Culture in the 2024 Voluntary National Reviews

A Culture2030Goal Campaign Report

15 July 2024

Executive Summary

The Culture2030Goal Campaign's report on culture in the 2024 Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) provides an overview of how far – and how – culture is being integrated into national efforts to deliver on the United Nations 2030 Agenda.

Steps to integrate culture in this way come despite the lack of a dedicated culture goal in the Agenda when it was agreed in 2015, a move which the Campaign has argued has led to the under-mobilisation of culture as a driver of development. The hypothesis of the campaign is that any government looking to take a truly comprehensive approach to achieving the Agenda – and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals – will need to address culture. Analysing VNRs offers a good way of testing this hypothesis, given that these offer a snapshot of how governments are approaching sustainable development.

Based on an exploration of references to culture in the 33 published reviews (including that of South Africa, which subsequently chose not to present, but not including Mexico, Samoa, South Sudan and Vanuatu, who had not yet published at time of writing), it looks at how VNRs address culture in three ways:

- According to the different dimensions of culture addressed
- According to the clusters of different SDGs linked to culture in reviews
- According to the targets set out in the Culture2030Goal Campaign's zero draft of a Culture Goal

The report finds that looking across the VNRs as a whole, the full range of dimensions of culture, clusters of SDGs, and targets in the Culture Goal zero draft are reflected.

There is nonetheless strong variation in the degree of attention paid to culture, with Austria, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Oman and Palau standing out for the depth and breadth of their exploration of the role of culture in sustainable development. Already from this range, it is possible to see that countries at quite different levels of GDP and from very different parts of the world are seeing culture as a key topic.

In line with the Campaign's own work to call for a dedicated Culture Goal in any future development agendas – and for it to be treated as a goal already today – the analysis does seem to indicate that there is need for an extra impulsion to ensure that the good practice that already exists is spread more universally. It also offers helpful evidence for a future revision of the Culture Goal, both in terms of setting out the potential relevance of the targets in place, but also useful nuances to be taken into account in future.

Introduction: The Missing Goal?

Welcome to the 2024 edition of the Culture2030Goal Campaign's review of the place of culture in the Voluntary National Reviews submitted by UN Member States for the year's High-Level Political Forum.

The Campaign brings together representative global and regional networks of cultural practitioners, heritage professionals, and culture policy decision-makers in local and regional government. Its primary goals are to make the case for the inclusion of an explicit culture goal in future development agendas, and for the full and meaningful integration of culture into development planning today.

Crucially, it argues that it was a mistake in 2015 not to include a culture goal in the United Nations 2030 Agenda. This oversight has, we argue, meant that culture is not necessarily seen as a policy lever in efforts to deliver sustainable development, that decision-makers in other areas are not prompted to incorporate cultural actors and factors into their own planning and delivery, and that the culture sector's contribution is under-valued. An explicit goal, it is argued, would not lead to culture being left in a silo, but would rather raise culture's status and facilitate interlinkages and the mainstreaming of culture into development policy work as a whole.

The work of the campaign therefore focuses on trying to rectify this situation, both through advocacy around major UN meetings and outputs, and highlighting relevant good practices. This publication falls into the second category, exploring how far countries – despite the lack of serious reference in the 2030 Agenda – governments are nonetheless making culture part of their work to achieve sustainable development.

The Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) represent an excellent tool for trying to answer this question. They represent a comprehensive snapshot – typically produced once every four years or so – of how countries are going about implementing the 2030 Agenda. They are – if the UN's guidance is followed – supposed to take account of all relevant policy actions and stakeholders for development. Our argument, as the Campaign, is therefore that any full review must therefore include consideration of culture, given how vital this is for progress across the board.

As highlighted, this is just the latest edition in a series produced by the Campaign. This edition follows in the model of the 2022 and 2023 editions[1]. Therefore, as in both previous years, following a methodology section (Section 1), there is an assessment of the different ways in which culture is approached in VNRs (Section 2), and an overview of where the Reviews suggest that culture is connected to progress on other Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Section 3). A slight change this year, building on an innovation in last year's report, is that this edition explores in more depth how far governments are already reporting on the targets set out in the Campaign's zero draft for a Culture Goal, released at the time of the UNESCO MONDIACULT Conference in 2022 (Section 4). Section 5 provides a conclusion.

Before starting, it is worth sharing the key initial finding that, as in 2023, every single one of the published VNRs refers to culture in one way or another. The number of

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[1] An early report covers the place of culture in VNRs from 2016 to 2019, using a more detailed approach that explores different terms related to culture. A similar methodology was then used to look at Voluntary Local Reviews from 2016 to 2020.

references varies from 1 to almost 100. Those countries broadly making most reference to culture are Austria, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Oman and Palau, representing a range of regions and levels of development. This is a welcome indication of a recognition that culture is not just something for richer countries, but has relevance globally.

We can also see that just over 1/3 of countries included their culture ministries or other relevant agencies in the preparation of their reports – Austria, Azerbaijan, Brazil, Colombia, Honduras, Lao PDR, Mauritius, Oman, Palau, Peru, Sierra Leone and the Solomon Islands. This is likely to be a conservative estimate, as we are aware that librarians, for example, were engaged in preparing Uganda's and Kenya's reviews. There may be further examples, for example where there is no list of contributors, or where there is no formal culture ministry.

A particular example of good practice is Palau, which has a working group whose mission is to look at how culture can be integrated into policy actions across the board.

The inclusion of culture ministries in preparing VNRs is a clear and positive indication of a country seeing culture as a policy area that needs to be acted on in order to achieve sustainable development.

1. Methodology

The report applies a relatively simple methodology, evaluating the 33 VNR reports that had been published at the time of writing (12 July 2024). This list includes **South Africa** (which subsequently decided not to present its report), but does not include **Mexico**, **Samoa**, **South Sudan** or **Vanuatu**, all of which had not published their reports, although still planned to present these at the High-Level Political Forum.

To carry out the analysis, a simple Ctrl+F search was used for "cultur*", or the equivalents in other languages. Original language reports were analysed when these were in English, French or Spanish, while those in Arabic were machine translated into English and analysed from there. Phrases or paragraphs referring to culture were then copied down, with a priori unrelated terms (like agriculture, aquaculture, silviculture, puericulture) discarded.

These references were then categorised for each of the three types of analysis. When looking at the overall way in which Reviews referred to culture, the following headings were used:
- Culture as a basis for national identity/nationhood
- Culture as an overall pillar of development
- Culture as a determinant of (or barrier to) the achievement of policy goals
- References to cultural tourism
- References to 'cultures of' different things
- Culture as something that is measured
- Culture policy as subject to sustainability principles
- Culture as a means of promoting sustainable development and the SDGs in particular

To note, references to culture itself as a goal are covered in the third analysis (see below).

Building on where culture is seen as a determinant of policy effectiveness in other areas, the second analysis looked at where culture was associated with different broad areas of sustainable development policy, namely:
- Promoting equity and inclusion (SDGs 1, 5 and 10)
- Climate, environment and agriculture (SDGs 2, 12, 13, 14 and 15)
- Health, wellbeing and basic necessities (3, 6, and 7)
- Education (SDG4)
- Growth (SDGs 8 and 9)
- Strong and sustainable communities (SDG 11)
- Peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG16)
- Partnerships (SDG17)

The final analysis uses as categories the 10 targets established in the Campaign's zero draft for a culture goal. In brief, these are below[2].

- Realise Cultural Rights for All

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[2] See the Campaign's zero draft here: https://culture2030goal.net/sites/default/files/2023-02/culture2030goal_Culture%20Goal%20-%20ENG.pdf

- Promote a Culture of Peace, Non-Violence and Global Citizenship, and Appreciation of Cultural Diversity
- Protect, Safeguard and Mobilise Heritage
- Protect and Promote the Diversity of Cultural Expressions
- Promote Local Culture and Products and Uphold the Rights of Artists
- Enhance the Conditions for the Mobility of Cultural Professionals and Cross-Border Creativity
- Empower Indigenous Peoples to Strengthen their Own Institutions
- Develop a Cultural Approach in Environmental Protection and Sustainable Urbanisation
- Strengthen Cultural Institutions
- Ensure that Cultural Considerations are Taken into Account in All Development Goals

In each case, the report provides an overview of how many countries included references to culture that fell into one of the relevant categories, and then summarises these. Links to the reports can be found in annex at the end of this report.

2. Dimensions of culture in VNRs

At the heart of the case made by the Culture2030Goal campaign is the idea that the contribution of culture to development is multifaceted. It of course includes the contribution that cultural professionals and institutions can make to achieving development goals, but also extends to the role that cultural insights and understanding can play in enhancing policy design.

We argue that culture should be seen as a goal in itself, as well as an enabler of the achievement of other goals, but also as a pillar of sustainable development as a whole, shaping what it means for our communities, societies and planet to be sustainable.

2a. Culture as part of national identity

Before looking at any specificities of delivery on the SDGs – individually or as a whole – countries often use the introduction to their VNRs to say something about what makes them unique, or other aspects which provide important context for the rest of their reports. Without going into questions of political theory, these help create an overall narrative, as well as looking to explain why countries 'work' overall as a space in which to pursue sustainable development.

Just under a third of Reviews mention the role of culture in building identity overall. Some countries suggested that it was the richness of their culture as a whole that marked them out (**Azerbaijan**, **Eritrea**, **South Africa**), with **Palau** being particularly strong on this, including reference to heritage on the front cover of its Review. Others underlined that it was their cultural that represented a key defining factor (**Brazil**, **Colombia**, **Costa Rica**, **Ecuador**, **Eritrea** (again), the **Solomon Islands**). **Nepal** even highlighted how its multiculturality features in its consultation.

Taking inspiration from Brazil's cultural diversity, from the exuberance of the Amazon Rainforest to the energy of large metropolises, the differences between population groups, the visual identity incorporates colors, shapes, and symbols that reflect the country's cultural richness, establishing a direct connection with the SDGs
Brazilian VNR

2b. Culture as a pillar of development

One key argument for the Campaign is that culture should be seen as pillar of development, alongside economic, social and environmental aspects. Indeed, the idea of 'cultural sustainability' features in our zero draft for a cultural goal. These examples point to culture (or cultural sustainability) as a goal in itself.

A third of countries do indicate that their conception of sustainability as a whole has a strong cultural aspect to it. Some talk directly about cultural sustainability (**Colombia**, **Honduras**, **Namibia** and **Syria**), while **Brazil** indicates that cultural diversity is a pillar of a resilient and sustainable future. **Ecuador's** report highlights the city of Manabí, which has made culture a pillar of its strategy, and **Costa Rica** and **Equatorial Guinea** have a dedicated section on culture in their development plans.

Meanwhile **Palau** stands out, presenting culture as the first of the first key areas of development in its plan. **Zimbabwe** talks about culture as a cross-cutting issue, similar to gender, youth, and promoting small business and entrepreneurship, while **Austria**

sets out cultural participation as being part of the same agenda as social and economic participation.

To prevent and reduce poverty or social exclusion, the financial security of all people living in the country is of crucial importance, just as their social, economic, political and cultural participation is
Austrian VNR

2c. Culture as a determinant of (or barrier to) the achievement of policy goals

Looking beyond broader references to culture underpinning development work across the board, over half of reviews argue that cultural factors have a major impact on the effectiveness of policy initiatives, and so the ability of countries' to achieve their objectives.

Starting on the positive side, with culture seen as an enabler of development in other areas (rather than a goal in itself, **Azerbaijan** suggests that the socio-cultural factors shaping its society give it the conditions necessary to thrive. Similarly, **Eritrea** suggests that cultural values and norms underpin its development pathway, while **Palau** is very strong in explaining how its culture – and in particular ways of thinking and working together – provide a strong basis for resilience and policy progress. More specifically, **Peru** notes how consideration of culture has boosted the effectiveness of education.

Countries seeing the need for a cultural transformation as part of wider development agendas include **Brazil** (for a sustainable economy), **Chad** and **Syria** (for sustainable development in general), **Colombia** (for sustainable nutrition), **Costa Rica** and the **Lao PDR** (health), and **Mauritius** and **Uganda** (for equality).

A sub-set of examples here are those which clarify that culture comes into play when localising policies (i.e. setting out how they should be implemented at local or regional levels). **Colombia**, **Costa Rica**, **Ecuador**, **Kenya**, **Peru** and **Sierra Leone** are strong here, noting that without this effort to integrate culture, polices risk being rejected – and so rendered ineffective – by communities. In other words, it is vital for policy implementation to be culturally relevant in order to achieve its goals.

Las soluciones planteadas deben guardar una proporción equilibrada de acuerdo a los usos y costumbres de la comunidad, si bien se realizan mejoras técnicas o innovadoras deben desarrollarse de tal forma que la comunidad no lo asimile como una vulneración a su cultura.
Colombian VNR

Looking at examples of where countries cite cultural aspects as being barriers to the achievement of the SDGs, the most common references are to norms that serve to disadvantage women. **Chad** and **Uganda** cite 'rigidities' in culture as slowing progress towards gender quality, while **Kenya** and **Eritrea** cite phenomena like forced marriage and female genital mutilation, and **Namibia** and **Mauritania** cite harmful practices in general. **Belize** notes that culture can have a particular effect on whether women can meet menstrual hygiene needs, and **Syria** suggests it means that they do not pursue education as far as they might. **Spain**, **Georgia**, **Guinea**, **Libya** and **Nepal** too note that

culture seems to be a factor in preventing true equality between women and men, and Colombia suggest that it leaves women disconnected from agriculture and nutrition questions. **Honduras** and **Uganda** highlight a toxic macho culture.

Beyond gender, cultural factors are cited as leading to discrimination against marginalised groups in general (**Kenya**, **Spain**, **Uganda**). **Brazil** notes that culture may be preventing full participation in water management programmes, and **Spain** suggest it could be holding back the transition towards care in the community of people facing mental health difficulties. **Colombia** suggests that culture is leading to poor nutrition and health, as do **Nepal** and **Uganda**.

Clearly, the Culture2030Goal campaign does not argue for culture for culture's sake, or that culture is fixed forever. Indeed, the examples of those reports calling for cultural transformation indicate that cultural policy and action represent the key means of addressing cultural challenges in societies.

2d. Culture and tourism

One of the rate references to culture in the 2030 Agenda comes under Target 8.9, which refers to sustainable tourism, drawing on local cultures. This is a very practical example of drawing on culture to achieve an economic sustainability goal.

9 countries do refer to this aspect of culture overall. Some simply recognise how their cultures can serve to make them more attractive (**Spain**, **Uganda**), while others are making concrete efforts to highlight the strength of their cultures in order to draw more visitors (**Chad, Ecuador, Honduras, Palau, Uganda** and **Zimbabwe**). There is an awareness of the risks that tourism can pose to cultures, a point made by **Costa Rica** and the **Lao PDR**.

2e. A Culture of…

A slightly tangential aspect of references to culture is where Reviews highlight the importance of developing a 'culture of' different things, usually in the context of trying to bring about positive or constructive behaviours within institutions or in the population as a whole. This refers to quite a broad definition of what culture is, but remains relevant given that it says something about wide values and beliefs – something that cultural interventions may be well placed to shape.

2/3 of Reviews indeed talk at some point about a 'culture of' different things. On the more positive side, examples include: volunteering (**Azerbaijan**); peace (**Brazil**, Guinea, **Oman**); respect for natural resources (**Colombia, Yemen**), food (**Colombia, Ecuador, Libya, Syria**), and energy (**Lao PDR**); wider sustainability (Costa **Rica, Libya, Syria, Zimbabwe**), innovation (**Costa Rica, Eritrea, Lao PDR, Nepal, Oman, Uganda**), entrepreneurship (**Libya, Oman**), localisation (**Costa Rica**), data (**Equatorial Guinea, Uganda**) and data sharing (**Nepal**), equality and human rights (**Guinea, Oman**), avoiding poverty (**Peru**), transparency in government (**Honduras, Uganda**), reading (**Kenya**), care (**Namibia**), digital security (**Nepal, Oman**), communication (**Oman**), civic participation (**South Africa**), and healthy aging (**Palau**).

More negative cultures that governments are seeking to change include those of violence against women and discrimination (**Honduras, Libya**), risky driving (**Lao PDR**), smoking (**Lao PDR**), and bureaucracy (**South Africa**).

2f. Culture as something that can be measured

The only indicator in the official set of SDG metrics relating to culture links to Target 11.4 (safeguard natural and cultural heritage), and focuses on spending on this. Five countries do report on this (**Austria**, **Congo (Republic)**, **Ecuador**, **Uganda** and **Zimbabwe**), while **Azerbaijan** and **Peru** give wider data about cultural spending, and **Namibia** reports on levels of enrolments in arts subjects. **Brazil** focuses more how far it has been able to disaggregate data in order to highlight intercultural inequalities, an angle which certainly would help in efforts to measure progress in closing them.

2g. Culture as a means of promoting the SDGs

There is an expectation that countries should promote the 2030 Agenda nationally, not least as part of the process of preparing their VNRs. This does create an interesting opportunity to draw on cultural actors and approaches to communicate most effectively.

7 of the Reviews this year do this, with **Austria** and **Zimbabwe** highlighting their use of heritage to stimulate engagement and Libya noting that wider cultural activities have helped raise awareness. **Kenya** and **Nepal** note that they have taken account of local cultural specificities when talking about the Goals, while **Brazil** deliberately looked to design to start a conversation, through the cover of their Review. **Uganda**, meanwhile, suggests that it is working to build a culture of leadership around the SDGs.

This design encourages immersive reading, proposing a visual journey that celebrates Brazilian diversity while emphasizing the urgency of the SDGs for a sustainable and inclusive future. Thus, the report aims to not only be a technical document, but also a visual artifact that instigates, educates and engages readers globally.
Brazilian VNR

2h. Culture policy as subject to sustainability principles

Finally, rather that looking at culture as a goal or a contributor to the achievement of other goals, it is also worth noting the references that a number of Reviews makes to the importance to apply wider sustainability principles to cultural policy design and implementation itself. This is arguably logical – if the cultural field is to claim that it should be recognised as a key actor in the sustainable development space, it needs to adhere to the same rules.

Six countries make this link in total. **Austria** and **Spain** highlight concerns about a lack of equality within the arts sector, and set out efforts to address this, with active steps to support the visibility of women and others at risk of marginalisation. **Brazil** too notes its affirmative actions – quotas, bonuses, reservation of spaces and other steps – to encourage participation by women, black people, indigenous peoples, traditional peoples and communities, people with disabilities, LGBTQIAPN+, elderly people, homeless people and other socially vulnerable groups.

Oman also underlines work to promote women in the culture and media sector, while **Palau** sets out its effort to engage youth, noting that this will be essential for the future of culture in any case.

2i: Data overview

Finally, it is possible to look across the numbers of references to build an idea of how, as set out in Graph 1 on the right. This indicates that the most common way of taking about culture is as a determinant of success, either through enabling or holding back progress.

The second most common type of reference to culture was to the idea of a 'culture of'. As noted above, these were diverse, covering both more and less desirable aspects. 10 reports each talked about culture as a pillar of development, and cited culture indicators, and 9 each saw culture as a basis for identity, and referred to tourism.

Graph 1: Number of VNRs addressing culture in different ways
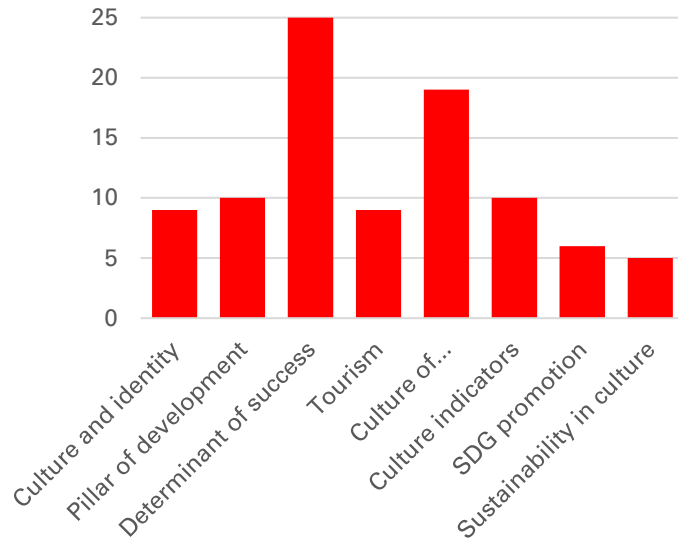
The below table looks at which countries referred to most different dimensions of culture in their reviews:

Number of dimensions of culture covered	Countries
7 Dimensions	Brazil
6 Dimensions	Ecuador
5 Dimensions	Costa Rica, Palau, Uganda
4 Dimensions	Austria, Colombia, Honduras, Namibia, Nepal
3 Dimensions	Azerbaijan, Kenya, Lao PDR, Libya, Spain, Syria, Zimbabwe
2 Dimensions	Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Guinea, Oman, Peru, Solomon Islands, South Africa
1 Dimension	Armenia, Belize, Congo (Republic), Georgia, Mauritania, Mauritius, Sierra Leone, Yemen

Brazil takes the most comprehensive approach, it appears, touching on all seven dimensions, while **Ecuador**, **Costa Rica**, **Palau** and **Uganda** all having five or more.

In closing this section, it is clear, as in previous years, that across the range of VNRs – and so Member States – culture is approached as an issue in different ways, in line with the approach taken by the Culture2030Goal campaign. This goes beyond a simple promotion of a particular sector or group, and touches on fundamental questions about how societies work as a whole. Nonetheless, what can be taken from all of these different perspectives is the value of an active, purposeful and comprehensive approach to culture in sustainable development.

3. Interlinkages between culture and existing Sustainable Development Goals

Section 2c above discusses the degree to which culture is seen as an enabler of – or a barrier to – progress in a variety of different areas covered by the SDGs. This section explores this question further, looking at the specific interlinkages between culture and existing SDGs that are identified in the 2024 VNRs.

The topic of interlinkages is an important one, and indeed is arguably one of the aspects that makes the 2030 Agenda unique. While each individual goal in the Agenda has been pursued at global level since well before 2015, the emphasis on how progress on each goal contributes to – and depends on – progress on the others is newer. This is indeed, arguably, a key element of the value-added of the 2030 Agenda compared to other processes.

There have been efforts to assess these connections. Already in 2017, the International Science Council carried out important work focused on these interlinkages[3], while in 2023, UCLG's Culture Committee looked at the evidence around how culture interacts with each existing goal[4]. This section looks – at a high level – at how Member State themselves perceive these links.

3a. Culture and Equity Goals (SDGs 1, 5 and 10)

The first set of SDGs considered are those focused on combatting poverty and inequality, in particular that faced by women. 10 of the 33 VNRs published look at these connections in total.

Starting with those Reviews that view the link as being a positive one, **Austria** underlines that it sees art and culture as being key to ensuring that policy efforts for social inclusion are meaningful, as does **Oman**. **Mauritius** too is positive about the impacts that heritage activities – such as the refurbishment or revalorisation of monuments and historic buildings – can have on deprived areas.

Brazil gives the example of work to support projects around Hip-Hop, given the potential of this to help build pride in marginalised communities. This is presented as just one example of the wider role of culture in 'combating structural inequalities and for social and economic transformations of justice and inclusion'. **Ecuador** focuses on its efforts to provide learning grants to leaders who then return to their communities to run cultural promotion projects that support the fight against poverty, while **Guinea** sees a positive approach to cultural diversity leading to more equitable access to resources and opportunities downstream, and **Nepal** presents work on culture as a route to enhancing gender equality.

Other countries see things more in terms of the costs of not taking a cultural approach. **Colombia's** review underlines that the lack of consideration of culture can lead to

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[3] International Science Council (2017), *A Guide to SDG Interactions from Science to Implementation*, https://council.science/publications/a-guide-to-sdg-interactions-from-science-to-implementation/

[4] Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments (2023), *Towards the Localization of the SDGs – From local action to global impact: How localizing SDG 11 empowers communities for sustainable transformation*, https://gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/uploaded/hlpf_2023.pdf, p95

equalities persisting or even getting worse, while **Ecuador's** *Creamos Vivienda* is given as an example of a project that only works because it takes account of culture. Linked to this, and as set out in 2c above, there is a clear negative consequence to allowing outdated or unjustifiable cultural practices to continue, given their harmful impacts on inequality.

Beyond these, in some reports, there is the suggestion that cultural and other inequalities may exist in parallel, a point that comes out in **Costa Rica's** and **Peru's** reports, which imply that to some extent it may be some other action that helps reduce all types of divide.

3b. Culture and Climate, Environment and Agriculture Goals (SDGs 2, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14 and 15)

The second subset of the SDGs covered are those looking at management of natural resources, and linked to this, the health of our wider climate. This year's reviews contain a lot of reflection on these issues, with goals 2 and 13 in focus at the 2024 High-Level Political Forum. 9 of the Reviews published address the connections here.

In terms of positive connections, examples include **Austria's** references to greening cultural buildings, as well as the power of cultural projects and spaces to build awareness of sustainability, given their power to influence behaviour for the good. **Colombia** too argues that cultural interventions at the local level can have a major positive influence on farming and eating habits, while **Honduras** argues the same around consumption patterns. **Mauritius** sees cultural actions as supporting climate change mitigation and adaptation, while **Oman** suggests that drawing on traditional cultural practices can offer a way to develop new value-added for farmers.

More neutrally, **Ecuador** warns that unless culture is taken into account, efforts to promote sustainable consumption and biodiversity are likely to be less effective, while **Brazil** suggests that it may be agrarian reform that shapes culture as much as the other way around. **Palau** underlines that there is a two-way link between nature and culture, as well as between food and culture, that must be managed in order to deliver positive outcomes. **Peru** does the same around environmental protection in general, and **Libya** around rationalising consumption.

On the more negative side, we can again look back to Section 2c, and the case of **Colombia**, **Nepal** and **Uganda** warning that cultural factors may support poor nutrition, and the concern that in **Brazil**, culture may be limiting uptake of optimal water management techniques.

A nivel comunitario, se deben organizar campañas de sensibilización y movilización social para fomentar el derecho a la alimentación y la adopción de hábitos saludables. Estas iniciativas pueden incluir actividades lúdicas y culturales, tales como ferias de alimentación, concursos de recetas tradicionales y proyectos de huertos comunitarios.
Colombian VNR

3c. Health and Wellbeing (SDG3)

The third subsection looks just at health and wellbeing, although the specific focus is justified by the fact that 9 Reviews explore the connection here already.

Once again, **Austria** highlights a positive example, citing the Arts for Health programme which complements medicalise care with 'nonclinical, evidence-based interventions that focus on the participatory, artistic process, such as dance workshops for people with visual impairments or a musical breathing program for long-term COVID-19 sufferers'. **Oman** too highlights how cultural activities contribute to wider wellbeing, as does **Equatorial Guinea**. **Palau** highlights the connection between a strong sense of place and identity and a good life, and points out particular the value of building a culture of healthy aging and resilience.

Costa Rica highlights work to help medical professionals better understand local cultures, in order to ensure that they can be as effective as possible. **Ecuador** too notes the relevance of intercultural health programmes, which have been particularly helpful in improving maternal health and treatment for people with HIV.

More neutrally, **Colombia** notes again that culture can, depending on what governments do about it, have a positive or a negative effect on nutrition and material health programmes, and underlines how much work this can take.

A more negative effect can come when old cultural practices and beliefs are allowed to continue, as highlighted in **Belize's** Review. This notes that culture may have been a barrier to the uptake of menstrual health programmes, while the **Lao PDR's** Reivew notes that unreformed culture may make it harder to make progress on sexual reproductive health or cutting smoking.

> *Para fortalecer las capacidades institucionales del sector salud, se han proporcionado conocimientos, herramientas y mecanismos para mejorar la respuesta a las necesidades de salud de la población y ofrecer servicios oportunos y de mayor calidad, con un enfoque en los derechos humanos, la perspectiva de género, la pertinencia cultural y la atención, intergeneracional*
> **Costa Rican VNR**

3d. Culture and Education (SDG4)

12 countries overall look at the impact that culture can have on efforts to deliver quality education for all, once again with a mixture of positive, neutral and more negative potential impact.

From a positive perspective, **Austria** notes how drawing on culture has helped make education more engaging and effective, while **Colombia**, **Costa Rica**, **Ecuador**, **Eritrea**, **Honduras**, **Mauritius**, **Oman** and **Zimbabwe** all underline the successes that they have had by bringing more cultural – and culturally relevant – content into both the curriculum and teaching practices. **Ecuador** also notes that child wellbeing services have increased their reach since taking more account of cultural differences.

The relationship does work the other way around as well, with **Palau** and **Zimbabwe** seeing the right kind of education as supporting the cultural vibrancy of their cultures as well.

As for the more negative points, **Kenya's** review worries about a weak reading culture in the country, while the **Lao PDR** notes that there can be cultural barriers to education.

3e. Culture and Economic Growth (SDGs 8 and 9)

This section brings together references to the links between culture and efforts to promote economic growth, jobs, innovation, industry and infrastructure. A number of these points have already been addressed in section 2d above on the links between culture and tourism.

11 countries make a connection between culture and growth. Some underline the potential of the cultural and creative industries as an economic sector, and so source of jobs and revenues (**Brazil**, **Mauritius**, **Palau**). **Equatorial Guinea** suggests more broadly that cultural diversity as a whole can drive prosperity, and that cultural interventions can boost productivity (as does **Nepal**), while **Mauritius** and **Brazil** see good heritage management as adding value for places. **Georgia**, meanwhile, suggests that cultural centres can have a role in boosting regional development.

More neutrally, **Libya** notes the need for a culture of entrepreneurship (alongside other countries mentioned in Section 2e above), while Honduras underlines that there needs to be investment in order to realise this potential.

3f. Culture, Community, Peace and Democracy (SDGs 11 and 16)

A full 22 VNRs refer to the interlinkage between culture and SDGs 11 (Strong and Sustainable Cities and Communities) and 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions).

Most positively, **Austria** sees cultural participation as a key determinant of community cohesion, while **Brazil** underlines how cultural projects have supported both regeneration and inclusion. **Colombia** notes its experience of using culture to mobilise communities to act collectively and purposefully, while **Ecuador's** support for cultural leaders to study is seen as helping to revive local areas.

> *The pandemic has highlighted the importance of cultural offerings for social cohesion and the resilience of communities.*
> Austrian **VNR**

Echoing a point also made under growth, both **Georgia** and **Kenya** suggest that cultural centres can be useful actors for regeneration (with **Kenya** referencing informal settlements), while **Nepal** cites the example of Dhuilikhel as a successful case of urban development building on culture. **Guinea** sees work to promote cultural rights as a way to address some of the problems encountered in the country's mining areas, while the **Solomon Islands** argue that safeguarding heritage and a culturally informed approach more broadly can help maintain peace and cohesion.

Armenia and **Equatorial Guinea** hope that cultural dialogue offers a route towards peaceful and friendly relations, and **Brazil** argues that it can help underline the need for human dignity. Meanwhile, **Eritrea** suggests that culture helps keep societies together, as do the **Solomon Islands**, and **Guinea**, **Honduras** and **Oman** underline the power of a culture of peace and rights. **South Africa** and **Spain** link culture with democracy, setting out the need to build a habit of engagement. Meanwhile, **Palau** highlights how the cultural concept of 'Bul' promotes peace within communities.

Among more neutral comments, the inclusion or not of action on culture is presented as having an impact on efforts to promote equity between regions, as well as between

urban and rural areas in **Costa Rica**, **Honduras** and **Peru**. **Nepal** notes that culture can go either way on governance, but sets the ambition of a culture of evidence-based policy making, while

On the more negative side, as highlighted above, unreformed culture can mitigate against participation, as well as maintain divisions in societies, as well as a lack of engagement in democracy.

Beyond the impacts of culture on other issues, **Azerbaijan** highlights how a lack of security – and in particular landmines – poses a threat to culture and cultural rights. More positively, **Brazil** sees SDG 16 as a driver of better cultural outcomes.

As a traditional practice promoting social order and governance, bul serves as a decision-making process guided by chiefs. It governs collective behaviour, ensuring harmony and cohesion within the community. The chiefs, with their profound wisdom and respect for their people and environment, convene to make informed decisions that benefit the community as a whole.
Palauan VNR

3g. Culture and Partnerships
Finally, SDG 17 looks at partnerships for the goals. While not explicitly referenced in the 2030 Agenda, cultural partnerships appear in 5 of the 33 published VNRs.

Some countries underline the potential of culture as the subject of partnerships, creating possibilities for stronger connections across borders and distances (**Brazil**, **Oman**). **Armenia** and **Syria** make the case for cultural cooperation as a means of supporting wider peace and partnerships, and the **Solomon Islands** highlight the opportunity created by the cultural exchange at the Pacific Games to build wider connections. Meanwhile, **Equatorial Guinea** rather sees partnerships as helping to address cultural challenges.

3h. Data overview
Looking across the data, Graph 2 provides an idea overall of how often each cluster of SDGs is referred to in relation to culture in this year's published VNRs.

The most regularly referred to cluster is that focusing on community development and cohesion, as well as democracy, peace and justice. After that comes education, with many reviews referring to how culture can boost the effectiveness and relevance of learning. Other clusters sit

Graph 2: VNRs referring to each set of SDGs
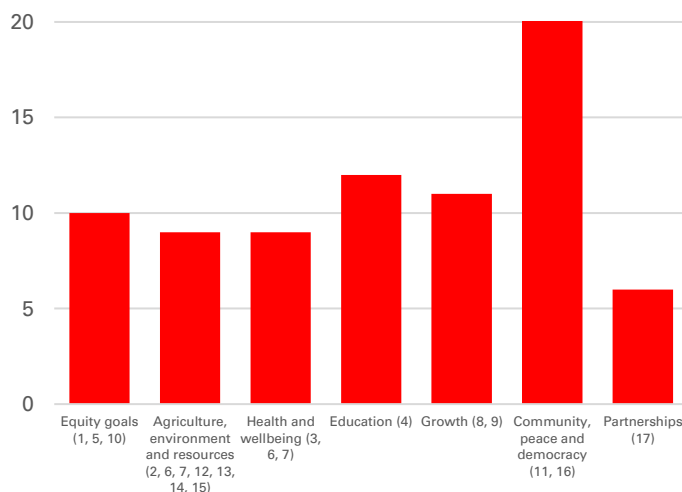
between 8 and 9 references, with only references to partnerships less frequently made.

Number of SDG Clusters Referred to	Countries
6 Clusters	Oman
5 Clusters	Austria, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Palau
4 Clusters	Costa Rica, Equatorial Guinea, Peru
3 Clusters	Honduras, Mauritius, Nepal
2 Clusters	Armenia, Eritrea, Georgia, Guinea, Kenya, Lao PDR, Libya, Solomon Islands
1 Cluster	Azerbaijan, Belize, Chad, Mauritania, South Africa, Spain, Syria, Uganda, Yemen, Zimbabwe

We can also look at the diversity of policy areas addressed in the table on the left. This highlights that **Oman** has the broadest range of references to culture and other clusters of SDGs, with **Austria**, **Brazil**, **Colombia**, **Ecuador** and **Palau** also scoring highly.

Concluding this section, it appears that governments generally see cultural action as having a positive impact on efforts to achieve other SDGs. However, positive impacts cannot be taken for granted, not least given the potentially negative impact that unreformed cultural practices may have. Once again, these experiences build the case for a more deliberate approach to culture in the SDGs, with a view to maximising positive spillovers and preventing the negative.

4. Reporting against the targets defined in the Culture2030Goal zero draft

Ahead of the 2022 UNESCO MONDIACULT Conference, the Culture2030Goal campaign released a zero draft of a culture goal. The objective was this was to advance the discussion in general by presenting a suggestion of what this might look like practically. The work drew on previous documentation by the campaign, as well as other international initiatives related to culture, and looked to follow the model of existing SDGs and their targets.

The previous edition of this report, in 2023, included a brief analysis of how far the different targets in this zero draft were already covered in Reviews. This not only aimed to provide a sense of how far the elements of a culture goal were already in place in the approaches that governments were taking to development, but also offered a chance to road-test the targets themselves.

This year, the analysis goes deeper, exploring not *whether*, but also *how* countries have touched on the different targets in their reporting. Through this, it is possible to build up an idea of the contours of a culture goal. The sections below look at each of the targets in turn, and then looks at the shares of reviews referring to each, as well as the breadth of each country's approach to culture.

4a: Target 1 – Realise Cultural Rights for All

The first target of the proposed culture goal sets out to: *realize cultural rights for all, by fostering inclusive access to and participation in cultural life, creativity and diversity of cultural expressions, in particular for women, children, older persons, persons with disabilities and vulnerable populations.* This reflects the emphasis in human rights practice of supporting economic, social and cultural rights, as well as the understanding that culture (and participation in it) is an objective in itself.

14 of the published reviews discuss the importance of cultural rights and participation. **Ecuador, Eritrea**, the **Lao PDR** and Spain explicitly highlight the relevance of cultural rights. Others talk about them in relation to specific population groups, with **Colombia** highlighting the case of migrants, **Honduras** people facing poverty, **Guinea** the population of regions facing wider challenges, and **Mauritania** and **Syria** women. **Palau** includes extensive consideration of the importance of the cultural rights of young people.

More broadly, **Austria** is strong in underlining the right of cultural participation and equal opportunities in culture, as does **Brazil** which makes the connection between promoting minority cultures and cultural rights in general. **Libya** highlights the need to promote the cultural advancement of society as a whole, while **Azerbaijan** focuses on the threat to cultural right posed by attacks on heritage or the presence of landmines.

The government's commitment to the culture agenda as an essential dimension of human dignity and inalienable right has been addressed through a series of programs and policies.
Brazilian VNR

4b: Target 2 – Promote a Culture of Peace, Non-Violence and Global Citizenship, and Appreciation of Cultural Diversity

This second target, which is already set out in full in the title, raises the role of culture – understood as a wider set of beliefs and values – in achieving wider development goals, in the case a peaceful and stable world, cohesion across peoples, and a positive attitude towards diversity. In total, almost half of the published VNRs talk about work towards this title (15 out of 33).

There are broad references to the need to foster a culture of peace in the Reviews from **Azerbaijan**, **Ecuador**, **Equatorial Guinea**, **Guinea**, **Oman** and **Spain**. The **Solomon Islands** explicitly argues that culture can help promote unity and peace. **Brazil** does so also, noting the particular potential of Hip-Hop music to contribute, while **Libya** and **Oman** set out work to promote communication in order to boost intercultural understanding. **Brazil** too underlines the potential of cooperation between Lusophone countries to boost cohesion in general, and **Oman** too talks about international cooperation and dialogue. **Palau's** review also gives extensive consideration of the connection between culture and supporting social cohesion and peace.

Beyond references to peace, **Colombia** highlights the need for a culture of inclusion and rights, while **Equatorial Guinea**, **Eritrea**, **Guinea**, **Honduras**, **Nepal**, **Oman**, **Peru**, **Zimbabwe** all talk about the value of promoting interculturality and cultural diversity in general. **Mauritius** in particular sets out how pluricultural education serving to build respect for diversity in general.

4.c: Target 3 - Protect, Safeguard and Mobilise Heritage

This third target highlights not just the idea of heritage preservation as a goal, but also how it can serve to achieve wider goals. In more detail, the target is: *Protect and safeguard all forms of heritage, harness them as a resource for sustainable development, through existing conventions and other policy frameworks, as well as such new mechanisms as may be appropriate.* 2/3 of VNRs refer to work in this area.

Starting with those countries citing heritage preservation as a goal in itself, **Chad** shares its plans to build an inventory of national heritage, while **Congo (Republic)** hopes to strengthen investment in heritage going forwards, as do **South Africa** and **Syria**. **Ecuador** also sets out its efforts, highlighting a focus on making sure that all communities and experiences benefit, a point echoed by **Honduras**, the **Lao PDR**, **Nepal** and **Oman**.

Threats to heritage are noted by **Azerbaijan**, which highlights in particular the impacts of war and use of munitions, while **Peru** refers to efforts to counter trafficking.

In terms of what contributes to heritage preservation, **Eritrea** points out how a mother-language policy in education can favour heritage preservation, while **Zimbabwe** too hopes to see education contribute to safeguarding.

The connection between natural and cultural heritage is clear in the efforts by **Brazil** to safeguard the heritage of the Amazon, while **Congo (Republic)** plans to do more to maximise the potential of national parks to support development goals.

As for how far heritage is being mobilised for development, **Austria** shares its work to incorporate intangible cultural heritage into education to build impact, while **Colombia** discusses how heritage can help promote better nutrition. **Mauritius** provides the example of the regeneration of Port Louis, where culture had helped deliver on wider policy goals.

Clear goals in safeguarding heritage are to boost attractiveness for tourism, if both are sustainable (**Costa Rica ,Uganda**), and for growth and investment more generally (**Namibia**, **Nepal**, the **Solomon Islands**). **Palau** too highlights the direct links between the protection of heritage and the achievement of goals across the board, with of course the title of its Review focusing on 'harnessing cultural heritage to build back better for a sustainable future'.

En materia de conservación patrimonial se destaca el Plan de Fortalecimiento Institucional del Patrimonio donde se detallan las herramientas técnicas y se plantean un conjunto de acciones para la preservación de los bienes y manifestaciones que conforman la herencia cultural a nivel nacional, con una perspectiva interseccional, construida sobre la base del diálogo abierto entre los distintos niveles de gobierno para garantizar la eficiencia de los procesos.
Ecuadorian VNR

Regarding culture and heritage, Uganda's cultural and natural heritage sector is a significant contributor to the country's foreign exchange earnings via tourism, fostering the country's identity and status. It supports language and literary arts, performing arts, visual arts and handicrafts, indigenous knowledge, cultural beliefs, traditions and values, cultural sites, monuments and antiquities
Ugandan VNR

Expressed sometimes as "TTO," tekoi refers to preserving cultural identity through language, telooch to preserving traditional foods and the environment and culture that sustain them, and ongelaod to preserving traditional arts, entertainment, cultural expressions, and ways of living.
Palauan 2024

4d: Target 4 – Protect and Promote the Diversity of Cultural Expressions

This target refers back to an aspect of culture itself as a goal, namely the importance of creativity and cultural diversity in general. The full text of the target is: *Protect and promote the diversity of cultural expressions to strengthen the creativity and development capacity of individuals and communities, through existing conventions and such new mechanisms as may be appropriate.* 9 published reviews refer to this target in some way.

Examples here in include **Brazil's** work to support Hip-Hop musicians with a view to supporting creativity and development capacity, as well as **Palau's** efforts to promote creativity among young people. **Colombia** gives extensive focus to work to draw on working with and through culture to energise community efforts to tackle poor nutrition.

The potential for education to advance goals here is established by **Ecuador** (which also notes how its National Equalities Council is ensuring oversight and

accountability), as does **Mauritius**, while **Guinea**, **Honduras** and the **Lao PDR** talk about pro-diversity policy efforts. The **Solomon Islands** looks towards its hosting of the Pacific Games as an opportunity to celebrate cultural diversity in the context of efforts to mobilise governments and others in the region to act on development challenges.

4e: Target 5 – Promote Local Culture and Products and Uphold the Rights of Artists

13 of the published VNRs touch on this target, which in full reads: *In devising and implementing policies on cultural and creative industries, sustainable tourism and digital technologies, promote local culture and products, the economic and social rights of artists and cultural professionals and artistic freedom, and develop and implement appropriate monitoring tools.* This is a key point for sustainability, ensuring that artists and creators benefit from a favourable environment and support for their work.

In terms of specific examples, **Chad** underlines its work to deliver on its National Craft Strategy (a point also noted by **Uganda**), while **Ecuador** notes programming to support traditional weaving activities and Oman the production of camel milk and related projects. The **Lao PDR** and **Costa Rica** highlight programmes focused on local artists aiming to help them make the most of tourism, sustainably. **Sierra Leone** underlines that such programmes should be based on cooperation with traditional leaders, while **Georgia** notes how regional cultural centres could support progress here, and the **Solomon Islands** highlight how galleries can help.

Mauritius in particular talks about its Status of the Artist Act, which sets out central guarantees and measures to allow creative workers to work under the best possible circumstances, while **Brazil** cites programmes aimed to help artists survive the economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Beyond general support to local creators, **Austria**, **Brazil** and **Spain** all emphasise their work to support creators at risk of marginalisation in general. **Spain** and **Austria** talk about women in particular (and **Austria** highlights support for artists who have been victims of abuse and/or discrimination, while **Brazil** highlights proactive efforts to support a wide range of groups.

> *To counteract gender-specific inequalities, the BMKÖS pays attention to gender budgeting, balanced funding and fair pay. Gender incentives are offered in the film sector. The regular collection of gender-specific data and figures enables an evidence-based equal treatment policy ("Film Gender Report", "1st Gender Report Kunst und Kultur")*
> **Austrian VNR**

4f: Target 6 – Enhance the Conditions for the Mobility of Cultural Professionals and Cross-Border Creativity

The sixth target, like the fifth, is specifically focused on the situation of artists and creators, looking this time at the possibilities they enjoy to travel and collaborate across borders. As previously highlighted, this work has the potential to favour cohesion and understanding, and arguably is well aligned to the exiting SDG17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

The full text of the target is: *enhance legal conditions and practical opportunities for mobility of cultural professionals and cross-border creativity in the creation of cultural goods, services and practices through international multi-stakeholder collaboration*.

Six Reviews mention this, with **Mauritius** in particular focusing on its efforts to promote the international circulation of cultural goods and services, as well as opportunities for professionals. Elsewhere, **Armenia**, **Oman** and **Syria** all talk about wanting stronger exchanges with other countries in general, while **Azerbaijan** cites the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation in particular, and **Brazil** talks about what it gains from cooperation with other Lusophone countries.

4g: Target 7: Empower Indigenous Peoples to Strengthen their Own Institutions

The need for a specific approach to the situation of indigenous peoples has been recognised across the UN with the existence of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, and they are well represented in processes around the 2030 Agenda through the Indigenous People's Major Groups. The Culture2030Goal campaign's zero draft follows this logic by including a target recognising the importance of their culture. The full text of the target is as follows: *empower indigenous peoples to strengthen their own institutions, cultures and languages, and to pursue their development in keeping with their own needs and aspirations.*

9 out of the 33 published VNRs discuss work to support indigenous culture and institutions, with **Brazil**, **Costa Rica**, the **Lao PDR** and **Palau** strong in setting out the importance of upholding cultural participation and rights. The need to support capacity and ownership of cultural initiatives by indigenous groups is well recognised in the Reviews of **Brazil** (which discusses autonomy), **Colombia**, **Ecuador**, **Eritrea**, **Palau** and the **Solomon Islands**. **Peru** highlights the relevance of efforts to coordinate efforts across levels of government here.

4h: Target 8: Develop a Cultural Approach in Environmental Protection and Sustainable Urbanisation

As already highlighted in the consideration of heritage, there is a strong connection between culture and nature, with each often shaping the other. Much the same goes for the connection between culture and urban development, given that both relate strongly to how people interact and work together. The full text of the target here is: *develop a cultural approach in environmental protection and sustainable urbanization, including land planning, landscape management, protection of biodiversity, agriculture and natural areas management, through heritage, local cultures and knowledge, creativity and arts*.

14 of the 33 published reviews highlight the connection between culture, and environmental and urban policies. As already mentioned, **Brazil** sets out the importance of protecting the heritage of the Amazon, while **Palau** and the **Solomon Islands** highlight how conservation of nature and culture go together, and **Yemen** calls for a culture of environmental protection.

Colombia in particular sets out how environmental sustainability and a culture of respect for resources go hand in hand, underlining that culture-based approaches are

therefore essential to achieve environmental goals, while Peru underlines how culture can have a role in promoting recycling.

There are more examples of recognition of the need to incorporate cultural approaches to sustainable urbanisation. At a broad level, **Costa Rica**, **Ecuador** and **Nepal** for example highlight how regional development requires approaches adapted to local cultures in order to effective and appropriate solutions.

Brazil highlights the value of culture as a driver of local socioeconomic development (and suggests that decentralisation of powers needs to be accompanied by affirmative inclusion of marginalised group cultures), as does **Colombia** with its Yanamas initiative, focused on building communities through culture. **Kenya** talks about how cultural facilities have served to support regeneration in informal settlements, while **Oman**, **Mauritania** and **Palau** highlight the contribution of cultural spaces more generally to a heathy village, town and city landscape.

Nepal, **Ecuador** and **Mauritius** all highlight specific examples of cities which have used culture-based approaches to development, while **Uganda** connect the valuing of culture with tourism and growth.

4i: Target a – Strengthen Cultural Institutions
In line with the existing SDGs, the Culture2030Goal campaign's zero-draft includes targets focused on the 'means of implementation' – i.e. steps that can be taken to facilitate the delivery of progress across all other targets. The first of these in the case of the zero-draft is the idea that a key support for progress on different aspects of a Culture Goal is a strong set of institutions, acting as actors, partners and venues. The full text of the target is: *Strengthen cultural institutions, including through international cooperation, to build capacity at all levels to realize cultural rights and sustain cultural pluralism*.

7 of the 33 Review refer to the role of institutions (although this may be a conservative estimate given that the analysis was based on searches for 'culture' or 'cultural', rather than specific institution types. For example, 9 reviews do refer to libraries in one way or another.

In detail, we can start with the examples of **Oman** and **Palau** that refer to the importance of cultural centres for the lives of their communities, as well as of **Kenya** in the specific case of informal settlements. **Brazil** too has invested in reinvigorating cultural spaces and institutions in deprived communities. **Austria** sees cultural institutions as having a core role in supporting sustainability education, while **Uganda** suggests that they can help promote gender equality.

Finally, **Spain** highlights the important point that institutions themselves need to work in ways that are consistent with sustainability principles, and in particular promote inclusion and representation.

4j: Target b – Ensure that Cultural Considerations are Taken into Account in All Development Goals
Building on the focus in Target 8 on the need to take culture into account in order to achieve urban and environmental policy goals, this Target looks more broadly at the

need to integrate cultural actors and perspectives into policy-making across the board. The full text of the target is: *ensure, through transversal, multi-stakeholder collaboration, that cultural considerations are taken into account in all international development goals, at the outset of and throughout all policy-making processes, through engaging cultural sector actors, whether or not associated with pre-existing cultural targets*.

Already in the introduction, one aspect of this is covered with the result that over a third of reports cited inclusion of culture ministries and/or other relevant agencies. Beyond this, other examples of policies pursued in a culturally-aware way include health (**Austria**, **Belize**, **Colombia**, **Costa Rica**, **Ecuador**, **Oman**, **Spain**), biodiversity (**Austria**, **Ecuador**, **Oman**), homelessness (**Brazil**), youth (**Brazil**), equality and poverty reduction (**Austria**, **Chad**, **Ecuador**, **Kenya**, **Mauritania**, **Palau**, **Peru**, **Spain**), climate empowerment (**Austria**, **Mauritius**, **Palau**), sustainable consumption (**Ecuador**), nutrition (**Colombia**, **Palau**), education (**Costa Rica**, **Ecuador**, **Honduras**, **Mauritius**, **Oman**, **Peru**, **Zimbabwe**), security (**Ecuador**), family policy (**Kenya**), and peace (**Solomon Islands**).

> *Para abordar estos desafíos, se proponen acciones adicionales como: (i) estructurar programas con base en la caracterización cultural, (ii) capacitar a grupos con visiones culturales diversas sobre las necesidades y beneficios de alimentarse, (iii) organizar la producción local, (iv) implementar proyectos y programas sostenibles más allá de vigencias, y (iv) articular la respuesta de diferentes actores.*
> **Colombian VNR**

4k: Data overview

Graph 3 (on the right) brings together the data shared in order to build an idea of how common it is for VNRs to refer to the issues covered by each of the targets in the Culture2030Goal zero draft document.

Unsurprisingly, given that safeguarding heritage already does appear in Target 11.4 of the current 2030 Agenda, this is the most frequently referenced. After this, cultural rights, promoting a culture of peace, connections with urban and environmental policies, and the integration of culture into other SDGs all have 14 or 15 Reviews referring to them, with the promotion of artists' rights on 13.

Graph 3: VNRs referring to each target
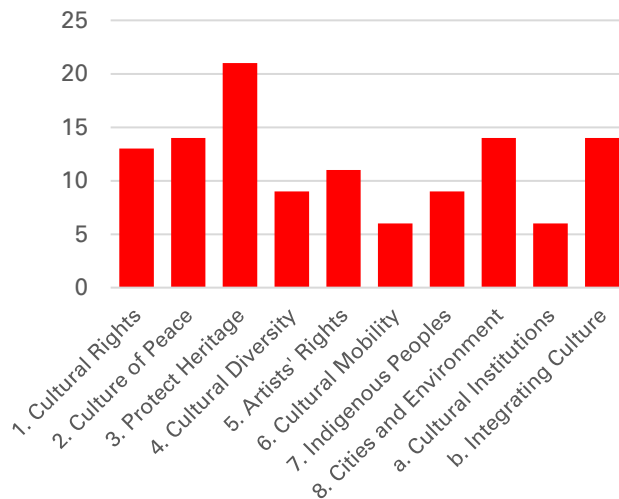
The areas which – arguably – would benefit most from explicit references in a goal are the targets around promoting creativity and cultural diversity, mobility, the interest of indigenous groups, and the role of cultural institutions.

Number of Targets Referred To	Countries
10 Targets	Brazil
9 Targets	
8 Targets	Ecuador, Palau
7 Targets	Colombia, Oman, Solomon Islands
6 Targets	Mauritius
5 Targets	Austria, Costa Rica, Honduras, Lao PDR, Peru, Spain
4 Targets	Uganda
3 Targets	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Chad, Eritrea, Guinea, Nepal, Syria
2 Targets	Kenya, Libya, Mauritania, Zimbabwe
1 Target	Belize, Congo (Republic), Equatorial Guinea, Georgia, Namibia, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Yemen

Meanwhile, we can also list countries by the number of targets to which they refer in their VNRs. The table on the left does this, highlighting **Brazil** as offering the most comprehensive consideration of culture in its Review. **Ecuador**, **Palau**, **Colombia**, **Oman** and the Solomon Islands also include broad discussion of culture.

This table nonetheless does not say much about the depth of reflection on culture nonetheless. The table in annex does look to do this, highlighting particularly strong sections on culture, but overall, the reports of **Palau** (which places culture on the front cover), **Austria**, **Brazil**, **Colombia**, **Ecuador** and **Oman** do stand out.

Concluding this Section, it is clear that every single one of targets in the zero-draft of the Culture Goal is reported on in at least a few Voluntary National Reviews. To some extent, this represents a validation of the targets identified, although response rates remain variable. Over the coming year, the Culture2030Goal campaign will draw on these insights, as well as those from the arts, culture and heritage community, to develop the draft further.

5. Conclusion

Looking across the analysis of the published 2024 VNRs, an initial key conclusion is that despite the lack of a Culture Goal in the 2030 Agenda, Member States have nonetheless inevitably been drawn to integrate culture into their efforts to deliver. They have collectively taken a comprehensive approach, seeing culture both as a goal in itself and a means of enhancing progress towards other goals. They look both at the cultural sector – the individuals and institutions active in the space – and culture in a broader sense, covering values, beliefs and attitudes.

At the same time, this coverage is inconsistent, with some countries including far more about culture than others. Unlike in previous years, however, those countries which have paid most attention to culture are widely spread around the world, with Palau, Oman, Austria, Brazil, Colombia and Ecuador all standing out. In short, the conclusion is that a full consideration of culture in sustainable development is relevant everywhere, but that there needs to be the sort of impulsion that a Goal can provide in order to standardise its integration into development planning and reporting.

Finally, it is worth underlining that each series of VNRs strengthens the evidence base for designing a culture goal in any post-2030 Agenda. They help set out good practices – practical steps that are already in place – which can, through a goal, be disseminated more broadly, to the benefit of all.

ANNEX 1: References to Targets of the Culture2030Goal Campaign Culture Goal zero draft

X = any sort of reference, XX = strong reference

Country		1. Cultural Rights	2. Culture of Peace	3. Protect Heritage	4. Cultural Diversity	5. Artists' Rights	6. Cultural Mobility	7. Indigenous Peoples	8. Cities and Environment	a. Cultural Institutions	b. Integrating Culture
Armenia	Link						X				
Austria	Link	XX		XX		XX				X	XX
Azerbaijan	Link	X		X			X				
Belize	Link										X
Brazil	Link	XX	X	XX	XX	XX	X	XX	XX	X	XX
Chad	Link			X		X					X
Colombia	Link	XX	XX	X	XX			XX	XX		XX
Congo (Republic)	Link			X							
Costa Rica	Link			X		X		X	X		X
Ecuador	Link	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X
Equatorial Guinea	Link		X								
Eritrea	Link	X		X				X			
Georgia	Link					X					
Guinea	Link	X	X		X						
Honduras	Link	X	X	X	X						X
Kenya	Link								X	X	
Lao PDR	Link	X		X	X	X		X			
Libya	Link	X	X								
Mauritania	Link	X							X		
Mauritius	Link		X	X	X	X	X				X
Nepal	Link		X	X					X		
Oman	Link		X	X		X	X		X	X	X
Palau	Link	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X
Peru	Link		X	X				X	X		X
Solomon Islands	Link		X	X	X	X		X	X		X
South Africa	Link			X							

Country	Link										
Syria	Link	X		X			X				
Uganda	Link			X		X			X	X	
Yemen	Link								X		
Zimbabwe	Link			X							X