



Projecting progress: are cities on track to achieve the SDGs by 2030?

Executive summary

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Introduction

The 21st century is becoming the urban century. Urban populations are growing quickly in many developing countries, particularly in Asia and Africa (UNDESA, 2014), the least urbanised regions to date. Cities have been drivers of economic growth, innovation and opportunity for centuries, and, despite technological advances that could make physical proximity less relevant and the congestion and pollution that result from the concentration of people, people continue to choose to live and work together in large and medium-sized agglomerations (Glaeser, 2011).

Cities offer both great opportunities and deep challenges; thus how urbanisation processes are managed is critical. In this context, it is crucial and timely to consider how cities can implement an ambitious global agenda like the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including Goal 11 on cities: Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable (UN, 2015). Agreed in 2015, with implementation now under way, this ambitious agenda sets 17 goals and 169 targets in areas of critical importance: people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership. Furthermore, Habitat III - the major global summit on sustainable urban development that took place in Quito in

October 2016 – also discussed how to implement the SDGs in urban areas, providing an opportunity to align these two major global processes.

Without a well-managed urban transition in developing countries, it is difficult to see how the SDGs could be achieved. Further, city governments are responsible for implementing many of these goals. A recent study suggests that up to 65% of the SDG targets are at risk should local urban stakeholders not be assigned a clear implementing role (Cities Alliance, 2015). Although decentralisation levels vary by country, it is often within local governments' remit to deliver basic services - water, sanitation and land-use decisions leading to housing provision, amongst others - that are closely linked to many of the goals.

In short, to achieve the SDGs, local governments need to be involved (Lucci and Lynch, 2016). Yet, with few exceptions (UNSDSN, 2016; Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments et al., 2016), little work has explored to date the implementation of the SDGs at city level. Fundamentally, we know very little about a more basic question: *how likely is it that cities will achieve these goals by 2030 based on current trends?*

The research

To answer this question, this report draws on ODI's 'Projecting Progress: Reaching the SDGs by 2030' (Nicolai et al., 2015, 2016a, 2016b, 2016c). It explores how likely it is that 20 cities in the developing world will achieve a selection of SDG targets drawing on data from the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS).

By providing examples of how cities are likely to fare, projecting forward current trends, this report helps to identify priority actions. It points to areas where progress needs to be accelerated or, indeed, where existing trends must be reversed to achieve the goals. It is hoped that this report's findings and recommendations will act as a useful tool for local officials, campaigners and citizens to identify those areas where stronger efforts are required and to reiterate the urgent need to act. Similar exercises could also be conducted locally using cities' own data sources.

In addition to projections for a selected number of targets, the report conducted a data availability assessment for Goal 11, the SDG most obviously linked to cities. It explores the extent to which cities have the data needed to monitor progress on this goal. It focused on all the targets of Goal 11, for which conceptually clear indicators with established methodologies have been agreed at the global level for 3 of our cities: Bogota, Mumbai, and Nairobi - one per region. To demonstrate the SDGs' universality, we added London as an example from a developed country.

This report focuses on Goal 11 to narrow the scope of the exercise, but many more targets are relevant at the city level. We liaised with city authorities and national statistical offices (NSOs) to get their assessment of the available data, and complemented this with online searches of local governments' statistics' portals, city development plans and NSOs' websites.

Key findings

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The results of the projections exercise for 20 cities for 8 targets using 10 indicators is summarised in the Table below. The targets fall into three groups, depending on what will be needed to achieve them:

Targets that require ‘reform’

Current trends take these targets more than halfway to achievement by 2030. Over half the cities in our sample are on track to meet or make it more than halfway to achieving five out of the eight targets measured with 10 indicators. These include: Target 3.2: End preventable deaths of children under five years of age; Target 4.1: Universal access to secondary education; Target 7.1: Universal access to energy; Target 8.5: Full and productive employment (male employment only); and Target 11.1: Access to adequate housing for all (quality of flooring). Access to secondary education and to energy are the only two indicators that are comparable with the global scorecard (Nicolai et al., 2015). The findings for these tally with that report.

Targets that require ‘revolution’

These are targets where progress needs to be speeded up by multiples of current rates to meet the goals. A majority of the cities with available data will require a ‘revolution’ for the following five targets and indicators: Target 2.2: End child malnutrition; Target 6.1: Universal access to drinking water (piped water in premises); Target 6.2: Universal access to adequate sanitation (access to flush toilets); Target 8.5: Full and productive employment (female employment); and Target 11.1: Access to adequate housing for all (overcrowding).

Targets that are heading the wrong direction and require a ‘reversal’ of current trends

Only a minority of cities fall under this category; all are medium-sized African cities. Four of them - Ouagadougou, Conakry, Bamako, and Brazzaville - require reversals on target 11.1: Access to adequate housing for all, based on trends in quality of flooring. In addition, Nairobi and Maputo require a reversal of trends for the housing target, but this is based on the overcrowding indicator. Harare and Abidjan require reversals for Target 2.2: End child malnutrition, while

Nairobi falls under this category for Target 6.1: Universal access to drinking water (piped water in premises).

Leaving no one behind in cities

It is not just trends at city level that matter - what happens within cities is equally important. The SDGs, through a commitment to ‘leaving no one behind’, have made it clear that they need to reach the poorest and most marginalised to be considered successful. In part, this emphasis seeks to address some of the Millennium Development Goals’ (MDGs’) shortcomings (Lucci and Lynch, 2016).

A critical requirement to ensuring no one is left behind is to address intra-urban inequalities. For instance, populations living in informal or slum settlements often find it difficult to access basic services. Consider Nairobi, where about 38% of the population is estimated to live in slum settlements (UN-Habitat, n.d.). In the case of access to electricity, if present trends continue, Nairobi is projected to be on track to achieve universal access by 2030. However, this projection of average progress rates masks differences within the city. In the case of slum settlements in Nairobi, if present trends continue, only 22% of this subpopulation will have access to electricity. This highlights the need to look at trends within the city itself and, importantly, improve the data to be able to do so.

The ‘cities’ goal, SDG 11: Are the data needed available?

The data availability assessment for six targets within Goal 11 for four cities illustrates the huge data challenge ahead. All three of the selected developing countries’ cities have data readily available for only two of the selected six, while London has data for three.

The indicators for which data is readily available include two targets, Target 11.1: access to adequate housing for all (the proportion of the urban population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing), and Target 11.6: cities’ environmental impact (air quality indicator only). Even for these indicators, where the data already exists, there are several issues - comparability: indicators used by cities and those agreed at global level often vary; accessibility: indicators are not always easy to find through user friendly websites; and quality: the extent to which data collection instruments cover marginalised communities varies as do levels of disaggregation.

Another point the data assessment highlights is that monitoring the SDGs at a local level will require

improvements in the capacity to produce, coordinate and analyse data. Furthermore, non-traditional or unofficial sources of data (e.g. produced by communities or perceptions/polling data) can also be very useful to fill data gaps. A key challenge ahead is how to incorporate these rich sources of data into the SDGs' performance

monitoring, reviewing and reporting framework. Finally, while monitoring the SDGs may appear a challenging exercise which requires a range of new indicators and data collection, a number of targets are already monitored or meant to be monitored for cities' development plans.

Recommendations

Two conclusions can be drawn from the analysis: 1) city-level data needs to be improved and 2) local government monitoring systems and capacities to measure progress on and implement the SDGs, will need to be strengthened. To do so, this report has three key recommendations:

1. Statistical offices' and cities' information systems should improve the data available, through both quick wins and long-term investments.

Some data improvements can be easily achieved through minor additions or amendments to existing household surveys. For example, ensuring consistency on how the questions are framed over time would make it easier to access trend data (in many cases we were not able to compare progress over time due to inconsistencies in the data). Furthermore, questions can be added to existing surveys to get a more nuanced picture of the quality, accessibility and affordability of basic services in dense urban settlements.

It is also important that large household surveys are representative at city level, so this analysis can be replicated for other cities. Small sample sizes within the available data also mean margins of error are high. Disaggregation beyond city level was often not possible for the cities for which we had data; this is particularly problematic when addressing intra-city inequalities. In order to tackle the deprivations of marginalised groups such as slum-dwellers, we need to better understand their specific deprivations. Surveys need to have a large enough sample size to represent various subpopulations of interest. They could, for instance, oversample these groups; otherwise, slum-specific censuses could be conducted. Further data on slums – citizen-generated or perceptions-based data – can

fill critical gaps about the quality of services and can be easily disaggregated.

2. Governments and city administrations should invest more in the statistical capacity at city level.

Our assessment of data availability for SDG 11 also highlights the need to improve monitoring systems and statistical capacities to measure progress on the SDG in the country and the city. This will also require strengthening national and subnational coordination and arrangements for data-sharing between government agencies as well as making it more open to the public. For instance, improving data accessibility through open data portals could help to strengthen governments' accountability and, equally, citizens' capacity to hold governments to account.

3. Donors and central governments should work to strengthen local governments' capacities.

Local governments have a major role to play in the SDG agenda. They are often responsible for delivering many basic services required to meet the SDGs. If we are serious about realising this agenda, they need to be a central part of it. In many rapidly urbanising developing countries, local governments' limited capacities and lack of resources are huge challenges. We will only have a chance of realising this agenda by strengthening local governments' capacities and increasing the resources available to them. This includes central governments, who often need to devolve the powers and finance required for local governments to deliver on the SDGs; and donors, who need to get better at supporting rapidly growing cities in developing countries.

How cities fare on the SDGs

				SDG 2	SDG 3	SDG 4	SDG 6	SDG 6
	Size	Country	Income level	End stunting	Reduce child mortality	Increase net secondary school attendance	Increase access to piped water in premises	Increase access to flush toilets
Mumbai	Mega	India	LMIC				A	E
Manila	Mega	Philippines	LMIC		A		E	E
Jakarta	Mega	Indonesia	LMIC		A		E	
Phnom Penh	Medium	Cambodia	LMIC	D	A	C		A
Kinshasa	Mega	DRC	LIC	C	B	B	E	C
Dar es Salaam	Large	Tanzania	LIC	E		A	E	A
Abidjan	Medium	Côte d'Ivoire	LMIC	F	D		A	E
Nairobi	Medium	Kenya	LMIC	E	B	B	F	E
Addis Ababa	Medium	Ethiopia	LIC	D	A		C	D
Ouagadougou	Medium	Burkina Faso	LIC	E	B	E	A	E
Bamako	Medium	Mali	LIC	E	A	B	E	E
Accra	Medium	Ghana	LMIC	C	A	E	E	E
Lusaka	Medium	Zambia	LMIC	E	B	A	E	E
Conakry	Medium	Guinea	LIC	B	B	C	A	A
Brazzaville	Medium	Rep. of Congo	LMIC	C	B		E	E
Harare	Medium	Zimbabwe	LIC	F	E	E	E	A
Kigali	Medium	Rwanda	LIC	D	A	A	A	E
Maputo	Medium	Mozambique	LIC	E	D	A	A	A
Lima	Large	Peru	UMIC	A	A		A	
Bogota	Large	Colombia	UMIC	E	A	E	A	

Green = reform, purple = revolution, red = reversal, grey = data not available to project progress.

How cities fare on the SDGs

				SDG 7	SDG 8	SDG 8	SDG 11	SDG 11
	Size	Country	Income level	Universal access to electricity	Increase employment rate (M)	Increase employment rate (F)	Improve quality of flooring	Reduce overcrowding
Mumbai	Mega	India	LMIC	A				
Manila	Mega	Philippines	LMIC	A		E	A	
Jakarta	Mega	Indonesia	LMIC	A	A	B	A	
Phnom Penh	Medium	Cambodia	LMIC	A	A	A	A	B
Kinshasa	Mega	DRC	LIC	A	A	B	E	E
Dar es Salaam	Large	Tanzania	LIC	E	A	A	A	E
Abidjan	Medium	Côte d'Ivoire	LMIC	A	D	E	A	E
Nairobi	Medium	Kenya	LMIC	A	A	C	A	F
Addis Ababa	Medium	Ethiopia	LIC	A	A	D	A	C
Ouagadougou	Medium	Burkina Faso	LIC	E	A	D	F	
Bamako	Medium	Mali	LIC	A	A	E	F	C
Accra	Medium	Ghana	LMIC	A	A	C	A	
Lusaka	Medium	Zambia	LMIC	B	E	E	A	
Conakry	Medium	Guinea	LIC	A	E	E	F	
Brazzaville	Medium	Rep. of Congo	LMIC	A	A	A	F	E
Harare	Medium	Zimbabwe	LIC	E		E	A	
Kigali	Medium	Rwanda	LIC	A	B	A	E	
Maputo	Medium	Mozambique	LIC	A	A	E	A	F
Lima	Large	Peru	UMIC	A		C	A	C
Bogota	Large	Colombia	UMIC	A		C	A	B

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