



**Evidence-based Decision Making for Urban Change**  
Global Data Tools in Action in Africa and West Asia



# Introduction to VLRs in Northern Africa and Western Asia

Dr Agata Krause  
UNESCWA, UN-Habitat, UCLG MEWA  
VLR Technical Lead  
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## What are the Sustainable Development Goals?



UN Secretary-General  
Ban Ki-moon:

“[The seventeen Sustainable Development Goals](#) are our shared vision of humanity and a social contract between the world's leaders and the people,”

“They are a to-do list for people and planet, and a blueprint for success.”

# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS





Image Source <https://habitat3.org/the-new-urban-agenda/>

## NEW URBAN AGENDA ADOPTED AT THE HABITAT III CONFERENCE

20 October 2016

Quito, Ecuador

*The United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) held from 17 to 20 October 2016 in Quito, Ecuador, successfully concluded with the adoption of the New Urban Agenda.*

The Habitat III Conference as a whole was a resounding success: 30,000 people, among them 10,000 international participants from 167 countries were accredited in the Conference. In the span of four days almost 1,000 events took place, including 8 Plenary sessions, 6 High-level Roundtable sessions, 4 Assemblies, 16 Stakeholders Roundtables, 10 Policy Dialogues, 22 Special Sessions, 3 Urban Talks, an Urban Journalism Academy, 59 United Nations events, 157 Exhibition booths, 42 Village projects and over 460 side, networking, training and parallel events were organized by various stakeholders.

# Zooming in: SDG goals, targets, indicators

## TARGETS AND INDICATORS

The screenshot shows the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Sustainable Development website. The header includes the UN logo, the text 'United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Sustainable Development', a search bar, and a user profile icon. A navigation menu contains: Home, SDG Knowledge, Intergovernmental Processes, HLPF, SIDS, Partnerships, Engage, News, and About. The main content area features a large orange banner for Goal 11: 'Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable'. Below this, a sidebar lists 'Target 11.1: By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums'. Underneath the target, it lists 'Indicators' with a dropdown arrow, and specifically '11.1.1: Proportion of urban population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing'. A small icon for Goal 11 is also visible in the sidebar.

United Nations  
Department of Economic and Social Affairs  
Sustainable Development

Home SDG Knowledge Intergovernmental Processes HLPF SIDS Partnerships Engage News About

Goals

# 11

## Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Target

### 11.1

By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums

Indicators ▲

#### 11.1.1

Proportion of urban population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing

Image Source: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal11>

# Quantitative and Qualitative SDG targets



Target

**1.1**

By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than \$1.25 a day

Indicators ▾



Target

**1.2**

By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions

Indicators ▾



Target

**1.3**

Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable

## How do we report on progress towards SDGs?

- Through the Voluntary National Reviews, which are an official part of the UN reporting:
  - Para 79 of the 2030 Agenda states: "conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels, which are country-led and country-driven".
- Presented a the High-level political forum (HLPF) meeting of the UN under the auspices of ECOSOC.
- Voluntary, state-led, undertaken by both developed and developing countries, and involve multiple stakeholders.



# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT KNOWLEDGE PLATFORM



HOME

HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM

STATES

SIDS

SDGS

TOPICS

UN SYSTEM

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

PARTNERSHIPS

RESOURCES

ABOUT



HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM  
ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

**VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEWS**

Image Source: <https://sustainabledevelopment>.



# Voluntary Local Reviews and their value-added

VLRs discuss the performance/progress of cities towards achieving SDGs (mirroring the VNRs). They are not part of the official UN reporting, however they:

- Reinforce mainstreaming SDGs
- Guide SDG-led evidence-based policy process and decision-making
- Emphasize the role of urban data in policy process and decision-making; and induce developing urban data eco-systems
- Strengthen participatory process centred around the municipality
- Provide a platform to discuss development challenges vis a vis national government and international community
- Allow to showcase good practices (e.g. at the High Level Political Forum!).

ISSANCE D'UN GÉANT DU SPORT

## Organisé par ONU-Habitat et ses partenaires : Un atelier pour renforcer les capacités de la commune d'Agadir en matière d'ODD

Publié par ALM | Date : septembre 30, 2022 | dans : Economie, Une | 115 Vues

Partage f 0 t 0 in 0



More information at: <https://aujourd'hui.ma/economie/organise-par-ONU-Habitat-et-ses-partenaires-un-atelier-pour-renforcer-les-capacites-de-la-commune-dagadir-en-matiere-dodd>



More information at: <https://www.unescwa.org/news/first-voluntary-local-review-agadir>

# Amman Mayor stresses keenness to speed up implementation of SDGs at UN forum

Shawarbeh takes part in 5th edition of Local and Regional Governments Forum in New York

By JT - Jul 13, 2022 - Last updated at Jul 13, 2022

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AMMAN — Amman Mayor Yousef Shawarbeh on Wednesday participated in the fifth edition of the Local and Regional Governments Forum-Fostering the Achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals from the Local Level towards the 2023 SDG Summit, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

The forum is currently being held at the UN headquarters in New York, on the occasion of the 2022 United Nations High-Level Political Forum (HLPF).

As a keynote speaker, Shawarbeh said that this edition aims to enable cities and local governments to contribute to global efforts to implement the 2030 SDGs.

He added that the city of Amman, like other cities, faces a number of urban challenges represented by increasing population growth as a direct result of migrations and arrivals of refugees.

He also referred to challenges posed by climate change as well as the economic and social impacts of the coronavirus pandemic.

Shawarbeh affirmed that the Greater Amman Municipality (GAM) has supported efforts towards implementing all goals related to



Amman Mayor Yousef Shawarbeh during the fifth edition of the Local and Regional Governments Forum-Fostering the Achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals from the Local Level towards the 2023 SDG Summit in New York on Wednesday (Photo courtesy of GAM Facebook page)

## OPINION

### Editorial

A tribute to a historic reign

Saturday 10 September 2022



**No government has the right to pass such laws**

Oct 24, 2022



**2022 American National Security Strategy, a new atmospheric**

Oct 24, 2022



**The new nuclear era**

Oct 24, 2022



**The great chips war**

Oct 24, 2022

Popular

Rated

Commented

**No government has the right to pass such laws**

Oct 24, 2022

**2022 American National Security Strategy, a new atmospheric**

Oct 24, 2022

Year	Local / regional government	Country	Report(s)	Language	Member State VNR
2022	City of Tampere	Finland	 <a href="#">City of Sustainable Action</a>	English	<a href="#">2020 VNR</a> , <a href="#">2016 VNR</a>
2021	City of Subang Jaya	Malaysia	 <a href="#">Subang Jaya Voluntary Local Review 2021, Implementing the 2030 Agenda in the City of Subang Jaya</a>	English	<a href="#">2020 VNR</a>
2021	Pará State Government	Brazil	 <a href="#">2nd VLR_State of Pará_Brazil</a>	English	<a href="#">2017 VNR</a>
2021	Asker municipality	Norway	 <a href="#">Agenda 2030 in Asker, Voluntary local review 2021</a>	English	<a href="#">2021 VNR</a>
2021	City of Helsinki	Finland	 <a href="#">From Agenda to Action: Implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals in Helsinki 2021</a>	English	<a href="#">2020 VNR</a>
2021	City of Ghent	Belgium	 <a href="#">Ghent Sustainability Report 2021 - Focus on People - Voluntary Local Review</a>	English	<a href="#">VNR 2017</a>
2021	Government of the State of Tabasco	Mexico	 <a href="#">Informe Local Voluntario 2021- Gobierno Del Estado De Tabasco -Consejo Estatal de la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible</a>	Spanish	<a href="#">2021 VNR</a>
2021	Municipalidad de Lima	Peru	 <a href="#">INFORME LOCAL VOLUNTARIO-LIMA-2021</a>	Spanish	<a href="#">2020 VNR Report</a>

UNDESA platform for VLRs: <https://sdgs.un.org/topics/voluntary-local-reviews>

# VLR approach and methodology

- Guided by the needs of the municipality and its development objectives
  - Reinforced focus on mainstreaming e.g. gender (Amman), ICTs and digital transformation (Agadir)
- Inspired by the UN-Habitat/UCLG Guidelines on the Voluntary Local Reviews, volume 1 and 2, adapted to the context of the city
- Following key 4 principles:
  - evidence-based;
  - participatory;
  - meaningful and
  - Action-oriented!
- Bottom-up approach to data collection supported by the WCCD, UMF (Amman) indicator frameworks.

## VLRs in practice

### Key stakeholders involved:

- Municipality, working in tandem with the National Statistics Office (Agadir); Urban Observatory (Amman); and other partners (e.g. ministries)
- UN institutions and agencies (UN-Habitat, UNESCWA, UCLG-MEWA)

Timeline: 9 months - 1 year

### Roles and responsibilities, based on the examples of Agadir, Amman:

- Data collection (municipality with support of NSO, guided by UN agencies)
- Stakeholder engagement (joint)
- Developing a draft VLR (UN agencies)

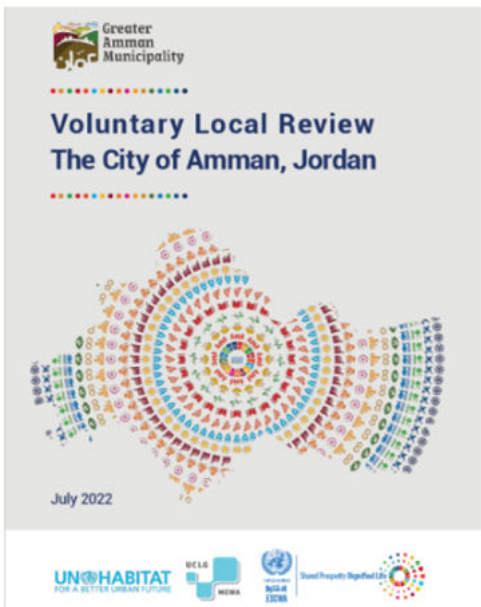
# Data collection and validation

## Challenges

- Limited data access
- Limited data availability
- Outdated statistics
- Data not produced at regular intervals
- Data not corresponding to the administrative boundaries of the city
- Limited access to disaggregated data
- Data not sourced/referenced

## Lessons learnt and opportunities

- Data production/collection centralized at the municipal level
- Using official statistics disaggregated at the city level (produced by the National Statistics Offices)
- Reinforced production of a high-quality urban data
  - Using international standards for data production/management
  - Reinforced data production as a development priority
  - Reinforced relationships between various data producers towards the development of urban data eco-systems.



The Amman VLR is expected to inform future operational frameworks between the Greater Amman Municipality, the Government of Jordan, the United Nations, the wider development community and other stakeholders, to move towards an increasingly sustainable urban future for all in the country.



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Global Data Tools in Action in Africa and West Asia



# Thank you

[agata.krause@urbanconsultant.eu](mailto:agata.krause@urbanconsultant.eu)