



Session 1.1: VNR Process

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Workshop on Data and Statistics for Evidence-based
Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs)

9-12 December 2019, Vienna, Austria



Introduction to VNRs



What are the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs)?

- The VNRs are a **central element of the follow-up and review** mechanisms of the 2030 Agenda
- Presented at the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) for sustainable Development
 - The **HLPF is the central platform for reviewing and following up on the 2030 Agenda** and SDGs, at the global level
- **Country-led** process that
 - **track progress on Goals**
 - be open and participatory for stakeholders
 - focus on people with a focus on people furthest behind
 - take a long-term perspective
 - be rigorous and **evidence based**

Role of robust data and statistics!

VNRs: what, how, and who?

- They are voluntary in nature – each country is free to decide on the scope and format of its review.
- Guided by 6 main principles
 - i. National ownership of the VNRs which are to be voluntary and country-led.
 - ii. Incorporation of the SDGs into national frameworks and plans.
 - iii. Integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development.
 - iv. Principle of leaving no one behind.
 - v. Making use of existing national frameworks to prepare the reports.
 - vi. Reflecting on cross-cutting issues, nationally but also at the regional level.
- As of 2019, 30 minutes for their individual presentations at the HLPF including Q&A, with the date of presentations being agreed by the ECOSOC Bureau with the Permanent Missions in New York and according to diplomatic rank

Stats on 2019 HLPF

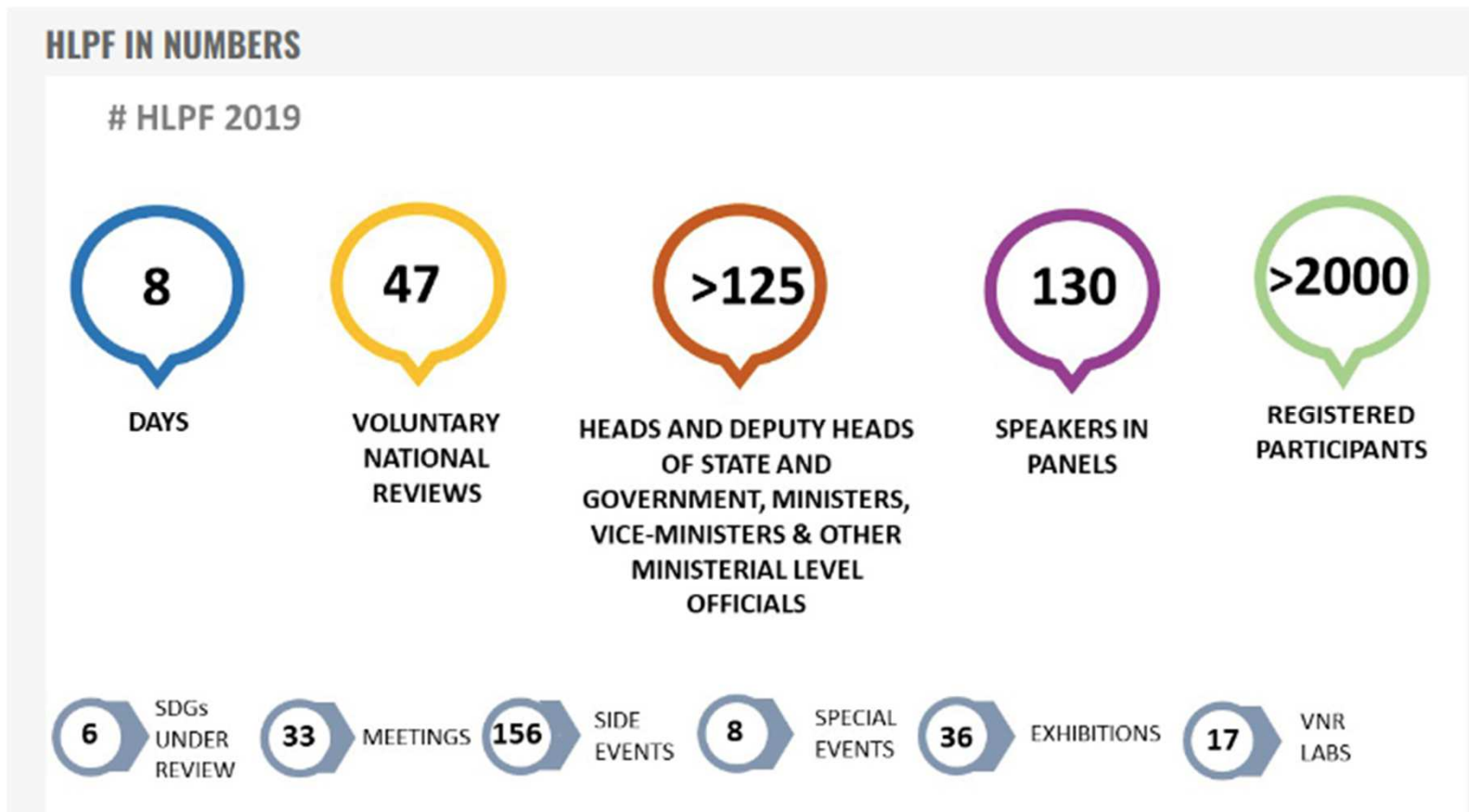


HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM
ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

9-18 July 2019

- Largest annual gathering to assess global SDG realization.
- 47 countries will present efforts to achieve the SDGs.
- 1000+ participants, 146 side events.
- Main landing page: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/2019> | bit.ly/2019hlpf
- Social media package | Promotional video | #HLPF #GlobalGoals #SDGs

Stats on 2019 HLPF



Data session at the HLPF

SDG Progress Report

Implementing the 2030 Agenda to empower people and ensure inclusiveness and equality



Where do we stand?

Big picture overview of global and scientific data trends and developments



VNR Lab at HLPF 2019

Strengthening the use of data for evidence-based VNRs

The VNR Lab focused on specific practices and approaches that countries have used to increase the use of data in their VNRs.

Challenges Identified

- Coordination
- Funding
- Dialogue between NSOs and policy-makers
- Statistical literacy
- Human capital
- Availability of timely disaggregated data
- Knowledge of SDGs and alignment with national plans
- Technology

Solutions Proposed

- NSO engagement with policy-makers and other stakeholders
- Effective communication of statistics (and about the importance of statistics)
- Coordination mechanisms
- Focus on the core (statistics)
- Relevance (for stakeholders)



2020 VNRs



VNR COUNTRIES IN 2020 [50]

FIRST TIMERS [27]

Austria
Barbados
Bolivia
Brunei Darussalam
Bulgaria
Burundi
DPR of Korea
DR of the Congo
Gambia
Kyrgyzstan
Liberia
Libya
Malawi
Micronesia

Mozambique
North Macedonia
Papua New Guinea
Republic of Moldova
Russian Federation
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Seychelles
Solomon Islands
Syrian Arab Republic
Trinidad & Tobago
Ukraine
Uzbekistan
Zambia

SECOND TIMERS [23]

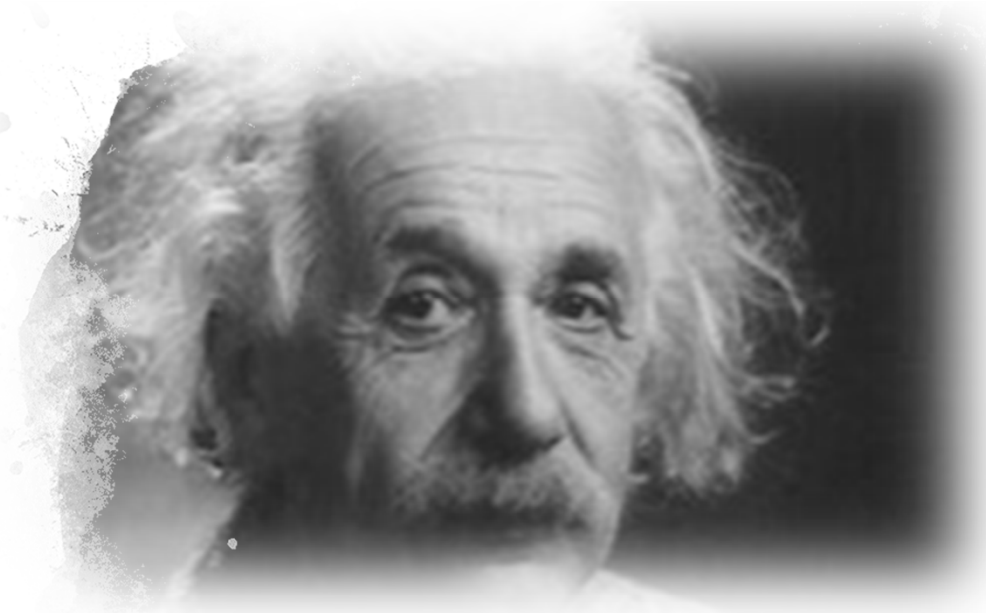
Argentina
Armenia
Bangladesh
Belize
Costa Rica
Ecuador
Estonia
Finland
Georgia
Honduras
India
Jordan
Kenya

Morocco
Nepal
Niger
Nigeria
Panama
Peru
Samoa
Slovenia
Uganda
Zimbabwe



WHY UNDERTAKE A VNR?

- Changes mindsets
- Identifies and acts on priorities
- Maps gaps and defines challenges
- Evaluates progress, identifies challenges
- Engages all stakeholders
- Draws lessons and provides critical reflections on the process:
 - increased level of meaningful consultations
 - whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach
 - forging of partnerships



The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results



SUPPORT TO VNR PROCESS

Preparatory process

UN DESA, in cooperation with UN country teams, regional commissions and regional and subregional organizations as appropriate conducts a preparatory process for VNR countries through:

- 3 global workshops
- Regional and subregional workshops in UN regions
- Individual assistance upon request from countries
- Preparation of synthesis report of VNR reports each year
- SG voluntary common reporting guidelines
- Synthesis of main messages from VNR reports
- Handbook on preparation for VNRs updated each year
- Webinars as needed



Benefits from preparatory process

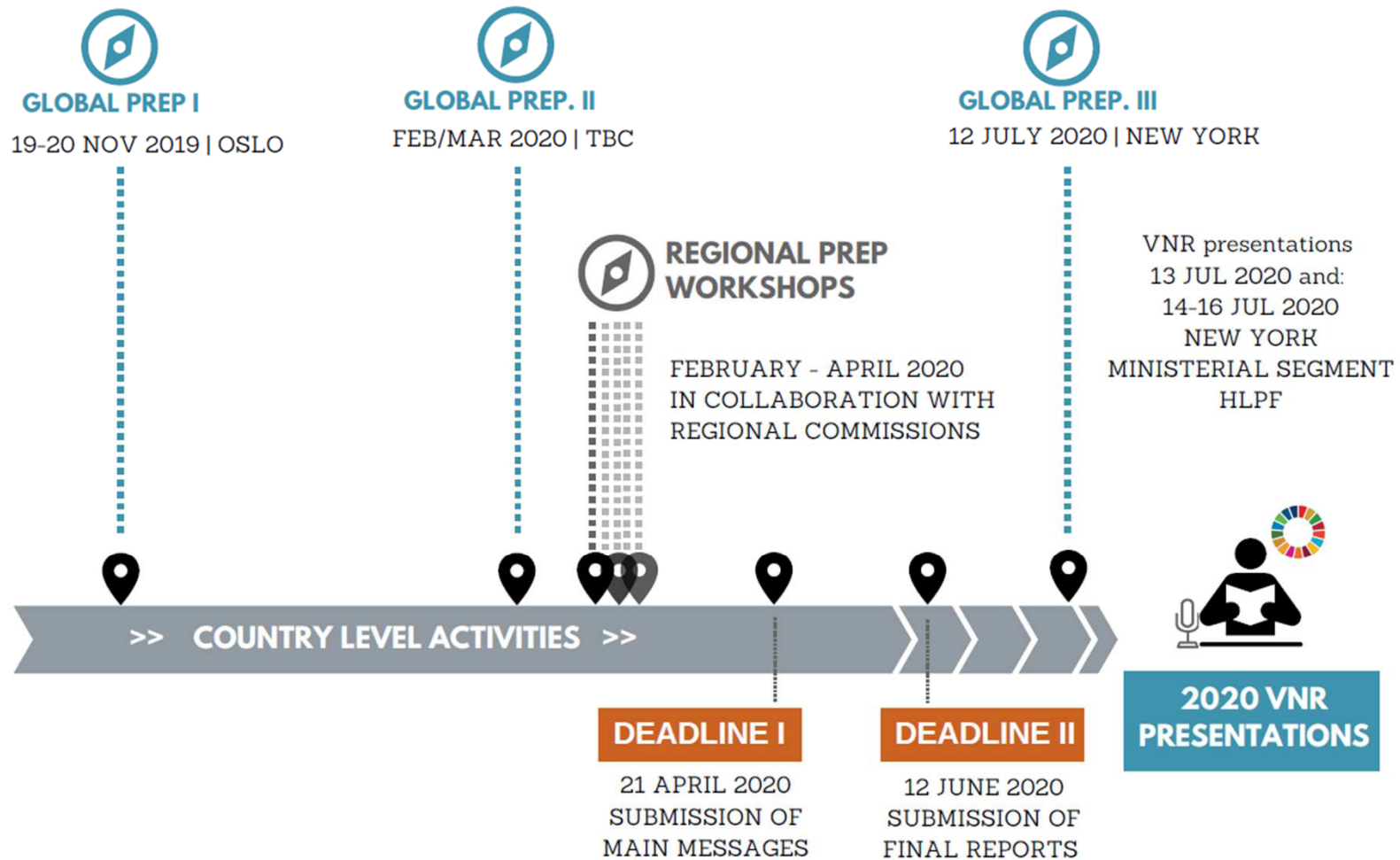
- Familiarization with VNR process, peer learning and capacity building
- Sharing of lessons learned, best practices and experiences from countries who have already presented their VNRs
- Regional and subregional specificities discussed among VNR countries and benefits and challenges connected to them

Challenges from preparatory process

- Insufficient time and resources for more robust capacity building
- Better coordinated support by the UN system
- Lack of comparability among reports due to different approaches and methods used



Timeline for 2020 Voluntary National Reviews



PRESENTATION AT THE HLPF

Each first-time presenter has 15 minutes for presentation and up to 15 min Q&A

Each second-time presenter has 10 minutes for presentation and up to 10 min Q&A

Format for presentation: individual/panel/interactive

Consider choosing a friend from the Group of friends of VNRs

Each VNR country will have focal point from DESA

Consider presenting and/or participating in VNR Labs

Consider having a side event and also maybe including other presenting countries

VNR preparation checklist

Item	Actions
1. Initial preparation and organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Send letter to President of ECOSOC to communicate decision to conduct a VNR.<input type="checkbox"/> Assign responsibility for coordinating and preparing the VNR.<input type="checkbox"/> Estimate and identify resources required.<input type="checkbox"/> Consider scope of review.<input type="checkbox"/> Develop work plan/road map with deliverables aligned to HLPF deadlines (e.g. submission of Main Messages and VNR Report).<input type="checkbox"/> Map key national actors (e.g. Parliament, line ministries, national statistical office, local government officials, stakeholders).<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare draft outline of VNR and develop key messages.<input type="checkbox"/> Assign information- and data-gathering tasks, including drawing on existing national documents and previous VNR reports.
2. Stakeholder Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Contact relevant government departments (line ministries) and agencies, setting out basic details, e.g. about the VNR, the information/data requested, and establishment of a focal point.<input type="checkbox"/> Develop stakeholder engagement plan which identifies key stakeholders, and method of engagement (consider offline and online options).<input type="checkbox"/> Establish awareness-raising and public outreach component to disseminate avenues for stakeholder engagement in the VNR process, making use of government communication services, social media, etc.<input type="checkbox"/> Make sure targeted efforts are made to reach groups that are marginalised and at risk of being left behind.



VNR preparation checklist

3. VNR Preparation

- Review and incorporate material received, including data, other reports and previous VNRs.
- Follow-up with government colleagues/information providers to secure missing material or provide additional analysis.
- Decide on participants for the preparatory global and regional workshops.
- Prepare zero draft, including identifying remaining gaps, together with stakeholders.
- Prepare draft of Main Messages (not more than 700 words) for approval and submission to DESA by **21 April 2020**.
- Carry out internal review of VNR, including quality control, allowing time for resolution of possibly contentious issues.
- Establish comment period and circulate draft to relevant government officials.
- Provide opportunity for stakeholders to comment and integrate comments from all national actors and stakeholders to the greatest extent possible.
- Edit the VNR and arrange for translation into English, if needed/desirable, and design and layout.
- Submit for endorsement and approval if required (for example to the Minister, Prime Minister, Cabinet).
- Transmit electronic copy of the VNR to DESA by **12 June 2020**.

4. HLPF Presentation

- Fill out questionnaire and return to DESA (deadline will be indicated) for information on HLPF presentation.
- Inform DESA of preferred presentation format (panel / individual), presenter, and composition of delegation.
- Produce visual materials for the VNR presentations. Deadlines for submission of audiovisual materials to DESA will be indicated.
- Select key messages for VNR presentation, with time limit scheduled for that year in mind.





Resources

- Voluntary National Review Database
<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/vnrs/>
- VNR Synthesis Reports ([2019](#) | [2018](#) | [2017](#) | [2016](#))
- VNR Handbook including SG Voluntary reporting guidelines – [2020 edition](#) (other languages coming soon)

Thank you!



ROADMAP FOR 2020 VNR PREPARATIONS

Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July
19- 20 November 1 st Global workshop, Oslo, Norway	Follow up webinar		24 -27 Africa regional SD meeting and regional VNR workshop, Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe Feb/March	11 – 13 March Regional SD meeting of ESCWA region and regional VNR workshop, Beirut, Lebanon	Regional SD forum for LA and the Caribbean, Havana, 30 March – 3 April or 13 – 17 April and the regional VNR workshop		12 June VNR report	12 July Global workshop, New York, US
			2 nd Global workshop (exact dates and venue TBC)	19-20 March Regional Forum on SD for the UNECE region and regional VNR workshop, Geneva, Switzerland	21 April MAIN MESSAGES			13 July – start of VNR presentations
				25 – 27 March Asia-Pacific Regional SD Meeting and regional VNR workshop, Bangkok, Thailand				