

# VNRs & Country-led Evaluations – how they work together

According to paragraph 74 (g) of the **2030 Agenda** and the reporting guidelines for the VNRs, the VNRs should be **“rigorous and based on evidence, informed by country-led evaluations”**.

✓ **Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs)** provide the tools for the follow-up and review framework for Agenda 2030. They are based on monitoring data and answer questions about what and how much has been achieved.

✓ By providing credible evidence **Country-led evaluations (CLEs)** are fundamental for conducting high-quality VNRs. CLEs inform, complement and enrich the VNRs, provide deeper analysis explaining the progress (or lack thereof) on certain SDGs and generate lessons on what needs to change in order to achieve the SDGs. CLEs therefore better serve evidence-based national SD policy and programmes, advocacy and decision-making.

✓ **BOTH VNRs and CLEs** are necessary for the follow up and review of Agenda 2030.

## VNRs

Measure and report on **national progress** towards achieving the SDGs

Track ongoing progress in **programme implementation**, in **outputs** and in **outcomes**

Report on **indicators against targets**

Driven by **accountability** to achieve the SDG targets

## Country-led Evaluations

Explain the targets and progress and support decisions, by **addressing the complexity of the SDGs and their achievement, in relation to national policies and programmes**

Make use of VNR monitoring data but is primarily concerned with **how well implementation, outputs and development outcomes were achieved**, as well as with determining long-term development impact

Examine and help answer **“why”** targets are achieved (or not achieved)

Driven **by evaluative thinking** and hence balance **accountability with learning** aspects to inform policy choices and influence programmes

**Engage a variety of stakeholders at all levels**

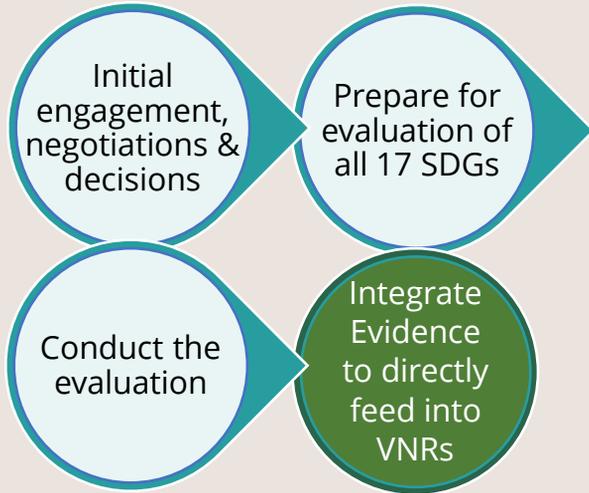


**“Country-led evaluations answer the WHY questions while VNRs answer the WHAT and HOW much questions”**

# 4 pathways how country-led evaluation can inform the VNRs

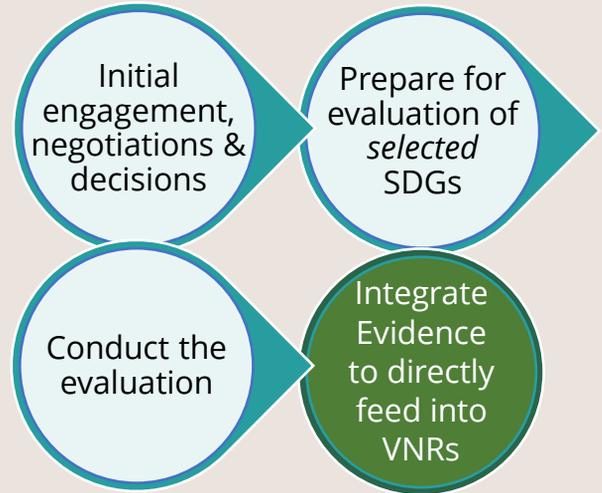
There are *more than one* pathway for Member States to conduct Country-led Evaluations of the SDGs. The scope can include all 17 SDGs or a strategic selection of SDGs. They can be primary evaluations or syntheses of evidence from past evaluations of relevant national policies, strategies programmes and projects. Such syntheses may also include evidence from evaluations by other actors within a country's evidence ecosystem where considered relevant to specific SDGs and to the VNR.

## Pathway 1: Evaluate *all* SDGs



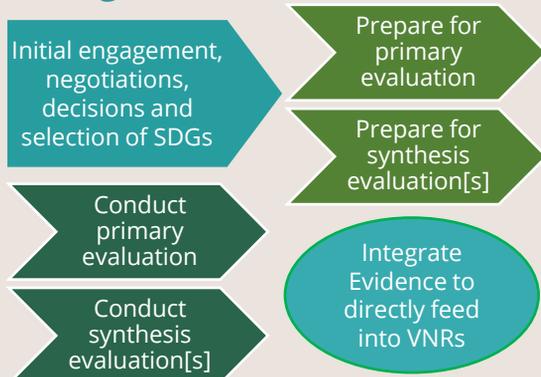
The **Finland** evaluation of the SDGs was completed within six months (29 August 2018 and 28 February 2019). In country contexts where national capacities are constrained, consideration of the role of partners would be critical.

## Pathway 2: Evaluate *selected* SDGs



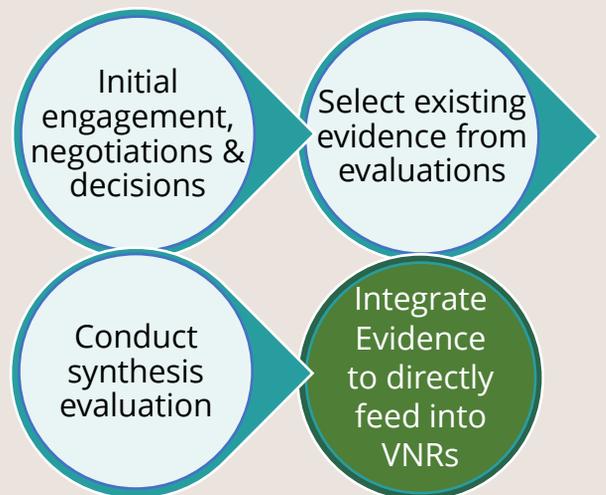
A country can evaluate SDGs for which evidence is critical to inform VNRs but also inform national policies and programmes. **Nigeria** has evaluated SDG 1,3 & 4, while **Cost Rica** has evaluated SDG 13.

## Pathway 3: Evaluate *some* SDGs; and consolidate existing evidence for the others



Most countries will have *sources of evidence* that if reviewed and consolidated could inform VNRs in a transparent, participatory and credible way. For example, national governments through their M&E systems and line ministries may have elements of some SDGs evaluated, while other actors including research communities, universities, development partners, or VOPES may have other evaluations of interest.

## Pathway 4: Not conducting an evaluation, only consolidating existing evidence of all SDGs



UNICEF provided support to OSSAP-SDGs **Nigeria** to complete a synthesis of 40 existing evaluations covering different SDGs. The evidence from multiple evaluations were used to strengthen the Nigeria VNR Report 2020.

