



THE LAUNCH OF THE MULTI-STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE VOLUNTARY LOCAL REVIEW OF IRBID CITY

The Intercontinental Hotel, Amman
February 7th and 8th, 2024

Background

In 2015, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan was among the 193 Member States of the United Nations who adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). By adopting the SDGs, Jordan committed to exerting the efforts required to address emerging global issues and challenges to achieve the sustainable development agenda. A year later, in 2016, the United Nations General Assembly endorsed the New Urban Agenda (NUA). These two Agendas presented a shared and universal opportunity for a prosperous and sustainable future for cities across the world.

Nevertheless, achieving sustainable urban development cannot be realized without the engagement of all the relevant stakeholders, including local authorities. In fact, 65% of the 169 SDGs targets cannot be achieved without the involvement of local governments. Therefore, while implementing the SDGs at the national level is a direct reflection of the countries' commitment to the 2030 Agenda, it is only through localizing the SDGs and strengthening the national-local policy dialogue that sustainable development can be achieved.

Since 2018, local governments across the world started developing Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) to monitor progress in achieving SDGs at the local level. This review constitutes a means for highlighting local development priorities mapped to the SDGs. Through evidence, this local review analyzes the city's strengths, challenges, and opportunities for achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. At the 2022 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), Jordan was the pioneering country presenting its second Voluntary National Review (VNR) and the first Voluntary Local Review in the Arab region for the City of Amman together at the same time. This advocated at the global level the importance of reinforcing national-local development dialogue and policy coherence for sustainable development.

As 2030 nears, the importance of regional, national, and local cooperation is growing more significant to achieve the goals and agendas we have set forth is crucial. The meaningful engagement of various stakeholders can redefine urbanization as a driver for advancing the SDGs, whereby the growing human capital, sectors, diversity, and investments can be leveraged to transform cities to be more sustainable and better perform against the 2030 Agenda—at the local, national, and international levels. Within this context and under the **“Fostering COVID-19 recovery and SDGs implementation through local action in Asia-Pacific, Arab and African countries”** global project, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA) have once again joined forces to strengthen the capacities of local and regional governments and multilevel

governance systems to advance SDG localization by harnessing the potential of Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) . This project supports Greater Irbid Municipality in reviewing the progress made in localizing the SDGs and strengthening the capacities of local authorities in mainstreaming the SDGs within its strategies and action plans while ensuring alignment as possible.

In this regard, and in the presence of His Excellency Dr. Nabil Al Kofahi, Mayor of the Greater Irbid Municipality, UN-Habitat and UNESCWA are organizing a national workshop, which aims to launch the multi-stakeholders dialogue related to the development process of the first VLR for the City of Irbid. This event marks the official initiation of the Voluntary Local Review process for Irbid City.

Workshop Objectives

The Launch of the Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue for the Voluntary Local Review (VLR) of Irbid City is a 2-day event that aims to launch the inclusive VLR development process and officially introduce the project to national stakeholders. It will additionally act as a learning platform for developing and aligning Voluntary National and Local Reviews. The event will serve as a venue to kick-off the stakeholders' engagement process and open channels for horizontal and vertical dialogues on sustainable urban development, fostering inclusive community engagement, and involving multisectoral development entities. It will set the stage for comprehensive data collection.

The first day of the event will focus on the development of the VLR of Irbid City to support Jordan's efforts towards SDG localization. It aims to enhance awareness around Jordan's SDG roadmap as well as to open dialogue around the Irbid VLR process. It will additionally support in finalizing the prioritization of the SDGs to be reviewed in the first VLR of Irbid city through stakeholder input. Through this activity and by addressing challenges, this activity will highlight the opportunities for data collection and for supporting planning and plans for Irbid City.

On the second day, a VLR-VNR Studio will be held. This serves as a learning platform for building the capacities of national and local governments on the VLR process and its potential alignment with national reporting processes, particularly the alignment between VNRs and VLRs which was highlighted in the first VLR of Amman and which was the result of the cooperation between MoPIC and GAM. It will also provide a forum for the exchanges of regional and international good practices in developing VLRs and aligning them with national and /or sub-regional plans and processes. The VLR-VNR studio will provide an opportunity for discussion between national and local governments on experiences with the processes of local data collection for the development of VLRs and VNRs; and the use of collected data for the evidence –based policy making such as the development of city action plans and programmes.

Participants

With the in-person presence of representatives of UN-Habitat Regional Office for Arab States and UNESCWA, the workshop will gather related regional, national, and local stakeholders to ensure an integrated and inclusive approach to the VLR process. Relevant stakeholders will participate in the launch event including GIM, MoPIC, MoLA, and DoS, participants from public and private sectors, NGOs, CSOs, and Academia. The event will also witness the engagement of Greater

Amman Municipality, represented by the Amman Urban Observatory, to share Amman's experience developing the Voluntary Local Review of Amman City.

Venue and Date

This event will be held in person at the Intercontinental Hotel in Amman on Wednesday 7th and Thursday 8th, February 2024.

Language

The main Language of the event is Arabic. Arabic and English Language interpretation will only be available for Day 2.

Workshop Agenda

Day 1: Project Launch and Multi-Stakeholders Dialogue

Wednesday, February 7th, 2024

Moderator: Deema Abu Thiab, National Programme Coordinator, UN-Habitat Jordan

9:30-10:00

Registration

10:00 – 10:30

Opening Remarks:

- His Excellency Dr. Nabil Kofahi, Mayor of Greater Irbid Municipality
- Nagwa Lachine, UN-Habitat Regional Office for Arab States Programme Officer
- Dr. Sukaina Al-Nasrawi, UN-ESCWA Lead of Sustainable Urban Development Portfolio

10:30 – 11:10

Overview of the Global Project on 'Fostering COVID-19 recovery and SDGs implementation through local action in Asia-Pacific, Arab and African countries, and the Practical Guidelines for VLRs in the Arab Region

Sukaina Nasrawi, UN-ESCWA

Nagwa Lachine, UN-Habitat Regional Office for Arab States

11:10 – 12:00

Irbid Voluntary Local Review: Status Quo and Development Process (40mins + 15mins Q&A)

Reem Halaseh, SDG Localization Consultant

12:00 – 12:30

Coffee Break

12:30 – 1:30

Sustainability Dialogue: Launching Conversations on SDGs (Group Discussion and Exercise)

Reem Halaseh, SDG Localization Consultant

1:30 – 2:00

Discussion Outcomes and Day 1 Summary

2:00 – 3:00

Lunch

Day 2: VNR/VLR Studio: Reinforcing Vertical Coherence.

Thursday, February 8th, 2024

Moderator: Reem Halaseh, SDG Localization Consultant	
9:30 - 10:00	Registration
10:00 – 10:10	Welcoming and Presenting Day 2 Agenda. Reem Halaseh, SDG Localization Consultant
10:10 – 11:10	Reinforcing Vertical Dialogue on the Sustainable Development Goals: International, National, and Local Perspectives on Strengthening Partnerships and Multi-Stakeholder Data Collection to Support Advancing the 2030 Agenda Deema Abu Thiab, UN-Habitat Jordan Rasha Dabbouri, Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation Akram Khreisat, Amman Urban Observatory, Greater Amman Municipality Moderator: Dr. Sukaina Al-Nasrawi
11:10 – 11:30	Open Discussion Reem Halaseh, SDG Localization Consultant
11:30 – 12:00	Coffee Break
12:00 – 1:00	Advancing Together: Exchange of Good Practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VLRs as the Foundation for Planning: The VLR Experience in the City of Helsinki (20mins) • Aligning VLR's with the Municipality's Action Plan: The VLR Experience in Agadir (20mins) (20mins Q&A)
1:00 – 2:00	Exploring the On-Going VLR Process: International and Regional Cases <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nakuru City Voluntary Local Review- Kenya (20 mins) • City of Ramallah Voluntary Local Review- Palestine (20 mins) • City of Hay Ennour Voluntary Local Review - Tunisia (20mins) (10mins Q&A)
2:00 – 2:30	Day 2 Summary and Next Steps Reem Halaseh, SDG Localization Consultant
2:30-3:30	Lunch