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SDG11 Global Council High Level Implementation Framework

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Abstract: This document is the approved version by SDG11 Council members subsequent to incorporation of comments regarding the SDG11 high level implementation framework as discussed and formulated earlier by the council members.

1. Cities and SDG11

Cities are the cradles of human civilization in which a majority of human beings live, and a large majority of natural and man-made resources are consumed. More than half the world's population now lives in urban areas. These urban areas consume 75 percent of natural resources, produce 60 to 80 percent of greenhouse gas emissions, and generate 50 percent of all waste. Cities contribute an estimated 80 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) globally.

Already in 2016, an estimated 54.5 percent of human population lived in urban settlements and the same figure is expected to rise to 60 percent by 2030. There were 512 cities globally in 2016 with at least 1 million inhabitants and 662 cities are projected for 2030. There were 31 “megacities”, i.e. cities with more than 10 million inhabitants, in 2016 and the same number is estimated to reach 41 by 2030. Similarly, in 2016 45 cities had populations between 5 and 10 million and 63 cities are projected for 2030¹.

Population growth has been an important driver of cities' economic growth. In a sample of 943 global cities with more than 500,000 inhabitants in their metropolitan regions, 58 percent of GDP growth between 2000 and 2012 came from expanding population. Rising per capita income contributed the other 42 percent. Large cities generate about 75 percent of global GDP today and are estimated to generate 86 percent of worldwide GDP growth between 2015 and 2030². Hence cities will play a crucial role economically in the future as well.

Cities as relatively dense and highly congested physical spaces are prone to significant challenges. More than 80 percent of cities in 2014 were located in areas which were vulnerable to high risk of mortality or economic losses associated with natural disasters. Population increase, urban sprawl, climate change, environmental problems, and fiscal pressures are among the myriad challenges faced by cities³. Additionally, demographic changes such as ageing populations, volatile economic growth, unemployment, low-wage low-skilled jobs, income inequality, social polarization and segregation

¹ United Nations Department of Economic & Social Affairs (UNDESA) Population Division (2016). The World's Cities in 2016 – Data Booklet (ST/ESA/SER.A/392)

² McKinsey Global Institute (MGI). (2016). Urban World: Meeting the Demographic Challenge

³ UNECE & ITU (2016). Striving for Sustainable Development Goals, United 4 Smart Sustainable Cities

present challenges for sustainable urban development⁴. Furthermore, current consumption levels in cities also pose significant challenges for the future.

Therefore, global social, economic and environmental challenges are mostly manifested in urban environments. In this context, the SDG11⁵, for making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable, plays an extremely important role.

<p>Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable</p> <p>11.1 By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums</p> <p>11.2 By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons</p> <p>11.3 By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries</p> <p>11.4 Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage</p> <p>11.5 By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations</p> <p>11.6 By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management</p> <p>11.7 By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities</p> <p>11.a Support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning</p> <p>11.b By 2020, substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels</p> <p>11.c Support least developed countries, including through financial and technical assistance, in building sustainable and resilient buildings utilizing local materials</p>
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SDG11 and Related Targets

⁴ European Commissions, Directorate General for Regional Policy (EU). (2011). Cities of tomorrow – Challenges, visions, ways forward

⁵ United Nations Development Program (UNDP). (2015). Sustainable Development Goals: Introducing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. New York, NY

Realistically, each city has its own particular characteristics and specific social and economic context and structure along with its own challenges. Hence, it is important for cities to identify their starting points, or current status, with respect to SDG11 goals and targets. The resultant gap between the current status and the intended targets in SDG11 create an enormous innovation potential for cities and communities.

Stakeholders including public and private sectors, NGOs, civil society and very importantly the city inhabitants themselves can collectively work as partners to close these gaps. Creating a public-private-people partnership (PPPP) through a rich urban ecosystem is critical. Engaging and working with stakeholders through shared platforms to make the best use of cities' collective capital and to ensure inclusivity are important for success. These partnerships can also enable creative and agile financing mechanisms for city initiatives.

Science, technology and innovation (STI) can be used as powerful tools to formulate targeted action items to address SDG11 targets. Traditional and alternative financing mechanisms can be combined and utilized for acceptable risks and returns during the SDG11 implementation.

2. **SDG11 Global Council (SDG11-GC)**

SDG11- GC's mission is to “formulate a pragmatic, multi-stakeholder, widely-applicable SDG11 implementation framework for cities; and to implement selective pilot initiative(s) by utilizing the formulated framework”.

SDG11- GC will capitalize on science, technology and innovation (STI) during its course of work and leverage emerging technologies if and where applicable (e.g. AI, data, blockchain, IoT, etc.).

SDG11- GC and its formulated implementation framework abide by the following principles:

- Utilize a pragmatic approach
- Apply wide stakeholder engagement
- Leverage on existing initiatives
- Form strong partnerships
- Recognize differences
- Leave no one behind

SDG11- GC is aware of the following challenges:

- Cities are at different levels of development with different performance characteristics with respect to SDG11.
- There are existing initiatives at the global, regional, national and local levels.
- Cities might not be well-informed as to how to enhance their performance with respect to SDG11.
- Public financing might be limited for cities.
- The particular context with respect to institutions, administration and governance differ among cities.

3. Introduction to SDG11 – GC High Level Implementation Framework

The scope of work for the first phase of SDG11-GC entails formulating a pragmatic framework for implementing SDG11. The framework intends to assist nations and cities to:

- assess their current position with respect to SDG11 targets,
- understand the gaps through a data-driven evidence based scheme (e.g. KPIs and related data and evidence),
- formulate a high-level pragmatic and actionable approach for closing their gaps through targeted action items, and
- exchange knowledge and practices among themselves.

The framework encompasses various enablers for successful implementation of SDG11. It formulates a high-level approach for implementing initiatives for SDG11 by strongly relying on robust partnerships (capitalizing on SDG17) from different constituents including financing organizations, public and private sector organizations, among others.

The SDG11 high-level implementation framework formulated by SDG11-GC consists of the following steps:

1. Baseline
2. Innovate
3. Implement
4. Assess

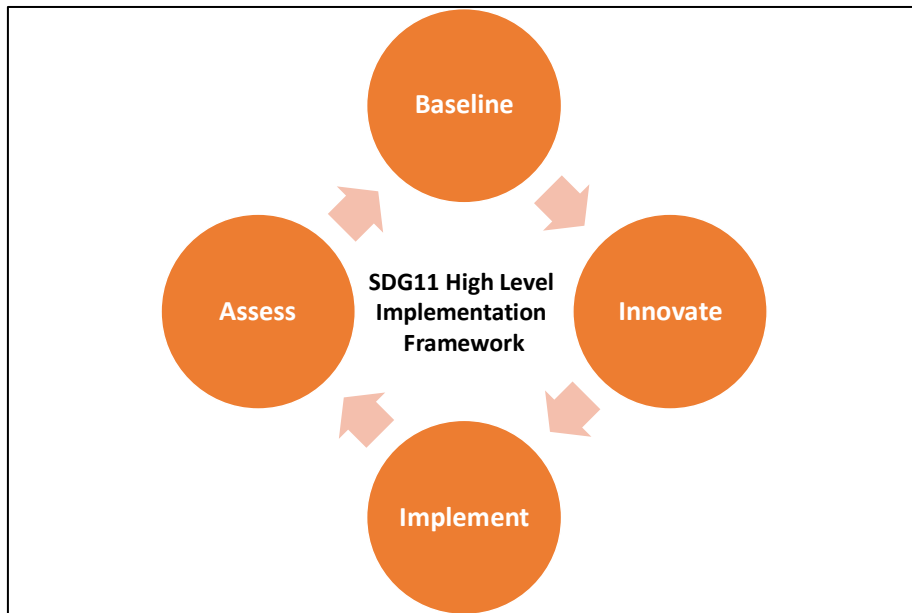


Figure 1: SDG11 High Level Implementation Framework Steps

Step 1. Baseline

This step entails conducting a current state review / audit which determines the baseline with respect to SDG11. More specifically, it evaluates the current status with respect to the following three components:

- a. SDG11 city targets and KPIs,
- b. ongoing city-level SDG11 initiatives and action items, and
- c. various enablers to aid in SDG11 implementation.

Each of the above component is explained below briefly and its relationship to SDG11 implementation is indicated.

a. SDG11 City Level Targets and Outputs / Outcomes through KPIs (data driven approach) and their baseline values:

SDG11 targets are at the national level. Hence, each nation should determine specific SDG11 targets at the city (local) level. Cities may have different targets when national level targets are cascaded down (translated to) city (local) level targets. Hence, cities' performances should be measured against their specific targets identified at the local level.

This would constitute a “City Scorecard” or a “City Dashboard”. It would also allow comparison of performances at the city (local) level. Cities’ performances can then be aggregated to determine the overall national level SDG11 performance.

The targets of SDG11 can further be translated into Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure progress toward intended results. Various initiatives have already been undertaken to define either specifically SDG11 related or general city related indicators (some of which can be recast with a perspective of SDG11). Some examples of such formulated SDG11 related KPIs are indicated below:

- i. SDG11 Monitoring framework prepared by UNHABITAT⁶: This framework discusses various definitions used by national and local governments (e.g. city, urban, metropolitan area, human settlements). UNHABITAT designed the City Prosperity Index (CPI) as a holistic, integrated and systemic view of the city and is composed of six main dimensions. CPI is posed as a potential global framework for targets and indicators of SDG11. The framework document also discusses mapping between SDG11 and various CPI sub-dimensions and proposes indicators for each target in SDG11. The proposed indicators are explained in sufficient detail to guide measurement aspects.
- ii. ISO 37120: ISO has developed 37120 under the ISO/TC 268 to help cities measure their performance for improving quality of life and sustainability⁷.
- iii. U4SSC KPIs: The “United for Smart Sustainable Cities” (U4SSC) is a UN initiative coordinated by ITU and UNECE and supported by CBD, ECLAC, FAO, ITU, UNDP, UNECA, UNECE, UNESCO, UN Environment, UNEP-FI, UNFCCC, UN-Habitat, UNIDO, UNU-EGOV, UN-Women and WMO to achieve SDG11⁸. U4SSC serves as the global platform to advocate for public policy and to encourage the use of ICTs to facilitate and ease the transition to smart sustainable cities. U4SSC developed a

⁶ SDG Goal 11 Monitoring Framework - A Guide to Assist National and Local Governments to Monitor and Report On SDG Goal 11 Indicators: Monitoring Framework - Definitions - Metadata - UN-Habitat Technical Support – February 2016

⁷ ISO 37120 briefing note: the first ISO International Standard on city indicators

⁸ <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/ssc/united/Pages/default.aspx>

set of international key performance indicators (KPIs) for Smart Sustainable Cities (SSC) to establish the criteria to evaluate ICT's contributions in making cities smarter and more sustainable, and to provide cities with the means for self-assessment in order to achieve the sustainable development goals (SDGs)⁹. A subset of these KPIs can be used for SDG11 implementation monitoring.

- iv. This framework is flexible enough to incorporate other KPIs which can be formulated by organizations, nations or cities themselves for SDG11 implementation. Such additional KPIs can be included in this framework during the SDG11 implementation by a city.

b. Ongoing city-level repository of initiatives / action items

This component includes actual initiatives / action items formulated and being implemented by a nation and/or city towards achieving SDG11 targets. These initiatives / action items may have been formulated to achieve SDG11 KPIs used by the nation and/or city. Alternatively, they may have been undertaken as part of an overall approach for implementing SDG11 and may reflect particular national or city level priorities and needs. In some cases, they may be national level initiatives being implemented at the city level (or local level).

Presumably, there will be multiple initiatives / action items formulated and being implemented pertaining to the SDG11 targets constituting an implementation repository for the city.

Note: Urban observatories, both local and national, can play a very sound bridge role to gather local data and connect it to regional/national/global agendas, and vice-versa. Urban observatories' three main areas of work include assistance to governments, local authorities and organizations of local civil society to amplify their ability to collect, manage and maintain and use information on urban development; enhance the use of knowledge and urban

⁹ <https://www.itu.int/en/publications/Documents/tsb/2017-U4SSC-Collection-Methodology/index.html>

indicators for policy formulation, planning and urban management through participatory processes; and collection and dissemination of results of global, national and city level monitoring activities, as well as disseminating good practices in the use of urban information world-wide¹⁰.

Following table indicates a simple approach that a city can use to collate its list of initiatives / action items related to SDG11 implementation.

Initiative / Action Item Name	Pertinent SDG11 Target	Pertinent KPIs (if any)	Brief Description	Objectives	Implementation Timeframe	Comments
Action Item 1						
Action Item 2						
.....						
Action Item N						

¹⁰ A Guide to Setting up an Urban Observatory, UN Habitat

c. Enablers (pragmatic checklist based approach) – to understand which enablers are in place within the city

This component refers to a composite list of enablers which help in implementing SDG11. The affirmative presence of these enablers will increase the likelihood of success in implementing SDG11. The enablers are listed below and briefly explained:

- i. **Leadership & Governance:** Strong leadership and governance processes are critical for city administrations to implement SDG11 initiatives in today's rapidly changing environment. City leaders have a natural role to influence city stakeholders toward a visionary collective goal for SDG11 implementation in order to achieve an inspirational and aligned development for their city. Throughout this development journey, governance structures determine the overall direction to achieve optimal performance outcomes while maintaining accountability, reputation and integrity. Cities' implementation performance depends on strong (political) leadership and effective followership. It is also important to establish a national level governance in coordination with city level governances of SDG11 implementations.
- ii. **Strategy & Policy:** Strategy entails setting a general direction for achieving SDG11 targets (as the desired goal) and the necessary steps to achieve it (e.g. an implementation plan). Policies are the deliberate system of principles and statements of intent guiding national and city level administrations to achieve SDG11 targets.
- iii. **Ecosystems & Engagement:** It is important for cities to engage their wide range of stakeholders and to ensure their participation and inclusivity during the implementation of SDG11, hence leaving no one behind. Collaboration platforms can be used by cities to enhance public and private engagement. Nurturing a rich and productive ecosystem will help boost city innovation capital. Public private partnerships can be utilized to complement public and private sector's skills in implementing SDG11. Entrepreneurs can be encouraged to establish start-ups for addressing SDG11 implementation challenges. Accelerators and incubators can be utilized to flourish and support SDG11 related SMEs. Similarly, NGOs and civil society can bring the perspectives of related organizations and society members to SDG11 implementations.

Cities can also capitalize on international system of urban agendas/actions, including numerous city networks, vast number of cross-country urban R&D programmes, twinning connections, etc. These will allow cross-border fertilization of knowledge and will potentially help accelerate SDG11 implementations at the national and city levels.

- iv. **STI (Science, Technology & Innovation) Utilization:** Cities face confounding and complex economic, social, cultural and environmental challenges. Science and technology based innovation can help cities address and overcome these challenges. Digital transformation and emerging technologies (e.g. Fourth Industrial Revolution technologies) have an immense potential to impact all aspects of societies. The physical fabric of cities is being augmented with a digital counterpart and technologies such as IoT, AI, Robotics, Virtual Reality are coalescing to impact cities globally. Hence, cities have enormous opportunities to harness STI during their SDG11 implementation.
- v. **Data:** Cities can collect, aggregate and draw insights from urban data to not only understand their current positions, but also to innovate and plan for closing their strategic gaps with respect to SDG11 targets. Hence, cities can identify their data initiatives such as open data, big data, and shared data to capitalize during their SDG11 implementations. The scope and the extent of these initiatives will potentially enable and even expedite SDG11 implementation.
- vi. **Financing:** SDG11 initiatives / action items implementation in general require financial resources. Cities can use a myriad of financing mechanisms ranging from traditional public sector funds (e.g. annual budgets) to alternative innovative financing mechanisms to fund their initiatives. Public private partnerships can be established to jointly undertake the risks as well as returns. Various financing mechanisms (e.g. debt instruments, green bonds, equity financing, securities, sovereign wealth funds, venture capital, cryptocurrencies, crowdfunding) can be tapped into for pertinent SDG11 initiatives where applicable.
- vii. **Regulations:** This includes all the rules (legal norms) made by a government authority which affects or impacts SDG11 implementation in. Regulations prescribe certain types of conduct and include legislations, laws, directives, acts among others.

Cities may differ in terms of applicable regulations with respect to SDG11 implementation. Hence, it is important to identify existing applicable regulations for SDG11. These include national regulatory frameworks within which cities operate; but also the local and regional (sub-national) regulatory frameworks applicable to cities and urban contexts. In some cases, cities may be progressive and can establish their own regulations pertaining to SDG11.

- viii. **Skills & Knowledge:** SDG11 implementation will require a certain level of skills and knowledge. Innovation for achieving SDG11 targets entails formulation of initiatives / action items which may require not only an understanding of urban issues but also in some cases science and technology based interventions. Hence, professional training programs, academic degrees, education curricula, vocational training, and research and development (R&D) programs may help boost such city needs in terms of skills and knowledge. Matching the city demand with supply of requisite skills will be essential for the success of SDG11 implementation initiatives / action items.

A simple table incorporating above discussed components is shown below. It can be used by a city to assess its current status, or baseline, with respect to SDG11. The questions in the table are fairly high-level and may require further elaboration and elucidation by the city to specify and depict its current status.

Assessment Element	Currently Exists	Explanation / Evidence	Comments
Are there SDG11 related targets and KPIs currently adopted by the city?	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Are there ongoing initiatives / action items to achieve SDG11?	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Is there a supervising (monitoring) body overseeing the general SDG11 implementation?	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Do the ongoing initiatives / action items have ownerships assigned?	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Is there an overall strategy for SDG11 implementation?	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Are there relevant policies for SDG11 implementation?	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Are the broad stakeholders defined for SDG11 initiatives / action items?	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Are there existing partnerships in place for SDG11 implementation?	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Are there specific Public Private Partnerships in place for SDG11 implementation?	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Is STI utilized in SDG11 implementation projects?	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Is Academia engaged in SDG11 implementation projects?	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Does the city utilize open, shared and private data for SDG11 implementation?	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Are there funds allocated for SDG11 implementation?	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Are alternative financing methods utilized in SDG11 implementation (e.g. green bonds, international assistance, crowdsourcing, etc.)?	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Are there regulations (e.g. laws, directives, standards) supporting or impeding SDG11 implementation?	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Are there collaboration platforms existing in the city for SDG11 implementation?	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Are the stakeholders in the city engaged broadly for SDG11 implementation?	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Are there sufficient skills to implement SDG11?	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Are there any R&D programs or projects targeting SDG11 implementation?	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Step 2. Innovate

Having assessed its current status in Step 1, the city (or in some cases the nation) can innovate initiatives / action items to close its gaps with respect to SDG11 targets. Some of the above discussed enablers can be utilized during this stage to potentially enhance the innovation effectiveness. The city can engage its stakeholders and capitalize on its innovation ecosystem. STI can be utilized to address various urban challenges. Financing alternatives can be taken into account for otherwise infeasible innovation ideas.

Another important input to this step might be an international benchmarking of other cities' successful initiatives / action items for implementing SDG11. The city needs to be careful in assessing the applicability of international benchmarks as the context of cities and their particular aspects may vary significantly.

During this innovation step, a long list of initiatives / action items can be formulated for implementation. In fact, it would be better to utilize city intellectual capital comprehensively to come up with numerous ideas contributing to SDG11 targets effectively and efficiently.

It is also important to note that innovation may entail experimentation by cities as they address their urban challenges and problems¹¹. Innovative technologies, solutions, and policies may be tested in limited or specified urban contexts. Successful urban experiments can be scaled up to city, regional, national and even international levels.

Innovation prioritization approach

The city might not have the means and the resources to implement the list of ideas in its entirety. In such cases, the innovation ideas will need to be prioritized. A simple innovation prioritization approach is proposed below with two main criteria. The first criterion is the value which identifies the projected (ex-ante) impact of the innovation idea. The second criterion identifies the readiness of the city, in other words the ease of implementation of the idea by the city. Each criterion is composed of several attributes which are briefly explained below.

i. **Value**

- *Alignment with city vision & strategy*: This attribute refers to innovation idea's overall fit to city's SDG11 vision and strategy, if it exists.
- *City targets and KPI(s) Impact*: This attribute indicates the extent of innovation idea's contribution to existing SDG11 targets and KPI(s) in the city.
- *Social Impact*: This attribute gauges the impact of the innovation idea on people and communities in the city. It would include issues such as people's lifestyle, culture, participation and engagement, health and well-being, personal freedom and privacy, concerns and aspirations among others. It is also important to assess whether it impacts the entire city or a subset of the city inhabitants.
- *Economic Impact*: This attribute assesses the impact of the innovation idea in the city's economy. Economic impact can include issues such as Gross Value Added (GVA) or Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the city, economic productivity, wealth, personal income, job opportunities and labor force among others.

¹¹ <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/1758-5899.12587>

- *Environmental Impact:* This attribute assesses the impact of the innovation idea in the city's overall environment. Environmental impact captures effects of the innovation idea on city water, energy, emissions, air, land, waste and in general on urban natural environment and resources.

i. Readiness (Ease of Implementation)

- *Implementation Cost:* This attribute measures the total cost of ownership for implementing the innovation idea.
- *Implementation Timeframe:* This attribute refers to the total implementation time of the innovation idea.
- *Implementation Risk:* This attribute captures various difficulties, impediments and hindrances which may potentially arise during the implementation of the innovation idea. Following sub-attributes may help in identifying and gauging various risks.
 - *PESTEL barriers:* This sub-attribute captures political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal barriers which exist in the city and may potentially hinder the implementation of the innovation idea.
 - *Complexity:* This sub-attribute reflects the complexity for implementing the innovation idea in terms of number of stakeholders involved, various uncertainties involved in deploying uncertain technologies, dependencies and linkages to other initiatives / action items in the city, among others.
 - *Requisite skills and know-how:* This sub-attribute includes the extent to which the innovation idea can be implemented with the existing skills in the city or in the city's overall ecosystem.

The city can use a simple scoring system for various criteria and their attributes. For example, a simple three level (Low, Medium, High) or a five level scoring system can be adopted. The scores can be identified either qualitatively or quantitatively based on available data and conducted analyses. Having well-defined criteria and attributes help also in more accurate relative scoring among the innovation ideas.

The city can apply the prioritization approach described above and can assess all formulated ideas with respect to the well-defined criteria.

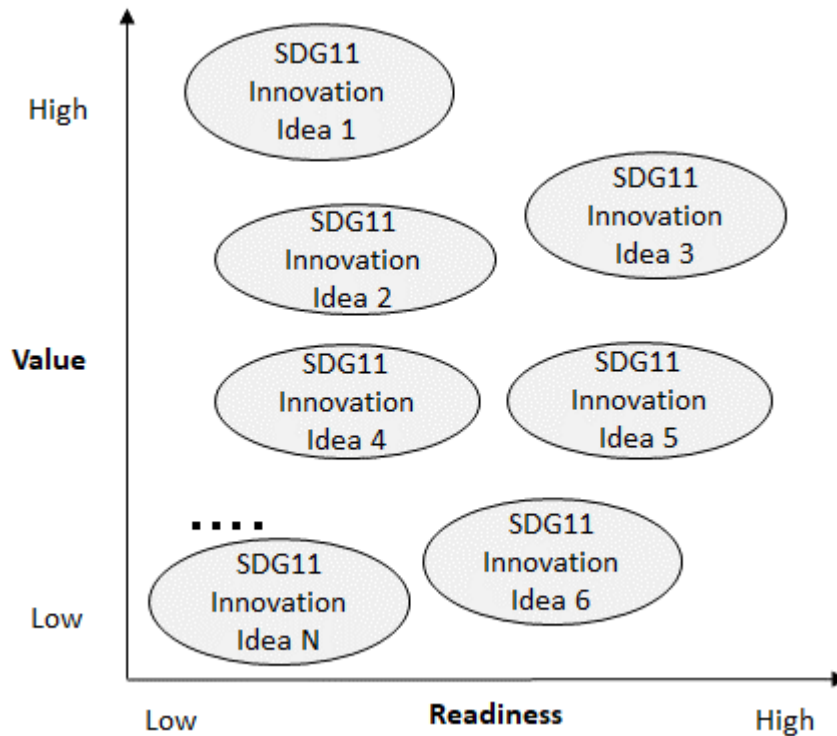


Figure 2 – Illustrative Prioritization of Innovation Ideas

This will assist the city to systematically identify the short-listed initiatives / action items for SDG11 implementation. Figure 2 shows how the innovation prioritization approach can be used to assist in the selection of a subset of innovation ideas by applying the well-defined criteria. The city administrators can apply heuristics such as selecting high value and highly ready innovation ideas for implementation. Similarly, low value and minimally ready innovation ideas may be either eliminated or given low priority during implementation.

Hence, at the end of Step 2, the city will have a concrete list of initiatives / action items for SDG11 implementation. The city then can formulate an implementation plan by deciding which initiatives / action items to kick-off when. Certain restrictions such as human and financial resources constraints may determine actual implementation timings. The initiatives / action

items can be phased out depending on restrictions and their mitigation timeframes. In some cases, cities may opt to diminish implementation risks prior to commencing the implementation of initiatives / action items.

Step 3. Implement

This step entails the actual implementation of SDG11 initiatives / action items by the city in line with the implementation plan crafted in the previous step. Cities assemble the required resources for implementation. Proper program and project management skills would certainly help during implementation.

It is important to note that enablers introduced in Step 1 can be utilized in this step to catalyse implementation. Some examples are given below to illustrate the concept:

- KPIs might help in overseeing and monitoring progress.
- Political leadership and appropriate governance would help in timely and robust execution.
- Policies might be used as a tool to induce certain behaviour and outcomes in the city.
- Extensive stakeholder engagement would ensure early buy-in and increase the chances of success through consensus.
- Innovation ecosystems consisting of public and private sectors as well as civil society (NGOs) would be beneficial for successful implementation.
- Skill and knowledge gaps can be identified early on and targeted training and R&D programs can be launched to mitigate them.
- Financing gaps can be closed by alternative financing mechanisms through appropriate planning.

Step 4. Assess

This step involves the assessment of the results of implementing SDG11 initiatives / action items. Cities are encouraged to retrospectively and objectively assess actual outcomes with

respect to intended ones. Existing urban observatories can assist and play an important role in conducting objective assessments in this step.

The city can assess if it has reached its intended city (local) level SDG11 targets or not. If the city had formulated SDG11 targets and KPIs with target values and timeframes for achievement, it would be important to evaluate whether the targets have been met and the extent to which the initiatives / action items have contributed towards achieving them.

Similarly, various enablers can be assessed for their effectiveness during the implementation step. Gaps in them can be identified to address and correct in due course. Lessons learnt can be identified to understand favourable and adverse consequences of the initiatives / strategic action items.

Positive aspects of successful initiatives may be potentially cross-utilized; for example, a successful policy in one initiative may trigger the use of a similar policy approach in another one. Such examples can be extended to other enablers as well. On the other hand, identification of ineffective enablers would result in their potential relinquishment.

SDG11 initiatives / action items are interventions in an urban context and inexorably lead to various transformations. Therefore, it is important to assess their impact retrospectively. An ex-post impact assessment would be highly beneficial to understand various social, economic and environmental changes that occurred in the city¹².

The comparison of ex-ante and ex-post impact assessments will highlight digressions in terms of intended and actual outcomes. Such divergences may help in due course plan more accurately or fine-tune initiatives / action items.

Important Note: Subsequent to the assessment conducted in Step 4, cities can revert back to Step 1 and re-initiate the high level implementation framework cycle again by defining their new

¹² SDG11 Global Council may recommend one of the existing approaches / standards in impact assessment.

baselines or current status. This is quite important since SDG11 is valid until 2030 and repetitive application of the SDG11 high level implementation framework will be essential.

4. Conclusion

SDG11-GC anticipates that the high level implementation framework will assist all aspiring nations and cities to provide guidance and to a certain extent support and accelerate their own SDG11 initiatives to achieve the 2030 targets. The high level implementation framework can be used as a simple methodology and will assist in structuring the overall approach towards SDG11 implementations. It encompasses fundamental aspects of SDG11 implementation; namely the measurement, initiatives to close the gaps, enablers to expedite the implementation (also overcome barriers) and the assessment to adjust and change course, if need be. The long term nature of SDGs (incorporating targets for 2030) naturally entails the recurrent application of the high level implementation framework in several cycles until 2030.

The framework is designed to be generic and flexible enough to integrate and accommodate specific contextual aspects of cities and communities. The implementation initiatives and enablers can be tailored to address cities' particular urban challenges and issues during the actual application of the framework.

SDG11-GC aims to contribute substantially for making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
