



WHITE & CASE

Analysis of the 2020 Voluntary National Reviews and SDG 16





The VNRs: In 2015, the Member States of the United Nations announced their commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which include 17 Sustainable Development Goals (“SDGs”) and 169 targets. The Member States vowed not only to act on these critical issues but also to engage in voluntary, transparent, and rigorous follow-ups and reviews. The results are published through the Voluntary National Reviews (“VNRs”). The VNRs use a set of global targets and indicators to evaluate the progress and challenges of implementing the SDGs by each Member State.

SDG 16 – Promotion of Peaceful, Just, and Inclusive Societies: SDG 16 calls to “[p]romote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.” In order to ensure effective reporting and understand how SDG 16 is interlinked with other SDGs, the Global Alliance for Reporting Progress on Peaceful, Just, and Inclusive Societies (the “Global Alliance”) was established. White & Case LLP, as member of the Alliance, examined each the VNRs from 2016–2019 to assess whether, and to what extent member states reported on SDG 16 and 24 related targets .

Review Criteria: In a process similar to that performed by White & Case for the 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019 VNR report cycles, White & Case reviewed the 45 VNRs submitted and publicly published in 2020 and analyzed (i) whether the countries reported on the SDG 16+ Targets; (ii) the extent of the reporting on these targets; (iii) whether the report indicated that it was a product of an inclusive, participatory process; (iv) whether the report noted that the private sector was involved in implementation and reporting, and (v) whether sources of data were provided. For member states who submitted prior VNRs, White & Case compared the member states’ SDG16+ reporting in 2020 to its prior submission(s).

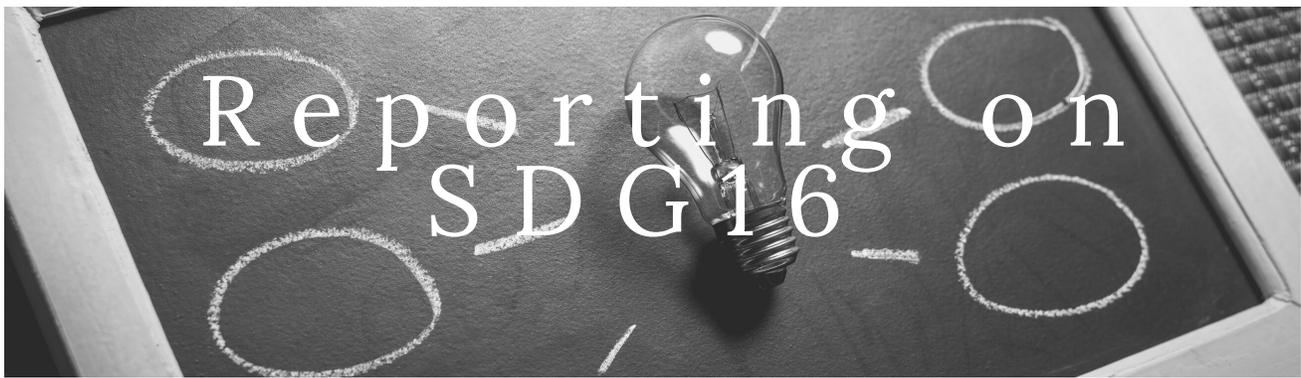
This year, the White & Case review also assessed whether the VNR: contained a specific section or chapter on SDG16; relied on Human Rights reports or engaged Human Rights institutions or data; discussed COVID-19’s impact on SDG16 reporting or implementation; mentioned negative trends or challenges in implementing or collecting SDG16 data; and provided next steps post-VNR submissions with respect to SDG16 and the 2030 Agenda.

Detailed Findings: A detailed chart of the overall findings is attached hereto as *Annex I*. Below is a tally of the number of VNRs (out of 45 VNRs submitted) that reported on SDG16+Targets:³

NUMBER OF COUNTRIES THAT REPORTED ON THE SDG16+ TARGETS		
SDG	Target	Total
1.B	Institutions and policies for poverty reduction	42
4.5	All forms of discrimination in education	44
4.7	Culture of peace, <u>non violence</u> and global citizenship	32
4.A	Safe education facilities	37
5.1	Discrimination against women and girls	43
5.2	Violence against women and girls	41
5.3	Child marriage and female genital mutilation	31
5.5	Women's participation and leadership	44
5.C	Policies and legislation for gender equality	43
8.5	Equal pay for equal work	38
8.7	Child labour and soldiers; forced <u>labor</u> and modern slavery and human trafficking	34
8.8	Labour rights; safe workplaces	34
10.2	Political, social, and economic inclusion	42
10.3	Equal opportunities, laws, <u>policies</u> and practices	39
10.4	Policies for greater equality	40
10.5	Regulation of global financial markets and institutions	14
10.6	Representation in global economic markets and institutions	15
10.7	Safe migration	26
11.1	Safe housing	43
11.2	Safe transport	40
11.3	Inclusive urbanisation	35
11.7	Safe public spaces	26
16.1	Reduce violence	44
16.2	End child abuse, exploitation, and violence	34
16.3	Equal access to justice	42
16.4	Reduce illicit financial and arms flows	30
16.5	Reduce corruption and bribery	44
16.6	Accountable transparent institutions	41
16.7	Representative decision-making	27
16.8	Participation of developing countries in global governance	20
16.9	Legal identity for all	27
16.10	Access to information and fundamental freedoms	34
16.A	Strengthen national institutions to prevent violence, terrorism, and crime	37
16.B	Promote non-discriminatory laws and policies	33
17.10	Equitable trade system	27
17.3	Tax collection	37

The level of reporting varied among the VNRs. The total number listed reflects the number of countries that made reference to a relevant substantive topic, even if supporting data or detailed information was not provided or the target/indicator itself was not mentioned. The detailed chart in Annex I identifies each VNR's reporting by target and differentiates between mere mention of a particular topic and data-supported reporting.





Forty-one countries reporting in 2020 contain a specific section or chapter on SDG16.

Armenia's VNR contains a separate section devoted to SDG16, which includes the following subsections: (i) access to justice and protection of human rights, (ii) combating corruption, (iii) effective, accountable and inclusive institutions, and (iv) protection of environment and tackling climate change.

Honduras's VNR contains a section specifically devoted to SDG16, focusing mainly on reduction in homicide, controlling corruption, improvement of public institutions and their transparency, and human rights, specifically protections for laborers and vulnerable populations.

Morocco's report includes a specific section for each SDG, including SDG16. Each section includes three subsections detailing (i) the current state of development for the SDG, (ii) the primary challenges Morocco faces in obtaining the SDG, and (iii) strategies and programs implemented to obtain the SDG.

Russia's VNR contains a specific chapter on SDG16, which provides a detailed discussion on each of the SDG16 targets. In addition, the VNR's preamble contains a summary of conclusions on the progress on each SDG, including on SDG16.

Ukraine's report includes a comprehensive section related to SDG 16. It identifies nine targets, which track, but are not identical to, the twelve targets of SDG 16 on the global level. Ukraine has identified 24 indicators of the targets, but data is unavailable for 3. Of the 21 that are measured, 18 show positive dynamics, including ten for which achievement of the target values set for 2020 is realistic.

All of this information is set forth in a detailed, data-driven chart that is in-part color-coded and easy to read and understand. The Report identifies specific achievements and positive trends, as well as barriers to progress.

It also includes a list of action items that must be taken to ensure achievement of SDG 16 going forward.



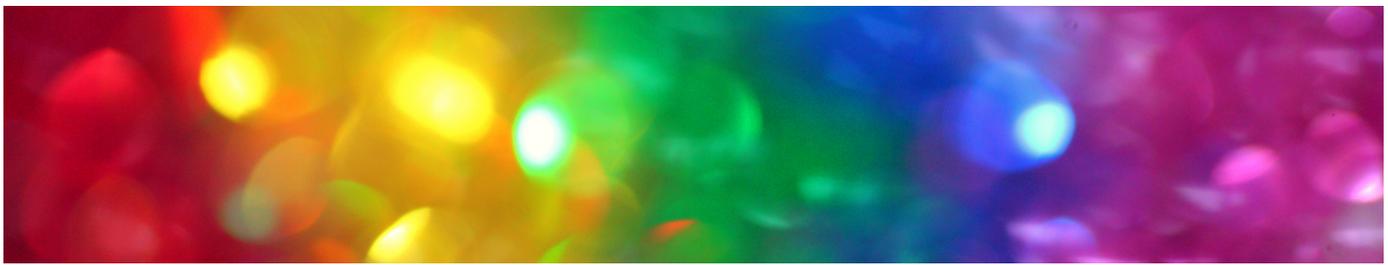
43 out of 45 reporting Member States in 2020 stated that their VNRs were the result of an inclusive and participatory process with various stakeholders. The level of detail provided varied.

Austria's VNR was the product of a broad and transparent multi-stakeholder approach when compiling the first VNR. Over forty organizations were actively involved from the outset in all phases of the review compilation process. The report took into consideration input from high-ranking political representatives, actors from civil society, scientific community, business, and young people.

Bangladesh has adopted the Whole-of-the-Society approach for SDGs implementation involving government, CSOs, development partners, private sector, academia, local authorities and Members of Parliament. The report further notes that in the initial stage of implementation of SDGs, concerned Ministries/Divisions were assigned with the responsibility of implementing the targets of SDGs. With a view to expediting the coordination mechanism, from the Prime Minister's Office, 17 Ministries were delegated as the coordinating ones for the SDGs, whose responsibility would be to coordinate goal-wise progress reporting.

To spearhead the process of VNRs preparation, a meeting of the 'SDGs Implementation and Review Committee' was headed by the Principal Coordinator (SDGs Affairs), PMO. The meeting was attended by all relevant Secretaries, CSOs and the private sector. It was decided that all goal-wise coordinating Ministries would submit goal-wise progress reports. Before submitting their goal-wise report, all coordinating ministries would complete goal-wise consultations with relevant leads, CSOs, private sector, academia, development partners and submit a report in prescribed format to the PMO and General Economics Division of the Bangladesh Planning Commission.

Finland's Government invited stakeholders, including CSOs, cities, businesses and regional authorities, to provide their own assessments on the progress made as part of the VNR report. 57 actors from civil society have assessed Finland's performance on every SDG. The VNR also includes chapters written by the Sámi people, the only indigenous peoples' group in the EU. Also Åland, which is an autonomous, demilitarized archipelago off the coast of Finland, has contributed to the report on Åland's approach and measures to the 2030 Agenda.



Malawi's first VNR is a demonstration of the commitment to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Despite the fact that the VNR process was conducted in a challenging environment especially due to COVID-19, the Government through the National Planning Commission was committed to ensuring the process was open, inclusive, transparent, and benefited from active participation of the UN system, NGOs, academia, and other key stakeholders. By utilizing an assortment of consultation platforms, the Government opened the space for active engagement and dialogue of all stakeholders including those in the hardest to reach areas in keeping with the principle of leaving no one behind.

The Government established two coordination and governance structures to oversee VNR preparations. These include the National Steering Committee and the Core Technical Committee. Malawi also decided to use the existing structure of Sector Working Groups that are already involved in SDG implementation and monitoring. The Sector Working Groups, co-chaired by respective Government ministries and development partners, played a pivotal role in contributing relevant and sufficient inputs to the VNR report preparation. The information gaps identified following the VNR drafting retreat were addressed through stakeholder engagement, consultation, and workshops. In addition, online surveys, key-informant interviews, evaluative workshops, photos, case studies, and human-interest stories were also used to close information gaps. As much as possible, dis-aggregated data was collected and validated through a series of key stakeholder workshops and eventually cleared by respective Principal Secretaries.

Additionally, Malawi conducted several stakeholder engagements. The consultations were carried out across various district councils through evaluative meetings with the youth, District Executive Committee, and key informant interviews. These important observations led to recommendations on accelerating the implementation of the SDGs in Malawi. A consultation with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersexual (LGBTI) groups was conducted by Centre for the Development of People. It was observed that the LGBTI community is facing various challenges, which are shaped by laws, policies, and practices, and which are informed from the background of social, religious, and cultural norms. Consensual same sex relationships between two adults were not only criminalised but also highly stigmatised, resulting in LGBTI persons being forced to remain underground.

Persons with disabilities in Malawi were consulted to affirm their knowledge and level of participation in the SDG process in Malawi. Several institutions responsible for persons with disabilities were invited to a zoom meeting. Some of the institutions that were represented included Malawi Council of the Hand-capped, Malawi Union for the Blind, Sight Savers, and Federations of disability in Malawi.

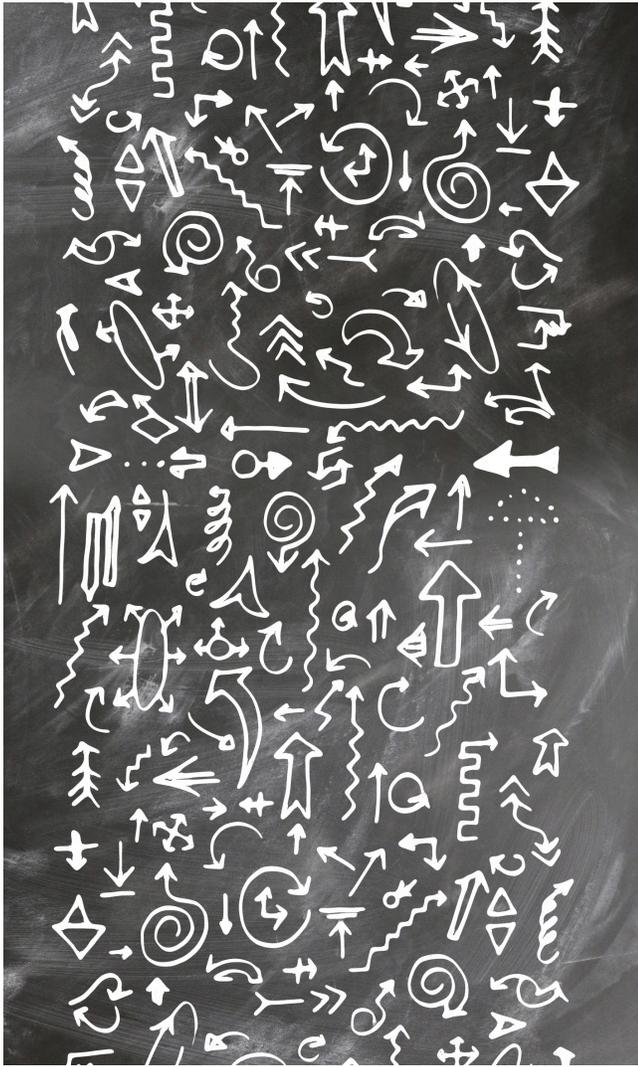
Private Sector Engagement

Forty-four countries reporting in 2020 indicate private sector involvement in reporting on or implementing the 2030 Agenda.

India's VNR included input from CSOs, NGOs, community organizations, and the private sector. Consultations with the various stakeholders, including private sector, was critical to the VNR preparation process. One of the first steps taken towards the report preparation was mapping of all the key stakeholders in the CSO and private sector space. The VNR noted that the report preparation process provided an excellent opportunity to strengthen the engagement with the private sector on SDGs. In the recent past, private sector spending under Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives was the major channel for private sector involvement in the SDG framework. However, the VNR report preparation process brought forth the enhanced uptake in adoption of business responsibility and sustainability frameworks and the proliferating consciousness among industry leaders.

Nepal's VNR notes that the private sector was involved in the creation of the report. The participants included officials from the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Confederation of Nepalese Industries, Nepal Chambers of Commerce, and Federation of Nepal Cottage and Small Industries and National Business Initiative. The private sector participates in the SDG Implementation and Monitoring Committee and the 7 thematic committees. They are also involved in SDG-based plan preparation and implementation, and the establishment of Nepal's SDG monitoring and evaluation system. The VNR notes that the private sector has a major role to play in the implementation of the SDGs, and the government is committed to further enhancing its collaboration with the private sphere. Moreover, the private sector institutions have been integrating the ethos of the SDGs in industrial enterprises and are planning to integrate SDGs agenda in their district chapters in different provinces. The UN Global Compact local network is also mentioned as expanding its private sector business houses to integrate the SDGs agenda by aligning their strategies and operations with principles of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. The VNR mentions that the use of ICTs, big data, and other evolving technologies will be critical in speeding up implementation, promoting partnerships and monitoring and evaluation.





Papua New Guinea's VNR includes input from the Business Council, which provides an Advisory Group on the SDGs to lead and champion the engagement of the private sector in the SDGs. An SDG Delivery Fund will be established to pool corporate social responsibility resources of the privatesector to fund priority SDG targets. The private sector assisted in work progressing towards SDG 3 by establishing 49 health facilities and supporting many health programs. The private sector is represented through the SDG governance structure including on the SDG Council and the Coalition of Partners or Technical Working Groups. The report also notes that the private sector supports the SDGs in the provision of infrastructure and social services, including by providing facilities as part of mining or drilling projects. Also, a number of private foundations support SDGs, including the Digicel Foundation and Steamships Foundation which provide health and education services, and Susu Mama which provides maternal and child health care. The VNR notes that, in developing and coming up with initiatives and policies to implement the SDGs, the government seeks to engage with and get the input of the private sector.

In 2019, **Uganda's** National SDG Taskforce, headed by the Permanent Secretary of the Office of the Prime Minister, established a multi-institutional Advisory Committee drawn from ministries, departments and agencies, Parliament, UN bodies, CSOs, and the private sector, to provide oversight to all processes leading to the VNR. The committee approved a comprehensive roadmap, an annotated chapter outline of the report, and all other technical engagements related to the process. The VNR notes that Uganda's private sector is increasingly paying attention to the 2030 Agenda and has been instrumental on several fronts. First, the private sector has been instrumental in shaping the policy discourse on the country's national development planning.

Second, it has been instrumental in supporting the coordination structure for SDG implementation. In addition to being represented by the Private Sector Foundation of Uganda at the National SDG Taskforce, the private sector provided technical support to the preparation of the national roadmap for creating an enabling environment for SDG implementation. The private sector has also facilitated several dialogues aimed at advancing the SDGs. For instance, at a side event during the 2017 Solidarity Summit on Refugees, some private sector leaders showcased the potential business case for investing in refugee and host communities, and deliberated on the incentives required from the government for the private sector to engage proactively in supporting local communities in business value chains.



Forty-four out of 45 countries reporting in 2020 identify sources of data in the VNR.

In **Gambia's** VNR, sources of data are cited throughout the VNR, including in relation to the graphs, illustrations, tables, and charts. Sources of data include surveys and reports such as the Integrated Household Survey, the Gambia Demographic and Health Survey, Gambia Labour Force Survey, Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, Malaria Indicator Survey, and the Annual Progress Report of the National Development Plan. The VNR includes a list of the acronyms and abbreviations used in the VNR, which contains the majority of the sources referenced in the VNR.

Micronesia's VNR identified several data sources. In particular, its methodology section notes that, "A national assessment of data availability and utilization of data on the sustainable development indicators identified indicators relevant for monitoring and reporting at the national and state levels. Line departments like the Department of Health and Social Affairs also conducted localization workshop for specific SDGs (SDG 3)". In Annex 1, the report also includes detailed SDG Indicators Baseline Data. This is disaggregated by indicators within each SDG, as well as by national versus state levels within FSM. Throughout the report, various other data from various sources is also utilized. For example, source documents from government website, reports, and UN reports

Liberia identifies certain data sources in Annex 1 to its VNR. In addition, Liberia's VNR notes, "existing evaluation reports, final project reports, research and survey reports, and other useful evidence-based reports from relevant data sources were systematically identified, collected, and document" for each SDG. Further, "a comprehensive data collection and reporting tool [was] developed and shared with VNR focal persons at the agency level" and later, a "comprehensive desk review of all the documented and other evidence-based reports" was performed, with involvement by the "hired consultants," "relevant government agencies," and "development partners."

In **Kyrgyzstan's** VNR, the National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic led the data mapping, inventory, adaptation, and collection processes. Each working group was presented with a matrix of all relevant indicators for which national data was available. Most of the VNR conclusions are based on the national SDG indicators. The VNR includes proxy measures and administrative sources from other government institutions, as well as the national Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) for the Kyrgyz Republic (2016; 2017; 2018), the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP; 2019), assessments of the access to opportunities and basic services in the Kyrgyz Republic, the MAPS Mission Report (2018), and complementary national surveys such as the Multi Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS; 2018)



Human Rights Reports

Most countries discussed Human Rights throughout their VNRs and some explicitly link the VNR to Human Rights reporting, including Universal Periodic Review (UPR) to SDG16

Costa Rica submitted its third national report on the human situation in the country during the 33rd session of the UPR Working Group, which took place on May 13, 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland. During the session, the Costa Rican delegation received a total of 212 recommendations and, on September 20, 2019, the Government of Costa Rica decided to communicate to the UPR Working Group that the country had made the decision to accept 194, partially accept 3, take note of 12, and reject 3 of the recommendations. This would enable the State to ensure effective implementation of the commitments made in the field of human rights until the next national review, scheduled for 2024. The 212 recommendations indicated are linked to the SDGs, through their targets and indicators, in different ways and were analyzed in order to link them to the different SDGs and to determine the amount or percentage of recommendations related to each of the SDGs. The SDG with the largest number of linked recommendations was SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) which is connected to 65.5% of these recommendations.

Kyrgyzstan's VNR notes that recent reports under international human rights instruments, including the Universal Periodic Review (UPR; 2019), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW; 2018), and various studies presented by regional and international organizations were used to create the Report.

Nepal's VNR notes briefly that country reports related to human rights, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) were included as part of the literature review. The VNR also cites the Nepal Spotlight Report on SDG 4 but does not appear to raise anything further specifically related to SDG 16



Georgia's report mentions the Human Rights Strategy 2014-2020, which “aims to ensure full enjoyment of all human rights for people living in Georgia and rendering of duties related to the rights by state authorities” and notes that the new 2021-2030 Strategy is being developed. The National Human Rights Action Plan, created to combat hate crimes, raises awareness about sexual orientation and mentions gender identity. Prime Minister's Human Rights Council aims at creating a discrimination-free environment. The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia established the specialized unit, Department of Human Rights Protection and Quality Monitoring, within its structure in 2018 to oversee investigations into and administrative proceedings on domestic violence, VAW, crimes committed on the grounds of discrimination, hate crimes, trafficking, and crimes committed by and/or towards minors. The Public Defender's Office of Georgia is mentioned as a highly respected National Human Rights Institution.



Kenya's VNR notes that the government of Kenya established institutions championing and safeguarding vulnerable groups' rights and further notes that the existence of National Human Rights Institutions in Kenya ensures a rights-based approach to implementing the SDGs. The Kenya National Commission on Human Rights is the national institution that prioritizes and champions for the rights of persons with disabilities. The National Council for Persons with Disability champions the rights of people living with disabilities through their registration and provision of services. Likewise, the United Disabled Persons of Kenya ensures that persons with disabilities enjoy their rights across all sectors of development. Persons living with disabilities are also granted tax exemption on their monthly or annual income. Other institutions include the National Youth Council, Anti-FGM Board, National Council for Persons with Disabilities, National Gender and Equality Commission, and Commission on the Administration of Justice. In addition, in 2019 the government established the National Committee on International and Regional Human Rights Obligations for reporting and follow up on regional and international human rights obligations. The Committee is responsible for reporting on progress and highlights challenges in implementing human rights obligations.



Samoa's VNR notes several of the key consultation processes related to the review particularly on data collection such as the SDS review, key sector consultations, the HIES 2018 results, DHS-MICS 2019 were postponed or delayed due to the Covid-19 crisis. This led to the SDGs Taskforce reverting to the use of all past census and national reports and other relevant data sources, to finalize the data matrix. Given restrictions, Samoa resorted to electronic consultations to assist with finalizing the data collection, receiving feedback and comments to the draft and for further consultations with government stakeholders, NGOs, and private sector

Zambia's VNR notes that due to the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic and in line with the World Health Organization guidelines to prevent and control the spread of the virus, several direct engagements with stakeholders were scaled down. Some planned physical meetings were replaced by electronic means of engagement and communication. The draft VNR was also made available on the government web portal (www.szi.gov.zm) to encourage public debate and solicit views. The VNR includes a detailed table on the status, challenges and opportunities presented by COVID-19.

Ecuador's VNR contains a complete section on COVID-19 and the possible impact on SDG targets and goals. There is, however, no discussion on COVID's impact to data creation, collection, or monitoring. The Technical Planning Secretariat "Plan Ecuador" foresees that within the formulation of the new National Development Plan for the period 2021-2025, specific policies and goals will be included to face the crisis caused by COVID-19. Also, chapters for most SDGs mention the possible impact of COVID-19 on SDG targets

Russia's VNR has a section that describes measures adopted in Russia in response to Covid-19, with its interconnection with/relevance for reaching the respective SDGs. As far as SDG16 is concerned, the section mentions the lockdown regime, which applied in Russia (with some minimal exceptions) during 30 March - 30 April 2020. In particular, the VNR describes efforts of the state in maintaining quality of education through online resources, various online initiatives that were created during the lockdown period to support people generally and to clarify any issues they may have had at that time, and measures to support vulnerable people, such as volunteer organizations and state initiatives providing daily living assistance, as well as medical and psychological help. There is no specific discussion on COVID's impact to data creation, collection, or monitoring

Benin's VNR mentions COVID-19 in different parts of the VNR, with a specific section dedicated to the impact of COVID-19 on the implementation of the SDGs at the national level. The Methodology section of the VNR states that the preparation of the report was a participatory and inclusive process despite the context marked by the COVID-19 pandemic. Indeed, actors were involved in a number of webinars and workshops which took place virtually. The VNR also specifies that whilst the availability of development partners and the integration of the SDGs into the national development framework constitute success factors of the country's SDG journey, COVID-19 and a narrow budget have represented limiting factors for the country's implementation of SDGs. In particular, taking into account the principles of the 2030 SDGs agenda, Benin prepared its third VNR through three key stages: i) The preparation of a concept note and timeline for the process; ii) The organization of national workshops; and iii) The participation in international workshops and seminars.

In relation to ii) and iii) the VNR specifies how COVID-19 impacted the organization of the workshops and seminars. For the organization of national workshops, these eventually took place in small groups of actors to ensure distancing measures were respected. In relation to the organization of international workshops and seminars, the VNR states that only the sixth session of the African Regional Forum on Sustainable Development was held in Victoria Falls. All other sessions were organized virtually. The section of the report dedicated to the impact of COVID-19 also lists the governmental measures put in place by Benin throughout the pandemic, rather than describing how COVID-19 impacted on the collection of data for the development of the VNR.



Nepal's VNR includes a dedicated chapter discussing COVID-19 and its impact on major sectors in Nepal and references and provides relevant commentary throughout the report to this effect. The VNR acknowledges that the broad ranging effects of the pandemic and its potential to exacerbate existing inequalities and vulnerabilities are relevant to SDG 16. Compounding the adverse impacts to Nepal's development efforts of the 2015 earthquake, the developing COVID-19 pandemic is having widespread and potentially long-term impacts on the lives and livelihood of the Nepalese people. The VNR notes that the pandemic's impacts on Nepal's health system and its fiscal and overall economic situation will have serious consequences for its capacity, resourcing and the mobilization of partnerships for the SDGs, including SDG 16, and therefore their effective implementation. The VNR notes that with reduced economic activity and remittance inflows, poverty levels and food insecurity could be expected to increase. In addition, with attention shifting to COVID-19, vaccination programs and the treatment of other diseases are being adversely affected. Education is also affected and notably the shift to digital learning may widen the existing gap between the rich and poor. However, the VNR notes that positive restructuring opportunities in the health and education systems are presenting themselves.

Reductions in labor force participation and incomes affecting women will likely result in increased hardship, and more generally, the VNR observes that the pandemic leaves the already vulnerable and marginalized more so. Predicted decreases in economic growth will have severe cumulative effects on poverty and employment in Nepal, and other multidimensional negative impacts on infrastructure and industry are expected. The VNR notes that some consultations with key stakeholders were undertaken in a virtual setting due to the COVID-19 lockdowns.



Member States 2020 Reporting vs. prior SDG 16 Reporting Results

Argentina submitted VNRs in both 2018 and 2020. The 2018 VNR included a cross-section review of a look from the statistical rigor and from the human rights perspective. The principle of “leaving no one behind” enshrined in the 2030 Agenda recognizes that human rights are essential to sustainable development. The 2020 VNR goes further and confirms the establishment of a cooperation agreement between the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights of Argentina, the Federal Board of Courts and Superior Courts of Justice of the Argentine Provinces and Buenos Aires. The purpose of the reform is to promote and facilitate access to justice within the framework of SDG16+. In addition, the Human Rights Observatory (established in 2016) has produced five Reports on SDGs and the role of congress.

In 2016, a national inter-institutional was established for the implementation and follow-up of the SDG targets. The 2020 VNR contains a section dedicated to the SGC16+Target and assigns responsibilities for the goals of 16 SDGs to the National Public Administration agencies according to the relevant political and institutional competences. The 2020 VNR also contains various sections, which highlight the private sectors involvements in numerous activities.

Generally comparing the 2018 VNR and the 2020 VNR, the latter is more specific in its reporting of certain SDGs, offering more statistics and details regarding the goals adopted by Argentina related to SDG16.

Specifically, Argentina’s 2020 VNR provides greater detail into the SGC16+Target and lists the goals adopted by Argentina together with the responsible body for each goal and monitoring indicator and baseline. The VNR also provides progress monitoring, including the initial situation and the evolution measured by different indicators prescribed therein.

The 2020 VNR contains data on SDG16+ Targets, mainly from the National Institute of Statistics and Census, which is the public technical body of all official statistical activities that are carried out in the Republic of Argentina. The 2020 VNR concludes that it is necessary to carry out again the exercise of aligning the goals of the SGC16+ Target and the political priorities.



Bangladesh submitted VNRs in both 2017 and 2020. The 2017 VNR did not contain a discussion of or strategy for implementing SDG 16. It instead focused exclusively on SDGs 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 14 and 17.

Conversely, the 2020 VNR covers all SDGs and therefore is three times as long as the 2017 VNR (201 pages in 2020, compared to 70 in 2017). Unlike the 2017 VNR, the 2020 VNR contains an in-depth examination of SDG 16 and its various targets and indicators, although it does not contain specific information on SDG 16.6 accountable transparent institutions and SDG 16.B promote non-discriminatory laws and policies and only contains limited information on SDG 16.8 participation of developing countries in global governance. For each indicator, the report provides quantitative data illustrating current country conditions such as figures on victims of intentional homicide, female victims of violence, victims of human trafficking and unsentenced detainees, although in some cases such data pre-dates 2016. The 2020 VNR also describes various legislative measures intended to combat discrimination and violence against women and children as well as certain strategies and governance tools aimed at preventing money laundering, bribery, and corruption.

The 2020 VNR reports on all of the SDG 16+ Targets, although the information on the following SDGs is limited: 4.7 culture of peace, non-violence and global citizenship, 5.2 violence against women and girls, 5.3 child marriage and female genital mutilation, 5.5 women's participation and leadership, 8.5 equal pay for equal work, 10.2 political, social, and economic inclusion, 10.5 regulation of global financial markets and institutions and 10.6 representation in global economic markets and institutions.

The 2017 VNR stated that the SDGs were aligned with Bangladesh's national development plan (the Seventh Five Year Plan (2016-2020)), as confirmed in the 2020 VNR which mentions that the national development plans and SDGs are thematically and functionally aligned and their implementation are mutually reinforcing and complementing. Both reports highlight that the "Whole of Society" approach has been adopted in the SDG implementation process, involving stakeholders from all strata of the society including the Government and other non-state players such as the private sector, Local Government Institutions (LGIs), Community Based Organizations (CBOs), CSOs as well as other entities.

Ecuador submitted VNRs in both 2018 and 2020. The 2018 VNR implemented the 2030 Agenda and the Technical Planning Secretariat “Plan Ecuador” has carried out several exercises to identify the initiatives generated from different actors. The 2018 VNR established the National Development Plan 2017-2021 “Toda Una Vida” and the SDGs. The programmatic structure of the Plan establishes three development axes, with 9 national objectives and 81 policies that go beyond the sectoral scope and 139 goals for development. The National Development Plan integrates the three development dimensions addressed in the 2030 Agenda and the National Development Plan and the SDG16 targets are 100% aligned.

Generally comparing the 2018 VNR and the 2020 VNR, the latter is more specific in its reporting of certain SDGs, offering more statistics and details regarding the relevant programs and national initiatives. In contrast, the 2018 VNR is tied to the implementation of the National Development Plan. Specifically, Ecuador’s 2020 VNR provides greater detail into the SGC16+Target and contains a full chapter for each SDG16+ Targets.

The 2020 VNR prioritizes SDG 1, 6, 7, 11, 12, 15 and 17 based on consultation with various actors from civil society, academic, private sector, autonomous government. In the 2020 VNR the private sector is involved in providing assistance in the following matters (i) contribution to national and local development through corporate social responsibility and through public-private community partnerships for development; (ii) innovation and development of new technologies; (iii) incorporation of sustainable development in corporate plans; and (iv) several projects conducted by the private sector in support of the SDG16+Targets.

The 2020 VNR contains data on the SDG16 targets in addition there is a chart of dis-aggregated data regarding performance indicators mentioning the SDG related to the data. It contains references to Human Rights and links them to all SDGs throughout and the 2020 VNR engages local Human Rights Institutions.

The 2020 VNR concludes that negative trends in respect of the progress made on the SDG16+ targets is primarily because of COVID-19. The 2020 VNR also highlights areas for improvement for certain SDG+ Targets.



Kenya completed a VNR in both 2017 and 2020. In June 2017, Kenya submitted the “Implementation of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development in Kenya”. The 2030 Agenda was adopted at the same time as Kenya was implementing its long-term economic blueprint for accelerating the transformation of the country into a rapidly industrializing middle-income nation by the year 2030 (“Kenya Vision 2030”). The 2017 VNR confirmed that the Kenya Vision 2030 was well aligned to the global development framework and its implementation was directly linked towards achieving the SDGs, with the timeframe of the Kenya Vision 2030 coinciding with that of the SDGs.

The 2017 VNR presented a detailed update on the progress in the implementation of all SDGs, including SDG 16. Kenya’s 2020 VNR contains a detailed breakdown of its progress with respect to SDG16 with quantitative data on, among other things, victims of intentional homicide, unsentenced detainees, seized small arms and light weapons and bribes. With respect to the SDG 16 Targets, the 2020 VNR contains limited information on the following SDGs: 4.7 culture of peace, non-violence and global citizenship, 8.5 equal pay for equal work, 10.2 political, social, and economic inclusion, 10.3 equal opportunities, laws, policies and practices, 10.4 policies for greater equality, 11.2 safe transport, 11.3 inclusive urbanization, 16.6 accountable transparent institutions, 16.7 representative decision-making, 16.B promote non-discriminatory laws and policies and 17.10 equitable trade system.