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Plenary round-table panel on voluntary national and local reviews as a means of fostering sustainable, inclusive, science-based, evidence-based and data-driven solutions to dramatically increase economic growth, job creation and the pace and scale of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063

Information and guidelines for the plenary round-table panel on voluntary national and local reviews as a means of fostering sustainable, inclusive, science-based, evidence-based and data-driven solutions to dramatically increase economic growth, job creation and the pace and scale of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063

I. Date, time and venue

1. The plenary round-table panel will be held on Friday, 11 April 2025, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., in the Plenary Hall.

II. Background and introduction

2. Voluntary national reviews are crucial for assessing the progress made in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, of the African Union, identifying challenges and good practices, and promoting effective policies, programmes and other interventions to drive implementation.
3. The slow pace of implementation of the two agendas has heightened the need for evidence-based voluntary national reviews that engender strong multi-stakeholder engagement, are linked to local-level interventions and impact, and can reinforce institutions, policies, plans and budgets to speed up and scale up integrated implementation of the two agendas. In this connection, local reviews have gained momentum, with a view to strengthening voluntary national reviews, deepening localization of the two agendas and bolstering local implementation.
4. A total of 10 African States¹ are currently engaged in the voluntary national review process in preparation for the high-level political forum on sustainable development, to be held in July 2025. Voluntary local reviews assist localities in charting progress and planning for sustainable development at the

* ECA/RFSD/2025/1.

¹Angola, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Lesotho, Nigeria, Seychelles, South Africa and Sudan.



local level. African localities have been very proactive in undertaking these reviews, with over 40 completed and a further 40 under way across the region.

III. Objectives

5. The main objective of the panel is to facilitate learning and strengthen practice in conducting and following up on voluntary national and local reviews in order to advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

6. The specific objectives are to:

(a) Share good practices, challenges and lessons learned in voluntary national and local reviews, in the context of multiple crises;

(b) Share insights about the linkages between voluntary national and local reviews and how to strengthen these reviews to reinforce institutions, policies, plans and budgets to speed up and scale up integrated implementation of the two agendas;

(c) Identify means to link national and local reviews with concrete road maps for the implementation of the two agendas, with a view to making progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals;

(d) Provide an opportunity to highlight the outcomes of the pre-event on voluntary national and local reviews.

IV. Guidelines

7. The Chair will outline the aforementioned objectives of the high-level panel and introduce the moderator and panel members listed in section V.

8. The Chair will then yield to the moderator, who will guide the discussion among the panellists and other participants.

9. The moderator will:

(a) Invite each panellist to speak for no longer than four minutes on one or more of the questions listed in paragraph 10;

(b) Foster an interactive discussion among the panellists on important issues, actions and solutions that emerge from the remarks made by the panellists;

(c) Following the panel discussion, invite questions and other comments from the floor on the topics under discussion;

(d) At the end of the dialogue, summarize the main policy messages, including recommendations made;

(e) Yield to the Chair, who will conclude the discussion.

10. During the discussion, the moderator will invite the panellists to address one or more of the following four questions:

(a) What were some of the good practices, lessons learned and challenges encountered in voluntary national or local reviews?

(b) What recommendations would you make to strengthen voluntary national or local reviews, with a view to reinforcing institutions, policies, plans and budgets to speed up and scale up integrated implementation of the two agendas?

(c) What development priorities have you identified that are crucial to ensuring broad-based, inclusive and sustainable development at the local and national levels?

(d) What were some salient outcomes of the regional preparatory workshop on voluntary national and local reviews held prior to the panel?

V. Chair, moderator and panellists

11. The Chair, moderator and panellists will be as follows:

Chair: Chair of the Bureau

Moderator: Director, Subregional Office for West Africa, ECA, Ngoné Diop

Panellists:

- Secretary-General, Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, Guinea, Kabele Soumah
 - Director of Sustainable Development Goals Policy Coordination, Benin, Camille Sevoh
 - Youth Leaders Fellow, United Nations Population Fund, Ghana, Bernadette Seyram Azah
 - Senior Global Advocacy Adviser for East, Central and Southern Africa, Sightsavers, Monica Njoroge-Ndoria
 - International Project Manager, South African Local Government Association, Tebogo Matlou
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