Incorporate feedback													4
5.	Validation workshop													
	Ngora District validation meeting													3
	Final SDGs and Agenda 2063 report-writing													4
	Presentation of the report in Zimbabwe													6
	Incorporation of report recommendations into District Draft Plan 3 by Ngora district													10
	Total days													90

Source: Ngora District Draft Voluntary Local Review (Uganda, 2020).

Table 2: Ngora Sustainable Development Goals localized indicator framework

Sustainable Development Goals localized indicators framework											
	Sustainable Development Goal targets	Sustainable Development Goal global indicators	Corresponding national indicators/NSI	Source	Available data (at national level)						Ngora District 2019 score
					2011	2013	2015	2016	2017	National target	
Sustainable Development Goal 2: Zero hunger											
	Target 2.2 By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons	2.2.2 Prevalence of malnutrition (weight for height >+2 or < -2 standard deviation from the median of the WHO child growth standards) among children under 5 years of age by type (wasting and underweight)	Prevalence of malnutrition (weight for height >+2 or < -2 standard deviation from the median of the WHO child growth standards) among children under 5 years of age by type (wasting and underweight)	UDHS							
	Sustainable Development Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages										50 per cent
	Target 3.1 By 2030, reduce the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100 000 live births	3.1.1 Maternal deaths per 100 000 live births	Maternal deaths per 100 000 live births	UDHS	438			438	336		77/100 000
		3.1.2 Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel	Proportion births attended by skilled health personnel	UDHS	58				74.2		
	Target 3.2 By 2030, end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age, with all countries aiming to reduce neonatal mortality to at least as low as 12 per 1 000 live births and under5 mortality to at least as low as 25 per 1 000 live births	3.2.1 Under-5 mortality rate (deaths per 1 000 live births)	Under-5 mortality rate (deaths per 1 000 live births)	UDHS							
		3.2.2 Neonatal mortality rate (deaths per 1 000 live births)	Neonatal mortality rate(deaths per 1 000 live births)	UDHS							22/1 000

Sustainable Development Goals localized indicators framework											
	Sustainable Development Goal targets	Sustainable Development Goal global indicators	Corresponding national indicators/NSI	Source	Available data (at national level)						Ngora District 2019 score
					2011	2013	2015	2016	2017	National target	
	Target 3.6 By 2020, halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents	3.6.1 Death rate due to road traffic injuries	Death rate due to road traffic injuries	UDHS							

Abbreviations: WHO, World Health Organization; UDHS, Uganda Demographic and Health Survey; NSI, National Standard Indicators.

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