



CONCEPT NOTE

Voluntary Subnational Reviews (VSR) Workshop

Tuesday 22 February 2022, 11:30 – 13:00h (CET)

Context

The representation of subnational levels of government in global reporting efforts on the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs has grown exponentially over the last few years. Going further, Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) and Voluntary Subnational Reviews (VSRs) are more than simple monitoring tools. They are a test of the political will to actually contribute to the bold and systematic changes we need to trigger in order to reduce inequalities – “leave no one behind” – and advance just and sustainable societies. VLRs and VSRs are becoming more and more widely recognized as inspiring and influential tools for stimulating bottom-up transformations.

During the past two years, over 120 local and regional governments (LRGs) from 37 countries developed VLRs and local governments associations (LGAs) from 14 countries, from all regions, have reported on the progress in localizing the SDGs through VSRs. While VLRs are developed by individual LRGs, VSRs are produced by LGAs based on inputs from their members: regions, large and intermediary cities and towns, therefore offering a country-wide analysis of subnational efforts for SDG implementation. UCLG sections are increasingly involved in the mobilization and support of LGAs to lead the localization process and promote their reporting efforts, particularly in Africa, Asia Pacific and Latin America. UNDESA, UN- Habitat and the Regional UN Commissions –ECA, ECE, ECLAC, ESCAP, ESCWA– are also putting more and more attention in these local reporting processes.

VSRs are indeed becoming recognized as powerful levers for creating a more comprehensive, nationwide and multi-level approach to governance related to the monitoring and reporting of the SDGs. Most of the national reports (Voluntary National Reviews - VNRs) from countries in which LGAs have produced a VSR have taken this subnational reporting exercise into account, dedicating specific space to it, or including a contribution written by the LGAs.





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Main objectives

The aim of the workshop is to exchange on all UCLG sections' experiences, as well as those of the commissions of our network, and strengthen their involvement to enhance this global effort, with specific attention on the preparation of the VSRs that are being prepared in 2022. Discussions will also include reflections on UCLG sections and commissions' interaction with the UN system to support the SDG localization movement. Currently, the LGAs from eleven countries, among the 45 countries which will be reporting to the HLPF in July 2022, committed to prepare a VSR: Argentina, Botswana, Belgium, Cameroun, Côte d'Ivoire, Italy, Netherlands, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, The Philippines and Uruguay. Other local government associations also expressed their interest in following-up their reporting processes. The workshop will hopefully lead to enriching the strategies and the coordination to develop a road-map to support the development of VSRs in the different regions. It will involve: representatives from UCLG regional secretariats, UCLG commissions, UCLG CIB Working Group, a few LGAs that are currently leading VSR processes and the World Secretariat (Research, Learning and Policy teams).

Agenda

- **Welcome and introduction** (11.30-11.45)
 - Why develop a VSR? A strategy for strengthening LGAs role in reinforcing the SDG localization process.
 - Brief presentation of the experience of VLRs and VSRs produced in 2020-2021 (by UCLG/CIB, 5 minutes)
- **1st part** (11:45 – 12:15): Sharing what is going on and what we can learn from each region — Brief presentations of UCLG sections
 - Where are we in 2022? Presentation of the process of VSR preparation by regions, coordination with the national governments, main calendars and eventual impact on regional institutions
 - Questions and answers
- **2nd part** (12:15 - 12:30): How can we enhance this process?
 - Exchange on the strategies to capitalize the work done and to enhance the involvement of LGAs in the different regions
 - Learning and institutional capacity building: building upon previous VLR and VSR experiences and training of LGAs: the Guidelines for VSRs





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- Research and peer to peer exchange: creation of regional working groups of LGAs to lead the process and exchange on: methodologies for mapping LRGs involvement by country, development of indicators, collecting information on financing mechanisms for the localization of the SDGs (means of implementation).
 - Policy: lobbying national governments regarding LRG involvement into national coordination mechanisms for the localization of the SDGs, as well as international institutions and spaces such as the HLPF, UN regional commissions, agencies and development partners to reinforce their support to the VSR initiatives; promoting synergies with local and regional governments that have developed VLRs
 - Questions and answers
- **3rd part** (12:30-12:50): Building a common vision and strategy on VSRs
 - Round-table: what support we need, next steps.
 - **Wrap-up and follow-up** (12.50-13:00)

