

NEPAL

TERRITORIAL ORGANIZATION

Nepal moved from a unitary form of government to a federal one with a strong focus on decentralization based on “cooperative federalism”. The new federation has three tiers of government, namely federal, state (7 provinces) and local (276 urban municipalities, 460 rural municipalities, 6 metropolitan cities and 11 sub-metropolitan cities).¹



Unless otherwise indicated, all the information in this profile is taken from the previously published Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs).²

1. NATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR SDG IMPLEMENTATION

The **Constitution of Nepal**, promulgated at the same time that the SDGs were adopted globally in 2015, adopts an effective and strong foundation for the main thrust of the SDGs. The 14th Plan (2016- 2019) was the first periodic plan to internalize the 2030 Agenda, and the **15th Plan (2019-2024)** has continued to align and mainstream the SDGs. Also, since 2016, the annual programs and budgets are aligned with the SDGs, introducing SDG coding to each program. The **National Planning Commission (NPC)** is preparing a national framework of ‘leaving no one behind’ to indicate the programs to uphold the inclusive agenda of the SDGs and the Constitution.

1.1 NATIONAL COORDINATION MECHANISMS

There is a **High-level Steering Committee on the SDGs**, chaired by the Prime Minister. It is composed of the Vice-Chair of the NPC as Deputy Chairman, the Foreign Minister, the Finance Minister, Chief Ministers of all provinces, the Chief Secretary, presidents of associations of rural municipalities, municipalities and district coordination committees. The Secretary of the NPC is also its secretary. There is also an **Implementation and Monitoring Committee**, led by the Vice-Chair of the NPC. It provides guidelines to the federal ministries for implementing and mainstreaming the SDGs at provincial and local levels. It also monitors implementation and prepares the status of progress of SDG implementation. There are also 7 thematic committees, each coordinated by members of the NPC. Besides, it has been set up a **Sustainable Development and Good Governance Committee of the National Assembly** in the Federal Parliament, with representation of all the major political parties to provide oversight and national budget scrutiny on the SDGs.

1.2 VNR ELABORATION PROCESS

The preparation of the 2020 VNR included literature review, discussions with relevant stakeholders in a virtual setting in view of the COVID-19 pandemic, and key informant interviews. These consultations were held with parliamentarians, and representatives of provinces and local levels. The report took into account indicators and data that had been developed in order to follow the progress of the SDGs implementation in Nepal. The data collected in the SDG Status and Roadmap report of the NPC (see below) was fundamental.

1.3 MONITORING

The **Status and Roadmap report of the NPC** proposed a preliminary list of 415 indicators to better reflect the national context for the monitoring and evaluation of the SDGs against a global total of 232 indicators. After consultations and engagement with province level SDG stakeholders, the NPC came up with a total of 594 indicators.³ The National Strategy for Development

1. See: https://www.sng-wofi.org/reports/SNGWOFI_2019_report_country_profiles_DEC2019_UPDATES.pdf

2. See: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/16513Nepal.pdf> (2017); https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26539VNR_2020_Nepal_Report.pdf (2020)

3. The VNR mentions that the 2021 National Population Census will be closely aligned with the SDGs and is expected to address specific issues related to SDG data generation, disaggregation and data gaps.

of Statistics (NSDS) has been prepared to improve and modernize the system of data collection by the government.⁴ Another monitoring strategy was the report prepared by the government in 2017 in consultation with stakeholders, including the status and roadmap, including 494 indicators, with 257 local indicators (see the VNR, 2020, p. 12-13). Finally, it is worth mentioning that the **High level National Development Action Committee (NDAC)** is the apex body of the government monitoring and evaluation system. It reviews the implementation of programs and projects and establishes inter-ministerial coordination on development related issues on a trimester basis. This last initiative is accompanied by another effort coming from the government: the organization of the Evaluation Networking (Eval-Net) meetings that started in 2013.

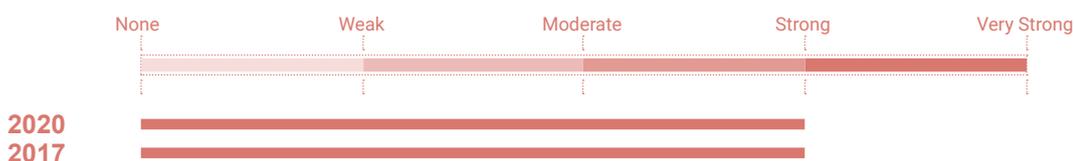
2. LRGs INVOLVEMENT IN SDG LOCALIZATION

The Chief Ministers of seven provinces and the chairpersons of local government associations have been included in the national **High-Level Steering Committee**. **Provincial-level steering committees** coordinate and facilitate the implementation of the SDGs in the provinces. Provincial governments have established their own policy/planning commissions, which have been sensitized about the SDGs. Actually, some of them have prepared periodic plans integrating the fundamental principles of the SDGs. District coordination committees, which are the main monitoring and supervising bodies for local level development works, have also been encouraged to align their functions for the SDG implementation.

As part of the 2020 VNR process, consultations were organized at the provincial and local levels, with heads and members of the planning commissions from all provinces and representatives of the **Association of District Coordination Committees of Nepal (ADCCN)**, the **Municipal Association of Nepal (MuAN)** and the **National Association of Rural Municipality in Nepal (NARMIN)**.

2.1 LRGs PARTICIPATION

► In the VNR process



Comments: Consultations were organized at the provincial and local levels, with the planning commissions from all provinces and representatives of the Association of District Coordination Committees of Nepal (ADCCN), the Municipal Association of Nepal (MuAN) and the National Association of Rural Municipality in Nepal (NARMIN).

► In national coordination mechanisms for SDG implementation



Comments: Provinces and local government associations are represented in the national High-Level Steering Committee.

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

Provincial and local levels are mentioned as crucial stakeholders in order to accomplish the 2030 Agenda in Nepal and are mentioned throughout the 2020 VNR as part of the most important partnerships and allies in this effort. In the subsection 3.6, entitled "Partnership with stakeholders", the subnational level (both provincial and municipal) is mentioned. Other important points are mentioned: the legislative, executive and judiciary powers that the Constitution gave them in order to plan and implement development programs; some planning and monitoring guidelines as well as SDG Localization Resource Book that have been prepared by the NPC; and the fact that most of the provinces have formulated SDG responsive periodic plans and MTEFs (Medium Term Expenditure Framework).

2.3 SPECIFIC PROJECTS AND CASES

► Nepal will pilot a subnational project on REDD+ to reduce about 14 million tons of CO₂-eq by 2020 by addressing the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation and strengthening governance mechanisms.

⁴Other efforts like the Cooperative and Poverty Management Information System (COPOMIS) are in operation for the purpose of monitoring and also establishing an integrated data system.

► The NPC has conducted awareness campaigns on the SDGs in each province. More recently 25 facilitators were enrolled for four months and provided training on SDG localization with the Nepal Administrative Staff College coordinating the event. These facilitators have moved to the 11 municipalities. Indeed, the facilitators (2 to 3 per municipality) are there to support the chief of the municipality and his team in municipal preparations of periodic plan and annual plan of action with SDGs actions at the center of their actions.⁵

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

In 2020, Nepal was among the first countries developing a VSR, based on a collaboration between the **Municipal Association of Nepal (MuAN)**, the **National Association of Rural Municipality in Nepal (NARMIN)** and the **Association of District Coordination Committees of Nepal (ADCCN)**.⁶ The municipality of **Dulikhel** published its VLR in 2022.⁷

2.5 MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION

As part of the federal system of financial governance, federal grants such as fiscal equalization, conditional, matching and special grants are provided, and revenue and royalty are shared among the provinces and local governments. Apart from other responsibilities, in Nepal, all three levels of government have expenditure and revenue rights. The Local Government Operation Act 2017, the Intergovernmental Fiscal Management Act 2017 and the National Natural Resources and Fiscal Commission Act 2017 have been adopted to facilitate coordination among the three tiers of the government. Lastly, the three-year Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) and annual programs and budgets have well emphasized the budget allocation for SDGs financing.

3. RELEVANT INFORMATION

General comments: The general elections as well as the provincial and local level elections, all took place following the presentation of the 2017 VNR. Since the provincial and local structures were given new responsibilities, efforts to develop and consolidate their legal, institutional and financial rules and regulations and to develop plans and programs are being carried out. In the last two years, they have built the necessary foundations, and the integration of the SDGs is under way. The 2020 VNR also mentions, as part of the next steps presented at the end of the document, the localization of the SDGs, highlighting the key role of the provinces and local level in integrating the SDGs into their respective areas of responsibilities. It states that provincial and local level planning needs to be institutionalized by mainstreaming and localizing the SDGs.

3.1 WOMEN PARTICIPATION

The 2020 VNR states that the President's Women Empowerment Program and the continuation of the practice of gender-responsive budgeting have contributed towards the upliftment of the status of women. In Nepal, 330 members of the seven provincial parliaments and about 35,000 elected representatives in 753 local councils have equally strong representation of women and marginalized groups, as per the electoral law. Women make up 34% of the provincial assemblies.

3.2 COVID 19

The 2020 VNR mentions that health-related interventions have been given the top priority and that policy initiatives have been taken to reorient economic activities with greater emphasis on the agriculture, skill development and employment generating activities for migrant returnees and unemployed people, enhance government expenditure on priority infrastructure projects and provide special credit facilities to the affected sectors. Supportive monetary and fiscal policies are also being adopted. Nevertheless, there are no measures specifically mentioned for the local level.

5. Answer to the GTF Survey in 2020.

6. See: https://gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/nepal_2020.pdf

7. See: <https://gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/vlr-dhulikhel.pdf>

4. SDG INDICATORS⁸

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|---|-------|----------------------|
| 5.5.1. (b) Proportion of seats held by women (%) in local governments | | 41 (2018) |
| 6.1.1. Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services (%) | Urban | 25 (2020) |
| | Rural | 16 (2020) |
| 6.2.1. (a) Proportion of population using safely managed sanitation services (%) | Urban | 42 (2020) |
| | Rural | 50 (2020) |
| 11.1.1. Proportion of population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing (%) | | 49.3 (2018) |
| 11.6.1. Proportion of municipal solid waste collected and managed (%) | | 94 (2003, Kathmandu) |
| 11.6.2. Air pollution – annual means of particulate matter in cities (population weighted) | | 81.6 (2016) |
| 11.b.2. Proportion of local governments that have adopted local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national strategies (%) | | 16.9 (2019) |

⁸ 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/npl>