

Metadata on SDGs Indicator 11.a.1

Indicator category: Tier III

Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

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: Number of countries that have national urban policies or regional development plans that: (a) respond to population dynamics, (b) ensure balanced territorial development, (c) increase local fiscal space.

1. Definition and method of computation

1.1 Definitions

Many urban related SDGs require global monitoring with the 'city' as the unit of analysis. In order to monitor the urban SDGs in particular, it is necessary to agree on a global/common definition of what constitutes a 'city'. A standard city definition will assist in the monitoring of the SDGs by ensuring that the study areas for the spatial urban SDGs are standardized and easily reproducible, and will add clarity to the methodologies and approaches to the collection of data to support the land and rural related indicators. UN-Habitat in collaboration with New York University and the Joint Research Centre - European Commission has adopted two definitions of cities. The definitions are:

a). City defined by the limit of its built-up area
-New York University

The Built-up area' of a city is defined as the contiguous area occupied by buildings and other impervious surfaces including the urban vacant areas in and around them but excluding rural areas beyond the urban fringe.

b). Degree of Urbanization (DEGURBA)
-European Commission-JRC

Degree of urbanization is defined as the classification of local administrative units' level 2 or communes into three types: Cities (densely populated), towns or suburbs (intermediate density) and rural areas (thinly populated areas) based on the share of the local population living in urban clusters and in urban centers.



Adelaide-city © reneweconomy.com

A National /Regional Urban Policy is 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 context and may include, where applicable terms such as National Urban Plan, Frameworks, Strategies, etc. as long as they are aligned with the identified qualifiers. The policy analysis, evaluation will consider the following tools: baseline spatial data mapping, benchmarking, surveys, scorecard, performance monitoring and reporting, gap and content analysis. This process indicator places particular emphasis on the aspect of national and regional development planning that support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas.

1.2 Methodology and Computation:

In order to develop a policy evaluation framework that assesses and track progress on the extent to which national urban policy or regional development plans are being developed and implemented that satisfy the following criteria as qualifiers:

- **Qualifier a:** Responds to population dynamics
- **Qualifier b:** Ensures balanced regional and territorial development
- **Qualifier c:** Increase local fiscal space

The method to quantify this indicator is based on policy analysis and evaluation that can be supported by adopted policies, conventions, laws, government programs, and other initiatives that comprise a national/regional urban policy.

With initial support of UN-Habitat, other UN Agencies and partners, the method to calculate this indicator has been further developed, piloted and rolled out at country level. In order to maintain the objectivity and comparability in the policy analysis, four categories of assessment will be used for each qualifier. These categories correspond 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. Further refinement of these 5 categories will be undertaken as necessary

- **Category 1:** Policy document does not refer to the qualifier or the country is not developing or implementing any policy.
- **Category 2:** Policy document refers to the specific qualifier, but this qualifier is not integrated in the diagnosis and recommendations of the policy.
- **Category 3:** Policy document integrates the specific qualifier, but this qualifier is poorly understood or misinterpreted.
- **Category 4:** Policy document integrates in a crosscutting perspective the specific qualifier without clear policy recommendations.
- **Category 5:** Policy document integrates and mainstreams the specific qualifier with clear policy recommendations derived from the qualifier.

For each one of these 3 qualifiers (a, b and c), the policy analysis/evaluation helps assess and classify the policy into one of the five categories described above. Due to the progressive nature of the categories, the score obtained for each of them is as follows:

| Category | Score (%) |
|----------|-----------|
| 1 | 0 |
| 2 | 1-25 |
| 3 | 26-50 |
| 4 | 51-75 |
| 5 | 76-100 |

For example, in Table 1, the evaluator provides a numeric value based on the category that corresponds to the qualifier analysed, understanding that only one category per qualifier is selected:

Table 1: Evaluators assessment of one of the qualifiers

| Qualifier | Category 1 (0%) | Category 2 (1 - 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” | 0 | 0 | 40 % | 0 | 0 | a = 40 % |
| Qualifier (b) “National urban policies or regional development plans ensure balanced regional and territorial development” | 0 | 20 % | 0 | 0 | 0 | b = 20 % |
| Qualifier (c) “National urban policies or regional development plans increase local fiscal space” | 0 | 0 | 0 | 75 % | 0 | c = 75 % |

To reduce the bias of subjectivity in the overall assessment, independent policy evaluation will be undertaken by several evaluators. Once each qualifier is evaluated by all the evaluators, a final averaged value for the indicator 11.a.1

is calculated. The table 2 below provides a summary of the procedures for the computation of the final values (final averaged value for the indicator 11.a.1).

Table 2: Summary table for the computation of the indicator

| 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 2 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.



Mzambarauni Community Resource Centre in Kilifi, Kenya 2016 © UN-Habitat

2. Rationale and interpretation

With the majority of humanity currently living in cities, and the number poised to increase further by 2030, the success of SDGs will depend largely on how urbanisation is coordinated and managed. Considering that urbanisation 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 urbanisation while mitigating its externalities.

This particular indicator is very relevant for tracking national progress on all other areas in the SDGs and targets where urban policies are mentioned along with the above 3 qualifiers. This indicator is one of the key metrics to benchmark and monitor urbanisation and asserts the national leadership and political will of national governments. This indicator is based on the notion that the development and implementation of national urban policies should support the participation, partnership, cooperation and coordination of actors and facilitate dialogue.

National Urban Policies (NUP) and Regional Development Plans (RDP) promote coordinated and connected urban development. A coordinated effort from the government through a NUP or 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.

This indicator provides a good gauge of global progress on sustainable national urban policies. It serves as gap analysis to support policy recommendations as well as identify good practices and policies among countries that can promote partnership and cooperation between all stakeholders. This indicator being process oriented and operational has the potential to support the validation of Goal 11 and other SDGs indicators with an urban component. Consequently, the indicator has the ability to be applied at multi jurisdictions levels, i.e. covering a number of areas while taking care of urban challenges in a more integrated national manner.

The indicator has a strong connection to the target, addressing the fundamental spatial and territorial aspects of national urban policy in the context of urban, peri-urban and rural areas. It is clearly suitable for all countries and regions and can be disaggregated and/or aggregated by areas of development as explained in the methodology section of this metadata. The indicator will be suitable to assess commitment to address urban policy related challenges and respond to the opportunities that urbanization brings. It clearly responds to Goal 11 harnessing the power of urbanisation for the common good. The indicator is strongly connected to other SDGs and their targets.

UN-Habitat has undertaken a comprehensive review of urban policies and the methodology forms the basis for the Global State of Urban Policy and Scorecard to be published every two years. Based on the baseline developed by UN-Habitat, it is feasible to routinely assess the status of national urban policies and ascertain the progress made by countries to develop and implement policies based on agreed qualifiers. The work will benefit from various ongoing initiatives of policies review and diagnostics undertaken by OECD, UN-Habitat and World Bank. Further methodological work would be needed to identify a list of criteria that have to be satisfied in order to attribute a value to the relevant development-oriented policy (i.e. Policies supporting job creation, innovation, land-use efficiency, public space, etc.).



New flats built for Kibera residents under the initiative of the Kenya slum upgrading programme. © UN-Habitat



Newly constructed residential housing units in Rabat, Morocco ©UN-Habitat/Jacob Ojwang



Implementation of line 1, 2 and 3 of the metrobus in Mexico City.

3. Disaggregation

- Disaggregation by geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts. For example, national level vs local/state level, city and regional levels.
- Disaggregation by economic sector (GDP) and Human development Index (HDI).

National data collected through assessment could be also aggregated at the regional and global to measure trends. Additional disaggregation will be provided based on the city population sizes covered by the urban policies.

3.1 Quantifiable Derivatives:

The analysis and reporting of the data collected will be presented and assessed based on the qualifiers by region and compared to the HDI, GDP, etc. For example:

- A number of countries that are developing and implementing national urban policy or regional development plans that responds to population dynamics;
- A number of countries that are developing and implementing national urban policy or regional development plans that ensures balanced regional and territorial development;
- Number of countries that are developing and implementing national urban policy or regional development plans that increase local fiscal space.

4. Sources and data collection processes

Data Sources: There are several data sources that could be used

1. Official documents such as National Urban Plan, Frameworks, Strategies, etc. Available in national or regional administrations.
2. Other supporting tools such as: baseline spatial data mapping, benchmarking, point-of-service surveys, performance monitoring and reporting, gap and content analysis.
3. Database of national urban policies by United Nations - and other international organizations, UN-Habitat has developed a National Urban Policy Database as a repository of official urban policies documents and related; UN-Habitat has also developed the UrbanLex, a database of laws and policies on urban matters.

5. Comments and limitations

The data for this indicator will be based on the robustness of the assessment framework developed and pilot testing in selected countries. Baseline data and benchmarks will build on UN-Habitat work on regional assessments, which requires validation by key stakeholders. There could be a challenge for consistent and cost-effective data collection and analysis.

As the indicator mainly aims to track progress on the number of countries developing and implementing national urban policies, it will not suppose specific judgements of any individual country's policies. It will not be used to produce any global or regional ranking.

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. Nevertheless, careful designing of the baseline and benchmarking will provide clear indications of the possible impact on urban policy implementation on people's quality of life. Content analysis and opinion surveys could further support any evidence and change observed, but employing similar methodology.

6. Current data availability/ indicator tier

The proposed target is measurable: UN-Habitat has worked for over five years in the areas of national and regional development planning to develop a foundation of evidence that can be adapted to monitor this target and indicator. Numerous tools exist that contain existing data on the national urban policy and regional development plans and can act as key elements of a methodological framework to monitor Target 11.a.

The national urban policy database developed by UN-Habitat offers a global overview of the state of urban policy at the national level. In addition, UN-Habitat has undertaken and produced regional assessments and case studies for national urban policies in several regions, including North America, western and Eastern Europe regions, Latin America, Africa, Arab states, and Asia and Pacific regions.

UN Habitat and partners complimented the research work undertaken to support the development of the Global State of National Urban Policy Report by in country technical support. This technical support has been provided to

countries to undertake the development and review/assessment of National Urban Policies to ensure that they are aligned with the proposed indicator for Target 11.a. and currently supporting the development of National Urban Policies in 33 countries and Sub-national Urban Policies in three regions.

UN-Habitat and other partners, including UNFPA will build the capacity for national counterparts to monitor and track the reporting of this indicator. National aggregates will be compiled to produce regional and global performance reports.

7. Responsible entities

UN-Habitat will take on the technical lead supported by UNFPA. In addition, there is a diverse group of partners working on National Urban Policy and Regional Development Planning (e.g. Cities Alliance, OECD, etc.), which includes government ministries and other regional think tanks and universities. All these will be invited to contribute to the reporting of this indicator.



Landuse reforms in Shanghai, China @ asiatictimes.com

Global Consultations

1. Initial consultations were held between several NSOs, government departments responsible for urban planning, Statistical Unit of UNFPA and the Regional and Metropolitan Planning Unit of UN-Habitat, where National Urban Policies (development, implementation) are being monitored.

1.1 Following the Expert Group Meeting on Indicator 11.a.1, hosted by UN-Habitat and UNFPA in September 2016, further development of the methodology for Indicator 11.a.1 were included to expand the repository for data collection tools, the finalization of a fully measurable and agreed upon indicator framework. The findings from initial data collection for Indicator 11.a.1 have been featured in the Secretary General's Glossy Report in both 2015 and 2016.

2. Since the EGM and the Secretary General's 2016 Glossy Report, UN Habitat and partners have been working further to consolidate knowledge on National Urban Policies globally. This has been undertaken, particularly through:

2.1 The development and launch of the Global National Urban Policy Database: the UN Habitat National Urban Policy Database is an important tool that provides a global overview of the state of urban policy at the national level. The aim of the database is to gather pertinent information in a central location and therefore make available a broad overview of the state of NUP globally; the Database provides an assessment and overview of National Urban Policies for almost every UN Member State.

2.2 Release of UN Habitat National Urban Policy Regional Reports:

UN Habitat National Urban Policy regional reports were released prior to the 26th Session of the UN Habitat Governing Council. Reports are available for the North American and European, Latin American, African, and Arab States regions, with the report for the Asia and the Pacific to be released in the coming months. The regional reports provide a foundation for understanding how and in what forms NUPs have emerged globally, and to highlight and cross-reference country-level experiences in undertaking the NUP process. These tools are applicable, therefore, to providing key insights that can inform both academic analysis and the approaches of practitioners and to facilitate inter-country learning.

2.3 Launching of the UN Habitat/OECD Global State of National Urban Policy Report:

Through the development of this Global State of NUP Report, UN Habitat and OECD can support national governments and other stakeholders by collecting data, best practices, and other knowledge on NUP across the world and then by sharing with them key trends and recommendations based on the findings. The Global State of National Urban Policy Report assesses the policy framework of 193 UN Member States.

8. Data collection and data release calendar

Every two years

9. Treatment of missing values

Not applicable

10. Sources of differences between global and national figures

Not applicable

11. Regional and global estimates and data collection for global monitoring

Already several relevant publications and review supporting the monitoring of this target and indicator have been completed across regions. This includes regional level and national level publications such as;

- National Urban Policy: A Guiding Framework
- National Urban Policy: Framework for a Rapid Diagnostic
- International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning
- National Urban Policy Regional Report: Asia and Pacific Region
- OECD Urban Policy Reviews: Mexico
- OECD Urban Policy Reviews: Poland
- OECD Urban Policy Reviews: Chile
- OECD Urban Policy Reviews: China.

UN-Habitat and other partners including UNFPA will build the capacity for national counterparts to monitor and track the reporting of this indicator. National aggregates will be compiled to produce regional and global performance reports.

Related indicators

This Indicator is related to several Goals and Targets, particularly the following:

- **Goal 1:** Poverty Eradication, targets 1.4 and 1.5: land tenure security and resilience
- **Goal 2:** Food Security, Nutrition and Agriculture, targets 2.3 and 2.a: land tenure security and urban-rural linkages
- **Goal 3:** Gender, target 5.2: safety and 5.a ownership and control over land
- **Goal 6:** Water, targets 6.1 and 6.2: access to drinking water and sanitation
- **Goal 7:** Energy, targets 7.2 and 7.3: access to renewable energy and energy efficiency
- **Goal 8:** Economic Growth and Employment, targets 8.3, 8.5 and 8.6: job creation, decent work and youth unemployment
- **Goal 9:** Infrastructure and Industrialization, targets 9.1, 9.4 and 9.a: access to and upgrading and financing infrastructure
- **Goal 10:** Reduce inequality – target 10.4 discriminatory laws

- **Goal 12:** Sustainable Consumption and Production, target 12.5: waste management
- **Goal 13:** Climate Change, target 13.1: resilience and adaptive capacity; 13.b capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management
- **Goal 15:** On terrestrial ecosystems; 15.9 By 2020, integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes,
- **Goal 16:** Peaceful Societies and Inclusive Institutions, targets 16.7 and 16.a: governmental subsidiarity and institutional capacity building, 17.b non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development
- **Goal 17:** on means of implementation and partnership for sustainable development; 17.14 Policy coherence for sustainable development; 17.17 Effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships

12. References

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7. UN-Habitat (2015) Diagnostic Framework for NUP
8. World Bank (Various years) Urbanisation Review (China, Colombia, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Korea, Sri Lanka, Turkey and Vietnam)
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United nations human settlements program
P.O. Box, 30030, Nairobi, 00100 Kenya.

For any inquiry, kindly contact
Robert Ndugwa: robert.ndugwa@un.org
Chief, Global Urban Observatory Unit
Research and Capacity Development Branch
UN-Habitat
www.unhabitat.org