

CIRCULAR 10 / 2023

FROM : ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
TO : METROS / INTERMEDIATE CITIES OR SECONDARY CITIES
CITY MANAGERS / MUNICIPAL MANAGERS
DIRECTORS IN THE OFFICE OF MUNICIPAL MANAGERS
PROVINCIAL DIRECTORS OF OPERATIONS
DATE : 24 FEBRUARY 2023

NATIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP ON VOLUNTARY LOCAL REVIEWS (VLRs) IN SOUTH AFRICA

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Circular is to invite Metros, Districts, and Intermediate Cities to the National Capacity Building Workshop on Voluntary Local Reviews (VLR) scheduled from 27-29 March 2023, in Durban (exact venue to be confirmed).

2. BACKGROUND

SALGA and the United Nations signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) in December 2018. The purpose of the MOA is to provide a governance institutional framework for cooperation to facilitate and strengthen collaboration between parties. The National Planning Commission (NPC) Secretariat in collaboration with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and SALGA is organising the workshop to build the capacities of local government officials in localising the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and in monitoring and reporting their progress by supporting the Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) process, including its linkages to the Voluntary National Review (VNR) process.

The 2030 Agenda (A/RES/70/1: Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development) recognizes this important role, pledging that "Governments and public institutions will also work closely on implementation with regional and local authorities". In paragraph 27 (e) of the Political Declaration of the 2019 SDG Summit (A/RES/74/4), Member States commit to empowering and supporting cities, local authorities, and communities in pursuing the 2030 Agenda, and recognized their critical role in implementing and realizing the Sustainable Development Goals.

The 2030 Agenda encourages Member States to "conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels, which are country-led and country-driven". This further underscores the critical importance of implementing the SDGs at local level, while empowering local authorities and actors as stewards of monitoring and review for the Goals.

Hence, there is recognition that localizing the national and internationally agreed upon development goals is essential for ensuring that these goals reflect local needs, norms, and values, thus ensuring that local actors find them relevant and meaningful. With regard to the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals, local and sub-national governments are increasingly playing a pivotal role in implementation, addressing core issues including poverty, food security, access to quality education, health care and water and sanitation services, and in advancing gender equality and reducing inequalities, among others. It is estimated that at least 100 of the 169 SDG targets will not be reached without proper engagement and co-ordination with local and regional governments.

3. OBJECTIVE AND METHODOLOGY

This capacity building workshop aims to support the acceleration and scaling up of SDGs implementation and localization in South Africa through the preparations of voluntary local reviews (VLRs) and their linkages to Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) and, through this process, to build the capacities of government officials at the national and subregional levels for effective SDGs implementation at all levels, including the subnational level and reviewing and monitoring of progress. Specifically, the inception workshop will:

- Strengthen awareness and multi-stakeholder partnerships for sub-national implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs through the Global Guiding Elements for voluntary local reviews (VLRs);
- Strengthen multi-stakeholder cooperation and experience sharing on the SDGs monitoring and review at local level;
- Build capacity for conducting comprehensive sub-national reviews of SDG implementation that complement and feed into follow-up and review processes carried out by the national government's Voluntary National Review; and
- Strengthen awareness regarding how the VLR process can be utilized to enhance data gathering and analysis for tackling urban-rural differences within South Africa.

4. EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

At the conclusion of the capacity building workshop, it is anticipated that the participants will:

- Have acquired enhanced capability and a better understanding of the requirements for successfully undertaking a voluntary local review and how to link it to the national VNR process.
- Be able to participate in ongoing and planned national development activities to advance the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs implementation at the national, local and regional levels.
- Be able to remain in a community of similar practitioners and experts to support one another in localizing the SDGs.

5. TARGETED PARTICIPANTS

- Metros / Districts and Intermediate Cities;
- Managers in the Office of the Municipal Manager/ Deputy Municipal Manager & IDP Managers;
- Two persons per municipality;
- Maximum total of 80 participants on a first come first serve.

Municipalities are kindly requested to confirm their attendance by filling up the form the number of delegates, their names and contact details to **Ms Clarissa Augustine at caugustine@salga.org.za / 079 520 8965** by no later than close of business on Wednesday, 08 March 2023.

N.B. United Nations will send a direct invitation to the delegates.

For further information or clarity regarding Localization of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) workshop. Kindly contact Mr Tebogo Matlou: tmatlou@salga.org.za or 083 252 4461.

Yours faithfully



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CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER (ACTING)