

Regional Workshop on Accelerating SDG Implementation: The Role of Voluntary National and Local Reviews

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VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEWS

The VNRs: Some Numbers

329 VNRs have been conducted to date

- 22 in 2016, 43 in 2017, 46 in 2018, 47 in 2019, 47 in 2020, 42 in 2022, 44 in 2022 and 39 in 2023

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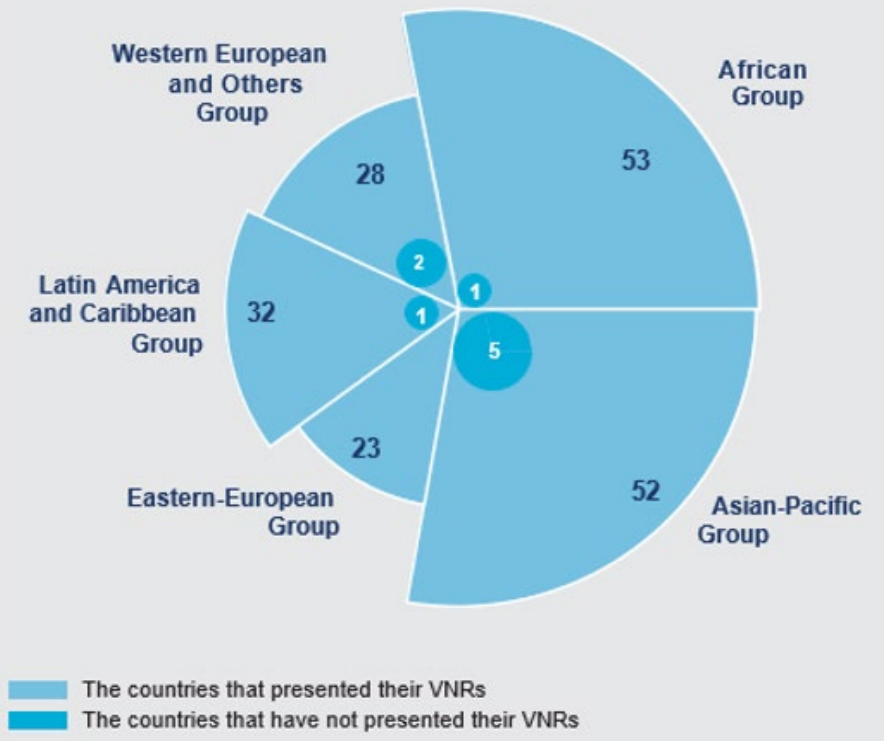
188 countries have presented VNRs with **123** countries having conducted more than one VNR. The European Union conducted a voluntary review in 2023.

9 countries have not yet presented a VNR

65 countries have presented 1 VNR, **107** countries have presented 2 VNRs, **14** countries have 3 VNRs and **2** country have 4 VNRs.

38 countries will present their VNRs in 2024.

STATUS OF VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW
PRESENTED BY REGION [As of 2023 High-Level Political Forum]

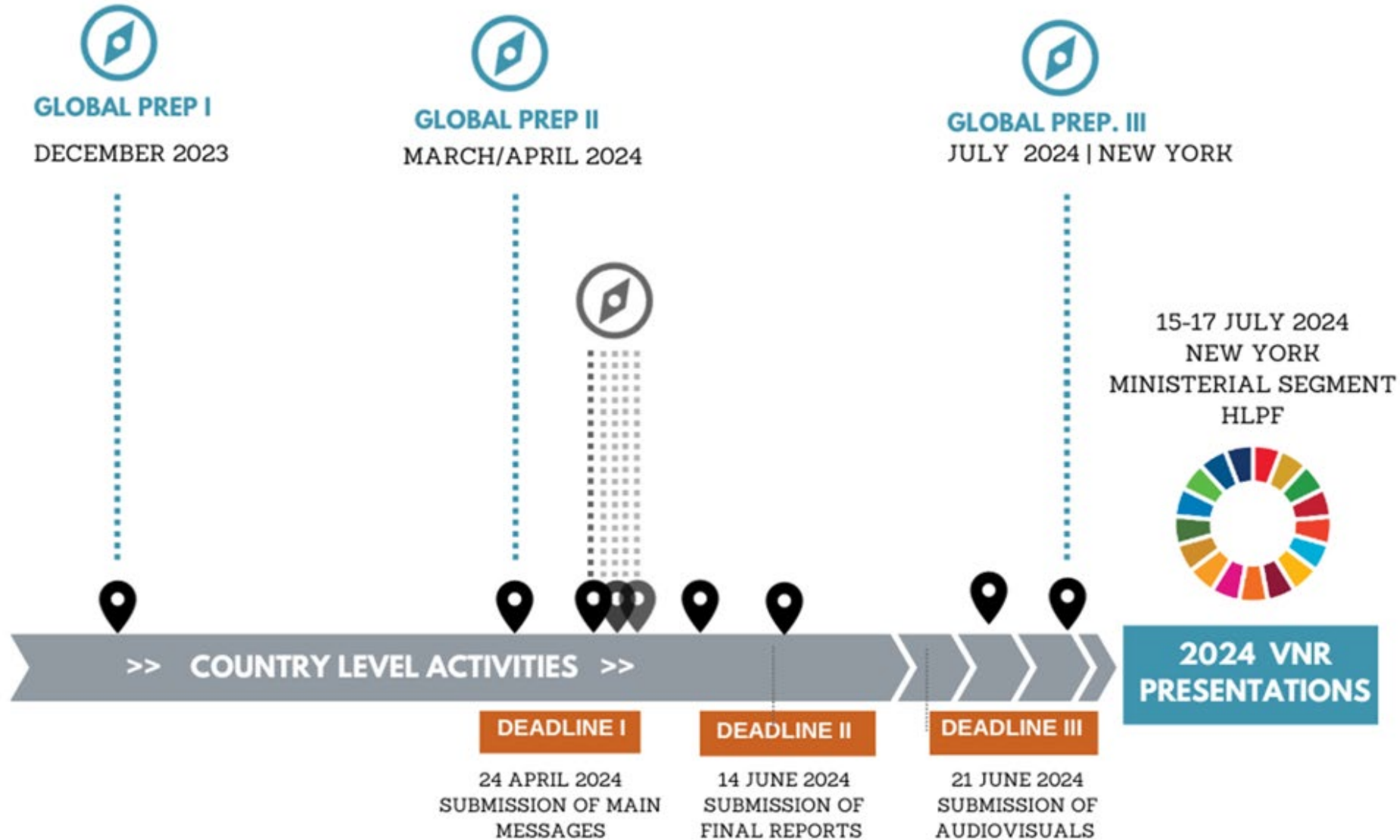


Link to VNR Database: <https://hlpf.un.org/countries>

38 VNR presenters at the 2024 HLPF

Number of Times Presenting/Region	1 st Time (2)	2 nd time (19)	3 rd Time (13)	4 th Time (5)
Africa (15)	South Sudan	Congo (Republic of the), Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Guinea, Libya, Mauritania, Mauritius, South Africa	Chad, Kenya, Namibia, Uganda, Zimbabwe	Sierra Leone
Asia Pacific (10)	Yemen	Micronesia (Federated States of), Oman, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Syrian Arab Republic, Vanuatu	Lao PDR, Nepal,	
Eastern Europe (3)			Armenia, Georgia,	Azerbaijan
Latin America and the Caribbean (8)		Belize, Brazil, Ecuador,	Costa Rica, Honduras, Peru,	Colombia, Mexico
Western Europe and Other Groups (2)		Austria	Spain	

Timeline for 2024 Voluntary National Reviews



FOLLOW AND REVIEW OF THE 2030 AGENDA

High-level Political Forum for Sustainable Development

The HLPF has a “central role in overseeing a network of follow-up and review processes at the global level” (2030 Agenda, paragraph 82). The HLPF is convened each year in July under the auspices of ECOSOC and presided over by the President of ECOSOC. VNRs are part of the follow-up and review process of the 2030 Agenda.

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Theme of the 2024 HLPF will be "Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises: the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions". ([A/DEC/77/553](#))

SDGs under in-depth: **Goal 1; Goal 2; Goal 13; Goal 16; Goal 17.** However, VNR reports should cover all of the SDGs



VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEWS

VNR presentations at the HLPF



Timing (TBD):

First timers:

- 15 minutes for presentation
- Q&A time tbc

Second and third timers:

- 10 minutes for presentation
- Q&A time tbc

Format:

The panel format: presentations are held sequentially; when all the presenters participating in the session have presented, questions are asked of all the presenters. The usual practice is for each country to receive 2-3 questions. Once all the questions have been posed, the presiding office (President/Vice-President of ECOSOC) gives each country the opportunity to make brief responses.

The individual format: a country makes its presentation, followed by questions.

Voluntary National Reviews at 2024 HLPF

- VNR countries need to submit Main Messages for their VNRs in one of the six official UN languages by **24 April 2024**. The compilation of the main messages will be published as an official document of the HLPF
- Main Messages can contain **emerging conclusions from the review**. The Main Messages provide an indication of some of the **key messages that the country would like to share with the international community**.
- VNRs continue to showcase how countries have included the 2030 Agenda and SDGs in **national development plans, strategies and frameworks** – as well as describing **their evolution**.
- VNR have also shown the **adaption of institutions to accommodate crises and shifting priorities**
- VNRs are **articulating some systemic issues related to the monitoring and implementation of the 2030 Agenda** – such as **data/statistics and sustainable financing** – as well as articulating some solutions and calls to action
- **Localization of the SDGs and increasing practice of sub-national reviews** – shows increasing domestication and ownership of the 2030 Agenda at multiple levels. Some countries are integrating VLRs in their VNRs
- Unique methods of **engaging the stakeholders** to ensure a whole of society approach

CONSIDERATIONS AND GOOD PRACTICES

Voluntary National Reviews at 2024 HLPF

- Some countries have linked VNR reports to **national data and information platforms or stakeholder engagement networks**
- VNRs also acknowledged the impact of **global challenges, especially the COVID-19 pandemic, on their SDG implementation** as well as **how they used the SDGs to build resilience**
- Highlighted the importance of **multilateralism and international cooperation and partnerships**
- Some countries **analyzed SDG progress achieved since the previous VNR**, including efforts to illustrate how baseline data was expanded and data innovations to fill the gap
- **Leaving no one behind and reaching those furthest behind first** – capacity building to ensure more marginalized groups are included
- **Broader range of stakeholders are being included in the reports and presentations** – indigenous peoples, women, children and youth, persons with disabilities, older persons, LGBTQI+, migrants and refugees, internally displaced persons
- **Highlighted the importance of peaceful and inclusive societies**

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COUNTRY EXAMPLES

Antigua and Barbuda 2021 VNR

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- Stakeholders in Antigua and Barbuda identified through the consultations those groups that are at risk of being left behind.
- The VNR highlighted each vulnerable group within the context of an SDG goal, the current situation of the groups as well as the country’s commitment through national policies and strategies to make these groups resilient.
- Highlighted systemic issues and the transformative actions needed to achieve the SDGs, including enhancing statistical capacity, the need for financing, including concessionary financing, support in accessing new and innovative financing mechanisms and the need to plan for exogenous shocks which have the potential to stall development progress



A Cross Section of Stakeholders at the Civil Society Consultation in April 2021



Stakeholders in Antigua and Barbuda identified through the consultations those groups that are at risk of being left behind, including people living in extreme poverty, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, marginalized children and youth, older persons, persons in prisons, deviant young males and females who are institutionalized and migrants. The table below positions each vulnerable group within the context of an SDG goal, the current situation of the groups as well as the country’s commitment through national policies and strategies to make these groups resilient.

Sustainable Development Goal	Example of Vulnerable Groups at Risk of being left behind	Indicator	Examples of Antigua and Barbuda’s Commitment to ‘Leaving no one behind’
GOAL 1: No Poverty	Women and children in poverty	National Poverty Rate: 18.4%	Social Protection Act 2020 Board of Guardians Scheme Peoples Benefit Programme

Jamaica 2022 VNR

- The lessons learned from Jamaica’s 2018 VNR have been interrogated and translated in efforts towards strengthening the implementation framework around Vision 2030 Jamaica.
- Jamaica included the recommendations from the 2018 VNR into the 2022 VNR
- Under each SDG chapter, Jamaica include linkages to other SDGs, lessons learnt/best practice, way forward and resource requirements

Next Steps from 2018 VNR

The first VNR, identified six areas as next steps which are key to accelerate progress on the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. Since 2018, significant steps have been taken in these areas:

- Full and effective implementation of national priorities, outlined in the MTF 2018–2021 to address the challenges—social, economic, environment and governance:** The 2018–2021 MTF was the first to integrate the SDGs within the plan implementation framework, and reflected 91.0 per cent alignment of *Vision 2030 Jamaica* and the SDGs. The level of full/partial alignment has since increased to over 98.6 per cent. The 2021 report on progress notes gains made across all four goals of the NDP with some 2018 targets being achieved.
- Strengthen the National Statistics System:** Following a review of the NSS, recommendations were made for the amendment of the Statistics Act and strengthening the capacity of data producers within MDAs.
- Improve the monitoring and evaluation framework:** A European Union (EU) funded programme involving the training of MDAs to support a coordinated system of monitoring national development, commenced in 2020. The M&E framework for the NDP and the SDGs were strengthened, and an online platform for the monitoring of the SDGs and *Vision 2030 Jamaica* developed with funding from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
- Explore mechanisms and strategies for financing:** Development financing has been a core area of focus of the GOJ and its partners. Efforts to strengthen the domestic financing framework has included the implementation of a Results-Based Budgeting Programme to inform more targeted financing of national development. In addition, public expenditure reviews have been conducted to improve efficiencies in spending in key sectors, as well as the development of innovative financing mechanisms to support domestic resource mobilization.
- Improve policy coherence and build capacity:** The *Vision 2030 Jamaica* framework, and the MTF which integrates the SDGs, forms the overarching policy framework that promotes both vertical and horizontal policy coherence. Through this framework, there is ongoing strengthening of local level planning and monitoring in alignment with the NDP and the SDGs, through the Local Sustainable Development planning framework and process, as well as its monitoring and evaluation processes.

Way Forward

Jamaica's approach to combating climate change has been strategic, collaborative, integrated, inclusive and ambitious. Initiatives that strengthen policies, enhance integration across actors and sectors, facilitate stakeholders' participation and build their capacity, are in keeping with the principle of sustainable development.

Target 13.1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries

Notable achievements focused on continued capacity building of key institutions, mobilizing climate finance and identifying the technologies needed to support climate resilience. Also, Jamaica created avenues to include the youth's voice in the climate response. A draft Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management Policy and Action Plan was prepared in 2020, and regulations were instituted to enable the Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Act to provide an opportunity to fully integrate climate change adaptation and DRM activities nationally and locally. This initiative also provides for the development of standard guidelines and tools to screen for disaster risks and climate change issues in the development approval process, as well as preparation of continuity of governance plans.

As part of the strategy for improving emergency response capacity under the Vision 2030 Jamaica—National Development Plan the GOJ intends to train volunteers to support disaster emergency response. The volunteers will work in tandem with volunteers from the Jamaica National Voluntary Program for Disaster Risk Management to serve in the pre-and post-impact phases of a disaster (Artica, 2022).

Target 13.2 Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning

The country's climate ambition is evident in the revised NDC and the progress made in the development of the NAP—both of which are an indication of strong global commitment and national priorities. Progress towards revising the Climate Change Policy Framework (CCPF) and preparing the 2050 Long-term Low Emissions and Climate Resilient Development Strategy are important milestones for ensuring climate measures become standard practice in development planning. The application of the Systematic Risk Assessment Tool (SRAT) which was developed by the Coalition of Climate Resilience Investment (CCRI) will facilitate the mapping of Jamaica's assets to ensure risk assessment data is integrated into national planning systems.

Resource requirements

To advance climate action, Jamaica will need resources in four key areas: sustained financial support for adaptation and mitigation measures, data to inform adaptation planning, data management infrastructure and technical expertise as seen in Figure 70.

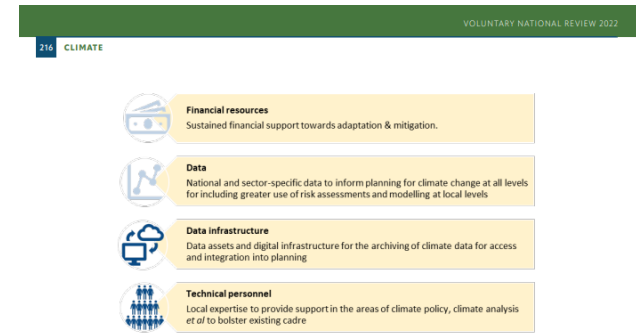


FIGURE 70. RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS TO ADVANCE CLIMATE ACTION IN JAMAICA

Regarding technical expertise, stakeholders identified that there is a need for more robust climate change analysis to be done within the government's ministries, departments and agencies. Most training initiatives, they note, are largely at the introductory level. Suggestions are that individuals trained at the tertiary level and recruited and retained in the public sector would enhance Jamaica's capacity to develop and implement national-level actions and meet global commitments (GOJ, 2020).

COUNTRY EXAMPLES

Dominica 2022 VNR

- Highlighted sustainable development challenges and vulnerabilities specific to the country. Dominica’s VNR also addressed the countries recovery efforts from two devastating climate events – Hurricane Maria in 2017 and Tropical Storm Erika in 2015.
- Leaving No One Behind. Vulnerable groups were identified through consultations, the VNR highlighted government actions to reduce vulnerability.
- Highlighted transformative actions and Dominica’s Resilience Vision, “The World’s First Climate Resilient Country”

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**Voluntary National Review – What are we reporting on?
Capturing the Views of the Kalinago People – Your Voice Matters**

- What do you think your roles are in preparing the VNR
- What are some of the issues and challenges faced by Kalinagos in Dominica?
- Do you have any views on the SDGs and sustainable development that you would like to reflect in the VNR?
- Are there any specific SDGs that you are working towards advancing within the Kalinago Community?
- Are there any mechanisms in Dominica for the participation of Kalinagos in decision-making processes at the national level that you would like to share and see included in the VNR? Or any recommendations
- Share with us any ways or approaches the Government and private sector can employ to achieve the SDGs?
- Any meaningful quotes that you would like to be included in the VNR – your perspectives – what do the Kalinagos in Dominica want by 2030

- People living with Disabilities
- Single Parents – including single male or single female headed households
- Kalinago
- Homeless/Vagrants
- Elderly
- Migrants
- Victims of Abuse
- Squatters/Landless
- Poor NEET (youth neither in education, employment or training)
- Unemployed and Underemployed
- Women and Children
- Mentally ill People

The table below shows examples of vulnerable groups and examples of actions being undertaken by the Government to reduce these vulnerabilities. For Dominica, leaving no one behind also

COUNTRY EXAMPLES

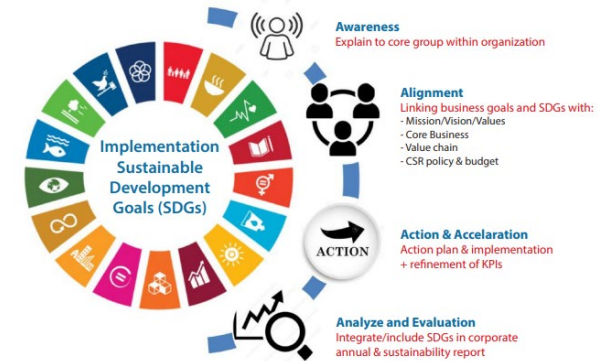
Suriname 2022 VNR

- Highlight innovative stakeholder engagement initiatives – for example, several youth focused initiatives were implemented to generate SDGs, such as the SDG Voice Project and SDG Youth Ambassadors programme, which included campaigns and activities for youth to promote the SDGs amongst their peers. A card game called SDG quartet was also developed in Suriname to get the youth more acquainted with the SDGs in a playful manner.
- Showcased awareness raising initiatives with different sectors, including private sector

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Source: <https://www.local2030.org/story/view/60>

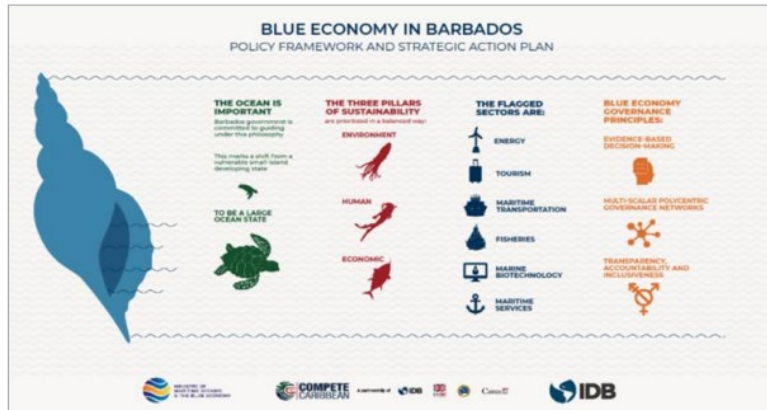


COUNTRY EXAMPLES

Barbados 2023 VNR

- The VNR highlighted some of the challenges and external shocks that impede SDG attainment, but also articulate the country's plans for transformation. The report highlights national policies aligned to the SDGs, ranging from social protection, food security, energy sector transformation, blue economy ocean protection and financing for development
- Articulates financing for development issues that are vital for the attainment of the SDGs in the country. The VNR highlights the Bridgetown Initiative which calls for reform of the Global Financial Architecture and increased climate financing for vulnerable countries to achieve SDG 13.

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SDG in Focus

Progress toward the Goal

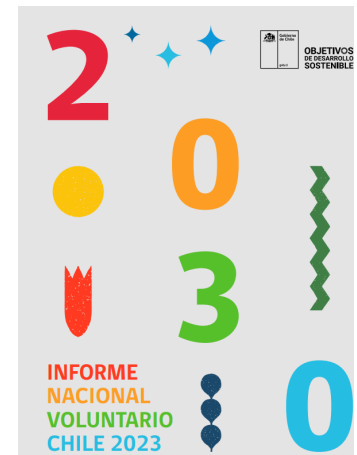


Barbados is a global leader in advocating for a revitalised Global partnership for Sustainable Development. Through the **Bridgetown Initiative (BI)**, we have proposed a revolutionary climate finance model which aims to overcome some of the main shortcomings of mobilizing climate finance for climate vulnerable countries with low ability to raise finance, and dependence on official development assistance (ODA) or remittances for economic development. Nonetheless, we continue to strengthen our domestic resource mobilization and attract foreign direct investment for sustainable development, including for the SDGs.

COUNTRY EXAMPLES

Chile 2023 VNR

- The VNR highlighted collaborative actions in Chile to foster sustainability. One milestone of this renewed commitment has been the adoption of the National Strategy for Implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The Strategy represents a broad agreement at the country level on a road map that charts a path from now until the symbolic target of 2030.
- The strategy also seeks to strengthen alliances at all levels, especially amongst those working locally to achieve the global objectives
- In preparation of the Strategy, approx. 2000 people and organizations were brought together 15 regional dialogues, dialogues with children and adolescents, older persons, private sector, social, economic and environmental working groups and interviews and meetings with key informants.
- Chile developed its first Voluntary Business Report for Sustainable Development in collaboration with the United Nations Global Compact
- Highlighted progress towards significant legislation such as the Climate Change Framework Law of 2022



COUNTRY EXAMPLES

Saint Kitts and Nevis 2023 VNR

- Utilized VNR presentation to galvanize international support and partnerships to attain the SDGs
- VNR report highlighted bright spots and success stories, as well as opportunities and the way forward under each goal
- The VNR highlighted the country's efforts in economic diversification, targeting sustainable agriculture and food security through the establishment of environmentally friendly green villages; promoting regenerative tourism; building resilience; sustainable consumption of environmental resources; and developing the green, blue and orange economies; and renewable energy

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Several key measures to strengthen implementation include:

- Establishment of a Cabinet-level SDG Subcommittee to strengthen oversight
- Reinvigorating governance of the goals by emboldening the NSDCC and its oversight mechanisms
- Maintaining and expanding the SDG alignment of planning and budgeting at the national level and cascading these practices to state and local governments
- Building capacity to track SDG financing needs.
- Strengthening the Department of Statistics' capacity and systems, particularly in collecting and reporting on SDGs data at the national and sub-national levels.
- Diversifying sources of financing for the SDGs by encouraging financing from the private sector, CSOs, and individuals.
- Integrate the three pillars of sustainable development – economic, social, and environmental - across all policy areas in the development of new policies, ensuring that there is equal treatment and consideration of each pillar in all key areas of national development. This involves policy integration and coherence and infusion of the goals and targets into national policy development as well as sectoral and government policies.

Bright Spots and Success Stories

- The GOKSN recognized the importance of the Fisheries sub-sector as a valuable source of nutrition and livelihoods, and in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, made substantive investments/assistance to the fisherfolk. In 2021, over 230 fishers received fishing gear and other relevant supplies, resulting in an overall fish landed value of \$6.9 million.
- DMR collaborated with the Bureau of Standards to enhance food and safety surveillance. This included enforcing important standards in the fish processing and service facilities as well as improving the technical guidance and resources necessary to assist marine users.
- The FAMRA legislation allows for the declaration of marine managed areas which can enable the protection of our marine resources, especially the fishing priority areas that can support sustainable fishing practices and conservation zones where levels of protection can exist.



Local Fisherman with Catch

Opportunities and Way Forward

St. Kitts and Nevis will continue to pursue the following strategies and actions to conserve and sustainably use its marine resources:

- There is a need for a dedicated management regime to regulate activities and enforce the existing legislation and regulations for conservation and environmental management, which includes the gazettement of the SKN MMA.
- Regulations for the FAMRA need to be developed.
- Develop and promulgate the Blue Economy Strategy and Policy.
- Allocate finance to support skills/capacity building and technology for exploring, studying, and utilizing the immense potential offered by the marine environment.
- Deepen Bilateral and Multilateral partnerships to support the sustainable management of our marine areas including shared fish stocks.
- An update to Nevis Development Plan to respond to coastal protection needs.
- Access to finance, insurance, and capacity building for fisherfolk to develop the fisheries sector and explore value-added products in small-scale fisheries while reducing the reliance on imported fish.

Guyana 2023 VNR

- Theme of the VNR was One Guyana: Achieving Low-Carbon Sustainable Development for All – and showcased the alignments of the 2030 Agenda to the national vision
- Highlights the incorporation of the SDGs into Guyana’s budget cycle. The integration of the SDGs into the national budget process from the preparation, in the Budget call circular, the annual Estimates of the Public Sector, in year programme performance reviews.
- Each SDG there is also sections on Challenges, emerging issues and addressing the way forward; lessons learned; and financing key initiatives
- Main messages – highlights need for access to more concessional lending

Challenges, Emerging Issues and Addressing the Way Forward

As expansion of ICT continues in Guyana, there are still challenges that must be addressed. Guyana requires a culture shift, to ensure greater incorporation of ICT across all spheres of society thereby promoting the functional utilisation of ICT. However, this is hinged on human capacity skills in ICT in Guyana, which are still relatively low. This has affected the overall technology adoption rate, which is also low, particularly in SMEs. Notwithstanding, there has been interest by young people who are incorporating ICT into their entrepreneurial ventures and providing a much-needed push for ICT in Guyana, however, to advance ICT, financing, skills development, and greater exposure to more cutting-edge technology is urgently needed.

Guyana’s ICT sector is evolving and the need for more innovators and creators is a prerequisite for our continuous development. Therefore, Guyana is looking to create a pool of innovators and developers that will drive technology innovation and creativity. Young Guyanese will form the core of this pool and will become the ICT creative minds that Guyana so urgently needs. To this end, capacity building initiatives including basic

information technology (IT) training, innovation camps focused the different thematic areas of IT, basic coding and advanced training in ICT areas such as web development and programming will continue to be implemented, and target Guyanese of different age groups.

Lessons Learned

The COVID-19 pandemic increased the demand for ICT exponentially and presented an opportunity for several Guyanese businesses to introduce online platforms to reach customers during the lock-down periods. This increase in demand for ICT also increased the demand for ICT training and has reinforced the necessity of ICT for accelerating Guyana’s development and resilience.

Financing Key Initiatives

In order to transform Guyana’s ICT landscape, Guyana is seeking to construct a Technology Incubation Centre at a cost of \$200 million. The Centre will provide a space for aspiring technology entrepreneurs, creators and innovators to start and effectively scale their technology ventures. It will feature a number of incubation services and

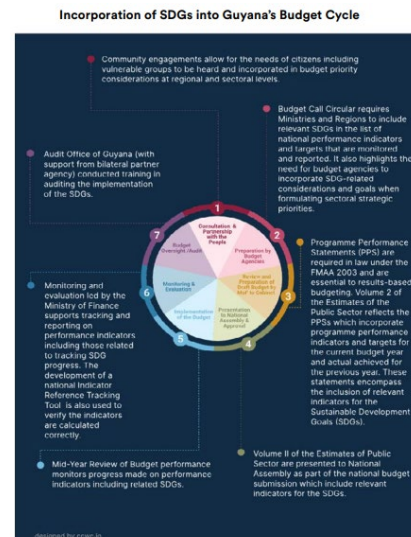


Figure 1: Incorporation of SDGs into Guyana's Budget Cycle

Thank you

COUNTRY EXAMPLES

Costa Rica 2020 VNR

- In relation to "leave no one behind" and data capacity in Costa Rica, the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses, as the SDGs Statistical Advisory Body made major effort to improve the tools of statistical operations, to ensure that users of information have the highest levels of disaggregation for population groups. The VNR included a timeline of the actions taken.
- Highlighted multi-stakeholder survey of signatories of the National Pact, designed to assess progress, identify good practices, challenges, lessons learned in the implementation the 2030 Agenda. Showcasing the contribution on different stakeholders to SDGs.
- Showcase localization process of the SDGs

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Year	Actions performed
2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methodological proposal and development of a tool to assess national statistical capacities for the elaboration of SDG. • Assessment tool on the status of SDG indicators based on the ECLAC tool. • List of SDG Indicators consulted and validated, with the corresponding methodological sheets. • Update of national capacities assessment and availability of indicator information. • Revision of indicators proposed by the United Nations and its methodological sheets based on the new list of revised indicators of the United Nations Statistical Commission
2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collection of information for indicators and development of methodological sheets. • Development of SDG baseline publication with data available. • Implement SDG Information System and monitoring of indicators update. • Support and monitoring of activities to revise targets and indicators in activities convened by the planning sectors of the Executive Branch (health, environment, poverty) and SDG Technical Secretariat (Mideplan).
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of the INEC Institutional Technical Commission for the monitoring of SDG indicators with the participation of the Technical Secretariat and the United Nations System • Review of the proposal for the Regional Framework of SDG indicators. • New methodological sheet structure for SDG, with fields' definition. • <i>Crucial milestone: "Methodology to evaluate and raise continuity in SDG environmental indicators"</i>

Figure 11. Classification of Actions Reported by Participating Stakeholder



Source: SDG Survey Report 2018, SNU-Costa Rica.

Institutional plans were aligned with the SDGs and towards municipal strategic thinking



Source: Report about the placement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in the local governments of Costa Rica.