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THE 20TH ODA EVALUATION WORKSHOP

VNR as a Tool to Achieve the SDGs and to Revitalize Multilateralism

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VNR as a means to update the current status of the SDGs

- **Conducting a Voluntary National Review (VNR) was stipulated as a follow-up mechanism** to review the implementation of the SDGs in para. 79 of the 2030 Agenda (A/RES/70/1).
- **As of October 2025, 439 VNRs have been submitted by 191 Member states and EU:**
<https://hlpf.un.org/countries>
- Each Member state is guided by **the Secretary General's guidelines for producing VNRs** (<https://hlpf.un.org/sites/default/files/2024-12/SG%20VNR%20Guidelines%202024.pdf>) and by **the UN Handbook for the preparation of VNRs** (<https://hlpf.un.org/sites/default/files/vnrs/hand-book/VNR>)
- **Multi-stakeholder engagement** is crucial in VNR so that “no one is left behind” in achieving the SDGs.

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HLPF as a forum of mutual exchange and learning

- **HLPF (High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development)** is stipulated in the 2030 Agenda as the global annual forum in July in NY for approx. ten days to monitor the implementation of the SDGs
- 35 countries have presented their VNRs at the 2025 HLPF: <https://hlpf.un.org/2025/vnrs>
- The 2025 HLPF conducted in-depth reviews of SDG 3, SDG 5, SDG 8, SDG 14, and SDG17.
- Summary of each VNR can be found in the “Compilation of main messages for the 2025 voluntary national reviews” (E/HLPF/2025/5).
- Besides HLPF and ECOSOC High Level Segment, **VNR Labs, Special Events, Side Events, and Exhibitions** took place and contributed to mutual learning and exchanges among Member states.

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The 3rd VNR of the GOJ: Important Progress (1)

- **Deeper engagement of the Roundtable for Promotion of the SDGs:** Close consultation with the Roundtable members took place in terms of the process and contents of the VNR, that includes how to conduct thematic breakout sessions and to ensure accessibility to information in the Stakeholder Meeting.
- The Roundtable for Promotion of the SDGs, that was established in 2016 by the Government of Japan for the purpose of promoting multi-stakeholder engagement in Japan for achieving the SDGs, was fully utilized in conducting the 3rd VNR.
- That clearly indicates **closer partnership between the GOJ and stakeholders.**

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The 3rd VNR of the GOJ: Important Progress (2)

- **First-ever Stakeholder Meeting for VNR** was convened by MOFA to review and discuss current situations of the SDGs in Japan
- Open call for participation
 - Held face to face as well as online
 - Four thematic breakout sessions were conducted for deep and focused analysis
 - Members of “SDGs Japan” acted as moderators/reporters in the thematic breakout sessions

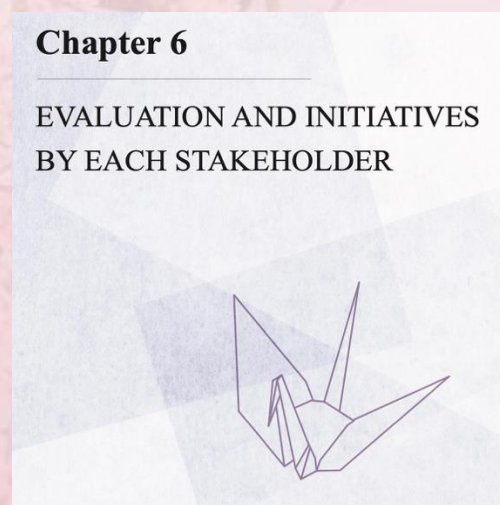


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The 3rd VNR of the GOJ: Important Progress (3)

- **Final draft VNR was put out for public comment for one month and several comments were reflected in the adopted VNR.**
 - They include; reference to “Universal Health Coverage (UHC)”, “mainstreaming of human rights and gender”, and “rights-based good local initiatives.
- **Firm commitment of the GOJ to the SDGs was clearly demonstrated**
- **An independent chapter of the VNR (Chapter 6) was dedicated for review by stakeholders:**
https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/sdgs/pdf/vnr2025_00_full_en.pdf



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The 3rd VNR of the GOJ: Important Progress (4)

- “SDGs Japan” published “*SDGs Spotlight Report 2025*” that consolidated civil society’s review of the 17 goals as a contribution/input to the VNR: <https://www.sdgs-japan.net/product-page/sdgs-spotlight-report-2025-en>
- In the process of reviewing each Goal, **constructive dialogue with relevant ministries/agencies** took place that enabled accurate understanding of the progress of the Goals. This was made possible thanks to closer partnership with the Global Issues Cooperation Division of MOFA, the Secretariat responsible for promotion of the SDGs in Japan. The 3rd VNR became **an invaluable opportunity for deepening constructive partnership.**



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The 3rd VNR of the GOJ: Lessons and Challenges

- **Evidence-based review for achieving the SDGs** should be further strengthened
 - There are **global indicators** that have been missing in the Japan's VNR
 - Progress of Initiatives including "reduction of marine plastic pollution through Osaka Blue Ocean Vision", and "one-stop support center for victims of gender-based violence" should be **reviewed with evidence**.
- **Further involvement of various stakeholders including MGoS (Major Groups and other Stakeholders)** should be promoted
 - Several groups of the MGoS have not been included in the Roundtable.
- **Transformative local initiatives should be shared and replicated**, both domestically and internationally, as good practices that profit the implementation of the SDGs



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VNRs for Revitalizing Multilateralism to Advance the SDGs

- **It is critically important to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs** so that our world is transformed from unsustainable to sustainable, no matter how grim the global situation surrounding the SDGs is.
- **The SDGs will never be achieved without multilateral efforts** since the issues addressed in the Goals of the SDGs are deeply interlinked, which necessitates strong commitment of all the Member states.
- For that to take place, **VNRs is of the utmost importance** for the Member states since they can inform us of the progress made as well as of the remaining challenges involved in achieving the SDGs

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VNRs for Revitalizing Multilateralism to Advance the SDGs

- **VNRs and HLPF offer an opportunity to learn from good practices of other Member states as well as to understand further challenges ahead for the sustainable development.**
- **Mutual learning and exchanges of good practices benefit the Member states in reaffirming the importance and commitment to the SDGs.**
- **Without this multilateral efforts, the globe will never be sustainable. Without strengthened efforts toward the SDGs, our future will be in crisis.**
- **Let us make the most of the VNR for achieving the SDGs and for sustainable future.**



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Thank you very much!

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