



Global Compact  
Network South Africa

## Contributors

The United Nations Global Compact Network South Africa would like to give thanks to its members, whose commitment to providing an Annual Communication of Progress has been invaluable in the production of our **VNR Synopsis** as we begin the process of reporting back:

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## Private Sector Contribution

### SYNOPSIS for South Africa's 2024 Voluntary National Review on Sustainable Development Goals

July 2023



Global Compact  
Network South Africa



Synopsis submitted to the South African Department of  
Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) as a contribution  
to the South African Voluntary National Review

SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT GOALS

**“September 2023 marked the mid point toward the 2030 Agenda deadline, and at the 78<sup>th</sup> convening of the General Assembly of this year, the UN Secretary General will host an SDG Summit to accelerate pace: Calling upon member states for rescue plans.**

**The private sector plays a very important role in achieving the SDGs, as government cannot achieve the goals and meet the targets alone. The partnership between public and private sector is a key component in success.**

**Done properly, the private sector VNR can become a real lever of change, and an opportunity to rethink and refresh approaches to sustainable value creation.**

**We urge the South African private sector to join and to participate in the 2024 Voluntary National Review of action to deliver the 2030 Agenda. Now is the time.”**

Mr. Nelson Muffuh  
South African Resident Coordinator, United Nations

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Johannesburg Skyline, Gauteng, South Africa

# IT IS TIME FOR US TO REPORT BACK

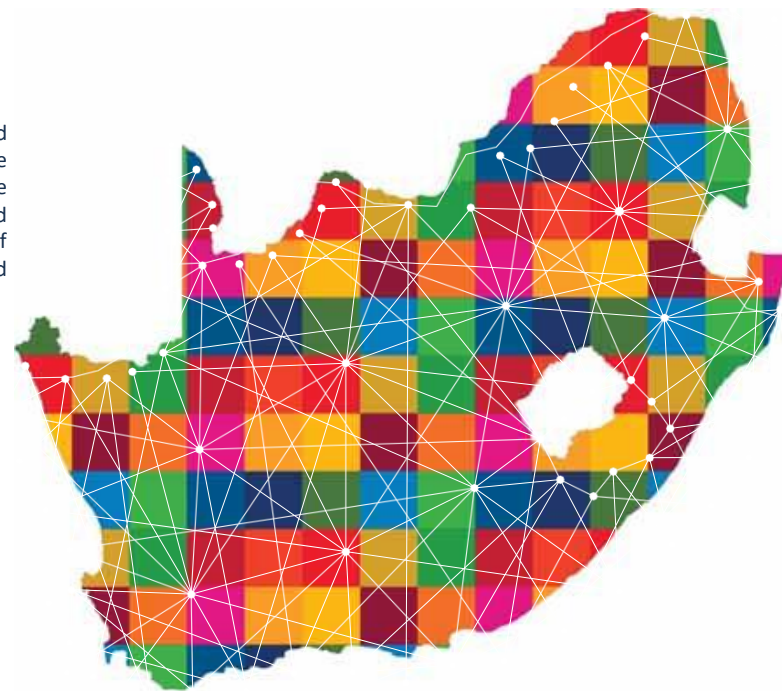
## PREAMBLE TO THE 2030 AGENDA

"The 2030 Agenda is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity. It also seeks to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom. We recognise that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. All countries and all stakeholders, acting in collaborative partnership, will implement this plan.

We are resolved to free the human race from the tyranny of poverty and want to heal and secure our planet. We are determined to take the bold and transformative steps which are urgently needed to shift the world onto a sustainable and resilient path. As we embark on this collective journey, we pledge that no one will be left behind. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets which we are announcing today demonstrate the scale and ambition of this new universal Agenda.

They seek to build on the Millennium Development Goals and complete what these did not achieve. They seek to realise the human rights of all and to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. They are integrated and indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental."

**HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT  
AND HIGH REPRESENTATIVES**  
United Nations Headquarters in New York  
25-27 September 2015





**The VNR is an opportunity to build an ongoing platform that unifies businesses around the 2030 Agenda. We warmly invite you to join our mission to build solidarity and collaboration on action alongside the National Development Plan, Africa's Agenda 2063, as well as civil society and community initiatives.**

## VNR BACKGROUND

### PARTICIPATE AND BE PART OF THE VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW 2024

The Global Compact Network South Africa (GCNSA) is part of the United Nations Global Compact, the world's largest corporate sustainability initiative. The core purpose of GCNSA is to bring the private sector to work together with other stakeholders, to collectively respond to the national and global challenges of poverty, inequality and environmental degradation.

Our core purpose is to enable and facilitate private sector contribution to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), aligned to the National Development Plan, and underpinned by application of the UN Global Compact Ten Principles.

In 2019, South Africa presented its first Voluntary National Review (VNR) report at the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) under the UN Economic and Social Council, one of 51 UN member States to do so.

The National Coordination for Sustainable Development is led by the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) through the National Planning Commission (NPC). In 2022, following the material impact of the global pandemic, South Africa lodged its second notification, and the intention to report back.

The DPME has requested the GCNSA to be its Private Sector Institutional Partner, and to once again support the coordination of the private sector's VNR contribution, feeding into the overall report, combining with the contribution of the public sector National Development Plan (NDP).

**In consolidating the private sector contribution to the Sustainable Development Goal VNR reporting process, the GCNSA has been guided to answer the following key questions:**

- How are companies scaling SDG action?
- Are businesses of all sizes participating?
- How have priorities changed since 2019?
- How are businesses performing on the SDGs?
- Which sustainability frameworks are most used?
- Is performance being disclosed?
- What was the impact of the global pandemic?
- Are public-private sectors collaborating well?
- Are we growing sustainable investments?
- Have we progressed on gender equality?
- What action is being taken on climate impact?

This **VNR Synopsis** report represents early findings and input from the private sector and will guide our next steps as we collaborate across the private sector and its stakeholders to develop key messages for the DPME to include in the National Report.



## FOREWORD BY UN RESIDENT COORDINATOR

During the 78th convening of the General Assembly this year the UN Secretary General will host the SDG Summit to accelerate the pace and actions to deliver the 2030 Agenda and the SDG targets. We are now at the midpoint of this journey, we are currently off-track, and there is still a long way to go.

The UN Secretary General is calling for all member states to deliver a rescue plan for people and planet. The UN Country Team in South Africa is accompanying and supporting the government to prepare for the Summit including reinforcing whole-of-society and cross-sectoral efforts to reinvigorate the national commitment to SDG acceleration.

We are advancing analytical inputs and mobilising commitments by engaging with civil society, unions, the private sector, think tanks, academic organisations, traditional and customary leaders, along with national, provincial, and local governments.

Linked to this is the Voluntary National Review that is a critical tool for advancing progress on the SDGs. It provides a framework for South Africa to review progress, to identify gaps and challenges and to accelerate efforts to achieve the Global Goals.

The VNR process allows countries to share and exchange experiences and lessons learned, best practices, approaches, and to collaborate on solutions to common challenges. This helps us to be bold where we have faltered and to correct our course.

South Africa's first VNR was in 2019 and its second, due in July 2024, is an important opportunity for the country to reflect on progress achieved so far, enabling us to charter a course for accelerated action toward the SDGs.

Allow me to use this opportunity to congratulate the GCNSA on the sterling support given to the government in 2019 with the development of the private sector contribution. Your track record speaks for itself as you are called upon, once again, to consolidate the private sector's contribution to the SDGs.

The private sector plays a very important role in the SDGs. Governments alone cannot achieve the goals and meet the targets. The partnership between the public and private sector is key to success, given the scope, ambition, and financial requirements of the task at hand.

Focus on the SDGs will open new private sector opportunities again through this process. The commitments on the SDGs and the VNR naturally presents ways for development actors to connect and to be strategic about collaboration with the private sector. Done properly, the private sector can become a true lever of change. I'm glad to note that of more than 1,000 Global CEOs, surveyed by Global Compact and Accenture in 2016:

More than 87% of the business leaders believed that the SDGs provide an opportunity to rethink approaches to sustainable value creation.

There are a growing number of companies reporting on the SDGs. This trend has been amplified by a rapid change in expectations of business and its role in society: taking shared responsibility towards people and planet. The UN has long-standing experience with private sector engagement on sustainable development and is here to provide support.

We have a critical role to play in convening actors around the 2030 Agenda, bringing together business, investors, foundations and wider stakeholders. Our goal is to enable private sector actors to be transformational partners in pursuit of the SDGs.

Reporting on goals and contributions helps us to focus on economic growth, just transition, social protection and cohesion, and job creation, where the private sector is well positioned to leverage its expertise, resources, and influence.

Collaboration in South Africa through ESG and corporate accountability initiatives, private-public partnerships, and alternative financing mechanisms are just some ways that sustainable development in South Africa can be advanced.

We urge you to ensure that the SDGs reinvigoration and VNR process is inclusive, participatory and transparent, reflecting the perspectives and priorities of all stakeholders.

VNRs offer hope, often resulting in innovative solutions and policies such as cash transfer programmes, business debt moratoriums, and national resilience plans, bringing critical relief. VNRs create awareness of advances and hold all of us, accountable for achieving sustainable development.

We count on your engagement and would like to take this opportunity to pledge our support to ongoing 2023 SDG Summit mobilisation and the forthcoming VNR 2024: Together, we can accelerate action towards a more sustainable, just and resilient future for all.

**Mr. Nelson Muffuh**  
**Resident Coordinator United Nations**  
**South Africa**





# MESSAGE FROM THE GCNSA CHAIRPERSON

**The Voluntary National Review process is unique due to its universal application across sectors and countries. It is a truly global call to action, backed by tangible goals and targets, with a set deadline. The 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals provide a valuable and holistic lens through which we can take stock of our performance so far.**



In this report back, to the United Nations High Level Political Forum, we will stand together with our Presidency, as South Africa is reviewed across sectors, giving a total perspective on our delivery. We will be there as one team, and we will be asked whether we have delivered results. We will need to answer whether we have been unrelenting, dedicated and, ultimately, successful in our endeavour to deliver a sustainable future for people and for our planet.

I encourage private sector businesses and companies to be courageous and honest in both your participation and your response. Provide insights and information about both the wins and the hurdles that have arisen. It is only when we understand our performance that we can get to the root cause of issues and find the inspiration to craft fresh and innovative solutions that do better.

It is vitally important for our South Africa that we raise our game. We need to be results driven, and we need to collaborate more. We need to get better at cascading our strategies and ambitions into tangible, effective and simple plans. We need to get better at managing our progress against smartly defined objectives.

Time is short, and we cannot afford to leave anyone behind. It is essential that we are inclusive if we are going to mitigate negative impact and maximise our full opportunities and potential together.

At the Global Compact Network South Africa, we are committed to facilitating this review with excellence. We see it as our core purpose to unify organisations within and beyond the private sector. It is our ambition to enable a powerful collaboration platform with an expanded ability to provide the support, resources and data that can fuel advances and compatibility between countries.

This VNR can lay a valuable foundation for future action by collecting insights and helping to create a repository: a shareable 'seed bank' of knowledge that can accelerate and scale the action that we need to take if we are going to stand proudly before future generations, having accomplished the task at hand: Looking at a future South Africa that is sustainable, inclusive, diverse, equitable and prosperous.

Use this VNR to create focus, and to know and deeply understand the impact that your organisation can most effectively land as we bridge toward the future.

Join us and participate.

**Mpumi Madisa**  
Chairperson of the Board  
Global Compact Network South Africa



Bloukrans Bridge, Eastern Cape, South Africa



Three Rondavels at Blyde River Canyon Nature Reserve, Mpumalanga, South Africa

## MESSAGE FROM THE GCNSA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

When GCNSA Board of Directors received its second request from the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) in the Presidency to coordinate Private Sector Performance on the SDGs, without any hesitation, we responded in the affirmative.

The request offers a significant opportunity to fulfil our mandate to support private sector action to deliver on the Global Goals and the Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact. We feel well positioned; ready to apply lessons learned during the 2019 Voluntary National Review, able to take this vital, collaborative process to the next level.

Since our last report there have been many significant changes to our South African socio-economic and political climate. The private sector has been tested. Now, more than ever, there is a need to demonstrate unity with government by committing our country's development priorities; as framed in the National Development Plan (NDP) and greatly resonated in the SDGs.

We have seen accelerated change since 2019, with critical new innovations, collaborations and partnerships arising to drive impact, to the benefit of society at large.

Yet we are not on track to meet the Global Goals by 2030. The UN SDG Report for 2023 shows that only 12% of the targets are on track, with weak or insufficient action on more than 50% of the targets and stalled or reversed action on 30% of the SDG targets. It is within this context that we intend to review and continue South Africa's private sector SDG story, to take stock of our situation, and to find fresh inspiration that can be shared to keep us focused and energised on the road ahead.

Currently we are at the beginning of the reporting process. We intend to be ambitious, and to leave no-one behind. We urge our members and those who are aware of the VNR process to reach out for wider participation. We want our view to be as diverse and broad-based as possible.

We maintain our intention: to delve deep into private sector perspectives, strategies and existing best practice examples. We seek to highlight tools, methodologies and strategies to guide and accelerate wider action.

In the last VNR, we made a powerful case for aligning the SDGs to South Africa's transformation agenda as outlined through the Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE).

This time we will continue to seek and surface synergies and opportunities for shared value creation, within and across industries and sectors. We do this in the context of the Agenda 2063 on Peace and Security, as part of our broader continent, and with global perspective.

Our hope is that participating companies will increase their ambition on development priorities, stretch targets to accelerate action; regallyse and refresh contributions to the quality of life of all. A special thank you to the GCNSA Board for their support as we take on this vital initiative, to Absa and Anglo American for their sponsorship, and to Empanda, an active member of the Global Compact and our facilitation partner in the development of our VNR report.

At the GCNSA, we believe in the power of business to create positive change. We are looking forward to an action-packed and interactive agenda.

**Please hear our urgent GCNSA Call to Action:  
Join us and participate in the VNR 2024!**

**Dr Achieng Ojwang**  
Executive Director  
Global Compact Network South Africa







Vanderkloof Dam in the Orange River, Northern Cape, South Africa

# VNR SYNOPSIS RESULTS SUMMARY

## EARLY PRIVATE SECTOR INSIGHTS

To initiate the analysis process, we have analysed the Sustainable Development Goal priorities indicated by the UNGC participants through their Communication of Progress Reporting returns. This early insight couples with basic information regarding the extent to which companies have implemented the Ten Principles of the UNGC, and the quality of SDG embedment in sustainability reporting:

**Ten Principles Adoption: % of South African GCNSA participant companies:**

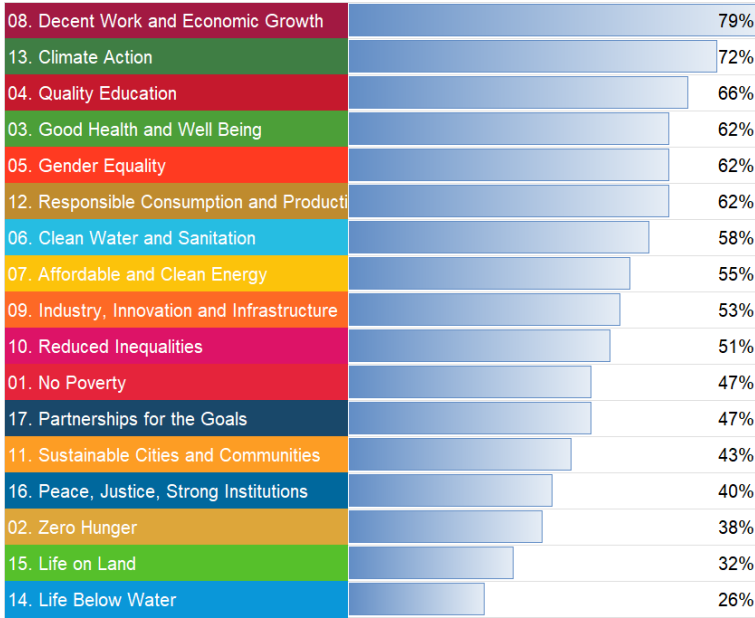
- **83%** of companies have a CEO Statement of Support for the Ten Principles of the UNGC
- **78%** of companies report that Human Rights Policies & Actions are in place
- **80%** of companies report that Labour Rights Policies & Actions are in place
- **80%** of companies report that Environment Policies & Actions are in place
- **80%** of companies report that Anti-Corruption Policies & Actions are in place
- **85%** of companies report that Measures on Ten Principles outcomes are in place
- **14%** of companies have UNGC Advanced Level Reporting

**SDG Embedment: % of South African GCNSA participant companies:**

- **62%** of companies report having SDGs linked to identified opportunities
- **60%** of companies report having SDGs prioritised
- **55%** of companies report having target KPIs for SDG priorities
- **63%** of companies report having SDGs integrated to a sustainability model
- **45%** of companies report having SDG outcomes defined
- **37%** of companies report having prioritised SDGs in collaboration with stakeholders

Further analysis and validation is to be done within the VNR process to increase the number of private sector participant companies reporting and to validate the quality of early results, as well as to create industry-based perspectives.

**GCNSA PARTICIPANTS SDG PRIORITIES:**



Source: UN Global Compact Network South Africa Membership, results based on 89 members between 2021 and 2023, depending upon most recent COP submission.





The City of Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa

# 10 PRIORITY TOPICS

## INNOVATION ROUND TABLE SERIES

Through the Voluntary National Review process we will be investigating 10 priority topics. These topics have been identified in consultation with our wider stakeholders through the planning process.

**In the Priority Topic Round Table Series, we will bring together companies and topic subject matter experts from across sectors to surface South African private sector Transition Roadmaps:**

Questions we will investigate:

- What is the impact of this topic on business?
- What is the private sector role in transition?
- What public sector support, enablers or policies are needed?
- What goals and solutions should we target?
- What best practices are available?
- What initiatives can we galvanise and play into?
- What partnerships are needed for progress?
- How can the SDGs provide a framework for success?

Which priority topic round tables should your company attend to share best practices, to network for future partnerships, or to leverage within your organisation's sustainability strategy?

### THE PRIORITY TOPIC ROUND TABLES:



#### 1: GROWING SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT

How do we increase investor confidence in our private sector?



#### 6: SYNERGIES WITH CIVIL SOCIETY & COMMUNITY

How do we collaborate best with the power of our people?



#### 2: A JUST TRANSITION TO CARBON NEUTRALITY

How do we achieve net zero emissions by 2050?



#### 7: IMPACT & OPPORTUNITY POST PANDEMIC

How do we adapt to changes in our post Covid landscape?



#### 3: SOLVING OUR ENERGY CRISIS

How do we enable sufficient electrical supply?



#### 8: BUILDING GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN RESILIENCE

How do we best show up in our global trading environment?



#### 4: ETHICAL TRANSFORMATIONAL GOVERNANCE

How do we assure high integrity business without corruption?



#### 9: EMPOWERING WOMEN TO ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY

How do we accelerate equity and diversity?



#### 5: EFFECTIVE PUBLIC-PRIVATE SECTOR COLLABORATION

How do we accelerate sustainability through partnerships?



#### 10: LEVERAGING SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORKS

How do we leverage new and existing frameworks?

# PRIORITY TOPIC ROUND TABLE 1:

Priority topic round tables are interactive virtual sessions.

The series is open to all VNR participants, please sign up on the GCNSA website to participate.



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## VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW 2024

How do we increase investor confidence and action to invest in sustainable business within our South African private sector?

### Logistics:

09:00 – 12:00 | Tuesday  
10<sup>th</sup> October 2023

### Round Table Agenda

- Welcome & Subject Matter Keynotes
- Business Impact Analysis
- The Private Sector Goals & Ambition
- Just Transition Pathways & Enablers
- Cross Sector Roles and Metrics
- Collaboration Platforms & Initiatives
- Direction and Close

### Suggested Participants:

Companies requiring or involved in the allocation of sustainable investments. Investment professionals and subject matter experts.

### Call to Subject Matter Experts

If you believe that your organisation has expertise on this priority topic, and can participate as a keynote speaker, please reach out to us during your VNR onboarding process.

## SYNOPSIS: GROWING SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT

### TOPIC OVERVIEW:

Sustainable investment, or socially responsible investment (SRI) is the process of considering environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors when making investment decisions. Investors are increasingly allocating capital to companies and projects that demonstrate strong sustainability practices, positive social impact, and responsible governance.

**What can the South African private sector do to foster a culture of sustainability and create an environment conducive to sustainable investment?**

By embracing practices that attract sustainable investment, South African businesses can proactively address environmental and social challenges and build resilience. We are going to focus on how we can access new opportunities, contributing to South African achievement of the sustainable development goals.

### SYNOPSIS QUESTIONS ARISING:

Our synopsis surfaces the following initial findings that we will delve into during our round table series:

- 1. Mitigating Environmental Risks:** How do we face off against environmental challenges, such as water scarcity, pollution, shortage of renewable energy, waste management, and climate change?
- 2. Enhancing Reputation and Stakeholder Trust:** How do we overcome reputational challenges to enhance brand value, and attract socially conscious investors?
- 3. Accessing New Markets and Opportunities:** How do we open doors to global demand for sustainable products and services and in alignment with sustainability principles?
- 4. Attracting and Applying Talent:** How do we absorb a younger workforce that increasingly prioritises companies with a commitment to sustainability and responsible practice?
- 5. Driving Innovation and Operational Efficiency:** What can accelerate innovative and sustainable operational practices that promote efficiency, reduce waste, optimise operations, and yield cost savings, productivity, and competitive advantage?

**Private sector stakeholders, including government bodies, customers, investors, and civil society, have increasing expectations that businesses take responsibility for operating in a sustainable manner. How do we align with these expectations and contribute to a more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable society?**

"The capital markets environment has shifted considerably in response to changes and developments in the trading and regulatory sphere. Sustainable development is rapidly becoming a defining feature of the global economy and financial markets will reflect this."

Dr Leila Fourie,  
Group CEO, JSE





# PRIORITY TOPIC ROUND TABLE 2:

Priority topic round tables are interactive virtual sessions.

The series is open to all VNR participants, please sign up on the GCNSA website to participate.



Global Compact  
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## VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW 2024

How does business contribute to achieving net zero emissions by 2050?

### Logistics:

09:00 – 12:00 | Thursday  
12<sup>th</sup> October 2023

### Round Table Agenda

- Welcome & Subject Matter Keynotes
- Business Impact Analysis
- The Private Sector Goals & Ambition
- Just Transition Pathways & Enablers
- Cross Sector Roles and Metrics
- Collaboration Platforms & Initiatives
- Direction and Close

### Suggested Participants:

Companies participating in net zero initiatives or working in the emergent renewables and energy efficiency space. Carbon neutrality subject matter experts.

### Call to Subject Matter Experts

If you believe that your organisation has expertise on this priority topic, and can participate as a keynote speaker, please reach out to us during your VNR onboarding process.

## SYNOPSIS: A JUST TRANSITION TO CARBON NEUTRALITY

### TOPIC OVERVIEW:

South Africa, like many countries, is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, including extreme weather events, water scarcity, and shifts in agricultural productivity. By committing to net zero emissions, the private sector can contribute to global efforts to limit global warming and mitigate the worst impacts of climate change.

**What can the South African private sector do to make the most of future opportunities for growth and job creation in renewable energy, energy efficiency, and other low-carbon solutions?**

Committing to action that results in net zero emissions by 2050 will contribute to global climate action, meet stakeholder expectations, mitigate risks, unlock new business opportunities, and demonstrate environmental leadership in our rapidly changing world.

### SYNOPSIS QUESTIONS ARISING:

Our synopsis surfaces the following initial findings that we will delve into during our round table series:

- 1. Innovation and Business Opportunities:** How can we access the opportunities arising as we transition to a net zero emissions economy, including the innovation and implementation of new technologies, products, and services?
- 2. Staying Ahead of Regulatory Change:** Governments, including ours, are implementing policies and regulations to address climate change. How do businesses align early, to maintain competitive edge and reduce the risk of future non-compliance or the impact of carbon taxes and emerging carbon border taxes?
- 3. Investor and Consumer Expectations:** How can we build and accelerate the benefits net zero can bring to business and country brand reputation, attracting socially conscious support from our stakeholders? How does business best leverage emerging scorecards for carbon emissions and solar programmes?
- 4. Access to Funding and Financing:** What are the financing opportunities, carbon trading, transition funding, grants, and subsidies that are increasingly available for projects aligning to net zero emissions targets?
- 5. Sustainable Supply Chains:** Achieving net zero emissions requires collaboration along the entire supply chain. How does business most effectively work with suppliers and partners achieve carbon neutrality?

**Businesses within our private sector would benefit strongly, both locally and globally, from being part of a low-carbon economy. What can we do to accelerate the transition?**

"We are continuously seeking ways to promote sustainable practices in our supply chain, seeking ways to reduce our carbon footprint, supporting our communities and taking our customers along with us on this journey. As a result, our ESG priorities will help us bring our purpose to life. They are critical in the markets in which we operate, given that we face significant socioeconomic challenges in our region."

Arrie Rautenbach  
Group Chief Executive Officer, Absa



# PRIORITY TOPIC ROUND TABLE 3:

Priority topic round tables are interactive virtual sessions.

The series is open to all VNR participants, please sign up on the GCNSA website to participate.



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## VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW 2024

How do we mitigate the impact of loadshedding and enable sufficient, affordable electrical supply?

### Logistics:

09:00 – 12:00 | Tuesday  
17<sup>th</sup> October 2023

### Round Table Agenda

- Welcome & Subject Matter Keynotes
- Business Impact Analysis
- The Private Sector Goals & Ambition
- Just Transition Pathways & Enablers
- Cross Sector Roles and Metrics
- Collaboration Platforms & Initiatives
- Direction and Close

### Suggested Participants:

Companies with initiatives to overcome the impact of loadshedding, or with innovative solution value propositions and subject matter expertise.

### Call to Subject Matter Experts

If you believe that your organisation has expertise on this priority topic, and can participate as a keynote speaker, please reach out to us during your VNR onboarding process.

## SYNOPSIS: SOLVING OUR ENERGY CRISIS

### TOPIC OVERVIEW:

Loadshedding is a problem that must be solved due to its significant impact on our economy, businesses, households, and overall quality of life. Whilst the problem sits heavily with the government and Eskom, the private sector is collaborating both to mitigate the impact, and to contribute to solutions, from accelerated progress in the renewable energy sector, through to business specific action to build resilience.

**What are the powerful actions business can take to contribute to energy efficiency, sustainability, and the overall goal of ensuring a reliable and stable electricity supply in South Africa?**

Businesses can play an active role in addressing load shedding challenges, reducing dependence on the grid, and improving resilience to power outages. We intend to investigate the lessons that have been learned and the solutions that are being implemented.

### SYNOPSIS QUESTIONS ARISING:

Our synopsis surfaces the following initial findings that we will delve into during our round table series:

- 1. Energy Efficiency Measures:** How can we accelerate energy-saving initiatives within operations, such as energy-efficient appliances, equipment, and lighting systems? What smart energy management systems are we adopting?
- 2. Backup Power and Renewable Adoption:** What are the most reliable backup power solutions, energy storage solutions, or fresh opportunities to integrate with renewable or off grid energy solutions, and how are companies selecting and funding solutions?
- 3. Collaboration on Energy Solutions:** Which industry associations, chambers of commerce, and other stakeholders are working to collectively address load shedding to engage in dialogues that advocate for reliable and sustainable solutions?
- 4. Employee Flexibility and Enablement:** How are businesses working to educate employees, manage schedules and create flexible work arrangements or resilient work spaces that address power outages? How are companies reducing demand during peak periods to alleviate strain on the grid?
- 5. Linking Energy Efficiency to Sustainability:** Are companies connecting the dots between sustainability and electrical continuity objectives and using energy audits to identify areas of energy waste and inefficiency as an opportunity to spring forward?

**Generating on-site renewable energy can help reduce dependence on the main electricity grid and mitigate the impact of load shedding, whilst also achieving longer term sustainability goals.**

"While the Group achieved its stated FY22 targets against water usage, non-renewable energy usage, fossil fuel-based energy usage and wastewater discharged, it unfortunately missed its GHG emissions reduction target. This was due to high production volumes across all sites, which pushed up electricity consumption. The high frequency of loadshedding impacted GHG emissions as it increased the Group's reliance on non-renewable energy sources such as diesel."

Gugu Dingaan  
Chairperson, Social & Ethics Committee, Distell





# PRIORITY TOPIC ROUND TABLE 4:

Priority topic round tables are interactive virtual sessions.

The series is open to all VNR participants, please sign up on the GCNSA website to participate.



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## VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW 2024

How can business act to enable safety from crime and corruption, assuring ethical, transformed governance?

### Logistics:

09:00 – 12:00 | Thursday  
19<sup>th</sup> October 2023

### Round Table Agenda

- Welcome & Subject Matter Keynotes
- Business Impact Analysis
- The Private Sector Goals & Ambition
- Just Transition Pathways & Enablers
- Cross Sector Roles and Metrics
- Collaboration Platforms & Initiatives
- Direction and Close

### Suggested Participants:

Businesses with experience addressing ethical transformational governance issues, with war stories to tell, or with subject matter expertise.

### Call to Subject Matter Experts

If you believe that your organisation has expertise on this priority topic, and can participate as a keynote speaker, please reach out to us during your VNR onboarding process.

## SYNOPSIS: ETHICAL TRANSFORMATIONAL GOVERNANCE

### TOPIC OVERVIEW:

Ethical transformational governance refers to leadership and management approaches that promote high integrity behaviour, transparency, accountability, and responsible decision-making. This is a vital focal point when driving positive change into all aspects of business operations.

**Ethical transformational governance is important to the South African private sector because it assures peace, justice and the strong institutions that we need to flourish.**

We intend to focus on sharing the approaches that businesses are taking to building resilient and responsible business environments that contribute to building South Africa's social, economic, and environmental outlook and reputation. We also intend to investigate and define the supporting role of the private sector in enabling public sector transformational governance.

### SYNOPSIS QUESTIONS ARISING:

Our synopsis surfaces the following initial findings that we will delve into during our round table series:

- 1. Rebuilding Trust & Nurturing Resilience:** South Africa has faced several high-profile cases of corporate corruption and unethical behaviour. Are businesses implementing ethical transformational governance frameworks to restore confidence and future proof business practices?
- 2. BBBEE Transformational Compliance:** How are South African businesses aligning to and prioritising the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) Act? What are the emerging best practices? Has the transformation agenda been disrupted by the impact of the global pandemic?
- 3. Whistleblowing & Corruption Detection:** What are the best practices for developing robust systems for detecting, preventing, and addressing unethical conduct and for rooting out corruption?
- 4. Building Ethical Culture & Reputation:** What approaches are company leadership teams taking to assure responsible leadership, decision-making and brand? How do we both attract and motivate for ethical behavioural standards, and deter employee, supplier and customer malpractice?
- 5. Meeting Global Stakeholder Expectations:** How can the South African private sector best collaborate with the public sector to restore reputational damage and deliver an ethical and transformed South Africa.

**Ethical transformational governance contributes heavily to the achievement of the SDGs. It is vital that we have healthy private and public sector institutions to power a sustainable future.**

"Governance & Risk Control (GRC) has traditionally been perceived as existing to protect companies from people. However, we believe most people are honest and ethical. GRC can do so much more than merely prevent unethical behaviour – it can empower that majority, give them courage, strengthen their convictions and build stronger organisations. Done properly, GRC is an enabler and protector of people and a foundation for business growth.

Fatima Newman  
Chief Risk Officer, EOH



# PRIORITY TOPIC ROUND TABLE 5:

Priority topic round tables are interactive virtual sessions.

The series is open to all VNR participants, please sign up on the GCNSA website to participate.



Global Compact  
Network South Africa



## VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW 2024

How do we accelerate sustainability through partnerships with the public sector at all levels of government?

### Logistics:

09:00 – 12:00 | Tuesday  
24<sup>th</sup> October 2023

### Round Table Agenda

- Welcome & Subject Matter Keynotes
- Business Impact Analysis
- The Private Sector Goals & Ambition
- Just Transition Pathways & Enablers
- Cross Sector Roles and Metrics
- Collaboration Platforms & Initiatives
- Direction and Close

### Suggested Participants:

Companies engaged in public-private partnerships and public sector representatives or members of other organisations engaged in evolving public-private sector collaboration.

### Call to Subject Matter Experts

If you believe that your organisation has expertise on this priority topic, and can participate as a keynote speaker, please reach out to us during your VNR onboarding process.

## SYNOPSIS: EFFECTIVE PUBLIC-PRIVATE SECTOR COLLABORATION

### TOPIC OVERVIEW:

Collaboration between the public and private sectors brings numerous benefits to business, including access to resources, market opportunities, risk mitigation, policy influence, and enhanced social license to operate. Public sector support is vital to enabling companies to navigate complex challenges, drive sustainable growth, and to aligning operations with societal needs and goals.

**We seek to understand how effectively the public and private sector are collaborating, and what emergent areas require an improved dialogue if we are to achieve the 2030 Agenda.**

We intend to seek existing and new opportunities for public-private collaboration that can promote long-term value creation.

### SYNOPSIS QUESTIONS ARISING:

Our synopsis surfaces the following initial findings that we will delve into during our round table series:

- 1. Engaging on Policy & Regulation Development:** How do businesses most effectively participate in public sector activities to define policies, regulations, and standards that govern business operations? Which policies are most important to evolve in order to enable and support private sector sustainability outcomes?
- 2. Which Market Opportunities are Top Priority:** Public-private collaboration can open new market opportunities for business. Which South African projects, initiatives and industry sectors offer the biggest opportunities for business growth and expansion?
- 3. Future Proofing and Resilience:** South Africa, like other countries is facing rapid, disruptive change. What new and emergent risks are arising for business and for our people? What should the public and private sector be collaborating on to anticipate, prepare and protect?
- 4. Collaboration within Communities:** How can businesses participate in inclusive decision-making processes to collaborate with the public sector to build a social license to operate and build positive relationships with communities?
- 5. Access to Public Sector Resources & Expertise:** How do businesses properly access public sector resources, data, and expertise to support sustainability initiatives? What collaboration opportunities are there to drive innovation and solve complex problems?

**South African business is well positioned to make a strong contribution to societal and economic value creation alongside the public sector.**

"As an anchor partner of the Digital Health Impact Accelerator Catalytic Fund, we help facilitate the strengthening of community health systems and their resilience to respond to future pandemics and health-related shocks. This initiative is aligned with our focus as a company, and that of the Anglo American Foundation and its focus on building strategic partnerships to achieve impact.

Achieving good health and well-being requires us to strengthen the quality of community health systems collectively, while also promoting the resilience of health systems in host communities and the countries where we operate.

Dr Alexandra Plowright  
Lead for Community Health and Well-being  
Anglo American





# PRIORITY TOPIC ROUND TABLE 6:

Priority topic round tables are interactive virtual sessions.

The series is open to all VNR participants, please sign up on the GCNSA website to participate.



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## VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW 2024

How do we collaborate best with the power of people within our communities and civil society?

### Logistics:

09:00 – 12:00 | Thursday  
26<sup>th</sup> October 2023

### Round Table Agenda

- Welcome & Subject Matter Keynotes
- Business Impact Analysis
- The Private Sector Goals & Ambition
- Just Transition Pathways & Enablers
- Cross Sector Roles and Metrics
- Collaboration Platforms & Initiatives
- Direction and Close

### Suggested Participants:

Companies with community-based initiatives or with civil society strategic partnerships with civil society. Civil society organisations engaged with private sector strategic partnerships.

### Call to Subject Matter Experts

If you believe that your organisation has expertise on this priority topic, and can participate as a keynote speaker, please reach out to us during your VNR onboarding process.

## SYNOPSIS: SYNERGIES WITH CIVIL SOCIETY & COMMUNITY

### TOPIC OVERVIEW:

The South African private sector has an abundance of examples where businesses have collaborated with communities and civil society to address social, economic, and environmental challenges. These collaborative efforts can facilitate meaningful engagement, foster local ownership, and promote sustainable development that meets the needs of both businesses and broader society.

### How are the needs of communities and civil society evolving, and how are partnership models developing in the face of disruptive change?

We intend to highlight business initiatives that offer sustainable solutions that can be more widely adopted. From financial support to in-kind contributions, volunteering, education, healthcare or infrastructure. We are looking to surface perspectives, approaches and blueprints that can be repeated and incorporated into effective long term sustainability strategies to foster trust and shared value. Are companies successfully maximising the opportunity for maximised strategic impact?

### SYNOPSIS QUESTIONS ARISING:

Our synopsis surfaces the following initial findings that we will delve into during our round table series:

- 1. NGO Partnerships and Alliances:** What are the best models for business collaboration with non-governmental organisations (NGOs)? Which scalable partnerships and alliances are making most impact in the alleviation of poverty, food security, education, conservation, and community development?
- 2. Community Needs Assessment:** What are the best approaches for business to engage with civil society and communities to hold a structured stakeholder dialogue and engagement that enables understanding and prioritisation of needs and measure success?
- 3. Social Responsibility Initiative Insights:** Which South African businesses have highly effective Corporate and Social Responsibility examples that have successfully uplifted communities or addressed social and environmental challenges?
- 4. Local Economic Development:** What are the best examples of collaboration with local communities to promote economic development? How are companies working within communities on social enterprise models, or to source goods and services, support small business, or provide workforce skills and training?
- 5. Community Investment and Philanthropy:** How are companies making community investment in philanthropic initiatives aimed at improving the well-being, from donations, grants, sponsorships, to support for community-driven projects?

**Business collaboration with local communities can create sustainable solutions to societal challenges whilst also generating economic value.**

"Our social investments are guided by the needs of communities around Mondi's operations as well as principles of sustainable development, such as those reflected in the UN Sustainable Development Goals, national and local development priorities, MAP2030 and our own business objectives. We specifically target initiatives and investments that support community development. MAP2030 was designed with a clear focus on the areas in which Mondi can make the most difference."

Dominique Reiniche  
Sustainable Development Committee Chairperson  
Mondi



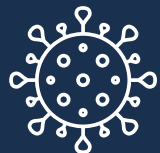
# PRIORITY TOPIC ROUND TABLE 7:

Priority topic round tables are interactive virtual sessions.

The series is open to all VNR participants, please sign up on the GCNSA website to participate.



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## VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW 2024

How do we adapt to changes in our post Covid landscape? What are the emergent changes, trends and lessons we can learn?

### Logistics:

09:00 – 12:00 | Tuesday  
31<sup>st</sup> October 2023

### Round Table Agenda

- Welcome & Subject Matter Keynotes
- Business Impact Analysis
- The Private Sector Goals & Ambition
- Just Transition Pathways & Enablers
- Cross Sector Roles and Metrics
- Collaboration Platforms & Initiatives
- Direction and Close

### Suggested Participants:

Companies and organisations interested in acting to land business opportunities or mitigations following the pandemic.

### Call to Subject Matter Experts

If you believe that your organisation has expertise on this priority topic, and can participate as a keynote speaker, please reach out to us during your VNR onboarding process.

## SYNOPSIS: IMPACT & OPPORTUNITY POST PANDEMIC

### TOPIC OVERVIEW:

The long-term impacts and changes from the COVID-19 pandemic are still unfolding. While businesses have experienced challenges, the crisis has also sparked innovation, resilience, and adaptation. It is important we understand the impact so that we can leverage lessons learned and adapt quickly to embrace emerging opportunities, as well as mitigate negative impact.

**How can South African business step forward, embracing innovation brought by the pandemic, whilst healing from the negative impact?**

We intend to explore and share sustainable workplace best practices that are now emerging in business, investigating the sustainability benefits and enhanced opportunity for collective problem solving. We also need to surface the negative impact on businesses that are still recovering, to understand the support they can most benefit from.

### SYNOPSIS QUESTIONS ARISING:

Our synopsis surfaces the following initial findings that we will delve into during our round table series:

- 1. Economic Resilience and Recovery:** Which industry sectors were worst impacted by lockdowns and impact on cash reserves? What was the damage, and how far have businesses recovered? Where are the biggest needs for support, recovery and future resilience?
- 2. Accelerating Digital Transformation:** The pandemic has accelerated the adoption of digital technologies. How can we identify, accelerate and share the advances that are crucial for innovation of sustainable business practices?
- 3. Focus on Mental Wellbeing & Health:** The pandemic highlighted the importance of health and safety in business operations. What initiatives have been created that successfully address the impact on employee mental health and well-being?
- 4. Hybrid, Remote Work and Flexibility:** Remote work has become a norm, creating opportunity to embrace flexible work arrangements that attract top talent, and reduce commutes and carbon footprints. What are the best practice remote or hybrid work policies that give flexibility, while retaining connection and productivity?
- 5. Enhanced Connectivity & ICT Literacy:** The pandemic thrust employees forward into a world of virtual collaboration, improving connectivity. How far have we advanced, and who has been left behind? What new gaps have emerged alongside our advances?

**The pandemic has influenced culture and consumer behaviour. There is a greater emphasis on health and sustainability. How can business most effectively align for people and for planet?**

"The pandemic has changed people's lives forever accelerating the use of tech and the growth in tech titans, and in turn leading to a countertrend of anti-tech sentiment and rising regulation. As a responsible tech operator and investor, Naspers are well positioned to navigate our changing world. Pandemic patterns persist and we are changed forever Covid-19 has had a lasting impact on people.

People have redefined how they work, interact, shop and play, moving much of this everyday activity online. Throughout the pandemic, ecommerce sales rose swiftly, and digital communication took over. At the same time, with mounting evidence of the climate crisis, sustainability became a bigger concern. As well as moving online, people are also going green, and they increasingly expect companies to play their part."

Phuthi Mahanyele-Dabengwa  
CEO, Naspers SA





# PRIORITY TOPIC ROUND TABLE 8:

Priority topic round tables are interactive virtual sessions.

The series is open to all VNR participants, please sign up on the GCNSA website to participate.



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## VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW 2024

How do we best show up in our global trading environment? How do we adapt to a changing global world?

### Logistics:

09:00 – 12:00 | Thursday

2<sup>nd</sup> November 2023

### Round Table Agenda

- Welcome & Subject Matter Keynotes
- Business Impact Analysis
- The Private Sector Goals & Ambition
- Just Transition Pathways & Enablers
- Cross Sector Roles and Metrics
- Collaboration Platforms & Initiatives
- Direction and Close

### Suggested Participants:

Companies with strong import and export dependencies and organisations with global supply chain capabilities and expertise.

### Call to Subject Matter Experts

If you believe that your organisation has expertise on this priority topic, and can participate as a keynote speaker, please reach out to us during your VNR onboarding process.

## SYNOPSIS: BUILDING GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN RESILIENCE

### TOPIC OVERVIEW:

The global supply chain which had already been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic has been further impacted by the Russia-Ukraine crisis. Disruption is set to stay, driven by inflationary pressure, global recession, climate change and weather events. This is impacting South African access to imports as well as the flow of exports to their destination. Businesses are facing port hold ups, reduced freight availability, and surging prices. Within this context it is vitally important for business to pay attention to sustainability across its supply chain, beyond internal company operations.

**How does South African business participate to combat future supply chain disruption and to adapt quickly to changes, whilst landing sustainability objectives?**

We intend to look at the best practices and initiatives that can protect our global supply chain and enable domestic resilience to disruption and inflation driven by rising commodity prices. How does the carbon neutrality agenda impact the attractiveness of our South African supply chain?

### SYNOPSIS QUESTIONS ARISING:

Our synopsis surfaces the following initial findings that we will delve into during our round table series:

- 1. Ensuring a Sustainable Supply Chain:** How can companies best ensure that sustainability principles are respected within their extended supply chain? What are approaches to supporting supplier sustainability?
- 2. Anticipating Further Geopolitical Tension:** How does the private sector collaborate with the public sector to enable international cooperation and interdependence? What trade links can enable resilience for both imports and exports?
- 3. Domestic Self Sufficiency in Material Supply:** What does it take to enable South African self-sufficiency? What are the priority materials and lead times for protecting core commodities required by our economy? How can sustainability goals align with strengthening domestic production?
- 4. Protection from Cyber Criminals:** Supply chains are becoming increasingly vulnerable to infiltration, damage and theft by cyber criminals. What are the innovative new technologies, such as Blockchain that can be shared to protect businesses?
- 5. Adapting to Shifts in Global Manufacturing:** How can South African business benefit from global demand from businesses that are re-evaluating their manufacturing footprint to optimise on cost efficiencies, sustainable and traceable sources of supply?

**By focusing on becoming a sustainable source of supply and developing global supply chain resilience, South Africa can gain competitive advantage and boost our domestic economy.**

"We aim to achieve a diverse, transformed, sustainable and high-performing supplier base by accelerating the development of small and transformed businesses. We will do this through simplified processes, impactful development support and funding for the betterment of communities beyond the boundaries of Sasol. We acknowledge that SMEs have been finding it difficult to access procurement opportunities and participate meaningfully in our supply chain. We introduced and continue to make enhancements to our digital SME access platform, Linkage, to mitigate this challenge and ensure that SMEs have enhanced visibility of available procurement and development opportunities."

Sasol



# PRIORITY TOPIC ROUND TABLE 9:

Priority topic round tables are interactive virtual sessions.

The series is open to all VNR participants, please sign up on the GCNSA website to participate.



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## VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW 2024

How do we accelerate gender equity, diversity and the empowerment of women?

### Logistics:

09:00 – 12:00 | Tuesday  
7<sup>th</sup> November 2023

### Round Table Agenda

- Welcome & Subject Matter Keynotes
- Business Impact Analysis
- The Private Sector Goals & Ambition
- Just Transition Pathways & Enablers
- Cross Sector Roles and Metrics
- Collaboration Platforms & Initiatives
- Direction and Close

### Suggested Participants:

Businesses and organisations that are leading or learning on gender equality and women empowerment initiatives.

### Call to Subject Matter Experts

If you believe that your organisation has expertise on this priority topic, and can participate as a keynote speaker, please reach out to us during your VNR onboarding process.

## SYNOPSIS: EMPOWERING WOMEN TO ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY

### TOPIC OVERVIEW:

Enabling gender equality and women's empowerment continues to be a huge challenge both globally and in South Africa. We need to focus on driving systemic change by sharing the initiatives that are advocating effectively and the strategies that are getting results. Gender equality promotes social wellbeing and stability, reducing social inequalities, discrimination and violence, leading to more peaceful, cohesive societies.

**Not only is gender equality a fundamental human right, when women have access to education, employment and economic opportunity, it leads to increased productivity, innovation and economic prosperity.**

We intend to surface the business role and best practice examples that can enable gender equality, both directly in the workplace, and when engaging in partnerships with government, civil society organisations, and communities. How do we push for a public-private sector alliance that ends gender-based violence, leveraging collateral such as the National Strategic Plan on gender-based violence and femicide, beyond our immediate workplaces.

### SYNOPSIS QUESTIONS ARISING:

Our synopsis surfaces the following initial findings that we will delve into during our round table series:

- 1. Equal Pay and Workplace Gender Equity:** How have leading companies managed to transition to equal pay for equal work? How have disparities in hiring, promotions, and leadership positions been successfully addressed? How have businesses tackled unconscious biases to enable career progression for women?
- 2. Gender-Based Violence and Harassment:** How have companies succeeded in landing zero-tolerance for gender-based violence and sexual harassment in the workplace? What are the incident reporting and support approaches that both address and prevent issues, enabling a culture that is safe and respectful?
- 3. Work-Life Balance & Flexible Work:** What are the benchmark policies and practices that support work-life balance for women, such as flexible work hours, remote work options, and family-friendly policies? What are the tactics that companies have used to create an inclusive and supportive work environment that recognises the needs of women employees?
- 4. Access to Education, Skills & Wellbeing:** How can education and skills development for women be promoted alongside policies and initiatives to address women specific needs such as reproductive health and maternity at different life stages?
- 5. Gender Equality Across the Value Chain:** How do businesses ensure gender equality and empowerment throughout the supply chain, encouraging diversity friendly procurement practices?

**Inclusive and supportive environments that prioritise the mental, emotional, and physical well-being of women employees are a vital sustainability enabler.**

"The Woolworths Group was the first major South African retailer to become a signatory to the UN Women's Empowerment Principles, a set of guidelines for companies for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women in the workplace and in communities. Woolworths launched WPride, a voice platform that aims to foster an environment in which everyone is accepted, protected, and respected regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression."

Belinda Earl  
Sustainability Committee Chairperson  
Woolworths





# PRIORITY TOPIC ROUND TABLE 10:

Priority topic round tables are interactive virtual sessions.

The series is open to all VNR participants, please sign up on the GCNSA website to participate.



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Network South Africa



## VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW 2024

How do we leverage new and existing sustainability frameworks to drive integrated benefits?

### Logistics:

09:00 – 12:00 | Thursday  
9<sup>th</sup> November 2023

### Round Table Agenda

- Welcome & Subject Matter Keynotes
- Business Impact Analysis
- The Private Sector Goals & Ambition
- Just Transition Pathways & Enablers
- Cross Sector Roles and Metrics
- Collaboration Platforms & Initiatives
- Direction and Close

### Suggested Participants:

Sustainability framework experts and organisations with advanced sustainability models that are aligned to multiple frameworks.

### Call to Subject Matter Experts

If you believe that your organisation has expertise on this priority topic, and can participate as a keynote speaker, please reach out to us during your VNR onboarding process.

## SYNOPSIS: LEVERAGING SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORKS

### TOPIC OVERVIEW:

Navigating across the range of existing and emerging sustainability frameworks can be complicated and intimidating for companies seeking to report and perform against the sustainability agenda. It can be resource consuming reporting against a variety of different frameworks. This priority topic seeks to understand how frameworks align, including alignment to public sector frameworks such as the South African government's National Development Plan 2030 and the 2063 Agenda on Peace and Security and International Agreements such as the International Bill of Human Rights.

**Whilst the Voluntary National Review 2024 focuses on achievement of the 2030 Agenda the Sustainable Development Goals, there are other valuable frameworks to consider.**

We intend to explore how different frameworks serve as guidelines and tools to help companies measure, manage, and report their sustainability, ESG, CSR, and climate-related performance. We will work with experts to understand how different frameworks align and can support transparency, accountability, and easier integration of sustainability into business strategies, operations and reporting.

### SYNOPSIS QUESTIONS ARISING:

Our synopsis cites the following sustainability reporting regulatory standards and frameworks that will be investigated, along with other frameworks that may arise, for their domain of focus, regional application, similarities, differences, and for alignment with each other:

- The Ten Principles – UN Global Compact
- SDGs – UN Sustainable Development Goals
- UNCTAD – Investment Policy Framework
- SEE – The JSE Sustainable Stock Exchange Initiative
- JSE – Climate Disclosures
- JSE – Sustainability Disclosures
- King IV – Responsibilities of Governing Bodies
- GRI – Global Reporting Initiative
- SASB – Sustainability Accounting Standards Board
- CDP – Carbon Disclosure Project
- ISO 26000 – Social Responsibility Guidance Standard
- PRI – Principles of Responsible Investment
- ISSB – International Sustainability Standards
- IFRS – International Finance Regulatory Standards
- ESRS – European Sustainability Reporting Standards
- EP – The Equator Principles
- CDSP – The Climate Disclosure Standards Board
- TCFD – Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures

**Sustainability reporting can be intimidating. It is important to demystify frameworks and regulations and to look at best practices for businesses that need to report against different standards for their varied stakeholders.**

"We are working hard to weave ESG considerations into our business strategy and our day-to-day activities. Our Group ESG Executive Committee's mandate is to align sustainability activities across the organisation, while focusing on the many business opportunities within our priority SDGs. We also created a framework to link the remuneration of executive directors to ESG key performance indicators (KPIs)."

Fani Titi  
Chief Executive, Investec

"As Chief Executive of Nedbank Group, I reaffirm our commitment to the United Nations Global Compact and the 10 principles that underpin it. In addition, as a Group, we remain a signatory to the Equator Principles and the CEO Water Mandate and we continue to support the UNEP FI Positive Impact Working Group. These commitments, along with deliberate focus on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), form an important part of our overall strategy as we align our core business to deliver on our purpose – to use our financial expertise to do good for individuals, families, businesses and society."

Mike Brown  
Chief Executive, Nedbank





Ngodwana Mill | Sappi Manufacturing, Consumer Goods & Retail

## 6 INDUSTRY INSIGHT DEEP DIVES COLLABORATION ROUND TABLE SERIES

Through the Voluntary National Review process, we will be investigating 6 industries for detailed insights into sustainability trends, challenges and opportunities.

**In the Industry Insights Round Table Series, we will bring together companies, trade associations and industry subject matter experts to evaluate progress, challenges and opportunities arising within key South African industries:**

Questions we will investigate:

- How has the industry performed against the SDGs?
- What are the primary sustainability risks and challenges?
- What are the emerging innovations and opportunities?
- What are the industry best practices and benchmarks?
- What are the opportunities for value across sectors?
- What public sector support, enablers or policies are needed?
- What partnerships and initiatives are needed for progress?
- How can the SDGs provide a framework for success?

Be sure to participate in the round table that most closely aligns to your business, or the interests of your organisation. Note, we are looking for companies to offer to act as keynote speakers for industry insight sessions. Let us know if your business would like to lead.

### THE VNR INDUSTRY INSIGHT SEGMENTS:







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# VNR Participant Guidance and Briefing

## ◆ VNR Objective

VNR Business Case

VNR Plan and Approach

VNR Registration

VNR Schedule of Events

VNR Report Design & Method

VNR Participant Role & Expectations

VNR Company Case Study Briefing

VNR Social Media Toolkit

VNR Support & Points of Contact



**WE ARE  
PARTICIPATING,  
YOU CAN TOO!**

[globalcompactsa.org.za](https://globalcompactsa.org.za)

## VNR Participant Briefing

### The VNR Objective

Our first Voluntary National Review of action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals was in 2019. Be part of the private sector input into the South African President's Report to the UN High Level Political Forum in 2024. Last time the GCNSA platform facilitated a view of the top ten trends within the South African private sector, yielding insights in challenges, emerging frameworks and best practices. This time, we are even more ambitious, seeking to include even more businesses to gain broad-based insights into how the South African private sector is performing against the 2030 Agenda. We want to grow participation and collaboration aimed at delivering the Sustainable Development Goals.

**Join us and participate! You will play a vital role in developing success stories that articulate private sector action. Your role is to bring your energy and leave no-one behind.**

The VNR is an opportunity to rapidly advance your company's sustainability strategy and to grow your personal sustainability frame of reference and personal expertise. Leverage the opportunity!

**Grow  
Innovate  
Motivate  
Share**



### CONNECT

Connect with industry, experts peers enabling networks across organisations and sectors, unifying South African action.



### LEARN

Gain the knowledge and skills to make progress and deliver impact by showcasing South African best practice approaches.



### COMMUNICATE

Build trust and credibility by communicating your progress towards South African sustainability goals and targets.



### LEAD

Show bold leadership and inspire others. Enable opportunity for leadership to surface and flourish, share your expertise.



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Network South Africa

# VNR Participant Guidance and Briefing

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## VNR Participant Briefing

### The VNR Business Case

Across sectors, stakeholders are increasingly calling for sustainability. Businesses that align their strategies to sustainable outcomes are performing best, and organisations that authentically value sustainability are attracting and retaining top talent better than companies that don't.

We asked early participants what they valued about being a part of the Voluntary National Review, and they prioritised the following business case benefits:

### 7 REASONS FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE VNR:

- 1 Connect to create new collaborative partnerships across industries and sectors. Open up new business opportunities.
- 2 Collaborate to tap into SDG opportunity that economists estimate is worth USD12 trillion. Sustainability is attractive to customers.
- 3 Build trust in our South African economy: inspire local and global investors, communicate that we are good to do business with.
- 4 Provide insights and your SDG data to inform trends that can scale SDG Action in South Africa, creating a national dialogue.
- 5 Contribute to a strong South African narrative that informs the National Development Plan and public sector SDG strategies.
- 6 Be part of a strong private sector collaborative voice that creates a unified sustainability platform for business.
- 7 Reflect collectively on SDG journeys, share best practice, peer-learn, and surface priority areas. Tell your success stories.



# VNR Participant Guidance and Briefing

- VNR Objective
- VNR Business Case
- ◆ **VNR Plan and Approach**
- VNR Registration
- VNR Schedule of Events
- VNR Report Design & Method
- VNR Participant Role & Expectations
- VNR Company Case Study Briefing
- VNR Social Media Toolkit
- VNR Support & Points of Contact

## VNR Participant Briefing

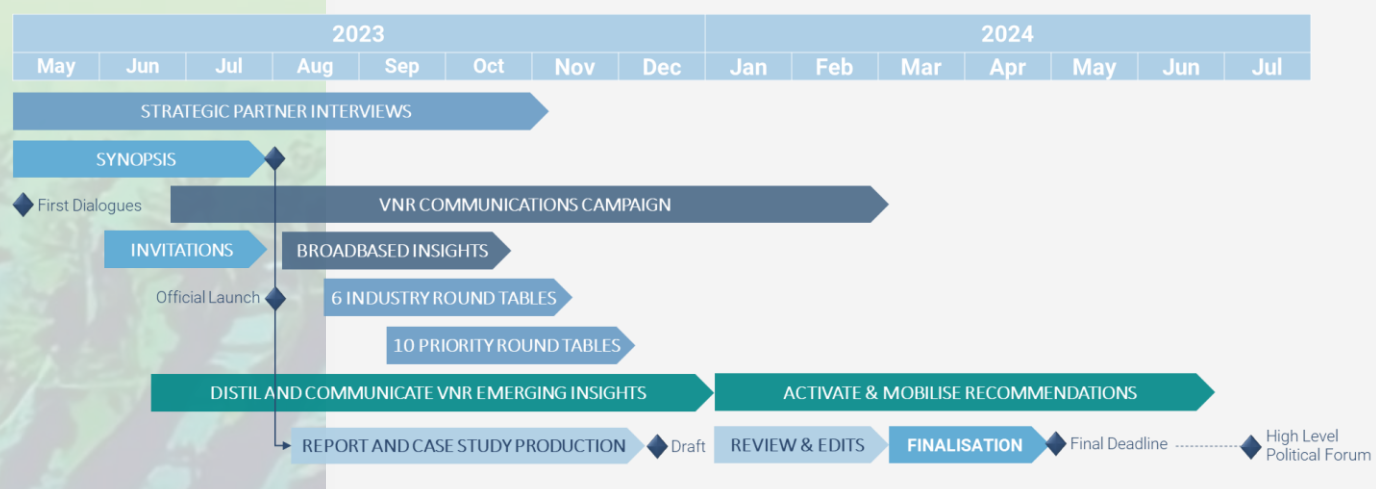
### The VNR Plan & Approach

We began the reporting process in August 2022 when the Department of Planning, Performance and Monitoring asked for a methodology for producing the private sector contribution to the Voluntary National Review. We then held our first Compact Dialogue communicating participation in May 2023. Our final report is due in March 2024 when it will be handed to the South African Presidency to take to the United Nations High Level Political Forum.

### THE VNR REPORTING PROCESS



### THE VNR PLAN AND DELIVERY TIMELINE





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# VNR Participant Guidance and Briefing

VNR Objective

VNR Business Case

VNR Plan and Approach

◆ VNR Registration

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VNR Report Design & Method

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VNR Support & Points of Contact



WE ARE  
PARTICIPATING,  
YOU CAN TOO!

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## VNR Participant Briefing

### VNR Registration

You need to register using our online form to participate in the Voluntary National Review. **VNR Participation is free**, however there is an option to become a Silver Sponsor if your organisation would like to have a video animation case study and qualitative interview, to cover costs of production. There are four kinds of free participant, with slightly different levels of work involved. Be ready to select which kind of participant you would like to be on your registration form:



#### VNR Strategic Partner

- Is a VNR Participant
- Shares Research & Data
- Communicates Frameworks
- Provides Insight
- Shapes Round Table Agendas



#### VNR Industry Champion

- Is a VNR Participant
- Industry Round Table Leader
- 121 Industry Interview
- Industry Quotation



#### VNR Priority Champion

- Is a VNR Participant
- Topic Round Table Leader
- 121 Priority Interview
- Priority Topic Quotation



#### VNR Participant

- Completes Insights Survey
- SDG Success Story
- Round Table Participation
- Networks for Participation

### Information you will need to register:

Be ready to fill in your registration form. You will need to have the following information and permissions from your company to register:

- Know which VNR participant type you want to be
- Have the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) your organisation has prioritised available
- Be ready to choose the priority topic round tables your company would like to attend
- You will also indicate the industry round table deep drive your company will align to
- Have an approved senior leader quotation available to express your Company SDG Ambition
- Have your company's latest sustainability report or integrated report ready to upload
- Be ready to indicate trade associations, strategic partners or suppliers you would like to participate
- Note that you will need to confirm that you are authorised to register your company

[Click here to link to the VNR Online Registration Form](#)



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Network South Africa

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VNR Registration

◆ **VNR Schedule of Events**

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VNR Support & Points of Contact



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## VNR Participant Briefing

### VNR Schedule of Events

Note that to enable maximised attendance of participants from across South Africa, and to leverage best in class interactive techniques, the VNR events series will be virtual. Links to events will be sent based on your VNR registration selections.

Date	Day	Time	Collaborative & Interactive Virtual Round Table
<b>South African Private Sector VNR 2024 Official Launch</b>			
<b>18-Aug</b>	Friday	10am - 12am	Welcome, VNR Synopsis Overview & Participant Onboarding
<b>The 6 Industry Insights Deep Dive Series</b>			
<b>12-Sep</b>	Tuesday	9am - 12am	Financial Services
<b>14-Sep</b>	Thursday	9am - 12am	Mining & Natural Resources
<b>19-Sep</b>	Tuesday	9am - 12am	Agriculture, Food Production & Retail
<b>21-Sep</b>	Thursday	9am - 12am	Electricity, Water & Infrastructure
<b>26-Sep</b>	Tuesday	9am - 12am	Communication & Information Technology
<b>28-Sep</b>	Thursday	9am - 12am	Manufacturing & Consumer Goods
<b>The 10 Priority Topic Round Table Series</b>			
<b>10-Oct</b>	Tuesday	9am - 12am	Growing Sustainable Investment
<b>12-Oct</b>	Thursday	9am - 12am	A Just Transition To Carbon Neutral
<b>17-Oct</b>	Tuesday	9am - 12am	Solving Our Energy Crisis
<b>19-Oct</b>	Thursday	9am - 12am	Ethical Transformational Governance
<b>24-Oct</b>	Tuesday	9am - 12am	Effective Public Private-Sector Collaboration
<b>26-Oct</b>	Thursday	9am - 12am	Synergies With Civil Society & Community
<b>31-Oct</b>	Tuesday	9am - 12am	Impact & Opportunity Post Pandemic
<b>02-Nov</b>	Thursday	9am - 12am	Building Global Supply Chain Resilience
<b>07-Nov</b>	Tuesday	9am - 12am	Empowering Women To Achieve Gender Equality
<b>09-Nov</b>	Thursday	9am - 12am	Leveraging Sustainability Frameworks



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- ◆ VNR Report Design & Method
- VNR Participant Role & Expectations
- VNR Company Case Study Briefing
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## VNR Participant Briefing

### VNR Report Design & Method

We have consulted with the National Planning Commission to define a VNR reporting methodology, which we have baselined our private sector VNR Synopsis on. This VNR Synopsis will then guide the structure of the full report. The final private sector VNR report may be adjusted based upon the insights emerging from the analysis.

**Inputs to the report will be gathered via a variety of mechanisms, including:**

- UNGC Communication of Progress Reports
- VNR Participant Sustainability Reports
- The VNR Participant Broad-based Insights Survey
- VNR Strategic Partner Data and Analytics
- Industry and Priority Topic Round Tables
- VNR Participant Case Studies and Success Stories

### Proposed VNR Report Structure

<b>Forewords &amp; Executive Summary</b> Executive Summary and Forewords by leaders summarising insights	<b>South African Private Sector Profile 2024</b> Overview of facts and statistics relating to delivery of the SDGs	<b>Private Sector SDG Priorities</b> Outcomes of prioritisation insights for private sector by industry	<b>Private Sector Challenges &amp; Opportunities</b> Summary of private sector SDG challenges, opportunities & trends
<b>Communication of Progress Analysis</b> Outcomes of COP, with deep dive into broad-based, qualitative insights.	<b>Arising Priority Topics &amp; Emergent Trends</b> Summary of Key Trends and opportunities arising from the VNR	<b>VNR Participant Case Studies</b> Case Studies that can provide best practice or learning opportunity	<b>Sustainable Development Goal Deep Dive</b> Analysis of SDGs for South African action drivers and connections
<b>Industry Sector Analysis &amp; Enablers</b> Analysis of Industries for specific initiatives and collaboration themes	<b>Private Sector Leadership Insights</b> Leadership Call to Action, including advice and recommendations	<b>Evaluation of Sustainability Frameworks</b> Evaluation and analysis of new and emerging sustainability frameworks	<b>Report Methodology &amp; Quality Acknowledgements</b> Recognition of Contributions, references and resources



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## VNR Participant Briefing

### VNR Participant Role & Expectations

Participation in the Voluntary National Review process for the private sector is free, thanks to the sponsorship of Absa, who are the gold sponsor for this initiative. Thanks also go to Anglo American who are a silver sponsor. We are funded to proceed, however further companies that are interested in becoming silver sponsors can reach out to us. You will then also benefit from the Qualitative Interview and a Company video animation, which are costly to produce.

Please note that we have worked to design a participation process that maximises insight, whilst minimising time-consuming effort. That said, when you sign up to participate, we strongly encourage you to help us to report successfully:

### 5 VNR Participation Commitments:

- 1. Please review the list of requirements for reporting on your Company Case Study.** We will supply a detailed template and guidance. We appreciate the dedication of your time, and hope that you will help us report properly by submitting your case study on time. Make sure that your information is properly reviewed before submission to prevent iterative review.
- 2. Please note and diarise our schedule of events.** We have worked to diarise our round table series long in advance to support your ability to plan time to attend. Your insights are vital. Please make sure that your company attends and properly represents itself. We need your insights!
- 3. Please be honest, factual and accurate.** The VNR process relies on authentic representation. Be honest about challenges and negative impact. We are only able to represent and vision future solutions if we are real about our current performance. Remember facts and statistics are invaluable!
- 4. Please encourage participation.** We appreciate the effort that you go to when getting senior leadership insights for your case study. Also, reach wider, we strongly encourage your engagement with partners and your suppliers, we need insights from companies of all sizes. Bring your network into the process.
- 5. Please communicate our progress.** Part of our strategic intention is to increase awareness of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. Engage in our social media campaign to create a multiplier effect so that we can build energy around this platform to advance sustainability in South Africa. Encourage participation and be courageous about networking.



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## VNR Participant Briefing

### VNR Company Case Study Briefing

Once you are registered you will receive your invitation to the Official Launch event, where the VNR Case Study briefing will be given. This will provide detailed guidance on how to prepare and submit your Company Case Study and your selected Success Stories. We will be working to align your case studies to emerging industry trends, SDG priorities and to priority topics.

We have worked on a recipe for company case studies that will enable consistency, whilst allowing for expression of the diversity of participants. It is important that you align to the Company Case study brief to enable our production team in the compilation of what we hope will be a large number of participating companies!

**THE VNR PARTICIPANT REPORTING DEADLINE IS THE 30<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2023**  
**We need to get all inputs in and analysed to feed the round table series.**

### VNR CASE STUDY INGREDIENTS:

#### Company Vital Statistics

- Company Name
- Industry or Sector
- Brief Company Description
- Company Sustainability Slogan
- Company Turnover
- Number of Employees
- Sustainability Budget pa.
- Top 3 Sustainability Achievement KPIs
- Website Report 'More Info' web address

#### Leadership Perspectives

- CEO or Leader Quotation
- CEO or Leader Survey: 10 Questions

#### Success Story

- Story | Industry | Sectoral Collaboration
- Facts and Impact KPIs
- SDGs | Leadership Quality
- Featured Priority Topic, if your story maps

#### SDG Reporting & Framework Maturity

- Confirmation of company SDG priorities
- Frameworks and Standards Checklist
- SDG Sustainability Model, if you have one
- Self-Assessed Sustainability Maturity Rating

#### Brand assets you need to submit:

- Corporate brand identity, including Hex colours
- High resolution company logo(s) with transparent background
- High resolution colour photo representing your core business
- High resolution colour photo representing your Success Story
- High resolution colour portrait photo of Qualitative Interviewee (silver & gold only)

#### SDG Opportunities | Challenges | Initiatives

- Top three sustainability opportunities (Company, Industry, South Africa)
- Top three sustainability challenges and pain points (Company, Industry, South Africa)
- Top three sustainability initiatives

#### Company Sustainability Video (Gold and Silver Participants only)

- 2 Minute Script based on your selected Success Story or Priority Topic
- Storyboard review and approval prior to production
- Video animation with your corporate brand and GCNSA VNR branding

#### Qualitative Interview Questions (Gold and Silver Participants only)

1. What has been your company's biggest sustainability win over the last year?
2. Which is your number 1 VNR Priority Topic and why?
3. What is the main impact your company seeks to maximise and why?
4. What is the main impact your company seeks to minimise and why?
5. What do you need from the government or public sector to succeed?
6. What pan-African sustainability issue is most important to your company success?
7. What is the sustainability contribution your employees most value?
8. What is the sustainability contribution your suppliers most value?
9. What is the sustainability contribution your customers most value?
10. What is the sustainability contribution your shareholders most value?





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## VNR Participant Briefing

### VNR Social Media Toolkit

Once you have registered to participate you will be given your VNR social media toolkit. Part of our strategic intention is to drive awareness of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. We intend to do this by conducting an ongoing social media campaign that drip feeds the results of the VNR report as we develop findings. You are strongly encouraged to give a shout out to fellow VNR participants and to share VNR findings with your circle of influence.

#### Your social media toolkit will contain:

- Links to VNR Video Animations as they are released
- The VNR participant badge for use on your website and social media channels
- The VNR mobilisation press release
- A developing series of VNR emerging insight social media flyers
- A draft email invitation for you to send to your strategic partners



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## VNR Participant Briefing

### VNR Support & Points of Contact

If you need help, we are here to guide you. Please feel free to reach out to us if you have any questions regarding the private sector Voluntary National Review 2024:

Global Compact Network South Africa Website:

<https://globalcompactsa.org.za>

VNR Registration Form:

<https://tinyurl.com/3nw2vk8c>

VNR Support Email Address:

VNR2024@globalcompactsa.org.za

VNR Contact Number:

011 771 4142

### VNR Role Players

- GCNSA Executive Director:
- VNR Silver & GCNSA Membership Enquiries:
- VNR Project Manager:
- VNR Social Media Engagement:

**Dr Achieng Ojwang**  
**Rethabile Mbokodi**  
**Chloe** Cormack  
Sifiso Nkosi

Note that **Empanda**, a member of the GCNSA, is acting as the private sector VNR Facilitator and is responsible for production of our VNR Report. Contact from Empanda should be expected by participants in the Voluntary National Review process. You can find out more about Empanda at [www.empanda.co.za](http://www.empanda.co.za)

### VNR Resources

The following links to resources are here to help you, especially if you and your organisation are new to the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals:

- [Blueprint for Business Leadership on the SDGs](#)  
A useful guide to the Sustainable Development Goals and how they are applied in business.
- [The United Nations Global Compact Website](#)  
The website for the UNGC has information about the 2030 Agenda with many helpful resources.
- [The South African National Development Plan 2030](#)  
The NDP details the South African public sector sustainability plans, aligning with the 2030 Agenda.
- GCNSA Programme of Events

## The Sustainable Development Goals:

In 2015, South Africa, as a United Nations (UN) Member State, adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. At the heart of this Agenda are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity:



## THE TEN PRINCIPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL COMPACT



### HUMAN RIGHTS

1. Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and
2. make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.



### LABOUR

3. Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;
4. the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;
5. the effective abolition of child labour; and
6. the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.



### ENVIRONMENT

7. Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;
8. undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and
9. encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.



### ANTI-CORRUPTION

10. Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.



United Nations  
Global Compact

## ABOUT THE UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL COMPACT

As a special initiative of the UN Secretary-General, the United Nations Global Compact is a call to companies everywhere to align their operations and strategies with Ten Principles in the areas of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. Our ambition is to accelerate and scale the global collective impact of business by upholding the Ten Principles and delivering the Sustainable Development Goals through accountable companies and ecosystems that enable change.

With more than 15,000 companies and 3,800 non-business signatories based in over 160 countries, and 69 Local Networks, the UN Global Compact is the world's largest corporate sustainability initiative. One Global Compact uniting business for a better world.

For more information, follow @globalcompact on social media and visit our website at [unglobalcompact.org](http://unglobalcompact.org)