

# UN HABITAT

FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

**61<sup>ST</sup> REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT  
REPRESENTATIVES TO UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME  
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**Item 6: Briefing to the CPR on the implementation Plan for  
Agenda 2030**

**HSP/CPR/61/6**

## Engagement of UN-Habitat in the monitoring and implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including the SDGs indicator process

**Goals and Targets:** In September 2015, the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit adopted a new framework to guide development efforts between 2015 and 2030, entitled “*Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development*”. The 2030 Agenda contains 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets. The SDGs address, in an integrated manner, the social, economic and environmental dimensions of development, their interrelations, aspects related to peaceful societies and effective institutions, as well as means of implementation (finance, technology, capacity development etc.). The goals and targets are expected to stimulate action over the next 15 years in areas of critical importance, focusing on People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership.

**Follow up and Review:** The Economic and Social Council decided that the theme for the high-level political forum in 2016 is ‘Leaving no one behind’. The General Assembly is debating a resolution on the ‘Follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the Global Level’. This resolution is expected to specify the themes and the sets of goals to be reviewed in depth during the current cycle of the high-level political forum under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council in 2017, 2018 and 2019.

## The SDGs indicator process, the role of the IAEG and Goal 11 indicators

**The Inter-Agency Expert Group:** the General Assembly Resolution proposed the development of a global indicator framework, and commissioned an *Inter-Agency Expert Group* (IAEG) to define and agree on the indicators for the approved Goals and Targets. The IAEG for SDGs is composed of *Members* (28) that are representatives of National Statistic Offices and *Observers* that are representatives of regional commissions and regional and international agencies, including UN-Habitat.

**The process and criteria for the selection of indicators:** The IAEG created global monitoring groups formed by national and international experts to participate in the selection and definition of indicators. The IAEG invited experts from civil society, academia and the private sector to contribute to this process. Various consultations, electronic online discussions, Expert Group Meetings (NY February 2015, Bangkok October 2015 and Mexico April 2016) took place to advance in the adoption of a global monitoring framework. The IAEG agreed that while the number of global indicators must be limited, some targets might require multiple indicators to measure their different aspects and recognized the need to systematically address the issue of disaggregation so as not to leave anyone behind. It was also agreed that indicators should cover all targets without re-interpreting or changing them.

**The evaluation of Indicators - tiers:** The IAEG agreed to group indicators into three different tiers: *Tier 1* indicators, for which an established methodology exists and data are already widely available; *Tier 2* indicators, for which a methodology has been established but for which data are not easily available; *Tier 3* indicators, for which an internationally agreed methodology has not yet been developed.

**The Statistical Commission and the endorsement of indicators:** The IAEG presented to the 47<sup>th</sup> Session of the Statistical Commission a proposal of a global indicators framework (240 indicators). The Statistical Commission (SC), held in the UN premises in New York (March 2016), “*agreed as a practical starting*

point with the proposed global indicators framework for the Goals and Targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development". The SC further requested the IAEG "to refine indicators, recognizing that the development of a robust and high-quality indicator framework is a technical process that will need to continue over time". These indicators will be later presented to the designated political inter-governmental process for its consideration.

**A stand-alone Goal on cities - Goal 11:** The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development gives a prominent role to urbanization and cities with the inclusion of a stand-alone goal for cities and human settlements. This comes as recognition that cities are a string that connects all other goals together; their density and economies of agglomeration link environmental, social and economic outputs. These interactions are important to formulate integrated policies that enhance the transformative role of urbanization and contribute to achieve sustainable development.

**Targets and Indicators for Goal 11:** The global indicator framework proposed by the IAEG to the Statistical Commission for global monitoring comprises 15 indicators for the 10 approved Targets of Goal 11 (7 outcome targets and 3 process targets). From the 15 indicators 'agreed as a practical starting point', 2 are classified as Tier 1, 7 as Tier 2 and 6 as Tier 3.<sup>1</sup> Still most of the Goal 11 indicators are to be refined as requested by the Statistical Commission.

**The specific nature of Goal 11 indicators:** From the 240 SDGs indicators that composed the global framework proposed by the IAEG, 98 are considered as Tier 1, 50 as Tier 2 and 78 as Tier 3, which means that 40 per cent have already established methodology and data is available. This is not the case with Goal 11 indicators, since 13 out of 15 require still to define methods, approaches and data collection systems. This is due to the novel nature of urban data collection methodologies and the need to design new indicators to respond to the urban targets as they were actually approved. Furthermore, 6 indicators are to be collected at local level and 7 require some form of spatial analysis.<sup>2</sup> This calls for specialized work to define metadata, the preparation of *ad hoc* tools and related training and capacity building and technical expertise to aggregate values at regional and global level.

**Around one-third of other SDGs indicators have an urban component:** The effective implementation of the 2030 Development Agenda and the monitoring and reporting of the related indicators require better articulation of Goal 11 with other SDGs indicators that have an urban component. From the Global Monitoring Framework adopted by the Statistical Commission (240 indicators), it is estimated that around one third of them can be measured at the local level, having a direct connection to urban policies, and a clear impact on cities and human settlements.

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<sup>1</sup> Tier 1 indicators are 11.1.1 (slums and housing) and 11.6.2 (air quality).

Tier 2 indicators are 11.2.1 (public transport), 11.3.1 (land consumption), 11.6.1 (solid waste), 11.7.1 (public space), 11.a.1 (regional plans), 11.b.1 and 11.b.2 (disaster strategies).

Tier 3 indicators are 11.3.2 (civil society participation), 11.4.1 (heritage), 11.5.1 and 11.5.2 (disaster), 11.7.2 (physical harassment) and 11.c.1 (efficient building materials).

<sup>2</sup> Indicators to be collected at local level are: land consumption and planning, civil society participation, budget on cultural heritage, solid waste, air quality and public space. Indicators requiring spatial analysis are: public transport, land consumption, people affected by disasters, solid waste and air quality location, public space, and climate change and resilience.

## UN-Habitat support to the SDGs: current activities on indicators

**Recognition of UN-Habitat as lead agency for various SDGs indicators:** The IAEG Report on the Tier system specifies which agency has been designated as ‘custodian’ agency for each indicator. It also mentions which other agencies are involved as supporting agencies. This designation is based on the mandate, recognized expertise and capacity to provide technical support and capacity building to governments. It is expected that custodian agencies will enhance coordination, ensure consistency and avoid duplications in the monitoring and reporting process. UN-Habitat has been designated as custodian agency for 8 indicators<sup>3</sup> and as a supporting agency in another 5<sup>4</sup> for Goal 11 indicators. The Agency was also designated as custodian agency for indicator 1.4.2 on security of tenure along with the World Bank for Goal 1.

**Coordination with other UN agencies:** In close collaboration with various UN agencies – UNESCO, WHO, UNISDR, UN Women, UNEP and UNDP – UN-Habitat prepared a Global Monitoring Tool for Goal 11 that provides definitions and metadata for all approved indicators for Goal 11. This tool will assist countries and cities in the definition of national targets, including specific benchmarks and standards, and in their reporting and monitoring efforts.<sup>5</sup>

**Partnership with academia and other organizations:** Working with various partners – universities, research centers, NGOs –, UN-Habitat is refining approaches for the data collection, analysis and compilation of information for the urban SDGs indicators, particularly those with a spatial component.

**Refinement of indicators, EGMs:** UN-Habitat and partners are organizing a number of EGMs to refine indicators classified as Tier 2 and 3 to discuss and agree on the approach, methodology and ways of computation of these indicators to move them to Tier 1. A first EGM was organized at Columbia University for the indicators on land consumption and planning (11.3.1 and 11.3.2). A second EGM will be organized with World Bank on public transport (11.2.1) and additional EGMs are planned for slums and housing (11.1.1).

**Proposal of a global monitoring platform – the CPI:** UN-Habitat is proposing to local authorities and national governments the adoption of the City Prosperity Initiative (CPI) as a global monitoring platform for Goal 11 indicators and other SDGs with an urban component. The CPI is being implemented in more than 300 cities across the world and as a monitoring framework. It offers the possibility to adopt a city-wide approach to development, with the option of providing individual disaggregation of indicators. Countries that decide to use the CPI will be able to identify, quantify, evaluate, monitor and report on progress made by their cities in all Goal 11 indicators in a more structured manner.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The indicators where UN-Habitat appears as lead agency are: 11.1.1 (slum and housing); 11.2.1 (transport); 11.3.1 (land consumption and planning); 11.3.2 (civil society participation), 11.6.1 (solid waste); 11.7.1 (public transport); 11.a.1 (regional plans) and 11.c.1 (efficient building materials).

<sup>4</sup> The indicators where UN-Habitat appears as supporting agency are: 11.5.1 and 11.5.2 (disaster) which is led by UNISDR; 11.6.2 (air quality) led by WHO; 11.b.1 and 11.b.2 (disaster plans) led by UNISDR.

<sup>5</sup> <http://unhabitat.org/sdg-goal-11-monitoring-framework/>

<sup>6</sup> The adoption of the CPI as a global framework offers several advantages: i) adopt a systemic approach to the city; ii) provide single values on the overall state of the city; iii) establish benchmarks and create specific targets; iv) create baseline data; v) identify priority interventions.

## UN-Habitat support to the SDGs: other current activities

**ACABQ Supplementary budget request:** UN-Habitat contributed to a report of the Secretary General of the UN on 'Supplementary financial information for the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions' (ACABQ) for 'Supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development'. The budget request includes a provision of USD 3 million to support UN-Habitat in the early years of the implementation and monitoring of SDGs and targets related to UN-Habitat's mandate. The ACABQ questioned several aspects of the process leading to the report. The Fifth Committee requested the Secretary General to submit another comprehensive report in the Fall session of the General Assembly.

**UN-Habitat website on SDGs:** The webpage on the role of UN-Habitat in the implementation, monitoring and reporting of the SDGs, in particular Goal 11, is currently being designed and constructed. The UN-Habitat website on SDGs will present information on relevant SDGs and showcase the significant role of the agency in implementation, monitoring and reporting. For each target, the webpage will provide an explanation and examples of UN-Habitat projects supporting the implementation of that particular target.

**Localising SDGs.** Un-Habitat, along with UNDP and the Global Task Force of Local and Regional Governments for Post 2015 and Habitat III carried out the UNDG-mandated Dialogues on Localizing the Post-2015 Agenda in 2014. In order to operationalize the guiding principles identified during the Dialogues, the partners are currently elaborating a Toolbox for localizing the SDGs, aimed at supporting local and regional governments and other local governance stakeholders in implementing the 2030 Agenda at the local level. The objective is to identify and propose concrete instruments, tools, and practices that i) raise awareness and advocate for the active role of local actors in the SDGs' localization (advocacy); and ii) support them in making their decisions coherent with the SDGs' attainment in support of a better quality of life for all citizens (implementation). The toolbox is currently being developed with the active participation of a wide array of partners, including LRGs, national governments, international institutions, universities, etc. It will build on lessons learned from the MDGs' implementation, and it will capitalize on already-existing local development and local governance practices and tools. An online platform with the first products will be launched in the coming months.

**Integrated monitoring of water and sanitation related SDG targets - GEMI:** This framework for monitoring SGD 6 was developed by UN-Habitat, WHO and UNEP, with support of the Government of Switzerland and other Member States, who have expressed an interest in developing a unified approach to monitoring the SDG 6. The initiative's focus is to integrate and expand existing monitoring efforts on: wastewater treatment and water quality; water use and use-efficiency; integrated water resources management; and water-related ecosystems (SDG targets 6.3 to 6.6, and 6.a and 6.b). The long term goal is to (i) establish and manage, by 2030, a coherent monitoring framework for water and sanitation to inform the post-2015 period, and (ii) contribute to country progress through well-informed decision-making on water, based on harmonized, comprehensive, timely and accurate information. The GEMI

framework supports Member States to develop flexible approaches to national monitoring, and address national and regional issues, in a way that is compatible with a global monitoring instrument.

**Accountability Systems for Measuring, Monitoring and Reporting on Sustainable City Policies in Latin America:** This is a project implemented by UN-Habitat in cooperation with ECLAC-Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean within the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and with a specific focus on Goal 11 on making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. The project has been recently approved for financing by the UN Development Account and it involves 9 cities in Bolivia, Brazil and Peru. This project will strengthen accountability systems in Latin American cities and support monitoring of government policies for achieving the SDGs in cities and urban agglomerations, in particular the Goal 11. It will create opportunities for the establishment of mechanisms for dialogue between local governments and civil society in monitoring and overseeing the implementation of the SDGs at the local level that produces sustainable cities outcomes. The project will develop tools and approaches to measure the impact of public policies focusing on Goal 11 and apply agreed indicators to monitoring and reporting on achievements in thematic areas ranging from housing, slum upgrading to public space, urban mobility and air quality amongst other relevant themes, as prioritized by the cities involved.

## Future UN-Habitat activities in support of the SDGs

**Capacity Building and Institutional Development:** UN-Habitat is designing capacity building programs in support to the implementation, monitoring and reporting of various SDGs indicators. Specific tools and guidelines will be created and training knowledge exchange workshops, peer-to-peer learning and tailor-made workshops will be organized in close collaboration with the regional commissions (ECA, ECLAC, ESCWA and ESCAP) and associations of cities.<sup>7</sup> UN-Habitat has contributed to several handbooks that are designed to support national and local governments to implement the SDGs.

**Technical support to Member States to create national aggregates of local data:** In order to report on various indicators that are locally produced, such as public transport, land consumption, civil society participation, solid waste, air quality and public space, UN-Habitat offers national governments the possibility to assist them in the creation of a National Sample of Cities. The design of this sample will enable them to aggregate values at country level to ensure consistency in the analysis, comparability in results, proper evaluation of progress, uniformity in reporting, and better connection to national policies, using the same set of cities over time.

**Technical support at institutional level to implement SDGs indicators:** UN-Habitat will assist national governments in the definition of national targets, connecting to global targets, including the creation of specific benchmarks and standards at country level. It will also assist in the strengthening and alignment of institutions and policies to respond to urban dimension of the SDGs and in the definition and reinforcement of 'means of implementation', supporting the creation of country implementation plans. UN-Habitat will also provide technical advisory services on implementation strategies and the

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<sup>7</sup> The UN Development Account will provide some funds for these training programmes and strategic partnerships with universities and National Statistic Offices is being planned.

localization of indicators at city/urban level.

**SDG Financing:** UN-Habitat is designing a project concept to contribute to SDGs financing. Though local governments do not have control over fiscal or monetary policies, they will have a major role in monitoring and implementing SDGs at the local level in conjunction with central governments. The preparatory process of Habitat III has emphasized the need to provide sustainable transfers from central to local governments, depending on national legislation and the financial and economic context. This is also part of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Finance (AAAA) where the need for healthy finance for subnational governments is highlighted. UN-Habitat is also working with partners to support and advocate for data generation for local governments<sup>8</sup> in order to strengthen monitoring and measurement, including indicators on municipal finance as well as urban planning to support Goal 11 and Goal 9.

**Further alignment of UN-Habitat initiatives with the SDGs:** All UN-Habitat branches and regional offices are reviewing their strategies to ensure alignment with the 2030 Agenda. Meanwhile, the UN-Habitat Project Advisory Group (PAG) ensures that all new UN-Habitat projects and initiatives are being designed with the view to maximize congruence with the 2030 Agenda including SDG-11.

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<sup>8</sup> Global Municipal Database, UN-Habitat with Lincoln Institute of Land Policies