

EL SALVADOR

TERRITORIAL ORGANIZATION

El Salvador is a unitary country with a single tier of elected local governments, comprising 262 municipalities.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 SDGs had important coincidences with the objectives and priorities defined in the Five-Year National Development Plan (PQD) 2014-2019. A Roadmap for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda was established in 2015, entailing the adoption of a mid- to long-term National Sustainable Development Agenda.

However, there is currently no national strategy guiding SDG implementation in El Salvador. The adoption of a **National Strategy for Sustainable Development by 2030**, as well as an accompanying Action Plan, is one of the priorities for the years to come. This should be produced in coordination with all government levels and with the participation of other stakeholders.

Within the framework of the initial development of the government agenda for the 2019-2024 period, focused on counteracting the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and vulnerability to climate change, the institutional priorities of the sectoral portfolios are thematically aligned with the achievement of different SDG targets.

1.1 NATIONAL COORDINATION MECHANISMS

Up until 2019, political leadership was placed at the highest level in the Presidency of the Republic and the technical coordination of SDG implementation was led by the Technical and Planning Secretariat of the Presidency (SETEPLAN) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MRREE). After several institutional changes aiming for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the country,³ the **National Council for Sustainable Development (CNDS)** is now coordinated by the Vice-President and is responsible for the coordination and monitoring of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.⁴ The Council is composed of: (a) the Vice-President of the Republic, (b) the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Treasury, Education, Science & Technology, Agriculture & Livestock, Environment & Natural Resources, and Local Development, (c) Executive Direction of the Institute for the Development of the Woman, (d) a representative from the academic-scientific community, and (f) a representative of the non-profit associations and foundations with environmental aims. In carrying out its functions, the CNDS has the support of an Executive Secretariat. In addition, it has promoted the establishment of a network of technical links in the different government portfolios for the management of information on the achievement of the SDGs.

1.2 VNR ELABORATION PROCESS

The 2017 VNR process was led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MRREE) and the Technical and Planning Secretariat of the Presidency (SETEPLAN). Whereas the 2022 VNR process was led by the **National Council for Sustainable Development (CNDS)**. A **Technical Committee** was established in which representatives of the CNDS Executive Secretariat, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the El Salvador Agency for International Cooperation (ESCO) participated, accompanied by delegates of the United Nations System. The report was endorsed by a Steering Committee, made up of heads of the government of El Salvador and the United Nations System, and was then approved by the CNDS. Online workshops and interviews were held, with participants from 75 institutions belonging to both the public and the private spheres.

1. See: <https://www.sng-wofi.org/country-profiles/>

2. See: https://hlpf.un.org/sites/default/files/vnrs/2021/16649RNV_EL_Salvador_1307_2011_2PP.pdf (2017);

https://hlpf.un.org/sites/default/files/vnrs/2022/VNR%202022%20El%20Salvador%20Report_0.pdf (2022)

3. Compared to the mechanisms established for the first five-year period of the implementation of the SDGs (2015-2019), inter-institutional coordination has been established around the performance of four basic functions in the management of the process for compliance with the SDGs: 1) coordination and monitoring; 2) mobilization of financing for development; 3) programmatic-operational coordination; and 4) territorialization.

4. Its functions were readjusted to assign it the responsibility of: a) monitoring the SDGs at the national, regional and international levels; b) facilitating the creation of mechanisms for access to information on the state of progress of SDG implementation; c) promoting the management of training, knowledge and information on sustainable development; d) promoting the application of the necessary policies at the sectoral level in favor of sustainable development.

1.3 MONITORING

In the first five-year period of implementation of the SDGs (2015-2019), the decision was made to take into account the achievement of 9 specific SDGs and follow up on 117 goals (88 of them related to the 10 prioritized SDGs and another 29 related to the remaining SDGs). In addition, the national statistical capacity to produce 103 of the 241 indicators proposed in the global framework was identified. In 2022, 100% of the monitoring indicators for the nationally prioritized SDG targets have been reviewed and updated. In addition, work is being done to enable digital tools for periodic monitoring of its progress.

In addition, different sectors of Salvadoran society have joined this effort through consultations with representatives of the national government, departmental governments and local governments, civil society organizations, academia, the private sector, trade unions, development cooperation partners, and the agencies, funds and programs of the United Nations System. With this collaborative exercise, the generation of mid-term evidence on the opportunities and challenges of El Salvador to achieve the SDGs by 2030 has been facilitated.

With the collaboration of the Secretary of Innovation of the Presidency, the specialized platform for monitoring the state of progress of the prioritized objectives and goals is being modernized. The creation of a National Statistics Institute to monitor SDG progress is also foreseen in the 2022 VNR.

2. LRGs INVOLVEMENT IN SDG LOCALIZATION

In 2017, there was no evidence of any LRG involvement in national coordination mechanisms for SDG implementation. In 2022, LRGs are still not represented in the National Council for Sustainable Development (CNDS) (only the Ministry of Local Development is represented).

However, while LRGs didn't take part in the 2017 VNR elaboration process,⁵ LRGs were involved in the drafting of the 2022 VNR. According to the VNR, 31 representatives from 17 municipalities, including the Metropolitan Area of San Salvador, participated in the sectorial workshops that the CNDS organized online. However, before the publication of the VNR, no information had been given to them as to how their contributions would be taken into account in the VNR.⁶ It uses departments as the level of government at which data is disaggregated.

The **Ministry of Local Development and Municipal Works** is in charge of the localization (or "territorialization", as mentioned in the 2022 VNR) of the SDGs. Its Direction for Municipal Works, created in 2021, ensures the execution of the funds for local development.

The Corporation of Municipalities of the Republic of El Salvador (COMURES), an entity created in 1941, had the function of articulating the relations of the municipalities with the national government and played a key role in local development. COMURES represented the municipalities in the National Council for Territorial Development. It is no longer operational.

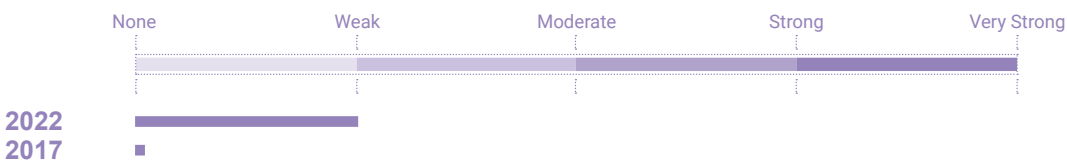
2.1 LRGs PARTICIPATION

► In the VNR process



Comments: Representatives from 17 municipalities participated in workshops as part of the elaboration of the 2022 VNR.

► In national coordination mechanisms for SDG implementation



Comments: LRGs are not directly represented in the National Council for Sustainable Development (only through the Ministry of Local Development and Municipal Works).

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.

5. Although in the 2017 VNR, focused on SDG 11, the data on the progress of the SDGs of the Mayors' Council of the Metropolitan Area of San Salvador (COAMSS) and the Planning Office of the Metropolitan Area of San Salvador (OPAMSS) were taken into account. Answer of COAMSS and OPAMSS to the GTF Survey in 2022.

6. Interview with Erlinda Minero, from the Consejo de Alcaldes del Área Metropolitana de San Salvador (COAMSS), May 2022.

2.2 VNR REFERENCES

There are very limited references to municipalities and no specific example in the 2017 VNR. The 2022 VNR includes more references to LRGs but does not include many references to their situation, aspirations, or best practices.⁷ The localization of the 2030 Agenda is referred to as the territorialization of the SDGs.

2.3 SPECIFIC PROJECTS AND CASES

► The municipalities of the **Jiboa Valley Intermunicipal Association** have created the country's first territorial master plan for tourism.⁸

► In **San Salvador**, the first effort for the municipality to link the SDGs was in 2018, incorporating the Goals into the axes of the Institutional Strategic Plan.⁹ There has been significant progress, since when development projects are formulated, they incorporate the SDGs. However, the challenge continues to be to generate data to measure progress in meeting the SDGs at the municipal level.¹⁰

The metropolitan authority of the capital city **San Salvador**, as part of a programme supported by the EU,¹¹ has made progress in integrating the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda, thanks to the adoption of the Strategic Plan towards 2030. The plan is supported by sectoral plans (on mobility,¹² public space,¹³ risks, water resources and climate change) and by a monitoring system, which will be followed by the Observatory of the Metropolitan Area (currently being created).

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

Not applicable.

2.5 MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION

Funding for development is mobilized by the El Salvador Agency for International Cooperation; the Ministry of Finance; the Secretariat of Commerce and Investments of the Presidency; the Secretariat of Innovation of the Presidency (technology); and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The current government has promoted the development of Institutional Strategic Plans (PEI) that facilitate the articulation between the programmatic and budgetary priorities of the sectoral portfolios according a multi-year period. Within the framework of this planning-budget relationship, the country guarantees the implementation of sectoral interventions in all pillars: the well-being of people; economic prosperity; protection of the planet; peace promotion; and alliance building.

3. RELEVANT INFORMATION

General comments: Territorial development and land-use laws (2011) in El Salvador have promoted local planning and the creation of a **National Council for Territorial Development** (2017). The review of the municipal code (2015) has extended local responsibilities.¹⁴ However, in 2021 reforms have recentralized national transfers to municipalities, and 75% of these resources will now be managed by a new Office for Municipal Works. The localization of the 2030 Agenda has thus been impacted by the national government's decision to recentralize municipal resources.¹⁵

3.1 WOMEN PARTICIPATION

The percentage of women elected in local governments was 11.07% during 2009-2012 and 10.69% in 2012-2015. Even though gender parity has not been achieved, in the first half of the implementation of the SDGs progress has been made in promoting greater participation of women in various second-tier positions. However, there has been a step back in the effective positioning of women as political actors eligible for public office. The percentage of heads of municipal governments in charge of women has decreased.

7. UCLG, 2022, Towards the Localization of the SDGs, https://gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/hlpf_2022.pdf

8. UCLG, 2019, GOLD V Report, <https://www.gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/ENG-GOLD-V-2020.pdf>

9. See: <http://sansalvador.gob.sv/gestion-estrategica/file/3046-plan-estrategico-institucional-2018-2021>

10. Answer of the municipality of San Salvador to the GTF Survey in 2021.

11. See: https://opamss.org.sv/ova_por/gobernanza-metropolitana/

12. See: https://opamss.org.sv/ova_doc/politica-metropolitana-de-movilidad-urbana/

13. See: https://opamss.org.sv/ova_doc/politica-metropolitana-de-espacios-publicos

14. UCLG, 2019, GOLD V Report, <https://www.gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/ENG-GOLD-V-2020.pdf>

15. In November 2021, two historical organizations in charge of distribution of funds and technical assistance to municipalities – the Salvadoran Institute for Municipal Development and the Social Investment Fund for Local Development – were dissolved, and a new Office for Municipal Works within the national government was created to manage local investments under the authority of the Ministry of Local Development. National transfers to municipalities were reduced, and 75% of these resources will now be managed by the new Office. UCLG, 2022, Towards the Localization of the SDGs, https://gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/hlpf_2022.pdf

3.2 COVID 19

In 2022, considering the adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the national government chose to maintain the SDG targets already prioritized. Likewise, it was decided to add SDG 8, considering decent work and economic growth as a priority, in recognition of the relevance of the state duty to guarantee the right to employment, as one of the areas most affected by the economic and health crisis.

4. SDG INDICATORS¹⁶

5.5.1. (b) Proportion of seats held by women (%) in local governments		32.4 (2018)
6.1.1. Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services (%)	Urban	77 (2020)
	Rural	-
6.2.1. (a) Proportion of population using safely managed sanitation services (%)	Urban	17 (2020)
	Rural	-
11.1.1. Proportion of population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing (%)		22.4 (2018)
11.6.1. Proportion of municipal solid waste collected and managed (%)		95 in San Salvador, Soyapango; 81 in San Salvador; 85 in San Salvador, Mejicanos; 50 in San Salvador, Ilopango; 73 in San Salvador, Apopa (2001)
11.6.2. Air pollution – annual means of particulate matter in cities (population weighted)		29.1 (2016)
11.b.2. Proportion of local governments that have adopted local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national strategies (%)		-

16. The data used for this table come from the UN SDG Indicators Database. See: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/dataportal>