



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
MAYOR'S OFFICE FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

**CITY OF NEW YORK JOINS UN-HABITAT TO LAUNCH REPORT ON
THE VOLUNTARY LOCAL REVIEW (VLR) MOVEMENT**

— The report highlights the origins of the VLR movement; all signatories have committed to advancing the Sustainable Development Goals and submitting a VLR report to the UN —

NEW YORK — On December 29, 2021 the City of New York has partnered with UN-Habitat to release *Leading Locally: The Origins and Impact of the Voluntary Local Review*, a report that chronicles the beginnings of the VLR movement which now boasts more than 330 signatories.

“New York City is proud to lead the way in building a fairer city for all, but the challenges we face as a society transcend borders,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “Now is the time to come together to find solutions that work, and the Voluntary Local Review is a powerful tool to help us build a more sustainable future around the globe.”

“The pandemic has taught us that we are all connected when it comes to modern-day crises,” said **International Affairs Commissioner Penny Abeywardena**. “We saw a surge of interest in the Voluntary Local Review during COVID-19 because there is growing recognition that, as a society, we must change course and work together to tackle inequality. The VLR requires the kind of introspection and accountability that can lead to the meaningful changes we need for a more equitable world.”

The Voluntary Local Review, created by New York City in 2018, is a platform by which local governments can exchange best practices in their efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and address crises in their communities.

Leading Locally: The Origins and Impact of the Voluntary Local Review highlights the role of local governments in advancing the Global Goals and how subnational leaders can work together to solve today's pressing challenges. It includes forewords by UN and NYC leaders as well as reflections from the mayors and senior representatives from Buenos Aires, Los Angeles, Bristol, Sierra Leone, Melbourne and Yokohama.

“The Voluntary Local Review is an important tool for localizing social and economic development. To make sure it is effective, we must continue to create opportunities that allow local governments to share and learn from one another,” said **Maimunah Mohd Sharif Under Secretary-General and Executive Director, UN-Habitat**. “The Voluntary Local Review can also facilitate dialogue between local, regional and national governments. And if we are to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, we need to use every tool at our disposal.”

“The Voluntary Local Review showcases the powerful impact local and regional governments can make and I am proud of our team for building such a strong movement,” said **Aissata M.B. Camara, Deputy Commissioner for Operations and Strategic Partnerships, NYC Mayor’s Office for International Affairs**. “We must continue to strengthen partnerships and collaborations between cities and states for the benefit of all communities and the VLR is one of the tools to get it done.”

“Although the COVID-19 pandemic has created many challenges worldwide, subnational governments continue to utilize the Voluntary Local Review as an instrument to build a more sustainable future. As we head into another year in this Decade of Action, the Voluntary Local Review remains vital for local progress on issues such as climate change, poverty, and health,” said **Oneika Pryce Strategic Relationships Associate, NYC Mayor’s Office for International Affairs**. “We encourage more subnational governments to join this movement of global cooperation and work towards achieving the Global Goals by 2030.”

The Voluntary Local Review Declaration serves as a non-binding agreement that encourages signatories to identify how their existing strategies align with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Modeled on the Voluntary National Reviews submitted by UN member states, the Voluntary Local Review also serves as a pathway for local and regional governments to showcase their efforts to the UN. New York City launched the Declaration in September 2019 during the UN General Assembly.

To learn more about the report and Voluntary Local Review, visit our [website](#).