



HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

VNR LAB 10

Engaging all parts and levels of government

Monday, 15 July 2018, 18:15-19:45
United Nations Secretariat, S2726/27

Concept Note

Purpose

This VNR Lab's core theme is engagement of government in SDG implementation with focus on institution-building. The goal is to allow VNR countries to think about their institutional challenges and solutions to promote and review the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. As such, the lab will seek to provide actionable guidance on interlinking the different levels of administration in addressing common sustainable development objectives from institutional perspectives.

Discussions will be informal with focus on results-oriented exchange of experiences. Case studies will concentrate on how countries have mobilized various ministries, local governments, parliaments and audit institutions among others, to implement and monitor the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Specific focus will be put on the catalytic role of frontier technologies in bringing different parts and levels of government together.

Organisation

The Secretariat will work with the selected (past, present and future) VNR countries to collect questions and draw attention to areas where countries are interested in for further guidance or support. Participants may be asked to state a main challenge in establishing an appropriate institutional framework or a critical action taken to address the specific engagement challenge(s) and suggest one piece of advice for countries in similar situations.

Each Member State will present initially for **three minutes (No PowerPoints)**. They will answer the following three categories of questions:

- (i) CHALLENGES--SOLUTIONS--What is one specific institutional challenge of engaging all parts and levels of government that you would like talk about? Which solution(s) have you have considered or implemented to overcome this challenge?
- (ii) SDG LINKAGES--What are the dominant SDG targets associated with your institutional challenge and solution(s)?
- (iii) INSTITUTIONAL INTROSPECTION --Anything you would have done differently in retrospect? What are the possible institutional implications?

Interventions from the floor should not extend beyond three minutes. Participants may have the opportunity to speak more than once as guided by the moderator. Discussants may actively participate throughout and will have about five minutes each at the end of the session to offer an overall analysis, respectively on administrative/institutional integration and SDG/sectoral nexus approaches.

Country selection

The 2018 VNR synthesis report stresses that none of the SDGs can advance without peace, justice and strong institutions. It highlights three SDG 16-related themes: (i) participation, particularly of vulnerable groups, (ii) multi-stakeholder engagement in institution-building at national and subnational levels, and (iii) transparency and accountability.

A preliminary overview of the 2019 VNR key messages also reveals that both good governance in general, and its institutional aspects more specifically, are on Member States' radar. Noteworthy in the key messages this year are (i) the cross-cutting emphasis on solution-oriented innovations, (ii) research and development; and (iii) digital transformation as catalysts of inclusive and multisectoral SDG implementation.

Against this backdrop, country selection methodology is based on past achievements, current governance panorama and future projects of institutional reform. There will be three cohorts of country presentations with interactive discussions in between. Each cohort will include a country and other stakeholder from different regions, developmental contexts and institutional backgrounds. Each cohort will cover different yet complementary dimensions of institutional engagement for SDG implementation and review.

Focus areas

Coherent and collaborative engagement of whole of government today

Guiding Question: *How to operationalize effective governance for sustainable development with engagement from all parts and levels of government, including centre of government and line ministries?*

Focus areas: *Accountability, transparency, capacity of the public sector, audit, corruption prevention and control; cross-agency and cross-sectoral coordination, coherence and collaboration*

CROATIA—Croatia is presenting its VNR for the first time this year. It has adopted a strategic approach to SDG implementation with its currently drafted 2030 National Development Strategy (NDS), expected to be adopted by the first quarter of 2020. The country's long-term development focus on planning and implementation at the level of national, local and regional self-government can be helpful for institution-building projects in different developmental contexts.

ARGENTINA—Argentina presented its VNR in 2017 and is coming back in 2020 to present a second time. The National Council for the Coordination of Social Policies of Argentina has put utmost emphasis on cross-cutting coordination and continuous consensus building both across public institutions and within them and working with the legislative and judicial branches as strategic partners. Argentina's legal and social engagement frameworks can present fresh perspectives on engaging all stakeholders in SDGs.

BURKINA FASO—Burkina Faso is a first time VNR presenter. It is integrating SDG implementation into its national development through its National Economic and Social Development Plan (PNDES, in its French initials), operationalized through 14 sectoral policies and local development plans. Burkina Faso's sectorial engagement of (non)governmental stakeholders contain lessons learned for countries integrating their policy domains horizontally and vertically.

Multi-stakeholder and multi-level engagement of government with an eye to tomorrow

Guiding Question: *How can we enhance the strategic engagement of (sub)national governments in national and transnational levels in SDG implementation and follow-up?*

Focus areas: *Public participation, civic engagement, partnership building, legitimacy, public trust, social capital, parliamentary engagement, civil society collaboration models*

AUSTRIA—Austria will be presenting its VNR next year, in July 2020, for the first time. This VNR Lab will provide the opportunity for the current VNR countries to have an ex-ante perspective on Austria's institutional preparations for SDG implementation through government engagement.

TUNISIA—Tunisia, a first time VNR presenter this year, engages all relevant ministries, government agencies and other stakeholders through its National Technical Committee and based on its 2016-2020 national development plan, which integrates the SDGs. Tunisia's specific focus on gender equality and social protection are notable in its institutional engagement strategies.

GIZ—Engaging governments through multi-stakeholder partnership platforms can yield a trove of institutional modalities and lessons learned to promote and strengthen government engagement for SDG implementation and review.

Enabling and adapting engagement of government throughout the policy cycle

Guiding Question: *How to involve the public and other stakeholders, including the vulnerable groups, in the implementation and review of SDGs, including through the innovative use of frontier technologies?*

Focus areas: *Access to data, institutional integration, science, technology and innovation for partnerships, monitoring and evaluation, audit, algorithmic governance*

INDONESIA—Indonesia has presented its first VNR in 2017 and is coming back this year for a second time to present its VNR. Its innovative data platforms for early warning, monitoring and evaluation and inclusive audit are noteworthy. Countries and other stakeholders may learn from Indonesia's institutional processes for the successful design and rolling out of several agile control mechanisms in public administration.

SOUTH AFRICA--South Africa, a first time VNR presenter, has taken significant steps towards creating an African STI multi-stakeholder forum and an African platform for research and innovation exchange. This targeted focus on the enabling role of data and technology for government engagement can provide refreshing perspectives to others contemplating similar approaches.

BELGIUM—Belgium presented its VNR in 2017. It started the process by creating a strong yet flexible institutional framework to allow cooperation, consultation and coordination among all governance actors. Belgium stated its next targets to be the coherence of internal and external policy-making in addition to coordinated institutional functioning in integrating the SDGs.

ALGERIA—Algeria's Inter-ministerial Committee of Coordination of SDGs under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs integrates the social, economic and environmental pillars of sustainability and has undertaken a multi-stakeholder approach to VNR preparations. Algeria's focus on continuity of quality public services to all based on the principles of solidarity and inclusiveness, including gender equality can shed light on government engagement approaches during transitional periods.

All discussions will be held under the Chatham House rules.

AGENDA

Moderator:

Mr. Geert Bouckaert, Bureau Member of the UN Committee of Experts on Public Administration; International Institute of Administrative Sciences (IIAS)

Panellists:

--Mr. Vladimir Drobnjak, Ambassador and Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Croatia to the United Nations, Republic of Croatia

--Ms. Gabriela Agosto, Executive Secretary, National Council for the Coordination of Social Policies, Republic of Argentina

--Mr. Larba Issa Kobyadga, Managing Director of Economy and Planning, Republic of Burkina Faso

--Ms. Sylvia Meier-Kajbic, Ambassador and Director of the Multilateral Development Cooperation, Federal Ministry for Europe, Republic of Austria

--Mr. Belgacem Ayed, President of the General Committee for Sectorial and Regional Development, Ministry of Development, Investment and International Cooperation, Republic of Tunisia

--Mr. Jörn Geißelmann, Adviser, Partners for Review, Global Policy, Governance, GIZ

--Dr. Agus Joko Pramono, Audit Board Member, Republic of Indonesia

--Mr. Dumisane Mthembu, Senior Specialist: Multilateral Environmental Agreements, Department of Science and Technology, South Africa

-- Mr. Tim Bogaert, Expert, Federal Public Service Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Belgium

--Ms. Sabrina Bey, Focal point of SDG10, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Algeria

Other participants: Fiji, Sierra Leone, Guatemala, Republic of the Chad, Kingdom of Tonga

Discussants:

Mr. Louis Meuleman, Bureau Member of the UN Committee of Experts on Public Administration; Visiting professor, Public Governance Institute, University of Leuven, Belgium

Mr. David O'Connor, Sustainable Economist, SDG Delivery Team, World Resources Institute

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