

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED FROM FIVE YEARS OF VNRs?

Presentation by

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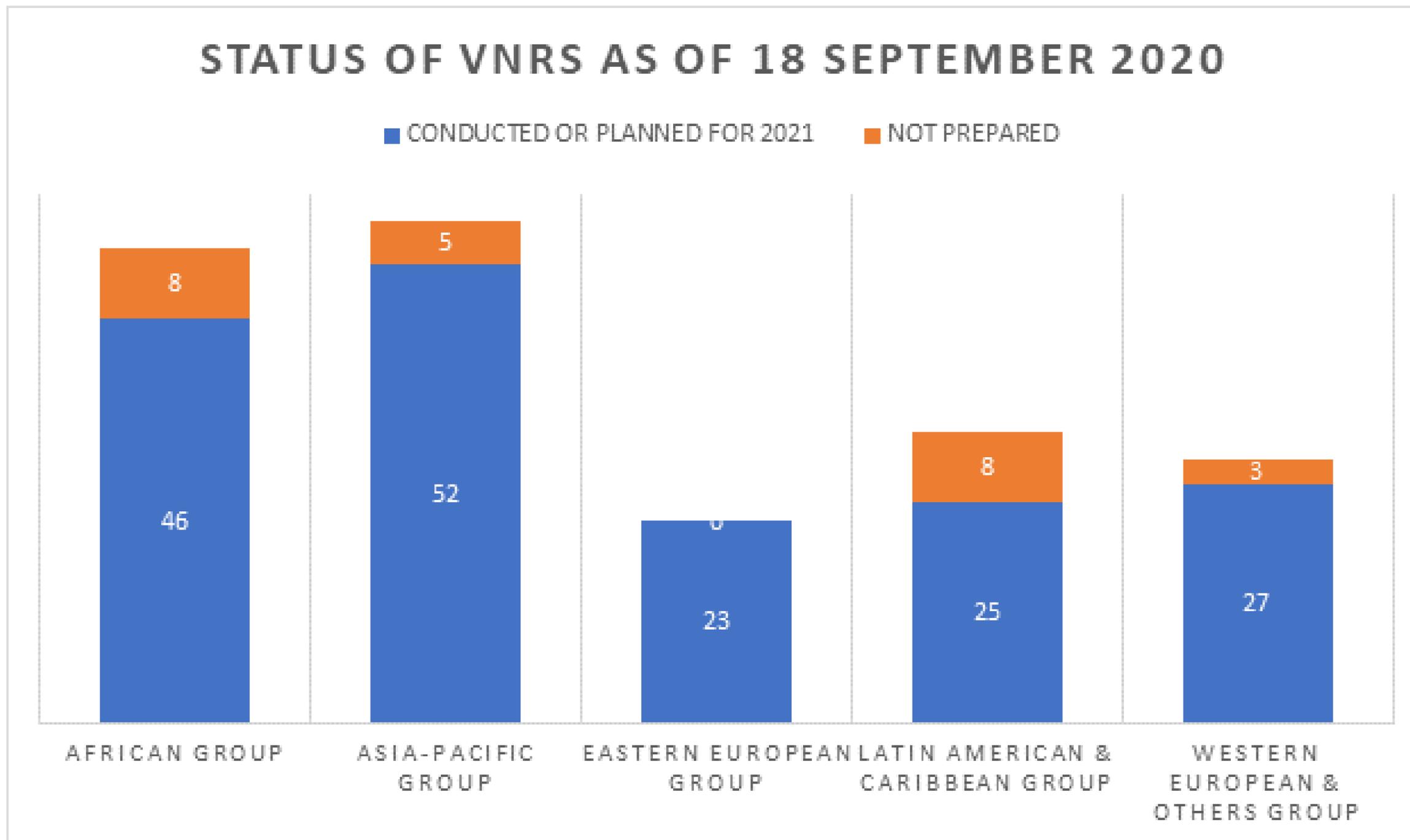


Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh

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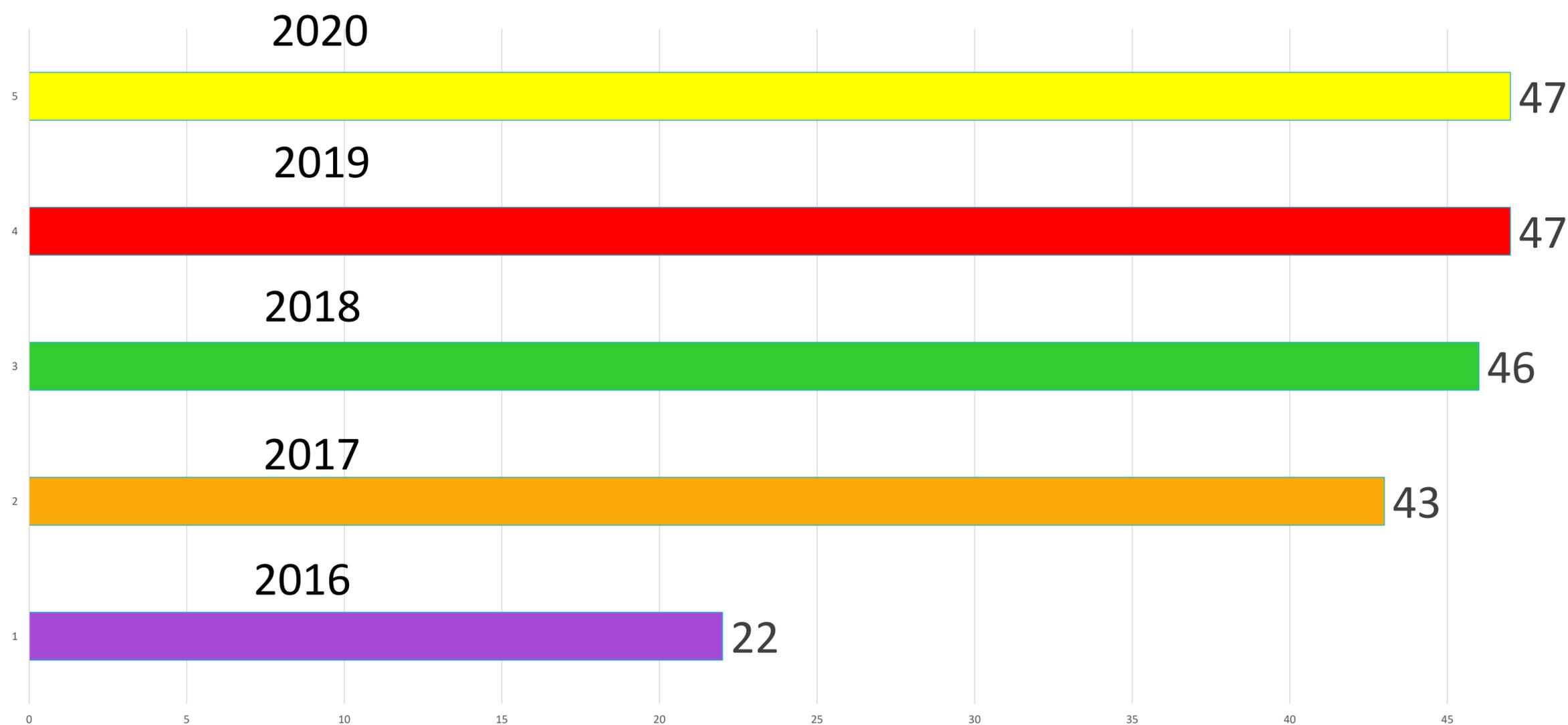
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NUMBER OF VNRs PER YEAR 2016 - 2020



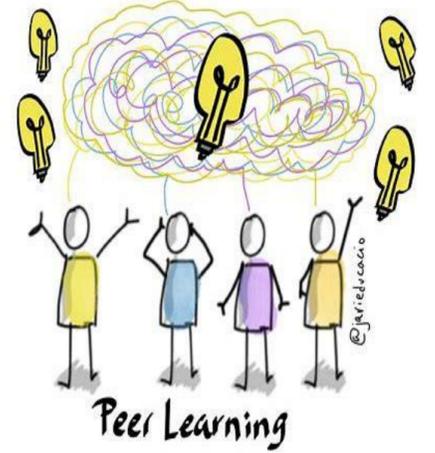
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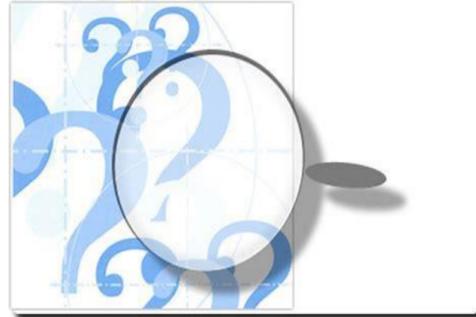
ENGAGEMENT: WHOLE OF SOCIETY APPROACH



DATA



Monitoring & Evaluation



SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION

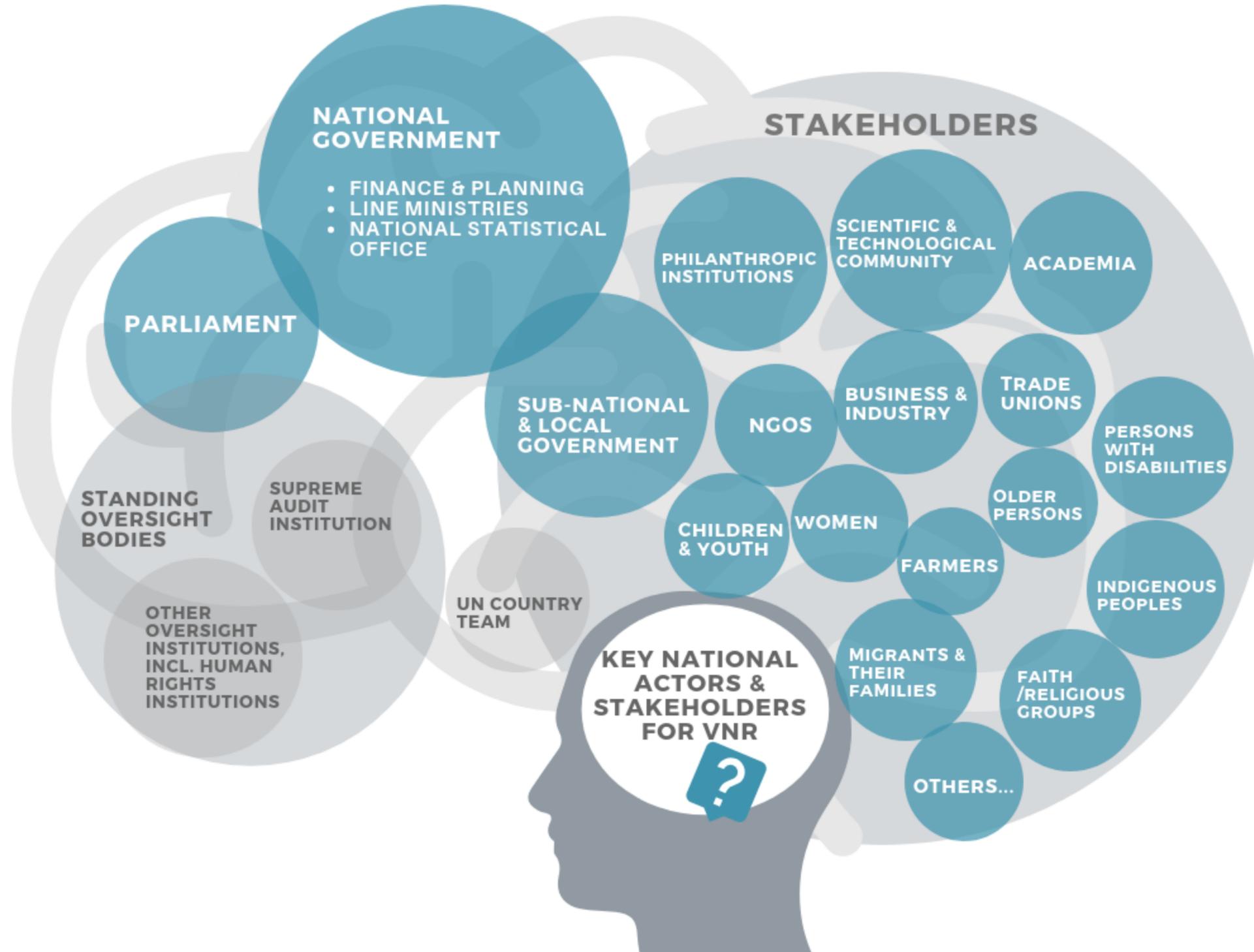
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Sustainable Development Goals
Image: Global Goals www.globalgoals.org

What Have We Learned from Five Years of VNRs?

Who is engaged in the VNRs?



What Have We Learned from Five Years of VNRs?

Stakeholder Engagement in VNRs

Countries tend to report on stakeholder engagement in five key ways:

- engagement through coordination and governance structures that support 2030 Agenda implementation;
- outreach and awareness-raising;
- through the development of national priorities for implementation;
- consultations and engagement on VNRs; and
- engagement through partnerships with non-state actors.

Source: [Multistakeholder engagement in 2030 Agenda implementation: A review of National Voluntary Review Reports \(2016-2019\)](#) UNDESA, 2020

What Have We Learned from Five Years of VNRs?

What VNR Reports Tell Us about Stakeholder Engagement

Around 75% of countries reporting to the HLPF from 2016-19 noted inclusion of non-state actors in governance mechanisms:

- high-level coordination or governance mechanisms, technical committees or working groups, advisory bodies.

80% of VNR reports highlights activities to inform the public and diverse stakeholders:

- media, social media, conferences, school programs, websites, translation of the 2030 Agenda into local languages, art installations, festivals.

Nearly 80% of VNR reports provided information on multi-stakeholder engagement to nationalize the 2030 Agenda and generate ownership:

- public meetings, consultation meetings, workshops, in-person meetings to generate ownership overall.

Others:

- youth councils, stakeholder fora, engagement with local and regional governments and by working in partnership with non-state actors.

Source: [Multistakeholder engagement in 2030 Agenda implementation: A review of National Voluntary Review Reports \(2016-2019\)](#) UNDESA, 2020

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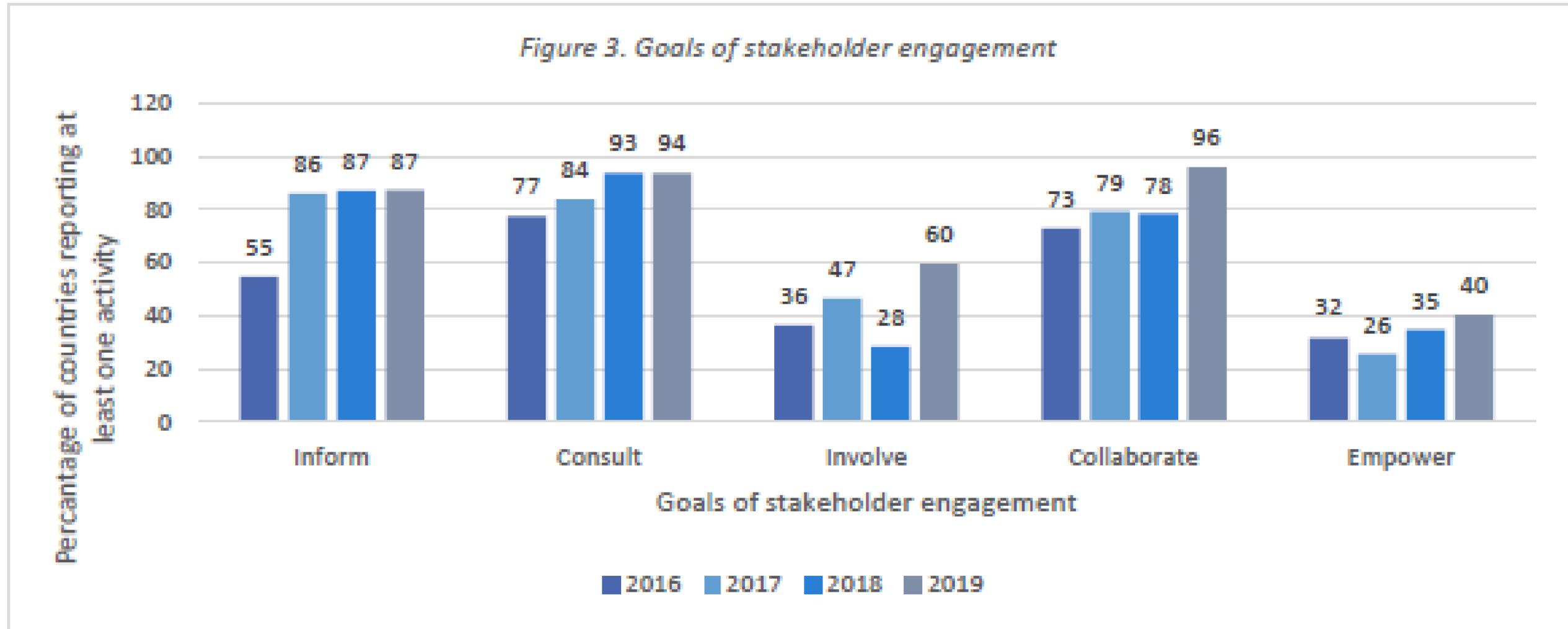


Table 2. Activities reported in VNR reports according to the Spectrum of Public Participation

Goal	 Inform	 Consult	 Involve	 Collaborate	 Empower
Description	Provide public with balanced information to help them understand a problem and/or a solution	Obtain feedback from the public on analysis, alternatives or a decision	Work directly with the public to hear the concerns of the public	Partner with the public throughout the process and develop alternatives and to identify the preferred solution	Place the final decision in the hands of the public
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication strategies • Conferences • Contests or festivals • General references to awareness-raising • Media • Websites • Official speeches • Parliamentary discussions • Partnerships to raise awareness • School programs • Social media • Translation to local languages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation meetings • Public comments online • Public meetings • Surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops • Engagement by governance mechanisms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-state actors included in governance mechanisms (high level/working level) • Other forms of participatory decision-making • Drafting VNR reports • Stakeholder forums • Electronic forums • Engagement with academia • Co-creation of SDG related resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity development initiatives • Citizen councils • Efforts to create an enabling environment • Funding mechanisms
Aspect of Implementation	<p>Awareness-raising</p> <p>Partnerships</p> <p>Follow-up and review</p>	<p>Nationalization</p> <p>Localization</p> <p>Follow-up and review</p>	<p>Institutional arrangements</p> <p>Nationalization</p> <p>Follow-up and review</p>	<p>Institutional arrangements</p> <p>Partnership</p>	<p>Partnership</p> <p>Localization</p>

Source: Activity and description directly from IAP² Spectrum. Activities concerning the 2030 Agenda implementation identified from VNR reports.

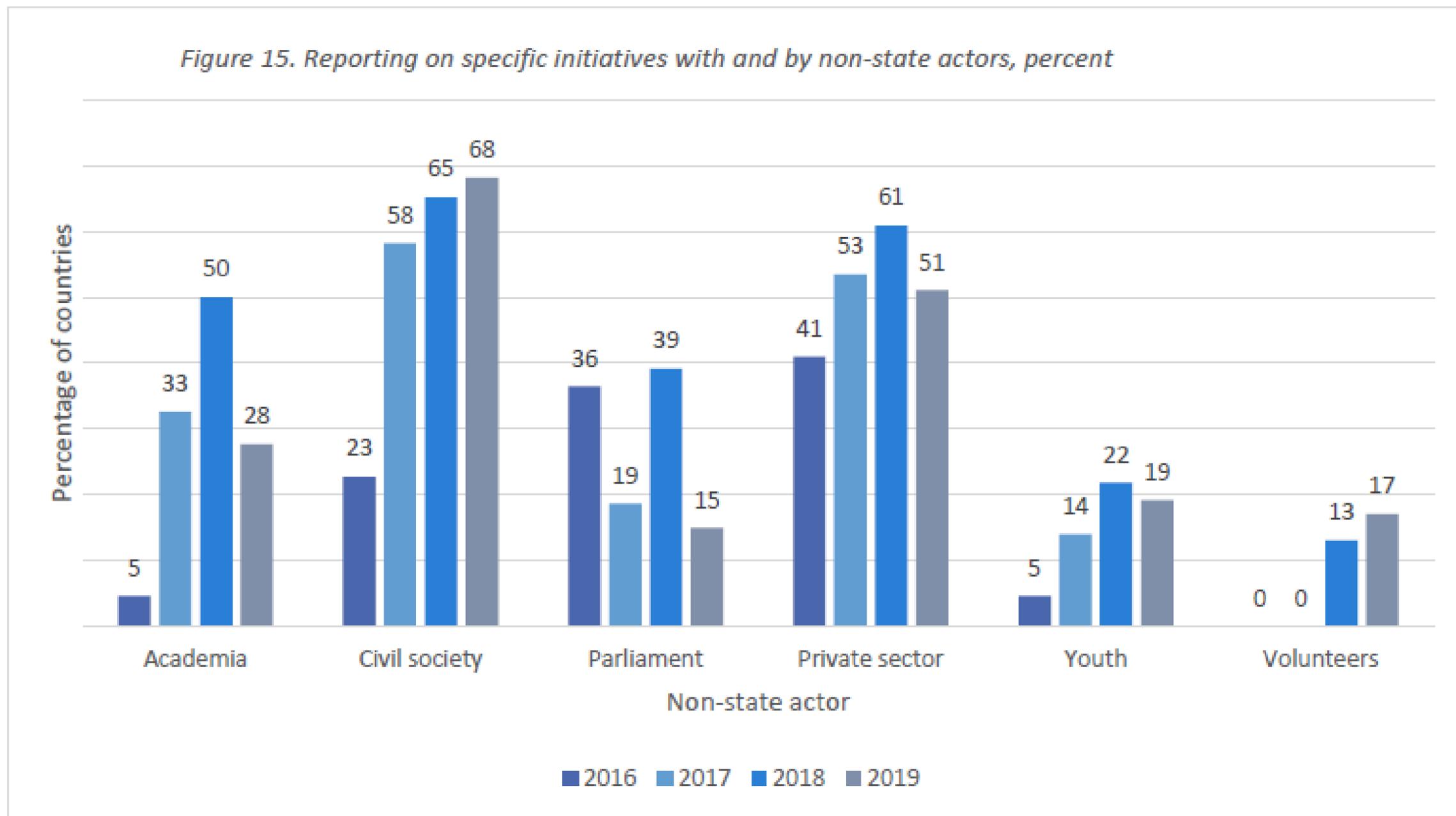
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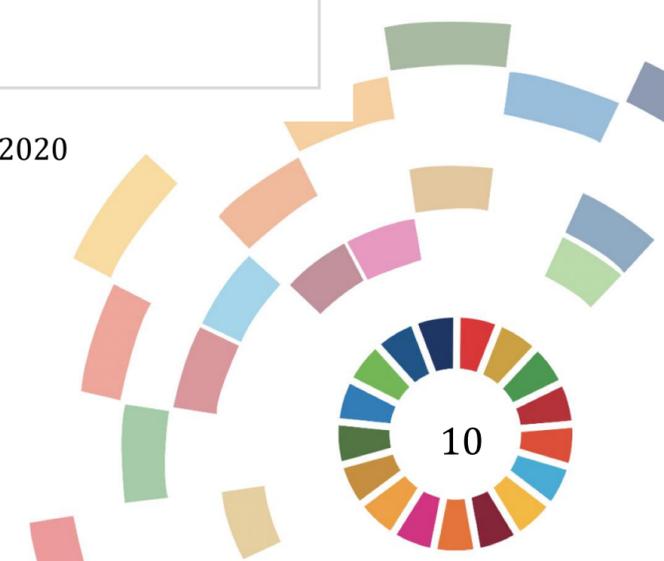
Source: [Multistakeholder engagement in 2030 Agenda implementation: A review of National Voluntary Review Reports \(2016-2019\)](#) UNDESA, 2020



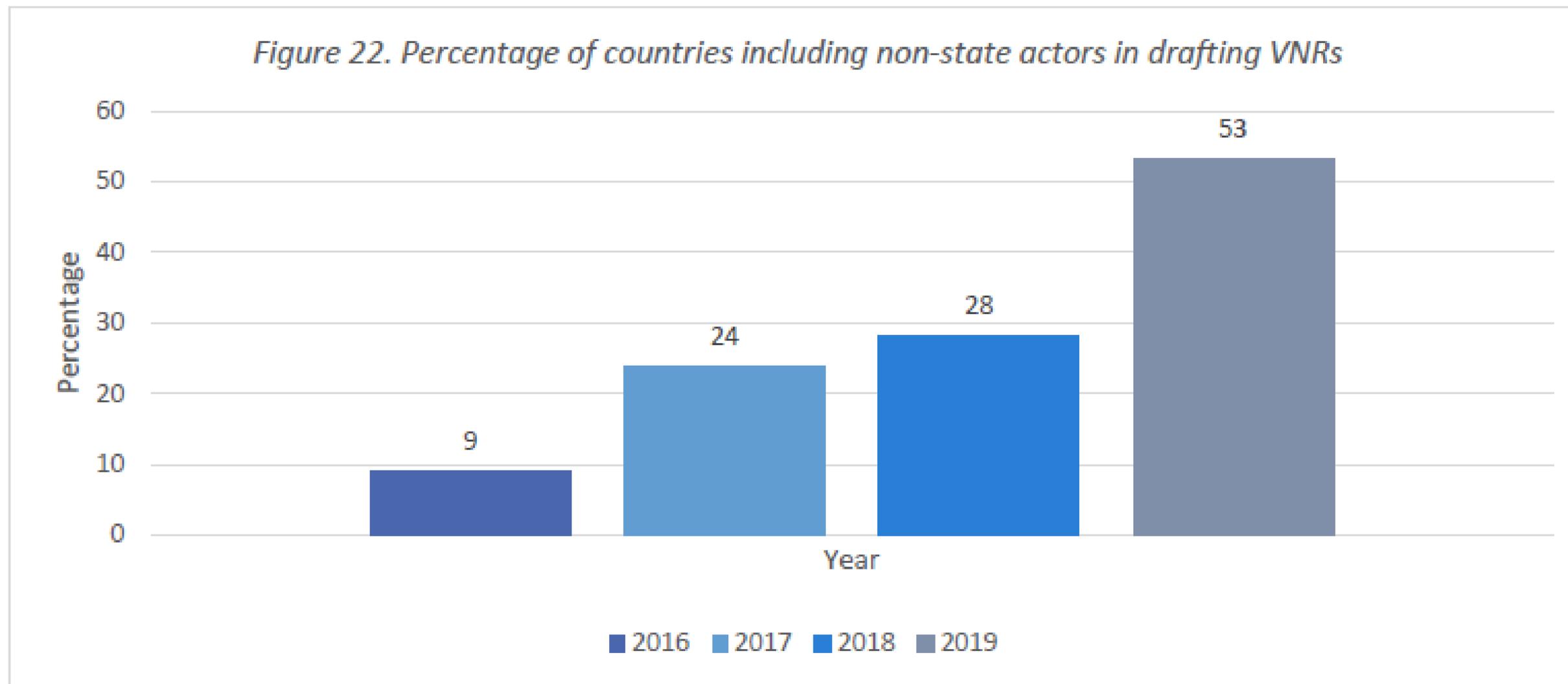
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Source: [Multistakeholder engagement in 2030 Agenda implementation: A review of National Voluntary Review Reports \(2016-2019\)](#) UNDESA, 2020



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What Have We Learned from Five Years of VNRs?

Feedback on the VNRs from 2019 HLPF questionnaire (234 responses from all stakeholders)

- VNRs have been useful for sharing lessons learned & experience gained:
- 44% strongly agree & 45% somewhat agree
- VNRs have been useful for sharing SDG implementation challenges:
- 41% strongly agree & 46% somewhat agree
- Preparation and presentation of VNRs advanced national implementation:
- 42% strongly agree & 40% somewhat agree
- VNRs have been useful for mobilizing partnerships:
- 32% strongly agree & 43% somewhat agree
- More specific guidance needs to be provided on the preparation, content and approach to VNRs
- **66% strongly agree & 25% somewhat agree**

What Have We Learned from Five Years of VNRs?

What We Have Learned in Five Years of Presentations of VNRs

BENEFITS:

- Change mindsets
- Strengthen political will, national ownership, institutions and coordination
- Integrate SDGs into national development plans, aligning them with budgets identifying financial frameworks, and integrating all three dimensions of sustainable development
- Embed VNRs into institutions and links the VNRs to reporting to other mechanisms and conventions
- Meaningfully engage stakeholders
- Monitor SDG implementation including through parliaments and supreme audit institutions
- Map existing policies and their compatibility with the SDGs, and identify implementation gaps and data availability
- Define challenges and identifies areas where support is needed
- Provide an important accountability tool
- Provide an important communication tool
- Draw lessons and provide critical reflections on 2030 implementation: increases level of meaningful consultations
- Whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach
- Stimulate continued national conversations after VNR has been presented
- Strengthen VNR follow-up by implementing lessons learned from other countries at HLPF

What Have We Learned from Five Years of VNRs?

What We Have Learned in Five Years of Presentations of VNRs

CHALLENGES

- Insufficient time and resources for more robust capacity building
- Insufficient coordination and integration at the government level, local level and support by the UN system
- Insufficient and ad hoc engagement of stakeholders
- Not enough data to monitor and evaluate progress
- Lack of comparability among reports due to different approaches and methods used

What Have We Learned from Five Years of VNRs?

What Can Be Improved

National level

- Strengthening national ownership including through capacity building and whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach and through preparing the VNRs by national multistakeholder team using international assistance when needed
- Linking the VNRs to reporting to other mechanisms and conventions
- Strengthening monitoring and oversight including through parliaments and supreme audit institutions, strengthening cooperation among all branches of government
- Explaining the impacts of strategies and policies on national level implementation of the 2030 Agenda
- Being honest in showing progress, but also gaps and challenges
- Identifying areas where support is needed

What Have We Learned from Five Years of VNRs?

What Can Be Improved

Global level: possible recommendations for HLPF review

- ❑ Using SG voluntary common reporting guidelines to increase comparability, but also to improve overall quality of reports over time by learning from good practices and reflecting these by updating periodically the guidelines
- ❑ Focusing VNR presentation at HLPF on explanation of impact of policies and strategies, lessons learned and peer learning that can be of benefit to all countries
- ❑ Strengthening of interactive discussion including through providing more time for Q&A and getting recommendations
- ❑ Strengthen the role of HLPF as a platform for peer learning and exchanging of experiences
- ❑ Strengthen HLPF to serve as a broker and matchmaker for partnerships in the follow-up after the VNRs through looking at areas where countries need support

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Reporting on multi-stakeholder engagement in VNR reports: Opportunities for improvement and good practice

- ❑ Follow existing guidance: SG's Common Reporting Guidelines and Handbook for the Preparation of VNRs.
- ❑ Provide details on the why, who, what, when, where and how of stakeholder engagement
- ❑ Report on the quality of multi-stakeholder engagement: VNRs are a basis for identifying good practices and lessons for ensuring inclusive and participatory action across 2030 Agenda implementation efforts
- ❑ Report on challenges, lessons learned and good practices in multi-stakeholder engagement: VNR reports can provide insights for effective strategies, approaches and good practices.

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What can be improved in Multi-Stakeholder Engagement



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Examples of Some Good Practices

 <p>Jamaica</p>	 <p>Namibia</p>	 <p>Cambodia</p>	 <p>Mongolia</p>	 <p>Finland</p>
<p>National 2030 Agenda Oversight Committee: multistakeholder technical body providing policy and strategic level advice for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the SDGs. Process of sensitization on the SDGs and consultation on the VNR began in 2017 with an approach to “Localize the SDGs”, through the Dialogue for Development series under the theme “Jamaica We Want: Vision 2030 Jamaica, advancing the SDGs... Leaving no one behind” engaging children and youth, farmers, fisherfolk, business community, persons with disabilities, women and grassroots organizations, service organizations, local level authorities, and parliamentarians (VNR, 2018)</p>	<p>Consultative process for preparing VNR including public sector, private sector, civil society, development partners, UN, academia and other interest groups. They also participated in data collection which was then validated through Namibia Statistical Agency. Engagement of relevant stakeholders across sectors e.g. agriculture, water, housing. (VNR, 2018)</p>	<p>By conducting an honest assessment of what would it take to achieve inclusive SD while leaving no one behind, the key actors including private sector, academia, and civil society, are one step closer to taking action and mobilizing support. The VNR process has started to galvanize innovation and to achieve the CSDGs, such as how tax revenues or ODA can be used to crowd in private investments to deliver development outcomes. It has also inspired discussions on a new development finance architecture that is able to track and direct financial and investment flows to stimulate economic growth and accelerate social and environmental gains. (VNR, 2019)</p>	<p>During the VNR preparation process, the Government of Mongolia organized a series of multi-sectoral consultations, discussions, and trainings with the representatives of the central government, local administration, academia, private sector, civil society and international organizations. Such multistakeholder interactions helped in building a shared understanding, and deepening knowledge about sustainable development. They also contribute the review of the whole of national development policy and planning system and mechanisms, and identifying key development challenges and bottlenecks. (VNR, 2019)</p>	<p>National Commission is a hybrid body combining high-level political leadership with participation by civil society and other societal actors especially those at risk of being left behind (indigenous, disable, migrants). Committee for Development Policy comprised of parliamentarians and other relevant stakeholders with key aim to strengthen effectiveness of development policy and promote discussion on development policy at national and, parliamentary levels. Citizens taking operational commitments is another way of engaging the whole-of-society. Operational commitments should create something new, be measurable and follow the principles of sustainable development set in the Society’s Commitment. (VNR 2020)</p>



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Resources

Voluntary national data base

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/vnrs/>

VNR Synthesis Reports

[2020 coming soon] [2019](#) [2018](#) [2017](#) [2016](#)

[Handbook 2020](#) for the preparation of national voluntary reviews

[2021 coming soon]

[Multistakeholder engagement in 2030 Agenda implementation:
A review of National Voluntary Review Reports \(2016-2019\)](#) UNDESA, 2020



What Have We Learned from Five Years of VNRs?

Thank you!



Q&A



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