



Concept note

2022 Voluntary National Review Lab Session at the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF)

Experience sharing of the VNR/VLR Processes- Ghana

Date – Wednesday 13 July 2022 (2.00-3.30pm. NY time)

Venue – UN Head Quarters (Conference Room 11)

Background

Ghana will be presenting its second Voluntary National Reviews (VNR) report at the 2022 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) following its maiden presentation in July 2019. While the 2022 VNR process benefitted from lessons from the 2019 VNR experiences, it was also uniquely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of these experiences include the wide acceptance and use of technology in the field of work and regular interactions. The SDGs are relevant since they provide a useful framework for addressing critical challenges such as inequality, climate change, poverty, job losses, food insecurity and peace

While COVID-19 remains a threat to socio-economic and human lives, it is however imperative for countries to track progress towards SDG in order to ensure sustainability of efforts while addressing gaps in the implementation. Ghana's 2022 VNR leveraged on a whole government and whole society approach towards the implementation of the SDGs. The review process assessed progress towards all the 17 Goals. A rapid assessment also was conducted to complement the VNR report which relied largely on quantitative data from surveys, administrative sources and censuses.

Acknowledging the above, Ghana in partnership with AU-APRM will organize a VNR Lab on the sides of the HLPF to facilitate experience sharing from the 2022 VNR process. The VNR Lab will provide a platform for an open conversation and dialogue among countries, stakeholders and partners on experiences and lessons learned, as well as innovations on the engagement of stakeholders from different sectors towards the preparation of Voluntary National Reviews as well as the implementation of SDG.

Ghana's VNR lab aims to discuss/identify challenges of some SDG implementation like Goals 4, 5, 16 and 17. Further, it will deliberate on opportunities in terms of mobilizing resources and

fostering partnerships to accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development as well as showcase how Voluntary Local Reviews have been used in the VNR processes. The lab consists of an expert-level discussion and an informational panel session.

Objectives of the VNR Lab

In view of that, the VNR Lab will focus on the following objectives:

1. Sharing of experiences of VNR preparation process
2. Implementation mechanism of the SDGs
3. Reporting of SDGs at the local level (VLR)
4. Response on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on SDGs implementation
5. Facilitation of SDGs implementation through partnerships

Expected participants:

- Senior technical experts from countries submitting their VNRs, and Countries making strides in VNR preparations
- United Nations and African Union Agencies
- Civil Society and Youth Groups

Venue and COVID-19 protocols:

- The VNR Lab will be organized on the margins of the HLPF at the UN HQs – Conference Room 11

Programme

Time	Item	Speakers
2:05-2:10pm	Opening Remarks	Ghana's Ambassador to the UN
2:10-2:15pm	Statements (Ghana)	Minister for Education, Ghana
2:15-2:20pm	Statement by UN DESA	Amson Sibanda
2:20-3:00pm	Panel Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Experience sharing on Ghana's VNR. ▪ Impact of COVID 19 on the SDG implementation 	Director-General, National Planning Commission, Ghana

Time	Item	Speakers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Impact of COVID-19 on the Implementation of the SDGs (i.e. Goals 4, 5, 15, 16 and 17). ▪ New areas of Financing and Partnership 	Country Experiences
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enhancing SDG localization and reporting ▪ Potential Voluntary Local Review Plan for 2023 in collaboration with APRM 	Ms. Sara Hamouda, APRM Continental Secretariat, Johannesburg
3:00-3:20pm	Q&A	Moderator
3:20-3:30pm	Closing remarks	Chairman, National Development Planning Commission

Moderator: Dr. Felix Addo-Yobo, Deputy Director, SDG Unit, Presidency

Guiding questions

Some of the questions the VNR Lab will address include:

1. What are the lessons learned from the 2022 VNR, and how do you plan to advance your efforts in the future based on the VNR?
2. What were your experience with data collection at the national and sub-national levels for the VNR process?
3. How has your implementation mechanism/architecture supported the SDGs?
4. What have been the challenges and opportunities in reporting progress on the SDGs at the local level?
5. What are the suggested plans/initiatives for building forward better from the COVID-19 effects?
6. How are you leveraging on partnership for resource mobilization and SDGs implementation at the national and sub-national levels?