Regional Voluntary National Review and Voluntary Local Review Workshop for Latin American and Caribbean countries
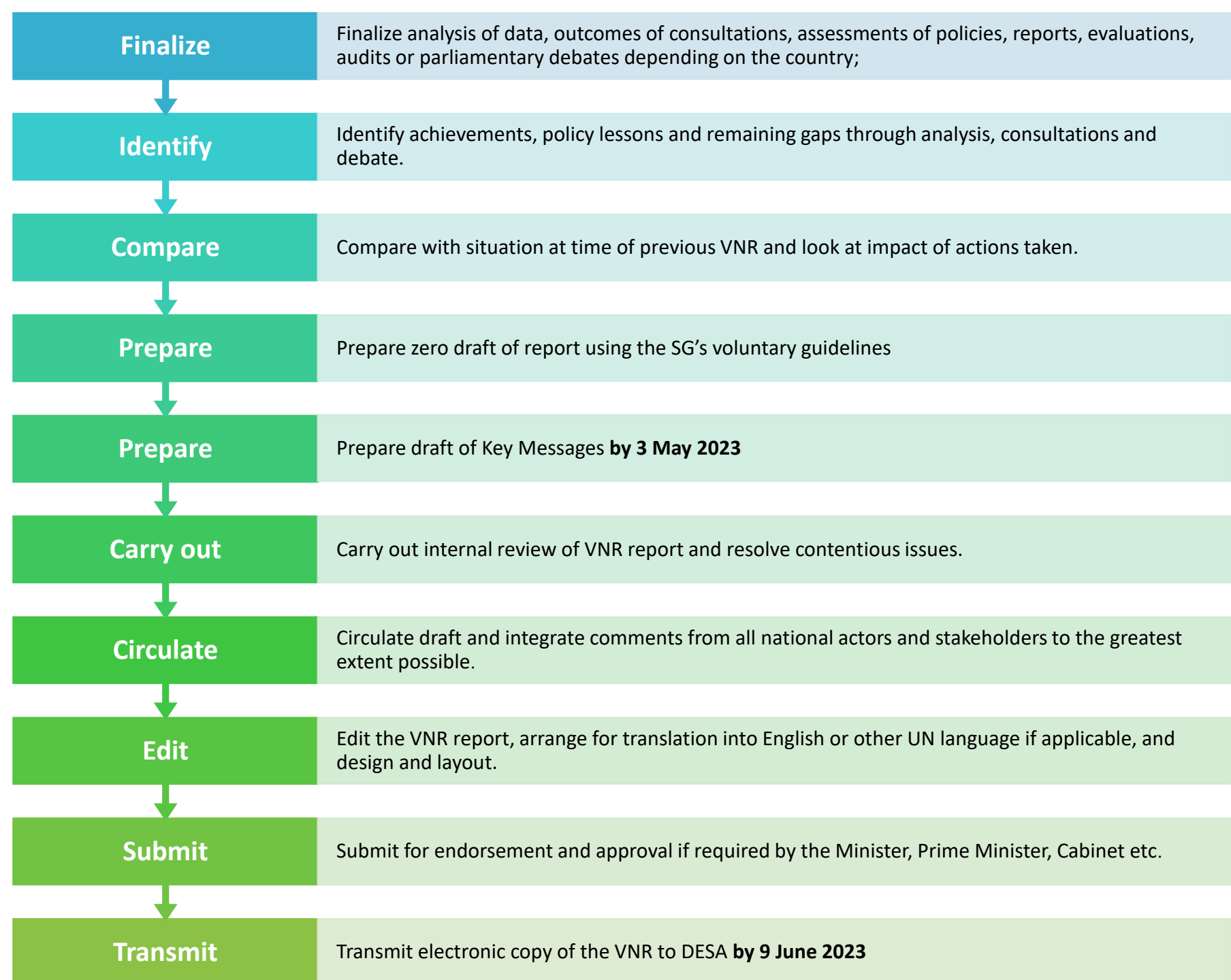
25 April 2023

Maame Agyeben

Office of Intergovernmental Support and Coordination for Sustainable Development

Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)

Checklist for VNR preparations

Finalize	Finalize analysis of data, outcomes of consultations, assessments of policies, reports, evaluations, audits or parliamentary debates depending on the country;
Identify	Identify achievements, policy lessons and remaining gaps through analysis, consultations and debate.
Compare	Compare with situation at time of previous VNR and look at impact of actions taken.
Prepare	Prepare zero draft of report using the SG's voluntary guidelines
Prepare	Prepare draft of Key Messages **by 3 May 2023**
Carry out	Carry out internal review of VNR report and resolve contentious issues.
Circulate	Circulate draft and integrate comments from all national actors and stakeholders to the greatest extent possible.
Edit	Edit the VNR report, arrange for translation into English or other UN language if applicable, and design and layout.
Submit	Submit for endorsement and approval if required by the Minister, Prime Minister, Cabinet etc.
Transmit	Transmit electronic copy of the VNR to DESA **by 9 June 2023**

VNR reports

3 May 2023 - Deadline for main messages of the VNR reports.
- Maximum 700 words with main conclusions and key findings
- The main messages of all VNR will be compiled, translated and published as an official UN document
- The official document published online on HLPF website. Example: undocs.org/E/HLPF/2020/5

4

9 June 2023 - Deadline for the VNR reports.
- The VNR reports will be published on the HLPF website, on the country specific page: https://hlpf.un.org/countries.
- The VNR reports must be submitted in an official UN language.
- The VNR reports will not be translated by UN DESA.

VNR presentations

16 June 2023 – Deadline for the submission of audiovisual materials
- Audiovisual materials include any PowerPoints and videos that will be used during the VNR presentation.
- Audiovisuals must be submitted in an official UN language
- We will also require transcripts of videos and speeches to be used during the VNR presentation.
- It is not compulsory to include audiovisual materials, but some VNR presenters have found them useful.

14 – 19 July 2023 – Dates of the VNR presentations at the 2023 HLPF
- UN DESA will soon send out a questionnaire and VNR countries can convey any special request, any date preferences and level of their main presenter

High-level Political Forum for Sustainable Development

The HLPF has a **"central role in overseeing a network of follow-up and review processes at the global level"**
(2030 Agenda, paragraph 82)

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The HLPF is convened each year in July under the auspices of ECOSOC and presided over by the President of ECOSOC. The HLPF seeks to:

- enhance the **integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development**
- **provide political leadership**, guidance and recommendations on implementation and follow-up
- address **new and emerging issues**

High-Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development

2023 HLPF: 10 - 19 July 2023

Ministerial Segment: 17 -19 July 2023

Theme: Accelerating the recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at all levels

SDGs under review: **SDG 6** on clean water and sanitation, **SDG 7** on affordable and clean energy, **SDG 9** on industry, innovation and infrastructure, **SDG 11** on sustainable cities and communities, and **SDG 17** on partnerships for the Goals

However, VNR reports should cover all of the SDGs

VNR presentations at the HLPF

JAMAICA (VNR)

CHILDREN & YOUTH

GHANA (VNR)

HIGH-LEVEL
POLITICAL FORUM
on SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT

#HLPF #SDGs
sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf

ITALY (E)

Timing (TBD):
- **Dates of VNR presentations:** 14-19 July 2023
- In-person format in Conference Room 4

First timers: (*35* mins at the HLPF):
    15 minutes for presentation
    20 minutes for Q&A

Second and third timers: (*25* mins at the HLPF)
    10 minutes for presentation
    15 minutes for Q&A

Format:
The panel format: presentations are held sequentially; when all the presenters participating in the session have presented, questions are asked of all the presenters
The individual format: a country makes its presentation, followed by questions.

Arrangements for VNR presentations

Who should present the VNRs?
It is recommended that a minister or person of higher rank lead the presentation of the VNR at the HLPF. Previous presenters include heads of state, prime ministers, vice-presidents, deputy prime ministers, and ministers from a range of portfolios. VNR countries may wish to consider including other stakeholders, civil society, youth, academia, private sector, etc. The main presenters may be joined by advisors and other presenters that can answer the questions during the Q&A

What will the modality of the VNR presentations be for 2023 HLPF?
The format of the VNRs at the 2023 HLPF will be in-person.

Which languages should the VNR presentations be conducted in?
VNR presentations should be conducted in one of the 6 official UN Languages. Interpretation services will only be available in the 6 official UN languages. All audiovisuals must be in UN languages and transcripts provided.

Where can the VNR presentations be watched?
The VNR presentations will be streamed live on UN WebTV.

VNR presentations: Interactive discussion

The Group of Friends of VNRs helps to facilitate match-making between VNR presenters and 'friends' who can engage in the VNR presentations and ask questions during the Q&A portion

During the interactive discussion, countries including those who are "friends" but also other countries requesting the floor, may comment and ask questions to any of the presenters in the panel.

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VNR Countries should consider the Q&A time as part of their presentation and an opportunity to highlight/emphasize key points and initiatives

One representative from Major groups and other stakeholders (civil society) is heard for each VNR country.

Voluntary National Reviews

Where will be the VNR presentations take place?

The VNR presentations will take place in person in Conference Room 4 of the UN. Below is a floor plan of Conference Room 4.

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CONFERENCE ROOM 4 - SEATING CHART
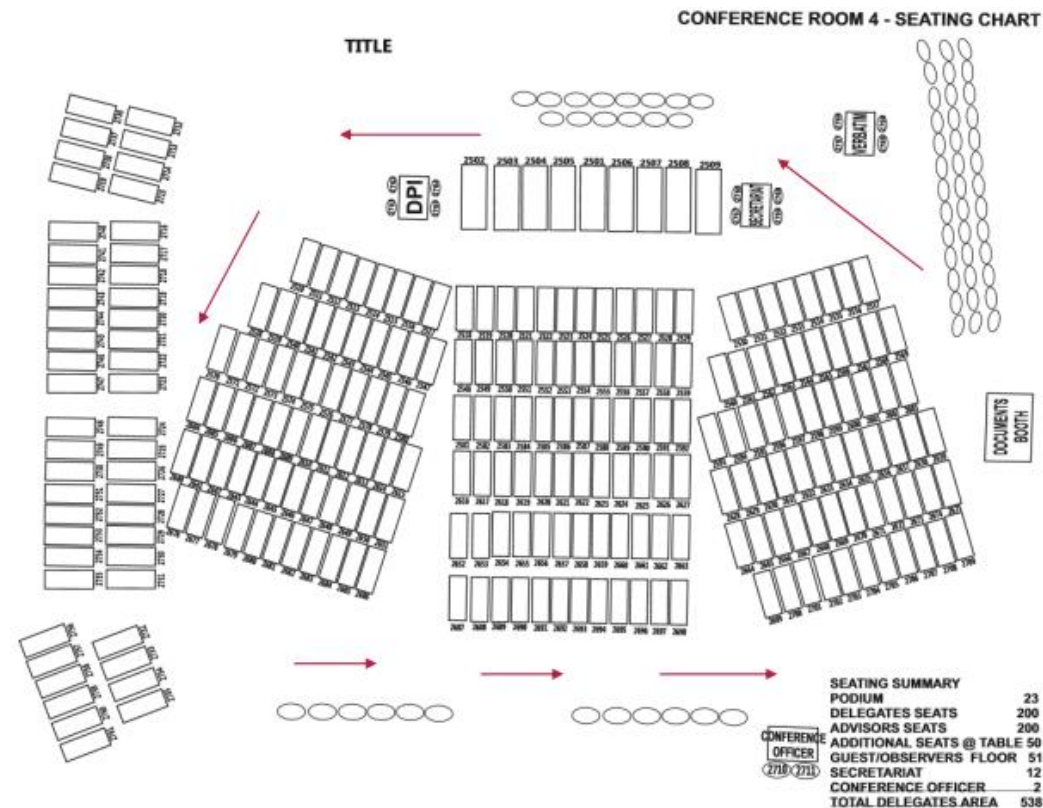
VNR presentations

Deadline for VNR reports and possibility for submitting updates.
 The deadline for VNR reports is 9 June 2023. It is to the countries benefit to submit to VNR report by this date, so that other countries and stakeholders can read the report. Countries may submit updates and edits to VNR report even after it has first been submitted.

Which language should the VNR reports be submitted in?
The VNR reports may be submitted in any of the official UN languages. The VNR reports will not be translated by UN DESA. VNR countries may wish to prepare different language versions of their VNR report

When will the VNR reports be published on the country page website?
The VNR report will be published on the country page shortly after it is received. We do a quick a review and post the report within 2-3 days

Is it recommended to distribute the report in print or digital version (by USB) of their VNR report at the HLPF?
VNR countries are welcome to distribute hard copies and USBs of the VNRs in the Conference Room if they wish. There will be table in the conference room where these can be displayed.

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VNR presentations – good practices

- **Clear structure to VNR presentation:**
    - Show your current situation with a few concise data sets;
    - Explain policies implemented;
    - Showcase good practices, opportunities and challenges;
    - Show one or two good case studies how one or more SDGs are being addressed and their interlinkages
    - In a few words, express the vision for the future; initiatives to accelerate SDG implementation

- **Showcase the main messages of the report**

- **Audio-visuals:** Refrain from including external issues not related to the VNR
- Instead, use examples of how you have prepared your VNR report with all sectors of society, showing ownership. Consider using a few photos from VNR preparations and videos of progress and impact.

Key consideration: What to present:
Key messages of the VNR process; how the review has aligned with national development priorities; opportunities for partnerships moving forward. Audiovisuals are welcome!

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VNR presentations – 2022 HLPF links

VNR presentations: (Panel) Guinea-Bissau, Gabon, Netherlands; (Individual) Grenada

Link: https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1k/k1kkx02s5l

VNR presentations: (Panel 1) Andorra, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Jordan; (Panel 2): Kazakhstan, Sudan, Senegal.

Link: https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1g/k1gnitmiou

VNR presentations: (Panel 1): Jamaica, Lesotho, Italy; (Panel 2): Luxembourg, Malawi, Liberia; (Panel 3): Montenegro, Pakistan, Sri Lanka. **Link:** https://media.un.org/en/asset/k10/k105ktmwbc

VNR presentations: (Panel 1): Botswana, Cameroon. **Link:** https://media.un.org/en/asset/k14/k14cwswkeu

VNR presentations: (Individual): Djibouti, Suriname; (Panel) Equatorial Guinea, Tuvalu

Link: https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1v/k1vcxbb6iq

VNR presentations: El Salvador, Sao Tome and Principe, Somalia, Dominica. **Link:** https://media.un.org/en/asset/k15/k15g1gk4qq

VNR presentations: (Panels) Belarus, Eswatini, The Gambia, Greece, Mali, United Arab Emirates

Link: https://media.un.org/en/asset/k15/k15dugcmh8

VNR presentations: (Panels) Argentina, Ghana, Latvia, Philippines, Switzerland

Link: https://media.un.org/en/asset/k16/k16ho7znrn

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Questions?

INTRODUCTION

Updated Secretary-General's Voluntary Common Reporting Guidelines for VNRs

- Guidelines first issued as part of SG report in December 2015. Updated in 2017 and 2019. Most recent update in February 2021

- Encourages VNR countries to link COVID-19 recovery plans with the 2030 Agenda and concrete measures and accelerated actions with a transformative potential taken to achieve the SDGs, leaving no one behind

- Beyond assessing negative effects of COVID-19, being analytical and forward looking through defining future actions for resilience with a focus on leaving no one behind and identifying specific support needed

- Second and third-time presenters encouraged to show case progress since first VNR and identify actions to accelerate progress on the SDG targets

- **Source:** [Updated voluntary common reporting guidelines for voluntary national reviews at the HLPF](#)

INTRODUCTION

Updated Secretary-General's Voluntary Common Reporting Guidelines for VNRs

1. Opening statement, highlights, introduction

2. Methodology and process for preparing the report

3. Policy and enabling environment
   a. _Ensuring_ ownership of SDGs
   b. Integrating SDGs in national frameworks
   c. Integration of 3 dimensions of SD
   d. Leave no one behind
   e. Institutional mechanisms
   f. _Systemic issues and transformative actions_

4. Progress on goals and targets _and evaluation of policies and measures_

5. _New and emerging challenges_

6. Means of implementation

7. Conclusion and next steps

8. Annexes

New elements in italics underlined

Source: Updated voluntary common reporting guidelines for voluntary national reviews at the HLPF

What are these new and emerging challenges?

- Report on Covid-19 recovery plans as they relate to your country

- Continuity and comparability of your first, second and third VNR report
  - Highlighting actions that show progress and changes from earlier report(s)
  - Consider reporting about moving forward to 2030

- Other new and emerging challenges:
  - Discrimination and inequality
  - Impacts of climate change
  - Vulnerability
  - Conflict and crises
  - *Changes in the global economy and their impact*

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Reflecting new and emerging challenges

- The impact of COVID-19 was highlighted across all 17 SDGs

- Health impact and measures

- Socio-economic impact and measures

- Medium- and long-term plans to strengthen economic, social and environmental resilience to COVID-19 and future pandemics

- Impact on VNR preparations

- Emerging challenges – economic, conflict related

- Highlight specific vulnerabilities

19

Reflecting Leaving No One Behind

20

- Dedicated section on Leaving No One Behind

- LNOB treated as a cross-cutting principle in strategies, programmes and plans

- Actions and initiatives related to LNOB under each SDG

- Initiatives for inclusion of various stakeholders and marginalized groups

- Measures to address the disparities

- Addressing need for disaggregated data

Source: Synthesis Report for 2020 VNR presentations

Second and Subsequent VNRs

- Highlight progress made since the previous VNR

- Could identify relevant actions they intend to be taken in order accelerate progress towards the 2030 Agenda, based on the findings of the VNR and the challenges it identified

- Consider how the previous VNRs' conclusions can be fed back into policy improvement and become an effective instrument in accelerating SDG implementation through feedback loops

- **Source:** Updated voluntary common reporting guidelines for voluntary national reviews at the HLPF

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Jamaica 2022 VNR

- The lessons learned from Jamaica's 2018 VNR have been interrogated and translated in efforts towards strengthening the implementation framework around Vision 2030 Jamaica.
- Jamaica included the recommendations from the 2018 VNR into the 2022 VNR
- Under each SDG chapter, Jamaica include linkages to other SDGs, lessons learnt/best practice, way forward and resource requirements

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Next Steps from 2018 VNR

The first VNR, identified six areas as next steps which are key to accelerate progress on the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. Since 2018, significant steps have been taken in these areas:

i. **Full and effective implementation of national priorities, outlined in the MTF 2018–2021 to address the challenges—social, economic, environment and governance:** The 2018–2021 MTF was the first to integrate the SDGs within the plan implementation framework, and reflected 91.0 per cent alignment of *Vision 2030 Jamaica* and the SDGs. The level of full/partial alignment has since increased to over 98.6 per cent. The 2021 report on progress notes gains made across all four goals of the NDP with some 2018 targets being achieved.

ii. **Strengthen the National Statistics System:** Following a review of the NSS, recommendations were made for the amendment of the Statistics Act and strengthening the capacity of data producers within MDAs.

iii. **Improve the monitoring and evaluation framework:** A European Union (EU) funded programme involving the training of MDAs to support a coordinated system of monitoring national development, commenced in 2020. The M&E framework for the NDP and the SDGs were strengthened, and an online platform for the monitoring of the SDGs and *Vision 2030 Jamaica* developed with funding from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

iv. **Explore mechanisms and strategies for financing:** Development financing has been a core area of focus of the GOJ and its partners. Efforts to strengthen the domestic financing framework has included the implementation of a Results-Based Budgeting Programme to inform more targeted financing of national development. In addition, public expenditure reviews have been conducted to improve efficiencies in spending in key sectors, as well as the development of innovative financing mechanisms to support domestic resource mobilization.

v. **Improve policy coherence and build capacity:** The *Vison 2030 Jamaica* framework, and the MTF which integrates the SDGs, forms the overarching policy framework that promotes both vertical and horizontal policy coherence. Through this framework, there is ongoing strengthening of local level planning and monitoring in alignment with the NDP and the SDGs, through the Local Sustainable Development planning framework and process, as well as its monitoring and evaluation processes.

Way Forward

Jamaica's approach to combating climate change has been strategic, collaborative, integrated, inclusive and ambitious. Initiatives that strengthen policies, enhance integration across actors and sectors, facilitate stakeholders' participation and build their capacity, are in keeping with the principle of sustainable development.

Target 13. 1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries

Notable achievements focused on continued capacity building of key institutions, mobilizing climate finance and identifying the technologies needed to support climate resilience. Also, Jamaica created avenues to include the youth's voice in the climate response. A draft Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management Policy and Action Plan was prepared in 2020, and regulations were instituted to enable the Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Act to provide an opportunity to fully integrate climate change adaptation and DRM activities nationally and locally. This initiative also provides for the development of standard guidelines and tools to screen for disaster risks and climate change issues in the development approval process, as well as preparation of continuity of governance plans.

As part of the strategy for improving emergency response capacity under the Vision 2030 Jamaica—National Development Plan the GOJ intends to train volunteers to support disaster emergency response. The volunteers will work in tandem with volunteers from the Jamaica National Voluntary Program for Disaster Risk Management to serve in the pre-and post-impact phases of a disaster (Artica, 2022).

Target 13.2 Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning

The country's climate ambition is evident in the revised NDC and the progress made in the development of the NAP—both of which are an indication of strong global commitment and national priorities. Progress towards revising the Climate Change Policy Framework (CCPF) and preparing the 2050 Long-term Low Emissions and Climate Resilient Development Strategy are important milestones for ensuring climate measures become standard practice in development planning. The application of the Systematic Risk Assessment Tool (SRAT) which was developed by the Coalition of Climate Resilience Investment (CCRI) will facilitate the mapping of Jamaica's assets to ensure risk assessment data is integrated into national planning systems.

Resource requirements

To advance climate action, Jamaica will need resources in four key areas: sustained financial support for adaptation and mitigation measures, data to inform adaptation planning, data management infrastructure and technical expertise as seen in Figure 70.
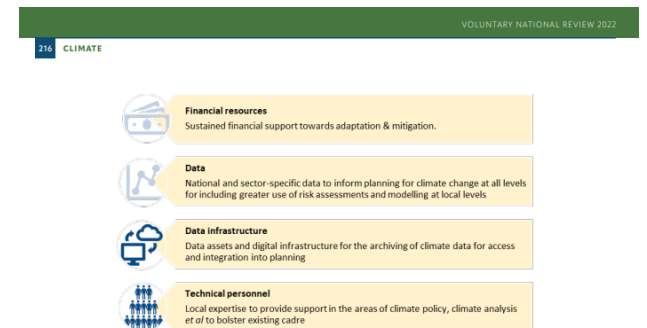
216 CLIMATE

Financial resources
Sustained financial support towards adaptation & mitigation.

Data
National and sector-specific data to inform planning for climate change at all levels for including greater use of risk assessments and modelling at local levels

Data infrastructure
Data assets and digital infrastructure for the archiving of climate data for access and integration into planning

Technical personnel
Local expertise to provide support in the areas of climate policy, climate analysis *et al* to bolster existing cadre

FIGURE 72 RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS TO ADVANCE CLIMATE ACTION IN JAMAICA

Regarding technical expertise, stakeholders identified that there is a need for more robust climate change analysis to be done within the government's ministries, departments and agencies. Most training initiatives, they note, are largely at the introductory level. Suggestions are that individuals trained at the tertiary level and recruited and retained in the public sector would enhance Jamaica's capacity to develop and implement national-level actions and meet global commitments (GOJ, 2020).

Dominica 2022 VNR

- Highlighted sustainable development challenges and vulnerabilities specific to the country. Dominica's VNR also addressed the countries recovery efforts from two devastating climate events – Hurricane Maria in 2017 and Tropical Storm Erika in 2015.
- Leaving No One Behind. Vulnerable groups were identified through consultations, the VNR highlighted government actions to reduce vulnerability.
- Highlighted transformative actions and Dominica's Resilience Vision, "The World's First Climate Resilient Country"

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Suriname 2022 VNR

- Highlight innovative stakeholder engagement initiatives – for example, several youth focused initiatives were implemented to generate SDGs, such as the SDG Voice Project and SDG Youth Ambassadors programme, which included campaigns and activities for youth to promote the SDGs amongst their peers. A card game called SDG quartet was also developed in Suriname to get the youth more acquainted with the SDGs in a playful manner.

- Showcased awareness raising initiatives with different sectors, including private sector

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Source: https://www.local2030.org/story/view/60
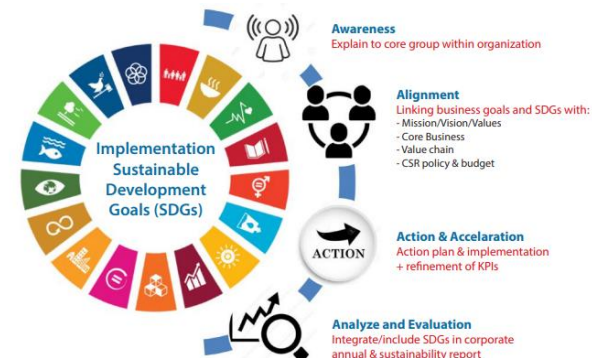
Antigua and Barbuda 2021 VNR

- Stakeholders in Antigua and Barbuda identified through the consultations those groups that are at risk of being left behind.
- The VNR highlighted each vulnerable group within the context of an SDG goal, the current situation of the groups as well as the country's commitment through national policies and strategies to make these groups resilient.
- Highlighted systemic issues and the transformative actions needed to achieve the SDGs, including enhancing statistical capacity, the need for financing, including concessionary financing, support in accessing new and innovative financing mechanisms and the need to plan for exogenous shocks which have the potential to stall development progress

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Stakeholders in Antigua and Barbuda identified through the consultations those groups that are at risk of being left behind, including people living in extreme poverty, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, marginalized children and youth, older persons, persons in prisons, deviant young males and females who are institutionalized and migrants. The table below positions each vulnerable group within the context of an SDG goal, the current situation of the groups as well as the country's commitment through national policies and strategies to make these groups resilient.

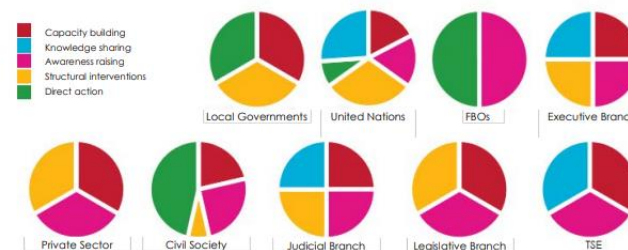| Sustainable Development Goal	Example of Vulnerable Groups at Risk of being left behind	Indicator	Examples of Antigua and Barbuda's Commitment to 'Leaving no one behind'
GOAL 1: No Poverty	Women and children in poverty	National Poverty Rate: 18.4%	Social Protection Act 2020 Board of Guardians Scheme Peoples Benefit Programmea

Costa Rica 2020 VNR

- In relation to "leave no one behind'' and data capacity in Costa Rica, the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses, as the SDGs Statistical Advisory Body made major effort to improve the tools of statistical operations, to ensure that users of information have the highest levels of disaggregation for population groups. The VNR included a timeline of the actions taken.
- Highlighted multi-stakeholder survey of signatories of the National Pact, designed to assess progress, identify good practices, challenges, lessons learned in the implementation the 2030 Agenda. Showcasing the contribution on different stakeholders to SDGs.
- Showcase localization process of the SDGs

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Year	Actions performed
2016	• Methodological proposal and development of a tool to assess national statistical capacities for the elaboration of SDG. • Assessment tool on the status of SDG indicators based on the ECLAC tool. • List of SDG Indicators consulted and validated, with the corresponding methodological sheets.
2017	• Update of national capacities assessment and availability of indicator information. • Revision of indicators proposed by the United Nations and its methodological sheets based on the new list of revised indicators of the United Nations Statistical Commission • Collection of information for indicators and development of methodological sheets. • Development of SDG baseline publication with data available. • Implement SDG Information System and monitoring of indicators update. • Support and monitoring of activities to revise targets and indicators in activities convened by the planning sectors of the Executive Branch (health, environment, poverty) and SDG Technical Secretariat (Mideplan).
	• Establishment of the INEC Institutional Technical Commission for the monitoring of SDG indicators with the participation of the Technical Secretariat and the United Nations System • Review of the proposal for the Regional Framework of SDG indicators. • New methodological sheet structure for SDG, with fields' definition. • Course/Workshop "Methodology to develop and give continuity to SDG environmental indicators".

Figure 11. Classification of Actions Reported by Participating Stakeholder

Capacity building
Knowledge sharing
Awareness raising
Structural interventions
Direct action

Local Governments | United Nations | FBOs | Executive Branch
Private Sector | Civil Society | Judicial Branch | Legislative Branch | TSE

Source: SDG Survey Report 2018, SNU-Costa Rica.

Institutional plans were aligned with the SDGs and towards municipal strategic thinking

2030 Agenda — PDHC — PEM — Government Plan — Organization

2030 Agenda Dimension | Human County Development Plan | Municipal Strategic Plan | Mayor´s Government Plan | Process Structure

Source: Report about the placement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in the local governments of Costa Rica.

Second and Subsequent VNRs

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- Some countries reference to what has changed in their institutional structure

- Some countries discussed increased engagement of stakeholders both from government and outside government in their second VNRs

- Countries also elaborated on better collection of data and refinement of indicators and monitoring and review of SDGs as well as financing strategies

- Some countries discussed concrete measures taken since first VNR

SOME CONSIDERATIONS FOR:

Resources

- **Updated SG guidelines**

- **2022 VNR Synthesis Report**

- **VNR Database**

Questions?