

Workshop on the Voluntary National Reviews in the Arab Region

UN House, Beirut, 10 – 11 October 2019
VIP (workshop) room, B1 Level

Preliminary Programme of Work

Version of 03 October 2019

Day One: Thursday 10 October 2019

08:30 – 09:00	Registration
09:00 – 09:30	<p>Opening Session</p> <p>The opening session presents the workshop objectives and reviews the programme of work, its content and expected outcomes.</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Karima El Korri, Head of the Unit on the 2030 Agenda, ESCWA - Joop Theunissen, Deputy Chief, Intergovernmental Policy and Review Branch, OISC, UN DESA - Friedrich Soltau, Senior Sustainable Development Officer, Division for Sustainable Development Goals, UN DESA
09:30 – 11:00	<p>Session 1- Open Dialogue on VNRs</p> <p><i>Brief introduction</i> on current global state of VNRs (5 min)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Joop Theunissen, UN DESA <p>The first session will be in the form of an open dialogue that aims to connect participants' ideas, needs and expectations. The session will initiate the peer-learning and contribute to building a common understanding of the main functions of the VNR as a key component of the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda.</p> <p>Co-moderators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adib Nehmeh, Senior Advisor on Sustainable Development, Unit on the 2030 Agenda, ESCWA - Maisaa Youssef, Sustainable Development Officer, Unit on the 2030 Agenda, ESCWA <p>Guiding Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the ultimate goal of a voluntary national review? (Why VNRs) 2. What goes in the VNR report? (different approaches to content) 3. What process do VNRs follow? (VNR roadmaps and action plans) 4. What use is made of the review process and the prepared report after its presentation at the HLPF? (the Post-VNR phase)
11:00 – 11:15	Coffee Break

<p>11:15 – 12:30</p>	<p>Session 2- Overview: Four years of VNRs</p> <p>The session builds on the conclusions of the open dialogue in the previous session to situate the VNR within a broader process of follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda including links to implementation, principles of the 2030 Agenda, partnership and participatory development, and monitoring and evaluation. It will include two presentations that synthesize key trends from four years of VNRs (2016 to 2019) from a global and regional perspective, highlighting practices and common challenges, and broadening the scope for options and solutions.</p> <p>Moderator: (5 min)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Karima El Korri, ESCWA <p>Speakers: (30 min)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Friedrich Soltau, UN DESA and Svenja Rauch, Associate Expert, Intergovernmental Policy and Review Branch, OISC, UN DESA - Maisaa Youssef, ESCWA <p>Discussant: (5 min)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Riccardo Mesiano, Sustainable Development Officer, Environment and Development Division, ESCAP <p>Q&A: (35 min)</p>
<p>12:30 – 13:30</p>	<p>Lunch Break</p>
<p>13:30 – 15:00</p>	<p>Session 3- Building the foundations for a new generation of VNRs: Cluster A</p> <p>This session will address the following topics in Cluster A: national development plans including the whole-of-government approach and implications in terms of integrated policies and institutional set-up, integrated financing frameworks and linkages with budget processes, alignment of national priorities with SDGs and leveraging interlinkages.</p> <p>Kick-off presentation: (10 min)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Friedrich Soltau, UN DESA <p>Group work: (35 min)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participants break into 3-4 groups to address a set of guiding questions. Each group will designate a facilitator/timekeeper and a rapporteur. <p>Guiding Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How are institutions at all levels of government being mobilized for implementing the SDGs and conducting the VNRs? What mechanisms of coordination have been put in place? 2. What steps have been taken to align national development plans with SDGs/to integrate SDGs in national development planning in your country? 3. How can SDG implementation be linked to budgetary processes and investment needs? 4. How can synergies between the SDGs be leveraged and trade-offs be minimized? <p>Reporting and discussion: (15 min)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The rapporteur of each working group will present the main findings of the group work in plenary, followed by a general discussion. <p>Mini-solutions for the next generation of VNRs: (15 min)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Riccardo Mesiano, ESCAP (<i>On the whole-of-government approach</i>) - Joop Theunissen, UN DESA (<i>On second- and third time reporting of VNRs</i>)

	<p>- Mona Fattah, Sustainable Development Officer, Unit on the 2030 Agenda, ESCWA (<i>On solutions for financing the SDGs</i>)</p> <p>Synthesis: (15 min)</p>
15:00 – 15:15	Coffee Break
15:15 – 16:45	<p>Session 4- Building the foundations for a new generation of VNRs: Cluster B</p> <p>This session will address the following topics in Cluster B: applying key principles of the 2030 Agenda such as the gender dimension, leaving no one behind, and good-quality disaggregated data.</p> <p>Kick-off presentation: (10 min)</p> <p>- Adib Nehme, ESCWA</p> <p>Group work: (35 min)</p> <p>- Participants break into 3-4 groups to address a set of guiding questions. Each group will designate a facilitator/timekeeper and a rapporteur.</p> <p>Guiding questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. HRBA and Gender equality are crucial issues in the Arab region. How can VNRs encourage integrating these principles in national development plans and national policies? 2. Conflict, war and occupation represent a threat to development. How can VNR address the linkages between peace and development and promote peaceful and inclusive societies? 3. How can VNRs use the principle of LNOB beyond the narrow selective targeting and address exclusion and discrimination? 4. What type of evidence is needed to verify the respect of the principles and what is the role of data? <p>Reporting and discussion: (15 min)</p> <p>- The rapporteur of each working group will present the main findings of the group work in plenary, followed by a general discussion.</p> <p>Mini-solutions for the next generation of VNRs: (15 min)</p> <p>- Karima El Korri, ESCWA (<i>On LNOB & HRA</i>)</p> <p>- Nada Darwazeh, Chief, Gender Equality Section, ESCWA Centre for Women (<i>On integrating the gender dimension into VNRs</i>)</p> <p>Synthesis: (15 min)</p>
16:45 – 17:00	Wrap up of Day 1 and preparing for Day 2

Day Two: Friday 11 October 2019

<p>09:00 – 10:30</p>	<p>Session 5- Building the foundations for a new generation of VNRs: Cluster C</p> <p>This session will address the following topics in Cluster C: partnerships, whole-of-society approach, multi-stakeholder engagement, accountability, and national/local ownership.</p> <p>Kick-off presentation: (10 min)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adib Nehme, ESCWA <p>Group work: (35 min)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participants break into 3-4 groups to address a set of guiding questions. Each group will designate a facilitator/timekeeper and a rapporteur. <p>Guiding questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who are the national stakeholders involved in development processes and VNRs at the national level and how were they identified? 2. Is the level of participation of all stakeholders (CSOs, private sector, local authorities, academia, parliament) in the VNR satisfactory? what are the main challenges to their full engagement? 3. How can the regional and global mechanisms help to overcome obstacles? <p>Reporting and discussion: (15 min)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The rapporteur of each working group will present the main findings of the group work in plenary, followed by a general discussion. <p>Mini-solutions for the next generation of VNRs: (15 min)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Joop Theunissen, UN DESA (<i>On multi-stakeholder engagement</i>) - Hania Sabbidin Dimassi, Unit on the 2030 Agenda, ESCWA (<i>On engaging with parliaments</i>) <p>Synthesis: (15 min)</p>
<p>10:30 – 11:00</p>	<p>Coffee Break</p>
<p>11:00 – 12:30</p>	<p>Session 6- Building the foundations for a new generation of VNRs: Cluster D</p> <p>This session will address the following topics in Cluster D: accelerating implementation, monitoring progress, evaluating policies, assessing delivery against commitments, identifying capacity and resources gaps costing of priorities, and financing strategies.</p> <p>Kick-off presentation: (10 min)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Friedrich Soltau, UN DESA <p>Group work: (35 min)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participants break into 3-4 groups to address a set of guiding questions. Each group will designate a facilitator/timekeeper and a rapporteur. <p>Guiding questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What happens after a VNR is presented at the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development? 2. How to build on the momentum of the VNR and the lessons learned of the review process to accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to put in place robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms? 3. What challenges do countries face in systematically following up on VNRs and how can they be overcome?

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12:30 – 13:30	Lunch Break		
13:30 – 15:00	<p>Session 7- The Road to HLPF</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="342 716 1490 1182"> <tr> <td data-bbox="342 716 899 1182"> <p>Parallel Session 7A (VIP-Workshop room)</p> <p>The session will bring together countries that have already prepared VNRs to reflect on the process, the HLPF, the regional level, and suggest ways to enhance the national-regional-global links in the broader framework of the HLPF review in 2020.</p> <p>Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Karima El Korri, ESCWA </td> <td data-bbox="899 716 1490 1182"> <p>Parallel Session 7B (Committee Room II)</p> <p>The session will gather countries that will prepare a VNR for the first time in 2020 or have yet to prepare one and allow them to engage with UN DESA and the organizers on the process and understand the key milestones going forward.</p> <p>Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maisaa Youssef, ESCWA <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Joop Theunissen, UN DESA - Svenja Rauch, UN DESA </td> </tr> </table>	<p>Parallel Session 7A (VIP-Workshop room)</p> <p>The session will bring together countries that have already prepared VNRs to reflect on the process, the HLPF, the regional level, and suggest ways to enhance the national-regional-global links in the broader framework of the HLPF review in 2020.</p> <p>Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Karima El Korri, ESCWA 	<p>Parallel Session 7B (Committee Room II)</p> <p>The session will gather countries that will prepare a VNR for the first time in 2020 or have yet to prepare one and allow them to engage with UN DESA and the organizers on the process and understand the key milestones going forward.</p> <p>Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maisaa Youssef, ESCWA <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Joop Theunissen, UN DESA - Svenja Rauch, UN DESA
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15:00 – 16:00	<p>Session 8- Synthesis and the way forward</p> <p>This session will take stock of the key messages and recommendations from the discussions over the two days and will consolidate the conclusions into a set of agreed benchmarks/standards/practical steps for consideration in carrying out future VNRs and related reports. It will also propose solutions to address the increasing demand for peer-learning, capacity building and support.</p> <p>Moderator: TBC</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UN DESA - ESCWA <p>Feedback</p> <p>Closing</p>		