



*“Next Generation Administrative Reforms –
Empowering Citizens and Reaching the Last Mile”.*

‘Stronger Together’: Voluntary Metropolitan Coordination across Local Boundaries on SDGs and Governance

Some Preliminary Trends

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A key pillar of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda, alongside the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals, is an **ongoing review of implementation.**

Central to this is the process of Voluntary National Reviews, where Member States submit and present reports on their progress in delivering on their commitments.



Types of Existing Voluntary Review

VNR- Voluntary National Reviews

regular and inclusive reviews of progress of 2030 Agenda implementation at the national and sub-national levels, which are country-led and country-driven“, every year at HLPF 40+ countries present their VNR

VLR- Voluntary Local Reviews

local and regional governments reports on their 2030 Agenda implementation. These VLRs can reinforce vertical coherence and complement and contribute to the national Voluntary National Reviews of SDG implementation.



Types of Existing Voluntary Reviews (2)

VSR- Voluntary Subnational Reviews

Voluntary Subnational Reviews (VSRs) are led by local and regional governments' associations, advance an innovative approach to SDG monitoring and reporting.

This innovative approach differs from Voluntary Local Reviews in that VSRs provide country- wide analyses of subnational efforts and challenges to localize the SDGs.



Propose to Add Another Layer of Review Process

1. Voluntary National Review (VNR)
2. Voluntary Subnational Reviews (VSR)
3. Voluntary Metropolitan Review (VMR)
4. Voluntary Local Review (VLR)



Metropolitan– In-between Layer

Metropolitan areas, according to the OECD, are cities with a population between 500 thousand and 1.5 million people. They can be **agglomerations of separate cities** which have been integrated into a larger urban area.

The separate areas retain autonomy which can make it difficult for the metropolitan area as a whole to coordinate sustainable growth and other functions of city government.





MAKE CITIES AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS INCLUSIVE, SAFE, RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE

(Source: The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2023: Special Edition)



== GLOBALLY, ==
3 IN 4 CITIES



MUCH LOWER THAN THE **TARGET OF 45-50%** (2020)



Cities are key to sustainability

Cities = 80 % of global GDP.

Cities = 70 % of global Greenhouse gas emissions.



World City Populations 1950 - 2030

Circle area proportional to populations in-
 1950 1990 2015 2030
 Data: United Nations 2019
 Design: D.A. Smith, CAGA, USA



Megaregions continue to grow and attract people, companies, institutions, and development in developed, emerging, and developing economies (Harrison and Hoyler. 2015). In Europe, the urban corridor between Manchester, London, Paris, Netherlands, Central and Southern Germany, to Northern Italy anchored by metropolitan Milan, has a population of about 110 million and is referred to as “Blue Banana.” The Tokyo–Nagoya–Osaka–Fukuoka corridor in Japan, for example, with a population of more than 70 million along 1,200 kilometers, is also referred to as Taiheio Belt or Tokaido Megalopolis. The corridor is connected by the Shinkansen high-speed train and is generating about 80% of the country’s economic output. The northeast in the United States (US) from Boston to Washington has a population of about 50 million people and a GDP of \$3.6 trillion (Florida 2019). Source: Stefan Rau, “Urban Synergies Through Coordinated City Cluster Governance”

Map source: <https://citygeographics.org/2015/12/09/mapping-the-global-urban-transformation/>



Justification for VMR

- The inherent **territorial interdependence** between metropolitan cities and the surrounding smaller cities and towns, which collectively form **a functioning economic ecosystem**.
- Unlike individual municipal-level reviews, a metropolitan-level aggregation provides a **comprehensive perspective on the localization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** by capturing the broader spatial, economic, social, and environmental interlinkages within the region.



Justification for VMR-interdependencies

- ❑ **An upstream hub** of a complex value chain, influencing and being influenced by the economic, social, and cultural dynamics of nearby autonomous municipalities.
- ❑ These **interdependencies** manifest in several ways:
 - **Economic Integration:** Smaller cities and towns are economically intertwined with metropolitan areas through supply chains, labour markets, infrastructure, and service networks, making their SDG progress interrelated.
 - **Social and Cultural Networks:** The movement of people, goods, and ideas between the metropolitan core and its adjacent territories strengthens shared development trajectories, impacting SDG outcomes in education, health, and social equity.
 - **Environmental and Resource Management:** Given shared natural resources and environmental pressures, sustainable policies require coordinated action beyond municipal boundaries.



Benefits

- better accounting for these territorial **synergies**
- ensuring that SDG localization efforts align with **functional urban-regional realities** rather than arbitrary administrative boundaries
- enabling better **coordination, policy coherence**, and the **identification of scalable and regionally adapted solutions**, thereby accelerating the territorialized implementation of the 2030 Agenda.



Voluntary Metropolitan Review

1. How to coordinate, plan, cooperate between entities of large metropolitan-megacities?
2. How to create meaningful and effective multi-stakeholder participation? Creative placemaking?
3. How to correct wrong directions- authoritarian rule? Laissez-faire? Controle movement of people from rural to urban centres?



VMR Preliminary Trends (1)

- SDG implementation and governance through administrative regulation and by a central metropolitan authority
 - **Such an approach and structure are seen as not effective.**
- Challenges confronting metropolitan areas are mainly
 - ✓ **Governance and policy coordination and coherence**
 - ✓ **Data and monitoring systems**
- Fulfillment of SDG 6, 11, & 13 is considered to be the hardest



VMR Preliminary Trends (2)

- **Areas needing the most coordination due to high interdependencies**
 - ✓ Transport and mobility
 - ✓ Housing
 - ✓ Urban planning
- **Major barriers to effective governance**
 - ✓ Political fragmentation and competition
- **Common Policy Coordination Tools**
 - ✓ Coordinational mechanisms
 - ✓ Funding and resource pool for common projects
- **Improvements**
 - ✓ Through specific purpose governance structure or agreement



VMR Preliminary Trends (3)

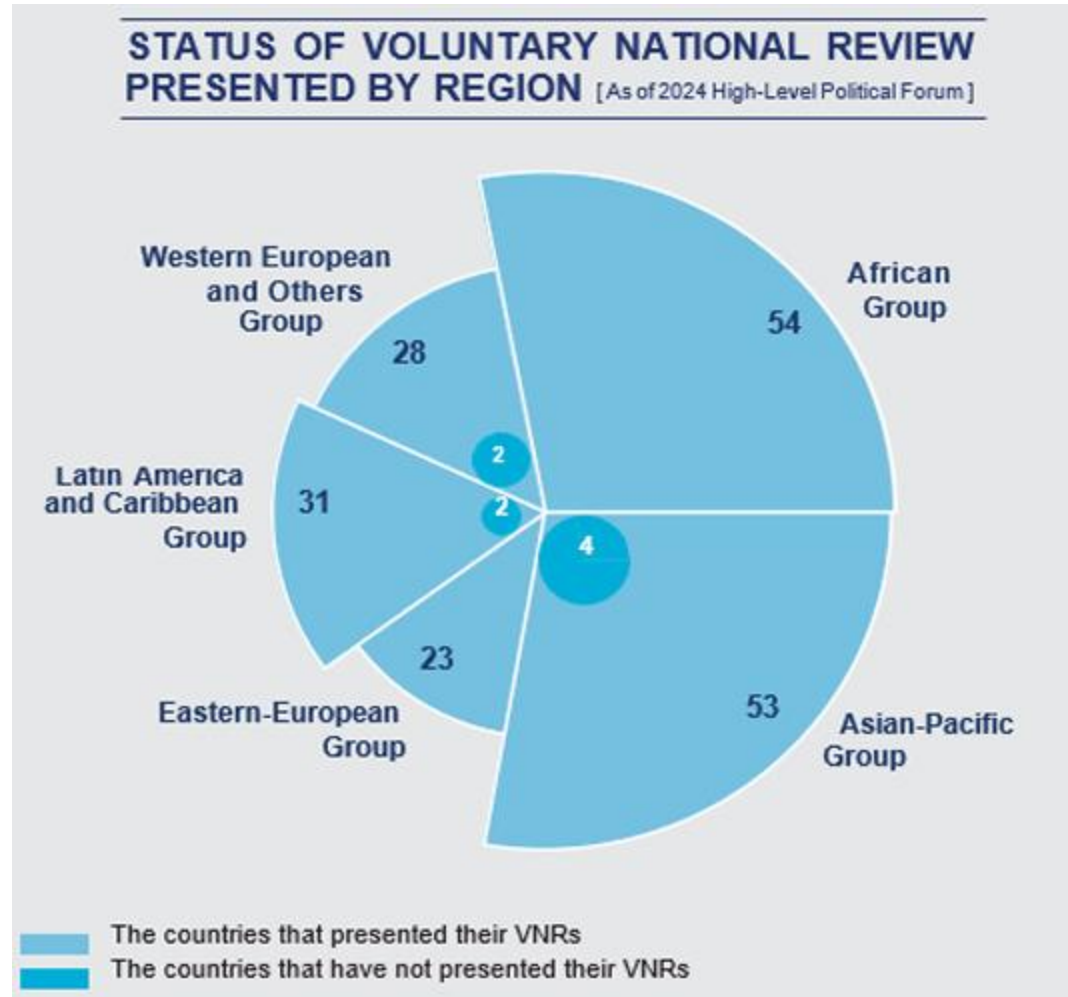
- Could VMR help better track and improve on SDG delivery?
 - ✓ Definitely would
- Additional Value Created
 - ✓ Coordinate data collection and indicators applied
 - ✓ Sharing of responsibilities for SDG implementation
- Institutional Capabilities Needed
 - ✓ Data Collection and Analysis Capability
 - ✓ System Thinking Culture



Thank You for your attention !!



Status of VNRs by Regions



https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/meetings/vnr-workshop-dec2024/2024_VNR_Synthesis_Report.pdf

