Voluntary National Reviews

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Voluntary National Review (VNR)s

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The 2030 Agenda encourages Member States to "conduct regular and inclusive **reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels**, which are country-led and country-driven" (paragraph 79)

Principles of Voluntary National Reviews

Voluntary

encourage reporting and include developed and developing countries

State-led

country driven reviews of progress at national and sub-national levels

Platform for partnerships

including through the participation of major groups and other relevant stakeholders

Learning experience

facilitate the sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned, part of a process

National circumstances

reviews in accordance with national circumstances, policies and priorities, together with relevant partners

Open, Inclusive, Transparent

Facilitates communication with all stakeholders

DURING THE HLPF

- Each country has 15 minutes to present (10 minutes if it is for a second time)
- After presentations, there is time (15 min) for Q&A from Member States and Major Groups and other Stakeholders

"**VNR Labs**" during the HLPF also provide room for informal dialogue between Member States and Major Groups and other Stakeholders on specific topics related to the VNRs
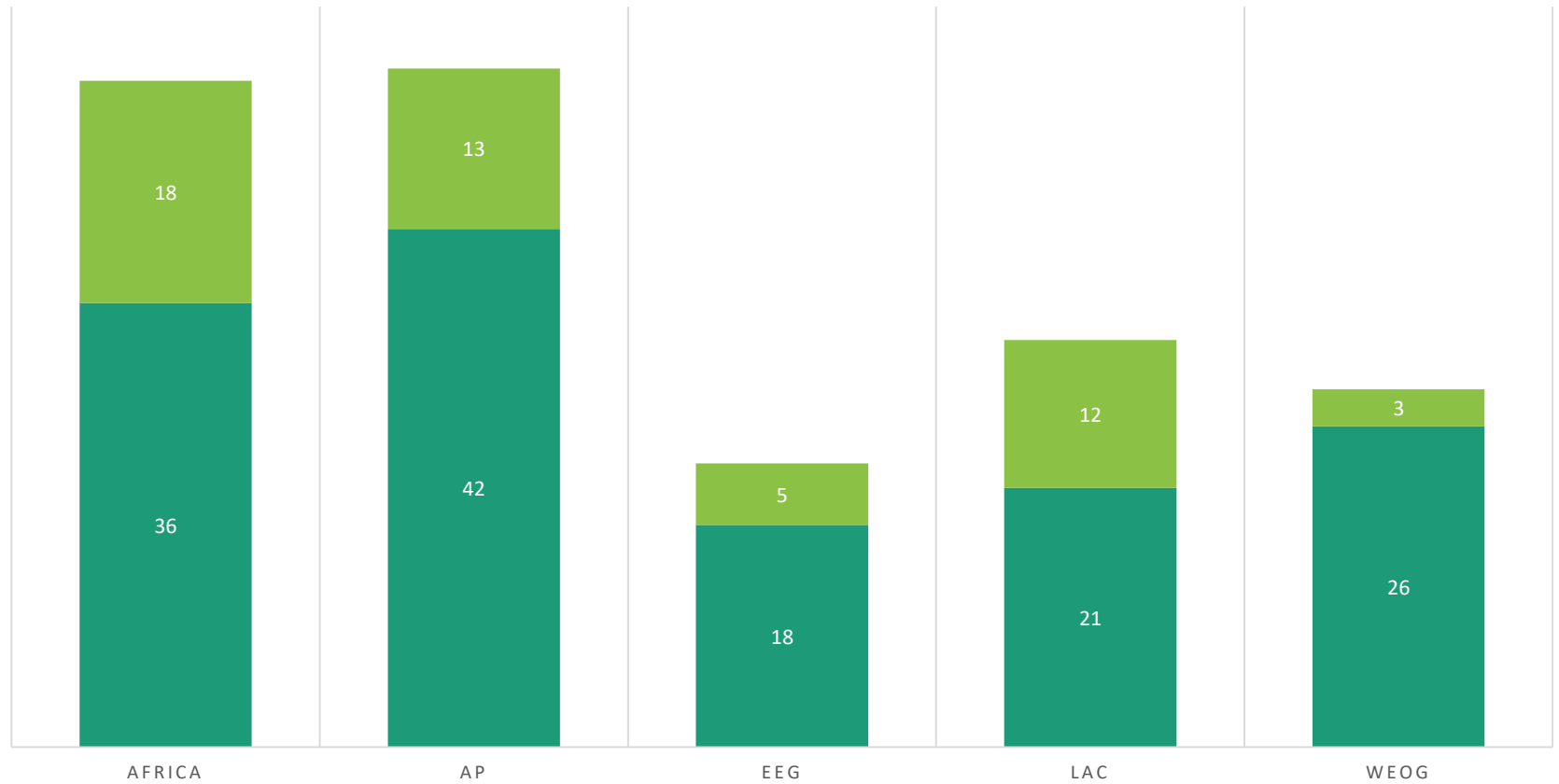
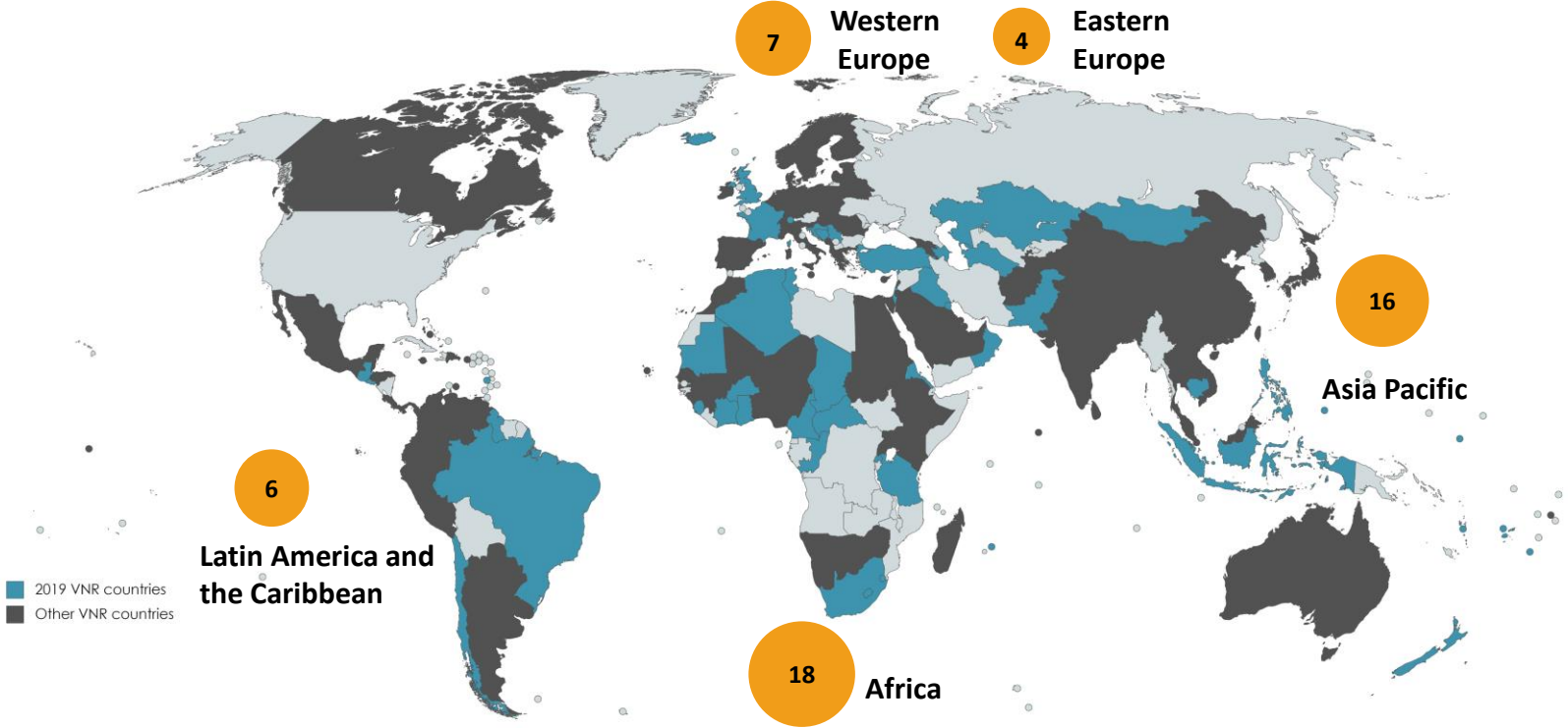# How can the VNR support national implementation?

- **Strengthens:**
  - Political will
  - National ownership
  - Institutions
  - Coordination

- **Identifies areas where support is needed**

- **Provides an important communication tool**

- **Changes mindsets**

- **Draws lessons and provides critical reflections on the process**

- **Provides impetus to continue national implementation after the VNR**

STATUS OF VNRS 2016 - 2019

Regional Division of 2019 VNRs

7 Western Europe

4 Eastern Europe

16 Asia Pacific

6 Latin America and the Caribbean

18 Africa

2019 VNR countries
Other VNR countries

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TIMELINE FOR 2019 VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEWS

GLOBAL PREP I
16-17 OCT 2018 | GENEVA

GLOBAL PREP II
19 – 20 FEBRUARY 2019 | BONN

GLOBAL PREP III
14 JUL 2019 | NEW YORK

REGIONAL PREP WORKSHOPS

MAR-MAY 2019
IN COLLABORATION WITH
REGIONAL COMMISSIONS

Second-time Presenters:
15 JUL 2019
First-time Presenters::
16-18 JUL 2019
NEW YORK
MINISTERIAL SEGMENT
HLPF

>> **COUNTRY LEVEL ACTIVITIES** >>

DEADLINE I

17 MAY 2019
SUBMISSION OF
MAIN MESSAGES

DEADLINE II

14 JUN 2019
SUBMISSION OF
FINAL REPORTS

2019 VNR PRESENTATIONS

Regional Preparatory Meetings in Spring 2019

| ECE Geneva, 21-22 March 2019 | ESCAP Bangkok, 27-29 March 2019 | ECLAC Santiago, 22-26 April 2019 | ESCWA Beirut, 9-11 April 2019 | ECA Tangier, 16-18 April 2019 |

Regional Sustainable Development Forums
organized by Regional Commissions

UN Secretary-General's
Voluntary common reporting guidelines

Voluntary guidelines requested by the Member States:

- **Help** countries structure reports for VNRs at the HLPF
- **Promote** comparability and consistency
- **Voluntary** nature of process - each country free to decide on scope of its review and format for presentation of findings
- Were updated in 2018

SG's Guideline Highlights

VNRs should:

- ✓ be **open, inclusive, participatory and transparent** for all people and will **support reporting by all relevant stakeholders.**

- ✓ be **people-centred, gender-sensitive, respect human rights** and have a particular focus on the **poorest, most vulnerable and those furthest behind.**

- ✓ maintain a **longer-term orientation, identify achievements, challenges, gaps and critical success factors and support countries in making informed policy choices.**

- ✓ Help to **mobilize the necessary means of implementation and partnerships, support the identification of solutions and best practices and promote the coordination and effectiveness of the international development system**.

SG's Guidelines propose:

- Highlights (summary)
    - overall progress, best practices, lessons learned, key challenges and support needed, **how the Government has responded to the integrated and indivisible nature of the SDGs**
- Introduction
    - context and objectives of the review, key features of the country context, policy architecture and policy tools for integrating the three dimensions of sustainable development, **links to other international agreements**
- Methodology of the review
    - discuss the process for preparation of the national review
    - whole-of-government approach and mechanisms for stakeholder engagement

- ## Policy and Enabling Environment

  a) **Creating ownership of the SDGs**;

  - efforts made towards all stakeholders to inform them on and involve them in the SDGs

  b) **Incorporation of the SDGs in national framework**;

  - initiatives undertaken to adapt the SDGs and targets to its national circumstances
  - policy coherence and interlinkages
  - implementation challenges and way forward

  c) **Integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development**

  d) **Leaving no one behind**
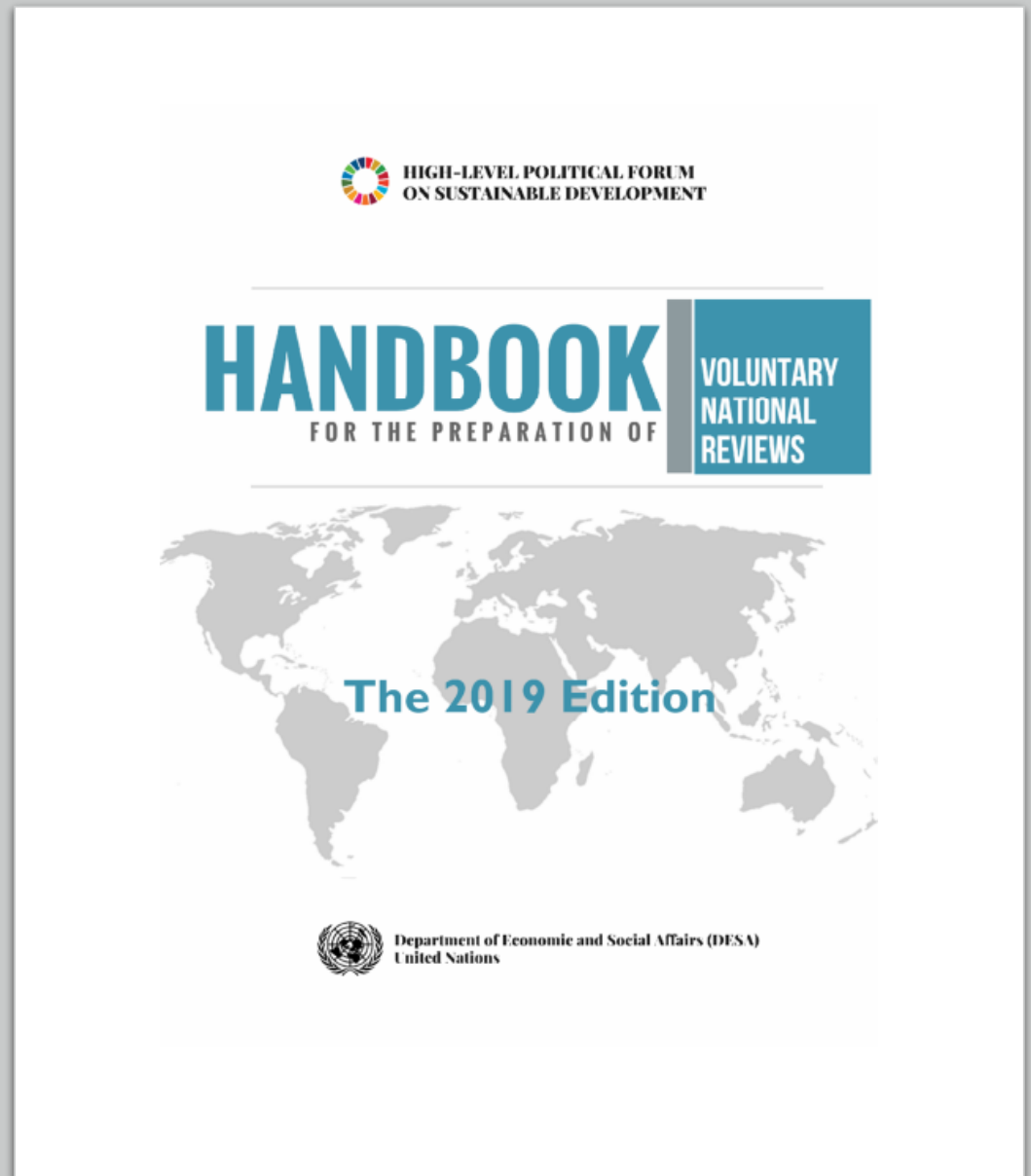
  e) **Institutional mechanisms**

  - how the country has adapted its institutional framework in light of the 2030 Agenda, coordination and integration to achieve policy coherence

  f) **Structural issues**

- Goals and targets
  - Brief information on progress and the status of all **17 SDGs**
  - Critical difficulties in reaching goals and how they have been addressed

- Means of implementation
  - How MOI are mobilized, difficulties, and what additional resources are needed.
  - How financial systems and resource allocations are aligned with 2030 Agenda
  - Technology; capacity development and data needs; multi-stakeholder partnerships

- Next steps
  - Next steps to enhance implementation, national and sub-national level, dissemination

- Conclusion
  - summary of analysis, findings and policy implications and how to apply lessons learned in the future

- Annex
  - statistical annex with data and/or annexes to showcase best practices or comments from stakeholders

VNR Handbook

- Supplement to the SG's guidelines

- Provides basic, practical information on the steps that countries may take when preparing VNRs

- Available in several UN languages

Best Practices in VNR reporting

- Engage a broad range of stakeholders

- Focus on quality, not quantity

- Include a statistical annex, if suitable

- Address implementation of all 17 SDGs

- Include analysis, lessons learned and detailed examples

- Avoid mere listings of strategies and programmes

- Showcase both strengths and weaknesses

- Identify areas where additional support is needed

- Spell out the next steps in implementation

UTILIZING THE VNR FINDINGS

✓ **Report at the national level before and after a VNR**

✓ **Embed lessons learned into institutions and link the VNRs to reporting of other mechanisms and conventions**

✓ **Strengthen policy coherence, interlinkages among SDGs and assess trade-offs**

✓ **Undertake costing analysis for SDGs and align with national budgets**

✓ **Take actions in the executive and legislative branches of government**

✓ **Continuously monitor SDG implementation, including through parliaments and supreme audit institutions**

✓ **Measure impacts of strategies and polices put in place**

✓ **Strengthen VNR follow-up by implementing lessons learned from other countries at the HLPF**

Resources

- UN Secretary-General's updated voluntary common reporting guidelines for VNRs at the HLPF

- Handbook for VNR Preparations [EN] [FR] [ES]

- Q&A for VNRs at the 2019 HLPF

- VNR Synthesis Report 2018, 2017 and 2016

- All the above can be found at HLPF VNR database https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/vnrs/