

# UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

## TERRITORIAL ORGANIZATION

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is a federal country: the Constitutional Federation comprises 7 Emirates. There are no local elected governments.<sup>1</sup>



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

## 1. NATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR SDG IMPLEMENTATION

The ideas and principles of sustainable development permeated **Vision 2021**, the UAE's previous development plan launched in 2010. All the SDGs could be mapped to one of the four pillars of The '**National Agenda**' launched in 2014 to guide efforts towards Vision 2021. UAE's **Centennial Plan 2071** launched in 2021 aims to plan national development for the next 50 years. It is not explicitly aligned with the SDGs. The federal government also launched a Net Zero 2050 strategic initiative in 2021 which is aligned with the Paris Agreement and aims to underpin dynamic economic growth alongside positive environmental impact.

### 1.1 NATIONAL COORDINATION MECHANISMS

UAE's **National Committee on SDGs** was formed in 2017 and is chaired by the Minister of State for International Cooperation. It serves as a platform for multi-stakeholder engagement and coordination. The Ministry of Cabinet Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and 13 other federal level government organizations are also members. Since 2018, the National Committee has established **supporting councils**, including the UAE Private Sector Advisory Council, the SDG Young Leaders Programme, and the Global Councils on SDGs.

### 1.2 VNR ELABORATION PROCESS

The **National Committee on SDGs** led the 2018 and 2022 VNR processes. Stakeholders have contributed to the UAE's annual reporting process through official annual reports, private sector-driven reports and the UAE SDG Data Hub (see below). The Committee has also organized multiple stakeholder meetings in the last years. Therefore, both VNRs benefited from stakeholder inputs. A **VNR workshop** was also organized with the National Committee members as part of the 2022 VNR process, on the sidelines of Expo 2020 – Dubai, to highlight the best practices of public sector entities, and how far they have come in implementing the global goals.

### 1.3 MONITORING

The **Prime Minister's Office** worked on incorporating the SDGs into the performance management system (Aadaa system). The secretariat of the **National Committee on SDGs** launched an initiative entitled '**The SDG Data Readiness Race**' to assess data readiness, indicator data availability and map priority indicators of the 2030 Agenda for the UAE. This initiative identified 105 priority indicators for the country. The **Committee** established multiple working groups and taskforces to coordinate the collection and production of data and to be able to monitor, and report on the progress made with respect to the SDG indicators. Moreover, the **SDG Aadaa Development team** developed the **Digital Sustainable Development Goals Dashboard (DSDGD)** which includes screens of the 17 goals and their achievements. It highlights the UAE government's achievements and programs to implement the SDGs, and enables ministries and government authorities to monitor progress. Finally, the UAE created a **SDG Data HUB** which promotes open data and addresses the lack of public awareness about the SDGs.

1. UCLG, 2022, Towards the Localization of the SDGs, [https://gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/hlpf\\_2022.pdf](https://gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/hlpf_2022.pdf)

2. See: [https://hlpf.un.org/sites/default/files/vnrs/2021/20161UAE\\_SDGs\\_Report\\_Full\\_English.pdf](https://hlpf.un.org/sites/default/files/vnrs/2021/20161UAE_SDGs_Report_Full_English.pdf) (2018); <https://hlpf.un.org/sites/default/files/vnrs/2022/VNR%202022%20UAE%20Report.pdf> (2022)

## 2. LRGs INVOLVEMENT IN SDG LOCALIZATION

Workshops were organized to elaborate the 2021 National Agenda which were attended by officials from 90 federal and local government entities. The federal and local government entities coordinated participation in the development of the Centennial Plan 2071. Each Emirate elaborates and implements its own **development plan**, aligned with the national strategy. To ensure the alignment of federal and local development plans, the National Key Performance Indicators and their associated targets are cascaded to the strategic plans of all local government organizations. Some local plans integrate most of the SDGs, such as those of the Emirates of Sharjah or Umm Al Quwain which are aligned with 15 of the SDGs. However, SDG localization remains an objective for the years to come.<sup>3</sup>

The 2018 VNR mentioned **Annual Government Meetings** which were the main national platform for cooperation between federal and local governments. Moreover, the **Government Accelerators (GA)**, which were established in 2016, serve as a platform for federal and local government entities to address challenges and achieve ambitious goals in short periods.

### 2.1 LRGs PARTICIPATION

Not applicable.

### 2.2 VNR REFERENCES

There is a brief subsection entitled “The National Agenda and local development plans” in the 2018 VNR (see VNR, 2018, p. 26). There is also a brief subsection on “Local development plans and alignment” in the 2022 VNR (see VNR, 2022, p. 41). Local government entities are mentioned throughout both reports without much specific examples of locally-led initiatives for SDG implementation. However, the 2022 VNR refers to the local level of government as a key stakeholder in implementing the SDGs. It stresses that the UAE, through its institutional architecture, will “ensure that the SDGs are localized and harmonized across federal and local levels of government; that policy coherence is achieved using the mechanisms, which align national and sub-national policies” (see VNR, 2022, p. 20).

### 2.3 SPECIFIC PROJECTS AND CASES

► The Sustainable Cities Index 2016 ranked **Abu Dhabi** and **Dubai** as the most sustainable cities in the Middle East. The development agendas for both cities, Vision 2030 Abu Dhabi and Vision 2030 Dubai incorporate inclusivity, social cohesion and sustainability as central themes.

► **Abu Dhabi**, the country’s largest state, has been developing green building ratings and certifications, in order to integrate the latest environmental construction standard in their national regulations.

► The municipality of **Shahama**, embedded in the Abu Dhabi metro area, has allocated parts of its budget to ecosystem protection for the marine environment specific to the Abu Dhabi region.<sup>4</sup>

► The **Dubai** Urban Plan 2040 was launched in 2021 by the Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai. It is a strategic plan that has been developed to increase the standards of happiness and economic, social, and environmental well-being in Dubai, and to make Dubai an international center by adopting the best smart urban planning mechanisms.<sup>5</sup> In 2021, the Food Tech Valley was launched in Dubai, with the intent to be an integrated modern city, serving as a hub for future clean tech-based food and agricultural products. It will also act as an incubator for researchers, entrepreneurs, startups and industry experts to develop solutions to shape the future of the food industry.

The city of **Dubai** also hosted Expo 2020-Dubai in 2021-2022. A purpose-built city and community with the SDGs ingrained in its every facet, from design to construction and day-to-day operation, emerged. The exposition welcomed 24 million visitors from around the world, driving awareness around the themes of sustainability, mobility and opportunity.

► **Masdar City**’s global initiative, “Innovate”, showcases groundbreaking technologies from international start-ups and small and mid-size enterprises, focusing on the areas of urban mobility, clean energy, agritech, food security, and artificial intelligence.

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

Not applicable.

3. UCLG, 2022, Towards the Localization of the SDGs, [https://gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/hlpf\\_2022.pdf](https://gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/hlpf_2022.pdf)

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

5. See: <http://dubai2040.ae/en/dubai-2040-urban-master-plan/>

## 2.5 MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION

There is no information on the means dedicated to implement the SDGs in the country.

## 3. RELEVANT INFORMATION

**General comments:** The 2022 VNR highlights the **Community Councils initiative** which aims to establish community councils in various residential areas to involve community members in the planning process and allow them to make suggestions for the development of urban and residential areas.

### 3.1 WOMEN PARTICIPATION

No reference.

### 3.2 COVID 19

The 2022 VNR only summarizes the UAE Government's initiatives to combat the COVID-19 pandemic and mentions measures taken at the federal level to limit the impact of the crisis on society. Dubai Healthcare City Authority launched 'ReacHer', a campaign in partnership with Al Manal Humanitarian Initiative which aimed to provide women with mental health support during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## 4. SDG INDICATORS<sup>6</sup>

5.5.1. (b) Proportion of seats held by women (%) in local governments		-
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 (%)		-
11.6.2. Air pollution – annual means of particulate matter in cities (population weighted)		44.9 (2016)
11.b.2. Proportion of local governments that have adopted local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national strategies (%)		-

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