



1. Background

For the past eighteen months the *Communitas Coalition* for Sustainable Cities in the New UN Development Agenda has been actively engaged in the UN’s efforts to establish a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As part of this effort, Communitas has worked closely with the UN-SDSN and others to advance an urban SDG and related targets and indicators. For SDG Goal 11 – Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable – we have participated in UN-SDSN’s consultations concerning targets and indicators at both the 22-24 August 2014 meeting in London and the recent 12-14 January 2015 meeting in Bangalore.

We were therefore surprised that the 16 January revised working draft of this UN-SDSN Report did not adequately reflect the outcome of these consultations as presented in the Bangalore Outcome Document. Along with many others involved in the Campaign for an Urban Sustainable Development Goal, we share several major concerns with the Indicators revised draft, described below.

Our suggested revisions build on the agreed UN Member States consensus reached by the SDG Open Working Group and the subsequent guidance provided by the UN Secretary General. We have therefore maintained the integrity and structure of Goal 11 and the associated targets, except in response to a significant gap. Our comments reflect in-depth consultation among Urban SDG Campaign members and their constituents.

2. General comments on the Report

In addition to the detailed comments on specific indicators, our major concerns are:

- **Imbalance in the number of proposed indicators per SDG** - There is a severe imbalance among the Goals in terms of the number of indicators allocated to each. For example, while we recognize the health SDG is of critical importance, the inclusion of 17 health indicators out of 100 total undermines the proposed UN-SDSN framework and its potential to achieve a balance among the SDGs. This is in clear contradiction with the transformative potential of SDG 11 on cities & human settlements, since urbanisation is agreed to be key a population megatrend of the 21st century with significant environmental, social and economic impacts. This imbalance also implies indirectly a certain hierarchy between the proposed SDGs at the level of indicators which is not coherent with the fact that the SDGs Open Working Group (OWG) Report as a whole and its 17 proposed SDGs constitutes the basis for incorporating the SDGs into the Post 2015 development agenda, as per the decisions taken at the 69th UN General Assembly. More balance will enable enhanced synergy among complementary and integrative Goals such as Goal 11, and will strengthen the focus on implementation.
- **Lack of attention to the #Urban SDG Campaign technical work on the formulation and prioritization of targets and indicators** - This 16th January draft includes only five Global Reporting Indicators for SDG 11, and these do not reflect the consensus of the Campaign for an Urban SDG. Specifically, this group of five Indicators includes one (Indicator 5) not part of the Bangalore Outcome Document, and identifies four other Indicators (related to public space, solid waste management, risk reduction and resilience, and a national urban and human settlements policy framework) as “Complementary” and not ‘Primary Indicators” as in the Bangalore Outcome Document.
- **Absence of the critical economic value of cities for poverty eradication and inequalities reduction** - There appears to be a delinking from Goal 11 of the productive role of cities in adding economic value and creating informal and formal livelihoods that provide the basis for the implementation and financing of key SDGs, especially poverty, inequality, food security, health, education, water and sanitation, and energy. It is expected that this will be suitably addressed in forthcoming intergovernmental negotiations. The redefinition of Goal 1 poverty targets and indicators to reflect the different reality of urban and national poverty lines is also a matter of critical concern.
- **Need to emphasize synergetic development across the rural urban continuum** - The need to keep the spatial balance of economic, social and environmental SDG targets across the rural urban continuum is an important theme that was intensely debated at the SDGs OWG.

Ending extreme rural poverty, enabling prosperity and sustainable agriculture would be difficult to achieve without sustainable urban areas and regions, led by empowered local and regional governments in partnership with other key stakeholders.

- **Recognizing the integrative nature of Goal 11** - This is especially around implementation and implies considerable synergy of the cities & human settlements Goal with at least 11 other SDGs and their related Targets and Indicators. This presents an opportunity to condense the overall SDG Indicator set, which will facilitate effective national, regional and local implementation. In addition, the urbanization of the indicator sets for other SDGs will strengthen universal coverage, especially aiding countries experiencing an urban transition.
- **Empowering a multi-scalar metric framework** - Goal 11 has brought to the fore the operational challenge of building a multi-scalar metric framework to enable monitoring of the SDGs at the appropriate level of action. To this end, the Bangalore Outcome Document suggests a minimal set of “universal” national Indicators that will be reported globally, plus a set of “supplementary” indicators that could be reported at national, regional, and subnational as considered appropriate by the member state (in consultation with its National Statistical Office and Regional and Local Governments) to support local and regional action and monitoring for the SDGs. We recognize that building an effective multi-scalar Goal, Target and Indicator framework for sustainable cities and human settlements will require regular review and fine-tuning as future implementation efforts reveal operational challenges.

3. Comments on proposed Indicators

In line with the technical “Bangalore Outcome Document” of the #urban SDG Campaign, in which Communitas actively participated

Link: http://communitascoalition.org/pdf/UrbanSDG_Bangalore.pdf

INDICATOR 69. *Percentage of urban population living in slums or informal settlements (MDG Indicator)*

Agree with this indicator for SDG 11.

Note that UN-HABITAT has developed a household level definition of a slum household in order to be able to use existing household level surveys and censuses to identify slum dwellers among the urban population. A slum household is a household that lacks any one of the following five elements:

- Access to improved water (access to sufficient amount of water for family use, at an affordable price, available to household members without being subject to extreme effort);

- Access to improved sanitation (access to an excreta disposal system, either in the form of a private toilet or a public toilet shared with a reasonable number of people);
- Security of tenure (evidence of documentation to prove secure tenure status or de facto or perceived protection from evictions);
- Durability of housing (permanent and adequate structure in non-hazardous location);
- Sufficient living area (not more than two people sharing the same room).

INDICATOR 5. *Percentage of women and men in urban areas with security of tenure, measured by (i) percentage with documented or recognized rights to housing, and (ii) percentage who perceive their rights to housing are recognized and protected*

Not needed as a primary indicator for SDG 11. This indicator is redundant in at least two respects: (1) It is already an indicator for Goal 1 (though the existing language refers to population in rural areas; this should be changed to urban, or include both rural and urban); and (2) UN-Habitat definition of a slum (see comment on Indicator 69, above) encompasses this.

INDICATOR 70. *Ratio of land consumption rate to population growth rate, at comparable scale- to be developed*

Agree with this indicator for SDG 11, however the tentative nature (in brackets with "to be developed") should be changed. There is little need for additional indicator development as it has already been tested and applied (see Shlomo Angel, Planet of Cities, 2012).

INDICATOR 71. *Percentage of people within 0.5 km of public transit running at least every 20 minutes*

Agree with this indicator for SDG 11.

INDICATOR 72. *Sub-national government revenues and expenditures as a percentage of general government revenues and expenditures - to be developed*

Agree with this indicator for SDG 11, however the tentative nature of the description (in brackets with "to be developed") should be deleted.

PRIMARY INDICATORS - Elevate the following four indicators from "Complementary" to "Primary" as per the Bangalore Outcome Document.

- Percentage of cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants that are implementing risk reduction and resilience strategies informed by accepted international frameworks (such as forthcoming Hyogo-2 Framework).
- Percentage of urban solid waste regularly collected and well managed.
- Area of public space as a proportion of total city space.
- Presence of a national urban settlements policy framework.