

MARSHALL ISLANDS

TERRITORIAL ORGANIZATION

The Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) is a unitary republic. The RMI court system includes local courts of first instance. There are 33 LRGs (municipal level).



Unless otherwise indicated, all the information in this profile is taken from the previously published Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs).¹

1. NATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR SDG IMPLEMENTATION

The **National Strategic Plan (NSP) 2020-2030** was updated in 2020 providing the Government with a roadmap for progress in five strategic areas (Social Services and Cultural Identity, Economic Development, Infrastructure, Environment Awareness and Climate Change and Good Governance). The policy objectives in each strategic area are aligned to the 2030 Agenda (and SAMOA Pathway).

1.1 NATIONAL COORDINATION MECHANISMS

The **NSP-SDGs Steering Committee** led the design and development of the NSP 2020-2030 and steered the design and development of the VNR. It has 5 subcommittees, for each one of the pillars of the NSP. The committee is also mandated to identify appropriate members for the 5 **thematic Task Forces**, to ensure that there is a wide range of representation from stakeholders both at national and local levels.

1.2 VNR ELABORATION PROCESS

A **VNR Working Group** was established by the NSP-SDGs Steering Committee to oversee and coordinate the 2021 VNR process. The working group included members of Office of the Chief Secretary (OCS), different ministries, Economic Planning and Statistics Office (EPPSO), Climate Change Directorate (CCD), Office of Commerce, Investment and Tourism (OCIT), and civil society representatives. Then, a VNR Write Workshop was conducted with relevant ministries and agencies, NGOs, state-owned enterprises, and private sector stakeholders.

1.3 MONITORING

The annual monitoring and report of the NSP tracks progress on the SDGs. The **Economic Policy, Planning and Statistics Office (EPPSO)**, ministries and the Office of Chief Secretary (OCS) are responsible for overseeing the monitoring and evaluation of the NSP and SDGs (through the NSP M&E Framework). An SDG database which is currently housed at the EPPSO, contains information used to help with ongoing monitoring of SDG and NSP implementation.

The NSP-SDGs Steering Committee supports local governments in data collection, monitoring and assessment at local levels. It also ensures that **information gathered at local level is used in national SDGs monitoring and reporting**.

2. LRGs INVOLVEMENT IN SDG LOCALIZATION

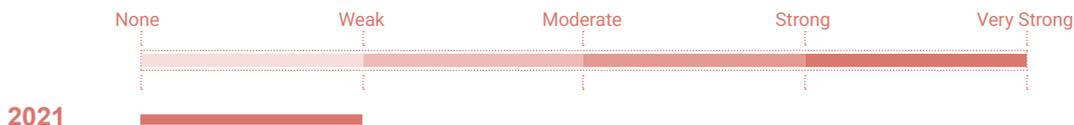
Municipalities are not mentioned among the stakeholders that participated in the national consultation process preceding the elaboration of the NSP. Local governments are part, at least in theory (and the Steering Committee has to supervise this), of the 5 **thematic Task Forces**. Each year the **Marshall Islands Mayors Association (MIMA)** convenes a conference meeting of all the mayors of the 24 atolls to dialogue with national government, civil society and other partners, addressing issues of concern to people living in the neighboring islands.

1. See: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/279312021_VNR_Report_Marshall_Islands.pdf (2021)

LRGs were part of the “broad engagement” as part of the reporting process for the 2021 VNR. But they neither were represented in the VNR Working Group nor were engaged in the VNR Stakeholder Workshops (only for private actors and NGOs). However, the VNR Working Group met with the officers of the **MIMA** to raise awareness and share materials on the VNR and gather inputs from the LRGs.

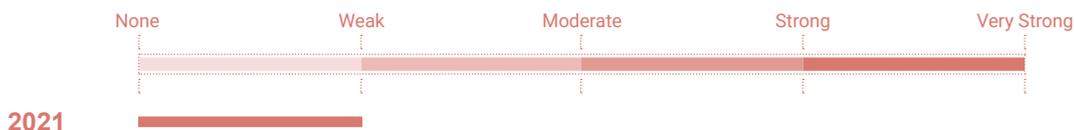
2.1 LRGs PARTICIPATION

► In the VNR process



Comments: LRGs neither were represented in the VNR Working Group nor were engaged in the VNR Stakeholder Workshops, but the officers of the Marshall Islands Mayors Association (MIMA) were consulted.

► In national coordination mechanisms for SDG implementation



Comments: Annual conference meeting with LRGs and national government through the Marshall Islands Mayors Association (MIMA). But there is no evidence of any direct LRG participation in national coordination mechanisms.

This assessment is based on the information collected in the VNRs and in the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments’ annual survey on the localization of the SDGs.

2.2 VNR REFERENCES

The paragraph “Consultation with Mayors”, in the section on the 2021 VNR’s methodology, refers to the consultative channels as part of the VNR process and the national coordination mechanisms (only consultative). There is a box (see VNR, 2021, p. 40-41) on SDG localization, but it refers more to the adaptation of SDG targets and indicators to the national level than to the local level. Overall, LRGs are mentioned throughout the report, and there are a few references to some cities, but without explicit reference to locally-led initiatives for SDG implementation.

2.3 SPECIFIC PROJECTS AND CASES

No reference.

2.4 VOLUNTARY SUBNATIONAL AND/OR LOCAL REVIEWS (VSRs / VLRs)

Not applicable.

2.5 MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION

Ministry level budget and planning information is aligned to the NSP. A fund was established under the Office of the President to support annual pilot projects that are designed to create awareness, ownership and align with the SDGs. These projects are presented by NGOs and other stakeholders (although one of the projects mentioned as examples is located in specific cities, **Majuro** and **Ebeye**, it is not specified if LRGs can participate). The conclusion specifies that the government continues “to finalize the alignment of planning and budgeting so that reporting ensures that progress of the NSP and related SDGs can be effectively monitored and evaluated at all levels of government (national, sector, ministry, local).”

3. RELEVANT INFORMATION

General comments: The 2021 VNR mentions rural-urban disparities. To address them, a diverse range of policies are in place to promote improving access and livelihoods in both rural and urban centers through the “One Nation Concept”, that is the unifying theme of the NSP.

3.1 WOMEN PARTICIPATION

No reference.

3.2 COVID 19

No reference of LRG initiatives to face the pandemic.

4. SDG INDICATORS²

5.5.1. (b) Proportion of seats held by women (%) in local governments		15.9 (2019)
6.1.1. Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services (%)	Urban	-
	Rural	-
6.2.1. (a) Proportion of population using safely managed sanitation services (%)	Urban	-
	Rural	-
11.1.1. Proportion of population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing (%)		-
11.6.1. Proportion of municipal solid waste collected and managed (%)		60 (2017)
11.6.2. Air pollution – annual means of particulate matter in cities (population weighted)		10.2 (2016)
11.b.2. Proportion of local governments that have adopted local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national strategies (%)		12.5 (2020)

2. The data used for this table come from the UN SDG Indicators Database. See: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/UNSDG/IndDatabasePage>. More information on the country's progress towards the SDGs here: <https://country-profiles.unstatshub.org/mhl>