



MEXICO



Adapting engagement practices to local realities

Highlights

- The meaningful engagement of sub-national authorities in Mexico in the follow-up and review frameworks of the 2030 Agenda showcases the advantages of having an innovative strategic vision and holistic approach to identifying and prioritising **multiple entry points** by which to **inform, consult, collaborate with, build the capacities of and empower** federal state and municipal representatives.
- Under the leadership and guidance of the Office of the 2030 Agenda of the Ministry of Economy, **mutually reinforcing frameworks have been consolidated and aligned** so as to directly involve local authorities in the national institutional arrangements of the 2030 Agenda. At the same time these will also strengthen sub-national mechanisms.
- **Without incentives geared towards the needs and interests of sub-national authorities and stakeholders, it is difficult to ensure long-term commitment, support and ownership.** Such incentives may include both financial and non-financial support, capacity development and training programmes.
- **Developing culturally sensitive activities** is an important means to customise support, adjust implementation of the 2030 Agenda to the diverse local realities and facilitate the creation of space for citizens' engagement and empowerment of local populations at risk of being left behind. Such targeted activities will be part of the **platform for local action**

(2021–2022), which includes three components: i) social mobilisation activities for citizens at the municipal level; ii) educational programmes on 2030 Agenda governance for municipal authorities; and iii) programmes for schools, museums and the private sector at the municipal level. Additional activities will include the development of 'Biocultural Heritage Territories', which seek to promote a culturally appropriate path to sustainable development.

Background

Since Mexico's second Voluntary National Review (VNR) in 2018, the role, responsibilities and levels of engagement of local authorities in the national institutional arrangements and review frameworks of the 2030 Agenda have been strengthened to enable the systematic, well-struct-

- **TYPE**
comprehensive case
- **STAKEHOLDER GROUP**
local authorities

tured, continuous and aligned involvement of stakeholders from and at the sub-national levels. In 2021, Mexico will present its third VNR at the High-level Political Forum (HLPF). This will further consolidate the active engagement of local authorities and the adoption of diverse forms of participation, such as: involvement in the national 2030 Agenda institutional mechanisms; the co-chairing of thematic committees and working groups; support for the provision of localised data to inform a more comprehensive review of SDG progress; assessment and incorporation of inputs from the voluntary sub-national and local reviews, and the inclusion of sub-national representatives in the official delegation to the HLPF, including support for the organisation of and participation in side events.

Engagement approach

Six state representatives, two representatives of the states that preside over the *Alianza Federalista* and the CONAGO (*Conferencia Nacional de Gobernadores*), six municipal representatives, plus one representative from the INAFED (*Instituto Nacional para el Federalismo y el Desarrollo Municipal*) and one representative from the CONAMM (*Conferencia Nacional de Municipios de México*) are included on a rotational basis in the multi-stakeholder National Council, which leads and coordinates the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development activities in Mexico. The Na-

tional Council connects the different branches and levels of government, involves other stakeholders from civil society, the private sector and academia, and is responsible for gathering, measuring and reviewing inputs and data to monitor and follow-up on SDG progress in the country. The Secretariat of the National Council is the Office of the 2030 Agenda. Previously attached to the Office of the Presidency, it is now located at the Ministry of Economy.

Municipal authorities and state delegates are also involved in the thematic working groups and committees, and thus directly operationalise sub-national views and contributions to the national follow-up and review processes. Bearing in mind the multitude of local realities in the federal states and municipalities, and the diversity of educational backgrounds and spoken languages of the participating municipal and state representatives (there are 364 languages and variants, besides Spanish), a range of targeted actions are planned under the **platform for local action** (2021–2022). These include: raising awareness through downloadable spots for local radios; working with media outlets to create audiovisual educational materials that will offer a step-by-step approach to SDG localisation in a language that is accessible to the non-specialist citizen; downloadable programmes for the local private sector, museums and schools; an SDG citizen mobilisation programme at the municipal level. Besides the platform, the Of-

fice of the 2030 Agenda also plans to offer a culturally appropriate development model for indigenous peoples based on the creation of 'Biocultural Heritage Territories' (given that the platform will not reach many indigenous communities due to the lack of universal internet access and linguistic diversity). Currently, the Office of the 2030 Agenda is evaluating options for extending the involvement of indigenous community radio broadcasters and museums for various C4D SDG outreach activities with a bottom-up approach. There are also plans to work on SDG capsules with *TV Educativa* (the Ministry of Education's TV channel) to complement the 2030 Agenda compulsory booklet for 6th graders launched in 2020.

The Office of the 2030 Agenda is also present in all 32 states through the coordination of the 2030 Agenda offices at state level (*Órganos de Seguimiento e Instrumentación, OSI*). This is designed to foster better connectivity between the different layers of government and **enable a more integrated approach which aligns the state and municipal mechanisms with the national 2030 Agenda institutional arrangements**. Furthermore, in cooperation with United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), federal state and municipal authorities are planning to pilot a Voluntary Sub-national Review (VSR), in order to obtain a more contextual perspective on the 'state of the art' at sub-national levels (both state and municipal).

In addition to the previously submitted three Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs for Mexico City, Oaxaca and Yucatán), seven more VLRs in four municipalities and three states will be prepared through a ‘Help Desk’ and hosted at the **platform for local action**, with support provided by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH. Both processes will complement the preparation of the 2021 VNR with localised data and context-specific assessments.

Principles and dimensions of quality of engagement

Since the 2018 VNR, the engagement strategy of the Government of Mexico has **utilised active sub-national involvement and meaningful contributions** from local authorities to enable more comprehensive and evidence-based SDG review processes. Combining universal principles of engagement with context-specific initiatives to **inform, consult, collaborate** and eventually **empower state and municipal authorities** has increased the number of actors, discussions and the quality of inputs that will inform the prepara-

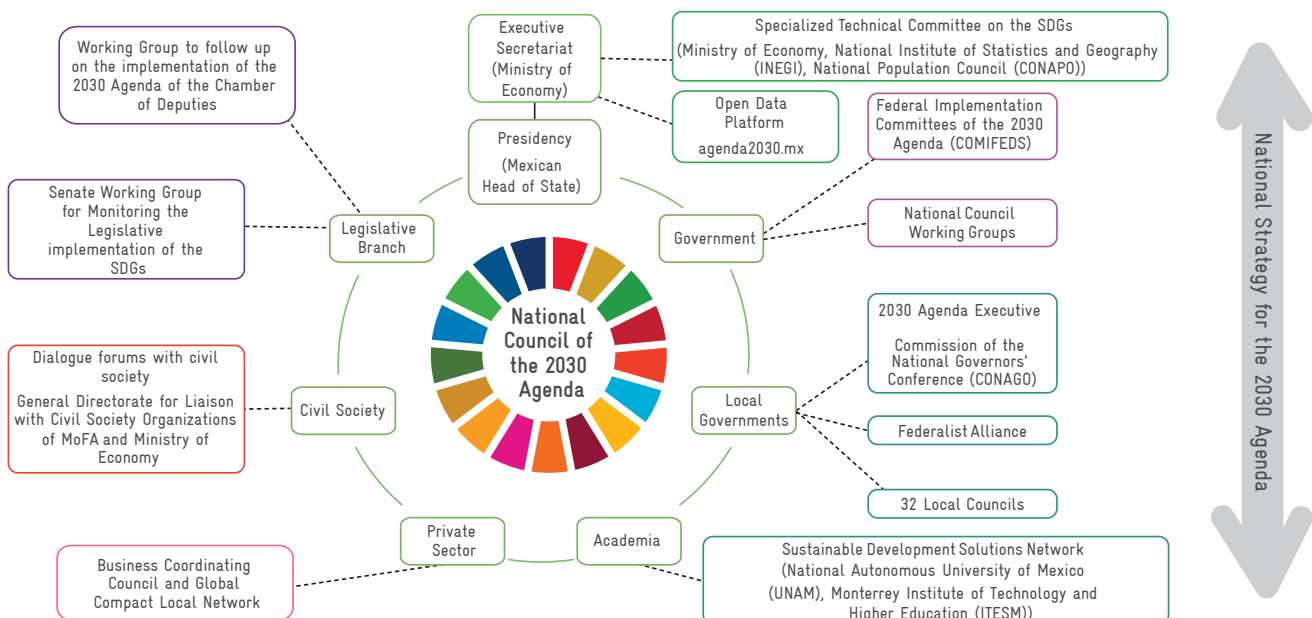
tion of the 2021 VNR. Relevant national authorities have made systematic efforts to **continuously inform and consult** sub-national stakeholders using a **clear communication strategy that takes account of the diverse state and municipal realities**. In conjunction with targeted capacity-building support to strengthen these stakeholders’ knowledge and competences for effective participation in the national follow-up and review frameworks, this has **institutionalised their long-term interest**, and thus their commitment to SDG implementation. Over time, the **independence entrusted** to sub-national authorities to provide direct contributions to the VNR and other national SDG planning, monitoring and reporting processes has **consolidated the expertise of sub-national governments and their self-confidence** in becoming pro-actively and autonomously involved, also in regional and global initiatives on implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Given the growing interest and activity of state and municipal authorities in showcasing their diverse experiences at regional and global SDG forums, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs initiated a programme to facilitate their international involvement

and meet the need for intensified cross-country knowledge sharing. This included publishing a book that provides suggestions and tools for designing and implementing strategies and public policies to internationalise the work of local authorities.

Results and impact

The step-by-step phases of the engagement modalities designed and developed by the Office of the 2030 Agenda in close cooperation with relevant state and municipal representatives enriched the informed interactions. They also improved dialogue between the different levels of government and generated complementary quality inputs to better inform the VNRs and other SDG review processes. The **two-way involvement** of local authorities in the 2030 Agenda institutional arrangements, combined with support for the development, consistency and alignment of state and municipal-level mechanisms, ensured an **integrated multi-level effort to address systemic and context-specific problems** which recognised the tangible contributions local authorities can make to SDG implementation and moni-

Institutional arrangements for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Mexico



toring. The fact that the sub-national and local reviews will inform the 2021 VNR demonstrates the **degree of alignment and trust** between the different levels of government.

Challenges

Constructing meaningful engagement mechanisms that can produce quality contributions from the sub-national levels is an extensive and complex process. The complexity and nuances of the available capacities at the state and municipal levels is one of the main constraints requiring clear action planning, training and resource considerations. With 364 indigenous languages and variants, diverse development gaps and variable internet access in the sub-national regions, there has been little room for the Office of the 2030 Agenda to pursue a *one-size-fits-all* engagement and awareness-raising approach. This highlights the importance of planning the necessary time and allowing for adjustments to the engagement activities depending on the local situations. The lack of data disaggregated by geographic location is another limitation in securing more effective SDG progress monitoring. Consequently, the Office of the 2030 Agenda – together with the *Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía* (INEGI) experts, partners and local stakeholders – is planning to further support the development of localised statistics and disaggregated data.

Success factors and lessons learned

One key success factor for the effective engagement of the sub-national levels has been the **holistic concept utilised by the Office of the 2030 Agenda**. This covers the full scope of the roles and responsibilities local authorities can play and have in national SDG review frameworks. It also incorporates and adapts many universal and good practice principles, and pursues a carefully defined and systematic engagement approach that seeks to inform, consult, involve, collaborate and empower meaningful participation at both national and sub-national levels. The favourable legal and policy environment, and the degree of alignment between national and sub-national planning and budgeting, are further key enablers that have mobilised strong engagement. **Combining financial resource allocations** with training opportunities and possibilities to share experiences and learning with peers in other countries have been critical incentivising factors. A significant advantage has been the **cooperative atmosphere** created, which acts as a driver for states and municipalities to inspire each other. Balancing national leadership with the independence of locally-driven alliances and mechanisms has been an important lesson learned for capturing the rich diversity of stakeholder opinions, ideas and contributions to the follow-up and review processes.

It is also important to continuously strengthen the vitality of the **strategic and operational vision** of national authorities with specific plans to further develop and design culturally appropriate approaches to sustainable development. These include awareness-raising activities using local radio, and media outlets, and partnering with cultural institutes and indigenous groups in order to disseminate accessible information on the objectives of the 2030 Agenda, in what is perceived as a two-way process of consultation and communication with jointly constructed outcomes. Finally, the inclusion of local authorities in the official delegation to the HLPF will not only support peer learning and knowledge management, but also enhance the inclusiveness of, and commitment to, the subsequent stages of the SDG review process.

Key partners

- [Office of the 2030 Agenda](#)
- [Ministry of Economy](#)
- [Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#)

Links

- [Book: suggestions and tools for designing and implementing strategies and public policies to internationalise the work of local authorities](#)

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