



# REPORT

## Considerations for the Follow-up and Review of the New Urban Agenda

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## Executive Summary

In October 2016, United Nations member states will sign a global plan of action for sustainable urban development - the New Urban Agenda - at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III). Strong follow-up and review processes are essential to maintain commitment and engagement over time for this document, thereby supporting the Agenda's implementation. By identifying implementation successes and challenges, follow-up and review facilitate policy learning and provide an evidence base for implementation activities. They can moreover strengthen the New Urban Agenda's inclusiveness and accountability. Against this background, this study develops recommendations for the follow-up and review of the New Urban Agenda.

### Global follow-up and review

Global follow-up and review processes are essential to facilitate an overall appraisal of progress on the New Urban Agenda and to orchestrate a UN-system-wide strategy on sustainable urban development that is linked to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In this context, the voices of cities need to inform the decisions and actions of international agencies more strongly than they currently do.

### **Focus areas**

A key question for the global follow-up and review of the New Urban Agenda relates to its content. **What, exactly, should be reviewed?** We suggest the following focus areas:

First, to the extent that the New Urban Agenda is an implementation agreement for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the follow-up and review of the New Urban Agenda should contribute to the review of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11, as well as the **urban dimension of the other SDGs** by exploring success factors of progress and making obstacles transparent. The achievement of several other SDGs will require concerted efforts in cities and by local authorities. Thus a broad consideration of the urban dimension of the SDGs beyond SDG11 is essential. Moreover, the follow-up and review of the New Urban Agenda could qualitatively complement the quantitative indicators used to measure urban progress in the context of the 2030 Agenda. For example, the global SDG indicator for target 11.a.1 concerns the *proportion of population living in cities that implement urban and regional development plans integrating population projections and resource needs, by size of city*. Reporting on this indicator will be purely quantitative. The follow-up and review of the New Urban Agenda could complement this by providing an assessment of the quality of these urban and regional development plans.

Moreover, the SDG indicators need to be nationalized and localized, a process that can be supported by the New Urban Agenda, e.g. by strengthening the monitoring capacities of cities. The follow-up and review of the New Urban Agenda needs to include the voices of the urban poor, making it inclusive and participatory.

Second, the New Urban Agenda contains additional elements that will also need to be monitored, reported and reviewed. In particular, this relates to the **enabling legal, institutional and financial frameworks that cities need to pursue sustainable urban development** and implement the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda. These enabling conditions - which relate to issues such as decentralization processes and the capacities and financial situations of local governments - are currently not part of the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda. However, comparable data is of fundamental importance to support

evidence-based discussions of progress and mutual learning on the enabling conditions. Depending on the final definition of such enabling conditions in the New Urban Agenda, existing indicators could be used to monitor them and could potentially be integrated into existing monitoring frameworks, such as UN-Habitat's City Prosperity Initiative. The New Urban Agenda should request an inter-agency task force, including UN-Habitat, the UN Statistical Commission and other relevant UN institutions to propose targets related to the enabling conditions in the New Urban Agenda, and identify appropriate review criteria where necessary. This exercise should be conducted by spring 2017, prior to the first thematic review of SDG11 at the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) in summer 2018.

Third, the current draft of the New Urban Agenda outlines **transformative commitments** for sustainable urban development. The acceleration of urbanization in parts of the world and rapid urban change worldwide is likely to necessitate additional structural, organizational and behavioral changes that cannot be fully anticipated yet and that go beyond these transformative commitments. Such transformative change requires the identification and propagation of urban innovations in the social, economic and environmental realms. Thus, the follow-up and review process should also pay attention to transformative urban change and facilitate discussions on its implications.

Fourth, follow-up and review of the New Urban Agenda should also consider the voluntary commitments for implementation that all interested actors can register on the Habitat III website. These voluntary commitments need to be part of the follow-up and review to enable member states and other actors to identify particularly successful commitments that should be continued and scaled up. Voluntary commitments to support the implementation of the New Urban Agenda should at a minimum: complement rather than substitute government action, be new or additional (rather than an established activity with a new façade), be specific and measurable, be adequately funded, and contribute to the implementation of at least one key topic of the New Urban Agenda.

### **Connections to the HLPF**

The global level review of the New Urban Agenda should have strong links to the HLPF, which will absorb much political attention in the next 15 years. As SDG11 will be reviewed in the context of the **thematic reviews** of the HLPF once in every **four-year cycle**, it allows for a regular consideration of sustainable urban development at the global level. Moreover, as the annual thematic reviews will consider interlinkages between the goals that are reviewed in that year and other SDGs, urban issues may also be discussed during the other years.

The New Urban Agenda should also request ECOSOC to consider making cities the theme for the HLPF during one session in the second cycle (2020-2023). While the UN Secretary-General initially suggested that “making cities sustainable and building productive capacities” should be the HLPF theme in 2018, this suggestion is no longer contained in the resolution on the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda. Instead, in 2018 SDG 11 will be reviewed in-depth together with several other SDGs under the theme “transformation toward sustainable and resilient societies”. If one of the future sessions of the HLPF has cities as its annual theme, **attention for urban issues** would be particularly strong in that year.

Discussions on transformative commitments in the urban realm should also be part of the **Quadrennial Global Sustainable Development Report** that will be prepared for the HLPF, and will highlight broader lessons learned and emerging trends.

The 2030 Agenda also encourages member states to conduct **voluntary national reviews** at the HLPF. These should reflect national progress on the urban dimension of the SDGs

and the enabling conditions. Such national reviews at the global level allow states to engage in a direct and focused dialogue on their implementation successes and challenges, which in turn is important for meaningful mutual learning to occur.

### **Global reporting**

A regular progress report on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda should cover the four topics outlined above, and should consider national and regional reports as well as relevant inputs from UN agencies, stakeholders and scientists.

Extensive reports would need to be prepared approximately once every four years, as an input to the HLPF's examination of SDG11 and the urban dimension of the SDGs. Additionally, briefer, annual reports could be prepared that provide insights on the urban dimension of the theme of the thematic reviews during those years when SDG11 is not reviewed in-depth at the HLPF. The added value of such annual reports compared to a single report on the urban dimension of the SDGs every four years needs to be carefully considered.

These reports should be developed in close cooperation by all relevant UN agencies and with stakeholder engagement.

### **Role of UN-Habitat**

A wide range of UN agencies are engaged in work that touches on urban issues, and are thus well positioned to contribute to monitoring, reporting and review of the New Urban Agenda. As the only UN agency with a mandate that is specifically dedicated to human settlements and urban issues, UN-Habitat in particular can make important contributions to the global follow-up and review of the New Urban Agenda. For example, UN-Habitat is well positioned to participate in, and even take a leading role, in an inter-agency task force with the mandate to identify existing indicators that can contribute to the monitoring of the New Urban Agenda, and where additional review criteria may be needed. However, as many different institutions collect data and indicators, this exercise should be conducted in partnership with all relevant UN institutions, in particular also the UN Statistical Commission. Such an inter-agency task force could also be responsible for aggregating qualitative and quantitative data on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda in progress reports. As many different institutions collect data and indicators, this exercise should also be conducted in partnership with all relevant UN institutions. Moreover, as the organizer and convener of the World Urban Forum, UN-Habitat should ensure that the WUF offers good opportunities to discuss a (draft) report on the New Urban Agenda, and offers a useful platform for mutual learning and discussion with respect to the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

At the national and local level, UN-Habitat could play an important role in supporting effective follow-up and review in cooperation with relevant partners.

### **Regional follow-up and review**

Monitoring, reporting and review at the regional level can facilitate peer learning between states. Urban challenges and opportunities often have a regional dimension, providing a strong incentive for regional review processes. Thus, the New Urban Agenda should encourage member states to discuss progress on urban issues during any regional follow-up and review processes that they decide to engage in in the context of the 2030 Agenda, and to also consider engaging in dedicated regional reviews addressing the New Urban Agenda. These could be supported by the UN regional commissions and other regional organizations,



e.g. by aggregating and comparing national data and preparing reports that summarize the conclusions of regional reviews as an input for the HLPF.

### **National follow-up and review**

At the national level, member states should consider regularly hosting inclusive national events to reflect on sustainable urban development. These events could also prepare inputs on urban issues for the voluntary national reviews of the SDGs that may take place in the context of the 2030 Agenda.

Comparable national data is of fundamental importance to support evidence-based discussions on implementation. To facilitate a coherent, inclusive and meaningful follow-up and review of the New Urban Agenda that is in line with the 2030 Agenda, targeted and specific support for improvements in statistical capacity are needed at the national, sub-national and local level. This includes support for the integration of multiple sources of data and support for data collection and analysis. Examples of support measures are trainings and the development of tools, guidelines and handbooks on data and methods.

UN-Habitat could be tasked with developing detailed guidelines on how effective follow-up and review at the national level can be implemented and how national reporting can align with and support the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda.

### **Local follow-up and review**

The local level is of fundamental importance for the implementation of the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda, and thus progress should also be monitored, reported and reviewed at this level. Such local follow-up and review also has benefits for local actors. For example, it can facilitate inclusive and coherent planning at the local level by providing an **evidence base**. It can also provide an **advocacy tool** for local governments vis-à-vis their national governments by allowing them to highlight where they need more support to implement the urban dimension of the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda.

The quality of local follow-up and review processes should also be considered at other levels. For example, by reflecting on local data availability, local initiatives for SDG monitoring, community-based monitoring processes and inclusiveness of marginalized groups such as the urban poor at the national and global level (in an aggregate form), support for improvements in local follow-up and review can be optimized.

Together with other relevant actors, UN-Habitat could develop guidelines for inclusive follow-up and review at the local level, and provide support to interested cities. Such local follow-up and review should also optimally feed into national-level processes for the New Urban Agenda.

### **Stakeholder Engagement**

#### **World Urban Forum**

The World Urban Forum (WUF) could play a substantial role as a **platform for inclusive discussions** and key venue for **mutual learning among policymakers, local governments, stakeholders and practitioners** on challenges and opportunities in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda. WUF participants could present their data and initiatives, allowing others to learn about good practices. The discussions at the World Urban Forum should be an input for a regular progress report for the HLPF on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda. The WUF could also offer a venue to reflect on the overall quality

of the follow-up and review process of the New Urban Agenda, and whether any adjustments are necessary to ensure the continued relevance of such processes.

### **City peer learning**

As cities are the focus of the New Urban Agenda, global follow-up and review processes should provide space for cities to reflect on challenges and opportunities and engage in mutual learning. City networks have many exciting initiatives to support peer learning and sharing of experiences. Such activities should be supported, scaled up and aligned with the New Urban Agenda. Moreover, the results of such city peer learning should be discussed in the context of the WUF. By reflecting on successes and challenges during the WUF, lessons learned can be shared with a broader audience.

### **Habitat Cycle**

The 20-year Habitat cycles are not in line with the rapid pace of urbanization and urban change. More frequent Habitat conferences as well as regular events for follow-up and review in between these conferences are necessary to ensure that member states, local authorities and their partners can respond to emerging trends and challenges and new insights in a timely manner.

The timeframe until Habitat IV should thus be shortened so that the Habitat process is optimally synchronized with the SDGs and any follow-up agreement to the 2030 Agenda. A Habitat IV conference after 15 years - in 2031 - could reflect on the implementation of the urban dimension of the SDGs and how to contribute to the implementation of the follow-up agreement of the SDGs. An additional mid-term review after 7.5 years would allow for a comprehensive assessment of the agenda and implementing any necessary adjustments.

Moreover, the follow-up and review process outlined above allows for regular discussion of progress in implementing the New Urban Agenda in the years between the Habitat conferences and the mid-term review. Firstly, urban actors can regularly discuss progress at the World Urban Forum. And, secondly, the HLPF will also provide an opportunity to discuss urban issues, particularly during those years when it reviews progress on implementing SDG 11.



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## Abbreviations

<b>CDP</b>	Carbon Disclosure Project
<b>cCR</b>	carbonn® Climate Registry
<b>CPI</b>	City Prosperity Index
<b>CRVS</b>	Civil registration and vital statistics
<b>DG DEVCO</b>	EU Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development
<b>ECOSOC</b>	The UN Economic and Social Council
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
<b>FUR</b>	Follow-up and Review
<b>GAP</b>	General Assembly of Partners
<b>GCIF</b>	Global City Indicators Facility
<b>GEMI</b>	Global Expanded Water Monitoring Initiative
<b>GIS</b>	Geographic Information System
<b>GLAAS</b>	UN-Water Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking Water
<b>GPSC</b>	Global Platform for Sustainable Cities
<b>GSDR</b>	Global Sustainable Development Report
<b>GRI</b>	Global Reporting Initiative
<b>GUO</b>	Global Urban Observatory
<b>Habitat III</b>	United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development
<b>HLG</b>	High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination, Capacity-building for Post 2015 Monitoring
<b>HLPF</b>	High-level Political Forum
<b>IAEG-SDGs</b>	Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Indicators
<b>ICPMD</b>	International Centre for Migration Policy Development
<b>ISO</b>	International Standards Organization
<b>JMP</b>	Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring & Evaluation
<b>MDGs</b>	Millennium Development Goals
<b>MDG-F</b>	Millennium Development Goals Fund
<b>MRV</b>	Measurable, Reportable and Verifiable
<b>NHCs</b>	National Habitat Committees
<b>NUA</b>	New Urban Agenda

<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SIDS</b>	Small Island Developing States
<b>TFIDD</b>	Trust Fund for Innovations in Development Data
<b>TFSCB</b>	Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building
<b>UCLG</b>	United Cities and Local Governments
<b>UNCTAD</b>	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNECE</b>	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
<b>UNEP</b>	United Nations Environmental Programme
<b>UNGC</b>	UN Global Compact
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNISDR</b>	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
<b>UNICEF</b>	The United Nations Children's Fund
<b>UNSG</b>	The Secretary General of the United Nations
<b>WBCSD</b>	World Business Council for Sustainable Development
<b>WBG</b>	World Bank Group
<b>WCCD</b>	World Council on City Data
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization
<b>WMO</b>	World Meteorological Organization
<b>WUF</b>	World Urban Forum

# 1 Introduction

In October 2016, representatives of national and local governments, United Nations and other international institutions, urban practitioners and other stakeholders will come together in Quito, Ecuador for the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III). At this occasion, a global plan of action for sustainable urban development - the New Urban Agenda (NUA) - will be signed. Strong follow-up and review processes are essential to maintain commitment and engagement over time for this document, thereby supporting the Agenda's implementation. By identifying implementation successes and challenges, follow-up and review facilitate policy learning and provide an evidence base for implementation activities. They can moreover strengthen the New Urban Agenda's inclusiveness and accountability.

Habitat III has often been framed as the first implementation conference of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Indeed, the 2030 Agenda has a substantial urban dimension, with 65% of all targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) requiring the involvement of local urban stakeholders to ensure their achievement (Misselwitz and Salcedo Villanueva 2015: 19). In this context, it is likely that the follow-up and review processes of the New Urban Agenda and the 2030 Agenda will be linked and complementary. However, the actual relationship between these processes still needs to be concretized – both with respect to institutional dimensions (how could the review of the NUA feed into the High-Level Political Forum?) as well as content (will the FUR of the NUA address only the urban dimension of the SDGs, or also additional elements?).

Against this background, the aim of this study is to **develop recommendations for the follow-up and review** of the New Urban Agenda. These recommendations should reflect lessons learned from relevant international agreements and urban initiatives, and should also consider how all relevant actors can be encouraged to participate in the follow-up and review of the New Urban Agenda. They should also outline suggestions for the relationship between the follow-up and review of the New Urban Agenda and the 2030 Agenda.

We focus on monitoring, reporting and review as essential elements of FUR. **Monitoring** is understood here as data collection and analysis to track progress on the goals and targets of an agreement. **Reporting** involves the compilation and dissemination of this data in a comparable format, e.g. standardized reports. Finally, **review** involves the critical assessment of progress towards the targets and goals agreed upon. It should also sustain political commitment over time, encourage political learning and provide support for implementation.

The focus of this study is on the institutional, technical and political attributes of effective monitoring, reporting and review mechanisms, rather than the specific content thereof – which is also still being negotiated. Of course, decisions on the specific content and any targets and indicators will affect the choice of appropriate monitoring processes and thus this study also makes assumptions regarding the nature of the content of the New Urban Agenda (see chapter 3.2). However, the broader institutional, technical and political dimensions of an effective monitoring mechanism can be elucidated without knowledge on the final targets and indicators that may be monitored. The same points also apply to reporting and review mechanisms. In all three areas, a broad scientific and policy literature has contributed substantive insights on the attributes of effective mechanisms in the area of sustainable

development in general, and to some extent also with respect to sustainable urban development in particular.

This report is structured as follows. Chapter 2 outlines the essential attributes of effective monitoring, reporting and review mechanisms for the New Urban Agenda. These attributes constitute the institutional, technical and political characteristics that should be met so that these mechanisms can support the implementation of the Agenda. To the extent that these attributes consider how these mechanisms can be made attractive to different actor groups and ensure their participation, they are also important to secure agreement on monitoring, reporting and review mechanisms in the first place. Chapter 3 then shortly outlines the approach taken in this study as well as the case selection. Chapter 4 to 6 present assessments of the monitoring, reporting and review processes of our three case studies - the Habitat Agenda, 2030 Agenda and relevant urban initiatives – according to the attributes outlined in chapter 2. Finally, chapter 7 draws on the lessons learned from these assessments to develop recommendations for the monitoring, reporting and review mechanisms of the New Urban Agenda.



## 2 Attributes

An extensive literature in the field of international relations indicates two ways in which monitoring, reporting and review mechanisms can facilitate implementation of and compliance with commitments (e.g. Raustiala 2002, Tallberg 2002, Victor 2006).

The **enforcement perspective** assumes that international agreements are implemented only when made compulsory in conjunction with incentives (Tallberg 2002). Incentives can be positive (e.g. capacity building, support) or negative (e.g. sanctions). Strong monitoring mechanisms are also an important component of an enforcement approach. By contrast, the **management perspective** assumes that states want to do their best to implement an agreement. Failures to implement an agreement are in this case rooted in lacking administrative or technical capacities or unclear commitments, and are therefore best addressed by improving transparency, mutual learning, implementation support, and rule interpretation (Tallberg 2002).

More recently, research has suggested that a **combination of enforcement and management approaches may actually be the most successful** (Tallberg 2002). Sanctions can be an important “weapon of last resort” (Brown Weiss and Jacobson 1998: 547-8). In the case of the New Urban Agenda, sanctions are not an option, as the NUA will not be a legally binding agreement.<sup>1</sup> However, other aspects of an enforcement perspective – such as the positive incentives mentioned above – can be part of monitoring, reporting, and review mechanisms. Implementation support is thus called for under both the enforcement and the management perspective – either as an incentive or as a form of support mechanism for states that are willing but unable to fully implement their commitments. Besides, both the management and enforcement perspectives emphasize strong data collection and analysis instruments, even if the justifications for this differ. In the case of the enforcement perspective, monitoring is important to ensure accountability and identify countries that are not implementing their commitments. Conversely, from a management perspective data provides the evidence base that is needed to create transparency, allow countries to share experiences and facilitate mutual learning.

Against this background, the following paragraphs outline how monitoring, reporting, and review can contribute to the effective implementation of international agreements. We specify those attributes that each of these mechanisms must possess to be effective. These attributes constitute the institutional, technical and political characteristics that should be met so that FUR can support the implementation of the New Urban Agenda. These have been derived from the relevant scientific and policy literature, and predominantly reflect a management perspective, as outlined above. Political attributes relate in part to those largely normative aspects that aim to ensure that all relevant actors are interested in contributing to the FUR. Relevant actors are member states, but also UN/international institutions and non-state actors. As these political attributes are similar for monitoring, reporting and review mechanisms, we discuss them once below. Conversely, some of the political, technical and

<sup>1</sup> The fact that the New Urban Agenda will not be a legally binding agreement can also have certain advantages. Thus, nonbinding agreements “are more flexible and less prone to raise concerns about noncompliance, and thus they allow governments to adopt ambitious targets and far-ranging commitments (...). A binding commitment might be useful for codifying an effort that is already in hand (or which requires actions that are easy for governments to deliver). But uncertain, strenuous efforts at cooperation are easier to organize when the commitments are not formally binding” (Victor 2006: 97).

institutional attributes differ substantially across monitoring, reporting and review mechanisms and are thus discussed separately. These include for example the practical conditions that must be met in order for monitoring to be effective, such as data comparability.

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## 2.1 Political attributes of effective monitoring, reporting and review

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The monitoring, reporting and review mechanisms of the New Urban Agenda **should be designed to be attractive to member states, UN institutions and non-state actors**. As noted by Simon et al. (2016: 60), “if the urban SDG is to prove useful as a tool as intended for encouraging local and national authorities alike to make positive investments in the various components of urban sustainability transitions, then it must be widely relevant, acceptable and practicable”.

Firstly, **commitment and buy-in from member states** is essential. Member states are the signatories of the NUA, and thus the responsibility for effective FUR primarily lies in their hands. National statistical offices must engage in data collection and compilation efforts, and member state representatives must commit to participate in an implementation review “at a political level high enough to ensure that serious and continuing attention is given to putting commitments into place” (Raustiala 2002: 427, see also Victor 2006: 98).

Achieving such member state commitment and buy-in is anything but easy: it is not immediately evident why states would consider a FUR process as something important that they should participate in. The interest of states in such a process is stronger where they are more directly influenced by the activities of other states. This is the case for systemic issues, where activities that take place on a local scale have direct, physical impacts at the global level, such as in the case of ozone depletion (Turner et al. 1990). The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer is thus also a frequently cited example of a very strong agreement with substantial commitments in the areas of monitoring, reporting and review. Conversely, participation in MRR processes will likely be weaker in the case of cumulative issues, which have clear impacts at the local scale, but where global impacts are more indirect (ibid.). Deforestation, for example, is an example of such a cumulative issue. While it eventually has implications at the global level due to its impact on carbon dioxide emissions and there is widespread agreement on the problems caused by deforestation, several decades of international negotiations in this area have thus far failed to produce a noteworthy agreement amongst member states (Dimitrov et al. 2007). Most of the well-researched implications of deforestation are at the national and local level, while scientific knowledge about its transboundary impacts remains incomplete and unreliable, giving some countries “reasons to openly reject the notion of forests as global public goods and to maintain that forests are not global commons but national resources (...) Hence there is no perceived interdependence” to justify a strong international agreement with appropriate monitoring, reporting and review mechanisms (ibid.: 244).

The case is similar with respect to urban governance. While the evidence is clear and growing that there is an urban dimension to transboundary issues such as climate change, global security or migration, the causal links are indirect and scientific evidence remains limited. Urban development in itself is thus still predominantly perceived as a national or local issue, rather than a systemic challenge where there is a strong interdependence between member states that justifies strong mutual monitoring, reporting and review of urban governance. Thus, member state’s interest in participating in the NUA FUR may actually be

quite limited. However, participation in the NUA FUR can nonetheless become appealing for member states if it helps them achieve domestic policy goals, e.g. by providing **opportunities for learning** and supporting **implementation** (see section 2.3).<sup>2</sup>

Secondly, the FUR of the NUA should be **inclusive and participatory toward all relevant stakeholders**. Allowing for stakeholder participation strengthens the legitimacy of the FUR and allows for the consideration of the data, knowledge and expertise of a wide range of actors (Raustiala 2002). Involving relevant stakeholders can also help ensure more realistic approaches toward implementation (considering that they will be important partners in implementation) (Raustiala 2002: 416). In the case of the NUA, participation by non-state actors in the FUR is also essential because its effectiveness will be determined by “whether it is relevant to urban governments and urban dwellers, especially those whose needs are not currently met, and gets their buy-in” (Satterthwaite 2016: 3). Including them in the FUR is a strong way of ensuring that the implementation of the NUA reflects local needs and concerns.

With respect to monitoring, inclusiveness is additionally important because of the conceptual work that needs to be done in order to achieve a minimum consensus as to common standards and universal definitions of urban issues (Simon et al. 2016), not least because of the changing dynamics of human settlements around the world in the period 1996 to 2016 (Cohen 2016).

We must also consider what expectations the FUR needs to meet to be attractive for stakeholders to participate. The literature suggests that incentives for non-state actor participation are generally strong, as they can “use the international process to strengthen their position in domestic policy debates” and benefit from the legitimacy it may endow on their implementation activities (Raustiala 2002: 416). With respect to specific institutional structures, inclusive and participatory monitoring, reporting and review processes presuppose a **multi-level FUR structure**.

Thirdly, FUR should **mobilize relevant knowledge and expertise from UN and other international institutions**. Considering that the implementation of international agreements also requires a coordinated effort by the UN system, it is important that all relevant UN and other international institutions participate in the NUA FUR. However, such institutions are not automatically interested in participating in such processes. For example, it may be difficult to encourage different international institutions to contribute to the FUR of the NUA, rather than focusing only on the SDG that they feel is most closely aligned to their mandate. Satterthwaite (2016: 10) mentions an example where “a former head of research at UN-Habitat refused to work on health issues because he claimed that was the World Health Organization’s (WHO) responsibility”. Such attitudes would preclude other international institutions whose work has an urban dimension such as the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), to name just a few, from effectively contributing to the FUR of the NUA.

Finally, **the NUA should build on existing FUR structures**. This helps to minimize excessive and additional burdens, particularly for member states with limited means. It also implies that it will be important to first take stock of the available sources, scope and quality

<sup>2</sup> In general, participation in the monitoring, reporting and review processes of non-binding agreements may also be stronger amongst liberal democracies, as these are more “comfortable with external scrutiny of implementation and familiar with extensive regulatory cooperation” (Raustiala 2002: 427).

of data available, as well as relevant existing reporting and review structures. However, practical and technical feasibility, political acceptability and stakeholder ownership should also be considered when capitalizing on potential synergies with existing processes. For instance, political acceptability of indicators must be secured among both state and non-state actors, particularly with regards to “big data” and new data collection methods.

Of course, in identifying existing structures that are to be integrated into a new FUR process it is important to ensure that monitoring, reporting and review are comprehensive and cover all dimensions of an agreement. It would be unfortunate if a FUR process addresses only certain aspects of an agreement, while others are not subject to a review process. In this study, we make certain assumptions regarding the content of the New Urban Agenda. These assumptions are outlined in section 3.2.

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## 2.2 Attributes for an effective monitoring and reporting mechanism

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Monitoring and reporting are essential first steps to support the evidence-based implementation of any international agreement. This applies equally to the enforcement and management perspectives. Strong monitoring and reporting mechanisms help member states gather and compile information and data, allow them to track progress, and make successes and challenges visible. This is key to understand if and what policy adjustments are needed and to inform policy design.

In addition to the general political attributes outlined in section 2.1, the following attributes are specifically relevant for monitoring and reporting:

**Firstly, the generation of high-quality comparable data is essential to allow for the combination of data from multiple sources.** The normalization of unstandardized data is costly, time-consuming and sometimes not possible. Considering the multitude of data sources that should be utilized for effective monitoring, the harmonization of data collection practices and uniform application of indicators becomes ever more important. This is particularly true for definitions of urban areas, which can greatly vary from country to country (UN-Habitat 2016). However, the generation of comparable data will not always be possible or feasible. In some cases it will also be important to rely on qualitative data and other means of information. The FUR New Urban Agenda will likely cover several different topics (see section 3.2), so also in this case it is likely that monitoring will consist of a combination of standardized quantitative data, as well as other sources of data (qualitative data, checklist indicators, community-based monitoring, etc.) for issues where indicators with established methodologies and/or sufficient country coverage are thus far lacking.

**Secondly, effective monitoring requires the use of multiple sources of data, including both qualitative and quantitative data and information.** Monitoring mechanisms that aggregate existing sources of data can not only improve the inclusiveness of the monitoring mechanism, but also help minimize costs and additional monitoring burdens. Data sources that should be tapped include for instance community-based data and information, private sector data, data from city networks, spatial data, and open source data. The utilization of available data and information also requires enhanced coordination and data sharing among local government departments and between stakeholders.

**Thirdly, sufficient capacities are needed to unlock the potential of the data revolution for effective monitoring and reporting.** On the technical side, there is a need for the design and implementation of national multi-dimensional information systems, high quality

registrars, strengthening civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) programs, improved use of administrative data, geospatial data and big data (IISD 2016a). Consequently, the demand for statistical capacity building is manifold and should focus on technical support in data collection, analysis and compilation, with special emphasis on new indicators and spatial data, assistance in the disaggregation of data, creation of tools, guidelines and handbooks on data and methods, and support in the coordination of actors and stakeholders (UN-Habitat 2016).

Developing countries may also need support in putting together their reports, to “synthesize and make sense of the vast amount of information” (Halle and Wolfe 2016: 6). Additionally, simple measures such as the timing of national reporting to be synchronized with periodic national reporting in international organizations could “reduce the burden on countries and to take advantage of work being done anyway” (ibid.: 6).

**Fourthly, reporting needs to strike an appropriate balance between flexibility (to reflect national priorities and capabilities) and comparability (to ensure that the reports are comparable)** (Halle and Wolfe 2016: 6). Consistent and comparable reporting enables comparison of efforts among member states and illustrates whether the global implementation efforts are sufficient to achieve compliance (Aldy 2014). Comparability will also help countries learn from each other’s reports (Halle and Wolfe 2016: 6). At the same time, there needs to be some flexibility in reporting formats, so that national priorities can be considered – this is essential to ensure interest in the reports that are produced and that the reports can support national decision-making processes. In general, it will be crucial to provide overall reporting guidelines, which offer instructions to member states, but also leave enough room for own priorities and additional points.

While the discussion on specific indicators is beyond the scope of this paper, it is important to mention that if additional review criteria are to be developed for the NUA, these should be defined according to clear principles. These include: global comparability, feasibility of measurement and reporting, meaningfulness to multiple stakeholders, applicability to global, national and local levels, with scope for subsidiarity in monitoring efforts by different actors at different levels.

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## 2.3 Attributes for an effective review mechanism

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**The scientific literature has demonstrated that review mechanisms are important to support the implementation of international agreements** (e.g. Raustiala 2002, Victor 2006). Review mechanisms allow progress to be examined, and any implementation gaps to be addressed. However, many international agreements lack strong review mechanisms. The following paragraphs outline key attributes for strong review mechanisms.

**Firstly, effective review processes provide sufficient opportunities for mutual learning and reflection.** This is particularly important in the case of commitments where governments may not be aware of the best implementation strategy at the time of signing the agreement (Raustiala 2002: 432, Victor 2006: 97). By engaging in the review process, governments can learn about other states approaches to implementing commitments, and can also benefit from the expertise of any non-state actors that are invited to participate in the review (Raustiala 2002: 416-7). Based on any learning that occurs during a review, there should also be opportunities “for the adjustment of treaty commitments in light of new information and experiences” (ibid.: 415).

**Secondly, review processes should be rigorous and take place regularly.** A thorough review of progress is not only necessary for learning to take place. By creating transparency, it can also “help assure reluctant participants that others are complying with shared obligations” (Raustiala 2002: 416). Regular review processes are necessary to facilitate a timely identification of implementation gaps, and also to allow for an agreement to be adjusted as circumstances change.

**Thirdly, review processes should mobilize implementation support.** Both the enforcement and management approaches to encouraging compliance with international agreements emphasize the importance of implementation support. In the case of an enforcement perspective, implementation support can be a positive incentive for member states to participate in a review process. Withholding support because of insufficient commitment to implementation can also function as a sanction (Raustiala 2002: 438). From a management perspective, parties to an agreement are generally assumed to be willing to comply with the terms of an agreement, but may lack the capacity to do so (Brown Weiss and Jacobson 1998, Chayes and Chayes 1995). Thus, countries that are unable to fully implement an agreement should receive implementation support. Examples of such support mechanisms include technology transfer, financial assistance and capacity building. Thus, support can take multiple forms, depending on the nature of an agreement and the specific implementation gaps where a city or country needs assistance. Given this diversity of different forms of implementation support, the actors involved can also vary. Examples include UN institutions, national development agencies, bilateral cooperation between local authorities, partnerships with the private sector and stakeholders.



## 3 Case Selection and Approach

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### 3.1 Case selection

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Chapters 4-6 analyze the monitoring, reporting and review mechanisms of three cases: the Habitat Agenda, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and relevant urban initiatives. These three cases were selected because they can provide particularly useful lessons for the FUR of the New Urban Agenda. The following paragraphs outline the rationale for choosing each of these case studies as well as their main characteristics with respect to monitoring, reporting and review.

#### 3.1.1 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The NUA is often referred to as the first implementation conference of the 2030 Agenda. This explains the selection of the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** as a case for comparison. The significance of urban issues and local actors for achieving the SDGs is illustrated by the inclusion of a standalone SDG for cities (SDG11) as well as the consideration of urban issues by the indicators and targets of other goals. Potential synergies of data systems, workflows and institutional arrangements between the SDGs and the NUA are to be utilized to the maximum extent possible. Finally, Habitat III and the NUA should connect to the political momentum of the 2030 Agenda, as this global development agenda will capture much political attention in the coming years.

The follow-up review of the 2030 Agenda aspires to be “robust, voluntary, effective, participatory, transparent and integrated” (Res. 70/1: para. 72). The details of this FUR process are still being finalized, and will continue to develop after the first review of the SDGs at the high-level political forum (HLPF). The key attributes of the FUR process of the 2030 Agenda are defined in resolution 70/1, and further refined in a resolution on the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda is intended to be a **multi-level process** at the subnational, national, regional and global levels (Res. 70/1: para. 77). The national and the global level are however the primary levels of monitoring and review of the 2030 Agenda.

At the **global level**, annual reviews of the SDGs will take place at the HLPF under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) (Res. 70/1: para. 84). Every four years, global reviews at the HLPF will occur under the auspices of the General Assembly, focusing on political guidance, emerging challenges and mobilizing action (ibid.: para. 87). The global FUR of the 2030 Agenda should “include developed and developing countries as well as relevant United Nations entities and other stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector” (ibid.: para. 84).

The annual HLPF reviews will build on inputs from various sources. Firstly, the HLPF will be informed by two reports. These include the **annual progress report on the Sustainable Development Goals** that will be prepared by the Secretary-General and the UN system, based on the global indicator framework, data from national statistical systems and regional data (Res. 70/1: para. 83). Moreover, the **Quadrennial Global Sustainable Development Report** (GSDR) will inform the HLPF and is intended to strengthen the science-policy interface (ibid.: para. 83).



Secondly, member states are encouraged to engage in **voluntary national reviews** at the HLPF. States are also encouraged to conduct inclusive national and subnational reviews (Res. 70/1: para. 79). Institutions such as national parliaments could support these national reviews, which are supposed to consider “contributions from indigenous peoples, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders, in line with national circumstances, policies and priorities” (ibid.:para. 79).

Thirdly, the HLPF will consider inputs from **regional and sub-regional reviews**, which can provide opportunities for peer learning among member states (Res. 70/1: para. 80). These regional and sub-regional reviews are supposed to be supported by regional and subregional commissions and organizations (ibid.: para. 80).

Fourthly, the HLPF will involve a **thematic review** of progress on the SDGs (ibid.: para. 85). Fifthly, the HLPF will also consider inputs from stakeholder reporting on their contributions to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda (ibid.: para. 89). Lastly, the results of the review will be summarized in a **ministerial declaration** as well as a more detailed summary of the HLPF by the ECOSOC president.

In considering all of these contributions, the HLPF is intended to build on existing structures. Thus, where appropriate, the HLPF will also consider inputs from existing international conventions, treaties and agreements. For example, SDG 13 calls for urgent action on climate change and its impacts. The 2030 Agenda explicitly recognizes the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) as the main forum for negotiations on climate change (Res. 70/1: para. 31). Kosolapova (2016) shows how FUR under the Paris Agreement can contribute to FUR on the progress of SDG 13 on climate. It is thus an example of an existing structure that feeds into the HLPF. The FUR of the New Urban Agenda could play a similar role by contributing to the global review of SDG 11. Moreover, certain potential aspects of the climate FUR that could feed into the HLPF are of interest for the New Urban Agenda and are thus discussed in the relevant sections of chapters 4-6.

Similarly, institutions across the UN system will also collaborate in providing inputs for the HLPF. For example, UN Water – an inter-agency coordination mechanism for freshwater issues – has taken the lead in developing a global monitoring framework for SDG 6 on water and sanitation. This framework outlines the contributions of different UN institutions, based on their relevant monitoring experience on particular targets and indicators of SDG 6. Thus, the example of UN Water not only provides concrete suggestions for a monitoring framework that feeds into the monitoring of the 2030 Agenda, but also provides suggestions for how inter-agency coordination for an issue where relevant data is dispersed among many UN institutions can work. This example is thus also discussed in the relevant sections of chapters 4-6.

Monitoring will support reporting and review at all levels. The **global indicator framework** for monitoring progress towards the SDGs was proposed by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) and discussed by the United Nations Statistical Commission in March 2016. Final agreement on some indicators is still outstanding, and the process to refine and agree on indicators remains ongoing. Moreover, agreed-upon methodologies and sufficient country coverage are lacking for many indicators. Nonetheless, the framework outlines two primary levels of monitoring of the SDGs: the global and national level. Where appropriate, this will be complemented by regional, sub-national and thematic monitoring. For regional and sub-national monitoring, indicators will be developed at the regional and national levels respectively, while indicators for thematic monitoring are already being developed in many areas (E/CN.3/2016/2/Rev.1).

While **local level monitoring, reporting and review** is of secondary importance in the 2030 Agenda compared in particular to the global and national level, its importance should not be underestimated. The SDGs have a strong urban dimension: about 23 percent of all SDGs indicators have an urban component (UN-Habitat 2016). Moreover, 65% of all SDG targets require the involvement of local urban stakeholders to ensure their achievement (Misselwitz and Salcedo Villanueva 2015: 19). Consequently, monitoring at the local level will be essential to the successful implementation of the SDGs. UN-Habitat's monitoring framework for SDG11 suggests that SDG11 and others with an urban dimension should be **monitored at the global, national and local level** (UN-Habitat 2016). UN-Habitat also proposes to coordinate the "aggregation of data and information for the global monitoring of SDGs, Goal 11 and other indicators with an urban basis" (ibid: 8).

### 3.1.2 Habitat Agenda

The **Habitat Agenda** was the outcome document of the second UN Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), and thus constitutes the precursor agreement to the New Urban Agenda. This makes the successes and shortcomings of the Habitat Agenda particularly relevant – it constitutes the current status with respect to monitoring, reporting and review mechanisms for issues related to human settlements and sustainable urban development at the global level. It constitutes the foundation that the NUA has to build upon, improve and/or revise.

The **national level** was also of central importance for the FUR of the Habitat Agenda (Habitat Agenda: para. 212). The Agenda called on governments at all levels to develop and apply relevant indicators, also at the national and subnational level (ibid.: para. 241). One of the precursor institutions of UN-Habitat, the **United Nations Centre for Human Settlements** (Habitat) was requested to assist in the development of guidelines for such national and local monitoring and evaluation (ibid.: para. 228(n)). The development of such monitoring procedures for the Habitat Agenda has however been slow and rather uneven.

The Habitat Agenda also encouraged states to convene **bilateral, subregional and regional meetings** to review implementation progress (ibid.: para. 215). **Regional commissions**, in cooperation with regional intergovernmental organizations and banks, were also invited to consider convening high-level review meetings and exchange experiences (ibid.: para. 221).

At the **global level**, the **General Assembly** was requested to consider holding a special session in 2001 for the overall review of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda (Habitat Agenda: para. 218). This resulted in the **Istanbul +5 conference**. **ECOSOC** was tasked with reviewing the UN-systemwide coordination and implementation of the Habitat Agenda, and was invited to review the follow-up of the Habitat Agenda (para. 219). UN-Habitat has prepared regular reports on the implementation of the Habitat Agenda for the UN General Assembly (e.g. A/69/298, A/68/332, A/70/210). These are, however, rather brief and in themselves insufficient to report on the implementation of the Habitat Agenda. Further global reports that occasionally discuss progress on the Habitat Agenda are UN-Habitat's flagship reports, in particular the Global Report on Human Settlements (GRHS). However, reporting on the Habitat Agenda is not the key goal of UN-Habitat's flagship publications. These have a far broader focus in supporting improved policies, legislation and strategies in areas such as urban planning, management and governance, and land and housing policies (UN-Habitat 2014a).

Another precursor institution of UN-Habitat –the **Commission on Human Settlements** – was given substantial responsibilities with respect to monitoring, reporting and review on the Habitat Agenda. The **Commission** was tasked with tracking progress on the implementation of the Habitat Agenda by analyzing relevant inputs “from Governments, local authorities and their associations, relevant nongovernmental organizations and the private sector” (Habitat Agenda: para. 222(b)). The collection and processing of statistical data was assigned to the Global Urban Observatory (GUO), which was established in 1997. The GUO was to improve data availability by reporting on urban issues in select countries. Since 2000, the GUO has also been tasked with contributing to the monitoring of the Millennium Development Goals, specifically the target related to improving the lives of slum dwellers.

To improve urban data availability, the GUO has pushed for the creation of urban observatories at the local, national and regional level. These observatories could be hosted by a wide range of stakeholders. However, as is outlined in the analytical chapters (4-6), this network of observatories failed to provide the comprehensive data that was initially envisioned, due to a lack of existing structures to build on.

Despite some progress, the work of the GUO was hampered by the absence of a coordinated effort at collecting data from national and sub-national levels. The Commission on Human Settlements was also tasked with tracking progress on the activities of the UN system (Habitat Agenda: para. 222(h)) and assisting ECOSOC in its coordination of the reporting on the implementation of the Habitat Agenda (ibid.: para. 226). The Commission should also develop appropriate recommendations to address any obstacles in achieving the goals of the Habitat Agenda (ibid.: para. 222(n)) and advise ECOSOC on the implementation of the Habitat Agenda (ibid.: para. 225).

**Habitat Agenda partners** were requested to “regularly monitor and evaluate their own performances in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda” (Habitat Agenda: para. 240). The importance of stakeholder participation in review processes was further emphasized in General Assembly resolution 51/177, which “calls upon all Governments to establish or strengthen, as appropriate, participatory mechanisms for the implementation, assessment and review of and follow-up to the Habitat Agenda and national plans of action” (Res. 51/177: para. 10). National Habitat Committees (NHCs) were one of the key forums through which such inclusive national reviews were to be facilitated. Data on the number of NHCs that were established is limited, but a report from UN-Habitat from 2014 indicates that 64 out of 193 listed member states had established, or were in progress of establishing, NHCs to help draft a report in preparation for Habitat III (UN-Habitat 2014b). However, as the analysis in the following chapters shows, these NHCs did not always operate optimally.

The Governing Council of UN-Habitat has since 2001 also promoted the use of coordinating and exchange platforms such as the World Urban Forum for reviewing the overall performance of the Habitat Agenda.

### 3.1.3 Other urban initiatives

The analytical chapters (4-6) also consider other various **urban initiatives** with relevance for monitoring, reporting and review. Rather than focusing on a specific initiative, each chapter considers different initiatives that can make a contribution to the respective topic. Such urban initiatives are included here for several reasons: firstly, as a wide range of urban actors (city networks, civil society groups, etc.) have developed monitoring, reporting and review initiatives, these offer opportunities for stakeholder participation in FUR processes. Secondly, such urban initiatives often develop innovative approaches to addressing

challenges in monitoring, reporting and review. In that respect, they can provide useful lessons for the NUA. And, thirdly, as indicated in chapter 2, building on existing structures is useful, as it minimizes the burden of additional FUR processes, and limits the cost of setting up such processes. Urban initiatives included in this study are:

- Bloomberg Philanthropies' "What Works Cities" initiative
- Global Platform for Sustainable Cities
- Intergovernmental Panel on Sustainable Urbanization
- Partners' Dashboard for Sustainable Urbanization
- Shack / Slum Dwellers International (SDI), specifically SDI's "Know Your City" initiative
- United Cities and Local Governments' (UCLG) peer learning and city-to-city cooperation initiatives
- United Nations Advisory Committee on Sustainable Urbanization
- World Council on City Data

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## 3.2 Approach

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The analysis of monitoring, reporting and review mechanisms in chapters 4-6 is based on key documents as well as ongoing observation by adelphi of the relevant processes. As the Habitat Agenda is an agreement that was signed 20 years ago, there are many primary as well as secondary sources that reflect on the successes and shortcomings of the Agenda, and that are considered in the analysis. Conversely, the 2030 Agenda and in particular its FUR processes are very much still in development, yet of particular relevance to the FUR under the NUA. Thus, our analysis of this process draws on primary documents, but also on our observation of the consultations among member states and discussions with experts on recent developments in the SDG process.

As the Habitat III process is also still ongoing and the New Urban Agenda will only be agreed upon in October 2016, our recommendations for the FUR of the Agenda are necessarily based on certain assumptions about the nature of this agreement. We consider these assumptions to be realistic, nonetheless it is important to be transparent about them and thus they are specified here:

- The 2030 Agenda and the New Urban Agenda will be closely linked. In particular, the core of the monitoring framework of the New Urban Agenda will be the indicators of SDG11, as well as other SDG indicators with an urban dimension. Thus, the reporting and review processes of the NUA should feed into the review of the 2030 Agenda.
- The New Urban Agenda will contain additional elements that also need to be monitored, reported and reviewed. In particular, this relates to the enabling conditions for implementation that the NUA should specify. Elucidating these enabling conditions constitutes an important added value of the NUA, as the SDGs have a strong urban dimension but do not sufficiently specify roles and responsibilities as well as enabling conditions for implementation at the local level. Follow-up and review of the enabling conditions requires consideration of assessments and feedback by local governments.

- A further additional element that may be part of the follow-up and review of the New Urban Agenda is the assessment of transformative change in the urban realm. Transformative change that promotes fundamental structural, organizational and behavioral changes will be essential for sustainable urban development, but is likely to cover issues outside of the scope of the existing SDG indicators. Monitoring such transformative change requires the use of qualitative and quantitative information from multiple sources.
- The FUR process should also consider the voluntary commitments that will be necessary for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda. Member states and other actors need to be able to distinguish successful commitments “from failures and to *systematically review and evaluate* which of these initiatives merit public support for scaling up” (Beisheim and Simon 2015: 21).

## 4 Political Attributes for Monitoring, Reporting and Review

The monitoring, reporting and review mechanisms of the New Urban Agenda **should be designed to be attractive to member states, UN institutions and non-state actors**. For FUR to be effective, all these actors need to be motivated to contribute to the process and learn from it. This chapter examines lessons learned with respect to the political attractiveness of FUR for these different actor groups in the 2030 Agenda, the Habitat Agenda and relevant urban initiatives. The three case studies are assessed according to the attributes outlined in section 2.1. As urban initiatives are not relevant for all of the attributes (e.g. commitment from member states), they are not discussed in each section.

The table below summarizes the findings in this chapter.

**Table 4.1: Summary of results for the political attributes**

Preconditions	2030 Agenda	Habitat Agenda	Urban initiatives
<b>Commitment from member states</b>	The Agenda recognizes the importance of member state commitment for FUR. The necessary structures are still in development, but look promising. +	The outcome document of the Istanbul +5 conference noted the lack of political will to implement the commitments made in the Habitat Agenda. - -	n/a
<b>Inputs from UN and other international institutions</b>	The UN system is expected to make significant contributions to the FUR of the 2030 Agenda. The structures to coordinate this are still in development. +	The Habitat Agenda called on contributions from UN and other international institutions. However, their role in monitoring, reporting and review remained weak. +/-	n/a
<b>Stakeholder inclusion and participation</b>	Emphasis on stakeholder participation in FUR. Stakeholders moreover have the opportunity to report to the HLPF. Modalities for inclusiveness at the national level are up to member states. +	Since 2002, stakeholders can engage biennially at the World Urban Forum. At the national level, modalities for inclusiveness are up to member states and results have been mixed. +/-	Stakeholders are developing ideas to support participation in FUR. This includes e.g. a United Nations Advisory Committee on Sustainable Urbanization. Their future relevance remains to be seen. +/-
<b>Building on existing structures</b>	The HLPF is a global synthesis of new and existing review processes. This also poses challenges: a large amount of information has to be made usable for the HLPF. +/-	The FUR of the Habitat Agenda called on inputs from other institutions. However, there were difficulties due to a lack of existing (sub-) national structures to provide input for the FUR. -	n/a
Legend: - - (very weak), - (weak), -/+ (sufficient), + (strong), ++ (very strong)			

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## 4.1 Commitment from member states

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As outlined in section 2.1, **monitoring, reporting and review processes must be designed to facilitate commitment and buy-in from member states.**

### 2030 Agenda

The 2030 Agenda aims to make FUR relevant for member states. With respect to monitoring, each member state can develop additional national indicators that reflect national priorities and preferences. Similarly, the voluntary national reporting guidelines that have been proposed for national reports leave some flexibility for national priorities to be considered. **Leaving room for national priorities can increase the relevance of monitoring and reporting for member states.** To what extent voluntary reporting guidelines for the 2030 Agenda succeed in guaranteeing a minimum level of comparability remains to be seen.

The 2030 Agenda moreover clearly recognizes the importance of ensuring commitment and buy-in from member states for a successful review process. For example, resolution 70/1 highlights that national ownership is to be created by making national-level processes “the foundation for reviews” (Res. 70/1: para. 74(a)). It also calls for high-level participation of ministers and other relevant high-level participants in the annual review under ECOSOC (para. 84). The quadrennial HLPF under the General Assembly can also serve to renew high-level political commitment to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

However, the structures necessary to ensure such strong commitment and buy-in from member states are still in development. The 2030 Agenda does look quite promising in this respect, specifically due to its strong focus on **mutual learning** (see section 6.1) and **implementation support** (see section 6.3). These dimensions can help states achieve domestic policy goals and provide incentives for their participation in the review process.

Ongoing discussions on the 2030 Agenda also highlight how **numerous other decisions may affect the level of commitment and buy-in from member states.** Thus, for example, Halle and Wolfe (2016: 8) point out that the choice of the annual theme for the HLPF needs to also consider which topics “ministers will see as important, on which they would wish to express their views”.

### Habitat Agenda

The Habitat Agenda illustrates how a lack of member state support can impede progress on monitoring and reporting. Despite formal agreement about the importance of the compilation of data on human settlements at different levels, follow-through has been slow. As a result, the Global Urban Observatory, which was established in 1997, has been significantly constrained in its capacity to fulfill its technical mission of compiling and disseminating relevant statistics about human settlements at international level.

The state of implementation of the Habitat Agenda was first comprehensively reviewed at an UNGA Special Session for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda (Istanbul+5) in 2001. While the review of implementation activities was generally positive, the “cumulative impact of all of the interventions has not [...] been sufficient to realize the goals of adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development” (A/CONF.226/PC.1/5, para. 30). Moreover, the **outcome document of the**



**Istanbul +5 conference noted the lack of political will to implement the commitments made at Istanbul** (Resolution S-25/2: para. 18). This indicates a lack of buy-in from member states.

According to the attributes outlined in section 2.1, opportunities for mutual learning and implementation support can increase member states' commitment and buy-in for a review process, as it helps them achieve their commitments and other domestic policy goals. However, **the Habitat Agenda did not include a systematic, regular assessment of national implementation progress at the global level**. There was **no specific, dedicated platform for states to discuss experiences amongst each other**. This does not mean that the Habitat Agenda generated no learning mechanisms – the precursor institutions of UN-Habitat engaged in various activities to promote learning, exchange of experiences, etc., and the World Urban Forum was launched in 2002 to support learning (among other things) (see also section 6.1). Moreover, states could hold bilateral or regional review meetings if they were interested in doing so. However, the lack of opportunities for states to directly engage in a discussion on their national progress, and the lack of a regular event to renew high-level political commitment to the implementation of the Habitat Agenda was certainly not helpful.

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## 4.2 Inputs from UN and other international institutions

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As outlined in section 2.1, **monitoring, reporting and review processes should mobilize relevant knowledge and expertise from UN and other international institutions**. Considering that the implementation of international agreements also requires a coordinated effort by the UN system, it is important that all relevant UN and other international institutions participate in these processes.

### 2030 Agenda

The follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda at all levels “will benefit from the active support of the United Nations system and other multilateral institutions” (Res. 70/1: para. 74(i)). Extensive contributions from UN and other institutions are necessary for two key reasons.

Firstly, **monitoring and achieving the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda requires a concerted effort from all parts of the UN system**. Thus, the contributions of all relevant UN institutions to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda should be monitored, reported and reviewed to “promote system-wide coherence and coordination” (Res. 70/1: para. 82). To support the HLPF, the governing bodies of UN institutions are requested to review their support to implementation and report on it (ibid.: para. 88). Moreover, the UN Secretary-General, together with the UN system, will prepare an **annual progress report on the Sustainable Development Goals** to inform the HLPF (ibid.: para. 83). This report will be based on the 230 global indicators proposed by the IAEG-SDGs.

Secondly, **it is essential that the in-depth review of the SDGs happens at other review venues, so that the HLPF can focus on overall progress and cross-cutting issues** (Halle and Wolfe 2016). This network of review processes thus has an important function in synthesizing the large amounts of information that will be fed into the HLPF (ibid.).

While the 2030 Agenda thus explicitly calls for contributions from a wide range of (UN) institutions, “whether and how to contribute” to the HLPF is up to the various contributing

bodies and forums to decide (A/70/684: para. 47). Various institutions are starting to pick up on this invitation and are considering how best to respond to this request for contributions to the HLPF. For example, UN Water has also already developed a concrete suggestion for a two-level monitoring framework for SDG6 and has elucidated how different UN institutions could contribute to this. Under the umbrella of UN-Water, an inter-agency initiative composed of UNEP, UN-Habitat, UNICEF, FAO, UNESCO, WHO and WMO will coordinate global monitoring efforts. To support global monitoring at the national level, teams for each SDG6 target will be formed. Each team has a designated lead UN agency and is composed of representatives from relevant UN agencies and other monitoring partners. Further, a focal point within the UN system is proposed to coordinate these teams. At the national level, a national focal point or **inter-sectoral monitoring team**, consisting of various relevant stakeholders, is suggested to collect, analyze and disseminate data (UN-Water 2016).

#### Habitat Agenda

The Habitat Agenda and its follow-up led to several opportunities for UN institutions to support the FUR of the Agenda. Firstly, as outlined in section 3.1.2, the precursor institutions of UN-Habitat – in particular the **Commission on Human Settlements** – were given significant roles in the FUR of the Habitat Agenda. Secondly, the UN **regional commissions**, in cooperation with regional intergovernmental organizations and banks, were also invited to consider convening high-level review meetings and exchange experiences. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), for example, has taken up this invitation. A UNECE Ministerial meeting on Human Settlements in 2001 “reviewed and appraised the implementation of the Habitat Agenda in the ECE region as a contribution to the special session of the General Assembly, Istanbul+5 held in 2001” (UNECE n/d). Thirdly, since its first session in 2002, UN institutions have also contributed to the follow-up of the Habitat Agenda through the **World Urban Forum**. For example, 39 UN agencies participated at the most recent WUF in Medellin, thus helping to “strengthen collective knowledge and coordination and cooperation in the United Nations system at the urban level” (HSP/GC/25/2/Add.2: para. 19)

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### 4.3 Stakeholder inclusion and participation

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As outlined in section 2.1, **monitoring, reporting and review processes should be inclusive and participatory**. By allowing for stakeholder participation, such processes can incorporate the expertise of a wide range of actors and becomes more legitimate.

#### 2030 Agenda

The 2030 Agenda places strong emphasis on inclusiveness: follow-up and review at all levels are supposed to be “open, inclusive, participatory and transparent for all people” (Res. 70/1: para. 74(d)). It moreover calls upon major groups and other stakeholders to report on their contributions toward achieving the SDGs (ibid.: para. 89). However, the extent to which the 2030 Agenda can deliver on this promise remains to be seen.

At the national level, it will be **up to states to define the modalities for stakeholder participation** in follow-up and review. At the global level, the suggestions of the Secretary-General’s report focus on creating opportunities for stakeholders to report to the HLPF on

their activities, and suggestions to use **online platforms** to provide visibility and accountability on these activities (A/70/684: para. 105-108). Stakeholders can also engage in the **annual multi-stakeholder forum for science, technology and innovation** which will take place before the HLPF, and whose discussions will also constitute an input to the HLPF (Res. 70/1: para. 70).

During the ongoing discussions on the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda, civil society representatives have emphasized the importance of ensuring that their contributions to the HLPF are meaningful, that there are clear pathways in which their inputs are considered in the HLPF and cannot be ignored (IISD 2016c). Some member states (e.g. Russia) are hesitant about substantial opportunities for non-state actor contributions to the HLPF. Moreover, platforms where stakeholders may submit their contributions to the SDGs could facilitate shadow reporting, which some member states see as problematic.

### Habitat Agenda

The Habitat Agenda calls on all stakeholders to monitor and evaluate their own performances in the implementation of the Agenda (Habitat Agenda: para. 240). The relevance of this call is however dependent on the extent to which such inputs are integrated in the national and global reporting processes on the Habitat Agenda.

At the national level, member states were encouraged to assess and review the implementation of the Habitat Agenda in an inclusive fashion (Res. 51/177: para. 10). To facilitate this, states were encouraged to (re)establish National Habitat Committees (NHCs) before the Habitat II conference, prior to its review at the Istanbul+5 conference in 2001, and to reflect on the implementation of the Habitat Agenda prior to the Habitat III conference (UN-Habitat 2014c). National Habitat Committees were to involve a wide range of stakeholders, to collect and analyze data, assess progress, identify best practices and compile these into national reports. However, NHCs were not established by all countries. Moreover, **inclusiveness in national FUR was mixed**. An analysis of several national reporting processes indicates that even where participatory approaches were used, they were not always balanced but “weighted towards urban areas or capital cities where meetings took place; rural groups were not very represented and it is unlikely that very marginalized groups would have access to these spaces” (Apsan Frediani and Simas Lima 2015: 11). However, the level of inclusiveness in national monitoring, reporting and review is always dependent on the decisions of member states regarding how to structure such processes. Member states have to be willing to conduct such processes in an inclusive manner. Institutions such as UN-Habitat can offer guidance and support for member states that are willing to create inclusive FUR processes, but lack the knowledge or capacities to do so. At best, **more detailed guidelines and support for the establishment of National Habitat Committees could have enabled a somewhat more inclusive and comprehensive approach**.

At the global level, **the World Urban Forum (WUF) provides a venue for broad stakeholder participation in the implementation and review of the Habitat Agenda since 2002**. The Forum has the threefold objective of: “(a) improving the collective knowledge of sustainable urban development through the sharing of lessons learned and the exchange of best practices and good policies; (b) increasing coordination and cooperation within and between different stakeholders and constituencies for the advancement and implementation of the Habitat Agenda; and (c) raising awareness of sustainable urbanization

among stakeholders and constituencies (including the general public)” (HSP/GC/25/2/Add.2: para. 4).

#### Relevant urban initiatives

Stakeholders are developing ideas that could support their **participation** in the FUR of the New Urban Agenda. For example, the General Assembly of Partners has suggested the establishment of a **United Nations Advisory Committee on Sustainable Urbanization** composed of stakeholder representatives to strengthen their input into the World Urban Forum, and an **Intergovernmental Panel on Sustainable Urbanization** to **share knowledge** and experiences. Moreover, the proposed **Partners’ Dashboard for Sustainable Urbanization** would offer an opportunity for broad stakeholder participation in the monitoring of the New Urban Agenda. Such ideas need to be further discussed and their potential for supporting the review of the New Urban Agenda analyzed.

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## 4.4 Building on existing structures

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As outlined in section 2.1, **monitoring, reporting and review processes should build on existing structures as much as possible.**

#### 2030 Agenda

The follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda at all levels “will build on existing platforms and processes, where these exist, and avoid duplication” (Res. 70/1: para. 74(f)). In particular, “data and information from existing reporting mechanisms should be used where possible” (ibid.: para. 48). This is intended to minimize reporting and review burdens, particularly for countries with limited means (ibid.: para. 74(f), A/70/784: para. 85).

Moreover, the HLPF will not have the time to conduct a substantial, in-depth review of all dimensions of the SDGs – these should happen elsewhere, so that the HLPF can focus on overarching and crosscutting issues. UN Water’s abovementioned proposal for a framework for global monitoring of SDG 6 offers an excellent example of a coherent global mechanism that builds on and integrates existing monitoring initiatives. While WHO/ UNICEF’s Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation (JMP) and the UN-Water Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking Water (GLAAS) can build on long-lasting experience to monitor target 6.1-6.2 and 6.a-6.b, a new monitoring initiative – the Global Expanded Water Monitoring Initiative (GEMI) – is currently being developed to monitor new targets. These three initiatives will gradually be aligned to ensure a coherent SDG 6 monitoring framework (UN Water 2016).

**Building on the inputs from a wide range of existing platforms however also poses challenges for the HLPF.** As Halle and Wolfe (2016: 4-5) point out, an extensive list of institutions have been suggested as potential providers of reports for the HLPF. **This large amount of information has to be made accessible and usable for the HLPF.** Reporting to the HLPF should be succinct, to avoid overburdening that forum with a “mighty river of undigested information” (ibid. 2016: 5). Intelligent reporting is needed to ensure that inputs for the HLPF are synthesized in a clear and useable manner.

### Habitat Agenda

The FUR of the Habitat Agenda also called on inputs from other institutions, thus building on existing structures. For example, the regional commissions were invited to contribute to the review of the Habitat Agenda at the regional level.

However, **the experience of the Habitat Agenda also demonstrates difficulties in effectively linking together different existing structures.** For example with respect to monitoring, the Global Urban Observatory faced problems in performing its monitoring function due to the absence of an integrated network of local, national and regional urban observatories. Thus it was not possible to build on existing structures at national and sub-national levels. This structural constraint has been aggravated by the fact that the National Habitat Committees (NHC) originally established to prepare the Habitat II conference were not maintained but for the most part dissolved following the end of the conference (some countries have re-established these committees in anticipation of Habitat III). Not only did this mean that there were no active fora to process information requests from and to GUO; it also implied that no continuous and comprehensive use could be made of other existing structures at national or sub-national level.

## 5 Monitoring and Reporting

Monitoring and reporting are essential first steps to support the evidence-based implementation of international agreements. They help member states to gather and compile comparable information and data, allow them to track progress, and make successes and challenges visible. This chapter examines lessons learned with respect to monitoring and reporting in the 2030 Agenda, the Habitat Agenda and relevant initiatives in the urban realm. The case studies are assessed according to the attributes outlined in section 2.2.

The table below summarizes the findings in this chapter.

**Table 5.1: Summary of results for monitoring and reporting**

Preconditions	2030 Agenda	Habitat Agenda	Urban initiatives
<b>Comparable data</b>	The 2030 Agenda drives efforts to improve comparability, but faces shortcomings with respect to urban data comparability. +	The Habitat Agenda attempted to find a balance between comparable and comprehensive data. +/-	Initiatives such as the WCCD are making contributions to data comparability, but are too costly for broad adoption. +/-
<b>Use of multiple sources of data</b>	Many initiatives to support the integration of different types of data are being developed in the context of the 2030 Agenda. ++	The Habitat Agenda makes use of multiple sources of data for compiling its databases. +	Urban initiatives work to leverage numerous sources of data. For example, data from community-based monitoring provides an inclusive and detailed picture of urban development. ++
<b>Sufficient statistical and reporting capacities</b>	The 2030 Agenda supports statistical capacity development. However, it does not mention support for national reporting efforts. +/-	The Habitat Agenda calls for developments in statistical capacity at all levels. However, it does not mention support for reporting efforts. +/-	There are strong examples of initiatives that support statistical capacity development, also specifically at the local level. ++
<b>Flexible and comparable reporting</b>	The voluntary common reporting guidelines for national reviews at the HLPF are still subject to discussions. +/-	Reporting guidelines for the Habitat Agenda leaned a bit too much in the direction of flexibility at the expense of clarity and comparability in reporting processes. -	n/a
Legend: -- (very weak), - (weak), +/- (sufficient), + (strong), ++ (very strong)			

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## 5.1 Comparable data

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As outlined in section 2.2, **the generation of high-quality comparable data is essential to allow for the combination of data from multiple sources.** However, the generation of comparable data will not always be possible or feasible. In some cases it will be important to rely on qualitative data and other means of information.

### 2030 Agenda

Comparability of data and the uniform application of indicators are essential for the integration of data from various sources and comparability among member states. Consequently, the issue of data comparability and internationally agreed standards is one of the central aspects of the global indicator framework proposed by the IAEG-SDGs. “Efforts should be made to fill data gaps and **improve international comparability by increased adoption of internationally agreed standards at the national level** (...) International organizations must support these efforts to standardize indicators in accordance with international guidelines and assure compliance” (E/CN.3/2016/2/Rev.1: 1).

Internationally agreed standards and definitions are particularly crucial when looking at the urban level. SDG11 necessitates a clear definition of what constitutes “cities” and the “urban”. However, attempts to agree on a universal definition on the “urban” have thus far been unsuccessful. Member states use widely diverging nationally agreed definitions and will continue to do so when monitoring and reporting on SDG11 and related indicators. These differing definitions will “continue to pose methodological problems in terms of comparability and aggregation of values at the regional and global levels” (UN-Habitat 2016a: 6). To solve this problem, UN-Habitat will focus on measuring the ‘built-up area of the urban agglomeration’ in its “SDG-Goal 11 Monitoring Framework”, which it intends to integrate in its City Prosperity Initiative (CPI). This would allow for a standardized definition and unit of measurement constituting ‘urban areas’, while impeding any inconsistencies that would arise when using different urban definitions during the collection and analysis process of information at city and sub-city level (ibid: 6).

Thus, in the context of the 2030 Agenda manifold efforts to improve data comparability are being initiated. **Particularly comparability on the urban dimension of the SDGs depends on the extent to which a shared definition of urban areas – such as the one proposed by UN-Habitat – are applied at all levels.**

### Habitat Agenda

The Global Urban Observatory (GUO) is in charge of monitoring the living conditions in cities according to a set of indicators such as GDP, population growth rate, share of households with improved water and sanitation, proportion of urban population living in slums, green area per capita, CO<sub>2</sub> per capita, Gini coefficient, urban poverty headcount ratio and unemployment rate. This information is, in turn, fed into the online database system Urban Info – launched in 2004. The GUO relies on data available in international and/or national databases that have already been compiled using harmonized methodologies and are therefore comparable.

In recognition of the **difficulties entailed in striking an optimal balance between comparability and comprehensiveness**, the Habitat Urban Indicators have been classified



in three types and two clusters (see Urban Indicators 2004: 7-54). The three-fold typology of urban indicators includes: (a) key indicators, (b) checklists and (c) extensive indicators. Key indicators are important for policy and comparatively easy to collect in most countries. Checklist questions are yes/no questions used to provide an assessment of areas for which quantitative indicators are not (readily) available. Finally extensive indicators are those indicators that complement the results of key indicators by providing more in-depth information, and are also not directly comparable among countries. The Habitat Agenda indicators include 20 key indicators, 9 checklist questions and 13 extensive indicators.

The cluster classification is used to indicate the data source and the latter's reliability: Cluster (A) indicators are those that may be obtained from censuses and national household surveys; with few exceptions these tend to be comparable across countries. By contrast cluster (B) indicators are less directly comparable since they are obtained from other sources, typically one-time studies that rely on different methodologies. Cluster B indicators also include expert estimations. Of the 20 key urban indicators, 9 are cluster A indicators, 9 are cluster B and 2 differ depending on the country reporting.

This approach towards Habitat Urban Indicators provides a **pragmatic compromise for dealing with situations of limited data comparability**. Thus, **the key indicators and checklists allow for a minimum level of comparability across countries, while the extensive indicators facilitate a more in-depth analysis of progress within national contexts**.

#### Urban initiatives

In the field of standardized, comparable data for cities, the World Council on City Data (WCCD) is a key player. If cities gather globally comparative and standardized data, it will automatically be easier for national governments to report on SDG11 (Teodorczuk 2016, McCarney 2015). In 2014, the WCCD launched ISO 37120, the first certified standard for city data. The ISO contains 100 indicators that have been developed and tested in collaboration with several cities, and reviewed by numerous country members. Thus far, 20 global cities (pilot cities) have been certified against ISO 37120 and are part of the Global Cities Registry, an open access database. However, the data that cities submit is subject to third-party professional verification. Consequently, there are costs involved with ISO 37120 certification, which constitutes a barrier to worldwide adoption of the ISO.

Yet while particularly developing countries criticize the ISO for a lack of inclusivity and excessive emphasis on economic aspects, it does provide a strong monitoring tool for SDG11. The ISO 37120 covers most SDG 11 indicators, except for those on culture and planning (D'Almeida 2015). Should the NUA require additional indicators (e.g. on the enabling conditions), the WCCD could play a key role in developing these. WCCD has signaled interest in revising existing or developing a new ISO if additional indicators would be needed (Fischer et. al. 2016: 35-36). However, **due to the costs involved with ISO certification this standard is not feasible for worldwide adoption, meaning that comparability amongst cities and countries that use this standard vs. those that do not is likely to be impeded**.

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## 5.2 Multiple sources of data

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As outlined in section 2.2, **effective monitoring requires the use of multiple sources of data, including both qualitative and quantitative data and information.** The consideration of qualitative data and information is especially important to generate knowledge on the status of transformative change and progress on the enabling conditions for cities. Monitoring mechanisms that aggregate existing sources of data can not only improve the inclusiveness of the monitoring mechanism, but also help minimize costs and additional monitoring burdens.

### 2030 Agenda

In the 2030 Agenda, member states commit to “promote transparent and accountable scaling-up of appropriate public-private cooperation to exploit the contribution to be made by a wide range of data, including earth observation and geospatial information” (Res. 70/1: para. 76).

Many SDG targets not only have a temporal but also a spatial dimension. Thus, spatial data will be key to provide decision makers with the relevant information to decide on the allocation of resources at the local level. Consequently, the **integration of traditional statistical data with geospatial data** will be essential (UN-Habitat 2016: 7). At the national level, member states have to decide what model for the integration of this data is most appropriate. At the global level, UNSC and the UN Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN GGIM) have established an Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information ‘to carry out work on developing a statistical-spatial framework as a global standard for the integration of statistical and geospatial information’ (UNSD 2014: 3).

The integration of multiple sources of data is no easy feat. In the context of the 2030 Agenda, discussions on how to aggregate non-standardized data from different sources are ongoing. In response to this challenge, a number of partnerships and platforms have recently been created. For instance, the first UN World Data Forum to be held in late 2016 will provide a venue for discussions on integrating and developing synergies between traditional and new sources of data. Moreover, the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data will support countries to develop platforms that allow for assembling, accessing and using various sources of data. With respect to monitoring SDG11, UN-Habitat (2016: 8) plans to provide technical advisory services to member states on the localization of indicators at the city level, e.g. by involving communities in new forms of data collection and reporting. **Thus, many initiatives to support the integration of different types of data are being developed in the context of the 2030 Agenda.**

Combining multiple sources of data is also important to track progress on transformative change. The 2030 Agenda’s Quadrennial Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR) may offer important opportunities in this regard. The GSDR is intended to strengthen the science-policy interface and will draw on a wider range of data, focusing on crosscutting issues, lessons learned and emerging trends (Res. 70/1: para. 83). Current consultations on the scope, frequency and methodology of the GSDR have highlighted that it should take a multi-disciplinary approach, and is to be drafted by an independent group of scientists that will be supported by a dedicated task team of representatives from various UN institutions to co-ordinate inputs to the report from the UN, private sector, civil society, academia. While the GSDR will address all topics covered by the SDGs, it also offers **an opportunity for**

**reflections on transformative change in the urban realm. As an input to the HLPF, it moreover serves to alert this forum to any new and emerging issues that should be considered.**

#### Habitat Agenda

The Habitat Agenda makes use of multiple-sources of data for compiling its databases (see previous section). It relies on information collected by other UN agencies and international organizations. For the most part this is supplied by national statistical offices or constructed by using data from national censuses and other related surveys. In addition, GUO collects some information on cities directly by using GIS technologies.

#### Urban initiatives

Quantitative and geospatial data will not be sufficient to assess progress on the urban dimension of the SDGs and the enabling conditions, especially in informal settlements. The global campaign “Know Your City” by Shack / Slum Dwellers International (SDI) and UCLG offers an excellent example of **how the collection and consolidation of community-collected citywide data on informal settlements can help to form an inclusive dialogue and partnership between the urban poor and local governments** (SDI n/d). Informal settlements are often ignored by city government and excluded from basic infrastructure. Local governments operate within a regulatory framework that does not consider informal settlements and their needs, and puts formal housing beyond the reach of most dwellers. Community-based data, consisting of both hard data and rich stories from urban poor communities, provide a detailed picture of everyday lives and spaces in informal settlements. While such data is rarely comparable between countries and may indeed be hard to compare within countries, it can **serve as an advocacy tool for the urban poor to better negotiate with local governments, provide a baseline against which progress can be measured**, and help to achieve a more equitable distribution of resources and services (d’Cruz et. al. 2014).<sup>3</sup> It can thus serve as a tool for inclusive urban development (GIZ 2014). Its potential role in the local FUR of the New Urban Agenda should thus be carefully considered.

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### 5.3 Statistical capacity and reporting capacities

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As outlined in section 2.2, **sufficient capacities are needed to unlock the potential of the data revolution for effective monitoring and reporting.**

<sup>3</sup> Considering that the comparability of such community.collected citywide data is limited, its role for global reports such as the abovementioned GSDR is limited. Moreover, the GSDR will focus on broader trends rather than the detailed developments taking place in specific cities. However, some community-based data collection initiatives do strive to achieve comparability across broader scales, « Know Your City » being one of them. It is thus conceivable that e.g. a global report based on comparable data collected by SDI in informal settlements across the globe can also constitute an input for the GSDR.

### 2030 Agenda

In the 2030 Agenda, member states recognize the need for “increased support for strengthening data collection and capacity-building in Member States, to develop national and global baselines where they do not exist (Res. 70/1: para. 57). Moreover, member states recognize the need to “support developing countries (...) in strengthening the capacity of national statistical offices and data systems to ensure access to high-quality, timely, reliable and disaggregated data” (Res. 70/1: para 76). Within the UN system, the UN Statistical Division will be responsible for strengthening national capacity and statistical systems, e.g. by providing training (IISD 2016a).

Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, a number of initiatives and partnerships have been formed to address the lack of statistical capacity. For instance, the UN Statistical Commission established the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-building for post-2015 Monitoring<sup>4</sup> (HLG). The HLG is tasked with “promoting national ownership of the post-2015 monitoring system and fostering statistical capacity-building, partnership and coordination” (E/CN.3/2016/3). The HLG will also lead the organization of the UN World Data Forum to be held in late 2016. The Forum shall provide a venue for technical discussion (e.g. innovative methods for data production, integration of traditional and new sources of data) and facilitate exchange among relevant stakeholders (UN Statistical Commission 2016, iisd 2016b). The HLG is also developing a Global Action Plan for the Modernization and Strengthening of Statistical Systems for Sustainable Development Data (UN Statistical Commission 2016).

Thus, **the 2030 Agenda supports statistical capacity development** in many ways, and **opportunities for harnessing these for statistical capacity improvements at the local level and on urban issues should be identified**. However, in contrast to statistical capacity development, **the 2030 Agenda does not explicitly mention support for national reporting** efforts. This is surprising and an obvious gap, as especially developing countries will likely require help in order to “synthesize and make sense of the vast amount of information” (Halle und Wolfe 2016: 6).

### Habitat Agenda

With respect to statistical capacities, the Habitat Agenda calls for the strengthening of the data collection and analysis capabilities of Habitat Agenda partners “at all levels, especially the local level” (Habitat Agenda: para. 240).

### Urban initiatives

Bloomberg Philanthropies has launched an initiative to strengthen the statistical capacity of cities. “What Works Cities” is a \$42 million program delivered together with data experts from the Harvard Kennedy School, Johns Hopkins University’s Center for Government Excellence, and the Sunlight Foundation. The program supports selected US cities in making better use of data by providing robust technical support, access to expertise and peer-to-peer learning. The program assists cities with “creating sustainable open data programs that

<sup>4</sup> The High-Level Group consists of representatives of national statistical offices, and representatives of and regional commissions and regional and international agencies as observers.

promote transparency and robust citizen engagement; incorporating data into budget, operational, and policy decision making; conducting low-cost evaluations; and steering funding to programs that get results for citizens” (Bloomberg Philanthropies 2016).

While they do not constitute urban initiatives as generally defined in this report, two World Bank Trust Funds that are particularly interesting for developing countries warrant mentioning. The World Bank Group (WBG) supports various initiatives targeting national data systems as well as improving data accessibility and increased use of data, harnessing its existing global project infrastructure. Its *Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building (TFSCB)*, a decade old multi-donor global grant is expanding to provide funding up to \$2m (World Bank 2015) to address data collection gaps for monitoring the SDGs. In complement to the TFSCB, the World Bank Group is currently developing a new *Trust Fund for Innovations in Development Data (TFIDD)* aiming to raise and dedicate \$100m to supporting innovations in technology as well as innovations in approach by “systematizing and de-fragmenting scaling up on innovations in development data to maximize spread of new approaches” (Global Innovation Exchange n.d.)

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## 5.4 Flexible and comparable reporting

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As outlined in section 2.2, **reporting needs to strike an appropriate balance between flexibility (to reflect national priorities and capabilities) and comparability (to ensure that the reports are comparable).**

### 2030 Agenda

The national level will be the most important for reporting under the 2030 Agenda. In order for national reporting efforts to be easily aggregated and useful for further regional and global reviews, they need to be comparable across countries while also flexible enough to adapt to national circumstances. The Secretary General's Report (A/70/684) provides voluntary common reporting guidelines for voluntary national reviews at the HLPF. However, these guidelines will be subject to ongoing discussions, and need to be further adjusted to reflect the feedback from countries participating in the HLPF.

### Habitat Agenda

The Habitat Agenda acknowledges the need for flexibility in reporting procedures that take account of different reporting procedures “in the economic, social and environmental fields” as well as diversity in “regional, national, subnational and, in particular, local characteristics and priorities” (Habitat Agenda: para. 241). However, it appears that reporting guidelines for the Habitat Agenda leaned a bit too much in the direction of flexibility at the expense of clarity and comparability in reporting processes. Thus, in some countries **the “lack of clear process framework from UN-Habitat has meant that processes have been highly centralized and bureaucratized, with no minimum standards for civil society participation”** (Apsan Frediani and Simas Lima 2015: 11).

## 6 Review

While strong monitoring and reporting mechanisms are necessary to provide and disseminate evidence on the implementation of an international agreement, the review process is the final step that uses this evidence to identify and address implementation successes and challenges. This chapter examines lessons learned with respect to the review processes of the 2030 Agenda, the Habitat Agenda and urban initiatives. The case studies are assessed according to the attributes outlined in section 2.3.

The table below summarizes the findings in this chapter.

**Table 6.1: Summary of results for review**

Preconditions	2030 Agenda	Habitat Agenda	Urban initiatives
<b>Mutual learning and reflection</b>	Whether the HLPF facilitates mutual learning remains to be seen. Observers caution that the large amounts of information that it will process annually could limit meaningful discussion. +/-	With the exception of the World Urban Forum (launched in 2002), the Habitat Agenda lacked regular events dedicated to learning, particularly for member states. -	The wide range of learning-related urban activities illustrates the importance that the urban community generally attaches to such initiatives. ++
<b>Rigorous &amp; regular</b>	The annual review at the HLPF provides for regular opportunities for a global review of the SDGs. However, national reviews are voluntary and may be less frequent. +	With only one comprehensive review of the Habitat Agenda at the global level (the 2001 Istanbul +5 conference), the review process was far from regular. - -	n/a
<b>Implementation support</b>	The FUR at the HLPF is structured to highlight areas where implementation support is needed and provide opportunities for discussion thereon. +	The Habitat Agenda mentioned the importance of implementation support. However, international cooperation in shelter and human settlements development did not increase substantially. -	There are many examples of urban initiatives that can make substantial contributions to implementation support for the New Urban Agenda. ++
Legend: - - (very weak), - (weak), -/+ (sufficient), + (strong), ++ (very strong)			

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## 6.1 Mutual learning and reflection

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As outlined in section 2.3, **effective review processes provide opportunities for mutual learning and reflection**. This is particularly important in the case of commitments where governments may not be aware of the best implementation strategy at the time of signing the agreement. By engaging in the review process, governments can learn about other states' approaches to implement commitments, and can benefit from the expertise of any non-state actors that are invited to participate in the review. Learning can also lead to adjustments in the treaty commitments in light of new information.

### 2030 Agenda

The 2030 Agenda emphasizes mutual learning and exchange of best practices as key goals of the 2030 Agenda review process at all levels (Res. 70/1: para. 73). At the global level, the HLPF in particular is intended to “facilitate sharing of experiences, inclusive successes, challenges and lessons learned” (ibid.: para. 80).

Current discussions on the HLPF indicate that **for learning to occur, sufficient time must be dedicated to the discussions on progress and challenges of each member state**. In particular, sufficient time needs to be given for member states in particularly challenging situations to discuss their progress at the HLPF, such as countries in special situations and small island developing states (SIDS) (IISD 2016c). However, to what extent the HLPF manages to facilitate an in-depth discussion on lessons learned and exchange of best practices remains to be seen. Some observers of the ongoing consultations on the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda caution that the large amount of information that the HLPF is supposed to process on an annual basis could crush opportunities for meaningful discussions (Halle and Wolfe 2016).

The development of the HLPF is a learning experience (IISD 2016c). This demonstrates how **developing review processes is a lengthy exercise. The details may only be fully decided several years after the agreement has been signed, and should include lessons learned from the first reviews**.

### Habitat Agenda

The Habitat Agenda (para. 228(d)) mandated UN-Habitat to facilitate a “global exchange of information on adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development by, *inter alia*, exchanging information on best practices and encouraging research activities”. National governments and local authorities were also requested to “continue to identify and disseminate best practices” (ibid: para. 241). However, for the most part **the Habitat Agenda lacked regular events dedicated to learning among member states** (see also section 6.2). An exception is the WUF, which was launched in 2002 as a biennial event to facilitate mutual learning and reflection among a wide range of stakeholders, including stakeholders, UN agencies, member state representatives, and other relevant actors.

### Relevant urban initiatives

The urban community has brought forth many strong and innovative programs to foster mutual learning among urban practitioners and other actors.



For example, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) is a global network of cities that, among other activities, supports cooperation and capacity building among cities as well as peer learning (UCLG 2014a, 2014b). **The wide range of learning-related activities that UCLG leads or is involved in illustrates the importance that the urban community generally attaches to such initiatives.**

For example, UCLG supports south-south cooperation – to help urban practitioners learn from the solutions that have been applied in comparable contexts (e.g. exchanges between Belo Horizonte (Brazil) and Maputo (Mozambique) on informal settlements, urbanization policies and slum upgrading; and between Chefchaouen (Morocco) and Borgou (Benin) on local development, solidarity based economy, public services). Cities are matched with others that have similar contexts, to facilitate mutual learning (UCLG 2016). UCLG and its partners provide technical support for the city-to-city cooperation initiatives.

UCLG has also organized a Mentoring Programme in collaboration with Cities Alliance and the Norwegian government, aiming to boost sustainable institutional development at the local level by allowing local civil servants to mentor each other.

Additionally, UCLG supported the development of initiatives dedicated to knowledge exchange, such as the C2C project, the “Mediterranean City-to-City Migration Profiles and Dialogue“, led by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICPMD) in partnership with UCLG, UN-Habitat and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) working on migrant integration at city level (UCLG 2014c).

The GAP suggestion of an Intergovernmental Panel on Sustainable Urbanization would also facilitate learning, but on a different level. Rather than focusing on mutual learning and exchange of good practices among local authorities, an intergovernmental panel would make new research on urbanization and sustainable urban development **accessible and comprehensible to a wide range of actors** (and policymakers in particular).

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## 6.2 Rigorous and regular review process

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As outlined in section 2.3, **review processes should be rigorous and take place regularly.** A thorough and rigorous review of progress is necessary for learning to take place and to ensure transparency. Regular review processes are necessary to facilitate a timely identification of implementation gaps, and also to allow for an agreement to be adjusted as circumstances change. Moreover, regular review processes provide an opportunity to facilitate new cooperation on implementation.

### 2030 Agenda

Questions regarding how to create a regular and rigorous review process affect all dimensions of the SDGs, but in particular the voluntary national reviews and the thematic reviews.

With respect to the voluntary national reviews at the HLPF, one tension that had to be addressed is how to ensure that every member state gets a chance to present its work on implementing the SDGs, while ensuring that enough time is available for each member state. With too little time available, discussions would simply not be meaningful and rigorous. Thus, not all member states will present their reviews annually, to allow for an in-depth progress discussion of only a few member states. To facilitate an in-depth discussion of the most



important issues, it has been proposed that member states focus the presentations of their voluntary national reviews on “two or three good practices identified by their country-level review; two or three major challenges currently being faced by their country in implementing the Agenda and any lessons learned in trying to address them; two or three areas in which it needs to hear about other countries’ good practices; and two or three areas in which it needs support from other countries and actors in terms of finance, capacity-building, technology, or partnerships” (A/70/684: para. 83).

The **regularity of national reviews** is another issue that needs to be considered. Halle and Wolfe (2016: 7) comment that “constant review prevents anybody from getting anything done, but reviews only every 7 or 8 years might be too few, with the risk that the long time laps between reviews might adversely affect progress towards the SDGs”. Initially, the Secretary-General’s report suggested that each member state engage in two voluntary national reviews at the global level, with additional (sub-)national reviews whenever they consider it useful. However, such references to a minimum number of voluntary national reviews at the HLPF have been removed. This poses a **danger of diluting the relevance of voluntary national reviews**.

The choice of annual themes for the thematic review of the HLPF will also affect the amount of time that is dedicated to the review of each SDG. Thus, during consultations some member states favored a single annual theme and evaluating all SDGs through the lens of that theme. The argument for this perspective is that it would allow for a focus on the integrated, interlinked nature of the SDGs, rather than a silo approach. However, others argued that focusing on only a handful of goals each year is better, to ensure that the HLPF is not overburdened and that enough time is dedicated to the review of each goal (IISD 2016c). **This discussion indicates the potential tradeoffs between a rigorous and in-depth review (of a handful of SDGs) and a coherent and integrated review (of all SDGs)**. The resolution on the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda has opted for an in-depth review of a handful of SDGs.

#### Habitat Agenda

With only one comprehensive review of the Habitat Agenda at the global level (the 2001 Istanbul +5 conference), the review process was far from regular. Neither subsequent sessions of the Governing Council of UN-Habitat nor the World Urban Forums – despite their merits in other aspects – triggered a comprehensive review of the Habitat Agenda.

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## **6.3 Implementation support**

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As outlined in section 2.3, **review processes should mobilize implementation support**. This can be a positive incentive for member states to participate in a review process. Moreover, it can help parties that are willing to implement an agreement, but lack the capacities to do so. Examples of such support mechanisms include technology transfer, financial assistance and capacity building.

#### 2030 Agenda

The 2030 Agenda recognizes the crucial importance of implementation support. The reviews of the Agenda are supposed to “mobilize the necessary means of implementation and

partnerships, support the identification of solutions and best practices” (Res. 70/1: para. 74(c)).

The Secretary-General’s report suggests several ways in which this could be achieved. Firstly, the report suggests that member states mention key areas where they need “support from other countries and actors in terms of finance, capacity-building, technology, or partnerships” during their voluntary national reviews (A/70/684: para. 83). Secondly, there could be “dedicated workshops discussing also prospective partnerships and cooperation to address key challenges in implementation” faced by member states (A/70/684: para. 83). And, thirdly, the UN Secretariat intends to develop an online platform to support the HLPF review, which will “also highlight areas in which countries seek support in the form of resources, technology transfer, capacity development or partnerships, as well as record commitments made to respond to those needs” (A/70/684: para.86).

Implementation support should also be subject to follow-up and review. In this context, the arrangements of the Paris Agreement are of interest. In addition to biennial reporting on greenhouse gas inventories and intended nationally determined contributions (INDCs), developed countries must also report biennially on any implementation support they are providing to developed parties. Conversely, developing countries are requested to report biennially on how much and what kind of support they need and have thus far received. Kosolapova (2016) suggests that this data could also be used to assess progress towards the relevant SDG targets, namely target 13.a on mobilizing USD 100 billion annually and operationalizing the Green Climate Fund, and target 13.b on climate change-related capacity building mechanisms in LDCs and SIDS.

#### Habitat Agenda

The Habitat Agenda mentioned multiple means of implementation support. The importance of international support for implementation was reiterated at the Istanbul +5 conference, however it also noted that “**international cooperation in shelter and human settlements development has not been enhanced significantly since 1996, which is a growing cause for concern**” (Res. S-25/2: para. 25). A weakness of the implementation support measures mentioned in the Habitat Agenda is that they are not clearly linked to the review of national implementation. **The New Urban Agenda will have to find ways to better encourage implementation support than its predecessor.**

#### Relevant urban initiatives

The **Global Platform for Sustainable Cities (GPSC)** is an example of an urban initiative that can make a substantial contribution to implementation support for the New Urban Agenda. The GPSC involves various development banks and UN institutions and aims to mobilize 1.5 billion USD to contribute to sustainable urban planning and financing through knowledge sharing and providing access to implementation tools.

## 7 Recommendations for the New Urban Agenda

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### 7.1 Summary of lessons learned

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The case of the Habitat Agenda highlights that states need to be motivated to monitor, report on and review implementation. **Member states thus need to understand how these processes can benefit them.** While the Habitat Agenda did call for bilateral or regional review meetings by states, and for the UN regional commissions to engage in regional reviews, there was no regular, high-level event for states to engage and reflect on the national and global state of implementation of the Habitat Agenda. In this context, it is not surprising that the development of the monitoring and reporting structure of the Habitat Agenda was slow and uneven. Monitoring and reporting would have been far more relevant for member states if there had been regular review processes for member states to discuss implementation successes and failures and how to best address these. This would also have provided for stronger opportunities for learning and implementation support. Thus, the **lack of a high-level review event and the disconnection with learning and implementation support means that incentives for member states to engage in thorough FUR of the Habitat Agenda were weak.** Conversely, the 2030 Agenda places a strong focus on creating opportunities for **mutual learning and implementation support** in the context of the HLPF and beyond.

Monitoring of the 2030 Agenda and the New Urban Agenda will require comparable data from multiple sources to track progress on the urban dimension of the SDGs, the enabling conditions and transformative change in the urban realm. To address the challenge of comparability, the Habitat Agenda distinguished between a handful of key indicators that are easily comparable between countries, checklists with yes/no questions where quantitative indicators are not (yet) readily available, and extensive indicators that are not directly comparable among countries but provide in-depth information to supplement the key indicators and the checklists. Such approaches allow for a **compromise between key indicators and checklists that allow for comparability amongst countries, as well as other indicators that allow for a richer picture of progress at the national and local level.** While the relevance of the latter type of information is limited at the global level due to a lack of comparability, it can be of utmost importance at the local and national level. For example, the SDI/UCLG initiative “Know Your City” revolves around community-based monitoring that combines hard data and qualitative data to provide a better picture of informal settlements and **facilitate a dialogue thereon with local governments.**

Discussions in the context of the 2030 Agenda highlight the methodological difficulties for comparable data that can be aggregated due to lack of common definitions, e.g. of “urban”. This will also affect the monitoring of SDG11. Thus, it is fundamental that efforts to find shared definitions, such as UN-Habitat’s proposal to focus on “built-up area of the urban agglomeration” as a definition that would be comparable across countries, are supported. With respect to using data from different sources, **the 2030 Agenda is spurring multiple initiatives to help countries integrate data from different sources. These should also be leveraged for the monitoring of the New Urban Agenda, where appropriate.** Such initiatives include work by the UNSC to develop a common standard for the integration of statistical and geospatial data and efforts by the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data to assist countries in assembling and using various data sources.

Such efforts however also require sufficient capacities for monitoring and reporting. **The 2030 Agenda recognizes this need, and various initiatives to strengthen statistical capacities are available**, e.g. through the abovementioned GPSDD and training by the UNSC. Various urban initiatives and initiatives by international institutions also aim to strengthen statistical capacities at various levels, e.g. Bloomberg Philanthropies' "What Works Cities" program and relevant programs by the World Bank Group. However, particularly developing countries may also need support in making sense of such data in their national reports, a need that is briefly recognized in the Secretary-General's Report (A/70/684) but that has thus far not been followed-up with further initiatives.

The Habitat Agenda and the 2030 Agenda demonstrate the **difficulties of ensuring that FUR are inclusive and participatory**. At the national level, the 2030 Agenda and the Habitat Agenda both encourage member states to conduct FUR processes in an inclusive fashion. However, the experience of the Habitat Agenda shows that many member states refrained from initiating inclusive National Habitat Committees. At the international level, current discussions on the 2030 Agenda show that the devil is in the details. The 2030 Agenda specifies that the HLPF should be open and inclusive of a wide range of stakeholders. However, states still have to define what this means and what specific structures will be available for stakeholder participation. Some states are evidently intent on keeping these structures minimal.

In comparison, the **World Urban Forum is a positive example of a venue that facilitates interactions among a wide range of actors**. Its inclusive nature should be maintained and its contributions to the review of the New Urban Agenda should be strengthened.

**Non-state actor initiatives in the urban realm provide opportunities to strengthen FUR**. In particular, they have the potential to strengthen the inclusiveness of the NUA (e.g. through the United Nations Advisory Committee on Sustainable Urbanization that has been proposed by the GAP), mutual learning and linkages between the review process and implementation support (e.g. the city-to-city cooperation initiatives by UCLG).

**Developing a FUR structure is a long-term process**. For example, the WUF, which was launched (partly) in response to the Habitat Agenda, was first held in 2002 – six years after Habitat II. Similarly, key aspects of the follow-up and review process of the 2030 Agenda are likely to only be agreed upon shortly before the first review at the HLPF in July 2016. Some details are even likely to only be finalized in the year(s) following the first review of the 2030 Agenda at the HLPF. It is also essential to **watch out that proposals for the FUR of the New Urban Agenda are not diluted retrospectively**. For example, while the Secretary-General's Report (A/70/684) initially proposed that member states engage in two voluntary national reviews at the global level until 2030 and this was included in the first draft of the resolution on follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda, such specifications were removed from the final resolution at the request of some member states.

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## 7.2 Recommendations for multi-level monitoring, reporting and review

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The recommendations for a FUR process that are outlined below are structured to address the required attributes that are outlined in chapter 2. They also consider important insights from the analysis of the structures of the Habitat Agenda, the 2030 Agenda and various urban initiatives. While the focus of this report is intended to be the global level of the NUA FUR, processes at the local, national and regional level are also sketched out below as their interlinkages with the global FUR need to be specified.

Moreover, the recommendations reflect the assumptions outlined in section 3.2 regarding the scope of the FUR of the New Urban Agenda. As the Habitat III process is still ongoing and the New Urban Agenda will only be agreed upon in October 2016, our recommendations for the FUR of the Agenda are necessarily also based on certain assumptions about the nature of this agreement. We consider these assumptions to be realistic, nonetheless it is important to be transparent about them so that the relevance of these recommendations can also be judged depending on whether these assumptions hold up and are reflected in the final draft of the New Urban Agenda. To reiterate, these assumptions are that:

- The FUR of the 2030 Agenda and the New Urban Agenda will be closely linked. In particular, the core of the monitoring framework of the NUA will be the indicators of **SDG 11**, as well as other **SDG indicators with an urban dimension**.
- The New Urban Agenda will contain additional elements that also need to be monitored, reported and reviewed. In particular, this relates to the **enabling conditions** for implementation that the NUA should specify.
- A further additional element that should be part of the follow-up and review of the New Urban Agenda is the **assessment of transformative commitments in the urban realm** – including issues that are beyond the scope of the existing SDG indicators.
- The FUR process should also consider the **voluntary commitments** that will be necessary for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda. Member states and other actors need to be able to identify successful commitments so that they can decide which ones should be continued and scaled up.

### 7.2.1 Global level

Monitoring, reporting and review of the New Urban Agenda at the global level is essential to allow for an **aggregate picture of progress** on the urban dimension of the SDGs, the enabling conditions and transformative commitments in the urban realm. By highlighting successes and challenges in implementation, such global FUR can support **learning** among states and provide an evidence base for implementation activities. Global follow-up and review processes can also help orchestrate a UN-system-wide strategy on sustainable urban development that is linked to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

However, it is unlikely that member states will agree on a sufficiently high-level, stand-alone and regular global review summit for the New Urban Agenda. Thus, the global level review of the New Urban Agenda should build on synergies with the HLPF, which will absorb much political attention in the next 15 years.

#### Focus areas

A key question for the global follow-up and review of the New Urban Agenda relates to its content. **What, exactly, should be reviewed?** We suggest the following focus areas:

First, to the extent that the New Urban Agenda is an implementation agreement for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the FUR of the New Urban Agenda should contribute to the review of SDG11, as well as the **urban dimension of the other SDGs** by exploring success factors of progress and making obstacles transparent. Thus, the indicators addressing the **urban dimension of the SDGs** in the **global indicator framework** will constitute a key element. The follow-up and review of the New Urban Agenda could qualitatively complement the quantitative indicators used to measure urban progress in the context of the 2030 Agenda. For example, the global SDG indicator for target 11.a.1

concerns the *proportion of population living in cities that implement urban and regional development plans integrating population projections and resource needs, by size of city*. Reporting on this indicator will be purely quantitative. The follow-up and review of the New Urban Agenda could complement this by providing an assessment of the quality of these urban and regional development plans.

Moreover, the SDG indicators need to be nationalized and localized, a process that can be supported by the New Urban Agenda, e.g. by strengthening the monitoring capacities of cities. The follow-up and review of the New Urban Agenda needs to include the voices of the urban poor, making it inclusive and participatory.

Second, the New Urban Agenda contains additional elements that will also need to be monitored, reported and reviewed. In particular, this relates to the **enabling legal, institutional and financial frameworks that cities need to pursue sustainable urban development** and implement the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda. These enabling conditions - which include issues such as decentralization processes and the capacities and financial situations of local governments - are currently not part of the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda. However, comparable data is of fundamental importance to support evidence-based discussions of progress and mutual learning on the enabling conditions.

Comparable data is of fundamental importance to support evidence-based discussions of progress and mutual learning on the enabling conditions. Depending on the final definition of such enabling conditions in the New Urban Agenda, existing indicators could be used to monitor them and could potentially be integrated into existing monitoring frameworks, such as UN-Habitat's City Prosperity Initiative. Important areas that should be addressed by these enabling conditions include national urban policies, municipal finance systems and legal frameworks (Cities Alliance JWP on Habitat III: 2016).

With respect to national urban policies, UN-Habitat has developed a National Urban Policy Database that contains information on official urban policies and related documents. This information could suffice for a global indicator on the number of countries that are developing and implementing national urban policies.<sup>5</sup> At the national level, more elaborate and varied indicators are needed as "the criteria for defining a successful National Urban Policy will inevitably vary by country. However, (...) a successful policy will, at a minimum, respond to nationally defined urban goals" and should be mainstreamed into departmental programs and policies (OECD and UN-Habitat 2016: 28).

Global indicators on legal frameworks could also draw on a UN-Habitat database - UrbanLex, a database of laws and policies on urban matters.

Indicators related to municipal finance systems could draw on the indicators in the Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) tool for national and subnational governments. As outlined by Lincoln Institute of Land Policy and the World Bank (2016: 27), "the PEFA framework provides a set of practical indicators to measure performance, establish baselines, design reform and capacity building programs, and measure the progress of reforms."

To the extent that such existing indicators can be used to monitor the enabling conditions that are eventually included in the New Urban Agenda, it should be considered whether

<sup>5</sup> Such an indicator had already been proposed for the global monitoring framework of the SDGs, but was finally not adopted. It is worth considering whether the Habitat III process would provide sufficient momentum for again considering this indicator, considering its relevance for the implementation of both the 2030 Agenda and the New Urban Agenda.



these indicators can be integrated into monitoring frameworks such as the CPI. For any enabling conditions where there are no indicators yet available to monitor them, lower cost approaches should be identified to monitor progress considering that the development and application of additional indicators is time intensive and costly. One possible option would be to use checklist questions, as was done for those areas of the Habitat Agenda for which quantitative indicators and data were not widely available. Checklist questions are simple yes/no questions used to provide an assessment of such issues where quantitative data is lacking. A downside is that such data is often less rich and detailed. Nonetheless, it can provide a snapshot of the state of enabling conditions in different countries.

Third, the current draft of the New Urban Agenda outlines **transformative commitments** for sustainable urban development. The acceleration of urbanization in parts of the world and rapid urban change worldwide is likely to necessitate additional transformative<sup>6</sup> structural, organizational and behavioral changes that cannot be fully anticipated yet and that go beyond both the enabling conditions and urban dimension of the SDGs mentioned above. Such transformative change requires the identification and propagation of urban innovations in the social, economic and environmental realms. Thus, the follow-up and review process should also pay attention to transformative change in the urban realm and facilitate discussions on their implications.

Discussions on such transformative change and new and emerging issues need to take place at the global level to ensure that member states can discuss adequate responses by the international system, and whether the 2030 Agenda or NUA need to be adjusted in light of new information and developments. This assessment should draw on multiple sources of data and reflect inputs from a wide range of stakeholders. Again, there are several options for how such an assessment of transformative change can be operationalized:

- Focusing UN-Habitat's flagship report (World Cities Report) on such assessments of new and emerging issues and transformative change. This could be difficult to achieve, considering that UN-Habitat has only recently revised its concept for its flagship report. However, while the focus of the new flagship report is on informing the Habitat III process and diagnosing key challenges and opportunities to be addressed with clear implementation recommendations in the New Urban Agenda, it also touches on transformative change – e.g. in Chapter 2, which discusses “Urbanization as a Transformative Force”. Thus, while a further revision of the flagship report concept in the near future would be costly, it would involve a shift in emphasis rather than a completely new focus.
- Creating an *International Multi-Stakeholder Panel on Sustainable Urbanization* (GAP recommendation) that brings together a range of stakeholders and considers their inputs for a periodic report on new and emerging urban issues and transformative change. This option is also relatively unlikely to garner sufficient support in the short term, as the establishment of such scientific panels is costly and objected by several member states. Moreover, establishing such panels is often a multi-year process. Thus, ongoing discussions among non-state actors on such a panel should be observed carefully. Once suggestions regarding the scope, institutional structures

<sup>6</sup> An example of an area where transformative change will be necessary is urban mobility infrastructure. If we aim to stay below a rise in global average temperature of 2°C compared to preindustrial times, then the path-dependencies that were implemented in many cities in the 20<sup>th</sup> century when private cars became the norm and cities were increasingly planned around automobile transport will have to be disrupted and redirected.

and financing of such a panel have become clearer, member states should consider supporting this initiative.

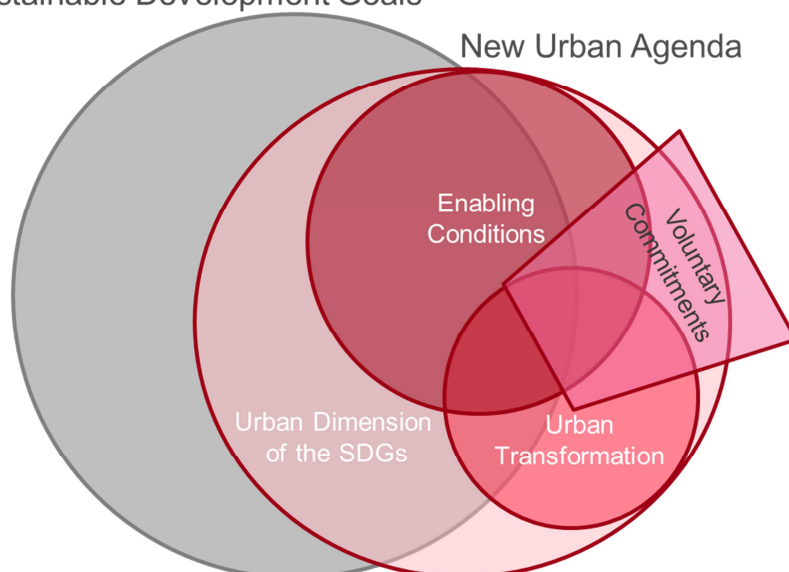
- Focusing on how **transformative change in the urban realm can be reflected in the Quadrennial Global Sustainable Development Report** that will contribute to the review of the 2030 Agenda. Rather than a detailed assessment of progress on the SDG indicators, the focus of the GSDR is on strengthening the science-policy interface, broader lessons learned and emerging trends. Moreover, methodologically it is supposed to draw on multiple sources of data and reflect inputs from a wide range of actors. As an input to the HLPF, the GSDR will support discussions on new and emerging issues and adequate responses in that venue.

Of the three options outlined above, the latter – discussing transformative change in the urban realm in the context of the GSDR – is the most realistic in the short term. However, as the GSDR focuses on new and emerging issues on all SDGs, it precludes a specific focus on transformative change in the urban realm. Thus, suggestions for a Multi-Stakeholder Panel on Sustainable Urbanization should be considered in the medium term. Such a panel would – in difference to e.g. the UN-Habitat flagship report – also provide an inclusive platform for discussions on transformative change and how to capitalize on it. Its discussions could be summarized in a report and submitted as an input to the WUF and HLPF for further consideration.

Fourth, follow-up and review of the New Urban should also consider the voluntary commitments for implementation that all interested actors can register on the Habitat III website. These voluntary commitments need to be part of the follow-up and review to enable member states and other actors to identify particularly successful commitments that should be continued and scaled up. Voluntary commitments to support the implementation of the New Urban Agenda should at a minimum: complement rather than substitute government action, be new or additional (rather than an established activity with a new façade), be specific and measurable, be adequately funded, and contribute to the implementation of at least one key topic of the NUA. In other cases, simple, additional review criteria may need to be developed to track progress on all areas of support.

**Figure 7.1: Focus areas for follow-up and review**

Sustainable Development Goals





The relationship between these four focus areas of the NUA and the SDGs is outlined in figure 7.1. The area of overlap between the SDGs and the NUA represents the urban dimension of the SDGs. Enabling legal, institutional and financial frameworks will be essential to implement both the urban dimension of the SDGs and transformative commitments, and are thus shown as overlapping with these.

### Connections to the HLPF

A high-level, regular review summit is necessary to renew political commitment for the implementation of the NUA. It is unlikely that member states will agree on a regular, dedicated review summit for the NUA, and the draft iterations of the NUA has even dropped a reference to a single mid-term review that was previously included. Thus, the global level review of the NUA should have strong links to the HLPF, which will absorb much political attention in the next 15 years.

As SDG11 will be reviewed in the context of the **thematic reviews** of the HLPF once in every **four-year cycle**, it allows for a sufficiently regular consideration of sustainable urban development at the global level. Considering that the thematic reviews are supposed to reflect the integrated, indivisible, interlinked nature of the SDGs as well as cross-cutting issues and new and emerging issues (see e.g. paras. 2 and 4 of the final draft resolution on follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda), **these reviews will also provide space for consideration of the urban dimension of the SDGs beyond SDG11**. As the annual thematic reviews will consider interlinkages between the goals that are reviewed in that year and other SDGs, urban issues may also be discussed during the other years.

The NUA should also request ECOSOC to consider making cities the theme for the HLPF during one session in the second cycle (2020-2023). While the UN Secretary-General initially suggested that “making cities sustainable and building productive capacities” should be the HLPF theme in 2018, this suggestion is no longer contained in the final draft resolution on the FUR of the 2030 Agenda. Instead, in 2018 SDG 11 will be reviewed in-depth together with several other SDGs under the theme “transformation toward sustainable and resilient societies”. If one of the future sessions of the HLPF has cities as its annual theme, **attention for urban issues** would be particularly strong in that year.

Member states are encouraged to occasionally conduct **voluntary national reviews** at the HLPF. These should also reflect **national progress on the urban dimension of the SDGs, and the enabling conditions** for their implementation by cities (see section 7.2.3). Such national reviews are important so that states can engage in a direct and focused exchange on their implementation successes and challenges, which in turn is important for **meaningful mutual learning** to occur. Moreover, reviewing states’ progress and challenges allows for a discussion on what sort of **implementation support** they may require going forward.

### Global reporting

A regular progress report on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda should cover the four topics outlined above, and should consider national and regional reports as well as relevant inputs from UN agencies, stakeholders and scientists.

Extensive reports would need to be prepared approximately once every four years, as an input to the HLPF’s examination of SDG11 and the urban dimension of the SDGs. Additionally, briefer, annual reports could be prepared that provide insights on the urban dimension of the theme of the thematic reviews during those years when SDG11 is not reviewed in-depth at the HLPF. The added value of such annual reports compared to a

single report on the urban dimension of the SDGs every four years needs to be carefully considered.

These reports should be developed in close cooperation by all relevant UN agencies and with stakeholder engagement. UN-Habitat could lead such an inter-agency task force in preparing progress reports. **World Urban Forum**

The World Urban Forum (WUF) could play a substantial role as a **platform for inclusive discussions** and as a key venue for **mutual learning among policymakers, local governments, stakeholders and practitioners** on challenges and opportunities in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda. WUF participants could present their data and initiatives, allowing others to learn about good practices. The World Urban Forum would provide an opportunity to reflect on a (draft) progress report on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda. The deliberations at the WUF could then be used to refine this report before it is submitted to the HLPF.

### **City peer learning**

As cities are the focus of the NUA, global FUR processes should provide space for cities to reflect on challenges and opportunities and engage in mutual learning. City peer learning could be encouraged directly between cities through city networks and build on existing peer learning programs. A strength of existing peer learning initiatives is their strong focus on mutual learning and sharing experiences – for example, initiatives by UCLG allow urban policymakers from cities that have been paired up to mentor each other.

City networks thus have many exciting initiatives to support peer learning and sharing of experiences. Such activities should be supported, scaled up and aligned with the New Urban Agenda. Moreover, the results of such city peer learning should be discussed in the context of the WUF. By reflecting on successes and challenges during the WUF, lessons learned can be shared with a broader audience.

### **Role of UN-Habitat**

A wide range of UN agencies are engaged in work that touches on urban issues, and are thus well positioned to contribute to monitoring, reporting and review of the New Urban Agenda. As the only UN agency with a mandate that is specifically dedicated to human settlements and urban issues, UN-Habitat in particular can make important contributions to the global follow-up and review of the New Urban Agenda. For example, UN-Habitat is well positioned to participate in, and even take a leading role, in an inter-agency task force with the mandate to identify existing indicators that can contribute to the monitoring of the New Urban Agenda, and where additional review criteria may be needed. However, as many different institutions collect data and indicators, this exercise should be conducted in partnership with all relevant UN institutions, in particular also the UN Statistical Commission. Such an inter-agency task force could also be responsible for aggregating qualitative and quantitative data on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda in progress reports. As many different institutions collect data and indicators, this exercise should also be conducted in partnership with all relevant UN institutions. Moreover, as the organizer and convener of the World Urban Forum, UN-Habitat should ensure that the WUF offers good opportunities to discuss a (draft) report on the New Urban Agenda, and offers a useful platform for mutual learning and discussion with respect to the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

At the national and local level, UN-Habitat could play an important role in supporting effective follow-up and review in cooperation with relevant partners. As is outlined in sections 7.2.3

and 7.2.4, this encompasses issues such as guidelines for local and national follow-up and review processes.

### **Habitat Cycle**

The 20-year Habitat cycles are not in line with the rapid pace of urbanization and urban change. More frequent Habitat conferences as well as regular events for follow-up and review in between these conferences are necessary to ensure that member states, local authorities and their partners can respond to emerging trends and challenges and new insights in a timely manner.

The timeframe until Habitat IV should thus be shortened so that the Habitat process is optimally synchronized with the SDGs and any follow-up agreement to the 2030 Agenda. A Habitat IV conference after 15 years - in 2031 - could reflect on the implementation of the urban dimension of the SDGs and how to contribute to the implementation of the follow-up agreement of the SDGs. An additional mid-term review after 7.5 years would allow for a comprehensive assessment of the agenda and implementing any necessary adjustments.

Moreover, the follow-up and review process outlined above allows for regular discussion of progress in implementing the NUA in the years between the Habitat conferences and the mid-term review. Firstly, urban actors can regularly discuss progress at the World Urban Forum. And, secondly, the HLPF will also provide an opportunity to discuss urban issues, particularly during those years when it reviews progress on implementing SDG 11.

To facilitate coherent, inclusive and meaningful global FUR, the New Urban Agenda should:

- Highlight the relevance of global level monitoring, reporting and review for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the New Urban Agenda
- Elucidate the connections between the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda and the New Urban Agenda. In particular, it is important that the NUA clarifies in what context the urban dimension of the SDGs, the enabling conditions, support mechanisms and transformative commitments will be reviewed.
- Request an inter-agency task force (led by UN-Habitat) to coordinate the global monitoring of the NUA, drawing on inputs from relevant UN and other international institutions, stakeholders, discussions at the WUF, national and local governments and other relevant actors. This inter-agency task force should moreover put together extensive reports based on this monitoring framework as an input for the HLPF. Such reports should be prepared in those years when the HLPF will consider global progress on SDG11 and the urban dimension of the SDGs (once in every four-year cycle of the HLPF). Additionally, briefer, annual reports could be prepared to provide insights on the urban dimension of the thematic reviews during those years when SDG11 is not reviewed in-depth at the HLPF.
- Define targets related to the enabling conditions and support mechanisms and request an inter-agency task force, including UN-Habitat, the UN Statistical Commission and other relevant UN institutions to identify appropriate indicators where they exist and develop additional, checklist indicators where necessary. This exercise should be conducted by spring 2017, prior to the first thematic review of SDG11 at the HLPF in summer 2018.
- Request that the Quadrennial Global Sustainable Development Report adequately considers transformative change in the urban realm.
- Request ECOSOC to consider making cities the theme for the HLPF during one of its sessions in the second cycle (2020-2023).

- Encourage all relevant urban stakeholders to participate in the HLPF, particularly during years that the thematic review will consider the urban dimension of the SDGs.
- Request the General Assembly to hold the Habitat IV conference in 2031 and consider holding a special session for a mid-term review and appraisal of the implementation of the New Urban Agenda in 2024.
- Emphasize the role of the WUF as a space for sharing experiences and mutual learning among policymakers, local government leaders, non-governmental stakeholders and expert practitioners in the field of cities and human settlements.
- Encourage cities to engage in city peer learning initiatives and report on the results of such activities at the WUF. At the WUF, representatives of city networks could present the main results from city peer learning initiatives. By providing a space for reflecting on their successes and challenges during the biennial review at the World Urban Forum, lessons learned can be shared with a broader audience. As mentioned above, the results of the discussions at the World Urban Forum – including the discussions on city peer learning initiatives – should feed into a report that is coordinated by UN-Habitat and fed into the HLPF.
- Request national and local governments, civil society, the private sector, the UN system and other actors to form partnerships and mobilize all available resources to address any implementation gaps that are identified during the review of the New Urban Agenda.

**In general, developing an FUR structure is a long-term process.** There also needs to be space to reflect on insights from the first reviews of the New Urban Agenda, to further adjust structures if need be.

## 7.2.2 Regional level

**FUR at the regional level can facilitate peer learning.** Urban challenges and opportunities often have a regional dimension, providing a strong incentive for regional FUR. The UN regional commissions and other regional organizations should support regional reviews, e.g. by aggregating and comparing national data. Any regional review meetings (e.g. ministerial conferences) that are organized in the context of the 2030 Agenda should, where possible, also be leveraged for regional discussions on the urban dimension of the SDGs and the enabling conditions. Moreover, member states should be encouraged to engage in dedicated regional meetings on sustainable urban development, supported by the UN regional commissions and other regional institutions. **The discussions during such regional review processes should also be summarized in reports that will constitute an input for the HLPF.**

To facilitate coherent, inclusive and meaningful regional FUR, the NUA should:

- Highlight the relevance of regional level reporting and review for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the New Urban Agenda.
- Encourage member states to also discuss progress on urban issues during any regional review meetings that they decide to hold in the context of regional reviews of the 2030 Agenda, and to also consider engaging in dedicated regional reviews addressing the New Urban Agenda.
- Call upon the UN regional commissions and other regional organizations to support regional review processes, e.g. by aggregating and comparing national data and preparing reports that summarize the conclusions of regional reviews as an input for the HLPF.

- Suggest that regional reviews are timed so that their results can feed into annual HLPF sessions that discuss SDG11 and a special session of the UNGA for the overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the New Urban Agenda (see section 7.2.1).

### 7.2.3 National level

Similarly to the 2030 Agenda, the national level will be central to the FUR of the NUA.

Monitoring at the national level should focus on the **urban dimension of the SDGs** as well as the **enabling conditions** for cities. It could also consider any additional indicators that reflect national priorities. Embedded in national monitoring frameworks for the SDGs, key data sources for this level of monitoring could include national statistical offices as well as aggregations of local level monitoring.

The results of this national level monitoring should also be the basis for **inclusive national reviews of sustainable urban development**. The 2030 Agenda already encourages member states to engage in such reviews for all SDGs. However, dedicated national forums or platforms for the review of the urban dimension of the SDGs, the enabling conditions for cities as well as any other national priorities for sustainable urban development are necessary to allow for an in-depth discussion on the urban future in that particular member state. Such events could engage a wide range of stakeholders, and **the results of these discussions should feed into the general national review of the SDGs and into any reports that member states prepare in the context of the SDGs**. Ideally, National Habitat Committees would take place more regularly than between Habitat II and Habitat III, to support regular reflection on urban developments. They could be synchronized so that they are most useful to national policymaking processes and to optimally contribute to the national review of the SDGs.

Comparable national data is of fundamental importance to support evidence-based discussions on implementation. To facilitate a coherent, inclusive and meaningful follow-up and review of the New Urban Agenda that is in line with the 2030 Agenda, targeted and specific support for improvements in statistical capacity are needed at the national, sub-national and local level. This includes support for the integration of multiple sources of data and support for data collection and analysis. Examples of support measures are trainings and the development of tools, guidelines and handbooks on data and methods.

The New Urban Agenda has important gaps to fill with respect to national level monitoring, reporting and review, as the draft does not contain any specific recommendations in this respect. The New Urban Agenda should:

- Highlight the relevance of national level monitoring, reporting and review for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the New Urban Agenda.
- Encourage member states to adopt monitoring frameworks for the urban dimension of the SDGs and the enabling conditions. Member states could develop or use their own monitoring frameworks, or use existing frameworks such as the WCCD ISO for sustainable cities (which is open to being adjusted with any additional indicators that are developed for the New Urban Agenda), or UN-Habitat's City Prosperity Initiative. If a single monitoring framework is adopted at the national level and local authorities are encouraged (or required) to use the same framework, this would greatly facilitate comparability within countries.

- Request UN-Habitat to support member states in the development of additional national indicators and targets that reflect national priorities and connect to the global monitoring framework for the urban dimension of the SDGs.
- Request relevant UN agencies – in partnership with other relevant actors - to provide targeted and specific support for improvements in statistical capacity on urban issues at the national and local level, including support for the integration of multiple sources of data, and technical support for data collection, analysis and compilation. This support can include trainings as well as the development of tools, guidelines and handbooks on data and methods.
- Request actors that already support the development of statistical capacity, such as the World Bank with its *Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building (TFSCB)* and *Trust Fund for Innovations in Development Data (TFIDD)* to ensure that these funds also support improvements in statistical capacity for monitoring of urban issues. Similarly, initiatives that support countries in accessing, using and integrating various sources of data, such as the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data, should adequately consider the integration of urban data.
- Request member states to consider regularly hosting inclusive national follow-up and review platforms/events to reflect on sustainable urban development and to prepare inputs for the national review of the SDGs. These events should be timed so that they are most useful to national policymaking processes and to optimally contribute to the national review of the SDGs.
- Call upon UN-Habitat to develop detailed guidelines with respect to how the principles for effective FUR at the national level can be implemented. This includes (but is not limited to) the functioning of national follow-up and review platforms/events. UN-Habitat should support interested member states in developing such platforms/events.

#### 7.2.4 Local level

The **local level is of fundamental importance for the implementation of the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda**, and thus progress should also be monitored, reported and reviewed at this level. Moreover, such local FUR also has many advantages for local actors. Firstly, it can facilitate inclusive and coherent planning at the local level by providing an evidence base. Secondly, it can provide an advocacy tool for local governments vis-à-vis their national governments by allowing them to highlight where they may need more support from the national level to implement the urban dimension of the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda. Thirdly, it can alert cities to areas where they could benefit from international initiatives, e.g. peer-to-peer learning with other cities.

The local level is particularly important to monitor progress on the **urban dimension of the SDGs** and the **enabling conditions** for cities. Considering the centrality of local actors in implementing many SDG targets beyond SDG11, it is important that progress at the local level is measured. This requires efforts to “**localize**” the SDGs, i.e. ensuring that local level actors understand, engage with and have the capacities to monitor the relevant SDG targets comprehensively. At the same time, implementation requires the right enabling conditions to be in place – to be defined by the New Urban Agenda. Local level monitoring of this aspect will be crucial – local governments need to be able to **provide feedback regarding the presence or absence of appropriate institutional, financial and legal frameworks**.

Local level monitoring should not just focus on traditional hard data. By involving communities in new forms of data collection and considering both qualitative and quantitative



data, **key indicators can be supplemented with additional information that provides a richer picture of the state of sustainable urban development.** For example, SDI's campaign "Know Your City" involves the profiling, enumeration and mapping of informal settlements with the help of approximately 150 questions on a questionnaire, covering issues such as the size of the population living in an informal settlement, access to sanitation, water, roads, electricity and healthcare services. This data collection approach by SDI is standardized, but leaves room for additional, country-specific modules. While not all of these indicators may thus be fully comparable across countries or even cities, it allows for a **more thorough reflection and review process at the local level.**

Local authorities could compile such information in **voluntary periodic reports.** These would not necessarily have to be new reports – such information could also be integrated into existing reports that local authorities may already be compiling. Reports by local authorities would primarily serve to enhance accountability towards local citizens and could form a basis for **voluntary local progress reviews.** Such reviews should be inclusive: by engaging with a range of different local stakeholders, local authorities can learn more about the data, gather a more detailed picture of implementation progress and gain insights on the opinions of urban inhabitants on the direction of future urban planning and management.

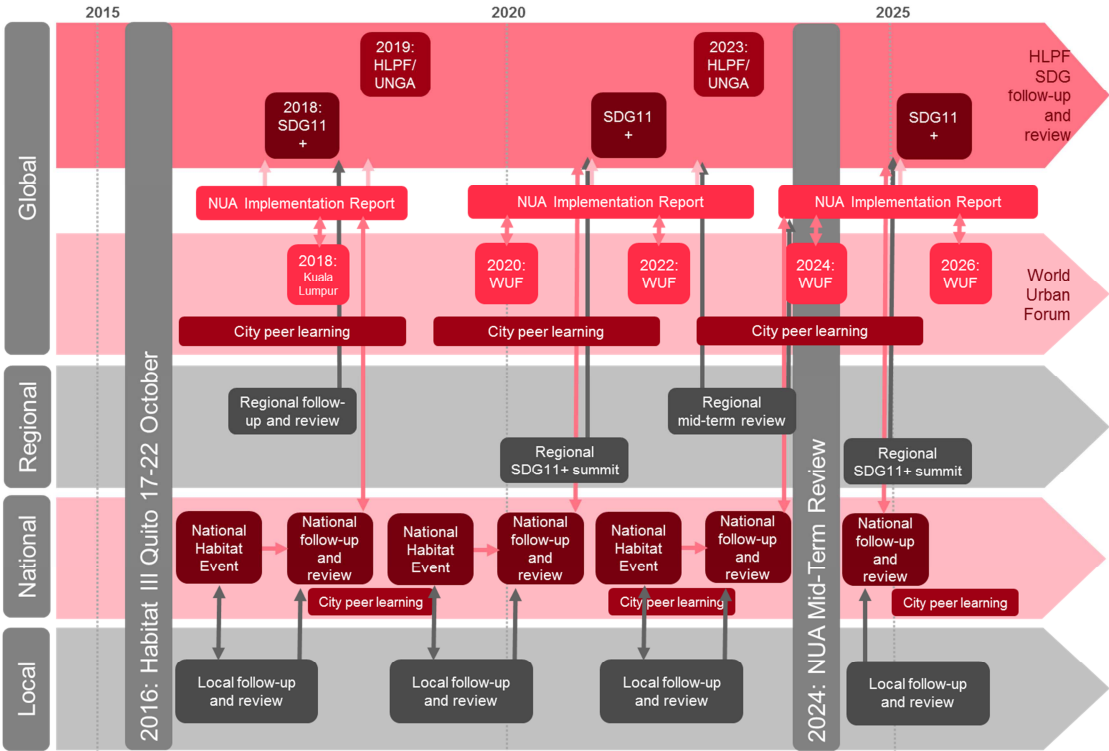
The quality of local follow-up and review processes should also be considered at other levels. For example, by reflecting on local data availability, local initiatives for SDG monitoring, community-based monitoring processes and inclusiveness of marginalized groups such as the urban poor at the national and global level (in an aggregate form), support for improvements in local follow-up and review can be optimized.

To facilitate coherent, inclusive and meaningful local FUR, the New Urban Agenda should:

- Highlight the relevance of local monitoring, reporting and review for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the New Urban Agenda. The zero draft of the New Urban Agenda calls upon local governments to develop mechanisms for local follow-up and review (para. 169). This should be elaborated on with specific references as to how this can benefit local governments and local stakeholders.
- Request UN-Habitat –in partnership with other relevant actors - to develop guidelines for inclusive reviews at the local level, and to provide support to interested cities.

Figure 7.2 summarizes the recommendations for follow-up and review processes at all levels and outlines how they are interlinked.

Figure 7.2: Overview of processes at all levels





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