

As of 7 July 2021

## **“Meaningful participation in times of crisis: Engagement of stakeholders for the preparation of VNRs”**

VNR Lab on Stakeholder Engagement during the 2021 United Nations High-level Political Forum (HLPF)

14 July 2021, 2:00 - 3:00 PM (EDT)

### **Background**

The United Nations High-level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development will be held from 6 - 15 July 2021, under the theme “*Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade action and delivery for sustainable development.*” For the fourth year, a series of **Voluntary National Review (VNR) Labs** are being convened on the margins of the HLPF. The VNR Labs will provide an informal platform for experience sharing and reflection on the VNR process.

As Member States focus not only on responding to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic but also on accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda as part of the Decade of action and delivery, multi-stakeholder engagement and durable partnerships with diverse stakeholders will be key to realizing progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and ensuring that no one is left behind. Governments at all levels, citizens, parliaments, academia, civil society, the private sector, trade unions, youth and others can accelerate transformative actions through individual and collaborative efforts on sustainable development.

The process for the development and presentation of Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) has been a key opportunity for setting up, strengthening and generating innovative approaches for meaningful stakeholder engagement in support of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. As this year’s HLPF will focus on exploring various aspects of the response to the pandemic, and best types of international cooperation to place the SDGs at the centre of the recovery from COVID-19, a forward-looking approach for meaningful stakeholder engagement is needed, including on the need for more investment, creativity, research and long-term approaches.

The need for qualitative stakeholder engagement, strong awareness-raising, research in capacity building and of adding the voices of most vulnerable groups to implementation and follow-up processes is critical for a resilient and inclusive recovery.

The VNR Lab will provide a space for dialogue and exchange between VNR countries and stakeholders to share challenges, good practices and lessons learned as well as report trends and exchange experiences to reach open, inclusive, transparent, well-informed, and iterative multi-stakeholder engagement for the 2030 Agenda.

This VNR Lab is organized by UNDESA, through its Division for Sustainable Development Goals (UNDESA/DSDG) and Partners for Review (P4R), a global network on SDG follow-up and review funded by the German Government and implemented by GIZ.

## **Objectives**

To promote an open conversation and exchange between Member States, stakeholders and partners on experiences and lessons learned on the engagement of stakeholders from different sectors in the preparation of Voluntary National Reviews and supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, especially considering the impacts and adjustments needed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The VNR Lab will identify challenges and opportunities and will discuss recommendations to strengthen and facilitate meaningful engagement of stakeholders that can lead towards and contribute to continuous and structured processes through all points of the SDG policy cycle.

## **Format and outcomes**

This event will be held virtually and will be open to all interested stakeholders. The event will consist of a panel followed by an interactive discussion. Access to the virtual event will be provided to pre-registered participants. The event will be recorded, and the recording will be shared on the official 2021 HLPF VNR Labs website.

A summary of the event will be prepared and posted online.

## **How to participate**

Interested stakeholders should register online [here](#) by 12 July 2021. All interested can register to attend.

## Draft Agenda

14 July 2021, 2:00 - 3:00 PM (EDT)

**Facilitator:** Ms Naiara Costa, Senior Sustainable Development Officer, Outreach and Partnerships Branch, Division for Sustainable Development Goals (DSDG), UNDESA

02:00 - 02:10	<b>Opening Remarks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Ms. Lotta Tahtinen</b>, Chief, Outreach and Partnerships Branch, Division for Sustainable Development Goals (DSDG), UNDESA (Confirmed)</li> <li>- <b>Mr. Jörn Geisselmann</b>, Advisor, Partners for Review (confirmed)</li> </ul>
02:10 - 02:35	<b>Panel: Meaningful participation in times of crisis: Engagement of stakeholders for the preparation of VNRs</b>  <b>Moderator:</b> Mr. Oli Henman, Action for Sustainable Development  <b>Speakers:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mr. Alfredo González Reyes</b>, 2030 Agenda Officer, Ministry of Economy, Mexico</li> <li>• <b>Ms. Natascha Skjaldgaard</b>, Head of Section - Africa, Policy and Development, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Denmark</li> <li>• <b>Ms. Judith Kaulem</b>, Executive Director, Poverty Reduction Forum Trust, Zimbabwe</li> <li>• <b>Mr. Andreas Kuestermann</b>, Board Member, Centrarse, Guatemala</li> </ul> <p>Speakers will make 3-minutes interventions focusing on the proposed guiding questions below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Can you share a few examples of innovative ways for the engagement of stakeholders in the VNR process, including considering the impact of COVID-19?</i></li> <li>• <i>Can you share a few recommendations on ways to strengthen stakeholder engagement in VNR processes as a way to contribute to the Decade of Action?</i></li> </ul>
02:35 - 02:55	<b>Interactive Discussion</b> Monitored through chat boxes and direct interventions from partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ms Aparna Basniyat</b>, Senior Research and Policy Advisor, SDG16, UNDP</li> </ul>
02:55 - 03:00	<b>Closing Remarks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- UN DESA/DSDG</li> <li>- Partners for Review</li> </ul>