



**United Nations**

Department of  
Economic and  
Social Affairs

## **Regional Voluntary National Review and Voluntary Local Review Workshop for Latin American and Caribbean countries**

### ***Sixth Meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development***

Enrique V. Iglesias Room  
ECLAC Headquarters Santiago de Chile  
Tuesday, 25 April 2023  
3:00-7:00 p.m. Santiago, Chile

Within the framework of the Sixth Meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development to be held in person at the headquarters of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in Santiago, from 25 to 28 April, 2023, under the Chairship of Argentina, ECLAC and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) will organize a regional workshop on Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) and the relationship between VNRs and Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) for Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) countries.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The countries of the LAC region have appropriated the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as a State commitment, in broad cooperation with multiple actors, including civil society, youth, the private sector, academia, local authorities and legislative authorities, among others. Between 2016 and 2022, 31 of the 33 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean reported their progress in the ownership, monitoring and implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs with the presentation of at least one VNR at the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in New York. Of these 31 countries, 16 countries have presented a VNR on more than one occasion.

Despite the various challenges posed by multiple crisis, including the COVID-19 pandemic, the crisis in Ukraine and climate change, the commitment and sustained effort of the countries to ensure the follow-up of the 2030 Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) remains uncompromised. While the 2030 Agenda continues to be the roadmap for a sustainable post-pandemic recovery, the VNRs continue to be the main mechanisms for reviewing the progress and challenges in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the national level and allow accounting for the trajectory and the strategies of each country. They also generate opportunities for peer learning and collective reflection on common or cross-border challenges of sustainable development. The emergence in the region of a series of VLRs, innovative exercises that express the commitment of actors at the sub-national, municipal and local levels with the 2030 Agenda, also constitute a tool for appropriation of the 2030 Agenda and complement national monitoring and review efforts.

## **PARTICIPANTS**

This year, four Latin American and Caribbean countries will formally present their VNRs during the HLPF in July 2023: St. Kitts and Nevis for the first time, Barbados and Guyana for the second time, and Chile for the third time. Participants at this regional workshop will include representatives from the 2023 VNR countries as well as those countries that intend to present their VNR in 2024 and beyond; other countries from the Latin American and Caribbean region, including those actively involved in [ECLAC's Community of Practice on VNRs for LAC countries](#) that may share relevant experiences from VNR processes of previous years; local authorities from the LAC region that have been involved in SDG localization efforts and/or the preparation of VLRs; Resident Coordinators of the United Nations system and representatives of their offices, and other officials of the United Nations system, including from DESA and ECLAC, as well as other actors, including civil society and the academic sector.

## **GOAL OF THE WORKSHOP**

The main goal of the workshop is to strengthen the knowledge and capacities of LAC countries in the formulation and preparation of their VNRs and VLRs as part of national strategy to implement and monitor the 2030 Agenda, and to enhance vertical integration across the local, national, regional and global levels.

## **OUTCOMES**

Expected outcomes of this workshop include:

- Greater regional dialogue, peer learning and exchange of good practices in the formulation, dissemination and presentation of VNRs and VLRs in different contexts, as well as in the national responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and its interlinkages with the implementation of the SDGs.
- Strengthening of the capacities of the participants to link the VNRs with the national long-term implementation strategies of the 2030 Agenda, link subnational and local efforts and identify their contribution to the VNR process.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The workshop will include interactive sessions on national efforts to prepare for VNRs and follow-up to the 2030 Agenda. Specific areas will be discussed, such as the strategies and roadmaps for the fulfillment of the 2030 Agenda in all its dimensions in the medium and long term, the importance of the territorialization of the SDGs, monitoring and measuring progress, identifying challenges and solutions, and active participation of relevant actors, among others. Valuable lessons learned from past VNR and VLR processes will be showcased, as well as the key messages that emerged from ECLAC's Community of Practice. Additionally, VNRs and VLRs will be reflected on as a tool to accelerate action for the SDGs within the framework of the Decade of Action and with a view towards the United Nations SDG Summit coming up in September 2023. The workshop will be held in a spirit of peer learning by encouraging the exchange of concrete experiences from the participating countries and local authorities. Countries will be invited to give presentations based on guiding questions, which will be followed by interactive discussions to encourage dialogue and exchange among all participants.

## PROGRAMME

15:00 – 15:10	<p><b>Welcome and Opening Remarks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cielo Morales, Director, ILPES, ECLAC</li><li>• Neil Pierre, Acting Director of OISC, DESA</li></ul> <p><b>Moderator</b> – Abdullahi Abdulkadri, Coordinator, Statistics and Social Development Unit, Subregional headquarters for the Caribbean, ECLAC</p>
15:10 – 15:30	<p><b>Session 1: VNRs and the implementation strategy of the 2030 Agenda</b></p> <p><b>The VNRs as a tool for the 2030 Agenda implementation and peer-learning in Latin America and the Caribbean</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Presentation by Mareike Eberz, Economic Affairs Officer, Office of the Executive Secretary, ECLAC</li></ul> <p><b>The VNRs at the 2023 United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Presentation by Maame Agyeben, Associate Sustainable Development Officer, OISC, DESA</li></ul> <p>Q&amp;A</p>
15:30-16:00	<p><b>Presentations by the 2023 VNR countries from the region</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shennel Richards, Chief Research Officer, Prime Minister's Office, Barbados</li><li>• Andrés Borlone, Multilateral Policy Directorate, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Chile</li><li>• Auren Manners, Director, Department of Public Sector Investment Planning, Ministry of Sustainable Development, St. Kitts and Nevis</li></ul> <p><u>Guiding questions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ <i>Which lessons learned can you share regarding the VNR elaboration process?</i></li><li>➤ <i>What are the main opportunities for acceleration of the SDGs that are reflected in your VNR?</i></li><li>➤ <i>How have you enabled meaningful engagement of relevant stakeholders in the preparation of your VNR?</i></li><li>➤ <i>How are you addressing statistical impediments for monitoring the 2030 Agenda?</i></li><li>➤ <i>Are there any unresolved issues in the elaboration of your VNR? How have you solved the main challenges in preparing your VNR?</i></li></ul>
16.00-16.30	<p><b>Interactive dialogue</b></p>

*Peer-exchange with previous VNR countries and other stakeholders*

**Meaningful stakeholder engagement in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Antigua and Barbuda**

- Joy-Marie King, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Director of International Trade, Antigua and Barbuda

**Data and statistics in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Costa Rica**

- Carla Morales, Development Manager, MIDEPLAN, Costa Rica

**The VNR Quality Index – a new tool to measure how countries are reporting the national implementation of the 2030 Agenda**

- Javier Surasky, Program Officer Governance and Financing for Sustainable Development, Cepei

**16:30 - 17:00**

Coffee break

**17:00 – 18:00**

**Session 2: Ensuring a Dialogue between the VNRs and VLRs – Experiences from 2021 and 2022 VNR Countries**

**Moderator** – Humberto Soto, Social Affairs Officer, Social Affairs Officer, Subregional Headquarters in Mexico, ECLAC

**High-level Intervention** - Carmen Ubaldi, Minister Executive Secretary of the Technical Secretariat for Planning of the Republic of Paraguay

**VNR/VLR Integration: developments at international level**

- Presentation Carol Pollack, Inter-Regional Advisor, DSDG, DESA

**National and sub-national experiences from the region**

Presentations by government and local authorities:

- **Argentina** – Experience from a 2022 VNR country
  - María Eugenia Brisson, Technical coordinator of the National SDG Team of the National Council for the Coordination of Social Policies, Argentina
  - Constanza Renzone, Secretary of International Affairs, Tierra del Fuego province, Antarctica and South Atlantic Islands, Argentina
- **Mexico** – Experience from a 2021 VNR country
  - Jessica Gabriela Ibarra Castro, Deputy Director of International Relations, General Coordination of Advisors and International Affairs of the Government of Mexico City

- **Paraguay** – Integrating VNRs and VLRs for a 2024 VNR
  - Ruth Vera, Vice Minister, Technical Planning Secretariat of the Republic of Paraguay or Ministry of Foreign Affairs SDG Commission
  - Yenny Franco, Strategic Planning, Municipality of Philadelphia

Guiding Questions

- *How have VNR and VLR processes contributed to dialogue and planning between national and subnational levels in terms of SDG implementation?*
- *What are the recommendations to strengthen the engagement of local and regional governments in the VNR process?*
- *How do VNRs and VLRs inform and strengthen each other?*
- *How have local and regional governments and stakeholders been engaged in the VNR process in your country? What are the main outcomes of this engagement?*
- *What are the main challenges, lessons learned and recommendations in conducting VLRs and/or utilizing VLRs in a Voluntary National Review?*
- *How can local stakeholders, in particular local and regional governments, support the provision of timely and disaggregated data for national SDG follow-up and VNR reports?*

<b>18.00 - 18.30</b>	Interactive dialogue
<b>18.30 – 18:45</b>	<b>Final Reflections and Closing Remarks – DESA/ECLAC</b>