



# LOCAL INDICATORS FOR THE 2030 AGENDA (SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS)





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**Accompanying Excel document**

This manual regularly refers to an accompanying Excel document in which the SDGs indicators are described in more detail.

In other words, the manual and the Excel document must be read in conjunction.

**Does your administration use indicators that are currently not included in the SDG indicators set, but that could be part of the SDGs framework? Be sure to let us know at [internationaal@vvsq.be](mailto:internationaal@vvsq.be)!**

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# 1 ACHIEVING GLOBAL GOALS AT A LOCAL LEVEL

This first chapter will discuss the sustainable development goals (SDGs) and how you, as a local administration, can contribute to them.

## 1.1 What are the sustainable development goals (SDGs)?

In September 2015, all 193 member states of the United Nations, including Belgium, approved the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This agenda contains 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs). The goal is to achieve sustainable development worldwide by 2030, with fair attention being paid to:

- ▶ People
- ▶ Planet
- ▶ Prosperity
- ▶ Peace
- ▶ Partnership

Seventeen goals have been formulated within these five pillars (see the following image, as well as Annex 1). This has been set out in 169 sub-goals and 232 indicators that measure the SDG-progress on a local level. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development addresses all global actors – governments, companies, educational institutions, associations and individual citizens – to jointly achieve these goals.



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## 1.2 SDGs and local governments

The Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities (VVSG) works with local authorities to translate the sustainable development objectives at the local level. To this end, VVSG offers promotional materials and tools and disseminates practical examples at a municipal level. In 2017, VVSG started with a **pilot project** in which it worked with a test group of 20 local administrations to determine how the SDG agenda can be integrated into the **municipal policy** and the local multi-annual plans. All tools and recommendations arising from this project will be made available on the [VVSG website](#).



In January 2018, an inspiration memo was completed on the integration of the SDGs into the local [context analysis](#) (and the administrative policy memoranda), illustrated with actual examples from the pilot municipalities. The context analysis is an outline of the municipal context concerning various themes, such as demography, mobility, work and co-existence. The context analysis is mainly based on figures and is part of the policy planning process of the Flemish municipalities in relation to local elections. Any policy proposals made by the administration are usually included in the administrative memorandum.

The next step is the new multi-annual plan. SDGs can also play an important role in this, for example, by means of indicators. The Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities has developed a set of local SDG indicators, which are accompanied by this manual. We describe how we can use indicators to monitor how municipal actions and objectives contribute to achieving the SDGs.

### **Choosing for the SDGs is not uncomplicated**

Local governments that really want to work on the SDGs choose for an interesting but also tough challenge, both substantively and in organisational terms. The SDGs are not something you can address on a whim.

Monitoring the efforts and the achieved results using indicators is part of this structural approach.

Choosing for SDGs means:

- ▶ a long-term commitment;
- ▶ a story in which you, as the administration, work together with citizens, organisations and other stakeholders;
- ▶ a comprehensive policy on sustainable development, for example, choosing to focus on renewable energy but investing in a bank which invests strongly in fossil fuels, is a troublesome story;
- ▶ ensuring a comprehensive approach in which themes and actions are studied in their context and municipal departments work together.

### 1.3 Key messages: monitoring as part but also a catalyst for a broad SDG policy

This manual focuses on monitoring the SDGs using indicators.

Monitoring is an important aspect, but it should be part of a broader SDG policy at a local level. Not all information can be quantified. Achieving the SDGs is primarily about taking specific initiatives and making employees and citizens aware of this global ambition.

Indicators are only one way of monitoring the contribution to the SDGs. Other interesting methods may be the use of the [VVSG circle exercise](#), as part of which you identify or 'map' the contribution to the SDGs in a qualitative manner. You can also include the SDGs in the vision of your municipality. Also be sure to consider sustainable development when drawing up your multi-annual plan. It's therefore interesting to create an [SDG impact analysis so you can determine the priorities of your administration](#) (only available in Dutch). Use the SDGs check for your goal tree and action plans. A qualitative, comprehensive policy for sustainable development with an intersectoral approach is key in this respect.

#### Key messages

To achieve the best possible effect with the monitoring, we recommend deploying it broadly, which means:

- ▶ Use the SDGs as a lever for a more transversal approach within the administration;
- ▶ When choosing indicators, remember that each goal can be translated internally (the own organisation), externally (the citizens), and globally (European and international partnerships);
- ▶ If possible, unravel the collected data at a sufficiently detailed level (broken down by target groups, neighbourhoods, etc.) to develop a policy that is as focused as possible;
- ▶ Do not only decide what you want to achieve, but always pay attention to the way to do this. Improving the quality level of homes is one thing, but we also want to use sustainable materials for this. Focusing on economic growth is important, but also take social and ecological aspects into account. In other words, choose for sustainable approaches as much as possible when achieving the goals.

## 2 INDICATORS WHAT ARE WE TALKING ABOUT?

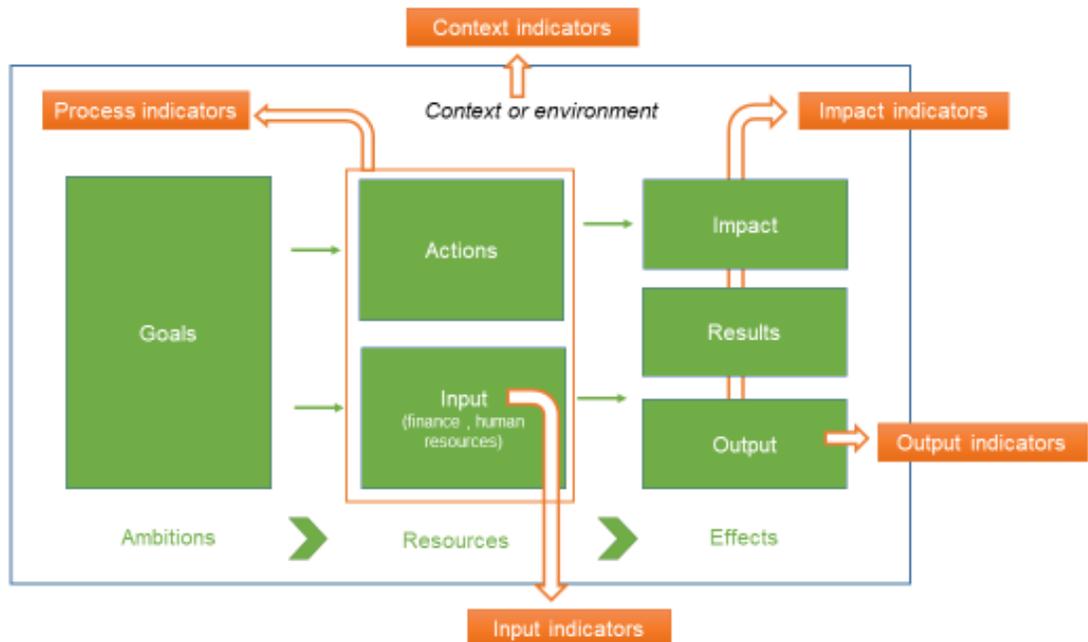
You can use indicators to monitor the SDGs within your administration. This chapter explains what we mean by this and which indicators are most suitable.

### 2.1 What are indicators?

Each administration has ambitions. These ambitions are translated into goals. Goals are converted into actions by deploying people and resources. Finally, the administration wants to know whether these actions were successful and if the goals have been achieved.

The following image shows the 'intervention logic' outlined above. The different sections are followed by different types of indicators, which we will explain in the next paragraph.

Image 1: the relationship between goals, resources and results



#### 2.1.1 Types of indicators

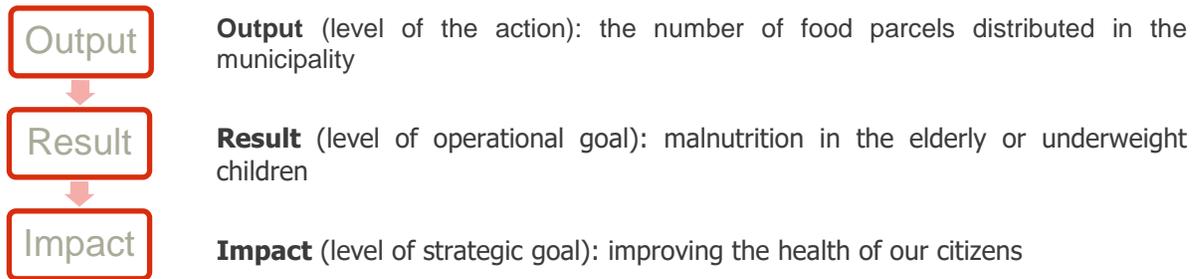
The intended results of the policy are measured using **indicators**. For example: if the administration wants people to become more active, it can monitor this by tracking the number of members of sports clubs, or

by monitoring the figures on sports participation in the municipal monitor (percentage of citizens practising a sport at least weekly).

We distinguish four types of indicators, based on their nature:

- ▶ **Context indicators:** these indicators describe the context in which a local administration works. These are situations and developments over which the local administration can only exert a small amount of control. Examples are poverty figures, employment rates in the municipality, the composition of the population, etc. Nevertheless, it is important to monitor these indicators, as they are ultimately the domains we want to change.
- ▶ **Input indicators:** these indicators provide information about the people and resources that are used to achieve a certain goal or action. Classic input indicators are the financial resources used for a certain action or goal, or the number of employees.
- ▶ **Process indicators:** these indicators provide information about the organisation or the approach of an action or measure. Examples are waiting times at the reception, the turnaround time of an environmental permit, or the involvement of citizens in an action.
- ▶ **Impact indicators:** these indicators measure the impact (of a strategic goal), the result (of an operational goal), or the output of an action. In other words, we measure the impact at different levels in line with the hierarchy of the multi-annual plan: actions and action plans, operational and strategic goals.

To provide an example: we will apply the classification below to the second development goal: “End hunger, achieve food security, improve food, and promote sustainable agriculture”.



A lot of indicators we propose in this manual to monitor the SDGs are the context indicators or impact indicators. The SDGs are mainly aimed at less poverty, better health, better climate... The efforts of the municipality will only partially affect these contextual factors, but it is still important to monitor these global developments.

Output indicators are also used, such as the number of distributed food parcels, water and energy consumption, or the commitment to the Covenant of Mayors (climate). These are indicators that are more directly addressable by the municipality.



### 2.1.2 Quantitative and qualitative indicators

Remember that indicators are not necessarily figures. Indicators can be quantitative (figures) or qualitative. We propose using a combination of both to monitor the SDGs.

Qualitative indicators could be the level of innovation within the local government, the level of cooperation with citizens and organisations within the municipality, the efforts put into raising awareness of fair trade, etc. These can be 'measured' during a work session with civil servants, with politicians, and/or with other stakeholders.

## 2.2 Local indicators for the SDGs

The United Nations formulated one or more indicators for each of the 169 sub-goals of the SDGs.<sup>1</sup> These global indicators are not linearly applicable or available at the level of each Flemish municipality. In other words, they need to be converted to allow a municipality to monitor the progress of the SDGs.

Applying the SDGs to the local administrative context in Flanders led to a set of 205 indicators. These indicators were selected based on the following criteria:

- ▶ **Relevance for local Flemish authorities:** not all sub-goals from the UN framework are relevant for Flemish municipalities. Some sub-goals have no proposed indicators, as they are mainly aimed at countries of the global South.<sup>2</sup>
- ▶ **Level of impact of the local authority:** some goals are a semi-exclusive power at the Flemish or Federal level. The municipality has almost no control over them. We have selected a number of indicators in domains that can be influenced by local policy.
- ▶ **Availability of data:** we have selected indicators for which data are generally easily available. This reduces the additional administrative burden and increases the chance that administrations will actually work on monitoring their SDG contribution.

Information can be supplemented by the local authorities if no accredited central data are available for specific SDG (sub-) goals. The proposed indicators (the Excel file) already contain a number of these indicators, such as the production of residual waste, PMC (low-density polyethylene plastic, metal and cartons), paper and cardboard, organic waste, expressed in kilograms by the municipality.

The proposed list contains a number of indicators for which data are only available at the level of the central cities. This will always be indicated in the Excel table.

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<sup>1</sup> [List with indicators](#) drawn up by the United Nations.

<sup>2</sup> These sub-goals are relevant for municipalities with an international partnership.

- ▶ **Link with indicators at the Flemish, Belgian or global level:** the SDGs are goals that demand global attention. We prefer indicators that also give an idea of the situation at a local, Flemish, national or global level. This links allows for better reports for the Flemish and Federal level and for the UN.

Please note:

- ▶ We have selected several indicators for some sub-goals. The administration can use them all, or make a selection;
- ▶ Twenty-eight indicators are used for different sub-goals, the so-called cross-thematic indicators.
- ▶ Administrations using indicators have a permanent monitoring system. This makes it easy to carry out an environmental analysis which is available at all times.

### 2.2.1 Chart

A basic set of 205 indicators is a lot. It allows your municipality to select the indicators that best match the goals, action plans and actions that the administration wants to monitor.

We have developed a chart with 54 basic indicators to help administrations. They together cover the 17 SDGs. In this chart one to 5 indicators are used for each sustainable development goal. We have chosen for representative indicators that together give a clear idea of the SDGs as a whole, which data are usually centrally available, and which have a clear link with the global indicators. However, the selection is still subjective in a sense.

The chart is a handy ready-to-go set of indicators, but we recommend customising the set to adapt it more specifically on the priorities of the administration. The image below shows how the 54 indicators in the chart relate to the basic set of 205 indicators.

Image 2: composition of the indicator set (basic set and chart)





## 2.2.2 Refine and customise based on the needs of the local government

The local government now has to supplement and customise the suggested indicators. The own indicators can relate to different types of actions. They can relate to internal actions within the local government e.g. sustainable procurement policy, external actions towards citizens e.g. healthy municipality campaign or global actions e.g. fair trade municipality. These three categories (internal, external and global) are also used in the list of indicators.

It is up to the administration to supplement and customise the suggested indicators. The own indicators can relate to internal actions within the administration (e.g. sustainable procurement policy), external actions towards citizens (e.g. healthy municipality campaign), and global actions (e.g. fair trade municipality). We also use the same three categories in the Excel table to indicate the focus of the indicator: internal, external or global.<sup>3</sup>

Keep in mind that different indicators that have been designated as internal or external also have a global impact. There are different municipalities that work on specific themes in an international partnership, such as waste processing or poverty reduction. The SDG sub-goals also have a global component for these municipalities.

The indicator set is a living document. Availability of data was an important selection criterion when preparing the current set. However, you, as an administration, can decide to use more ambitious indicators that guarantee greater monitoring of the SDG sub-goal, but for which the collection of local data requires more effort. For example, this applies to themes such as health, sustainable agriculture, circular economy, and life on land and in water.

E.g. sub-goal 2.2. (ending all forms of malnutrition by 2030): the indicator for malnutrition among the elderly could change into 'share of the population group 65+ with a BMI lower than 18.5'.

E.g. sub-goal 8.5 (achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men by 2030, as well as for young people and people with disabilities, as well as equal pay for work of equal value): the indicator 'employment through Public Centre for Social Welfare guidance' does as a rule not say anything about the opportunities that participants already make use of on the regular labour market. You can measure the qualitative level if you can also identify the personal growth.

## 2.2.3 Timing

The SDGs must be monitored with a certain frequency. Measuring the process at set intervals results in accrued insight and ensures that the monitoring framework encourages people to take initiatives.

Be sure to also consider the frequency with which you monitor the indicators. We recommend doing this annually, especially for the priorities of your administration, but this will not be possible for all indicators.

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<sup>3</sup> The Excel list with local SDG indicators does not include the type of indicator. An indicator which is an environmental indicator for one administration, may be an impact indicator for another.

For example, there will only be new data on environmental factors from the survey as part of the municipal monitor every three years.



### 3 GETTING STARTED

Have you, as an administration, decided to monitor your contribution to the SDGs using indicators? This chapter explains the specific steps you can take to get started. There are 6 steps.

<b>Step 1</b>	Create a link between the multi-annual plan and the SDGs
<b>Step 2</b>	Think about the structure of your process
<b>Step 3</b>	Determine the indicators
<b>Step 4</b>	Collect data (locally or centrally)
<b>Step 5</b>	Report
<b>Step 6</b>	Assess the completed process

#### 3.1 Step 1: Create a link between the multi-annual plan and the SDGs

Each administration that starts working with the SDGs needs to deal with two goal frameworks:

- ▶ The PMC (Policy and Management Cycle) goal framework of the municipality, in which the goals in the multi-annual plan are translated into action plans and actions;
- ▶ The SDGs: Seventeen goals, broken down into 169 sub-goals.

It is desirable to link each framework to each other as much as possible so that there is only one objective framework and one monitoring framework. A first step in this respect may be [carrying out an SDG impact analysis to help determine the priorities of your administration](#) (only available in Dutch). You can then use the 2030 Agenda as a reflection framework for developing and assessing your multi-annual plan, for example using the [VVSG circle exercise](#).

Two separate frameworks (MAP and SDGs) are also possible, especially if you only start working with the SDGs after the multi-annual plan has been drawn up.

If you create a link between the MAP and the SDGs, keep in mind that one municipal goal can usually be linked to several SDGs, and vice versa, as one SDG can be linked to several goals or actions from the MAP. We will illustrate this with two examples:

- ▶ A strategic goal in the MAP related to reinforcing the economic fabric can focus on sustainable business parks (SDG 9), social economy and entrepreneurship among young people (SDG 8), encouraging short-chain production (SDG 2 and 12), supporting second-hand stores (SDG 12), etc.

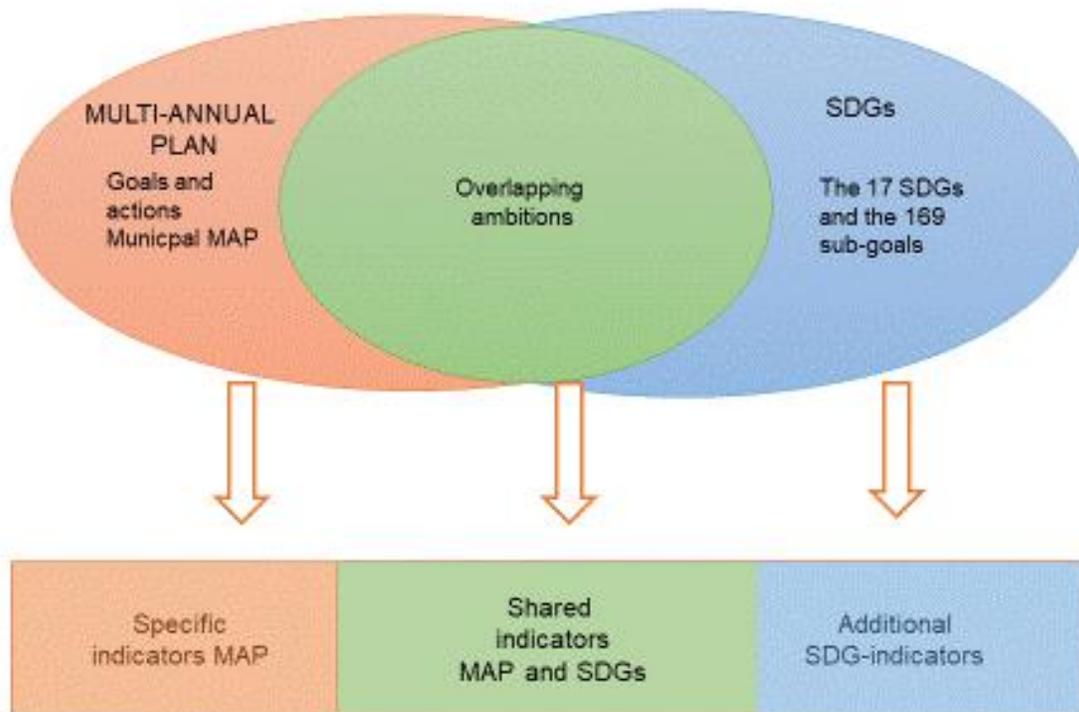
- ▶ SDG 13 'Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact' can be linked to several goals, such as reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the municipal territory, and actions in the multi-annual plan, such as LED street lighting, collective actions for insulating walls or roofs, energy scan of municipal buildings, local sustainable food strategy, bicycle actions with schools, etc.

### 3.1.1 Select the goals you want to monitor

We will certainly experience the situation shown in the image below when monitoring. Part of the SDGs will overlap with the goals in the MAP (the green oval). There will also be SDGs that are not present in the MAP (blue) and goals in the MAP that cannot be immediately linked to an SDG (red).

We will choose which goals in particular we want to monitor in step 1, both from the MAP and the SDGs. An [SDG impact analysis](#) (only available in Dutch) can help with this. We will then create a comprehensive indicator set for the selected goals.

Image 3: choosing the SDG (sub-) goals we want to monitor using indicators



### 3.2 Step 2: Think about the structure of your process

Think about how you will address matters before you start monitoring the SDGs. Ensure that your approach is 'SDG-proof': make sure that there is strong (long-term) support, invite all departments (comprehensively),



and pay attention to all parts of the organisation.

Decisions that need to be taken:

▶ **How do you proceed?**

We propose a method consisting of 6 steps in this manual, but you should check whether this approach will work within your organisation and make changes where necessary.

▶ **What is the estimated schedule of the different steps?**

Make sure to also include a schedule in the roadmap. We ideally use a participatory process which easily spans a few months. This assures there is strong support.

▶ **What frequency are you planning?**

Determine what your administration and the internal organisation will focus on. You will more frequently monitor these indicators. The long-term environmental indicators can be monitored every three years (e.g. using the city or municipal monitor).

▶ **Which internal stakeholders do you involve in the process?**

We referred to the term participation above. This process cannot take place without a mandate of the College of Mayor and councillors, without consulting the management team, or without input from colleagues. Determine in advance what you want to discuss with them and what you expect from them.

The table below gives an overview of the topics you must discuss with the policy-makers, management team, or colleagues.

Also refer to Annex 2 for an overview of potential internal partners per SDG.

Table 1: the monitoring of the SDGs is relevant to policy-makers, the management team, and employees

Policy	Management	Employees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Demarcation: which SDGs do we want to monitor in particular, or do we choose to monitor all SDGs?</li> <li>▶ Discuss the relationship between the monitoring of the goals from the multi-annual plan and the SDGs. Strive to set up a single system.</li> <li>▶ Capture the reporting frequency: how often will the monitoring of the SDGs be discussed by the Council of Mayor and Aldermen?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Determine which indicators you will use for the monitoring together with the management team. Determine what additional indicators are needed.</li> <li>▶ Regularly assess the indicator set.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Make sure that employees are aware of the purpose of the indicators. Make them aware of the sustainable development goals.</li> <li>▶ Involve employees in the data collection.</li> <li>▶ Report on the results.</li> <li>▶ Celebrate successes.</li> </ul>

▶ **Which external stakeholders do you involve?**

You can involve both internal and external stakeholders in the process. This may range from structurally and very intensive (they also decide on the indicators, provide data, etc.) to more occasionally (annual meeting at which the municipal reports on the progress of the SDGs and at which associations and companies are invited to take additional initiatives).

Also refer to Annex 2 for an overview of potential external partners per SDG.

▶ **What are possible pitfalls and how can you avoid these?**

Increase your chances of success by considering in advance how you can make the SDG monitoring successful, or vice versa, consider what may go wrong and how to avoid this. Brainstorm with one or more colleagues. This may take an hour, but you will avoid issues at a later time.

### **3.3 Step 3: Choose the appropriate indicators**

Once you have determined which goals you want to monitor (step 1), you must decide how you will do this. We select our indicators in this phase.

You can use the Excel table for this. You can find indicators for all sub-goals in it, unless they are not relevant for Flemish local authorities. Annex a gives an overview of the different themes of each SDG.

How many indicators you ultimately include in your municipal monitoring system depends on the ambition of the administration:

- ▶ The Excel table offers a set of 205 basic indicators for monitoring the SDGs. Multiple indicators have been provided for each SDG sub-goal.
- ▶ The chart of 54 indicators is a slimmed-down set, with an average of 3-4 indicators for each of the 17 objectives. Boards can also use this set as a starting point.
- ▶ Regardless of the starting point (the basic table or the chart), we always recommend supplementing the indicator set with specific indicators for the administration: own internal ambitions, ambitions toward the citizens, or global ambitions. We have previously pointed out that we have included only a few output indicators because we did not want to make any preliminary assumptions about municipal autonomy. Output indicators are strongly linked to municipal policy choices (participating in the Covenant of Mayors, grants for developmental aid, etc.).

If you choose additional indicators yourself, make sure to monitor their quality. Assess your indicators based on the SMART quality criteria from the table below.

Table 2: Quality criteria for indicators

<b>SMART: quality criteria for indicators</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <b>Specific:</b> it must be clear what the indicator intends to measure to everyone who uses it.</li> <li>▶ <b>Measurable:</b> the indicator must be easy to quantify and be expressed in a clear unit of measurement.</li> <li>▶ <b>Acceptable:</b> indicators should raise as little resistance as possible among those involved.</li> <li>▶ <b>Relevant:</b> there must be a clear link between the selected indicators and the goals of the topic that must be monitored.</li> <li>▶ <b>Timeliness/Frequency:</b> indicators must be able to be collected frequently and timely and must show a development over time.</li> </ul>

Indicators can also be broken down further (e.g. by age, by target group, by gender, ...) to gain a more nuanced idea of developments that are important to the administration. The SDG agenda recommends doing this as much as possible. The more depth, the more targeted the policy can be.

### 3.3.1 Linking Policy-themes to the SDGs

If your long-term plan is based on a number of municipal policy themes (such as mobility, security and housing) rather than on the SDGs, it may be difficult to find appropriate SDG indicators in the Excel document. The table below helps you to find a connection between municipal policy themes and the local SDG indicators. For each theme, an indicative indication is given of the SDGs for which one or more SDG indicators can be found in the Excel document. The list of themes is not exhaustive. Use this table together with Appendix 1, which each SDG explains in more detail.

The table below only applies to the local SDG indicators set. In terms of content, the themes relate to more SDGs than indicated in the table, but no specific SDG indicators are available. For example, care institutions also consider ecological aspects, but there is no SDG indicator for them. Another example is the important link between mobility and poverty and mobility and work and the economy, but again no specific SDG indicators are available.

Theme	SDG 1	SDG 2	SDG 3	SDG 4	SDG 5	SDG 6	SDG 7	SDG 8	SDG 9	SDG 10	SDG 11	SDG 12	SDG 13	SDG 14	SDG 15	SDG 16	SDG 17
Poverty	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X						
Childcare	X			X						X	X						
Residential care (e.g. Home care, Residential care centre, Local service centre, Elderly care)	X	X	X		X					X	X						
Housing	X					X	X		X	X	X	X	X				
Local food strategy		X										X					
Health	X	X	X			X		X			X						
Integration and diversity				X	X			X		X	X					X	
Leisure (youth, sport and culture)			X							X	X						
Education	X			X				X									
Energy	X		X				X		X		X	X	X				
Water						X							X				
Environment and nature management		X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		
Waste policy								X			X	X		X			
Spatial planning						X			X		X		X		X		
Work and economy		X		X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X				
Mobility			X						X		X	X					
Safety			X		X						X					X	
Local global policy				X				X		X		X					X
GIS (geographical information systems)						X				X			X				
Procurement policy								X				X					
Civil affairs											X					X	
Public Governance					X					X						X	
Human resources policy			X	X	X			X		X	X					X	
Finances	Finance is an essential part of every SDG. A number of indicators refer specifically to budget, namely SDG 8, 10, 11 and 17.																
Participation	Participation is part of every SDG. A number of indicators refer specifically to participation, namely in SDG 3, 10, 11 and 16.																
Service	Core task of local government. SDG 16 has a number of specific indicators relating to services.																

### 3.3.2 Example of deprivation

Your administration values reducing the lack of opportunities. Corresponding action plans and actions are fully in line with the first SDG (reducing the number of poor people by at least half by 2030).

The Excel table shows 19 possible indicators related to poverty for the administration.

As an example, we will choose two indicators on the affordability of housing: the waiting list for social housing, and the housing ratio (the % of citizens where family expenditure on housing amounts to at least 30% of the family income). These are cross-indicators that are also linked to SDG 11 on sustainable cities and communities.

### 3.3.3 Example of the comprehensive and integral nature of the SDGs

The SDGs are interconnected. One policy goal or action plan may include indicators that are linked to different SDGs and different pillars of sustainable development. These indicators may also correspond to the goal, action plan, or action level. The next example has been taken from the multi-annual plan 2014-2019 of the Municipality of Berlaar.

POLICY GOAL: It is pleasant to work in Berlaar.

⇒ **Indicator** SDG 8.1: Gross value added per citizen

ACTION PLAN: Berlaar profiles itself as a good employer who creates a safe and healthy working environment for its employees. (SDG 3 and 8)



Action: Berlaar provides the necessary means for accurate operations related to prevention and protection.

- ⇒ **Indicator** SDG 3.4: mental health in local government, being absenteeism due to illness in municipalities and Public Centres for Social Welfare due to psycho-social reasons such as burn-out and depression
- ⇒ **Indicator** SDG 8.8: number of occupational accidents among municipal staff

Action plan: Berlaar promotes and develops the local economy. (SDG 2, 8 and 9)



- ⇒ **Indicator** SDG 8.3: Net growth of number of enterprises
- ⇒ **Indicator** SDG 2.5: Number of sales sites for regional and farm products
- ⇒ **Indicator** SDG 2.5: Number of short-chain farms

- ⇒ **Indicator** SDG 9.2: Occupancy rate of business parks
- ⇒ **Indicator** SDG 9.1: Accessibility of the city centre by bike and public transport

Action: Berlaar organises and supports actions with and for local traders.

Action: Berlaar supports local markets and street trading.

Action: Berlaar has an active retail policy.

- ⇒ **Indicator** SDG 8.2: retail vacancy rate, being the rate (%) of vacant retail space relative to the total availability

Action: Berlaar offers support and information to starting entrepreneurs.

- ⇒ **Indicator** SDG 8.10: entrepreneurship grants, being the rate (%) of start-ups that apply for entrepreneurship grants from the municipality relative to the total number of start-ups

### 3.4 Step 4: Data collection

Once the indicator framework is in place (phase 3), the architecture is ready. We still determine the specific values in step 4. We collect data that tell us something about where we are in relation to the different SDG (sub-) goals.

You can also use the Excel table for this. This indicated the source of the data for each indicator. Data collection may require more or less effort, depending on whether it concerns central or local data.

#### ▶ **Central data**

You do not need to collect these data yourself. The Excel table contains links to sources where you can easily find the data.

The majority of the indicators are based on central data. Currently, a small part of the central data is only available for the central cities.

#### ▶ **Local data**

These data are not registered centrally and can be found within your own organisation. If you need relevant data that you are not yet registering, it is important to set up a simple system for this. Colleagues can certainly help you with this. We recommend collecting the data as close to the source as possible.

Clearly indicate when you expect which data to make sure your colleagues can free up the time necessary for this.

#### 3.4.1 Analysing and interpreting the data

Once you have collected the data, you need to analyse them. You will analyse and interpret the data. It is useful to use a unit of measurement for this:

- ▶ **Development over time:** a comparison with historical data;



- ▶ **Benchmark:** a comparison with the Flemish average, or a comparison with another municipality. This can be done using the municipal monitor;
- ▶ **Target number:** a comparison with the ambition set by the administration.

### 3.4.2 Example data collection

We will give two examples of data collection below and refer back to the two indicators on the affordability of housing for this, as used in the example of lack of opportunity in step 3.

The first indicator (**the waiting list for social housing**) is a local indicator for which the data can be collected by the administration itself. The administration can annually request the number of citizens on the waiting list from the social housing associations operating in its territory. By doing this systematically, you can get an idea on how the situation changes over time and take initiatives if necessary.

The second indicator (**housing ratio**) is a central indicator from the municipal monitor which is collected using a survey by the Flemish government. The downside is that it is only conducted every three years. The source of the data has been indicated in the Excel table. The data first contain the general housing ratio for each municipality and are then broken down by owners and tenants. The example below shows that affordability is stronger among tenants. 46% of the tenants spend more than 30% of their income on housing, while this is only 12% for owners.

Housing ratio: share (%) of citizens whose total family expenditure on housing amounts to at least 30% of their family income (source: gemeentemonitor 2017)	Less than or equal to 30% (%)	More than 30% (%)
Housing ratio general	81	19
Housing ratio owner	88	12
Housing ratio renter	54	45

### 3.5 Step 5: Report

Once all data have been collected (Step 4), you have a complete picture of the contribution of the local government to the (selected) SDGs. Now it is time to share this with the municipal councillors and colleagues.

You can report on the SDGs in a variety of ways. Consider the following:

- ▶ whether you distinguish between target groups in the report. Will you draw up one report for everyone? Will you draw up a report for citizens, or only for employees and the council? In the last case, can you

emphasise different aspects depending on whether you will address the management team or employees?

- ▶ How will you report the data? If you or one of your colleagues is good with Excel, you can get a lot done using this. But there is also more specific software for creating dashboards. We will show number of examples from Flemish authorities to serve as inspiration below.

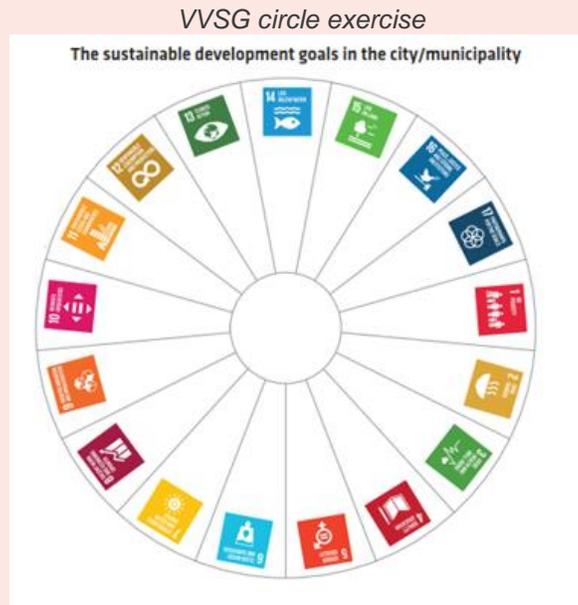
### Engaging citizens, associations and companies in the SDG story

The moment of reporting is an excellent opportunity to engage citizens, organisations and companies in the SDG story.

The progress on the SDG goals can be shown using Excel, PowerPoint or other visualizations during an annual stakeholder meeting. We then determine which things the municipality can do better, but also what contributions citizens, organisations and companies can make.

The [VVSG circle exercise](#) is an interesting tool for supporting a session like this. You can indicate which SDGs are already being addressed well in the municipality. You can also see shortfalls that require more brainstorming.

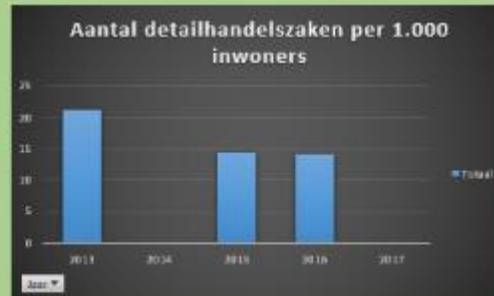
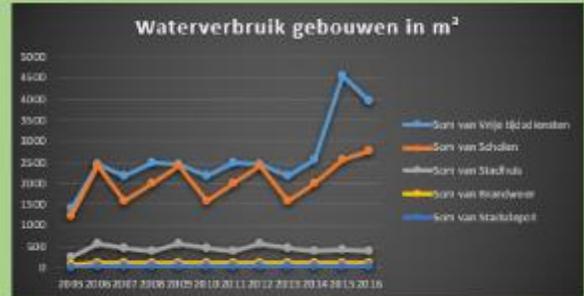
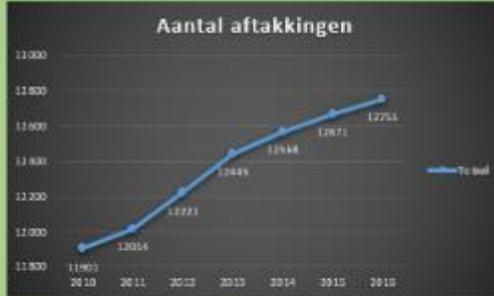
At the end of the year, we naturally celebrate the successes achieved over the past year.



### 3.5.1 Excel report in Harelbeke

The Municipal Administration of Harelbeke has created a tab with visualisation of the data for each pillar of sustainable development (people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership). A small section from their extensive overview is shown below.

Bij het domein PLANET komen volgende SOG's aan bod

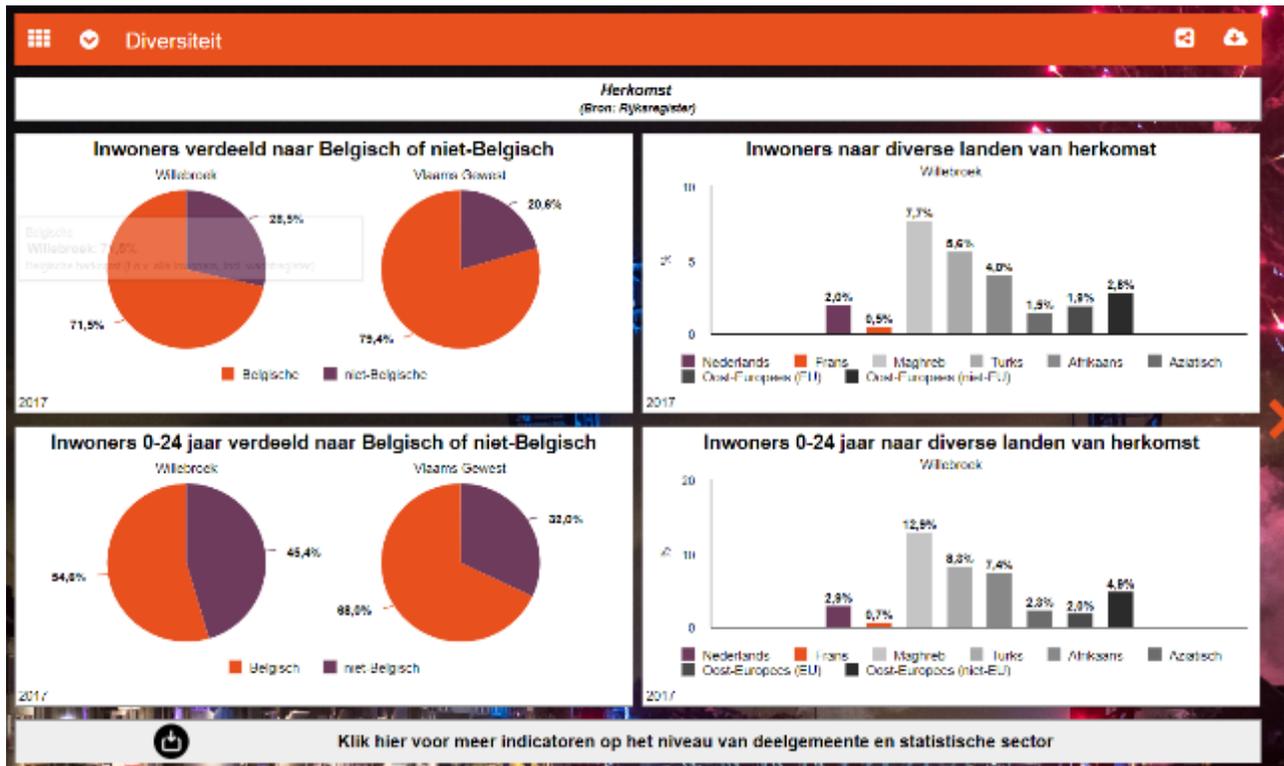


Source: Municipality of Harelbeke, <https://www.harelbeke.be/strategisch-meerjarenplan-2020-2025>

Note: this source is only available in Dutch.

### 3.5.2 Swing mosaic as starting point in Willebroek

Willebroek uses the (paying) application Swing Mosaic to present the results. This application makes it easy to create dashboards of your organisation. This information is made public and placed on a website in Willebroek. You can see an example of 'Willebroek in figures' below. This application can also be used to visually display your chosen SDG indicators.

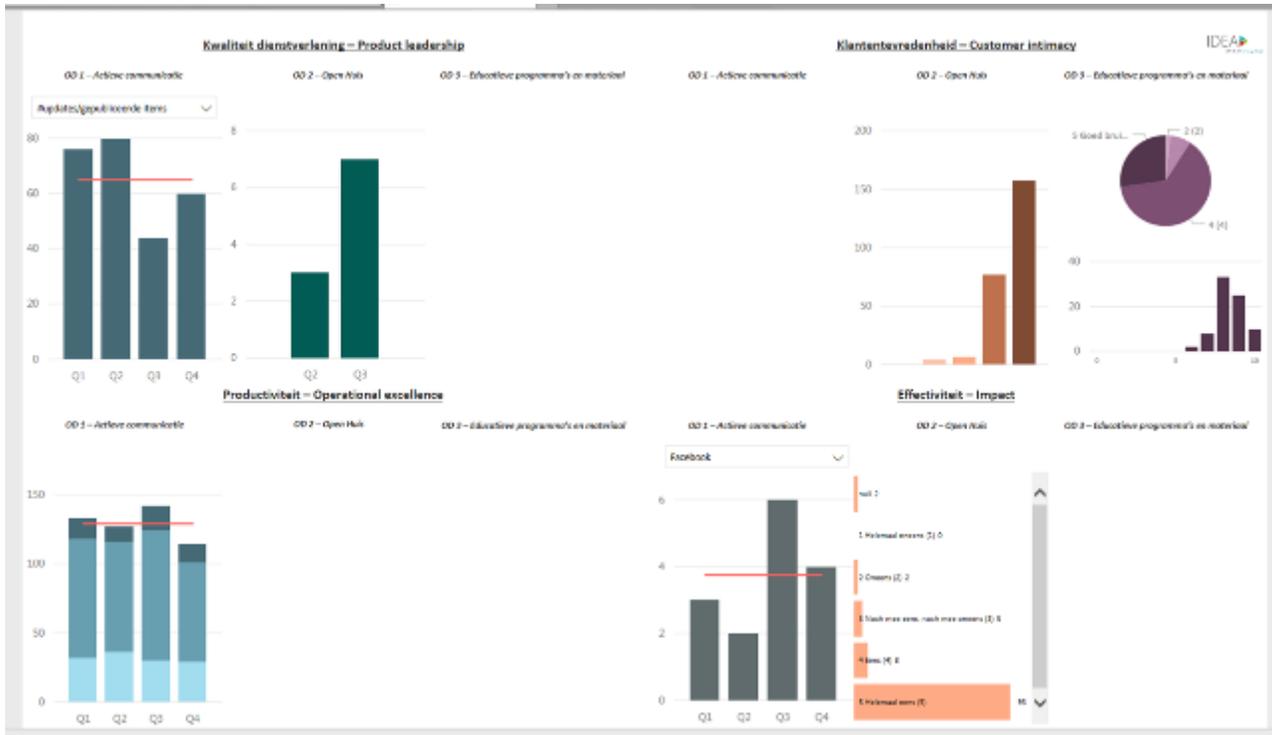


Source: <https://willebroek.incijfers.be/dashboard/Diversiteit/>

Note: This source is only available in Dutch.

### 3.5.3 Microsoft Power BI (free version)

For great visualisation, you can also use the free version of Microsoft Power BI to quickly and simply present the data of your organisation visually. A brief overview of the options can be found on the following Youtube link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yKTSLfvGbk>. This application can also be used to visually display your chosen SDG indicators.



Source: IDEA Consult

Note: this source is only available in Dutch

### 3.6 Step 6: Assess the completed process

The findings should be evaluated, especially after your first experience with indicators and the corresponding reporting. As the final step in the process, you assess how everything went and which changes must be made to the process in the next exercise together with a number of key figures on the administration.

- ▶ Has our need for information been met by the selected indicators? Do we know what we wanted to know?
- ▶ Which indicators does our selection provide? Which indicators will we add? Which indicators need to be refined?

- ▶ What data are difficult to collect? Are we using the most efficient method to collect our data? Which data are we missing?
- ▶ What changes must we make to our approach?
- ▶ Has the group of key figures been chosen correctly?

## 4 KEYS TO SUCCESS

Introducing SDG indicators to the administration is not self-evident, especially if there is hardly any monitoring tradition. This is why this last chapter provides hints on how to approach this successfully.

### 4.1 Committing employees to your story

Working with indicators is relatively new to local authorities. It frequently evokes resistance. This is why it is important to take the time to involve policy staff and colleagues in your story.

We will give a number of rules for achieving strong support for your process below.

- ▶ **Ensure there is clarity: determine the purpose and roles**

Take sufficient time to explain why this exercise is important. Remind yourself of the purpose of this project: contributing to global challenges as a local government.

The Policy and Management Cycle (PMC) decree encourages making policy targets measurable 'as far possible and useful'. By choosing SDG indicators, your administration commits itself to an international transition to sustainable development.

Clearly indicate who is responsible for what, both administratively and politically.

- ▶ **Keep it simple**

Use the presented structure of 5 pillars and 17 themes. Determine which actions and objectives you will assess using indicators. A clear and understandable report which shows the achievements is also highly motivating for your colleagues.

- ▶ **Identify the benefits**

The use of indicators helps, among other things, to track changes, to justify your policy, and to look ahead. By monitoring interim achievements, you and your colleagues learn things and can make flexible adjustments. By using indicators to check whether processes are taking place as planned, you also meet expectations in terms of organisational control.



▶ **Save time**

Make sure that the collected information is used in the best possible manner to ensure that the efforts made by your colleagues are not called into question and contribute to clear reporting. Adapt different systems to each other and make the most efficient use of existing data to ensure the efforts made by your colleagues do not become too time-consuming.

▶ **Support/coach employees**

Are you still facing resistance? First try to discover why there is resistance and whether it is of such nature that you need to take action. Do you need to take action? Talk with your colleague to find out what the underlying causes are. Explain why this project is important and ask how you can help find a solution.

An example: you notice that a colleague does not collect the requested information. When you continue to ask questions, the employee indicates that quantitative data is not enough to tell the story. Give him or her the opportunity to look for qualitative data that can be included.

## 4.2 Promote

▶ **Delegate responsibility and build trust**

Some employees are suspicious of your project and are afraid that they will be judged on the results. A solution may be to link your appreciation to the results they achieve.

▶ **Imagine yourself as the other person**

Tailor your speech to the target group. If you give examples, try to link these to the themes on which the person is working as much as possible.

▶ **Establish relationships**

Employees may feel that only they have to participate in this project. Establish sufficient relationships within the organisation and demonstrate that this is an organisation-wide project.

▶ **Look for key figures**

Create support by involving a small, committed group in this project. A group of ambassadors who promote the project can give it wings.

▶ **Remain authentic and genuine**

Exude enthusiasm, but also be patient with everyone. Do not only discuss good news, but also address things that are more difficult.

▶ **Celebrate successes**

Have you achieved results with an enthusiastic team? Award them and celebrate this success.

## 5 RECOMMENDED LITERATURE

Did you develop a taste for it all? The following links and publications are definitely worth studying.

### Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities and the SDGs

- ▶ [VVSG web page](#) on the SDGs
- ▶ [The brochure 'Local support for global challenges'](#): this brochure translates the 17 universal goals to the level of the local boards.
- ▶ [Brochure 'How to integrate sustainable development goals into the context analysis'](#)

### SDGs

- ▶ The [United Nations](#) and the SDGs
- ▶ [Europe](#) and the SDGs.
- ▶ [Website](#) of the Federal Institute for Sustainable Development about the SDGs (only available in Dutch and French)
- ▶ Implementation of the SDGs by the [Flemish Government](#) (only available in Dutch)

### Monitoring the SDGs using indicators

- ▶ [Indicator set](#) of the United Nations and the official [list](#) with UN indicators.
- ▶ SDG indicators of [EUROSTAT](#).

### Evaluation and monitoring in general

- ▶ [Online toolbox of the Flemish Government on evaluation and monitoring](#) (only available in Dutch)
- ▶ Monitoring manual by the Government Institute (2007) on [evaluation design and management](#) and [monitoring policy](#) (only available in Dutch)

## 6 ANNEXES

### 6.1 Annex 1. Substantive overview of 17 sustainable development goals



Eradicate poverty everywhere and in all its manifestations: Currently, many people in developing countries have to make do with less than 1.25 USD a day. Poverty remains a pressing problem in Belgium as well. We must halve poverty at a national level by 2030. Ultimately, the goal is to end poverty, in all its forms, everywhere.



End hunger, ensure food safety/assurance, and promote sustainable agriculture: Everyone has access to affordable food. New agricultural techniques will grow healthy and high-quality food in a sustainable way. This gives every human assured access to food.



Good health and well-being for all ages: Child and maternal mortality must be reduced. The same applies to drinking and drug use. Information on infectious diseases is necessary to prevent them from spreading. The UN wants to draw more attention to mental disorders and advocates fewer traffic deaths.



Inclusive, equal, high-quality education and opportunities for lifelong learning for everyone: Boys and girls can freely attend primary and secondary school. They will also have the opportunity to continue their studies. Technical, occupational or university education must be freely accessible, regardless of gender or origin. The learning environment must be safe and inclusive. This goal also concerns high-quality pre-school care and raising students as citizens of the world.



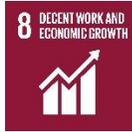
Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls: We must end gender inequality: the glass ceiling, the pay gap, and gender violence. Like men, women are entitled to good health and knowledge about sexuality. There is a need for policy and legislation focused on gender equality.



Access to water and sanitary facilities for everyone, and sustainable water use: Everyone has the right to safe drinking water and sanitary facilities. Water scarcity must be addressed. Efforts must also be made for sustainable water management and an improved water quality. This may be done by reducing pollution, discontinuing the dumping of chemicals, and proper treatment of waste water.



Affordable and sustainable energy: Everyone must have access to affordable, reliable and sustainable energy. We must combat energy-poverty and produce and use our energy more efficiently. Renewable energy sources are also becoming increasingly important.



Long-term, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full employment and decent work for all: The UN wants to eradicate slavery, forced labour and child labour. Youth unemployment must be addressed. Entrepreneurship must be supported and we must strive for economic growth without harming the environment.



Resilient/solid infrastructure, inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and innovation: A strong economy and social welfare rely on a solid, sustainable infrastructure. Innovative industry and internet are also essential to all human beings.



Reduction of inequality within and between countries: This includes inequality based on income, age, sex and disability. Discriminatory laws and policies are unacceptable. Social protection is important. Developing countries must also be given a greater say in the decision-making process of international financial and economic institutions.



Making cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable: This concerns adequate and affordable housing, sustainable mobility, and the environmental impact of cities and municipalities. Safe and green public spaces, disaster relief, sustainable spatial planning, and heritage management are also covered by SDG 11.



Creating sustainable consumption and production patterns: Our consumer society produces a lot of waste. It is essential to sustainably control and efficiently use raw materials. We must also invest in less polluting production methods that produce less waste, as well as a sustainable procurement policy and sustainable tourism. We can contribute to sustainable consumption by reducing food waste and recycling and reusing waste products.



Taking urgent measures to combat climate change and its consequences: Climate change affects every country on all continents. This is why the policy must contain measures, for example, aimed at reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, and citizens must become aware of ways of adapting to climate change. The UN wants to make vulnerable nations more resilient to natural disasters.



Protection and sustainable use of oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development: Ecosystems on the coast and in the seas and oceans must be protected. Overfishing, pollution of marine ecosystems and illegal fishing must be combated.



Protection, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems: Continental ecosystems such as forests, marshes and mountains must be protected. Preserving biodiversity is a priority. We must combat poaching and smuggling of protected species. Affected natural areas will be restored.



Peace, safety and legal certainty are essential for promoting sustainable development: This concerns fighting crime, corruption and violence, including against children, but also promoting a strong legal system which protects fundamental freedoms. Effective and transparent institutions that pay attention to civic participation and inclusive decision-making processes are also indispensable.



Enhancing the means to implement these goals and revitalising the global partnership for sustainable development: The UN expects more cooperation: between companies, government, citizens and organisations, but also between all the players themselves. Technology, exchanging knowledge, trading, finances and data are very important.

## 6.2 Annex 2. Internal and external partners per SDG

The matrix below has been drawn up by the pilot municipalities and can help involve the right internal and external partners in the preparation of the multi-annual plan and the selection of indicators. The matrix shows the link between the internal services and external partners on the one hand, and the 17 SDGs on the other hand. It is extensive and representative but not exhaustive.



		SDG 1	SDG 2	SDG 3	SDG 4	SDG 5	SDG 6	SDG 7	SDG 8	SDG 9	SDG 10	SDG 11	SDG 12	SDG 13	SDG 14	SDG 15	SDG 16	SDG 17	
	INTERNAL ACTORS																		
Internal Services	HRM			X		X											X		
	Well-being	X	X	X	X	X					X		X				X	X	
	Housing	X		X				X						X				X	
	Education		X	X	X	X					X								
	Work/Agriculture	X	X						X					X	X	X		X	
	Integration				X	X					X						X	X	
	Youth			X													X	X	
	Leisure			X	X	X					X								
	Social district workers	X		X														X	
	Child care	X			X														
	WZC (residential care centre)/LDC (local service centre)		X	X	X														
	Mobility				X							X		X					
	Sustainability										X	X	X	X	X	X			X
	Tourism		X							X									
	North/South		X							X		X							X
	Space							X	X			X					X		
	Environment							X			X	X		X	X	X			X
	Urban planning								X					X		X			
Social economy									X									X	
Heritage management										X				X					



Communication		SDG 1	SDG 2	SDG 3	SDG 4	SDG 5	SDG 6	SDG 7	SDG 8	SDG 9	SDG 10	SDG 11	SDG 12	SDG 13	SDG 14	SDG 15	SDG 16	SDG 17
INTERNAL ACTORS																		
Internal services	Public works									X		X						
	Procurement									X			X					
	Local economy								X	X		X	X					X
	Urban renovation									X		X		X				
	Urban construction									X								
	Technology									X				X				X
	Reception											X						X
	LOI (local reception initiative for asylum seekers)											X						
	Housing												X		X			
	GIS (geographical information systems)												X				X	
	Vegetation												X				X	
	Catering													X				
	Monument management												X					

		SDG 1	SDG 2	SDG 3	SDG 4	SDG 5	SDG 6	SDG 7	SDG 8	SDG 9	SDG 10	SDG 11	SDG 12	SDG 13	SDG 14	SDG 15	SDG 16	SDG 17	
	EXTERNAL ACTORS																		
Partners	CAW (General Welfare Centre)	X		X							X						X	X	
	Poverty association	X															X		
	FEDASIL (Federal Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers)										X								
	Community development										X	X					X	X	
	Integration agency										X						X	X	
	Food banks	X	X																
	Debt mediation centres	X																X	
	CLB (Pupil guidance Centre)	X			X														X
	Energy suppliers							X						X					
	VREG (Flemish Regulatory Body of Electricity and Gas Market)									X		X		X					
	Schools			X						X	X								X
	Universities									X									
	SVK (social rental agency) &SHM (social housing company)	X													X				X
	Police				X														X
	Intercommunal organisations										X			X					X
	Municipal advisory body		X								X	X	X						
	Health insurance funds			X															X
	Higher authorities																		
First line care	X		X																



	Provincial support centre Social planning	X		X															
		SDG 1	SDG 2	SDG 3	SDG 4	SDG 5	SDG 6	SDG 7	SDG 8	SDG 9	SDG 10	SDG 11	SDG 12	SDG 13	SDG 14	SDG 15	SDG 16	SDG 17	
	EXTERNAL ACTORS																		
Partners	Knowledge institutes		X	X			X				X							X	
	Hands-on experts	X	X	X													X		
	K&G (Child and Family Agency)	X		X								X						X	
	Social housing																		
	Agricultural organisations						X									X		X	
	Waterways and sea canals						X								X	X			
	H2O circles						X											X	
	Energy cooperatives							X											
	Climate movements							X						X	X				X
	Local grids							X											X
	EU							X											X
	VDAB (Flemish Service for Employment and Vocational Training)								X										X
	UNIZO (Union of Independent Entrepreneurs)								X	X			X	X	X				X
	VOKA (Flemish Network of Enterprises)								X					X	X				X
	Public transport											X		X					
	Trade associations								X										X
	LOP (Local consultation platforms on education)										X								
	Accessibility agency										X								
	Thrift stores												X						X
Fair trade													X					X	

	Catering/retail													X					
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