

Sustainable Development Goals Tracker

WASD Global SDGs Monitoring Framework

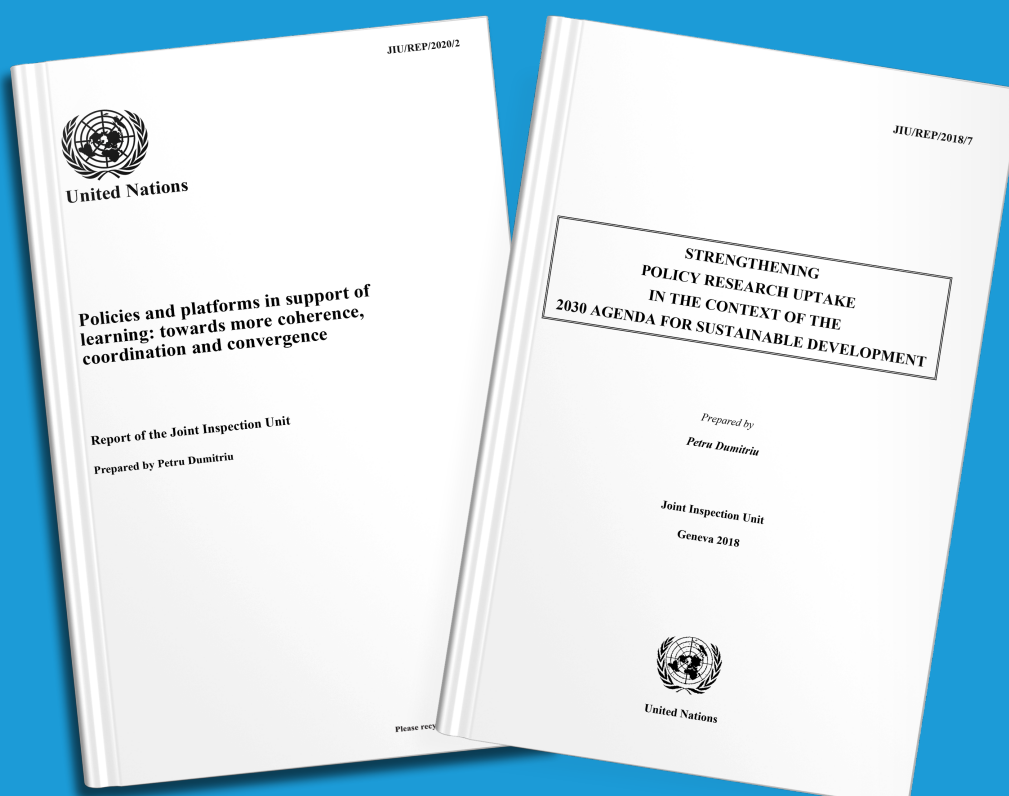
WASD COLLABORATION WITH THE UNITED NATIONS

WASD is delighted to be working very closely with various United Nations Agencies, most specifically with the UN Joint Inspection Unit (JIU). Both JIU and WASD are inspired by the conviction that the UN Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development (SD) and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide the momentum for renewed UN engagement with the public and private sectors.

In 2018, WASD collaborated with JIU on the UN project **Strengthening policy research uptake in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**, aimed at reviewing the policy research uptake in service of the 2030 Agenda for SD. For the first time in its 52 year history, the UN (aided by WASD) officially consulted academics and researchers from all over the world on the policy research uptake in the UN.

In 2019, WASD also worked very closely with the UN JIU to undertake a UN system-wide review of policies, programmes, and platforms to support learning and enhancing the adequacy of training policies in the UN. The report **Policies and platforms in support of learning: towards more coherence, coordination, and convergence** was launched officially on 28 October 2020 at the opening of WASD's Online Learning Conference.

These various initiatives and events with the UN JIU have encouraged WASD to launch its **Sustainable Development Goals Tracker (SDGT)**.





Sustainable Development Goals Tracker

WASD Global SDGs Monitoring Framework

The 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was established in 2015 through the collective agreement of all United Nations Member States; the SDGs set out a universal vision for peace, prosperity, and the protection of the planet. Comprising 17 Goals and 169 targets to be achieved by 2030, they serve as a blueprint for a more inclusive and sustainable future. Progress towards these objectives is assessed through national and global indicators, guided by the shared commitment to “leave no one behind”. To enhance the monitoring and evaluation of this global agenda, WASD has introduced the **Sustainable Development Goals Tracker (SDGT)**, an innovative analytical framework designed to measure and assess worldwide progress in achieving the UN’s SDGs (1-17). The SDGT offers a comprehensive, data-driven, and comparable tool that tracks each nation’s implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As the first significantly; to establish such a system, WASD plays a pioneering role in advancing the global sustainability agenda by providing evidence-based insights, strengthening accountability, and supporting policy-makers in accelerating progress towards the Goals.

Since 2016, UN Member States have been submitting Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) annually to the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) to report on progress towards the SDGs. To date, 190 countries and the European Union have presented at least one VNR, with the United States remaining the only major country yet to do so. Between 2016 and 2025, a total of 412 VNRs have been presented, reflecting growing global participation, although reporting frequency varies, with most countries submitting their first, second, or third review. The quality and depth of data also differ significantly; some reports feature over 100 indicators, while others include fewer than 20. The most recent VNRs were presented at the 2024 HLPF in New York, and 35 countries are expected to participate in the 2025 cycle, marking the tenth anniversary of VNR reporting.

The SDGT is directly aligned with the 17 SDGs established by the UN in 2015. The SDGT builds on the VNRs, the official UN mechanism through which countries assess and report their progress on the SDGs. By systematically analysing the quantitative and qualitative data presented in VNRs, the SDGT monitors and evaluates each nation’s performance across all 17 SDGs, through a structured, evidence-based assessment process. Using this analysis, the SDGT applies a 0-5 performance scale to measure progress in line with the VNR assessment framework, providing a clear and comparable indication of how effectively each country is advancing towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

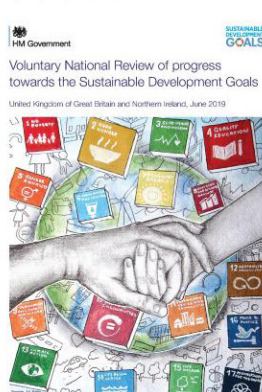
WASD uses VNRs as the main data source for the SDGT. As a self-assessment process, each VNR enables UN Member States to review and report their progress in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. These reviews are voluntary, inclusive, and country-led, reflecting each nation's priorities, achievements, and challenges. The analysis of VNRs combines advanced Artificial Intelligence (AI) with rigorous expert evaluation to ensure accuracy, depth, and transparency. AI-assisted tools are used to scan, summarise, and structure large volumes of VNR text, enabling efficient processing and identification of key themes. This is followed by manual expert review, where specialists interpret context, verify accuracy, and capture nuanced insights that automated systems may overlook. Comparisons between AI and human assessments are conducted to test reliability, ensuring a balanced, evidence-based evaluation across all SDGs. The process also includes a layered expert review: academic experts from WASD first assess the SDGT team's draft, followed by senior WASD experts who provide detailed commentary. A third-opinion review is then undertaken to enhance objectivity, and country-specific experts validate local accuracy and relevance. Where data gaps or inconsistencies exist, WASD uses proxy indicators or qualitative assessments, ensuring that all 17 SDGs are systematically evaluated. This approach transforms the VNR findings into a standardised performance framework, allowing for consistent and transparent measurement of sustainability across nations. In the final stage, the refined analysis is uploaded to the SDGT platform, ensuring full transparency and enabling public feedback for continuous improvement.

SDGT Performance Rating Scale

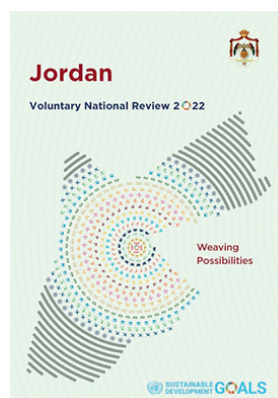
Score	Description
0	No Progress: No measurable advancement or data available.
1	Severely Off-Track: Minimal progress with major challenges persisting.
2	Off-Track: Limited improvement with substantial efforts still required.
3	Moderately Off-Track: Noticeable progress achieved, but significant gaps remain.
4	On-Track: Considerable advancement made; close to meeting the target.
5	Achieved: Goal fully realised with sustainable performance maintained.



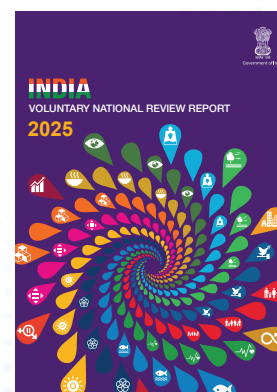
KSA VNR Report



UK VNR Report



Jordan VNR Report



India VNR Report

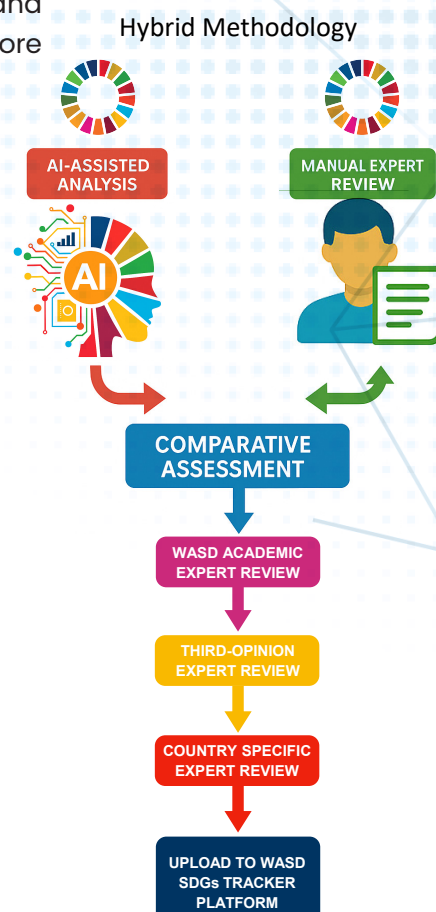
Irregular VNR Reporting: A Challenge to SDGT

Several reporting gaps persist within the VNR process. Notably, some countries have never submitted a VNR, while others have not reported to the UN for over three years. Many reports also fail to follow the official UN template, resulting in inconsistencies in structure and depth that hinder cross-country comparisons. As the VNR process remains entirely voluntary, there is no mechanism to ensure regular or standardised reporting, raising serious concerns about accountability. In 2025, this irregularity creates significant blind spots in assessing global progress towards the SDGs, not merely a gap in data, but a gap in collective responsibility as the world moves towards 2030.

WASD Approach to VNR Analysis

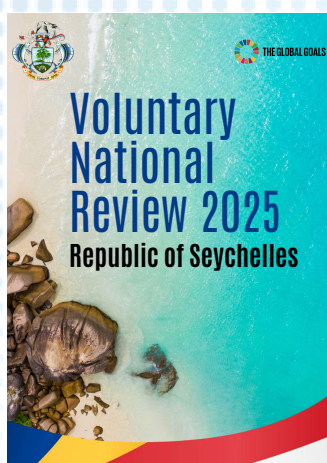
- Extract and interpret quantitative and qualitative data on SDG progress.
- Align national indicators with the global SDG targets.
- Identify successes, challenges, and data or policy gaps.
- Apply the 0-5 performance scale to evaluate each SDG.
- Generate regional and global comparisons to assess progress trends.
- Provide recommendations and guidance to support countries in improving performance and achieving the SDGs.

Through this integration of VNR methodologies, the SDGT strengthens accountability, encourages evidence-based policy-making, and supports the UN in tracking global SDG implementation in a more structured and comparable way.



Advantages of using the SDGT

- **Enhanced Accountability and Transparency** – The SDGT quantifies national progress, enabling governments to demonstrate their commitment to sustainable development and encouraging open reporting and improvement.
- **Evidence-Based Policy Development** – Findings from the Tracker help policy-makers identify priority areas for reform, guide investment, and support data-driven decision-making aligned with the 2030 Agenda.
- **Global Comparability and Benchmarking** – The 0-5 scoring framework allows countries to benchmark their SDG performance regionally and globally, promoting learning and healthy competition.
- **Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration** – The Tracker strengthens partnerships among governments, civil society, the private sector, and academia, fostering collective ownership of the SDGs.
- **Support for UN Monitoring and Review** – By providing standardised, evidence-based insights, the SDGT complements UN monitoring mechanisms and contributes to discussions at the HLPF.



Seychelles VNR Report



Germany VNR Report



EU VNR Report



Botswana VNR Report

WASD Support for the UN in Tracking Global SDGs Progress

- Monitor global and regional SDGs progress in a consistent, comparable format.
- Identify countries or goals that are severely off-track, enabling targeted support and international co-operation.
- Facilitate knowledge exchange by showcasing success stories and best practices.
- Provide an evidence base for policy discussions at international forums, including the HLPF.

SDGT is not just about analysing documents; it's about making sure countries stay on track with the goals to which they have committed. The SDGT Project brings structure, clarity, and accountability to VNRs, helping us spot patterns, compare progress, and understand the real challenges nations are facing. By combining AI tools with human expertise, we have built a smarter, faster, and more thoughtful way to evaluate national efforts. Most importantly, it proves that no country is alone in this journey. We all face challenges, but there are also valuable lessons being learned, and they need to be shared. If we want to achieve the SDGs by 2030, we need better data, more transparent reporting, and stronger action, especially at the local level.



Sustainability Tracker

ISSN: 2978-2384 (Print) - 2978-2392 (Online)



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