



Training and Peer Learning workshop on SDG Localization, Voluntary Local Reviews and Infrastructure Asset Management for local and central government officials in South Africa

**21-24 October 2025
Hotel Sky Sandton, Johannesburg
Concept Note**

Overview

A national **“Training and Peer Learning workshop on SDG Localization, Voluntary Local Reviews and Infrastructure Asset Management for local and central government officials in South Africa”** is being organized by the Division for Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DSDG/UNDESA) and the Economic Commission for Africa, the National Planning Commission of South Africa, the South Africa Local Government Association, and the Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator and the United Nations Development Programme in South Africa. The workshop will be held from 21-24 October 2025 in Johannesburg, South Africa.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes that SDGs realization depends upon the strategic engagement of all stakeholders, from the national to the local level. The experience gained since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda in 2015 has shown that cooperation and coordinated action across all levels of government yield the most positive outcomes. With an estimated 65% of SDG targets linked to the work of local and regional governments, the role of local action has been increasingly understood as a pre-condition for SDG achievement.

This vital role has been acknowledged in major UN reports and declarations, including the Secretary-General's "Our Common Agenda," the 2023 SDG Summit Declaration, and the Pact for the Future. In 2025, pursuant to paragraph 55 of the Pact for the Future, the Secretary-General issued a report providing recommendations, for consideration by Member States, on how to further engage with local and regional authorities to advance the 2030 Agenda. In the face of multiple global crises that have slowed progress, localization has become more important than ever, and local governments are increasingly embracing the 2030 Agenda to drive change in their communities.

Objectives and Methodology

The Government of South Africa has prioritized SDG acceleration through localization. It participated as a partner country in the 2023-2024 project on *Improved local and national government capacities for localizing SDGs progress through Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs)*, funded by the Government of Italy and implemented by the Division for Sustainable Development Goals (DSDG/UNDESA) in partnership with the National Planning Commission and in close cooperation with RCO and UNDP

South Africa and SALGA. During the project, VLRs were prepared by ten city or municipal governments.¹

South Africa is now participating in a second phase of the project, entitled *Strengthening local and national government capacities for SDG localization in Africa*, which focuses on accelerating and scaling up SDG implementation and localization through: 1) the development of new VLRs by local governments; and 2) providing capacity building support focused on SDG planning, budgeting and implementation, particularly infrastructure asset management planning, a key tool for local governments to increase the resilience, revenue and service potential of their infrastructure portfolios over their entire lifecycle.

The capacity building workshop aims to support these two objectives. To do so, national and sub-national experts will be drawn from various line ministries, including the National Planning Commission, the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, the Office of the Presidency, Statistics South Africa and the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment; local and regional governments; academia, research centers and civil society; development partners; and the United Nations Country Team.

Through a mix of presentations, group work, peer learning and discussion, the workshop will support participants to:

- Deepen their understanding of inclusive and data-driven approaches to advance SDG localization, including through planning, review and reporting, in alignment with existing national, subnational, and municipal systems.
- Gain a strengthened understanding of how infrastructure asset management and SDG localization efforts can be integrated with one another.
- Have acquired enhanced capability and a better understanding of the requirements for successfully undertaking a voluntary local review and an infrastructure asset management plan, and how to link and align these to and coordinate them with national and local planning priorities and processes.
- Be prepared to participate in a community of similar practitioners and experts to support one another in localizing the SDGs.

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