



**LOCAL
ACTION**

Aligning local projects with the SDGs

A quick guide for
measuring action



Why align local projects with the SDGs?

- The SDGs offer a powerful shared language and an opportunity to contribute to common challenges, becoming part of a global movement towards sustainability,
- They also provide a framework for innovation, collaboration, and sharing of solutions and best practices between cities, territories, and countries.
- As a comprehensive set of interrelated goals, the SDGs represent an integrated approach across all dimensions of sustainable development. They serve as a compass to ensure that our actions are planned, implemented and monitored in a holistic way.
- The SDGs are local: cities and local governments are great drivers of innovation as they tackle complex challenges every day. They have increasingly shown their commitment with the 2030 Agenda by embracing the SDGs to promote sustainable development in their own territories and beyond. Local action is the key to achieve the SDGs: the more local it gets, the more real it gets!

When can you use this guide?

- Whether you are just starting to formulate your initiative, or you need a broader understanding of your priorities, or if you are getting ready to measure the results of your project, this guide will help you to...

Get inspiration about what to do next. Take a step back and consider the wide range of options that you can target with your initiative, and the interlinkages between social, economic, and environmental dimensions.

- If your project focuses on clean energy (SDG 7), it will probably have an impact on sustainable consumption (SDG 12) too!
- Is it about education (SDG 4)? Then, most likely, it will also address gender (SDG 5) and inequalities (SDG 10).

Better visualize and communicate what you want to achieve with your project. The SDGs can be easily understood by everyone and are a great communication tool.

Change trajectory mid-way if you need to. Projects are initially designed on paper, but they are implemented in dynamic and ever-changing situations that involve communities. The SDGs can serve as a guiding framework to help you navigate and find your way if you get lost.

Measuring and demonstrating the impact by using alternative, locally adapted indicators. Do you want to write a more interesting project report? The SDGs are great for showcasing how you have taken action and achieved results!

Let's put on our
SDG lenses!



Where to start? Here are some simple steps to get you started

- There is no one-size-fits-all approach to aligning your initiative to the SDGs. They must be interpreted within your specific context, taking into account local opportunities, priorities and ideas. Therefore, tailoring the following steps to meet the needs of your city is encouraged.
- It is not just about what you can do for the SDGs...it is about what the SDGs can do for you!

One - Let the SDG principles inspire you

- The SDGs were developed through a collaborative process involving a diverse group of people from every country in the world. Despite the challenges, this collective effort resulted in a remarkable achievement: a consensus on a shared set of global goals.
- The spirit of Agenda 2030 is to bring the world together to act for people, for the planet and for partnerships. The SDGs go beyond targets and indicators; they are underpinned by several key principles that can guide policies, actions, and investments.

Exercise:

Before start planning your project, we invite you to think about the SDG principles¹ and see how they could strengthen the coherence, impact and sustainability of your SDG local actions. Please, do not consider this as a need to simply tick all the boxes, but rather as a reflection exercise.

Following the examples below, try to develop one or several question for each of the principles and see how they are relevant and could apply to your local project:



¹ [Learning Module 2: Territorial Planning & the SDG](#), UCLG, UNDP and UN Habitat, 2017.

TWO - Link your project to the SDGs

- Review your project's objectives, expected outputs and activities.
- Analyze the 17 Goals in detail, and the interlinkages between all of them.
- Identify to which SDG your project contributes the most by asking yourself:
 - Which SDG will be more impacted?
 - How will my project affect the other Goals (Either positively or negatively)?
- SDG are an enabling framework that can help us capture certain dimensions of our projects that we may have been originally overlooked.



THREE - Now go one step further: SDG targets

- Once you have identified which SDG your project contributes to, analyze the targets corresponding to each SDG.
- Ask yourself: Do the project activities reflect the issue, ambition and scope of the SDG targets?



FOUR - Review, rethink or create your metrics to measure impact:

- Measuring, monitoring and evaluating local action is crucial for understanding progress towards the SDG at all levels and recognizing the contributions of cities and local governments to the 2030 Agenda.
- Well-functioning monitoring and evaluation systems are key to project management efficiency, transparency and accountability. But above all, these frameworks need to be USEFUL and avoid unnecessary complexity or unattainable requirements.

The SDG provide a set of indicators that can serve as inspiration to define your own. But no need to overcomplicate things! If you find any useful indicators among the official UN SDG indicators, feel free to use them.

The **Global Indicator Framework** was developed by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators and agreed upon at the 48th session of the UN Statistical Commission held in March 2017. It was later adopted by the General Assembly in July 2017. After several annual refinement, the framework currently includes 231 indicators.

You may also want to explore the wide range of local indicators that have been proposed and are being used by various actors from all over the world: local and regional governments and their associations, national governments, international organizations, Civil Society Organizations, universities...

You can find many good examples compiled in the **Comparative study on SDG monitoring systems at local and regional levels**.

Or you may want to use what you already have to design your own set of indicators, in order to establish a baseline that can be measured with existing resources. In order to do so, think about the following elements: What is the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data? Are there disaggregated data - by gender, location (urban-rural), age, ethnicity, and other relevant dimensions? What are the data collection capacities (human resources, technological facilities...)?

FIVE - Go global! Share your experiences, innovations, and best practices

- With cities, local and national governments and the international community embracing the SDG as a universal framework, it has become easier – and more important than ever – to share our experiences, innovations and best practices with others around the world. This collaborative approach can help maximize skills, knowledge and resources, increase cooperation and build alliances in pursuit of our common goals.
- If your project is aligned to SDG targets and indicators, reporting through existing mechanisms such as Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) or Voluntary National Reviews (VNR) can be really useful – and a great opportunity for visibility!
- We are looking forward to hearing about your experiences. Do not be shy, share with us your SDG local actions!

Contact us at: info@sdglocalaction.org

Let's look at a few examples: How are cities aligning their strategies, plans, and projects with the SDGs?

La Paz, Bolivia

UNDP Bolivia has developed a comprehensive 10-step methodology to localize the SDGs that has been successfully applied by subnational governments (Bolivian cities and departments). This approach provides a foundation for local development from the bottom up, through the establishment of objectives, targets, means of implementation, and the use of indicators to measure and track progress. Firmly grounded in national and, most importantly, local priorities, it seeks to conduct planning WITH communities, rather than solely FOR them, while also involving governments, businesses and civil society to pursue sustainable development for all, ensuring that no one and no territory is left behind.

The main steps of this methodology are as follows:

Step 0: Establishment of work agreements

Step 1: Promote awareness and capacity building

Step 2: Articulation between territorial planning and the SDGs

Step 3: Creation of territorial spaces for coordination

Step 4: SDG Diagnosis and Multidimensional Analysis

Step 5: Definition of an integrated work agenda

Step 6: Establishment of goals and indicators

Step 7: Definition of intervention programming

Step 8: Implementation of pilot interventions

Step 9: Establishment of a monitoring mechanism

Step 10: Articulation with the national monitoring system.

Vision to overcome multidimensional poverty					
Areas of intervention	Target	Strategic objectives	Programs	Strategic actions	SDG
Employment for all	Long-term employment opportunities are generated through the promotion of productive activities that stimulate the economy and decent employment.	2	8	20	8, 9, 2, 11, 12
Education for production and employment	Conditions are created for people to achieve adequate levels of education and develop skills for production and employment.	3	5	14	4, 9, 8, 11, 16
Rights for equality and equity	Rights, protection, and well-being of all people are guaranteed	3	6	15	4, 5, 10, 16
Health for life	Universal access to health care service with quality and warmth	2	5	15	3, 2, 13, 15
Safe home	Access to basic services with quality, stability, reliability, and continuity is guaranteed	2	4	10	6, 7, 11
Environment sustainable	Sustainable management of the environment and its resources is guaranteed	2	2	6	13, 15

Valladolid, Spain

The [Urban Agenda 2030 \(AUVA2030\) of Valladolid](#) is a comprehensive roadmap for the entire city, developed through a participatory process, with a focus on the medium and long term. It serves as a strategic document aimed at transforming Valladolid into a more sustainable, resilient, inclusive, and safe city. Grounded in the local context, challenges, and opportunities, AUVA2030 proposes a set of interconnected priorities and objectives for the city, linking them to the global sustainable development agendas - the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

The development of AUVA2030 involved the following steps:

- 1) Situation diagnosis: data collection and analysis to assess past initiatives (e.g., previous urban sustainability agendas and programmes) in order to establish a baseline for future action.
- 2) Analysis of sustainable development agendas at national (Spain), supranational (European Union) and global (Urban Agenda and SDGs) levels to facilitate alignment with broader objectives.
- 3) Definition, through a participatory approach with the Municipal Advisory Council, of strategic priorities, objectives, and an action plan.
- 4) Development of an indicators' framework for monitoring and evaluation.
- 5) Public awareness raising through information campaigns (talks, exhibitions in the neighborhoods...) and capacity building activities for municipal staff.

Have a look at this snapshot of [AUVA2030](#) to see how it aligns local objectives, priorities and actions with the SDGs and their corresponding targets, and how it sets both quantitative and qualitative indicators to effectively measure progress.

Strategic objective	Specific objective	Strategic priority	Action	Qualitative indicator	Quantitative indicator	SDG	SDG target
4. Sustainable management of resources and promotion of the circular economy	4.1 Become more energy efficient and save energy	Sustainable and resilient cities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pollution prevention and environmental quality.• Climate Action.• Natural Resources and Waste Management.• Biodiversity and ecosystems.	4.1.1. Is there a sustainable energy action plan or strategy in place that sets local targets?	4.1.2 Energy consumption by buildings, infrastructures, and public services	7	7.1 Universal energy access 7.2 Renewable energy 7.3 Energy efficiency 7.a Research and investment in clean energy 7.b Infrastructure and technologies in developing countries

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable Consumption and Production. Circular economy. 	4.2.1 Is there a sustainable water management plan in place to promote the sustainability and efficiency of the city's water resources?	4.2.2 Percentage of water self-sufficiency	6	6.1 Access to safe drinking water 6.2 Access to sanitation and hygiene 6.3 Water quality. 6.4 Increase the efficient use of water resources. 6.5 Implement integrated resource management. 6.b Support local communities in the management of water and sanitation.
	4.3 Promote materials cycle			4.3.1 Have criteria been incorporated into urban management to promote the sustainable cycle of materials and resources within the framework of the circular economy?	4.3.2 Budget invested in actions that use local and easily recyclable materials	12	12.2 Efficient use of natural resources. 12.3 Reducing food waste in production and supply chains. 12.4 Management of chemicals and all wastes 12.5 Prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse of waste.
	4.4 Reduce waste and promote recycling			4.4.1 Are there any waste management plans in place to increase the percentage of selective collection and recycling?	4.4.2 Per capita waste generation	11	11.6 Waste and pollution in cities

Kigali, Rwanda



6.4 By 2030, substantially increase **water-use efficiency** across all sectors and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity and substantially reduce the number of people suffering from water scarcity



Local Action:

By 2025, we will **reduce household water expenditure by approximately 50%** from \$12/month to \$6/month for 1,405 households



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



By 2025, we will **install 7 smart waste sensors** for efficient and real-time collection by waste collectors in both neighborhoods

Kumasi, Ghana

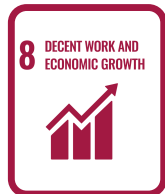


6.2 By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and **end open defecation**, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations



Local Action:

By 2025 we aim to install **approximately 915 toilets, improving the access to equitable sanitation for ~38%** of the houses in Moshie Zongo



8.5 By 2030, achieve **full and productive employment and decent work** for all women and men, **including for young people** and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value



By 2025, we will train and achieve full and productive employment for **150 young women and men** in Moshie Zongo

