



Towards a New Generation of VLRs: Exploring the Local-National Link.

Launch of the Second Volume of the UN-Habitat-UCLG Guidelines for VLRs

Launch of the VLR Communiqué

14 July, 4-6pm CEST
Virtual event

Background

The Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) and Voluntary Subnational Reviews (VSRs) global community has been growing at an encouraging pace. When it was published, in July 2020, the first volume of the UCLG-UN-Habitat Guidelines analyzed just 37 VLRs available, while the second volume lists more than 67 full-fledged documents — this is rapid progress, in the span of just a few months. Local Governments Associations in nine countries have developed VSR in 2021, joining the movement initiated in 2020 by 6 countries.

VLRs and VSRs are changing the local-national dynamic. The VLR-VSR movement has increased the demand for institutional interaction between the local and national level. Several countries have established inter-institutional and cross-level mechanisms for different levels of government to work together, exchange data, practices, and techniques on the implementation of the SDGs. Demand for an effective multi-level dialogue and cooperation has been essential to expand the centrality and effectiveness of SDG localization.

VLRs and VSRs have revamped multi-level dialogue and have made national governments more aware of localization and the impact of local data and initiatives on national reviews, policy-making and long-term vision. VLRs have also shown how ready local governments have been to contribute as peers to SDG alignment and implementation.

Central governments have open new opportunities for engagement with local and regional governments, though new dialogue channels or direct support including resources or technical cooperation around the SDGs. VLRs and VSRs are having a major role in accelerating these processes.

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UN-Habitat – UCLG VLR Series

Building on the long-standing existing partnership on advancing the localization of the SDGs, UN-Habitat and UCLG have further join forces to support the VLR and VSR global movement. To do so the two institutions have engaged in a process of research to offer local, regional and central governments with the most updated and cutting-edge information on VLRs and VSRs and key opportunities for exchange and peer learning: *the VLR Series*.

As part of the VLR Series, and following the publication of the first volume of the Guidelines for VLRs in July 2020, UN-Habitat and UCLG have developed a second volume exploring the relation between VLRs and VNRs. The second volume looks into the existing multilevel connections between national and local SDGs reviews, and more largely for SDG localization. The guidelines hence propose a thematic analysis on some of the key dimensions or VLRs, looking at them through a multilevel governance perspective: ii) mainstreaming the SDGs; ii) data and indicators; iii) participatory process; iv) means of implementation. Moreover, the guidelines propose an overview of the existing international ecosystem supporting VLRs and VSRs, including the central role of UN agencies and the Associations of Local and Regional Governments. The guidelines conclude by proposing a series of recommendations to both local and national governments to strengthen their collaboration, specifically around the VLR and VNR processes.

Along with the second volume of the guidelines, UN-Habitat and UCLG, together with the partners that took part to the [Expert Group Meeting on VLRs organized in February 2021](#), have elaborate the Voluntary Local Review Communiqué. The Communiqué is a recognizing the value of VLRs and their contribution to the national SDG review process, calling for national governments to work closing with their local counterparts, enhancing dialogue, resources and cooperation.

Objective of the event

The session will be the occasion to launch the second volume of the UN-Habitat-UCLG guidelines for VLRs entitles *Towards a new Generation of VLRs: Exploring the Local-National Link*. Along with the guidelines, the partners will also share the *VLR Communiqué*.



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Throughout the session, the main findings and recommendations of the guidelines will be presented along with interventions from some of the key local and central governments that have inspired the research.

Draft Agenda

Master of Ceremony: Shipra Narang Suri , Chief Urban Practices Branch, UN-Habitat	
Time CEST	Session
4.00 – 4.15pm	Opening Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maimunah Mohd Sharif, UN-Habitat Executive Director • Emilia Saiz, UCLG Secretary General
4.15 – 4.45pm	Launch of the Vol.2 of the Guidelines for VLRs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martino Miraglia, Human Settlements Officer, SDG Localization and Local Governments, UN-Habitat & Ainara Fernández, Research Officer, UCLG • <i>Finland – VLR-VNR live laboratory</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sami Pirkkala, Secretary General of Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development ○ Mia Malin, Project Manager SDG at City of Helsinki
4.45 – 5.30pm	Panel Discussion Moderator: Edgardo Bilsky , Coordinator of UCLG Research Unit Speakers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alfredo González Reyes, Head of the 2030 Agenda, Mexican National Government, Mexico • Hüseyin Keskin, Mayor of Sultanbeyli, Turkey • Stefan Wagner, Head of Department of International Affairs, Bonn, Germany • Jonan Fernández Erdozia, General Secretary for Social Transition and 2030 Agenda, Basque Country, Spain • Ken Oluoch, Senior Programme Officer, Sustainable Development Goals Unit Council of Governors, Kenya • Junichi Fujino, Programme Director, Integrated Sustainability Center, IGES, Japan



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5.30 – 5.45	Launch of the VLR Communiqué <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Carmen Sanchez-Miranda Galledo, Head of Office UN-Habitat Spain• Santiago Saura Martínez, Councillor for International Affairs and Cooperation of Madrid City Council, Spain
5.45 – 5.50	Closing and Wrap-up <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mehmet Duman, Secretary General of UCLG-MEWA• Shipra Narang Suri, Chief Urban Practices Branch, UN-Habitat