






**The Global
SDG Synthesis
Coalition**

USING VNR DATA AS PART OF A SYNTHESIS OF GLOBAL EVALUATIVE EVIDENCE ON PROGRESS TOWARDS SDG17



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VNR LABS
HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM

Using Voluntary National Review data as part of a Synthesis of Global Evaluative Evidence on the Sustainable Development Goal 17 –the Partnership Pillar



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Research questions to identify the state of the evidence on SDG-17

VNR DATA ANALYSIS AND DEVIANCE ASSESSMENT

Which countries
(across contexts) have made the **most progress on SDG-17** and why?

IMPACT EVALUATION SYNTHESIS

Which policies and programs are most effective in improving and accelerating SDG-17 indicators and targets?

PERFORMANCE & PROCESS EVALUATION SYNTHESIS

How and why are some programs and policies more or less successful in achieving progress toward SDG-17?

Rules-Based Classification and Sentiment Analysis to Identify Themes based on VNR data

The Rules-Based Classification method identifies the number of keywords associated with SDG-17 in the VNRs.

To understand each country's attitudes toward the different SDG-17 topics, we conducted a sentiment analysis of the VNR reports.

Build a dictionary of keywords and phrases



Tag SDG-17 text in VNRs using the dictionary



Process the VNR reports text using a sentiment analysis tool

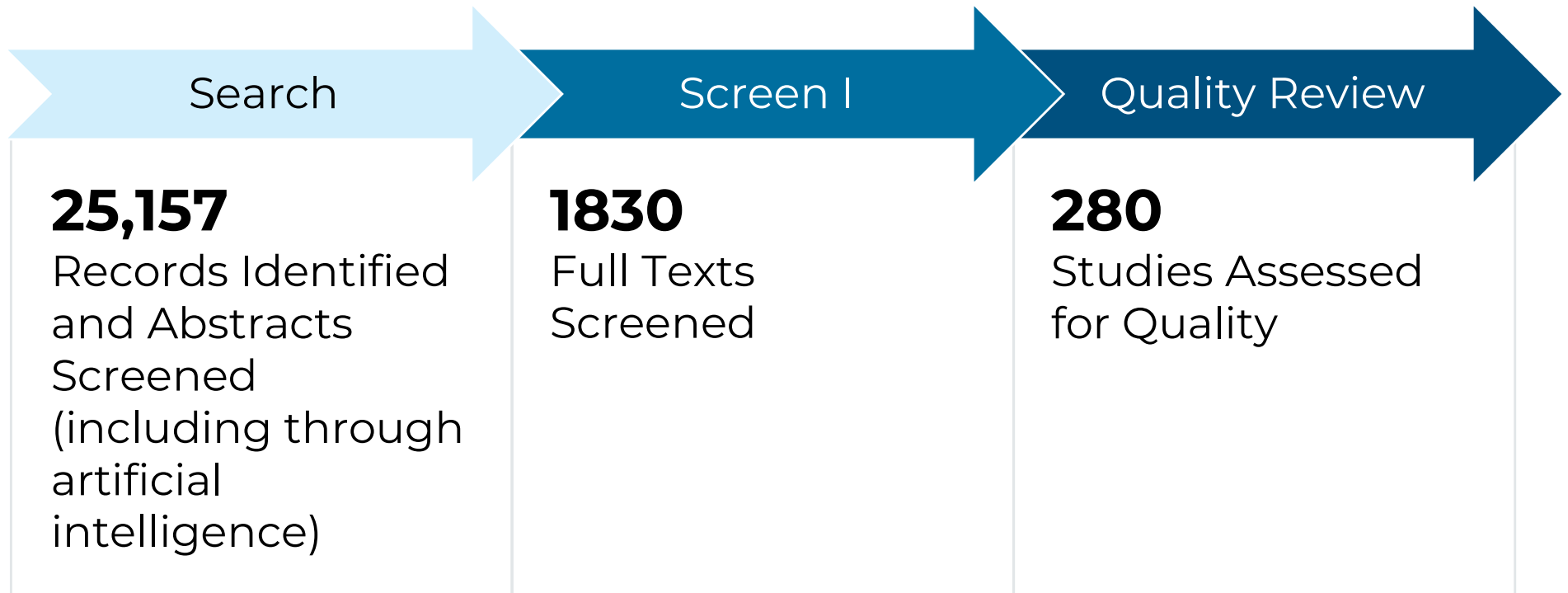


Classify the reports as positive, neutral, or negative



Screening of thousands of studies after a comprehensive search

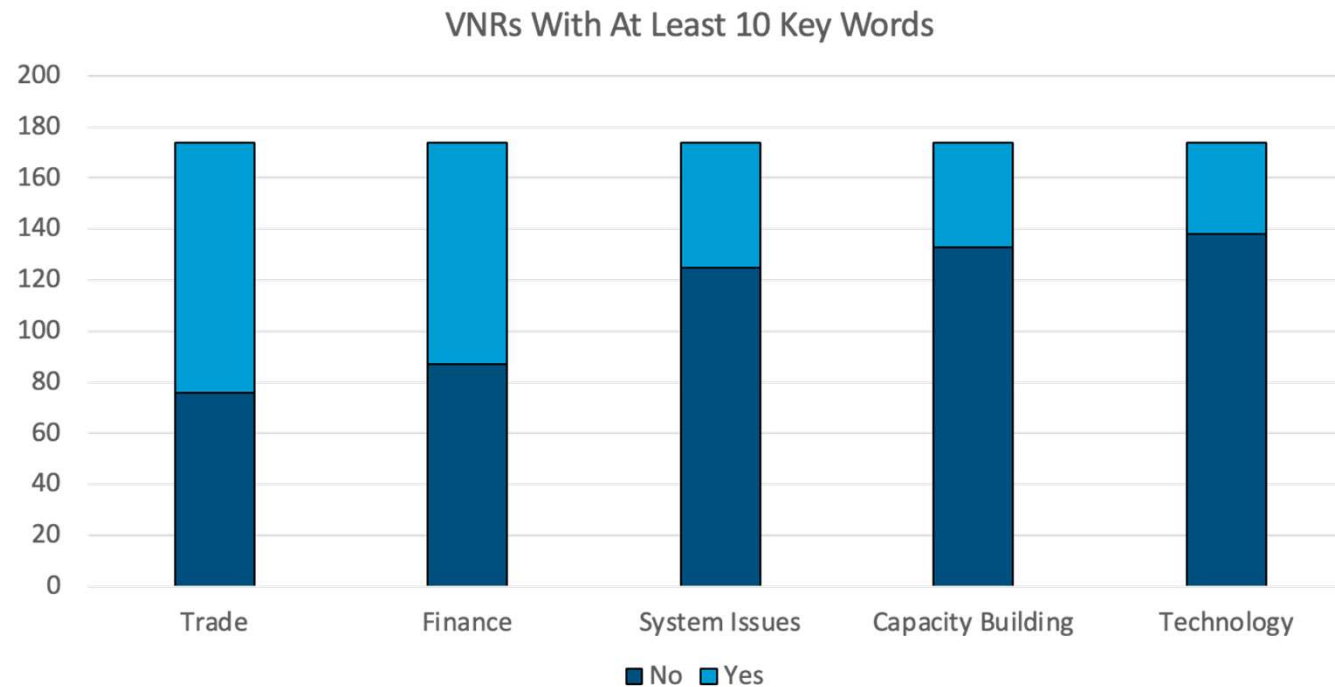
189 impact evaluations and 91 performance and process evaluations met our inclusion criteria



FINDINGS

Voluntary National Review findings

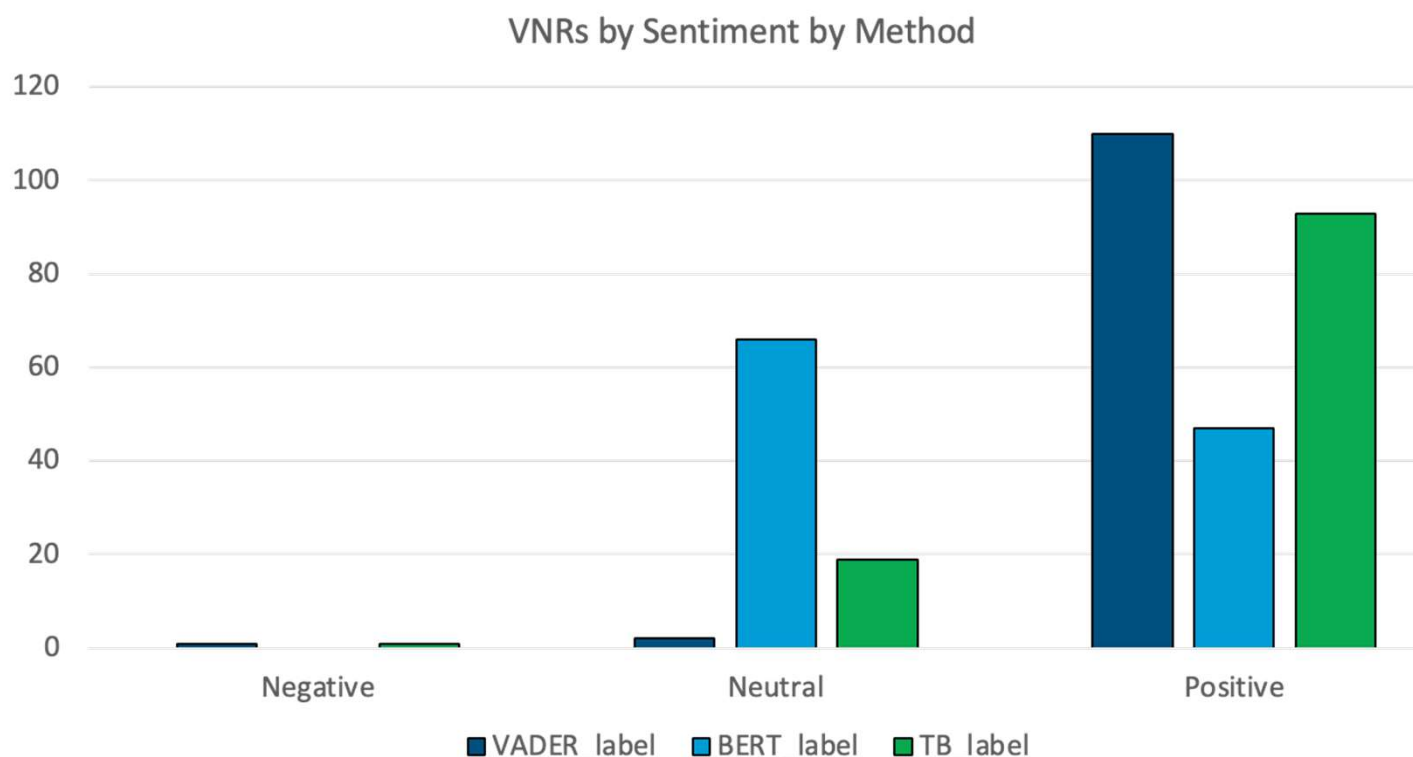
A considerable number of VNR reports communicate about trade and finance, a smaller number speak about systemic issues, and only a few report on capacity building and technology. *Why is this so?*



Ireland VNR 2023 - *“Beyond our work in specific thematic areas, and in line with SDG 17 on “partnerships for the Goals”, we work in partnership with many organisations to contribute broadly to the SDGs across the world – including with governments, civil society organisations and multilateral institutions.”*

Lithuania VNR 2023 – *“As the Lithuanian economy grows, so does the share of government revenue in GDP (from 34.5% in 2018 to 36.5% in 2021).”*

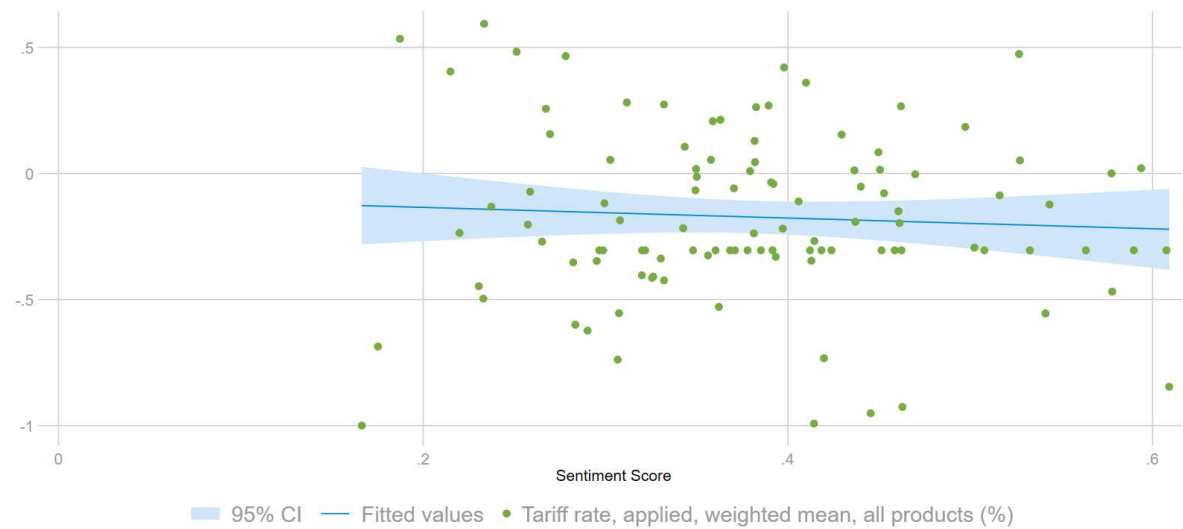
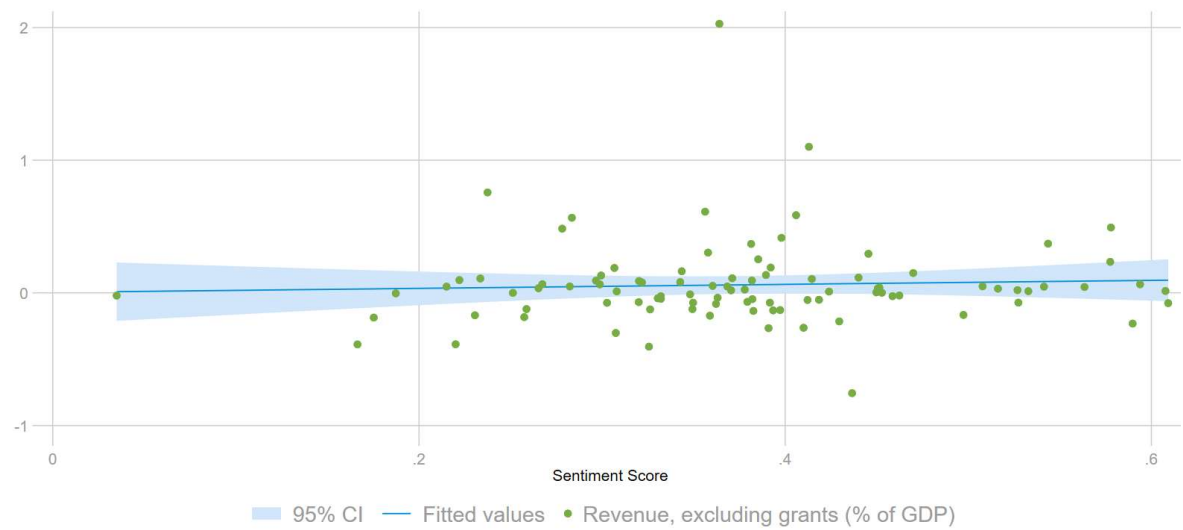
VNR data show a moderately positive sentiment/outlook regarding SDG-17 progress



India VNR 2020 – “...The Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), driven by NITI Aayog, is radically transforming the innovation and entrepreneurship landscape in India. Atal Tinkering Labs (ATL) operating in schools are galvanizing design mindset, computational thinking, adaptive learning and physical computing across various themes.”

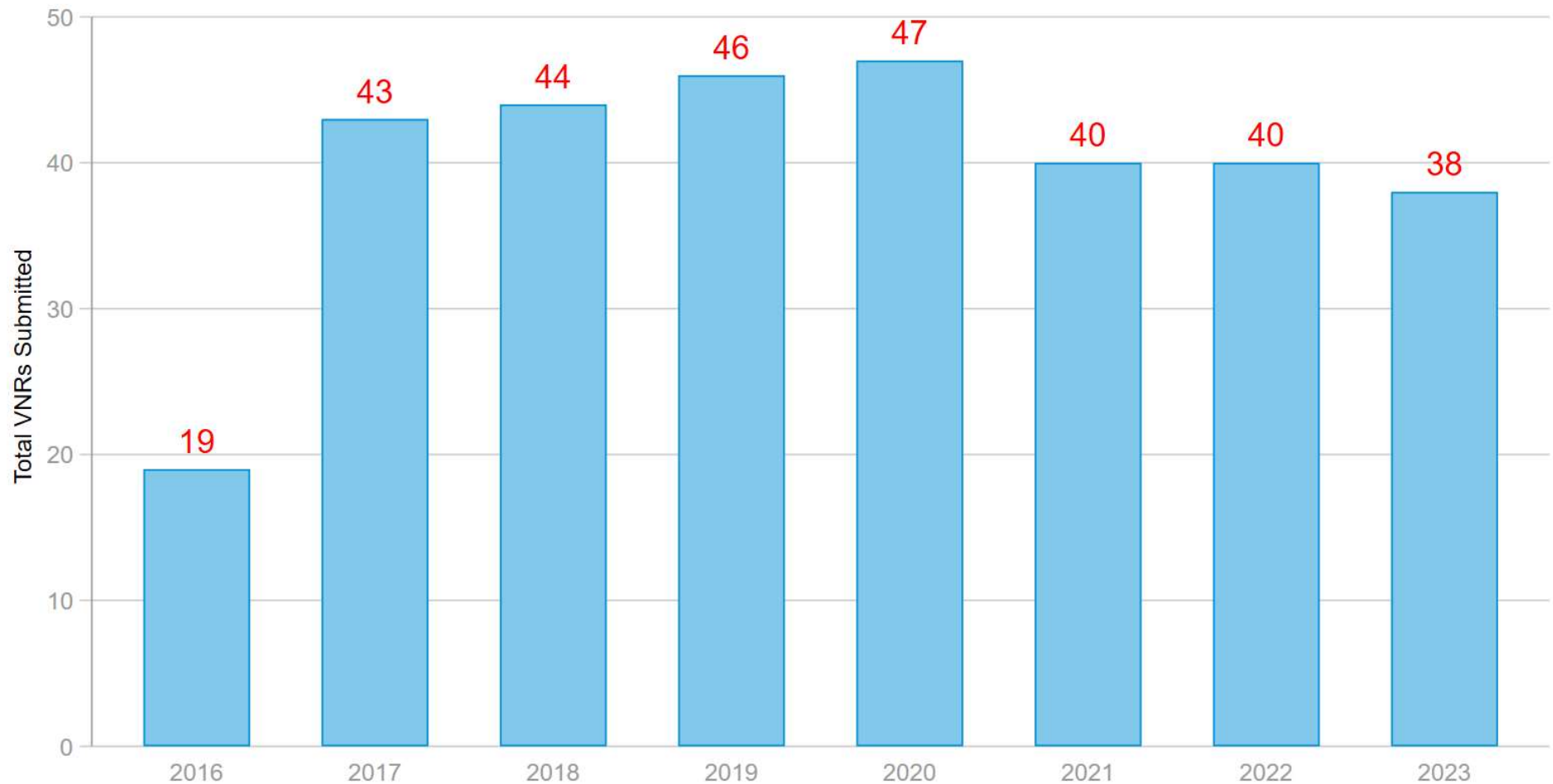
Liechtenstein VNR 2017 – “Through specific aid and development projects, Liechtenstein supports developing countries as partners in the implementation of the SDGs”

However, VNR sentiment scores are not associated with SDG-17 progress

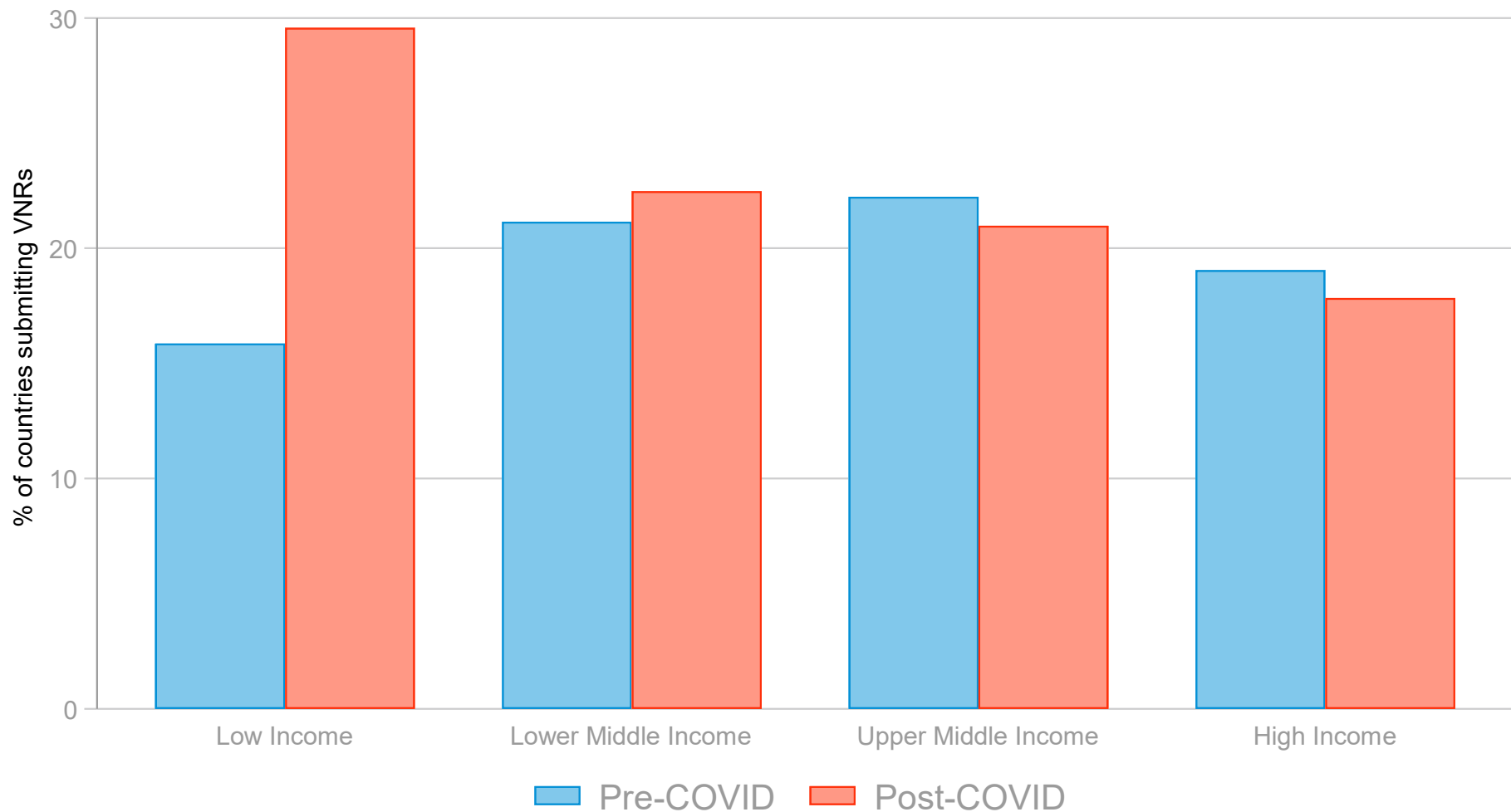


SDG 17 Data	Association with Subjectivity and Polarity Scores
Finance	—
Trade	—
Capacity Building	—
Technology	—
Systemic Issues	—

The number of VNR reports increased steadily, but COVID-19 reversed the trend



Only low-income countries submitted more VNR reports following COVID-19. *Why is this so?*



While low-income countries have a pressing need for development assistance, official development assistance of traditional donor countries has declined. *Could new donor agencies partially fill this gap?*

Bhutan VNR 2021 – *“Bhutan’s first VNR report had assessed that SDG 17 was at risk, due to several constraining factors. These include limited foreign direct investment, limited capacity to harness the benefits of science and technology, and withdrawal of traditional development partners and decline in Official Development Assistance.”*

Belgium VNR 2017 – *“With just below 0.5% of gross national income currently spent on official development assistance (ODA) (indicator 33), Belgium, like most other EU Member States, still has some considerable catch-up effort to make in order to reach the internationally set 0.7% target which was recommitted to in the context of the 2030 Agenda.”*

Thailand VNR 2021 – *“Thailand has transitioned from a recipient country to an emerging development donor. The country has provided developing assistance to other developing countries on the basis of the SEP for SDGs partnership through South-South and Triangular Cooperation to 26 countries in Asia-Pacific, Africa, and Latin America.”*

Key Lessons from the VNR analysis

Key Lessons from the VNR analysis

1. VNR reports have insufficient focus on evaluative evidence to identify what works and why in accelerating SDG-17 outcomes.
2. While data science and artificial intelligence can generate lessons about VNR reports, VNR reports require stronger connections with statistical data and evaluative evidence to maximize the potential of data science.
3. More specific language about ways to liberalize trade (e.g., regional trade agreements vs. preferential trade agreements), increase government revenue (e.g., tariff vs. VAT revenues), and stimulate technology (e.g., broadband internet vs. mobile phones) will help VNR reports to come with more specific recommendations about what kind of programming can help accelerate SDG-17 outcomes
4. More in-depth problem analyses on the specific needs of the most likely to be left behind populations can increase the effectiveness of multi-stakeholder partnerships

Issues for further consideration

1. After the start of COVID-19, the number of VNR reports of low-income countries increased, but the number of reports submitted by middle-income and high-income countries decreased
 - a. Do these trends reflect an increased commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals in low-income countries? Does it reflect an increased need for Official Development Assistance?
 - b. What explains the different trend in middle-income and high-income countries? Has COVID-19 affected the ability of these countries to focus on the Sustainable Development Goals? Why?
2. VNR reports speak most about finance and trade, and less about technology
 - a. Would more private sector involvement help in increasing the VNR reports' technology focus?
3. Increasing Official Development Assistance from new donor countries facilitates trust and autonomy based on South-South partnerships, and could partially compensate for reductions in Official Development Assistance of traditional donor countries. However, it is unlikely to meet all financing needs of low-income countries
 - a. Could tax reforms and community-based tax data collection contribute to reducing countries' dependence on Official Development Assistance?
 - b. What are the implications for the most likely to be left behind?

Thank you

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