MODULE 7

NATIONAL URBAN POLICY

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NATIONAL URBAN POLICY

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TARGET 11.a: *Support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning*

Indicator 11.a.1: *Proportion of population living in cities that implement urban and regional development plans integrating population projections and resource needs, by size of city.*

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Rapid population growth and increase in the city population has spurred the challenge of sustainable urbanization. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have been developed to curb such challenges. In particular, the international community recognized urbanization and city growth as a transformative force for development by endorsing a goal on cities **(SDG 11)–make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.** In addition, cities are today the string that connects and hold over 90% of the required success of all SDGs. This suggests that the success of the SDGs will depend largely on how urbanization is coordinated and managed. Considering that urbanization is a tool for development, many countries are now embarking on the development and implementation of national urban policies as tangible instruments to coordinate stakeholders' efforts, harness the benefits of urbanization while mitigating its externalities.

SDG Indicator 11.a.1 - Proportion of population living in cities that implement urban and regional development plans integrating population projections and resource needs, by size of city - is very relevant for tracking national progress on all other areas in the SDGs and targets where urban policies are mentioned whose plans are being developed, implemented and satisfy the following criteria as qualifiers:

- Responds to population dynamics
- Ensures balanced regional and territorial development
- Increase local fiscal space

This indicator is one of the key metrics to benchmark and monitor urbanization and asserts the national leadership and political will of national governments. It is based on the notion that the development and implementation of national urban policies should support participation, partnership, cooperation and coordination of actors to facilitate dialogue. This indicator further provides a good barometer in global progress on sustainable urban policies. It serves as a gap analysis to support policy recommendations.

National Urban Policies (NUP) and Regional Development Plans (RDP) promote coordinated and connected urban development. A coordinated effort from governments through a NUP and RDP provides the best opportunity for achieving sustainable urbanization and balanced territorial development by linking sectorial policies, connecting national, regional and local government policies, strengthening urban, peri-urban and rural links through balanced territorial development.

1.2 Concepts and Definitions

National/ Regional Urban Policy: Broadly defined as a coherent set of decisions derived through a deliberate government-led process of coordinating and rallying various actors for a common vision and goal that will promote more transformative, productive, inclusive and resilient urban development for the long term. This standard definition will be extended and adapted to country contexts and may include where applicable terms such as National Urban Plan, Frameworks, Strategies, etc. as long as they are aligned to the qualifiers.

UNIT 1: METHOD OF COMPUTATION

METHODOLOGY

In this section, you will learn how to:

1. Identify whether the policy document integrates and mainstreams the qualifier(s)

2. Analyze and evaluate each of the qualifiers

3. Categorize the country on the extent to which it is developing and implementing a national urban policy or regional development plans

DATA SOURCES:

• Official documents such as National Urban Plan, Frameworks, Strategies etc. available in national and regional administrations,

• Point of service surveys,

• Database of national urban policies by United Nations,

• UrbanLex, a database of laws and policies on urban matters developed by UN-Habitat,

• Performance monitoring and reporting,

• Gap and content analysis

In order to maintain the objectivity and comparability in the policy analysis, four categories of assessment will be used for each qualifier. These categories respond to a progressive evaluation of the extent that national and regional policies and plans integrate positive elements that contribute to the realization of the target.

The categories are as follows:

• **Category 1 (0%):** Policy document does not refer to the qualifier or the country is not developing or implementing a policy.

• **Category 2 (1-25%):** Policy document refers to the specific qualifier, but this qualifier is not integrated in the diagnosis and recommendations of the policy.

• **Category 3 (26-50%):** Policy document integrates the specific qualifier, but this qualifier is poorly understood and misinterpreted.

• **Category 4 (51-75%):** Policy document integrates in a crosscutting perspective the specific qualifier without clear policy recommendations.

• **Category 5 (76-100%):** Policy document integrates and mainstreams the specific qualifier with clear policy recommendations derived from the qualifier.

Table 1: Quantifiers and categories of scores

Qualifier	Category 1 (0%)	Category 2 (0-25%)	Category 3 (26-50%)	Category 4 (51-75%)	Category 5 (76-100%)	Total (max 100 per qualifier)
Qualifier (a) "national urban policies or regional development plans respond to population dynamics"						
Qualifier (b) "national urban policies or regional development plan ensure balanced regional and territorial development"						
Qualifier (c) "national urban policies or regional development plans increase local fiscal space"						

To reduce the bias and subjectivity in the overall assessment, independent policy evaluation will be undertaken by several evaluators. The table below provides a summary of the procedures for computation of the final value:

Table 2: Summary of final computation based on several evaluators assessment

National urban policy;	Evaluation 1	Evaluation 2	Evaluation 3	Evaluation 4	Average experts score (Ranges 0-100 %)
Qualifier (a) "national urban policies or regional development plans respond to population dynamics"	A1	A2	A3	A4	$Qa=(A1+A2+A3+A4)/4$

Qualifier (b) "national urban policies or regional development plans ensure balanced regional and territorial development'	B1	B2	B3	B4	$Qb=(B1+B2+B3+B4)/4$
Qualifier (c) "national urban policies or regional development plans increase local fiscal space'	C1	C2	C3	C4	$Qc=(C1+C2+C3+C4)/4$
	Final value of the assessment **(Average values from all 3 qualifiers)**				$X=(Qa+Qb+Qc)/3$

Based on the final value of the assessment (X in Table above), countries that fall into categories 2 and 3, which correspond to 1 – 50 percentage points, are not counted as "countries that are developing and implementing a national urban policy or regional development plans". These countries are encouraged to deploy efforts in order to improve national urban policies or regional development plans.

Countries that fall into categories 4 and 5, which correspond to 51 percentage points or more in the assessment, are considered as "countries that are developing and implementing a national urban policy or regional development plan" that contribute to the achievement of Target 11.a. Countries that are counted as having national urban policies or regional development plans can still make efforts to improve the rating of the 3 qualifiers.

1.3 Rationale for Monitoring

DATA COLLECTION

UN-Habitat has undertaken a comprehensive review of urban policies and the methodology used could form the basis for the Global State of Urban Policy and Scorecard to be published every 2 years.

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

UN-Habitat and other partners including UNFPA will build the capacity for national counterparts to monitor and track reporting of this indicator.
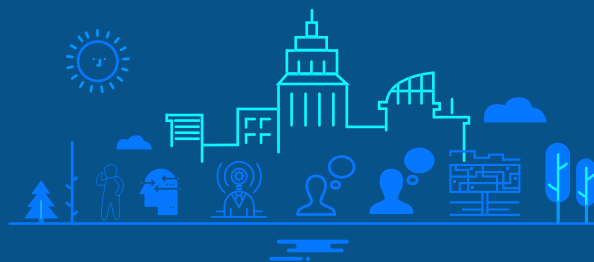
DATA RELEASE

Monitoring of the indicator will be repeated at annual intervals, allowing several reporting points until the year 2030. Comprehensive reporting will be undertaken on a biennial basis.

1.4 General Limitations

Data Limitations	Possible Solutions
• Baseline data and benchmarks will build on UN-Habitat work on regional assessments, which need to be validated by key stakeholders. There could be a challenge for consistent and cost-effective data collection and analysis.	• Careful design of the baselineand benchmarking would provide clear indications on the possible impact on urban policy and implmentation on people's quality of life.
• There might be some limitations in correlating and quantifying the contribution and attribution of urban policy to the overall change and outcomes on the ground.	• Content analysis and opinion survey could further support any evidence and change observed, but similar methodology needs to be applied.

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