

Pacific 2024 Voluntary National Reviews Clinic

An Associated Event of the Seventh Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development

Thursday 23 November 2023, 09:00-16:00

Hybrid (Suva, Fiji and online)

CONCEPT NOTE

Context

The voluntary national review (VNR) is a process through which countries assess and present national progress made in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The VNR is a country-led and country-driven process which aims to facilitate the sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned, with a view to accelerating SDG implementation. VNRs are not only a reporting mechanism to periodically take stock, but importantly is a tool to continuously reflect on and improve the SDG implementation process itself. VNRs also seek to identify ways to strengthen plans, policies, and institutions of governments and to mobilize multistakeholder support and partnerships for SDG acceleration.

Next generation VNRs enable countries to show development since the previous report by deepening impact and trend analysis, increasing localization, reviewing resource mobilization, and improving engagement with stakeholders. National reviews can also indicate emerging challenges, which is particularly important in the context of ongoing crises of climate change and natural disasters, geopolitical uncertainties, and economic slowdown.

Most countries in the Pacific have completed and reported at least one VNR. Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, Vanuatu, and Solomon Islands are presenting their second report in 2024, while Samoa their third one. At the same time, Voluntary Local Reviews are being prepared in Fiji focused on particular geographic areas to provide a nuanced and spatial context to SDG related issues. While reporting on the specific context of each country, the VNR also outline challenges, many of which are similar across countries, especially within the same region

Objectives

This VNR workshop aims to facilitate the exchange of experiences and good practices in preparing VNRs. It will provide an opportunity to discuss the role of VNRs as enablers for



multistakeholder partnerships and improve planning and policy frameworks to accelerate SDG implementation. The Workshop will also discuss technical support for the VNR process, including through ESCAP resources.

Held in the format of interactive and forward-looking discussions, the workshop seeks to:

- Offer a space to discuss VNR preparation.
- Foster capacity building and peer learning by providing advice on VNR preparation processes and key challenges encountered in the 1st and 2nd VNRs.
- Provide an overview of ESCAP’s VNR support and tools.
- Promote south-south cooperation on the VNRs and SDG acceleration.

Participants

The workshop is intended for relevant stakeholders from the Government, academia, civil society, parliaments, private sector, think tanks, international organizations, etc. involved in the preparation of VNRs in the Pacific.

Modalities

The workshop will take place on **Thursday 23 November 2023** at the ESCAP Pacific Office Headquarters on Level 5, Kadavu House in Suva, Fiji and online **via MS Teams**. It will be conducted in English. Detailed information can be found on the [official event page](#).

Tentative Agenda

Thursday, 23 November 2023

**All times as stated in Suva Time (GMT+12)*

Time	Session
Morning	<p>Setting the scene: The role of voluntary national reviews <i>This session will introduce elements the key elements of the VNR process, highlighting the role of VNRs as tools for SDG acceleration.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Tour de table and participants’ experience with VNRs.</i> ➤ <i>Overview of VNR timeline & process, and best practices from the Pacific region.</i> ➤ <i>Reflections on the role of VNRs in SDG acceleration.</i>
	<p>Roundtable 1: Exploring the voluntary national review process and experiences from the region <i>This roundtable discussion will provide space for countries to share their experiences with VNRs.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Country experiences with 2nd VNR <p>Open Discussion/Talanoa</p>

Group photo and networking break	
	<p>Session 2: Using the VNR to strengthen evidence-based policy on sustainable development and targeting those left behind</p> <p><i>This roundtable will discuss approaches and methodologies to integrate SDG progress assessments as well as analysis on the most vulnerable groups and into VNR processes. It will also present good practices at country level and will elaborate on how VNRs can promote better use of evidence in policy making, particularly in relation to targeting inequalities and those being left behind.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>SDG Progress Assessment: using data for evidence-based analysis for VNR</i> ▪ Country experiences of conducting/utilizing an SDG Progress Assessment ➤ <i>Integrating Leaving No-One Behind analysis in the VNR</i> ▪ Country experience of conducting/utilizing an LNOB analysis <p>Open Discussion/Talanoa</p>
Lunch break	
Afternoon	<p>Session 3: Policy coherence and planning for implementation of national development priorities and SDGs</p> <p><i>This roundtable will discuss key policy coherence and planning systems issues, practices, and opportunities to enable more effective implementation of national development priorities and SDGs.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Country reflections <p>Open Discussion/Talanoa</p>
	<p>Session 4: Multistakeholder approaches for VNRs to promote SDG acceleration</p> <p><i>This roundtable will discuss the importance of promoting multistakeholder participation in the VNRs, presenting best practices from the region with stakeholder engagement, including through ESCAP's VNR Twinning Programme and other collaborative initiatives.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stakeholder experiences with engagement in VNR processes <p>Open Discussion/Talanoa</p>
	<p>Wrap-up and vote of thanks: Key take aways</p> <p><i>This session will summarise key points emerged during the discussions and will present future activities on Follow-up and Review.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Forthcoming global VNR workshops and APFSD</i> ➤ <i>Connecting countries for peer learning</i> ➤ <i>Resources and support available</i>

Further Information

For more information on ESCAP's VNR support please visit: <https://www.unescap.org/2030-agenda/voluntary-national-reviews>

All questions regarding the workshop can be directed to escap-vnr@un.org with copy to escap-pacific@un.org.