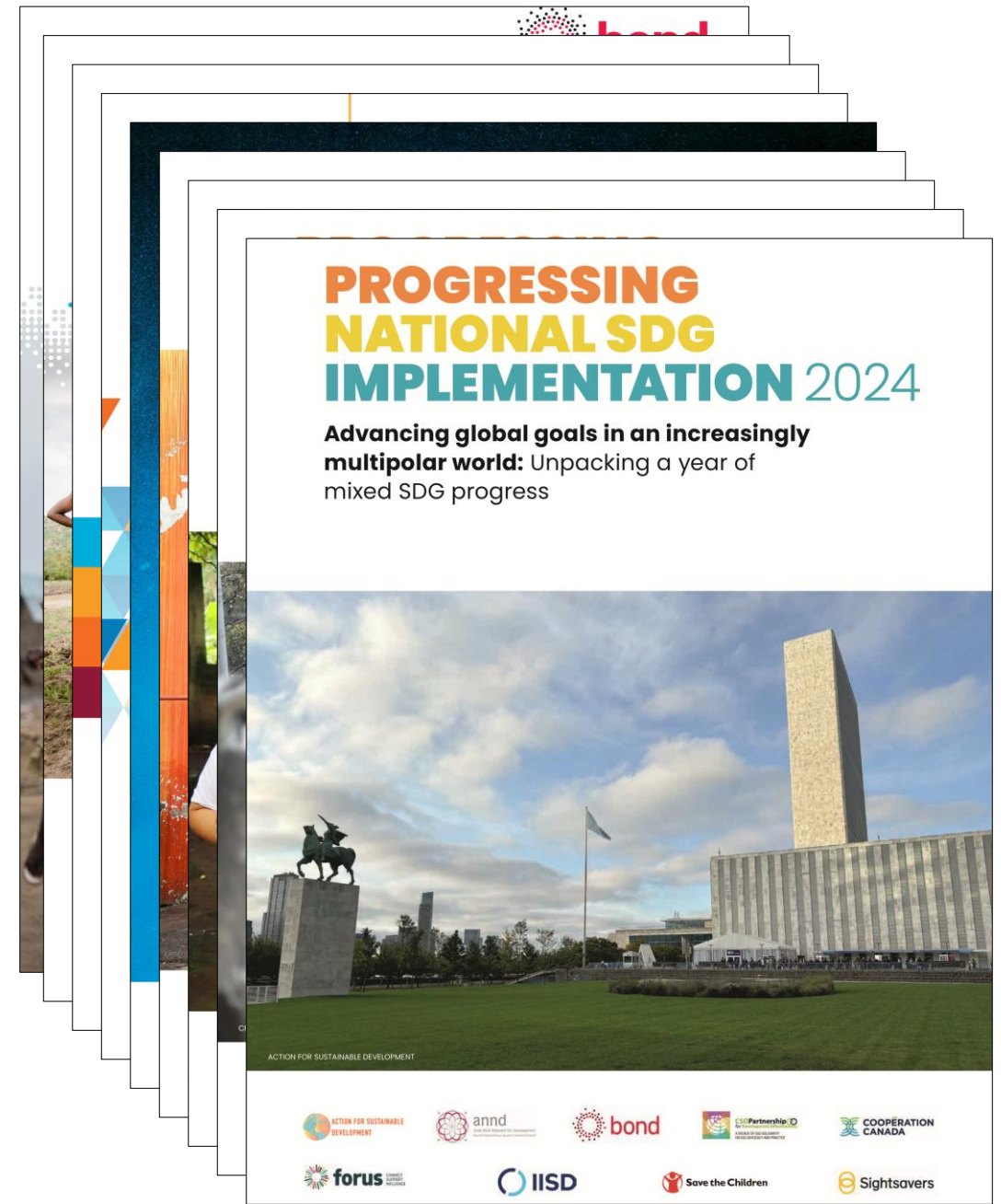


Civil Society Reports on VNRs: Trends and Transparency



Progressing National SDG Reports

- The Progressing SDGs Implementation Reports have been developed and published by a group of civil society networks and international NGOs annually since 2016.
- A team of researchers analyzes and collects data from all available VNR reports each year, based on a comprehensive analytical framework made up of 100+ variables.
- In 2024, the analysis was based on 35 of the 36 VNR reports.
- Wherever possible, we include a CSO “fact check” box immediately following specific assertions in the official reports.

Progressing National SDG Reports

CSO View: Civil Society participation in the formulation of the National Development Plan in Uganda



In Uganda, technical advisory bodies play an important role in ensuring that SDG priorities are embedded into national development planning and implementation. However, they appear to play a less active role at the implementation level.

According to the Uganda National NGO Forum (UNNGOF), CSOs have been able to actively engage in both the planning and policymaking processes at the national level, extending their reach well beyond project-level involvement.

As a platform organization, UNNGOF collaborates closely with government bodies to ensure that the National Development Plans are responsive to citizens' aspirations. In spite of this effort, however, the implementation of recommendations from CSOs continues to be hampered by the general lack of government accountability, wastage, and unresponsiveness of government agencies.

I. Governance, Institutional Mechanisms and Engagement



Chapter 1: Leadership, Governance and Institutional Arrangements



Chapter 2: Stakeholder Engagement in 2030 Agenda Governance

II. Policies for Agenda 2030 Implementation



Chapter 3: Incorporation of the 2030 Agenda into National Frameworks and Policies



Chapter 4: Implementing the 2030 Agenda – Country Experiences



Chapter 5: Measurement and Reporting

III. Implementing the 2030 Agenda in Partnership



Chapter 6: Leave No One Behind



Chapter 7: Localizing the SDGs



Chapter 8: Partnerships for SDG Delivery



Annex: Use of the Secretary General's 'Voluntary Common Reporting Guidelines'

Key Findings: SDG Monitoring

- 2024 reports reveal a shift from token consultations to some level of VNR co-creation: nearly all countries now embed non-state actors through VNR-specific structures that contribute or at least validate the report.
- Approximately **80%** of reports based their assessment on all SDGs. However, **less than 15%** of countries indicated having access to disaggregated data for most of the VNR sections.
- **100%** of 2024 VNRs cited actions to strengthen national statistical capacity, up from 85% in 2023 - signaling momentum around efforts for data strengthening.

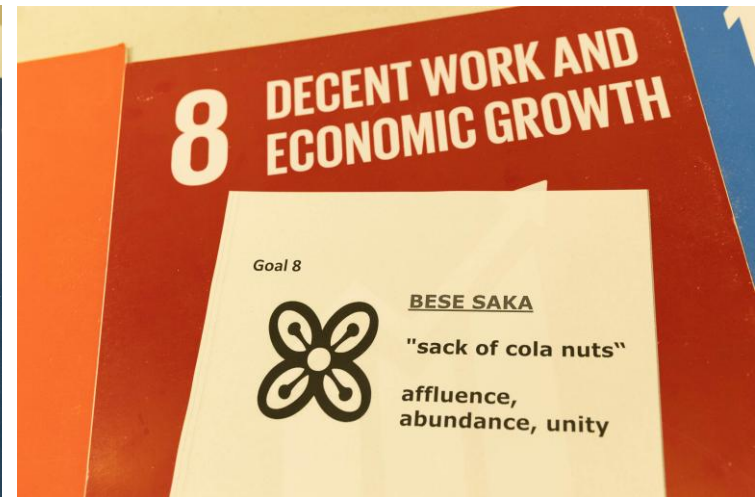
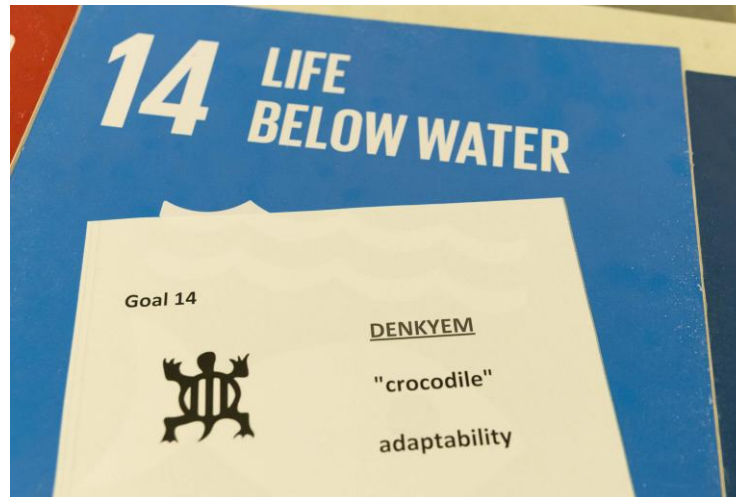
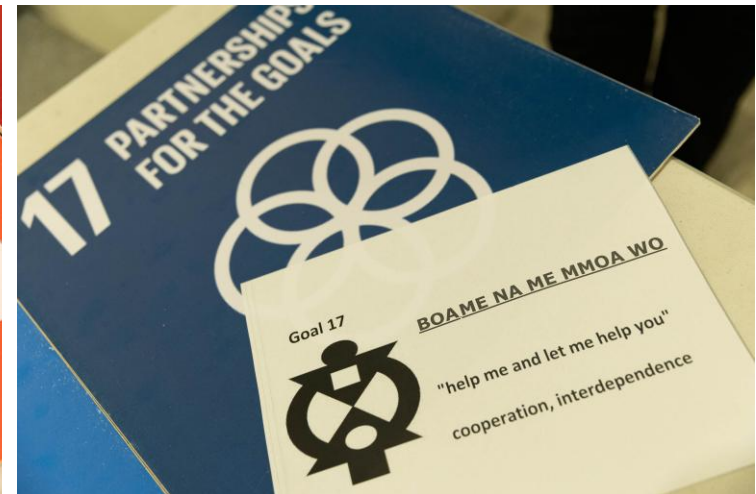
Key Findings: Localization

- Subnational governments and local non-state actors are increasingly engaged in SDG reviews. Approximately **75%** of countries provided some level of information on their efforts to localize the SDGs (77% in 2022)
- **33%** of countries report that VLRs were conducted in parallel with the VNR, up from 16% in 2022.
- **60%** of reports address multistakeholder engagement at the local level, albeit mostly limited to examples of specific projects and actors rather than an overarching analysis.

Key Findings: Leave No One Behind

- 2024 VNR reports (**100%**) mention the ‘Leave No One Behind’ (LNOB) principle, same as 2023.
- Only **29%** of 2024 VNRs ran a baseline study to pinpoint who is being left behind—down sharply from 2023 (**43%**), pointing to persistent data gaps.
- Women & girls (**86%**), persons with disabilities (**83%**), and children/youth (**80%**) top the list—yet Indigenous Peoples (**26%**) and LGBTQ+ communities (**20%**) remain after-thoughts, exposing blind spots in inclusion strategies.
- **Tackling inequalities is on almost every agenda – 97%** of countries now report at least one policy aimed at shrinking social or economic gaps.

Translating the SDGs: Language Matters



Final Reflections: Toward more iterative VNR reporting

- Since 2016, UN member states have tabled more than 300 VNRs while civil-society coalitions have produced at least 100 Spotlight Reports and other independent assessments, which often offer a wealth of perceptions and agency from the grassroots, highlighting equity blind spots.
- Harnessing insights from CSO reports can turn the VNR process into a more effective dashboard for closing SDG gaps and mobilizing inclusive, effective partnerships.

Final Reflections: Toward more iterative VNR reporting

- With just five years left, VNRs must shift from descriptive documents to in-depth assessments that propose and discuss actionable options for SDG acceleration, solutions to institutional and policy bottlenecks, map who is still excluded and how, and propose tangible, integrated, costed solutions.
- More generally, the UN should establish an annual ‘commitment tracker’ whereby Member States include progress on commitments made as part of their VNRs and at the 2023 SDG Summit.

PROGRESSING NATIONAL SDG IMPLEMENTATION REPORTS

www.progressingsdgs.org

