



Call for Participants – Connective Cities Dialogue Event

Learning process for Local Governments and Local Government Associations (LGAs) on “Sustainability Reporting and Voluntary Local Reviews”

2-4 December 2024

Headquarters of the Association of German Cities, Hausvogteiplatz 1, 10117 Berlin

Connective Cities invites representatives of national and international Local Government Associations (LGAs) as well as urban practitioners from cities in Germany and in the Global South to take part in the dialogue event on “**Sustainability Reporting and Voluntary Local Reviews**” that will kick-off the learning process for the local government associations and cities.

The event will be hosted by the Association of German Cities from **2 to 4 December 2024** and is mainly geared towards practitioners, experts, and decision-makers from the Local Government Associations both in Germany and on the international level. City representatives from Germany and from the Global South with the special thematic focus on Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) and sustainability reporting are also invited to join the discussion and share their hands-on examples and experiences from the ground. The Dialogue Event will be concluded with the **10 years anniversary celebration of the Connective Cities Platform**.

Background

In the rapidly urbanizing world, with about 56 % of the world population living in cities and urban areas, local and regional governments as well as local and regional government associations are on the forefront of tackling the global social and environmental challenges on the ground. Their commitments towards the 2030 Agenda with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are highlighted through their increasing engagement in the VLRs, which is a mechanism to foster SDG localization. VLRs is a stocktaking process and a form of sustainability reporting that allows the assessment of the local developments towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. VLRs enhance accountability and transparency, foster innovative solutions to the current challenges including climate change, migration and health crises. Furthermore, VLR framework can contribute towards the promotion of the multilevel governance as well as informed decision-making against the background of the continuously changing contexts.

Thematic Focus

Halfway through to the 2030 deadline, this upcoming dialogue event will offer an opportunity to continue and expand the discussion of the previous events and to stocktake and exchange on the good practices around VLRs, while addressing the following guiding questions:

1. What are your best practices and lessons learnt to fulfill VLR objectives?
2. How can LGAs and local governments efficiently work together towards promoting sustainability reporting and anchoring VLRs in national reporting?
3. How can cities and LGAs improve communication of VLRs in order to enable their citizens to make use of sustainability reporting in their elective decision-making?
4. What are our visions for the 2030-Agenda and beyond?

Objectives

The main objective of the dialogue event is to initiate a practice-oriented exchange between German and international representatives of Local Governments and Local Government Associations (LGAs) in order to strengthen the capacities of the participating LGA's to assume their role as promoters of the Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs).

The event will offer an interregional platform for the exchange of good practice examples from LGAs as well as from their Member cities.

The aim of the exchange is to get to know good practices from LGAs with different approaches with regard to the VLRs and sustainability reporting. The interest is primarily in pragmatic solutions and approaches that can be replicated or adapted to the different regional contexts. Furthermore, the event will provide space for discussion on specific challenges and opportunities around enabling cities during their journey towards using VLRs and support LGAs in developing new joint project ideas among peers that can be further implemented in the respective organizations.

With a mix of project presentations, peer-to-peer consultations focusing on current challenges in this area and finally the space to develop joint project ideas generated from such interactions, we hope to support a productive knowledge exchange.

This dialogue event is the first step of what we call a "Connective Cities learning process". Selected project ideas developed as part of this event will have the chance to be further supported by Connective Cities through a follow-up activity such as an expert mission or webinar.

Target Group

The event aims to bring together around 30 international and German participants and is geared towards representatives of cities and local government associations from around the world with a strong interest in sustainability reporting and VLRs.

Participation and Contact

If you are a representative of a Local Government Association or its Member city engaged in VLR process, and wish to participate and actively contribute to the dialogue event, preferably with a good practice that fits in the thematic focus and addresses some of the guiding questions, we warmly invite you to apply for your participation. To do so, please send us an email by **30 September 2024** including the following information:

- your organization and your function within it;
- a short description of your sustainability reporting or VLR process you would like to present to the other participants.

Important Note: The travel and accommodation costs will be covered by Connective Cities. Please note, however, that participation spaces are limited.

If you have any queries about the event and your eventual participation, please contact Sibylle Loyeau, Connective Cities Project Manager: sibylle.loyeau@engagement-global.de, +49 (0)228-20717-2587

Connective Cities at a glance

The international exchange platform **Connective Cities** has been bringing together international urban practitioners from city administrations, civil society, academia and the private sector since 2014.

Connective Cities is a cooperation project of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the Association of German Cities and Engagement Global with its Service Agency Communities in One World.

For more information on past and upcoming activities, please check: www.connective-cities.net

Factsheet: All information at a glance

Date & Place	2-4 December 2024, The Association of German Cities, Berlin (Hausvogteiplatz 1)
Duration	2.5 days
Thematic focus	The event will focus on the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your good practices and lessons learnt to fulfill VLR objectives? • How can LGAs and local governments efficiently work together towards promoting sustainability reporting and anchoring VLRs in national reporting? • How can cities and LGAs improve communication of VLRs in order to enable their citizens to make use of sustainability reporting in their elective decision-making? • What are our visions for the 2030-Agenda and beyond?
Expertise	Sustainability reporting, SDGs, voluntary local reviews, capacity building for VLRs
Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate a practice-oriented exchange between German and international local government associations (LGAs) and cities active in enabling and supporting their Members with the implementation of VLRs • Foster the LGAs capacities to assume their role as promoters of VLRs
Criteria for participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interest and first-hand experience in municipal strategies and projects in the area of sustainability reporting and/or VLRs; • Presentation of good practice examples; • Willingness to engage in an exchange about current needs and challenges in this thematic area.
Working language	English

On behalf of

