

White & Case Review of the 2019 Voluntary National Reports with a focus on Sustainable Development Goal 16

The VNRs: In 2015, the Member States of the United Nations announced their commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which include 17 Sustainable Development Goals (“SDGs”) and 169 targets. The Member States vowed not only to act on these critical issues but also to engage in voluntary, transparent, and rigorous follow-ups and reviews. The results of these reviews are published through the Voluntary National Reviews (“VNRs”). The VNRs use a set of global indicators to evaluate the progress and challenges of implementing the SDGs by each Member State.

SDG 16 – Promotion of Peaceful, Just, and Inclusive Societies: SDG 16 calls to “[p]romote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.” In order to ensure effective reporting and understand how SDG 16 is interlinked with other SDGs, the Global Alliance for Reporting Progress on Peaceful, Just, and Inclusive Societies (the “Global Alliance”) was established. At the request of Global Alliance, White & Case LLP examined 22 VNRs submitted in 2016, the 43 VNRs submitted in 2017, and 45 VNRs submitted in 2018 to assess whether, and to what extent, member states reported on the implementation of SDG 16 and the 24 related targets (the SDG16 targets together with the 24 targets hereinafter “SDG16+Targets”).¹

Review Criteria: The number of VNR submissions has increased every year and, in 2019 (47 VNRs), is more than double the number of VNRs submitted in 2016 (22 VNRs). In a process similar to that performed by White & Case for the 2016, 2017 and 2018 VNR report cycles, White & Case reviewed the 47 VNRs submitted in 2019 and analyzed (i) whether the countries reported on the SDG 16+ Targets; (ii) the extent of the reporting on these targets; (iii) whether the report indicated that it was a product of an inclusive, participatory process; (iv) whether the report noted that the private sector was involved in implementation and reporting, and (v) whether sources of data were provided. In addition, for member states who submitted prior VNRs, White & Case compared the member states’ SDG16+ reporting in 2019 to its prior submission.

The Global Alliance for Reporting Progress on Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies is a coordinating platform for Member States, UN entities, Private Sector and Civil Society Organizations to work together on reporting, measuring and tracking SDG16+.

The Alliance uses the reporting framework of the 2030 Agenda as a ‘hook’ to drive the evidence-based and multi-stakeholder action necessary for progress on the SDGs.

The Global Alliance helps governments to conduct the participatory planning, monitoring and reporting which pulls SDG 16 data together – enabling the evidence-based policy, and the joint action needed for transformative change.

¹ In addition to all SDG16 targets, the 24 related targets are the following: 1.B institutions and policies for poverty reduction; 4.5 all forms of discrimination in education; 4.7 culture of peace, non violence, and global citizenship; 4.A self education facilities; 5.1 discrimination against women and girls; 5.2 violence against women and girls; 5.3 child marriage and FGM; 5.5 women’s participation and leadership; 5.C policies and legislation for gender equality; 8.5 equal pay for equal work; 8.7 child labour and soliders; 8.8 labour right; 10.2 political, economic, and social inclusion; 10.3 equal opportunities; 10.4 policies for greater equality; 10.5 regulation of global financial markets; 10.6 global financial and economic institutions; 10.7 self-migration; 11.1 safe housing; 11.2 safe transport; 11.3 inclusive urbanization; 11.7 safe public spaces; 17.10 equitable trade system; 17.3 tax collection.

Detailed Findings: A detailed chart of the overall findings is attached hereto as *Annex I*. Below is a cursory summary of the number of VNRs (out of 47 VNRs submitted) that reported on SDG16+Targets:²

NUMBER OF COUNTRIES THAT REPORTED ON THE SDG16+ TARGETS		
SDG	Target	Total
1.B	Institutions and policies for poverty reduction	42
4.5	All forms of discrimination in education	46
4.7	Culture of peace, non violence and global citizenship	29
4.A	Safe education facilities	30
5.1	Discrimination against women and girls	42
5.2	Violence against women and girls	44
5.3	Child marriage and female genital mutilation	27
5.5	Women's participation and leadership	44
5.C	Policies and legislation for gender equality	42
8.5	Equal pay for equal work	29
8.7	Child labour and soldiers; forced labor and modern slavery and human trafficking	32
8.8	Labour rights; safe workplaces	28
10.2	Political, social, and economic inclusion	44
10.3	Equal opportunities, laws, policies and practices	36
10.4	Policies for greater equality	42
10.5	Regulation of global financial markets and institutions	15
10.6	Representation in global economic markets and institutions	17
10.7	Safe migration	28
11.1	Safe housing	34
11.2	Safe transport	27
11.3	Inclusive urbanisation	25
11.7	Safe public spaces	20
16.1	Reduce violence	41
16.2	End child abuse, exploitation, and violence	39
16.3	Equal access to justice	40
16.4	Reduce illicit financial and arms flows	29
16.5	Reduce corruption and bribery	42
16.6	Accountable transparent institutions	36
16.7	Representative decision-making	29
16.8	Participation of developing countries in global governance	19
16.9	Legal identity for all	26
16.10	Access to information and fundamental freedoms	37
16.A	Strengthen national institutions to prevent violence, terrorism, and crime	31
16.B	Promote non-discriminatory laws and policies	32
17.10	Equitable trade system	27
17.3	Tax collection	28

² The level of reporting varied among the VNRs. The total number listed reflects the number of countries that made reference to a relevant substantive topic, even if supporting data or detailed information was not provided or the target/indicator itself was not mentioned. The detailed chart in *Annex I* differentiates between mere mention of a particular topic and data-supported reporting.

Multi Stakeholder Involvement

All of the 47 reporting Member States stated that their VNRs were the result of an inclusive and participatory process with various stakeholders. The level of detail provided varied among VNRs.

Saint Lucia's Sustainable Development Goals National Coordinating Committee (SDGNCC) - the governing committee tasked to guide the implementation and monitoring of the SDGs in Saint Lucia -- is a multi-sectoral committee co-chaired by the Ministries responsible for Sustainable Development and Economic Development and is comprised of representatives and alternates from the private sector, Academia, Youth, Civil Society, Non-Government Organizations. The SDGNCC has a mandate that requires engagement with Faith-Based and Community-based organizations, as well as Persons with Disabilities, women's groups and the wider public to ensure that no one is left behind.

Algeria involved ministerial departments, civil society, and the private sector in its reporting process. Algeria also created a committee under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs exclusively focused on the implementation and advancement of the SDGs. The committee includes members from both houses of Parliament, the National Economic and Social Counsel, the National Statistics Office, the National Environmental and Sustainable Development Observatory, the Algerian Space Agency, and the National Cartography and Remote Sensing Institution.

Bosnia and Herzegovina initiated broad stakeholder citizen-focused consultations on Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2016 with the official launch of the Agenda 2030/SDGs in April 2017. The United Nations in Bosnia and Herzegovina has informed and engaged over 3,000 people and continues to be the main force of advocacy and engagement in the country. Most of 2018 was devoted to further broad stakeholder consultation (May 2018 consultations involved more than 250 people and an SDG and private sector conference was held in June 2018 and attended by more than 400 participants) and analytical and technical work. The SDG Framework document (to be finalized in 2019) will be the subject of further consultation both with experts, policymakers CSOs, the private sector, academia, and the general public, to allow for its proper integration into the strategic planning processes initiated by different levels of government.

Cambodia adopted a "whole of government approach," drawing in line ministries and agencies, and local administrations; and a "whole of society" approach, which includes having the product open to civil society and business actors with regular consultations taking place throughout the process.

Ghana's VNR process was coordinated by the SDGs Implementation Coordinating Committee (ICC). The ICC is under the supervision of the High Level Ministerial Committee on SDGs, including parliamentarians, civil society organizations, the private sector, schoolchildren, traditional authorities and academia. The ICC managed a team of technical experts to prepare a harmonized VNR report that then went through a series of validation meetings including children, youth groups, journalists, and national-level entities.

Iceland used an "inter-ministerial working group" to map 169 targets, and currently focusing on 65 priority targets. Iceland established a Youth Council to ensure formal participating of young people in

the promotion of goals. Iceland's VNR report was available in the government electronic consultation portal to invite the opinion of various parties and the drafters considered the feedback for the final report. The following groups' opinions were considered when writing this VNR by submissions through the online portal to the SDG working group: Association of Chartered Engineers in Iceland, Auður Guðjónsdóttir, Iceland National Olympians Association, IOGT Iceland, Landsvirkjun – National Power Company of Iceland, Save the Children Iceland, The Icelandic Youth Council, Throskahjalp – National association of intellectual disabilities, and Valorka. Iceland created a working group consisting of “representatives from all ministries, the Association of Local Authorities in Iceland and Statistics Iceland, as well as observers from the Youth Council for the SDGs and the UN Association in Iceland.” There has been collaboration between the five Nordic states to achieve goals in alignment with the SDGs. The SDG information portal offers individuals, NGO's, companies, institutions, municipalities, and others an opportunity to present project that contribute to promote the SDGs.

The **Mauritania** Government put in place an inter-ministerial committee to supervise the realization of its VNR. The committee is presided by the Prime Minister and including eight principal departments, as well as the Secretariat General of the Government, the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights and the Tadamoun Agency, active in the struggle against poverty and grassroots development. A consultation and exchange workshop was conducted to mark the beginning of the review, which included all stakeholders: members of the steering committee of the process, elected representatives, development partners, civil society representatives, economic operators, trade unions, etc. During this workshop, the steps of the review process, the targets to be analyzed during the project, and feedback indicators were validated.

Mongolia's report specifically mentions the inclusion of underrepresented groups and focuses on the importance of multi-stakeholder participation in the country's governance process. Mongolia noted that its VNR preparation process involved over 10 consultations, and that the entire process was highly participatory with a national-level discussion organized with over 100 participants. Notably, Mongolia acknowledged that the major overarching bottleneck that hinders progress is the lack of coherence and coordination among stakeholders and sectors, and that strengthening the coherence of these policies can improve the participation of everyone.

Palau's report noted that eight working groups led by government ministries, including representatives from civil society and semi-private organizations worked on the VNR. The government held two National Consultative Workshops, attended by those from civil society, state governments, and the United Nations Country Team.

Serbia noted its reporting process incorporated inclusiveness, “covering the inclusion of every individual irrespective of race, sex, ethnic background, or identity, and every segment of society to contribute to its achievement.”

South Africa's VNR was drafted with a contribution of NGOs, private sector, academia, and civil society organizations. DPME and Stats SA sent open invitations to civil society organizations, academia, trade unions, the private sector, and other stakeholders during the drafting process.

During **Turkey's** 2019 VNR preparations, 2,962 representatives were consulted directly from government bodies, 312 NGOs, 2,000 companies and 50 municipalities. Public institutions identified current situations and gaps. Public entities, NGOs, and stakeholders of each SDG target developed recommendations. The process included twenty meetings, which included six roundtable meetings with the participation of over 300 experts and executives representing around 150 institutions.

Preparation of **Turkmenistan's** review required horizontal and vertical coordination of the governmental sector and assumed wide participation of all stakeholders, including the private sector, social associations, academia, youth, and UN agencies. An inter-agency working group was created for the preparation of VNR and included governmental agencies with active participation of the UN agencies, academia, private sector, and social associations. The Ministry of Finance and Economics of Turkmenistan was responsible for the review.

The **United Republic of Tanzania's** first Voluntary National Review was reported to be inclusive and participatory, using different methodologies. The process involved Local Government Authorities, Members of Union Parliament, the Zanzibar House of Representatives, Civil Society Organizations, Non-governmental Organizations, the private sector, development partners, ethnic groups, academia, professional groups, labour associations, women and youth networks and the media.

In **Kuwait**, there were gatherings that provided open fora for participants to actively participate in the successive preparations, to discuss and provide required information and data, and to engage in reviews and revisions leading to final VNR report.

Cameroon reported a participatory approach that involved actors such as the Government, Parliament, the private sector, civil society, Decentralized Territorial Communities, Technical and Financial Partners, Youth Associations, the media, and universities.

Central African Republic's VNR process involved all stakeholders including state institutions (administrative and local authorities), the private sector, civil society organizations, and development partners.

Chad's process was coordinated by the Coordination Nationale de Suivi des Objectifs de Developpement Durable (CNSOOD), a national entity created to pursue the accomplishment of the SDGs. The CNSOOD works with several UN offices and the Interministerial Technical Committee (CTI), which is attached to the Office of the Presidency, and the Economic and Development Planning Ministry. The CNSOOD is composed of members of the national assembly, members of civil society and members of the UN.

Croatia's recently established Steering Committee for drafting the Action Plan involves various stakeholders from different sectors. The Croatian Chamber of Commerce and the state administration authorities organised the conference "Support the Sustainable", which brought together key stakeholders to carry out a multisector consultation process on the contents of the first VNR and reach a consensus on national priority areas with regard to SDGs.

Guyana's VNR included consultation with all stakeholders including the private sector, civil society, communities with a focus on indigenous people in vulnerable situations, and development partners.

The Government of **Kazakhstan** formed the SDG Coordination committee with 5 inter-agency working groups focused on the People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnership. These groups included members of the government, society, international organizations, expert community and the private sector. The working groups had around 30 discussions with representatives of NGOs, and the final draft of the report was discussed at a seminar with about 50 representatives of NGOs.

Lesotho reported that it engaged in a multi-stakeholder consultative and validation approach. Lesotho held a National VNR Conference to validate the findings and formed a VNR 2019 coordination and technical committee to develop a roadmap, including stakeholder consultation plan. Stakeholders included government ministries, Lesotho UN, development partners (including EU Commission), private sector, academia, SCOs/NGOs, women groups, people with disabilities, youth and children.

Nauru's VNR³ was formed using a Technical Working Group (TWG) that included both government and civil society representatives. As part of the review, the TWG conducted both community and sector-based consultations.

New Zealand's VNR reported an effort to include the distinct situations under the SDGs of the Maori and Pacific population.

Tonga's VNR involved a coordinated approach to ensure that all stakeholders are involved in the country's development agenda and the SDGs. This included a multi-sectoral consultation at the national level and consultations driven by NGOs to all communities. The implementation was a joint collaboration of NGOs, private sector, and the communities themselves.

Vanuatu provided a detailed account of the consultative process underlying the report and implementation of the SDGs. The VNR noted that the Government engaged the public regarding the VNR in both 2018 and 2019 (at the beginning and conclusion of the VNR report process) to ensure that their inputs were included in the report. In concluding its report, Vanuatu noted "[t]he VNR process has provided an opportunity to strengthen stakeholder coordination for NSDP implementation (private sector, NGOs, faith-based group, local governments)."

Private Sector Involvement

Nearly all (46 of 47) countries reporting in 2019 indicate private sector involvement in reporting on or implementing the 2030 Agenda.⁴

Bosnia and Herzegovina reported that, as of March 2018, a SDG and private sector working group was tasked with mobilizing interest among private sector actors to engage in the SDGs implementation as well as to streamline and magnify the importance of sustainable development for the private sector in

³ Nauru did not specifically mention the role of the private sector.

Bosnia and Herzegovina. **Rwanda** established an SDG steering committee, which played a role in validating the VNR report, and which brought together Government officials from different ministries, the development partners, civil society organizations and the private sector. The Government of **Saint Lucia** reported that they adopted an inclusive and strategic process to develop the country's Medium-Term Development Strategy (MTDS) 2019-2022 that involved month-long discussions between participants from 134 organizations representing the full spectrum of relevant stakeholders, from the public and private sectors, and civil society.

In **Ghana**, The ICC held consultative meetings in Cape Coast, Tamale, and Kumasi, which involved over 100 participants from entities including the private sector and other groups. **Liechtenstein** noted that their government is committed to involving the private sector and civil society. A survey, which was sent to a variety of actors in industry, the financial sector, commerce, philanthropy and civil society, was met with great interest in all areas of the private sector. In **Pakistan**, the National Advisory Committee on the SDGs included representation from the National Assembly, the private sector and experts on women and poverty. To address financing and governance issues, the Government engaged a group of experts to identify solutions. Similar deliberations are on-going to devise a mechanism for effective public-private partnerships (PPPs). **Turkey** noted that multiple private trade and industry associations were selected as coordinating bodies and close communication and cooperation was maintained throughout the process. Specifically, the private sector was responsible for the analysis and implementation of best practices for SDGs 4, 7, 8, 9 and 12.

The **UK** noted its VNR is the product of collaboration between the UK government, devolved administrations, civil society, business and the private sector, and local delivery partners. As a result of this approach, the UK stated that a diverse range of voices and accounts from across the UK are reflected throughout the report. The UK VNR extensively delves into the role of the private sector in contributing to the Goals and discusses the importance of its participation. **United Republic of Tanzania's** VNR involved multi-stake participation and a second layer of consultations with the private sector, higher learning and research institutions, and public sector officials. **Cote d'Ivoire** noted it is committed to the process of national ownership of the SDGs by the population. The VNR further noted the participatory and inclusive dialogue between the Government, the private sector and civil society to share experiences and strengthen the integration of the SDGs in public policy, which plans to improve the lives of citizens. **Lesotho's** VNR noted a participatory and inclusive process that included the private sector. **Fiji** collaborated with the private sector, NGOs, CSOs, academia and philanthropy on programs or initiatives to support the achievement of SDGs as well as their perceptions on SDG implementation in Fiji. This allowed private stakeholders the opportunity to provide detailed information on SDG-related projects that demonstrate their commitment to implementing the SDGs.

Mauritius's VNR dedicated a section, titled "The Mauritius Private Sector: Innovative Leadership," that discusses the role of the private sector involvement in the SDGs. **Oman's** VNR reported that, together with the government and other segments of society, the private sector was the driving force behind the creation and ongoing efforts of the National Committee for Sustainable Development. The committee was formed under the chairmanship of the Deputy Secretary General of the Supreme Council for Planning and the membership of representatives of all development partners, including government,

academics, members of the State Council and Shura Council, representatives of the private sector, and civil society.

Use of Statistics and Data

The 2019 VNRs, as compared with earlier years, generally provide more data analysis and include a more comprehensive list of data sources.

Algeria's report identifies some sources of data, including the National System of Statistical Information, comprised of the National Statistics Office, unnamed agencies and observatories, research centers, and governmental statistical services. However, it does not include sufficient footnotes, does not cite the sources for many of the reported statistics, and does not include a statistical annex. The report also acknowledges some limitations in data collection – specifically it notes the insufficiency of data for some of the goals. The Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) was responsible for compiling data for **Ghana's** indicators. The VNR also includes best practices and success stories from thirty-three case studies of SDG-related interventions from across the spectrum of participants in the process. The case studies are in process of being uploaded to an on-line portal.

Iceland used various sources throughout its VNR. The majority of the sources come from Iceland statistics, the Ministry of Welfare, Iceland Parliament, OECD, The Prime Minister's Office, UNICEF, and the Legislative assembly. For **Israel**, non-government providers of data include: 1) Coalition of Civil Society Organizations (collation of non-government orgs interested in leveraging SDGs); 2) Maala, a corporate social responsibility roof organization; 3) Forum 15 – The Israel Forum of Self-Government Cities; 4) Israel-Urban Forum; and 5) Karen Kayemeth Lelsrael, and Jewish National Fund (KKL-JNF).

The Pakistan Bureau of Statistics was the main source of data in **Pakistan's** VNR. **Sierra Leone** provided a detailed breakdown of its data collection process, including multi day technical sessions to discuss field data and an integrated SDG platform for CSOs. **Tunisia's** national statistics reporting agency has been tasked with collecting data for implementation of the SDGs. For **Turkey's** VNR data, surveys of public institutions were sent out in accordance with results from the 2016 Stocktaking Analysis Project, in which stakeholders for each SDG target were identified. A Database for Best Practices and Projects Related to SDGs was created and is maintained by public and private sector actors, as well as academia, NGOs and municipalities. Data throughout the report was collected from these sources and compiled along with census and other population data government statistical organization, TurkStat. All data cited for each target was provided by TurkStat. **Turkmenistan** identified various government Ministries and its bureau of statistics, TurkmenStat, as sources of data. The data includes specific annual indicators for 2015-2018.

UK's report uses a combination of global indicator data, government sources, and some non-government sources. The report further notes that information and data were collected from a range of sources, including: (a) The ONS' National Reporting Platform, (b) other government sources to fill in the gaps between UK data and the Global Indicators, to help provide a fuller picture of UK progress towards the Goals, (c) non-government sources to provide further objectivity and context, (d) Single Departmental Plans, which provide a framework to focus the UK government's efforts on important

issues, and through which individual UK government departments have embedded the Goals, and (e) Government Annual Reports and Accounts which review activities undertaken by each UK government department over the course of the year. For **United Republic of Tanzania**, the sources cited include House Budget Survey, Demographic and Health Survey, the Prime Minister's Office Disaster Risk Reduction Management, Tanzania Revenue Authority, National Bureau Statistics, Ministry of Agriculture, National Irrigation Commission, Population and Housing Census, 2012, Global Health Development Report, Ministry of Education Science and Technology, President's Office Public Service and Good Governance, Mainland Economic Survey, National Accounts Tanzania Mainland Publication, The Economic Survey Publication, and Ministry of Finance and Planning.

Burkina Faso set up a technical team to produce the first draft of the VNR report. This team – which consists of the INSD, the SPNDES, the DGCOOP, the SPCNDD, the SP-CNPS, the DGEP and the DGEES of the ministries in charge of the social action, the health, the agriculture, national education and justice – was tasked with the collection of data of the statistical system and the documentary review necessary for the production of the first draft of VNR and integration of the various amendments and observations made throughout the process.

Congo is increasing their financial resources dedicated to statistics data from USD 3.1 million in 2014 to USD 4.7 million in 2015 and USD 27.27 million in 2018. **Eswatini's** data for populating the SDG indicators was solicited from various national reports from various sections of government and parastatals. Most indicators were sourced from the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey of 2014, The External Assistance Annual Reports, the Eswatini Household Income and Expenditure Survey of 2018 and government ministries' annual statistical reports. **Fiji's** VNR report has been developed by the team from the Ministry of Economy based on SDG baseline data assessment and consultation with national stakeholders. **Iraq** used sources throughout the VNR from various sources, including Ministry of Planning, Central Bureau of Statistics and international organizations such as OPEC and World Bank.

Rwanda detailed, at length, its process for collecting data and its plans to expand data supply in the future. Specifically, Rwanda reported that its VNR information was gathered through extensive desk review of all relevant documents such as Regional and National Visions, National Strategy for Transformation (NST1), policy documents, budget and legal frameworks, sectoral strategies, plans and programs, and District Development Strategies. Secondary data from existing surveys including the Integrated Households Living Conditions Surveys (EICVs), the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), Labour Force Survey (LFS), Population and Housing Census, Sectorial Annual Statistical Reports and other relevant surveys were analyzed. In addition, an online survey questionnaire was completed by all relevant Government. The 3rd National Strategy for the Development of Statistics, NSDS3 is Rwanda's first NSDS designed for alignment with the SDG agenda, leveraging the global mandate to expand data supply, mobilize resources and strengthen the National Statistical Systems. In April 2017, the GoR released an innovative policy designed to facilitate a national data revolution, designating NISR as the lead implementing institution. The DRP (FY2017/18- FY2021/22) aims to 'build an innovation [and] data-enabled industry to harness rapid social and economic development' (The Republic of Rwanda, 2017). As declared during the 5th UN International Conference on Big Data for Official Statistics, which took in Kigali from 29th April to 3rd May 2019, the Government of Rwanda has offered to host a hub of the UN

Global Platform in Rwanda at the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda Training Centre and Data Science Campus. The hub will support capability development work of international and regional agencies in Africa in Big Data for official statistics and respond to SDG data needs.

Reporting Challenges

As with prior years, a lack of reliable data remains a reporting challenge for Member States.

Saint Lucia reported that one of the major structural issues impeding implementation of the 2030 Agenda, is the lack of reliable statistical data necessary to report on selected indicators and targets. The Central Statistical Office (CSO) generates the bulk of its data through census and surveys and from administrative data provided by other agencies. There are, however, many agencies within the statistical system that collect data on their own without much supervision from the CSO. The CSO is not involved in the choice of statistical methods and does not monitor the quality of data generated by these agencies. A contributing factor to the paucity of credible and reliable data is the lack of structured data collection and analysis processes, i.e. a “systems approach”. Data is collected in a piecemeal fashion by various agencies, usually only when funding is available. In many instances, the data is not analyzed beyond the purpose for which it was collected; it is not validated, and it is not regularly and systematically updated. Data collection in Saint Lucia is very much a function of the availability of funds, especially donor funds.

For **United Republic of Tanzania**, the VNR notes that absence of baseline data and/or limited data for some of the indicators has impacted on the monitoring of their progress (e.g. SDG 8, SDG 13, and SDG 16) and thus poses a challenge in tracking progress. Unavailability of quality routine data and a lack of harmonization of data reporting formats across LGAs for comparability purposes is also another challenge. Some data is aggregated at national and regional levels hence may not reflect the true picture at the local level.

In the summer of 2018, **Pakistan** launched its ‘Data Reporting Gaps Analysis’ study – a stepping stone for monitoring and reporting on progress towards the SDGs. Each SDG was analyzed for the efforts required to report on its relevant target. Overall, out of 244 indicators, discounting global indicators, Pakistan will be able to report progress on half of the SDG indicators. It noted that discussion is ongoing in terms of some of these indicators’ definitions or calculation methodologies, the remaining half require major efforts.

For **Timore-Leste**, the availability of data for SDG 16 indicators is low, with data available for only 24 percent of indicators. It is particularly a struggle for data related to SDG 16, which was not covered by the MDGs. For example, in order to meet the data requirements for indicators 16.3.1 on victims of violence and 16.5.1 bribery, a dedicated crime survey would be required, which would be a significant investment. There is also currently no official data on Human Trafficking. As part of the Government’s effort to achieve universal birth registration by 2021, the Government, with support from development partners, conducted a baseline assessment of birth registration data in order to improve understanding of the situation through disaggregated data. Analysis of this data makes an important contribution to improving understanding of the disparities at municipal level and how this links to other forms of

deprivation. In relation to social cohesion, the University of Timor-Leste is part of a UNICEF-supported international research network tasked to design a measurement framework to capture the contributions of early childhood development (ECD) interventions in making societies more cohesive, peaceful and inclusive, contributing to the achievement of SDG16. Information on this will help generate data on SDG16 for Timor-Leste.

Member States' 2019 Reporting Versus Prior SDG16+ Reporting Results

Several Member States reporting in 2019 have submitted VNRs previously. All reporting for a second time in 2019 provided a much more comprehensive review.

Turkey completed a VNR in both 2016 and 2019. In 2016, Turkey submitted the “Report on Turkey’s Initial Steps towards the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” The 2016 VNR presented a fairly detailed plan of SDG implementation within the framework of the government’s 10th National Development Plan with brief mention of certain of the SDG16 targets (16.3 equal justice, 16.6 accountable institutions, 16.10 protection of fundamental freedom, and 16.B promotion of nondiscriminatory laws and policies). Turkey’s 2019 review contains a more detailed breakdown of its progress with respect to SDG16 in particular and contains in-depth descriptions of nearly all SDG16 targets (including all from the 2016 VNR—16.3, 16.6, 16.10 and 16.B—plus 16.1 reduce violence, 16.2 end child abuse, exploitation and violence, 16.9 legal identity for all, and 16.A strengthen national institutions to prevent violence, terrorism, and crime). SDG 16.5, 16.6 16.8 and 16.10 were expressly named as being a goal and feature of Turkey’s Municipal Governance Scorecard, a nationwide project that was developed in 2017-2018 to improve governance practices. The project was shared with the public and was created to achieve more transparency and less corruption in local governments and to create a standardized set of recommended best practices.

As compared with the 2016 VNR, Turkey’s 2019 VNR is significantly more comprehensive at 140 pages (as compared with 49 pages in 2016) and showcases specific instances of implementation forecasted in the 2016 VNR. The 2019 VNR highlights Turkey’s response to the Syrian humanitarian crisis with emphasis on the principal of “leaving no one behind” and Turkey’s “Open Door” policy in response to the influx of Syrian migrants. In its discussion on SDG16, the 2019 VNR details Turkey’s relationship with regional and global terrorism and highlighted national public education and prevention programs to deter and prevent terrorism.

The 2019 VNR concludes with highlights of individual areas of progress for each of the SDGs and commits to scaling up and continuing development efforts with participation from “all institutions and members of society ranging from central government and local administration to the private sector, from NGOs to academia, from elderly to the youth.”

Sierra Leone also completed a VNR in both 2016 and 2019. In the 2019 report, Sierra Leone states that the country prioritized Goal 4 and Goal 16, as exemplified by the recent launch of the Medium Term National Development Plan. Sierra Leone’s dedication to Goal 16 is “demonstrated by the fact that Sierra Leone is a Co-chair of the Global Task Force on Justice and Chair of the G7+ group of countries leading the global agenda to address the problems faced by countries in fragile and conflict related

contexts.” Sierra Leone plans to achieve progress on Goal 4 through the implementation of a Free Quality School Education program. While Sierra Leone is committed to implementing all of the SDGs, it indicates that Goal 4 and 16 are especially integral in accelerating the national development agenda.

In generally comparing the 2016 VNR and the 2019 VNR, the latter is more specific in its reporting of certain SDGs, offering more statistics and details regarding the relevant programs and national initiatives. In contrast, the 2016 VNR broadly tied many of the SDGs, either directly and indirectly, to one of the eight pillars of Sierra Leone’s Agenda for Prosperity.

Specifically, the 2019 VNR reports more on the country’s peacefulness, crime rate reductions, and Sierra Leone Police’s efforts towards minimizing riots and violence. While there is little mention of combatting child marriage in the 2016 VNR, the 2019 VNR talks about the country’s support for the First Lady’s “Hands-Off Our Girls” campaign aimed to reduce the prevalence of adolescent pregnancy and child marriage. Moreover, the 2019 VNR notes that Sierra Leone has made progress on the elimination of child labor through the Decent Work Country Program and its heightened focus on promoting economic diversification. Additionally, the 2019 VNR details its success in achieving greater access to justice through the Sierra Leone’s Legal Aid Board. Since the establishment of the Legal Aid Board in 2015 (which is briefly mentioned in the 2016 VNR), the country has been making significant progress each year on increasing the number of less privileged and vulnerable persons benefitting from legal counsel and education.

Moving forward, Sierra Leone wants to continue making substantial progress on Goal 4 (education) and Goal 16 (justice, peace, security and inclusiveness), do more to further progress on goal 8 (promoting employment/decent work) and goal 13 (climate change), and to fortify its implementation of Sierra Leone’s Medium Term National Development Plan.

Chile submitted VNRs in both 2017 and 2019. The 2017 VNR primarily served as a diagnostic tool that set forth four main policy priorities regarding SDG implementation: (1) bolstering inclusive social and economic development; (2) reducing poverty and inequality; (3) combatting climate change; and (4) strengthening democratic institutions. The report also included a methodological overview, a discussion of SDG integration at the national and sub-national levels, and an implementation strategy featuring the creation of the National Council for the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In its analysis, the 2017 VNR did not contain a discussion of or strategy for implementing SDG 16. It instead focused exclusively on SDGs 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, and 14.

Chile’s 2019 VNR is almost twice as long as the 2017 VNR (132 pages in 2019 compared to 256 in 2017). Unlike the 2017 VNR, the 2019 report contains an in-depth examination of SDG 16 and its various targets and indicators. For each indicator, Chile provides quantitative data illustrating current country conditions such as figures on victims of intentional homicide, unsentenced detainees, and reported instances of bribery. The report notes, however, that almost all of the statistics pre-date 2017. The 2019 VNR also describes various legislative measures intended to combat corruption and strengthen public trust in governmental institutions. In reflecting on lessons learned, Chile identifies as most relevant the need to improve collaboration with civil society actors to deepen a “democratic culture.”

Of the SDG 16+Targets, the 2019 VNR does not contain data on the following: 5.1 discrimination against women and girls; 10.4 policies for greater equality; 10.5 regulation of global financial markets and institutions; 10.6 representation in global economic markets and institutions; 10.7 safe migration; 11.3 inclusive urbanization; 11.7 safe public spaces; 17.3 tax collection; and 17.10 equitable trade systems.

The 2019 VNR concludes by stating that the report is a product of cooperation among diverse stakeholders around the country and that the SDGs discussed in the VNR have been integrated into Government Program 2018-2022. Looking forward, Chile aims to (1) strengthen the dissemination of the 2030 Agenda at the regional and local levels; (2) operationalize institutional changes and streamline the efforts of related sectors; and (3) analyse public action related to the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda.

Indonesia also completed a VNR in both 2017 and 2019. In 2017, Indonesia did not provide any data on the SDG16 targets. In 2019, Indonesia provided significantly more information on the SDG16 targets.

Indonesia started implementing a number of policies aimed at reducing inequality and increasing access to justice. Indonesia prioritized ending gender based violence and child violence, as a key part of its efforts to increase access to justice. Indonesia noted that it is working towards implementing 16.3, and that its priority is to increase equality throughout society. Indonesia has worked extensively on achieving goal 16.4 by 2030. Indonesia's VNR specifically highlights in its report that it is particularly concerned about the illicit flow of money in relation to the commodity industries, which are integral parts of the Indonesian economy.

Indonesia established a human rights commission, along with various other bodies to achieve 16.5. It also highlighted the recent rise in public trust from the actions of the National Commission on Corruption. Furthermore, Indonesia worked to ensure that government actions are transparent in furtherance of goal 16.6 and 16.10. It has implemented a new policy of technology-based procurement for government contracts to minimize corruption, while at the same time enforcing its laws that ensure that public has access to information about government activities and spending. There has been significant progress in ensuring that all people have identity documents, as birth certificates are particularly important for obtaining services in Indonesia.

Overall, in comparison with a lack of reporting on SDG16 in 2017, Indonesia reports significant areas of progress in meeting the SDG16 goals.

The **Philippines** completed VNRs in both 2016 and 2019. After consulting with both local and national stakeholders, the 2016 VNR identified five thematic pillars of focus in relation to the SDGs: (1) poverty reduction; (2) environmental sustainability; (3) participatory governance; (4) stable order based on international rule of law; and (5) peace and security. The report also included a general discussion on SDG data collection methodologies and forward-looking implementation activities. However, the 2016 VNR did not discuss goals or priorities with respect to specifically enumerated SDGs.

The 2019 VNR contains a more comprehensive breakdown of the SDG priorities and milestones. Generally, the 2019 VNR's evaluation includes details that can be categorized under the following SDG16+ Targets: 4.5 discrimination in education; 8.5 equal pay; 8.7 child labour; 10.2 political, social,

and economic inclusion; 10.3 equal opportunities; 10.4 policies for greater equality; 16.1 violence reduction; 16.5 corruption and bribery reduction; 16.6 accountable transparent institutions; 16.7 representative decision-making; 16.8 participation of developing countries in global governance; 16.9 legal identity for all; 16.10 access to information; 16.A strengthening of national institutions; 17.10 equitable trade systems; and 17.3 tax collection reform. The Philippines reported the most detail on topics related to SDGs 8.5, 10.2-4, 16.1, 16.5-6, 16.8-9, and 17.3, which underscore various national legislative efforts and achievements within these areas.

The 2019 VNR is twice as long as the 2016 VNR (50 pages in 2019 compared to 27 in 2016). While the 2016 VNR focused on the lessons learned from the 2016 MDGs and the transition to the SDGs, the 2019 VNR provides a more thorough discussion on concrete data points and SDG accomplishments. In its discussion of SDG16, the 2019 VNR also lists “strengthening citizen participatory governance;” “sustaining transparent, accountable, and responsive governance;” and “promoting inclusion while ensuring security and privacy in the National ID System” as key components of its policy mainstreaming efforts.

In its conclusion, the 2019 VNR states that the Philippines will continue to integrate the SDGs into the Philippine Development Plan and utilize newly established monitoring platforms to oversee this process. The 2019 VNR also asserts that, over the next few years, the Philippines will “focus on ensuring that the programs, activities, and projects that support the SDGs are funded and effectively localized.”

Guatemala completed its first VNR in 2017 and a second in 2019. The 2019 VNR was approximately 60% larger than the 2017 VNR, with 459 and 277 pages, respectively. Data collection and evaluation mechanisms vastly improved. The 2019 VNR devoted several pages outlining new methodology and data-sourcing mechanisms. Compared to 2017, the 2019 VNR provided greater detail and a wider variety of sourcing for SDG16-related targets.

In contrast to the 2017 VNR reporting based on identification of global SDGs, the 2019 VNR emphasized its own metric of 10 national priority categories, one of which directly addressed SDG16 (“institutional strengthening, security and justice”). Although reporting depth improved, unreported SDGs in 2019 included 16.8 and 16.A. Reporting also disregarded SDGs 16.7 and 16.10 after initial reporting in 2017. The 2019 VNR attempted to analyze SDG16B, but deemed the data insufficient.

Of the SDGs reported in detail, there was a significant rise in the availability of current data from 2017. The 2019 VNR reported on SDG16.4 for the first time, providing data on the portion of small arms and light weapons seized in compliance with international and legal standards (more than 76,000 arms of all types, including various guns and explosive devices). The submission also emphasized the 2030 goal of significantly reducing illicit financial and arms flows, strengthening recovery and return of stolen goods, and fighting against all forms of organized crime. Insufficient data was available to evaluate the flow of illicit finances.

Measurements of SDG16.5 also qualitatively improved. Data showed an increase to 11.5% of business-reported incidents of bribery relating to public officials between the first measurement in 2006 and 2010, improving in 2017 via an 8.5% reduction.

The submission on SDG16.1 provided a correlation between declining homicide rates since 2009 and successes in displacement of organized crime. Other categories of interest (e.g., conflict and sexual violence) were identified for later analysis when sufficient data became available. The report emphasized human trafficking numbers by age, sex, and type of exploitation (women under the age of 15 were affected 40.3 per every 100,000 and the proportion of men and women between 18 and 29 who suffered sexual violence before reaching age 18 was 4% for women and 1% for men).

SDG16.9 inputs provided the exception to improvements in hard data, emphasizing a 2030 goal for all-inclusive birth registry and a call for greater data on children under 5.

In lesser detail, the 2019 VNR reported data relative to 16.1, 16.3 and 16.6 on the number of individuals detained sans sentencing as a percentage of the total incarcerated population (quadrupling in a 14-year period, from 3,236 in 2005 to 12, 651 in 2018). In this submission, Guatemala reported insufficient availability of data on victim reporting and conflict resolution, and on public satisfaction with public services.

The 2019 VNR cited continued structural challenges to long-term development of SDGs on a national level. Decentralized implementation and data-collection remain priorities moving forward. Guatemala noted successes in public outreach, “horizontal communication”, and the first municipal participation in development plans. The five-year plan for implementing the 2030 Agenda remains broad, focused on the 10 national priorities as critical points in addressing and implementing SDGs.

Azerbaijan completed its first VNR in 2017 and a second in 2019. The 2017 VNR endorsed the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development entailing the 17 SDGs. The 2019 VNR involved vastly greater specificity and a broader, more coherent range of data. Several categories included new data inputs and the 2019 VNR explained the broad goals of the 2017 VNR in more detail. The 2019 VNR expanded SDG focus on four working groups (social, economic, environment, and monitoring) and specific target “accelerators”. Azerbaijan noted special goal-oriented attention to the areas of universality, “Leaving No One Behind”, commitment to human rights, and national ownership principles of the 2030 Agenda.

The new submission doubled in size (from 69 pages in 2017 to 136 in 2019). The 2019 VNR contains each of the 17 SDGs as a separate category with relevant data and tables relative to the number of goals, targets, and indicators considered a national priority. SDG16 comprised 12 overall targets out of 25 indicators and a selected 6 targets of 9 indicators. Azerbaijan also outlined the ten programs and strategies with the best coverage across SDG categories, several of which targeted SDG16.

The 2019 VNR submitted the first data on SDG16.1, relaying a decrease in intentional homicides of 0.5 per 100,000 population during 2010-2017. The refugee and internally displaced persons reached 1 million and the Armenia-Azerbaijan-Nagorno-Karabakh conflict continued to impede SDG achievements. SDG16.2 received special attention for “eradicating abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children” including cruel and degrading punishments. The report noted that the Commissioner and members of the National Preventive Group conduct sporadic investigations at various facilities to track the issue.

The 2017-identified problem of underage marriages for girls persists, but has been partially addressed with legal educational opportunities for women conducted at the local levels. The minimum legal age for marriage was raised from 17 to 18 through Amendments to the Family Code. By 2015, local monitoring groups were established to assess and investigate violence against children and provide assistance, including evasion from education and broad violence issues affecting children.

The 2019 VNR reported on SDG16.3 (promote rule of law and equal justice) for the first time. Azerbaijan established new institutions and programs in this area, including improving equal access to courts (e.g., with the establishment of administrative courts). Since 2000, when the new judicial system started operating, the number of civil cases considered by courts increased about 13 times, reaching 283,000 cases. Use of information and communication technologies facilitated court access, noting 60% country coverage by the e-Court system and the introduction of online payment of court fees. The 2019 VNR introduced data on un-sentenced detainees as a proportion of the overall prison population and introduced amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code to improve procedures for pre-trial detention.

Azerbaijan enacted further laws relevant to SDG16.5 (reduce corruption and bribery) and expanded for the first time to SDG16.6 (accountable transparent institutions). Improvement measures targeted detecting and preventing corruption-related offenses and eliminating their consequences, as well as combatting corruption and improving transparency in the judicial system. The Law “On Combatting Corruption” was amended in 2017 and now ensures whistleblower confidentiality. In 2017, the Criminal Code was amended to include heads and employees of public legal entities in the scope of liability for corruption crimes.

In sum, the majority of strengthened inputs from 2017 to 2019 stemmed from the establishment of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms outlined in the 2017 VNR. On average, reporting quality increased with availability of data. However, reporting on SDG16 still lags behind the other SDG priorities and several subcategories are missing relevant data and/or evaluation. SDG 16.B was not reported and SDGs 16.7 and 16.8 were reported in 2017, but absent in 2019. These changes are consistent with a slight shift in attention from reporting broader general progress in 2017 to more concrete examples of census and policy in 2019.

White & Case Review of the 2019 Voluntary National Reports with a focus on Sustainable Development Goal 16

Reporting Results As Compared with the 2016, 2017, 2018 VNRs

NUMBER OF COUNTRIES THAT REPORTED ON THE SDG16+ TARGETS												
SDG	SDG Indicator	2016 Total	2017 Total	2018 Total	2019 Total	2016 Percent Reported	2017 Percent Reported	2018 Percent Reported	2019 Percent Reported	Total Percent Change from 2016	Total Percent Change from 2017	Total Percent Change from 2018
1.B	Institutions and policies for poverty reduction	19	39	39	42	86.36%	90.69%	86.67%	89.36%	3.00%	-1.34%	2.70%
4.5	All forms of discrimination in education	18	33	39	46	81.82%	76.74%	86.67%	97.87%	16.05%	21.13%	11.21%
4.7	Culture of peace, non violence and global citizenship	14	18	22	29	63.63%	41.86%	48.89%	61.70%	-1.93%	19.84%	12.81%
4.A	Safe education facilities	9	15	24	30	40.91%	34.88%	53.33%	63.83%	22.92%	28.95%	10.50%
5.1	Discrimination against women and girls	17	37	39	42	77.27%	86.05%	86.67%	89.36%	12.09%	3.32%	2.70%
5.2	Violence against women and girls	12	34	38	44	54.55%	79.07%	84.44%	93.62%	39.07%	14.55%	9.17%
5.3	Child marriage and female genital mutilation	6	18	23	27	27.27%	41.86%	51.11%	57.45%	30.17%	15.59%	6.34%
5.5	Women’s participation and leadership	15	37	38	44	68.18%	86.05%	84.44%	93.62%	25.44%	7.57%	9.17%
5.C	Policies and legislation for gender equality	14	33	38	42	63.64%	76.74%	84.44%	89.36%	25.73%	12.62%	4.92%
8.5	Equal pay for equal work	13	24	34	29	59.09%	55.81%	75.56%	61.70%	2.61%	5.89%	-13.85%

8.7	Child labour and soldiers; forced labor and modern slavery and human trafficking	7	15	25	32	31.82%	34.88%	55.56%	68.09%	36.27%	33.20%	12.53%
8.8	Labour rights; safe workplaces	11	15	22	28	50%	34.88%	48.89%	59.57%	9.57%	24.69%	10.69%
10.2	Political, social, and economic inclusion	17	23	35	44	77.27%	53.49%	77.78%	93.62%	16.34%	40.13%	15.84%
10.3	Equal opportunities, laws, policies and practices	16	26	29	36	72.73%	60.47%	64.44%	76.60%	3.87%	16.13%	12.15%
10.4	Policies for greater equality	13	24	36	42	59.09%	55.81%	80.00%	89.36%	30.27%	33.55%	9.36%
10.5	Regulation of global financial markets and institutions	4	10	8	15	18.18%	23.25%	17.78%	31.91%	13.73%	8.66%	14.14%
10.6	Representation in global economic markets and institutions	7	9	11	17	31.82%	20.93%	24.44%	36.17%	4.35%	15.24%	11.73%
10.7	Safe migration	11	12	20	28	50%	27.91%	44.44%	59.57%	9.57%	31.67%	15.13%
11.1	Safe housing	12	21	37	34	54.55%	48.84%	82.22%	72.34%	17.79%	23.50%	-9.88%
11.2	Safe transport	9	21	37	27	40.91%	48.84%	82.22%	57.45%	16.54%	8.61%	-24.78%
11.3	Inclusive urbanisation	15	19	36	25	68.18%	44.19%	80.00%	53.19%	-14.99%	9.01%	-26.81%
11.7	Safe public spaces	7	11	30	20	31.82%	25.58%	66.67%	42.55%	10.74%	16.97%	-24.11%
16.1	Reduce violence	9	18	28	41	40.91%	41.86%	62.22%	87.23%	46.32%	45.37%	25.01%
16.2	End child abuse, exploitation, and violence	10	17	30	39	45.45%	39.53%	66.67%	82.98%	37.52%	43.44%	16.31%
16.3	Equal access to justice	14	23	34	40	63.64%	53.49%	75.56%	85.11%	21.47%	31.62%	9.55%
16.4	Reduce illicit financial and arms flows	5	12	20	29	22.73%	27.91%	44.44%	61.70%	38.97%	33.80%	17.26%
16.5	Reduce corruption and bribery	10	21	37	42	45.45%	48.84%	82.22%	89.36%	43.91%	40.52%	7.14%

16.6	Accountable transparent institutions	12	18	33	36	54.55%	41.86%	73.33%	76.60%	22.05%	34.74%	3.26%
16.7	Representative decision-making	13	18	21	29	59.09%	41.86%	46.67%	61.70%	2.61%	19.84%	15.04%
16.8	Participation of developing countries in global governance	10	11	12	19	45.45%	25.59%	26.67%	40.43%	-5.03%	14.84%	13.76%
16.9	Legal identity for all	5	10	20	26	22.73%	23.25%	44.44%	55.32%	32.59%	32.06%	10.87%
16.10	Access to information and fundamental freedoms	12	20	24	37	54.55%	46.51%	53.33%	78.72%	24.18%	32.21%	25.39%
16.A	Strengthen national institutions to prevent violence, terrorism, and crime	10	11	25	31	45.45%	25.59%	55.56%	65.96%	20.50%	40.38%	10.40%
16.B	Promote non-discriminatory laws and policies	14	17	24	32	63.64%	39.53%	53.33%	68.09%	4.45%	28.55%	14.75%
17.10	Equitable trade system	9	16	23	27	40.91%	37.21%	51.11%	57.45%	16.54%	20.24%	6.34%
17.3	Tax collection	8	20	26	28	36.36%	46.51%	57.78%	59.57%	23.21%	13.06%	1.80%