



UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

nrg4SD

I.C.L.E.I
Local
Governments
for Sustainability

TELLUS INSTITUTE
for a Great Transition

Technical proofing of targets

**SDG “Make cities & human settlements
inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”**

Prepared by the Communitas Secretariat 2nd February 2015

Introduction

This document focuses primarily on Goal 11 “Make Cities and Human Settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable” and provides suggestions on the technical proofing of its proposed targets.

These suggestions are made on the basis of the consensus achieved by UN Member States in the Sustainable Development Goals Open Working Group (SDGs OWG) Report and in recognition and support of this Report being the basis for incorporation of the SDGs into the final Post 2015 development agenda (UNGA Resolution A/68/L61). With this in mind, careful consideration has been given to preserving the political balance crafted relentlessly by the OWG.

A limited number of key words has been tweaked and/or introduced with a view to: (i) enhance the consistency with existing multilateral agreements, (ii) improve the action-oriented and outcomes-oriented approach of the targets and (iii) facilitate measurability, follow up and monitoring.

However, there is a single aspect on which we would need to go beyond the OWG Report. We would not like to miss the opportunity to convey that there is a considerable concern within the global urban and larger development community regarding the absence of the critical economic value of cities for poverty eradication and inequalities reduction in the proposed SDG11. There appears to be a delinking from 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 in areas such as poverty, inequality, food security, health, education, water and sanitation, and energy. It is hoped 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.

Suggested technical proofing of the SDG on Cities & Human Settlements

| SDG11 as per OWG Report <i>Suggested technical proofing in italics</i> |
|--|
| Goal - Make Cities and Human Settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, <i>productive</i> and sustainable” |
| <p>Today, more than half the world’s 7.3 billion people and around 75% of its economic output (over \$50 trillion) are in urban centres of all sizes. These concentrate most new investments and most new jobs and so also most opportunity. As the urban population grows towards the estimated 70% of global population by 2050, almost all the growth in the world’s population between now and 2030 (over one billion people) will be in urban areas – mostly in Asia and Africa. As urban population grows, so will the urban share of global GDP and investments.</p> <p>The current absence of a clear economic dimension provokes a delinking from 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 in areas such as poverty, inequality, food security, health, education, water and sanitation, and energy. Some of the language recommendations for targets provided below aim also to overcome this delinking.</p> |

11.1 By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable *land*, housing, and basic services, and *including the upgrading of slums*.

“Land:” For consistency with target 1.4 of SDG on Poverty and target 2.3 on SDG on Hunger, Food, Nutrition and Agriculture. Security of land tenure is recognized to be at the root of ensuring housing and decent living conditions. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) has observed that all persons should possess a degree of security of tenure which guarantees legal protection against forced eviction, harassment and other threats. It has argued that forced evictions are incompatible with the requirements of the ICESCR (General Comment No. 7). Moreover, given the interdependence of all human rights, forced evictions frequently violate other human rights. Thus, while manifestly breaching the rights enshrined in the ICESCR, the practice of forced evictions may also result in violations of civil and political rights, such as the right to life, the right to security of the person, the right to non-interference with privacy, family and home and the right to the peaceful enjoyment of possessions. The inclusion of a reference to land is also consistent with Paragraph 115 of the Rio +20 Outcome Document “The Future We Want” that reads *“we encourage countries to give due consideration to implementing the Committee on Food Security Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security.”* It is important to note the choice of the wording *“access to land”*, instead of *“own land”*. Owning land is only one part of accessing land; there are many other forms of tenure that are part of the continuum of land tenure forms.

Reference docs.:

ICESCR - General Comment No. 7 - <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Housing/Evictions.pdf>

Rio+20 “The Future We Want” - <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/futurewewant.html>

CFS Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests
<http://www.fao.org/nr/tenure/voluntary-guidelines/en/>

“Including the upgrading slums:” To attain a level of political ambition and transformative capacity in line with the Rio +20 mandate and to recognize the much needed focus on securing alternative decent living conditions to slums; without reopening the question around sensitive language such as *“elimination”* or *“prevention”* of slums given the connotations around forced evictions.

Reference doc: 65th annual UN DPI/NGO Conference Outcome Document (Section: Resource Document), New York, August 2014 - <http://outreach.un.org/ngorelations/files/2014/09/Resource-Document.pdf>

11.2 By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable *energy-efficient* transport systems for all *people and goods in urban and peri-urban areas*, improving road safety, notably by *and* expanding public and *non-motorized* transport, with attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations.

“Energy-efficient” and “non-motorized:” They are both proxies for implementing, measuring and reporting on the sustainability of transport, that would also allow for synergies with SDG 7 on Energy. This is also in line with Paragraph 136 of the Rio +20 Outcome Document “The Future We Want” that reads *“We further recognize the importance of (...) of non-motorized mobility, including by promoting pedestrian and cycling infrastructures.”*

“People and goods:” Providing transport systems and the subsequent infrastructure both for the mobility of people and goods is critical for addressing poverty and inequality and improving human and environmental health. The mobility of all people is an enabler for access to employment, recreation, social and cultural opportunities for all, across the rural urban continuum. The mobility of goods is an enabler for better and more inclusive patterns of growth and productivity across urban, peri-urban and rural areas, including of the micro-, small- and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs), which are essential for a thriving local economy. This allows for recognizing the productivity dimension, which is currently not reflected in the SDG. It also fosters interlinkages with SDG 8 on Economic Growth, Employment and Growth and with SDG 9 on Infrastructure, Industrialization and Innovation. The transport of goods represents an important percentage of the environmental and health impact of the transport sector, hence the interlinkages with SDG 3 on Health and Well-being and SDG 13 on Climate Change.

“Urban and peri-urban:” Please refer to the paragraph above as regards the rural urban continuum. Besides, in several countries the majority of road crashes happen outside urban areas, so it is not appropriate to refer issues of road safety and mortality exclusively to the urban area. The proposed language retrieves the wording that existed in late iterations of the draft OWG Report in June 2014.

Reference doc: Results Framework on Sustainable Transport by the Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport SLoCaT
http://www.slocat.net/sites/default/files/u10/draft_final_report_for_st_results_framework_july_25th_july.pdf

11.3 By 2030 enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization *with more equitable and efficient land use*; and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable ~~human settlement~~ *urban and city region OR urban and regional*, planning and management in all countries; *including through financial and technical assistance to strengthen revenue streams, regulatory and institutional capacity for national, subnational and local governments.*

“With more equitable and efficient land use:” To qualify in a results-oriented manner what is understood by *“inclusive and accessible urbanization”* with a notion that evokes:

- (i) Correlation between growth in urban population and in urban sprawl – current estimates show a tripling in sprawl with just a doubling of population;
- (ii) Synergetic development across the rural urban continuum;
- (iii) Social cohesion, avoiding social segregation of the most vulnerable groups towards the peripheral areas of city boundaries; as well as improving economies of scale for the provision of public services and utilities; and
- (iv) Productivity connected to dimensions of commuting distance and subsequently to green house gases emission; as well as to proximity between factors of production and economies of scale.

The above enumeration encompasses the three dimensions of sustainable development and reinforces the productivity aspect of a city, which is currently not reflected in the SDG. Efficient land use does not prevent the creation of new cities in countries experiencing a transition towards urbanization, and is easily measurable with an indicator that correlates land use with population growth and – e.g. Ratio of land consumption rate to population growth rate at comparable scale.

“Urban and city region OR urban and regional:” To incorporate a multi-scalar approach for the implementation of *“inclusive and sustainable urbanization”* in a technical fashion and in coherence with target 11.a. Though links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas are addressed in target 11.a, it is essential for effective implementation that this target incorporates a multi-scalar approach. The current wording *“human settlement planning & management”*, though it may help shorten the language and evoke more than the simple notion of a city; it fails to capture the technical nature of the multi-scalar approach needed across the rural urban continuum, beyond the administrative boundaries of a city. We recall that Paragraph 135 of the Rio +20 Outcome Document *“The Future We Want”* reads *“...We recognize the efforts of cities to balance development with rural regions.”*

“Including through financial and technical assistance to strengthen revenue streams, regulatory and institutional capacity for national, subnational and local governments:” To qualify in a results-oriented, monitorable and quantifiable manner what is understood by *“enhanced capacity”*, and offer place-holders for means of implementation. We recall that up to late stages of the OWG, the draft text was reflecting a notion of capacities for all levels of government, in line with calls by several Member States. This was afterwards subsumed in the current wording *“in all countries”*, thus reflecting the universality of the agenda and this target, but failing to address the crucial need for a multi-level implementation and governance in the interest of a quick deployment and achievement of this SDG. This in a context of multi-level governance being hardly reflected in the OWG Report. We recall that the Rio +20 Outcome Document *“The Future We Want”* recognizes in Paragraph 76, when addressing the Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development, *“that effective governance at local, sub-national, national, regional and global levels representing the voices and interests of all is critical for advancing sustainable development”* and Paragraph 135 reads *“We commit to promote an integrated approach to planning and building sustainable cities and urban settlements, including through supporting local authorities...”*

Reference docs.: Versions of the draft OWG report until May 2014 and June 2014 and Rio+20 *“The Future We Want”* - <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/futurewewant.html>

11.4 Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard ~~promote~~ the world’s cultural and natural heritage.

“Promote” covers the notion of safeguarding in a proactive manner.

Please see below on 11.b regarding an alternative for a scenario of reduced targets, which would incorporate the elements of target 11.4 into 11.b and thus enhance the results-oriented approach and measurability of the current target. 11.4.

11.5 By 2030 significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of affected people in *social, health, economic and ecological terms* and decrease by y% the economic losses relative to GDP caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with the focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations.

“Social, health, economic and ecological terms:” To correlate the notion of affected people with a measurable and monitorable framework in the interest of enhancing the results-oriented/outcomes-oriented nature of the target. We do bear in mind the exchanges and subsequent political agreement on highlighting “*water-related disasters*”, in connection to SDG 6 on Water and Sanitation and SDG13 on Climate Change. We note that such emphasis on water-related disasters might create an imbalance with other types of disasters, and other situations of environmental change and disease outbreaks at the levels of implementation, follow up and review; hence the suggested additional language.

11.6 By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to *biodiversity loss*, air quality, ~~municipal and other~~ and waste management.

Alternative for a scenario of a reduced number of targets, which would allow to incorporate the elements of target 11.c - By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to *biodiversity loss*, air quality, ~~municipal and other~~, waste management *and use of local construction materials for sustainable and resilient buildings, particularly in least developed countries, including through financial and technical assistance.*

“Biodiversity loss:” It should be recalled that since the OWG started in April 2014 to actively debate the notion of first “ecological footprint” and then “environmental impact” of cities and human settlements, three thematic areas consistently emerged across the messages by Member States, the UN system and Major Groups & Other Stakeholders. These were: biodiversity, air and waste. In coherence with the Rio +20 mandate for the SDGs to build upon already existing multilateral agreements and contribute to full implementation of all major summits’ outcomes; it is particularly important to recall not only the Aichi Targets but also Decision X/22 of the Convention on Biodiversity Protection and its annex “Plan of Action on Subnational Governments, Cities and Local Authorities on Biodiversity” as adopted by the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in October 2010, in Nagoya, Japan.

Reference docs.: Local and subnational implementation of the Convention on Biodiversity Protection - particularly Decision X/22 and its annex The Plan of Action on Subnational Governments, Cities and Local Authorities on Biodiversity <http://www.cbd.int/subnational/about>

The alternative in a scenario of reduced targets seeks to incorporate the elements of target 11.c into this 11.6. This preserves and actually widens the special attention given to least developed countries in target 11.c and allows for the universality of provisions regarding construction materials. It evokes the notion of natural resources management in urban areas.

11.7 By 2030, provide universal access to *and maintain* safe, inclusive, and accessible *and multipurpose*, green and public spaces, particularly for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities.

“Maintain:” Evokes elements of infrastructure needs in the interest of sustainability.

“Multipurpose:” Evokes essential elements of mixed-urban planning as opposed to zoning, with important links to flexibility for accommodating the evolving needs of urban dwellers and social cohesion. Paragraph 136 of the Rio +20 Outcome Document “The Future We Want” reads “*We further recognize the importance of mixed-use planning...*”

Besides both suggestions are in connection with SDG 9 on Infrastructure, Industrialization and Innovation facilitates reporting, and the notion of sustainable infrastructure.

Reference docs.: Versions of the draft OWG report until May 2014 and June 2014 and Rio+20 “The Future We Want” - <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/futurewewant.html>

11.a Support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning *and implementing urban and human settlements policy frameworks.*

“Implementing urban and human settlements policy frameworks.” To incorporate a results-oriented approach to this target in the interest of the implementation, measuring and monitoring of its transformative potential.

11.b By 2020, increase by x% the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, and resilience to disasters *and holistic disaster risk management at all levels*, develop and implement in line with the forthcoming Hyogo Framework ~~holistic disaster risk management at all levels.~~

Alternative for a scenario of a reduced number of targets, which would allow for incorporating the elements of target 11.4 - By 2020, increase by x% the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, *protection and promotion of the world’s cultural and natural heritage*, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, and resilience to disasters *and holistic disaster risk management at all levels*, develop and implement in line with the forthcoming Hyogo Framework ~~holistic disaster risk management at all levels.~~

“...holistic disaster risk management at all levels:” For reader-friendliness

The alternative for a scenario of reduced targets seeks to incorporate the elements of target 11.4 into this 11.b and thus enhance the results-oriented approach and measurability of the current target 11.4.

11.c Support ~~least developed countries, including through financial and technical assistance, for sustainable and resilient buildings utilizing local materials,~~ *particularly in least developed countries, including through financial and technical assistance.*

“... particularly in least developed countries, including through financial and technical assistance:” This suggestion preserves the special attention given to least developed countries, while it allows for the universality of these provision since they are of universal relevance for achieving the SDG.

Please see above on 11.6 an alternative for a scenario of reduced targets, which would incorporate the elements of target 11.c into target 11.6. In doing so, the special attention given to least developed countries would be preserved and actually (potentially) widen to the other themes covered in 11.6; the provisions of the current 11.c would be elevated to an universal agenda given their relevance for achieving the SDG, and the notion of natural resources management as part of the environmental impact of urban areas would be introduced.

Prioritization of technical proofing suggestions

The Communitas Secretariat wishes to underscore that, as per the rationale expressed above, all the suggestions for technical proofing contribute to (i) enhancing the consistency with existing multilateral agreements, (ii) improving the action-oriented and outcomes-oriented approach of the targets and (iii) facilitating measurability, follow up and monitoring. However, in a possible scenario of reduced flexibility, this section is an attempt to prioritize the suggestions – also in the understanding that indicators could potentially deal with some of the suggested elements.

First level of priority

- **SDG - Productive role of urban economies** - Make Cities & Human Settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, *productive* and sustainable.
- 11.1 – “Access to land” and *beyond the upgrade of slums only.*

- 11.3 - “Equitable and efficient land use” for inclusive and sustainable urbanization; as well as capacity for (..) urban and city region OR urban and regional, planning and management in all countries; including through financial and technical assistance to strengthen revenue streams, regulatory and institutional capacity for national, subnational and local governments.
- 11.2 - “Energy efficient and non-motorized” transport; as well as transport systems for all “people and goods in urban and peri-urban areas”.
- 11.7 - “Multipurpose” green and public spaces.
- 11.6 - “Biodiversity loss” for environmental impact.

Second level of priority

- 11.a – Implementing urban and human settlements policy frameworks, as a way to achieve transformative change and measure and report implementation regarding rural urban synergies.
- 11.c – Universality for the provisions on use of local constructions materials, while preserving the particular attention to least developed countries.
- 11.5 – Number of affected people by disaster in “social, health, economic and ecological terms.”

Background on *Communitas*

- Cross-sectoral technical coalition, led by organizations of subnational and local authorities, working in a multi-stakeholder approach along with civil society organisations, the UN system and its Member States.
- Expert and practitioner-led “task force” approach informed by the perspective of regional and local policy and implementation.
- Unique governance structure among other existing actors in the Post 2015 development agenda process.
- Core partners are: The Tellus Institute, ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability, nrg4SD Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development and UN-Habitat.
- A multi-stakeholder Advisory Committee ensures that the Project lives up to its identity as a cross-sectoral technical group, and reviews key deliverables for technical quality, thereby enhancing the credibility and profile of *Communitas*.

Communitas' ultimate goal is to empower a *New Urban Paradigm* in human development for poverty eradication, social justice and sustainability. Its vision is one that capitalizes on the following opportunities within the context of elaboration of the emerging Global the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the SDGs and in the horizon of Habitat III in 2016:

- Recognizing poverty eradication, social justice and sustainable urbanization as interconnected and multi-dimensional processes for human development, with inextricable links to human rights and democratization.
- Implementing a New Urban Policy with local impact and grassroots empowerment as the driving forces.
- Conceptualizing cities with a wider territorial /scalar approach beyond their administrative boundaries, in the interest of social cohesion and understanding urbanisation as a social process in close inter-dependence with rural development.
- Embedding the real needs of people into the multilateral process by empowering multi-stakeholder collaboration

For the past year and half, 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. As part of this effort, Communitas has provided regular technical support to multilateral deliberations on the proposed SDG on Cities & Human Settlements, as well as on the territorial dimension of other relevant SDGs. In autumn 2013, Communitas established a series of *working groups* on key themes for urban sustainability, which produced a series of *issues papers* and pioneered *zero draft urban targets* for the SDGs. During the following months until the adoption of the SDGs OWG Report, the Communitas Secretariat produced different *iterations of target proposals*, in collaboration with our multi-stakeholder Advisory Committee; as well as with the UN Group of Member States Friends of Sustainable Cities and the UN Technical Support Team. Fundamental to the evolution of our proposals, was the close consultation with other constituencies relevant to urban sustainability via our engagement in the #Urban SDG Campaign, the World Urban Campaign and the UN Major Groups and Other Stakeholders.

A detailed account of the evolution of our work on targets is available from our website www.communitascoalition.org, where all materials are open source. The *Quick Overview* on the Role of the Communitas Coalition in empowering a New Urban Paradigm in human development for poverty eradication, social justice and sustainability, as well as our detailed *Interim Report of Activities (September 2013-July 2014)* available online, both offer a panorama of our past and planned activities.

For any queries please contact: Maruxa Cardama, Co-founder and Executive Coordinator

mcardama@communitascoalition.org | Cell.: +32 475 844 339 | Skype: maruxacardama

Twitter @MaruxaCardama | LinkedIn