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Review of the implementation of the programme of work 2018-2019

Sustainable urban development and smart sustainable cities

UN Smart Sustainable City Framework (UN-SSCF)

Note by the secretariat

Summary

United for Smart Sustainable Cities (U4SSC) is an initiative to support policymakers at all levels in achieving Sustainable Development Goal 11: "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable". The U4SSC serves as the global platform to advocate for public policy and to encourage the use of ICTs to facilitate and ease the transition to smart sustainable cities.

The U4SSC initiative in 2017 published the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for Smart Sustainable Cities (SSC) to support cities worldwide in evaluating the role and contribution of ICTs in smart sustainable cities, and to strengthen policymakers' capacity at all levels to develop policies that correspond to the goals and values of the 2030 Agenda. The indicators provide cities with the self-assessment tools to measure their progress to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

U4SSC partner organizations aim to initiate revision of the KPIs for SSC to develop UN Smart Sustainable City Framework which is described in this note.

The Committee is invited to take note of the information provided and to discuss revision of the KPI for Smart and Sustainable Cities and development of UN Smart Sustainable City Framework (Un-SSCF); the current activities under the U4SSC Initiative and to reiterate the invitation to national and local governments to use the indicators for the evaluation.

I. Introduction

1. United for Smart Sustainable Cities (U4SSC) is an initiative to support policymakers at all levels in achieving Sustainable Development Goal 11: "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable". The U4SSC serves as the global platform to advocate for public policy and to encourage the use of ICTs to facilitate and ease the transition to smart sustainable cities.
2. The U4SSC initiative in 2017 published the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for Smart Sustainable Cities (SSC) to support cities worldwide in evaluating the role and contribution of ICTs in smart sustainable cities, and to strengthen policymakers' capacity at all levels to develop policies that correspond to the goals and values of the 2030 Agenda. The indicators provide cities with the self-assessment tools to measure their progress to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
3. These indicators were developed based on an international standard - Recommendation ITU-T Y.4903/L.1603 "Key performance indicators for smart sustainable cities to assess the achievement of sustainable development goals". They are designed to support cities that are aiming to:
 - achieve the SDGs
 - become smarter
 - become more sustainable.
4. The U4SSC Key Performance Indicators were developed through the contributions of multiple UN agencies, external experts and international organizations as well as feedback from the participating cities.

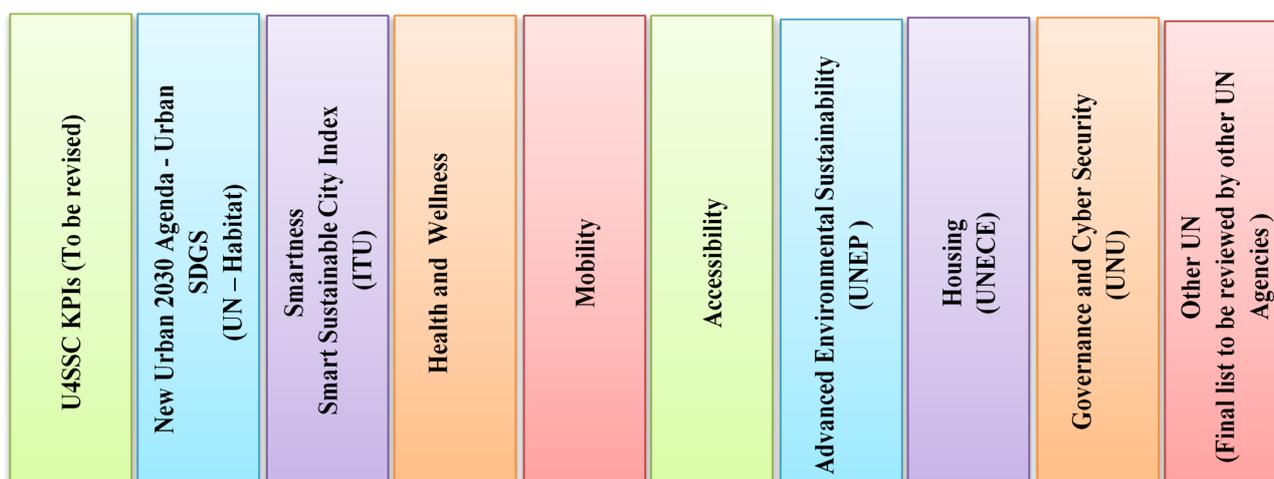
II. Achievements to date

5. The KPIs for SSC project has enjoyed tremendous success. Over 100 cities worldwide have partnered with the U4SSC to pilot and report on these indicators. The participating cities have reported positively on the benchmarking ability of the indicators and the performance evaluation reports. The results have been used as a basis for policy development and supported the transition towards better data collection and data production and analysis at the local level.
6. To further the success of the KPIs for SSC project, it is essential to refine the indicators based on the feedback received from the participating cities as well as internally within the UN to achieve optimum harmonization of the KPIs for SSC.
7. In consideration of the guidance and feedback from cities, there is a need to further refine the KPIs for SSC into a UN Smart Sustainable City Framework that will:
 - i. apply user-friendly tools to enable them to engage in becoming smarter and more sustainable;
 - ii. assist cities in the development of medium and long term polices;
 - iii. provide multiple entry points for analysis depending on a city's capabilities;
 - iv. provide more advanced analytics;
 - v. address performance to SDGs at a local level;
 - vi. provide a link to the development of the ITU Global Smart Sustainable City Index;
 - vii. provide a link to U4SSC implementation programme for projects.

III. Development of UN Smart Sustainable City Framework (UN-SSCF)

8. Revision of the Key Performance Indicators for Smart and Sustainable Cities will lead to Development of UN Smart Sustainable City Framework (UN-SSCF)
9. The proposed UN Smart Sustainable City Framework will build upon existing UN efforts including the United for Smart Sustainable Cities (U4SSC) initiative coordinated by ITU, UNECE and UN-Habitat and supported by other 13 United Nations agencies and programmes; the New Urban Agenda and City Prosperity Initiative (CPI), led by UN Habitat; the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other efforts from other UN Agencies.
10. The KPIs for SSC will be incorporated into a UN System-wide framework for measuring smartness, sustainability and urban SDG performance that is currently under development through different UN bodies. The UN SSC framework will allow fair measurement of efforts at city level to improve urban SDG performance by enabling a clear understanding of the factors that produce positive changes in the implementation of urban SDGs and those that limit good performance.
11. The goal of the new UN Smart Sustainable City Framework is to provide cities with a transparent and accountable framework that will better support cities (and countries) in meeting the needs of tomorrow. By harmonizing with the New Urban Agenda and other global commitments, this new UN Smart Sustainable City Framework will be able to take local context into account and thus, have improved reporting on the evaluation with better overall outputs. Policymakers will be able to leverage the outcomes as inputs in the policymaking processes and strengthen their capacity to build a smarter and more sustainable future.
12. The outcome expected will be a UN Smart Sustainable City Framework (please see Figure below) that will harmonize existing efforts and will leverage on the expertise and work ongoing in the different UN agencies.

UN Smart Sustainable City Framework



13. Above is just a proposed structure for the UN Smart Sustainable City Framework what would allow cities to engage at a level that is appropriate for their data collection abilities and with topics that are of most interest based on their needs for improvement. It could also engage with other external indicators or benchmarking efforts with topics that align with UN Agency priorities.

IV. Update process of the U4SSC KPIS

14. The revision of the U4SSC KPI will focus on an update of the current KPIs to a set of basic Core U4SSC KPIs will focus on basic levels of smartness and sustainability such that all cities can report regardless of size, geography, or economic status.

Updated Basic KPIs – Entry Point for Cities

- Use current Indicators as the starting point; modifying, adding, removing as required based on:
 - Pilot city experience
 - Review with respect to SDG priorities for each UN agency
 - Review with respect to other UN efforts (e.g. UN Habitat CPI) to harmonize terminology
 - Add further details and interpretations on methodologies, data sources, rationale, etc.
 - Review and update benchmarks

15. Proposed Timeline

- i. A joint letter to be signed by ITU, UNECE and UN-Habitat principals in October 2019
- ii. Proposal for review is discussed and endorsed by the UNECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management on 2-4 October 2019
- iii. UN bodies, U4SSC partners, could be invited to designate their focal points plus 5 external experts by 1 November 2019
- iv. The official project with a dedicated website could be launched in Barcelona during the Smart City Expo in November 2019
- v. The first e-meeting could be convened in December 2019 and a first set of KPIs and a first draft of the Smart and Sustainable City Measurement Framework (SSCMF) will be developed by April 2020
- vi. The first draft of the SSCMF will be published for open comments from 1 April to 1 May 2020. Comments received will be addressed and a revised version of the SSCMF for final approval will be submitted to all UN bodies involved in the process on 1 June 2020.
- vii. The final outcome will be presented at the U4SSC Annual Meeting in September 2020.
 - viii. CUDHLM adopts the new KPIs in October 2020.

16. Secretariat for the revisions will include ITU, UNECE, UNU and UN-Habitat.