

## HENNET VNR Journey Towards Sustainable Development Goals

### Introduction

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, universally adopted by all United Nations Member States, provided a visionary roadmap for nations and stakeholders to strive for equality, social inclusion, and a sustainable, prosperous world while conserving our planet and ensuring that no one is left behind. As part of its follow-up and review mechanisms, the global pact urged Member States to conduct voluntary, regular, and inclusive reviews to assess progress at national (VNR) and sub-national levels (VLR), which were country-led and country-driven. These reviews served as a basis for the regular progress reviews by the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) that convened annually in July in New York.

The **Kenya National Treasury** and Planning through the State Department for Planning is mandated to coordinate the implementation, monitoring and review of the SDGs in Kenya. To enhance effectiveness and efficiency, the State Department for Planning prepares progress reports of the implementation of the SDGs in the country. It also prepares Voluntary VNRs which are part of follow-up and review of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. The Voluntary National Review is a process through which countries assess and present progress made in achieving the global goals and the pledge to leave no one behind. <https://www.treasury.go.ke/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/CS-Statement-2-VNR-Launch-on-Monday-6th-July-2020.pdf>

Since 2017, CSOs have been submitting progress reports to inform Kenya's Voluntary National Review. In addition to Kenya's own VNR report, CSOs in Kenya collaborate to submit their own VNR reports. These CSO-contributed reports are then consolidated into the final Kenya VNR report. Notably, **HENNET** has played an instrumental role in championing CSOs by convening them to address **Goal Number 3: Good Health and Well-being**

Given that the Voluntary National Review is a process through which countries assess and present national progress made in implementing the 2030 Agenda, it was imperative that CSOs also mirrored the process and developed their own VNRs to assess the extent to which they contributed to the national process. Kenya will be among the Member States that will present its third VNR in July 2024. Thus, through the leadership of the SDG Kenya Forum, the CSO process was initiated on January 31, 2024, with stakeholders being enhanced in their capacity to develop a VNR report. A follow-up virtual meeting was also held on February 21, 2024, on the same.

A roadmap was developed that informed the timelines for organizations to present their submissions to the Forum for compilation by March 31, 2024. Therefore, against this background, the SDG Kenya Forum, in collaboration with Open Institute, scheduled a three-day working/writing Workshop to review the progress made by CSOs, as well as provide an opportunity for technical experts to interface with the participants and enrich their submissions. The workshop was a writing workshop where organizations improved on the submissions they had developed as well as shared information, experiences, and best practices on VNR with their peers. The meeting was held from March 25 to 27, 2024, at Maanzoni Lodge, Machakos.

### **The Vital Role of Civil Society Organizations:**

As Kenya prepares to present its third VNR in July 2024, the importance of CSOs in this process cannot be overstated. These organizations serve as the voice of the people, advocating for the needs and aspirations of communities across the nation. Recognizing the critical role of CSOs, the SDG Kenya Forum has taken the lead in initiating a parallel process, empowering these organizations to develop their own VNR reports and contribute to the national dialogue on sustainable development.

### **HENNET's Involvement in Goal Group 3:**

Among the diverse stakeholders present at the writing workshop, HENNET played a significant role in the discussions under Goal Group 3, led by the International Center for Reproductive Health-Kenya (ICRH-K). HENNET's involvement stemmed from its prior experience as an unbiased convener, bringing together various CSOs and supporting the drafting of Goal Group 3. By actively engaging CSOs in health-related areas, HENNET strengthened the network and facilitated a cohesive approach towards achieving sustainable development targets in Kenya.

### **The VNR Writing Process:**

The VNR writing process in Kenya unfolded through several key stages, with HENNET playing an active role throughout. From the inception meeting in January 2024, where the groundwork for the VNR process was laid, to the discussions on Citizen-Generated Data in February, HENNET contributed to shaping the CSO community dialogues and gathering valuable qualitative data. In March, HENNET convened a sensitization session to equip CSOs with the necessary knowledge and guidelines for their participation in the VNR process. The culmination of these efforts was the VNR writing workshop at Maanzoni Lodge, where HENNET and other CSOs focused on reporting specifically on SDG 3, which aims to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all, at all ages.

### **HENNET Timelines in the VNR writing Process**

#### **1. Inception Meeting (January 31st):**

- The SDG Kenya Forum initiated the VNR 2024 process with an Inception Meeting. During this stage, they laid the groundwork for the Voluntary National Review process which was attended by HENNET and other CSOs
- The VNR process facilitated peer learning, allowing CSOs to share experiences and strengthen policies for SDGs implementation.
- A key focus was on amplifying grassroots voices in the CSO VNR process, recognizing that embracing citizen-generated data truly reflected community needs.

#### **2. Stage 2 (February 6<sup>th</sup> 2024):**

- On February 6<sup>th</sup>, participants engaged in a discussion on Citizen-Generated Data (CGD) at The Forum. Their contributions shaped Kenyan CSOs' SDGs Community Dialogues, serving as a valuable source of qualitative data that would be instrumental in writing during the VNR Process

### **3. Stage 3 (March 8th):**

- On March 8, 2024, HENNET convened a CSO Forum for a sensitization session with the Health CSOs. The purpose was to understand what was expected of CSOs in the Health Sector regarding reporting on SDGs.
- This session aimed to equip CSOs with the necessary knowledge and guidelines for their active participation in the VNR process.

### **4. Stage 4 (VNR Writing):**

- From March 25th to 27th, the VNR reporting took place at Maanzoni Lodge in Machakos. HENNET actively participated in this crucial stage.
- During this period, HENNET and other CSOs, such as ICRHK, Ageing Concern Foundation and Fred Hollows, focused on reporting specifically on SDG 3. Goal 3 aims to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all, at all ages.

### **5. 2024 VNR Report:**

- The 2024 VNR Report is scheduled to be tabled in New York during the Annual High-Level Political Meeting in July.
- Kenya has been rated as one of the leading countries in Africa for tracking the implementation of SDGs through the 1st and 2nd VNR Reports of 2017/2020.
- The 3rd VNR will be a significant milestone, further reinforcing Kenya's commitment to sustainable development.

### **Looking Ahead:**

As Kenya prepares to present its third VNR in July 2024 during the HLPF in New York, the nation stands as a leader in Africa for tracking the implementation of SDGs. The theme of the HLPF 2024, "Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises: the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions," highlights the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. The forum will focus on the thematic reviews of SDGs 1, 2, 13, 16, and 17, addressing the special challenges faced by countries in special situations and exploring the regional and local dimensions of effective solutions.



**Hennet**

Health RIGs Network