Global Future Cities Programme

# SDG PROJECT ASSESSMENT TOOL
## VOL 2: USER GUIDE

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Foreign & Commonwealth Office

UN@HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

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# THE **SDG¹ PROJECT ASSESSMENT TOOL** IS AN OFFLINE, DIGITAL AND USER-FRIENDLY INSTRUMENT THAT GUIDES CITY AUTHORITIES TO DEVELOP MORE **INCLUSIVE, SUSTAINABLE** AND **EFFECTIVE** URBAN PROJECTS.

1. In 2015, world leaders signed the Sustainable Development Agenda convening development efforts towards 17 common global goals to be achieved by 2030, which are referred to as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

# WHAT IS THE SDG PROJECT ASSESSMENT TOOL?

**This User Guide outlines the application of the SDG  Project Assessment Tool. The five steps are described, including the objective, participants and timeframe of each step.**

The SDG Project Assessment Tool (referred to as SDG Tool) is developed by UN-Habitat as an offline, digital and user-friendly instrument to guide City Authorities and Delivery Partners in the development of more inclusive, sustainable and effective urban projects. The main purpose of the SDG Tool is to increase the alignment of selected urban projects to the SDG's and their city's contexts.

The objective of the SDG Tool is to:

1.  Improve the quality of urban projects in the planning, development and design phase to enhance sustainability and inclusiveness;

2.  Promote an enabling environment that ensures the implementability and viability of the projects in the medium and long term; and

3.  Steer a participatory process between City Authorities and Delivery Partners to develop strategies to optimize the project's alignment to the SDGs and the Programme objectives.

The SDG Tool has been developed specifically for the cities and urban projects in the field of urban planning, mobility, resilience and data systems within the Global Future Cities Programme, providing a framework based on existing publications, policy papers and normative principles  .

## THE GLOBAL FUTURE CITIES PROGRAMME

The Global Future Cities Programme (referred to as the Programme), established by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (UK FCO - donor), supports 19 City Authorities globally with technical assistance provided by the private sector (Delivery Partner) to develop projects in the field of urban planning, resilience and transport towards sustainable, inclusive prosperity. To achieve the objectives of the Programme, strategic advice is key to support the cities in conducting quality control of projects implemented, and to enhance their ability for sustaining projects beyond the Programme's timeframe.

The Strategic Development Phase of the Programme was concluded in December 2018, resulting in Terms of References (ToR) for 30 urban projects in 19 cities across the 10 countries. The Implementation Phase was launched in early September 2019 (one month later for the SEA region) and will end in March 2022. The implementation phase includes a set-up and inception phase of three months (staggered between September – January 2020) and a closure phase of 1 month (March 2022).

## SCOPE

The SDG Tool will be applied periodically throughout the different phases of project implementation as an iterative assessment, triggering discussion among key stakeholders to further improve the projects. It is not is not an instrument for final evaluation.

| What the SDG Project Assessment Tool *is* | What the SDG Project Assessment Tool *is not* |
|---|---|
| Project development tool | City context assessment |
| Quality Improvement | Impact assessment |
| Iterative assessment tool | Final evaluation tool |
| Pilot | Final |

*Figure 1:  Summary of what the SDG Project Assessment Tool is and is not.*

Application of the SDG Tool will generate recommendations that aim to identify both weaknesses that could be improved on in projects and strengths that could contribute to sharing best practices among cities in the Programme. Instead of creating competition between cities, or city rankings, the SDG Tool will identify common issues and enhance learnings and the exchange of knowledge between the cities.

## TARGET GROUPS AND BENEFICIARIES

The main target groups of the SDG Tool are the City Authorities and the Delivery Partners. City Authorities will benefit from guidance on shaping project development so that projects contribute to the city's agendas and address existing urbanization challenges within the context of Sustainable Urban Development. Furthermore, Delivery Partners will benefit from the SDG Tool as it will ensure that the projects align to the SDGs and international norms and standards for inclusive prosperity, sustainable urbanization and gender mainstreaming to meet the Programme's objectives.

Further, the application of the SDG Tool will also benefit the Programme overall, and other stakeholders engaged throughout the Programme's duration as it is an assurance of the Programme objectives. The SDG Tool may also contribute to other Programme components, such as the Theory of Change, the Knowledge Management Platform, thematic learning events and normative outputs (publications).

## APPROACH

### The New Urban Agenda as a driver for the Sustainable Development Goals

The SDG Tool builds on the idea that the New Urban Agenda (NUA) provides the "how" to achieve sustainable urbanization, while the SDGs detail "what" needs to be achieved. Building on the transformative commitments of the NUA, the SDG Tool seeks to capture the essence of the SDGs in a series of Key Drivers, Sustainability Principles and Performance Criteria. In combination, the different components of the SDG Tool translate the NUA and the SDGs into clear actions that provide direction to Delivery Partners and City Authorities. The aim is to guide the development of urban projects in order to improve their likelihood of contributing to the NUA and the SDGs in the long term.

## Drivers and principles for sustainable urbanization

The SDG Tool provides a framework that includes a selected number of Sustainability Principles organised under Key Drivers to assess and guide how urban projects enhance sustainable urbanization. While the Key Drivers stem from the transformative commitments of the NUA, the Sustainability Principles are rooted in existing international norms and standards developed by UN-Habitat, other UN agencies and international leading agencies, as well as relevant experiences and findings produced as part of the Strategic Development Phase of the Programme.

The Sustainability Principles are normative principles for urban projects in the areas of transport, resilience, urban planning and data. They are organized into technical and effectiveness Key Drivers. While the **technical** Key Drivers need to be followed for sustainable and inclusive urbanization, the **effectiveness** Key Drivers relate to the implementation, viability and sustainability of the urban projects beyond the Programme period.

The technical Key Drivers are as follows:
    A.1 Social Inclusion
    A.2 Spatial Planning
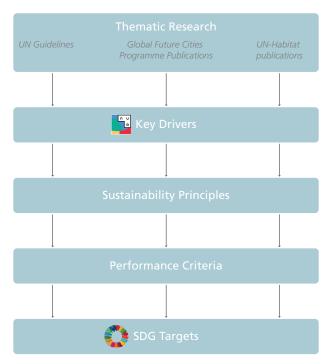    A.3 Environmental Resilience
    A.4 Economic Development



*Figure 2: UN-Habitat's approach to developing the Sustainability Principles as criteria for assessing performance, linked to SDG targets.*

The effectiveness Key Drivers are as follows:
    B.1 Data-driven Processes and Management
    B.2 Capacity and Market Maturity
    B.3 Urban Governance and Legal Frameworks
    B.4 Financial Strategies

Critical inclusiveness and sustainability issues, such as climate change, gender, human rights, disability and children, youth and elderly persons are considered integral to the entire framework and therefore incorporated across all Sustainability Principles.

## Direct and indirect SDG alignment

Each Sustainability Principle has been formulated to directly and/or indirectly align to a selected number of the 169 targets of the 17 SDGs. Direct alignment implies that a target explicitly relates to a Sustainability Principle and is addressed in a straightforward manner. Indirect alignment implies that a target is relevant but does not explicitly relate to a principle, which means it is addressed in a less apparent manner. Depending on the direct and indirect alignment, the maximum potential of a project to align with certain SDGs varies between each Sustainability Principle, resulting in a unique "SDG Project Profile". This SDG project profile will provide an overview of the maximum potential achievements of an urban project in terms of SDG alignment. Direct alignment will be weighted twice as much as indirect alignment when determining the SDG project profile and assessing a project.

## Assessment

Users of the SDG Tool will assess how far urban projects meet the Sustainability Principles by assessing each principle against five to ten Performance Criteria. Each criterion will be ranked on a scale from 'not included' to 'comprehensively aligned', resulting in an overall assessment for the Sustainability Principles. The final outcome of the assessment will highlight the main strengths and weaknesses of the urban project. It will serve to initiate a discussion between the City Authorities and the Delivery Partners and provide the basis for recommendations to improve the urban project in line with the NUA and the SDGs.

# GLOSSARY
# OF TERMS

| TERM/ACRONYM | DEFINITION |
|---|---|
| City Context Report | The report provided for each city within the Global Future Cities Programme which provides information on the characteristics and pre-conditions of each city. |
| Delivery Partner | UK private sector companies selected for implementing the 30 urban projects of the Global Future Cities Programme. |
| Global Future Cities Programme (GFCP) | Specific component of the Prosperity Fund of the UK government which aims to carry out targeted projects to encourage sustainable urban development and increase prosperity whilst alleviating high levels of urban poverty. |
| Implementation Phase | The second phase of the Global Future Cities Programme, launched in early September 2019 and expected to end in March 2022, which aims to support the implementation of the 30 projects. The Implementation Phase includes a set-up and inception phase of three months (staggered between September – January 2019 ) and a closure phase of 1 month (March 2022). During this phase UN-Habitat will provide strategic advice, knowledge management and quality control. Note: the projects will be technically developed during this phase, but they do not include any physical infrastructure investments. |
| Milestone Deliverable | The document(s) prepared by the Delivery Partner to the UK FCO at main milestones. This includes key outputs that are relevant to the City Authorities to review. |
| Review Template | The template that UN-Habitat will use to facilitate the review of Milestone Deliverables in the application of the SDG Project Assessment Tool. |
| Key Drivers | Factors that bring change in sustainable urbanization to achieve the SDGs, based on the New Urban Agenda as the 'how' and SDGs as the 'what' to be achieved. |
| New Urban Agenda (NUA) | A shared vision for a better and more sustainable future, adopted at the Habitat III conference in Quito, and endorsed by the UN General Assembly in 2016. |
| Output | The materials prepared by the Delivery Partner in accordance with the Project Workplan. |
| Performance Criteria | A list of criteria of the SDG General Framework to assess how the projects have integrated the Sustainability Principles. The criteria guide sustainable project development. |
| Projects | The 30 urban projects for 19 cities across 10 countries that were identified and specified during the Strategic Development Phase of the Global Future Cities Programme. The projects are grouped under three themes; urban planning, transportation and resilience. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Project Workplan** | Detailed project workplan prepared by Delivery Partners for the Implementation Phase. |
| **SDG General Framework** | The complete list of Sustainability Principles and Performance Criteria which will be used to create the tailor-made SDG Project Assessment Worksheet for each project. |
| **SDG Project Assessment Session** | Participatory sessions between the City Authority, UK FCO, the Delivery Partner and UN-Habitat, to discuss recommendations for improving the alignment of a project with the SDG targets as well as the city context and goals. The assessment sessions will be undertaken appr. 4 times per intervention during the Implementation Phase. |
| **SDG Project Assessment Tool** | The tool to improve the quality and viability of the urban projects throughout their development by maximising inclusion of the SDGs and hence enhancing sustainability and inclusiveness in cities. It will assure   the Programme's primary objectives. |
| **SDG Project Assessment Worksheet** | Tailor-made versions of the SDG Project Assessment Tool for each of the 30 projects. Each tailor-made worksheet will comprise the most relevant Sustainability Principles and SDG priorities for a given project (the SDG Project Profile). |
| **SDG Project Profile** | The potential SDG alignment that a project can achieve, determined by direct and indirect SDG alignment. |
| **SDG Recommendations Report** | The report providing advice and recommendations to the City Authority to instruct the Delivery Partner to successfully implement the urban projects. The final report to the City Authorities will also proving advice / recommendation, beyond the Global Future City Programme's timeframe. The report will be prepared by UN-Habitat approximately 4 times throughout the Implementation Phase and it will be validated by the City Authority and disseminated to the Delivery Partner and the UK FCO. |
| **Sustainability Principles** | The technical principles which aim to enhance sustainable urban developed projects. They are based on international norms and standards. They are linked to the SDG targets directly and indirectly so that an SDG Project Assessment can be done. |
| **Terms of Reference (ToR)** | The documents prepared in the Strategic Development Phase of the Global Future City Programme which defined objectives, deliverables and implementation detail of the project. |
| **UK FCO** | The United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office, donor of the UK Prosperity Fund Global Future Cities Programme. |

# PROCESS

**1**

## Define a set of principles

UN-Habitat,
City Authorities,
UK FCO,
Delivery Partners

**2**

## Review the project

UN-Habitat,
City Authorities

ITERATIVE PROCESS

**3**

**Discuss the
results**

UN-Habitat,
City Authorities,
UK FCO,
Delivery Partners

**4**

**Provide
recommendations**

UN-Habitat

**5**

**Improve the
project**

Delivery Partners

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Participatory process

Deliverables

# 01 DEFINE A SET OF SUSTAINABILITY PRINCIPLES

## STEP

## OBJECTIVE

*The parties involved will identify a set of Sustainability Principles (approximately 20) relevant for each urban project. The Sustainability Principles (refer to glossary for definition) will be derived from the General Framework and collated into a tailor-made worksheet per project. The aim of this step is to ensure the consistency and the relevance of the SDG Tool for the specific project context.*

## RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

- ☐ SDG General Framework
- ☐ Project Workplan, and Terms of Reference (if relevant)
- ☐ City Context Report
- ☐ City /National Strategies and Plans

## PARTICIPANTS

| CA | City Authority | UK | UK FCO |
|----|----------------|----|--------|
| DP | Delivery Partner | UN | UN-Habitat |

## TIME _ Duration

Preparation: 1-2 days

Workshop: 1 day

Finalization: 1 week

## TIME _ Frequency

1 time / Programme

①→②→③→④→⑤

**Understanding of the SDG Tool**

**CA**
**DP**
**UK**
**UN**

**■ 1.1 Trainings on the SDG Project Assessment Tool**

UN-Habitat will provide training sessions about the SDG Tool to the partners of the Programme. The Concept Note of the SDG Tool provides a general overview and introduction to the rationale, the approach and methodology of the SDG Tool. The training session provides the opportunity to illustrate more in detail how the SDG Tool will be applied, but also an opportunity to address roles and responsibilities and any unclarities.

The training sessions will be organized separately for each partner (City Authority, Delivery Partner and the UK FCO) and delivered through video-calls or participating in meetings when possible.

**Selection of Sustainability Principles**

**DP**

**■ 1.2 Presentation of the interventions**

The Delivery Partner will hold a short presentation of the interventions. This session is particularly important to have a common understanding on the intervention, and Delivery Partners approach to implement it.

**CA**
**DP**
**UK**
**UN**

**■ 1.3 Identification of city challenges and priorities for the project**

Based on the project objectives and workplans, UN-Habitat will facilitate a joint discussion on the main challenges and priorities that application of the SDG Project Assessment should address, taking into account strategies, policy documents and/or plans from local to national level in each context.

**CA**
**DP**
**UK**
**UN**

**■ 1.4 Selection of Sustainability Principles**

The SDG Tool is based on a "General Framework" **(Vol. 1)** that contains a set of Sustainablility Principles for each of the themes: urban planning, mobility, resillience and data systems. UN-Habitat has developed the General Framework with Sustainability Principles that will be applicable to all projects to ensure viability.

Likewise, each Sustainability Principle includes "Performance Criteria" which provide the scope and technical specifications to guide the assessment of the project.

Participatory methods facilitated by UN-Habitat (such as thematic group discussions), will allow the workshop participants to prioritize and select approximately 20 Sustainablility Principles. These principles will determine the main aspects of the project that will be assessed through the SDG Tool and are fixed during the course of the project/process.

| Sustainability Principles | |
|---|---|
| ☑ | Appropriate provision and spatial distribution of affordable housing meet shelter needs and ensures access to basic services and livelihood opportunities for all. |
| ☐ | Identification and analysis of vulnerable areas in planning helps reduce exposure and prevents damage from climate disasters. |
| ☐ | Inclusive, transparent, continuous and meaningful participation ensures that urban services needs and aspirations of the community are addressed. |

| Performance Criteria |
|---|
| *The project is based on a background assessment of the housing quality and quantity, including an economic and spatial assessment of the housing needs and supply, access to housing for women, children and youth, the elderly and the disabled and existing populations living in informal or slum areas.* |
| *The project includes reliable data gathering and assessment to identify vulnerable groups (including urban poor, marginalized groups, and all genders, ages and abilities) within the project's scope and geographical coverage in order to address their needs and preferences.* |
| *The project applies a social mix approach (mix of different income levels) for inclusive housing provision. Strategies and mechanisms such as the allocation of 20-50% of the residential floor area to affordable housing are included.* |

*Figure 2: Example of Sustainability Principles and Performance Criteria taken from the General Framework*

## ■ 1.5 Agreement on the conditions of the application

**CA**
**DP**
**UK**

Participants will decide on the number of times (milestones) the SDG Tool will be applied throughout the Implementation Phase, based on the Delivery Partner's workplan related to the outputs schedule and considering 4 milestones as an average until March 2022.

## FINALIZATION Tailor-made SDG Project Assessment Worksheet

## ■ 1.6 Delivery Partner final review

**DP**

The SDG Tool should be tailored to the scope of the project and in alignment with the Project Workplan of Delivery Partners.

After the Workshop with the City Authorities, the set of selected principles including their respective Performance Criteria will be shared with the Delivery Partner, who will double check and confirm whether the Principles selected are in accordance with the Project Workplan and contractual agreements with the UK FCO .

Any proposed changes must be justified with clear evidence. This process should occur within 1 week following the workshop with the City Authorities. The Performance Criteria once determined will be fixed during the whole process.

**UN**

### 1.7 UN-Habitat final draft

UN-Habitat will review the comments of the Delivery Partner and prepare a final draft of the tailor-made SDG Project Assessment Worksheet. The final draft will be shared with the City Authority.

**CA**

### 1.8 City Authority final review

The City Authority has the opportunity to review UN-Habitat's final draft of the SDG Assessment Worksheet. If necessary, the City Authority can provide comments on the selected Sustainability Principles and Performance Criteria to ensure the worksheet is aligned with the city's goals and objectives.

**UN**

### 1.9 Finalization and Delivery of a tailor-made SDG Project Assessment Worksheet

UN-Habitat will combine and format the final Sustainability Principles and tailored Performance Criteria into a worksheet, per project, and distribute to all participants. The "Tailor-made SDG Project Assessment Worksheet" will be available through the Knowledge Management Platform of the Global Future Cities Programme. The Tailor-made worksheet will be a digital tool which all partner can use to assess the project deliverables in-progress.

# 02 REVIEW THE PROJECT

## STEP

## OBJECTIVE

*The parties involved will apply the SDG Project Assessment Tool using the tailor-made worksheet to undertake an assessment of the Milestone Deliverable against the selected Sustainability Principles and the related Performance Criteria. The aim of this review is to identify strengths and weaknesses of the projects implementation.*

## RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

- ☐ Milestone Deliverable
- ☐ SDG Assessment Worksheet
- ☐ Project Workplan

## PARTICIPANTS

**CA** City Authority    **UN** UN-Habitat

**DP** Delivery Partner

## TIME _ Duration

Preparation: 1-2 days

Technical Support: 1-2 days

Self-assessment: 1 day

## TIME _ Frequency

4 times / Programme

1 → 2 → 3 → 4 → 5

**PREPARATION**  **Milestone Deliverable**

**DP**

### 2.1 Deliverable submission

The Delivery Partner will prepare and submit the Milestone Deliverable as agreed with UK FCO and UN-Habitat in the Inception Phase.

**UN**

### 2.2 Deliverable technical review

Thematic experts from UN-Habitat and/or the Local Strategic Advisor will conduct a technical review of the Milestone Deliverable.

UN-Habitat will use the Review Template **(Annex 2)** to provide reference to materials and documents that are relevant for the SDG Project Assessment Session, in order to facilitate the City Authority and UN-Habitat to conduct the preparatory assessment (step 2.3).

**TECHNICAL SUPPORT**  **Preliminary Assessment**

**UN**
**CA**

### 2.3 Preparatory assessment between the City Authority and UN-Habitat

UN-Habitat will support the City Authority in the review of milestone deliverables, by applying the SDG Tool through working session/s. The sessions will invite a limited number of relevant experts and focal points from the City Authority and UN-Habitat, and are expected to take an average of a day. With the support of UN-Habitat, the City Authority will prepare the assessment (scoring) to discuss the results collectively.

> **Project Development Scoring:**
>
> *The selected Performance Criteria will be assessed on a scale of 0-3: 0=Not included, 1=Included but weakly aligned, 2=Sufficiently aligned, 3=Comprehensively aligned*
>
> *A score for each Sustainability Principle will be calculated based on the average score of the Performance Criteria.*

**SELF-ASSESSMENT**  **Delivery Partner (optional)**

**DP**

### 2.4 Delivery Partner's Self-Assessment

UN-Habitat recommends the Delivery Partner to carry out a self-assessment of their deliverable against the agreed Performance Criteria, in order to be prepared for the common discussion and for describing the project alignment with all the Sustainability Principles of the SDG Tool.

# 03 DISCUSS THE RESULTS

## STEP

## OBJECTIVE

*Based on a presentation of the Milestone Deliverable by the Delivery Partner, all parties will engage in a joint discussion on the progress of the project. The discussion will be guided by the preliminary results of the SDG Tool application (Step 2) and will lead to an agreed assessment of the project.*

## RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

- ☐ Milestone Deliverable
- ☐ SDG Assessment Worksheet
- ☐ Project Workplan

## PARTICIPANTS

**CA** City Authority     **UK** UK FCO

**DP** Delivery Partner     **UN** UN-Habitat

## TIME _ Duration

Workshop: 1 day

## TIME _ Frequency

4 times / Programme

1 → 2 → 3 → 4 → 5

**WORKSHOP**  **Presentation of Milestone Deliverable**

**DP**

### 3.1    Presentation of Milestone Deliverable

The Delivery Partner will present the Milestone Deliverable to the City Authority, UK FCO and UN-Habitat at the beginning of the workshop.

**CA**
**DP**
**UK**
**UN**

### 3.2    Discussion: Questions and clarification

The City Authority, supported by UN-Habitat when needed, will present the results of the Preliminary SDG Project Assessment completed in Step 2. The results will be visualised to inform a quick analysis of the end scoring that is provided in the SDG Tool.

The results of the tailor-made SDG Project Assessment Worksheet will be used as the basis for a joint discussion among all parties. The participants will address and raise aspects to discuss or observe, and to ask questions to the Delivery Partner for clarification on the Milestone Deliverable that were flagged during the Preliminary Assessment.

> **Relevance of Sustainable Principles and Performance Criteria:**
>
> *If a specific Sustainability Principle or Performance Criteria is considered in the overall workplan of a project, but is not addressed until a certain stage of the project is reached, it should be noted by the workshop participants and it should be captured in the SDG Recommendations Report (step 4) that that the scoring of the project will be low until it is addressed.*

**CA**
**UN**

### 3.3    Discussion: SDG Project Assessment Tool final results

Following the Delivery Partner's presentation and the participatory discussion led by the City Authority (with support from UN-Habitat where needed), UN-Habitat will provide guidance to the City Authority in arriving at a final scoring of the SDG Tool. This process will start from the results identified by the City Authority and will update all participants on the scoring of each Performance Criteria.

# 04 PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS

## STEP

## OBJECTIVE

*UN-Habitat will compile an SDG Recommendations Report, which will provide recommendations to the Delivery Partner and the Cities Authorities to improve the quality of the project and ensure its sustainability beyond the Programme's timeframe.*

## RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

- ☐ Milestone Deliverable
- ☐ SDG Project Assessment Tool – Final Results
- ☐ SDG Recommendations Report
- ☐ Project Workplan

## PARTICIPANTS

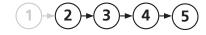**CA** City Authority

**UK** UK FCO

**DP** Delivery Partner

**UN** UN-Habitat

## TIME _ Duration

Preparation: up to 2 weeks

Finalization: 1 day

## TIME _ Frequency

4 times / Programme

1 → 2 → 3 → 4 → 5

**SDG Project Assessment Report**

**UN**

### 4.1    Preparation of SDG Project Assessment Report

With input from the different participants of the discussion (Step 3), and additional experts if needed, UN-Habitat will prepare a report that includes:

1.  Explanation of how the project has scored against the Performance Criteria including graphical representation (see Figure 3).
2.  An overview of the level of achievement of the targeted SDGs (see Figure 4).
3.  Technical recommendations to improve the quality of the project.
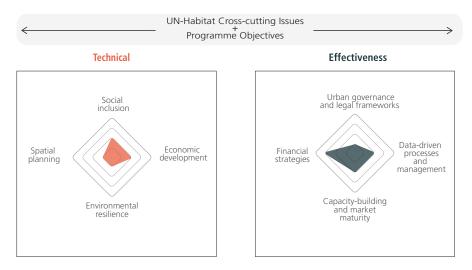


*Figure 3: Example representation of SDG alignment results. The above charts illustrate how a project might score against the Technical and Effectiveness Key Drivers during the 1st SDG Project Assessment Session.*
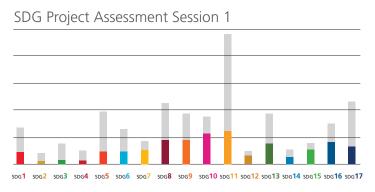


*Figure 4: The above bar graph illustrates how a project is aligning with the SDGs after the 1st SDG Project Assessment Session. The grey bar represents the maximum potential alignment and the coloured bar represents how the project is scoring at that particular milestone. This alignment is derived from the score the project receives against the Key Drivers in Figure 3.*

**Distribution of** SDG Recommendations Report

### 4.2    Report sharing

**CA**
**DP**
**UK**
**UN**

UN-Habitat will finalize the SDG Recommendations Report which, upon validation of UK FCO, will be distributed to all participants.

The report will provide recommendations for the further development and improvement of the project implementation, while being a reference point for the following SDG Project Assessment Session (to be scheduled within the next 4 to 6 months).

# 05

# IMPROVE THE PROJECT

STEP

## OBJECTIVE

*Both the Delivery Partners and the City Authority will to take into consideration the recommendations of the SDG Recommendation Report to improve the quality of the project implementation and ensure its sustainability beyond the Programme's timeframe.*

## RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

- ☐ Project Workplan
- ☐ SDG Project Assessment Tool – Results
- ☐ SDG Project Assessment Report

## PARTICIPANTS

| CA | City Authority | UK | UK FCO |
|----|----------------|----|--------|

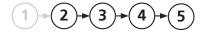| DP | Delivery Partner | UN | UN-Habitat |
|----|------------------|----|-----------|

## TIME _ Duration

Until the next SDG Project Assessment Session:
On average 4 - 6 months

## TIME _ Frequency

4 times / Programme

1 → 2 → 3 → 4 → 5

# IMPROVEMENT of Project

### 5.1 Delivery Partner

The Delivery Partner will review the Report and improve the project further taking the recommendations into account, focusing on the areas identified as critical or weak in the Project Assessment process. If necessary, UN-Habitat will provide guidance for a comprehensive understanding of the SDG Recommendations Report.
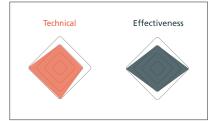
### 5.2 City Authority

City Authorities are expected to actively contribute to identifying strategies to ensure the projects will be sustained beyond the Programme's Implementation Phase, using the SDG Recommendations Report as a guide.

SDG Project Assessment Session 1

SDG Project Assessment Session 1

SDG Project Asessment Session 4
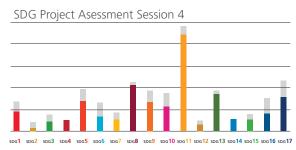
SDG Project Asessment Session 4

*Figure 5: The above graphs illustrate how a project can improve it's scoring against the Key Drivers and alignment to the SDGs throughout the duration of the project design.*

# DISSEMINATION of Knowledge

### 5.3 Knoweldge Exchange

The improvement of the project is expected to draw from the work and knowledge produced within the Global Future Cities Programme, as well as relevant UN-Habitat publications. UN-Habitat will manage the exchange of documents and the delivery of activities that aim to support sustainable project implementation until the following SDG Project Assessment Session. In particular:

- Normative Outputs (publications);
- Capacity Building Events at the Programme level; and
- Expert Group Meeting Reports.

Moreover, the Delivery Partner and City Authority will be able to share best practices through the Knowledge Management Platform with all the Programme actors across all the cities involved in the Global Future Cities Programme.

## ASSESSMENT CONCLUSION

After the final SDG Project Assessment Session, UN-Habitat will prepare a final SDG Recommendation Report for each project. This report will summarise how the project has developed throughout the entire Implementation Phase, including capturing the results of the previous sessions. In addition, this final report will provide recommendations to the City Authority that will aim to ensure the long-term sustainability of the project. The final SDG Recommendation Report will be shared with all parties upon approval of UK FCO.

# ANNEXES

# ANNEX 1: QUESTIONS REGARDING THE SDG PROJECT ASSESSMENT TOOL

## INTRODUCTION

### What is the purpose of the SDG Tool? Why is it relevant/ helpful?

Given the complexity of urbanization, City Authorities are often managing diverse urban projects delivered by a variety of partners. The SDG Tool helps City Authorities and Delivery Partners (service providers) to assess and guide the development of projects, with the aim of achieving sustainable urbanization in line with the New Urban Agenda (NUA) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

### WHO SHOULD USE THE SDG TOOL AND WHY?

The SDG Tool is designed for City Authorities and other partners involved in the delivery of urban projects. In the case of the Global Future Cities Programme, it is used by City Authorities and Delivery Partners (service providers) with support of UN-Habitat. The application of the SDG Tool creates quality assurance measures and fosters a conversation between City Authorities and Delivery Partners about the adequate development of urban projects. It supports City Authorities in asking the right questions and provides recommendations for Delivery Partners to improve the alignment of a project to the NUA and the SDGs.

### What benefit does the SDG Tool have for project management and coordination between City Authorities and Delivery Partners?

The SDG Tool provides a set of Sustainability Principles and Performance Criteria, identified and agreed upon by the relevant City Authority and Delivery Partner, to assess and guide urban projects in line with the SDGs. It will be useful during the project inception and for periodic reviews to assess viability, raise any concerns, and enhance buy-in while the project is being developed. As the project is being delivered, the SDG Tool will assist City Authorities in keeping oversight of the project, making decisions about the project that are rooted in the SDGs, and mitigating potential conflicts by aligning the priorities of the City Authority and the Delivery Partner.

### How and when should the SDG Tool be applied?

The SDG Tool will be applied in a participatory manner, including technical staff and decision makers from City Authorities, Delivery Partners, UK FCO and UN-Habitat. Group discussions will be held to discuss certain Sustainability Principles to be addressed in the project development. The SDG Tool should be applied in the planning and design phase of a project. It is an iterative tool used as a means of in-process assessment to facilitate discussion among key stakeholders to identify strengths and weaknesses of a project in relation to the SDGs.

### How does the SDG Tool ensure the participation and inclusion of a wide enough group of stakeholders?

The inclusion of a diverse range of stakeholders began with the participatory identification of the urban projects and a stakeholder mapping exercise, captured in the projects' Terms of Reference. The Sustainability Principles and Performance Criteria have been designed to assess the Delivery Partners' approach to stakeholder inclusion and ensure that stakeholder participation is meaningful.

## DECIPHERING PRINCIPLES

### Why does the SDG Tool and its Sustainability Principles only cover some of the SDG targets?

The SDG Tool and its Sustainability Principles were developed specifically for the 30 urban projects of the Global Future Cities Programme in the field of urban planning, mobility and resilience. Therefore, they only cover the SDG targets that the urban projects can realistically contribute to. The selection of the targets does not reflect their importance but their relevance for the urban projects.

**Does the SDG Tool risk to be subjective, given that the Performance Criteria of the Sustainability Principles can be adapted for each urban project? What measures have been taken to ensure that the assessment is objective?**

The selection of Sustainability Principles and the adaptation Performance Criteria will be context-specific and result in tailor-made SDG Project Assessment Worksheets that are agreed upon by City Authorities, Delivery Partners, UK FCO and UN-Habitat. Transparency and consensus building throughout the tailoring process will mitigate the risk of subjectivity. During the application of the SDG Tool, UN-Habitat will provide independent and objective expert advice.

**If the selected Sustainability Principles vary for each project, does that mean the assessments of different projects will not be comparable?**

The assessment of the projects will always be based on existing conditions and critical needs in a given city. The periodic application of the SDG Tool (approx. 4 times throughout the Programme) will allow for comparisons between different assessments of a project. It is not meant to serve as a basis for comparison between different projects, as each city context is unique.

**Will the SDG Project Assessment Worksheet consider different Sustainability Principles and Performance Criteria based on the workplan and progress of the urban project?**

Yes, depending on the workplan of the Delivery Partner, some Sustainability Principles and Performance Criteria might not be considered during each assessment. The worksheet will remain the same but the results of the assessment will show that some of the Sustainability Principles have not been addressed yet. These principles should be addressed and the results improved at a later stage of the project development.

## QUALITY CONTROL & SCORING

**How does the SDG Tool assure the quality of a project? Does the compliance with the SDGs indicate the quality?**

The SDG Tool serves as a reference point to ensure that projects are grounded in Sustainability Principles that reflect the essence of the SDGs. It seeks to make the projects more sustainable and inclusive. However, the quality of the project will always depend on multiple, sometimes external factors, and on how well recommendations from the SDG Project Assessments are incorporated.

**Does the number of SDGs a project aligns with reflect its quality?**

No, the number of SDGs a project aligns with does not reflect its quality. A project with a broader, more interdisciplinary scope might align with a wide range of SDGs, while a smaller-scale, more focused project might align with fewer SDGs. Both types of projects can improve their quality, if they successfully incorporate the recommendations of the SDG Project Assessments.

**How can the project's assessment results be improved?**

A project should strive to incorporate the Sustainability Principles listed in the SDG Tool. If a project doesn't explicitly incorporate these principles, UN-Habitat recommends its revision. After each session, UN-Habitat will provide a SDG Recommendation Report that should be incorporated by the Delivery Partners and reviewed at the next assessment.

## LOOKING BEYOND THE GLOBAL FUTURE CITIES PROGRAMME
**Is the SDG Tool aligned to the national level indicators and impact assessments?**

The SDG Tool does not aim to contribute to national reporting or monitor of impact, it is designed to provide guidance as to how a project can better be aligned to the SDGs. The recommendations derived from the assessments aim to increase the projects' impact in the long term, ultimately contributing to the global effort of achieving the SDGs.

**Could the SDG Tool be used for other urban projects that are not part of the Global Future Cities Programme?**

The SDG Tool was developed for the 30 urban projects of the 19 cities of the Global Future Cities Programme, which are focused on the themes of planning, resilience, mobility and data systems. Nevertheless, the methodology of the SDG Tool lends itself to being adapted to other projects and programmes. The Global Future Cities Programme will serve as the testing ground to pilot the SDG Tool. The lessons learned will inform the SDG Tool's improvement and scalability in the long-term.

# ANNEX 2: REVIEW TEMPLATE

## INTRODUCTION

The SDG Project Assessment Tool aims to guide City Authorities and Delivery Partners to develop more inclusive, sustainable and effective urban projects. To enable City Authorities to effectively review and assess the project at different SDG Project Assessment Sessions, Delivery Partners are expected to submit an Milestone Deliverable prior to each session. The purpose of this Milestone Deliverable is to provide a concise overview of key activities and progress made on outputs since inception to conduct a project review. It is not to provide an extensive report of all accomplishments and achievements.

As each urban project will comprise different activities and outputs, UN-Habitat will make use of the Review Template to provide reference(s) to materials/documents relevant for an SDG Project Assessment Session. These reference(s) will allow the City Authority and UN-Habitat to conduct the project review, through the lens of the SDG Project Asssessment Tool. Responses can be completed in bullet points or concise answers using the template below. Kindly copy and paste the template to a spreadsheet or word document to develop the Review Template.

## OVERVIEW OF KEY OUTPUTS

This section will inform on the key outputs submitted since the last SDG Project Assessment Session, in order for the City Authority to get an overview of how the work of Delivery Partners (i) contributes to the selected Sustainability Principles, guided by the Performance Criteria of the SDG Project Assessment Tool, and (ii) addresses previous recommendations of UN-Habitat (if applicable).

The table links specific outputs to the sustainability principles, providing references, where these outputs can be found and assessed. This includes references to relevant materials/documents including a page reference.

| Sustainability Principles | Outputs | References | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|
| Agreed upon Sustainability Principles and assessed through Performance Criteria | Delivered outputs as part of Milestone Deliverable for the SDG Project Assessment Session for each Sustainability Principle | Links to materials/ documents and indications where to find the information (i.e. page numbers) | How the activities and content of the outputs respond to the SDG Project Assessment |
| 1. | | | |
| 2. | | | |
| ... | | | |