Your role in the reporting process

Is your country participating in the VNR?

YES

How are you involved in the consultation process of the VNR?

Will your LRGA prepare its own national report?

What will be your main role/s in the process (collecting data, advocacy, engaging stakeholders, drafting the report, etc.)

NO

How can you get independently involved?

Will your LRGA prepare its own national report?

What could your main role/s be in the process (collecting data, advocacy, engaging stakeholders, drafting the report, etc.)
Involving stakeholders

List of stakeholders

1. + Pros /- Cons
   Actions:

2. + Pros /- Cons
   Actions:

3. + Pros /- Cons
   Actions:

4. + Pros /- Cons
   Actions:

5. + Pros /- Cons
   Actions:
What data should be collected

What information should you collect in your territory?

What data sources are available to you?

How will you collect the data? Which mechanisms will you use?
Sharing the results

Where and how will you submit your experience(s)?

How will you ensure that your inputs will be taken into account in the VNR?
National Review (Template 1)

1. **Summary (half page)**
   Synthesis of the report, highlighting the role of LRGs in localizing the SDGs and highlighting one or two good practices and one or two challenges in which LRGs would need support in terms of capacity-building, financial support, a partnership and/or technology, etc.

2. **Introduction (two paragraphs)**
   A short paragraph presenting the national context. Has the country started the SDGs implementation process? Why are the LRGs developing their own national report? What are the key challenges facing LRGs in the ‘localization’ of the SDGs in their country/countries?

   A paragraph with a short description of the current LRG situation: the number of LRGs, key responsibilities for urban and territorial management (e.g., services, economic development, etc.), key figures in local finance (local revenues, expenditure and investment, and total national government revenue, expenditure and public investment).

3. **Methodology and process for the preparation of the review (one short paragraph)**
   To what extent have LRGs been consulted for the National Voluntary Review? To what extent have their views been considered?

4. **Policy and enabling environment (2 pages)**
   **A. Creating ownership of the Sustainable Development Goals:**
   
   [outline the efforts made to inform and involve all stakeholders — including LRGs — in the process, including the dissemination of the review process]
   
   - **Participation of LRGs in the national debate on the SDGs:** if the country has initiated the process for the implementation of the SDGs, the report should provide more information about how its LRGs have been involved in the political debate. How can political and institutional balances contribute to the involvement of LRGs in the implementation of the global agendas?

     The LRG report should also highlight any initiatives taken by associations of local governments and sub-national governments to disseminate information about the SDGs and to initiate the implementation process at the sub-national level (localization).

   **B. Incorporation of the Sustainable Development Goals within the national (and local) frameworks:**
   
   [This may describe national efforts made to integrate the SDGs into the country’s legislation, policies, plans and programmes, including its...]

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strategy for achieving sustainable development. Countries could consider referring to major efforts undertaken by local authorities and non-state actors to implement the goals, including partnerships.

This point can be jointly developed with point f (see below) on “institutional mechanisms”.

- **LRGs and national policies**: how have LRGs been associated with the definition of national policies or strategies for SDG implementation? To what extent have LRG priorities and positions been considered in national policies or national development plans to support the ‘localization’ process?

- **Multilevel governance**: has any specific mechanism been created to ensure that the implementation and review processes are followed up? If so, how have the LRGs been associated with it (e.g., in Brazil, the creation of a National Committee on the SDGs — via Decree 8892, October 2016. This body includes representatives from ministries, LRGs and civil society)? Have the SDGs had any impact on national legislation or institutional frameworks and helped to promote reforms and/or improve coordination between national and subnational governments (multilevel governance)?

- **Current institutional framework**: the report should explain the role of LRGs in the ‘localization’ of SDGs, based on the current distribution of responsibilities between different levels of government (as defined through laws governing decentralization and existing rules and policies). It should also highlight the national capacity to build programmes for sub-national governments and what reforms are currently being, or should be, considered in order to improve the achievement of the SDGs in different territories and thereby ensure that “no-one gets left behind”.

- **Local democracy**: given the critical role of the involvement of local stakeholders in SDG implementation, the LRG reports should analyse whether the existing national legislation and the local institutional framework facilitate and promote the involvement of civil society and the participation of economic stakeholders in local decision making (e.g., Goal 16.6: “develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels”). LRGs should highlight sub-national government initiatives to promote the participation of local stakeholder (e.g., via participatory planning and budgeting).

- **Create an enabling environment**: the LRG report should stress how national frameworks either facilitate or hinder the initiatives of LRGs. Even though, in most countries, it is probably still too early to identify any important legal or institutional reforms, the LRG report could help to define what the key areas are at the level of legislative and national policy that need to be revised in order to support SDG localization and the creation of an ‘enabling environment’ for LRGs.

- **Indicators**: as regards monitoring and review, what can national governments do to ‘disaggregate’ national data? How are LRGs associated with these initiatives?
• The LRG report should also highlight any sub-national initiatives taken to integrate SDGs into local development plans and local policies. This should involve the strengthening of institutional coordination and of planning mechanisms at the local and regional scales, and the creation of new local alliances (between LRGs and local stakeholders) to support the localization process.

C. Integration of the three dimensions

[Discuss how the three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental) are being integrated, as well as the principles of the 2030 Agenda. For example, “leaving no one behind” is one of the main priorities of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in a particular case]

Whenever possible, LRGs should, through concrete examples, highlight how local and regional development plans can help to bring about a more integrated approach that includes all three of the target dimensions (plus culture).

D. Goals and targets

[Brief information on progress and the current status of all the Sustainable Development Goals and also of the critical difficulties encountered in reaching them. If possible, provide a more in-depth analysis on a few selected goals, targets and innovative policies. The discussion could focus on trends, successes, challenges, emerging issues, and lessons learned]

E. Thematic analysis

[Include an analysis of any progress and initiatives related to the thematic focus of high-level political fora for the year in question]

Points D and E can be developed together, focusing on the analysis of national policies and LRG actions to support specific thematic areas, e.g., Goal 11 on inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements.

The LRG report should highlight specific initiatives undertaken by sub-national governments in relevant areas, e.g., slum upgrading, strengthening urban participatory planning, urban mobility, water and waste management, and adapting to and mitigating climate change, among others.

Whenever possible, the report should refer to SDG indicators collected by national and international institutions and, if needed, it will be possible to add indicators identified by LRGs to pinpoint major gaps in official statistical systems relating to SDG achievements.

F. Institutional mechanisms

[How the views of different ministries, agencies, levels of government and non-governmental stakeholders are taken into account and information about the institution in charge of coordination and integration. How responsibility is allocated among various levels of Government (national, subnational and local) for the coherent implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda]
This issue should be addressed jointly with point B (see above).

5. **Means of implementation (one paragraph, half a page max.)**

[Discuss how the means of implementation are mobilized, what difficulties this process faces, and what additional resources are needed to implement the 2030 Agenda, including the terms of financing, the capacity to meet development needs, and also information relating to data and statistics, knowledge-sharing, technology and partnerships]

This section should introduce a general analysis of the evolution of local financing, explaining whether and how resources have been decentralized to allow LRGs to meet their responsibilities and what needs to be improved to achieve fiscal decentralization and to develop mechanisms that ensure greater balance between different regions and territories in order to support balanced and cohesive territorial development and “leave no one behind”.

6. **Conclusion (half a page)**

[A summary of the analysis, with the findings and policy implications]
1. **Summary**

Synthesis of the report, highlighting the role of LRGs in localizing the SDGs and highlighting one or two good practices and one or two challenges for which LRGs would need support to help them with capacity-building, financing, establishing partnerships, technology, etc.

2. **Methodology and process for the preparation of the review**: sources of the data and information collected, number of participating LRGs etc.

3. **Policy and enabling environment**

A. The mechanisms for the participation (multi-level governance) of LRGs in the SDG national debate and for the definition, follow-up and evaluation of the contributions made to the Agenda (ad-hoc mechanism, informal consultations, no participation at all...)

B. The extent to which the priorities of the LRGs have been considered in national laws, policies and/or plans in order to support the localization process; also the possibility of LRGs contributing to the Agenda and the mechanisms used for data collection

C. Initiatives taken to integrate SDGs into local laws, plans and policies; the strengthening of institutional coordination, and the creation of new local alliances (between LRGs and local stakeholders) to support the localization process

D. The main difficulties facing LRGs (legal constraints, lack of financing, capacity to meet development needs, need for technical resources, differences between territories...)

4. **Goals and targets: thematic analysis**

Analysis of progress, initiatives and challenges related to the thematic focus of the HLPF for a given year, and also other issues considered relevant. Whenever possible, this should be analysed using SDG indicators or other indicators adapted to serve this purpose

5. **Conclusion**
Voluntary Local Review

What is a Voluntary Local Review (VLR)?

Since 2016, the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) of the United Nations has asked member states to submit their reports — the Voluntary National Reviews (VNR) — to assess the state of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). VNRs promote accountability, transparency, and encourage dialogue on shared experiences between countries.

As all of the SDGs have targets directly related to the responsibilities of local and regional governments, many cities have taken the first steps towards mapping their activities to achieve the SDGs and using the goals as a comprehensive framework through which to assess their progress.

A Voluntary Local Review (VLR) has no official status at the UN, although the compilation of one underlines the value of the SDGs as a global framework driving local action. Moreover, Local Government Associations (LGA) advocate for including local achievements in VNRs.

The Value of a VLR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Within local government</th>
<th>Within civil society</th>
<th>Within national government</th>
<th>Within the global community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Align to Common framework, highlight the importance of data, update the divisions of labour, and break silos.</td>
<td>Listen to community and promote transparency and accountability, encourage new partnership and leadership.</td>
<td>Affirm the principle of subsidiarity and the role of local governments in achieving national commitments (VNRs).</td>
<td>Engage with the global community, make your effort visible, elevate city priorities to the global conversation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What information is contained in a VLR?

Refer the SDG in plans and policies

Many cities have tagged actions that demonstrated that they actually already work towards achieving the SDGs thus promoting dialogue between public administration and citizens.

Strategies to meet and to commit extra effort to achieve the SDGs have reshaped the character of large and iconic projects to look at them through a transversal lens.

Data and Indicators

Cities take the responsibility of managing the implementation of the SDGs in order to promote goal-orientation and continued progress.

Existing performance indicators are a good basis to confirm the relevance of global indicators on the local level. VLR indicators may be local as well as global.

Local norms

Local norms ensure that reporting becomes a continuous exercise independent of leadership changes.

Structure of a VLR

There is no set template for the drafting of a VLR. Various partners and academia have supported local reporting with guidelines and web resources. UCLG contributes with a global report and learning module to engage in reporting.
Starting the process

More than a dozen global cities have been developing a VLR and the methodology applied was similar. It mainly followed the following guiding questions:

1. **Who starts?**
   - Ensure political support: Mayor’s office and council can support the report and commit to localizing.
   - Ensure citizen involvement: A report can help to empower participatory processes.

2. **Who is managing?**
   - Appoint an SDG coordinator or facilitator from municipal staff:
     - **Advantages:** Funding and inter-departmental information sharing.
     - **Disadvantages:** Risk of blocking momentum, decrease in proactivity.
   - Commission or Working Group:
     - **Advantages:** Empowers integration of servants and citizens and new leadership.
     - **Disadvantages:** Difficulty in funding and discontinuity in reporting.

3. **Who to learn from?**
   - Consult the national local government association on their role in VNRs.
   - Visit national and global knowledge and research platforms and discover what other cities are doing and how partners and academia can help.

4. **Is Data available?**
   - Difficulty in access of databases.
   - Consult budget cycle.
   - Map different data along the city space.
   - Engage in partnerships to collect and evaluate data with different stakeholders.

5. **Keep engaged**
   - Cities must know their audience and target of the VLR.
   - Open consultation at the local level increases accountability between citizens and government.
   - Share your lessons and report through Local Government Associations.
Imagine you have been invited to speak at the International Cities Conference, during the sustainable development panel. You are expected to make a 3-minute oral presentation about your city’s successful changes in the last few years.

Use the SDG framework to talk about your city’s success story, referring to at least 2 SDGs and using appropriate indicators. You can also refer to the structure of a VLR (summary, methodology, policy environment, goals & targets, and conclusion) to organize your presentation.

Give your city a name, and define your position within the city. Feel free to come up with additional information about your city to the one provided. Use the tokens at the bottom to vote for the presentations you like the most.

City A

Name: ________________________  (You name it!)
Habitants: 75 000
Location: In your territory
Key characteristics: City situated near one of the country’s most visited National Parks, with good touristic infrastructure and quite good access to the region’s capital (buses every 40 min).

A recent debate is posed in parliament for national government to forbid plastic bags, as biodiversity of bird species has reduced 30% over 10 years.

Key project aligned with the SDGs:

- **Monthly market** for 50-60 local farmers, where they exchange 657892 products. Average weekly participation of habitants is 2500.

- **7000 free books** for all secondary school students in the city.

- First network of **city bikes** in the region. 6000 users in the first year.

- Creation of a **board of advisors** to the city council for **climate emergency**. Monthly meetings with scientists, representatives of NGOs and activists.

- Creation of a **free phone number** for basic **juridical advice** for the citizens. Attended 7500 calls in last 12 months.
Imagine you have been invited to speak at the International Cities Conference, during the sustainable development panel. You are expected to make a 3-minute oral presentation about your city’s successful changes in the last few years.

Use the SDG framework to talk about your city’s success story, referring to at least 2 SDGs and using appropriate indicators. You can also refer to the structure of a VLR (summary, methodology, policy environment, goals & targets, and conclusion) to organize your presentation.

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**City B**

**Name:** _______________________ (You name it!)

**Habitants:** 200,000

**Location:** In your territory

**Key characteristics:** Industrial city with a big pollution problem. The country’s mining sector is in constant downturn (unemployment 18%). Many residents are employed in local factories.

**Key project aligned with the SDGs:**

- **1** 750 homeless habitants attended by “Integrated Support” programme.
- **2** 12,000 free school breakfasts from sustainable local produce.
- **3** Green job training for 10,000 secondary school students to develop an interest in renewable energy industry.
- **4** Expanded organics collection to serve more than 25% residents — the largest program of its kind in the country.
- **5** Planted over 20,000 trees and created the City’s street tree inventory — where users can track stewardship as well as submit tree updates and service requests.
Imagine you have been invited to speak at the International Cities Conference, during the sustainable development panel. You are expected to make a 3-minute oral presentation about your city’s successful changes in the last few years.

Use the SDG framework to talk about your city’s success story, referring to at least 2 SDGs and using appropriate indicators. You can also refer to the structure of a VLR (summary, methodology, policy environment, goals & targets, and conclusion) to organize your presentation.

Give your city a name, and define your position within the city. Feel free to come up with additional information about your city to the one provided. Use the tokens at the bottom to vote for the presentations you like the most.

Name: ______________________ (You name it!)

Habitants: 350 000

Location: In your territory

Key characteristics: City located close to the big metropolis which is a place of work for most of the city’s habitants. Young people tend to leave the city right after high school. Girls and women are afraid to leave, as the gender based violence is high in the country, including at work. (Proportion of women subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner, since aged 15 is 10 in 1000)

Key project aligned with the SDGs:

- **Sexual education** classes for women and girls from the marginalized neighborhoods. In total 12 000 attendees.

- **Subsidies** for 6200 senior and low-income homeowners to ensure the access to **clean drinking water**.

- **Solar installations** in 7 city buildings. The buildings are fully sustainable.

- **6000 microcredits** for youth to develop projects in the city. 30% of the participants came from low-income families.

- Financed over 500 affordable apartments and homes. The biggest investment in **accessible housing** in the city’s history.

- 25 schools joined the **energy saving program** led by the students.