The Quality of Life
Initiative Guidelines

Quality of Life
Initiative

UN-HABITAT

UN-Habitat: United Nations Human Settlements Programme

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) is the United Nations agency working towards a better urban future. It is mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities with the goal of providing adequate shelter for all.

It promotes sustainable urbanization and strives to ensure that all people live in well-planned, well-governed and efficient cities and human settlements with adequate housing, infrastructure and services. By working with governments, local authorities and communities, UN-Habitat aims to improve the quality of life in cities through projects that support economic development, environmental sustainability and social equity.

The Quality of Life Initiative

Implemented by UN-Habitat and sponsored by the Quality of Life Program, the Quality of Life Initiative is a global project transforming how cities understand and improve urban well-being by harnessing human-centred data to capture what people truly value.

The Initiative invites cities to undertake a joint assessment of their residents' quality of life to identify key areas for monitoring and improvement. By going beyond numbers and using an inclusive approach, the Initiative empowers people to pioneer a better future by providing new insights and knowledge to create more resilient, compassionate and thriving communities.

This innovative approach paves the way for a more inclusive future where multiple dimensions of quality of life are brought to light, driving improvements in urban governance, design and investment.

The Quality of Life Index

The Initiative defines "quality of life" as a dynamic assessment, collective or individual, of the opportunities provided by a city for people to thrive. This holistic approach places people's experiences at the forefront of urban development and decision-making.

Using quality of life as a lens to assess progress in cities, the Initiative encourages sustainable policies, investments and community-centred innovations via globally relevant, locally applicable data collection and analysis. The Quality of Life Index is a portfolio of indicators for cities that provides local decision makers with a tool to evaluate community priorities and guide actions by conducting a pulse check across nine essential quality-of-life domains: basic services & mobility, culture & recreation, economy, education, environment, governance, health & well-being, housing, and social cohesion.

Its novel structure, incorporating both a compulsory Global Layer that captures universal aspects of quality of life and a Local Layer defined by the community itself, equips each city with their own bespoke index tailored to local values, priorities, and cultural and contextual nuances.

The Quality of Life Initiative Guidelines

The Quality of Life Initiative guidelines provide a comprehensive framework for cities to assess and improve the quality of life for all inhabitants. They offer policymakers, urban planners and community leaders practical steps and recommendations to effectively implement the initiative.

Acknowledgements

Executive Summary

The Quality of Life Initiative, implemented by UN-Habitat and sponsored by the Quality of Life Program, is a global framework designed to revolutionize how cities understand and improve urban well-being.

In a world where the total share of urban population is expected to grow from 55 per cent today to 68 per cent by 2050, ensuring the quality of life in cities has become more critical than ever. This initiative seeks to address the evolving needs of cities, focusing on people-centred data that highlights what inhabitants value most in their daily lives.

The Quality of Life Initiative Index

The Quality of Life Initiative takes a holistic approach to assessing urban well-being, moving beyond traditional metrics like GDP to focus on human experiences and values.

At its core is the Quality of Life Index, which offers cities a two-layer measurement tool comprising:

1. **Global Layer** – Universal indicators that reflect quality-of-life dimensions relevant to most cities

2. **Local Layer** – Community-specific indicators that reflect the unique needs, values and priorities of each city

By adopting this dual-layer structure, the Index allows cities to monitor and improve various aspects of urban life across nine essential domains: basic services & mobility, culture & recreation, economy, education, environment, governance, health & well-being, housing, and social cohesion. The Quality of Life Initiative empowers decision makers to take an evidence-based approach, using data from these domains to guide investments, policies and urban development strategies that directly improve residents' quality of life.

The Quality of Life lenses

The Quality of Life Initiative integrates thematic lenses across all its domains to ensure an inclusive, equitable and holistic approach to urban well-being. These lenses – such as inclusivity, equity, accessibility, participation and sustainability – are applied within each domain (e.g. housing, health & well-being, education) to address key urban challenges in a way that benefits all inhabitants.

By using these lenses, the initiative ensures that cities focus not only on improving services and infrastructure but also on making them accessible and responsive to the diverse needs of their communities, fostering long-term, sustainable improvements in the quality of life.

Accessibility	Affordability
Choice	Connectedness & belonging
Equity	Inclusion
Safety	Satisfaction & adequacy

Implementation process

The implementation guidelines provided in this document offer a comprehensive roadmap for cities to adopt the Quality of Life Index. The step-by-step process is designed to support local governments, urban planners and community leaders in assessing and enhancing urban well-being through a series of practical actions:

1. **Onboarding:** Introducing cities to the benefits of the Quality of Life Index and formalizing participation

2. **Planning:** Engaging stakeholders to define what quality of life means to the city's inhabitants

3. **Learning about the Index:** Familiarizing cities with the Global and Local Layer indicators

4. **Indicator development:** Conducting workshops to identify local indicators that reflect the city's unique priorities

5. **Data collection & Index computation:** Gathering and analysing data to compute the Quality of Life Index

6. **Interpretation & management:** Using data insights to drive evidence-based policy and investment decisions

Strategic impact

These guidelines prioritize community participation as a foundational aspect of the Quality of Life Initiative. By leveraging workshops and crowdsourcing, cities can actively integrate the voices of their inhabitants, ensuring that the chosen indicators and resulting actions align with the genuine needs and aspirations of the community.

Implementing this initiative enables cities to gain comprehensive insights into the factors driving urban well-being, while equipping them with tools to create more inclusive, resilient and thriving environments. The dual-layer approach allows for locally relevant solutions, empowering governments to make data-driven decisions tailored to their specific urban contexts.

Through innovative data collection methods – such as social media surveys, mobile data, and satellite imagery – cities can continuously monitor their progress, ensuring that improvements remain both sustainable and responsive to the evolving needs of their inhabitants.

Ultimately, the initiative offers a strategic framework for cities to enhance the daily lives of all inhabitants, advance global sustainability goals, and foster urban environments where everyone, regardless of background, can thrive and achieve a dignified quality of life.

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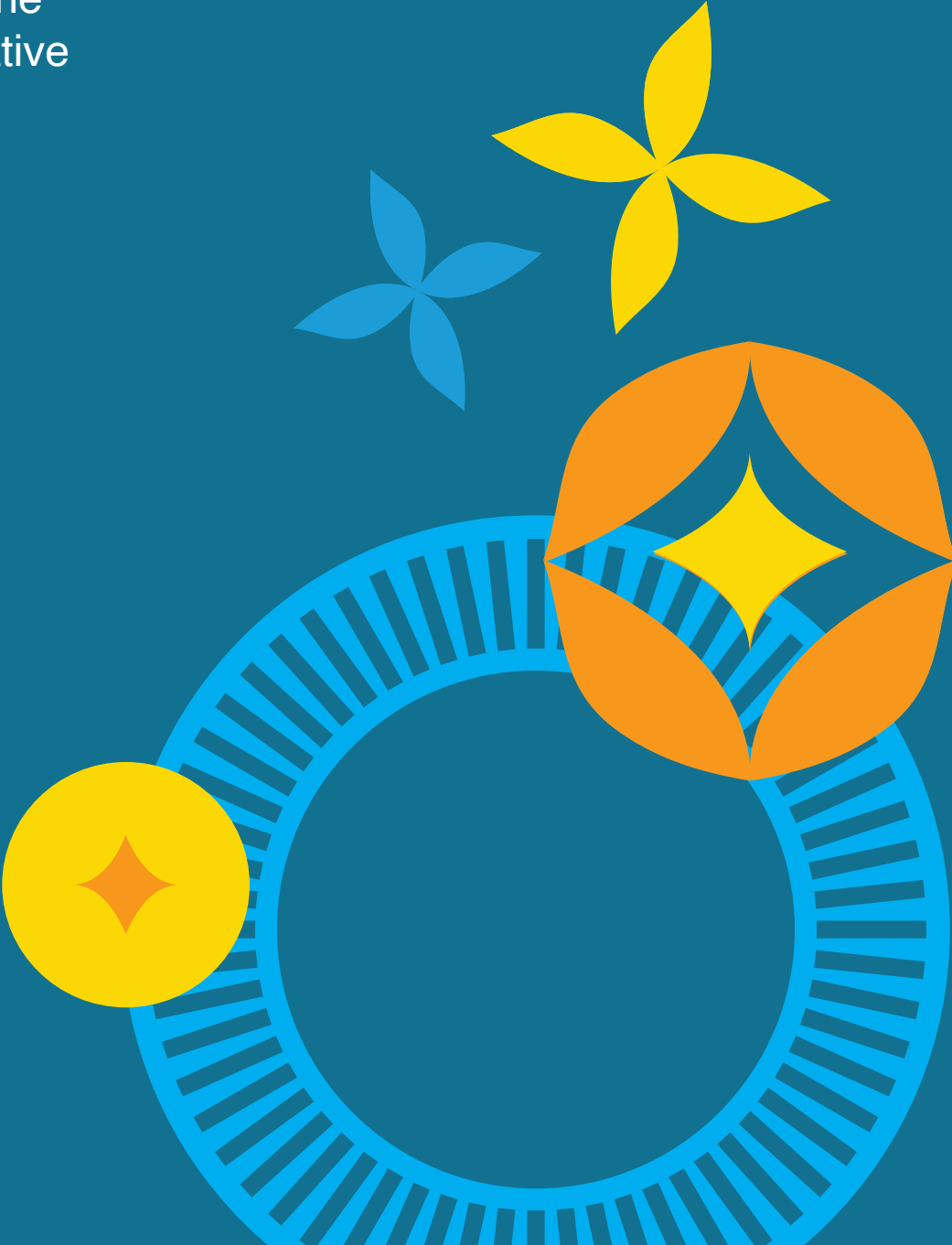
Story of the Quality of Life Initiative

Today, 55 per cent of the world's population lives in urban areas. That percentage is projected to rise to 68 per cent by 2050.[1]

In anticipation of this shift, understanding how people work, play and experience life in towns and cities around the world has become more critical than ever. Global pandemics, climate change, armed conflict and other challenges have called into question long-standing notions of what constitutes a "good life". At the same time, emerging opportunities such as the digital transformation are already underway and are poised to drastically alter countless aspects of day-to-day life.

These challenges and opportunities ultimately weave together to shape the quality of life of individuals and communities around the world. City leaders are eager for better knowledge and tools that can provide insights into the decisions and investments they can make that will improve the quality of life for everyone in their communities.

Residents in Jakarta, Bogotá or Paris could share many of the same basic concerns when it comes to what makes a dignified quality of life – such as access to quality healthcare, education, safety, and so forth. And yet, if we delve deeper, we discover that each community has its own set of motivations, priorities, aspirations and needs that are unique to their own customs, culture and context.

The Quality of Life Initiative took shape to explore these unique textures that make up the fabric of communities around the world. The Initiative recognizes that quality of life is relevant to everyone, everywhere – and that, while it may look different to different people in different places, everyone, no matter where they are, is entitled to a dignified quality of life.
These guidelines lay the foundation for cities to measure quality of life in their own unique contexts, recognizing that quality of life means different things to different people and different places.

They should be used to assess what matters and to inspire action by laying out an approach to understanding and measuring quality of life which can be adapted across thousands of settlements, cities and towns around the world. By moving beyond traditional measurements of progress, quality of life can become the common thread running through urban development, putting people and the things they value first.

Quality of life - in constant evolution

More than 2000 years ago, Aristotle mused about what makes a "good life" and its constitutive elements.[2]
Over the ensuing centuries, the concept of quality of life has been interpreted and reinterpreted countless times. Gradually it moved from the purely philosophical realm and into the political sphere, where decision makers and others began to consider the well-being and subjective experience of individuals when designing policies.

During the second half of the 20th century, GDP was used to measure progress, prosperity and, by proxy, quality of life. Gradually, it became apparent that such a purely economic metric could not account for a comprehensive measure of progress and human well-being, and that the focus on GDP alone was failing to capture the social, environmental and emotional dimensions that define quality of life. The lived experience of people goes well beyond a single metric, and thus a wider array of disciplines – such as psychology, environmental studies, social welfare studies and others – enriched the discussions around quality of life over the past several decades.

Looking beyond GDP means focusing on new metrics that put people at the centre, measuring both the objective and subjective factors that contribute to quality of life. The challenges of the 21st century cannot be addressed through a singular focus, and the Quality of Life Initiative is working to develop a more holistic understanding of progress, which puts the focus on individuals and communities and measures value according to what matters to them.

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1 United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, "68% of the world population projected to live in urban areas by 2050, says UN", 16 May 2018.

2 Arthur Schopenhauer, The Wisdom of Life: The Essays of Arthur Schopenhauer (Calgary, Canada, Theophania Publishing, 2002).

Looking through a quality-of-life lens

What makes the Quality of Life Initiative unique is not the topic areas it covers. The domains which make up the Global and Local Layers of the measurement tool – such as basic services & mobility, economy, education, housing, and others – have been thoroughly researched and studied for many years.

What is novel is that this Initiative is filtering these domains through a quality-of-life lens, which reframes common urban development issues in a way that speaks to the human dimensions of cities, incorporating what people truly value. Using housing as an example, the Initiative does not only look at housing from the perspective of urban planning, housing supply, zoning or design; it explores how the different issues around housing intersect with and impact quality of life. How does a "home", as the foundational unit of the neighbourhood and community, determine the relationship between people and their environment? What are the relationships between housing and levels of social cohesion, feelings of safety, and impacts on mental health?

These lenses of quality of life – accessibility, choices, connectedness & belonging, equity, inclusion and safety – inform the conversation and the decisions taken across all the domains in the Initiative. When looked at through the prism of quality of life, these fundamental building blocks of society – whether housing or any of the others – take on a renewed importance and relevance to the prospering of our communities.

Central to this process is active community engagement. Through workshops, crowdsourcing and stakeholder mapping, cities can capture the voices of their inhabitants and ensure that their quality-of-life priorities are directly reflected in the indicators they choose. These guidelines provide detailed steps on how to incorporate these participatory methods, ensuring inclusivity and a people-centred approach.

Why an initiative on quality of life?

Before establishing a new Initiative around quality of life, it was first necessary to scan the current landscape to understand what – if any – gaps existed that a new endeavour might be able to fill. A thorough analysis of existing indices on quality of life found that a great deal of important work has been done over the years to measure quality of life.

As the topic has gained increasing political relevance, efforts to capture a better understanding of quality of life have multiplied. And yet, the analysis revealed several opportunities to go even further by placing quality of life at the centre of local and global development discussions, and by more concretely linking policy decisions and investments to impacts on the lives of people on the ground.

Transitioning from vision to action: Implementing the Quality of Life Initiative

The Quality of Life Initiative provides a comprehensive framework for measuring and enhancing everyday life in urban settings, yielding impact via implementation. The implementation guidelines that follow offer a step-by-step process for cities to adopt the Quality of Life Initiative framework with the ultimate aim of improving their inhabitants' quality of life.

By following these guidelines, cities will be able to translate the quality-of-life lenses into tangible outcomes. Through stakeholder engagement, crowdsourcing or the use of innovative technologies, the guidelines will guide each city and its local partners through each phase of the implementation process, ensuring the goals of participating in the Initiative are realized in a practical and effective way.

Part II
Index implementation guidelines

A practical and effective guide for cities to improve the lives of its inhabitants

So you want to improve quality of life in your city?

The **Quality of Life Initiative** invites all formally recognized local, municipal and provincial governments in urban, peri-urban and rural areas to participate in the Initiative and improve the lives of their communities

This is the guideline for you

Introduction

The Quality of Life Initiative

The great news is that you would be pressed to find a city around the world that says they are not working to actively improve the quality of life of their inhabitants. Unfortunately, there is no consolidated playbook on how to do this. This is where the Quality of Life Initiative comes in.

The Quality of Life Initiative is a global programme designed to measure and enhance the quality of life in cities worldwide. At the centre of the initiative is an index developed to aid local decision makers in taking the pulse of their communities from a quality-of-life perspective.

This is complemented by a series of knowledge products and best practices for improving quality of life across nine core domains: basic services & mobility, culture & recreation, economy, education, environment, governance, health & well-being, housing, and social cohesion.

Principles of the Quality of Life Initiative

Human Centric – Valuing what matters

The Quality of Life Initiative moves beyond traditional measurements to understand both objective and subjective factors that contribute to what people really value and care about, and that determine their overall satisfaction.

Co-creation – Learning from partner cities

Through extensive consultation, field testing and co-creation with partner cities from different geographic regions, the Quality of Life Initiative has created a high-quality, easy-to-use and adaptable index that responds to the needs of cities with diverse challenges and conditions, and at various stages of development.

Globally relevant, locally applicable – Establishing new global standards for local change

The Quality of Life Initiative recognizes that quality of life means different things to different people. It aims to help local decision makers better respond to local challenges and priorities in order to improve the quality of life of their inhabitants.

Inclusion – Leaving no one behind

Inclusion is fundamental to ensuring quality of life for all. By incorporating an element of disaggregation, the Quality of Life Initiative enables policymakers to gain deeper insights into the needs, aspirations, and disparities of different groups within society, empowering them to develop more equitable and effective solutions tailored to everyone's needs.

Evidence-based decision-making – Actionable insights for change

The Quality of Life Initiative innovates how data is collected, organized and visualized. It helps local leaders better understand the needs of their community and strengthens decision-making, with better links between performance measurement and the well-being of their inhabitants.

The Quality of Life Index

Although quality of life remains a priority for most communities, there has been an absence of an internationally agreed-upon framework for measuring quality of life – particularly at the local level, where policy decisions are felt firsthand. To fill this need, the Quality of Life Index is designed to help local leaders view their communities through a quality-of-life lens, enabling them to make more informed decisions on what matters most to their people.

The challenge arises from the fact that quality of life means different things to different communities. Therefore, how do you create a global index that is universally relevant but also locally applicable? Rather than trying to capture all of this in one set of indicators, which has hindered previous efforts, the solution was to create two distinct layers of indicators:

The Global layer was developed through a research-led and consultative process, drawing on other indices, the insights of academic experts as well as local community representatives and other stakeholder groups, and investigations into novel methods of measuring quality of life.

The Local Layer is determined by the cities themselves through a guided and structured process. The result is a bespoke index that responds to the values and priorities of each and every community.

The Index was designed around nine quality-of-life domains. These domains were formulated based on advice from academic researchers and local government representatives. These domains reflect a multidimensional approach to quality of life, encompassing the diverse needs and aspirations of urban

A **Global Layer** of indicators that measures those aspects of quality of life that are universal. These indicators are relevant to most places and people.

A **Local Layer** of indicators that accounts for local values, priorities, and cultural and contextual nu https://qolidemo.com/_next/static/media/economy.b3619f1d.svg ances. These indicators are unique to each city, bringing information to the Index about local quality of life that enhances (without replicating or replacing) the Global Layer.

- Basic services & mobility
- Governance
- Culture & recreation
- Health & well-being
- Economy
- Housing
- Education
- Social cohesion
- Environment

Linkages to Global Frameworks

Sustainable Development Goals

The Quality of Life Index is linked to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as it provides a comprehensive framework for assessing and enhancing urban well-being in alignment with global development priorities.

By integrating indicators that cover various aspects of life, such as health & well-being, education, economic stability, environmental sustainability, and social inclusion, the Quality of Life Index directly contributes to the monitoring and achievement of multiple SDGs, particularly those focused on reducing inequalities (SDG 10), promoting good health & well-being (SDG 3), ensuring quality education (SDG 4), and fostering sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11).

The Quality of Life Index serves as a valuable tool for cities to measure their progress towards these goals, identify areas of improvement, and implement data-driven policies that align with the broader agenda of sustainable development, ultimately working towards the localization and acceleration of these agendas for creating resilient, inclusive and thriving urban environments.

The Global Urban Monitoring Framework

Urbanization calls for evidence-based policies, action plans and programmes for cities to achieve their full potential. Data collection at the urban level, however, has proven to be a challenging endeavour. For that reason, the United Nations Statistical Commission asked UN-Habitat to create a single monitoring framework for data collection at the local level.

The result is the Global Urban Monitoring Framework (UMF). Endorsed by the Statistical Commission in 2022, the UMF was created to harmonize urban indicators and data collection in urban areas, as well as monitor the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda. The effectiveness of this framework provided a strong basis for structuring the Quality of Life Index.

The basic foundational structure of the UMF is a matrix. It consists of five essential domains (society, economy, environment, culture, and governance & implementation) and four city objectives (safe, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable). Each cell defines an "attribute" of a city that needs to be measured (e.g. a safe society, a resilient economy, etc.).

User's Guide
Implementation Process

The **Quality of Life Initiative Guidelines** is a capacity-building and knowledge management tool to guide your city in effectively implementing the Quality of Life Initiative.

The guidelines help you understand the overall nature and objectives of the Initiative, the participation process, and the steps taken to effectively compute the Index scores, and it explores the ways in which the Index results can be interpreted and incorporated into policies and strategic plans along with the views and values of the communities.

Goal of the Guidelines

Our goal is to provide you with an effective tool, process and policy-oriented outcome to improve the lives of your city's inhabitants.

The Target Audience

City leaders/ representatives: Those interested in enhancing the quality of life in their community

Implementation leaders: City representatives and partners responsible for guiding a city or town through the Quality of Life Initiative to improve living conditions

Supporting stakeholders: National government representatives, civil society members and international development actors involved in supporting a city or town during the implementation process of the Quality of Life Initiative

Important Note: It is essential that these guidelines are read in conjunction with the accompanying technical methodology & metadata and other relevant documents. This context is crucial for accurately developing the Quality of Life Index values.

Objective of the Guidelines

Enable cities to create a comprehensive Index:

- Provide the necessary guidance and step-by-step instructions to support your city and its stakeholders in developing a tailored Local Layer that, combined with the Global Layer, constitutes the Quality of Life Index.

- Provide the necessary guidance and steps to establish indicator values for both the Local and Global Layers.

- Guide the technical process of combining the city's Local Layer and the universal Global Layer to develop the Index.

- Offer instructions on how to upload the data of your city to the Quality of Life Platform

Enable cities to continuously improve:

- Provide the necessary guidance and steps to continuously take the pulse of cities and communities, then subsequently update the data to understand both how your city performs when it comes to quality of life and how improvements are recognized.

- Provide the necessary guidance and steps to use the Index to identify areas for policy and investment decisions, thereby improving outcomes for city inhabitants

Implementation Breakdown

The process of implementation is divided into three stages. Each stage consists of a step group followed by a series of steps that your city should follow to effectively develop and compute the Quality of Life Index. The diagram below outlines the implementation breakdown, which is detailed throughout these guidelines.

Joining	Implementing				Managing
1. Onboarding	**2.** Planning	**3.** Learn about the Index	**4.** Indicator Development	**5.** Data Collection & Index Computation	**6.** Implementation & Monitoring

Step 1.1 Why join the Quality of Life Initiative?

Step 1.2 How to formally register your city in the Quality of Life Initiative?

Step 2.1 Do you know what quality of life means to your city's inhabitants?

Step 2.2 Who are your Quality of Life Initiative stakeholders?

Step 2.3 What is the recommended workplan and what resources are needed?

Step 3.1 What is the Global Layer of indicators?

Step 3.2 What is the Local Layer of Indicators?

Step 4.1 How do you incorporate crowd-sourcing?

Step 4.2 How do you prepare for the Local Layer workshop?

Step 4.3 What is the pre-workshop inception meeting?

Step 4.4 How do you develop the Local Layer indicators?

Step 4.5 How do you refine the list of Local Layer indicators?

Step 5.1 How do you collect data for the Global Layer?

Step 5.2 How do you collect data for the Local Layer?

Step 5.3 How do you compute the Quality of Life Index?

Step 5.4 How do you validate the collected data?

Step 6.1 How do you interpret the data and Index values?

Step 6.2 How do you manage your city's Index through the Quality of Life Initiative Platform?

1-2 Months	2-3 Months	1-2 Months

Stage 1
Joining

Timeline **1–2 months**
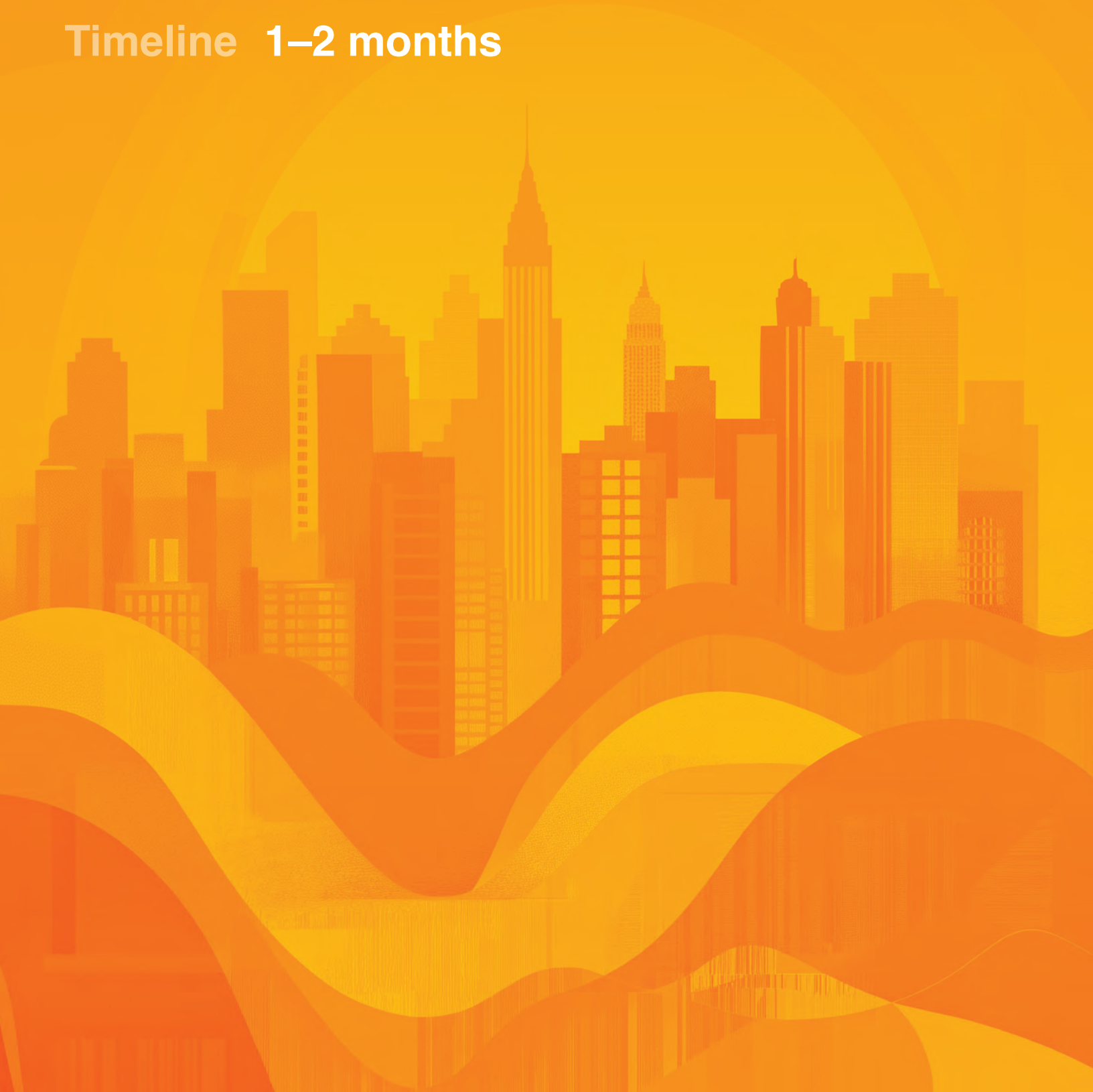
Step 1
Onboarding

Sub Steps

1.1 – Why join the Quality of Life Initiative ?

1.2 – How do you formally register your city in the Quality of Life Initiative?

Step 1 – Onboarding

Step 1.1 – Why join the Quality of Life Initiative ?

How do your city's priorities align with the Quality of Life Initiative?

This section outlines various considerations that align with the objectives and process of the Quality of Life Initiative. These considerations are an important first step to establishing the key reasons for your city to participate.

Priority	Your city ...	Consideration
Global engagement	Has past or ongoing involvement in local, national, regional or global (data) initiatives	If your city has ongoing or completed data exercises such as those pertaining to Voluntary Local Reviews, other SDG-related exercises, or the UMF, they can be seamlessly integrated into the Quality of Life Index. Doing so enhances your city's alignment with global standards, increasing its credibility and visibility on the international stage.
	Aims to make progress towards the United Nations SDGs	Aligning with the Quality of Life Initiative helps your city meet SDG targets, particularly those related to sustainable cities and communities. The Initiative aims to accelerate progress and bring a quality-of-life lens to the SDGs.
	Aims to strengthen its network and expand its partnerships with other cities and global actors	The Quality of Life Initiative facilitates engagement among participating cities, and a wider community of practice involving academia, civil society and private sector, allowing for the sharing of experiences, lessons learned, and innovative solutions to shared challenges.

Priority	Your city ...	Consideration
Local governance and strategic policy	Aims to mainstream a focus on quality of life into your city's strategic planning.	Integrating Quality of Life Initiative practices and processes into local strategic planning helps your city orient its focus towards improving the well-being of your city's residents.
	Wants to strengthen data-driven decision-making	Using the Quality of Life Index provides you with reliable data, leading to more informed decision-making and more effective and targeted interventions.
	Aims to attract investments	By joining the Quality of Life Initiative and implementing the Index, your city demonstrates commitment to quality of life which positions your city competitively and may generate private sector investments
	Wants to increase community engagement and transparency practices	The Quality of Life Initiative process strengthens your engagement with residents and various stakeholders, building trust and accountability. Your community will have the opportunity to view your city's quality-of-life achievements and interventions through the Quality of Life Platform.
Capacity Building and Knowledge Management	Wants to build the capacity of its administration	Participation in the Quality of Life Initiative helps enhance the capacity of your local government officials, urban planners and community leaders. The resources and knowledge available through this initiative empower local leaders to make informed decisions and drive meaningful improvements in your city.
	Wants to access regional and global expertise, leading practices and lessons learned	Your city will have access to the Initiative's global network of experts and practitioners for insights and best practices tailored to your specific needs and context. This access ensures that you benefit from the latest knowledge and strategies for the improvement of quality of life.
	Seeks access to innovative data visualization and analysis tools, best practices and updated data collection techniques	The Quality of Life Platform offers an advanced way to visualize and interpret your city's Quality of Life Index values. Additionally, the Platform provides an opportunity to showcase your work under the Quality of Life Initiative, with the potential for recognition and awards for your efforts in implementing, managing and participating in the Index.

How can you tailor the Quality of Life Initiative to meet your city's needs?

Now that you have identified the reasons to participate and how your city aligns strategically with the Quality of Life Initiative on various fronts, it is important for your city to consider how the Quality of Life Initiative can be tailored to meet the city's needs.

For this, the following guiding questions may help your city on the way. Ideally, you will have robust answers to these questions before committing to the process:

How can a quality-of-life lens support your city's inhabitants?

Identify how a quality-of-life lens will allow your city to better respond to the needs of your inhabitants.

What are the primary concerns and aspirations of your community?

Identify the key issues and goals of your inhabitants. Consider what specific improvements are needed to enhance their living conditions.

Which aspects of daily and community life are most valued and where do inhabitants face challenges?

Identify the areas of daily life that are most challenging for inhabitants is essential for targeted policymaking.

How do different neighbourhoods and demographic groups experience life in your city?

Consider factors such as age, sex, ethnicity, income and geographic location, and how these elements affect or are affected by various aspects of quality of life. This consideration is crucial for developing an inclusive approach to improving quality of life.

How can your city respond to the quality-of-life needs of your community?

Once you determine your community's quality-of-life priorities, consider how best to improve the lives of your inhabitants. Incorporating the Quality of Life Initiative implementation framework encourages regular community engagement, data collection and performance monitoring to ensure that the quality-of-life priorities are effectively addressed.

What urban planning tools can be leveraged to address the primary concerns and aspirations of your community?

By identifying key issues such as housing, transportation and public spaces, your city can focus on specific improvements that enhance living conditions.

How can a quality-of-life lens be integrated into your city's strategic planning exercises?

This lens will help your city better respond to the needs of your inhabitants by aligning long-term goals with resident well-being.

By addressing these questions, you can clearly define your impactful goals and objectives and create effective strategies to enhance the quality of life in your city for all inhabitants.

What are the benefits of participating in the Quality of Life Initiative?

As you consider the various ways in which your city aligns with the Quality of Life Initiative, and define its unique goals for joining the Initiative, you may also want to consider the benefits gained by joining.

While it is likely to be different from one city to another, here is a list of benefits that are consistently realized through implementation of the Quality of Life Initiative.

Identifying the quality-of-life priorities of your community

Arguably the most important benefit of participation, you will be engaging with members of the community about those matters that are most important to them. In doing so, you will be taking the pulse of the community when it comes to quality of life and developing a list of priority areas that the city wishes to influence.

Tracking quality-of-life improvement over time

By adopting the Quality of Life Initiative methodology, your city can drive on-the-ground transformation and become a pioneer for quality-of-life-based policies and practices. This involvement positions your city as a leader in implementing effective quality-of-life improvements.

Recognition and awards

The Quality of Life Initiative provides recognition and support to your city as it demonstrates its commitment to and progress in implementing quality-of-life practices.

By addressing deficits and responding to development opportunities, cities can both overcome their challenges and unlock potential for growth. Best practices will be collected and shared globally to help other cities improve the quality of life for their populations, creating a network of cities working towards a common goal of enhancing urban living.

Ultimate benefit: Enhancing the everyday lives of people

The ultimate benefit of participating in the Quality of Life Initiative and utilizing the Index is to enhance the lives of all residents in your city. By understanding, analysing and addressing key issues, city leaders can implement various interventions to create more liveable, sustainable and inclusive environments for all.

Step 1.2 – How do you formally register your city in the Quality of Life Initiative?

Now that you have identified the goals, objectives and benefits of participating in the Quality of Life Initiative, you can formally register your city. This step must be completed by an authorized representative of your city.

Note: Authorized representatives typically include the mayor, city manager, or chief executive officer of the municipal government. Additionally, senior officials such as the director of urban planning, head of the city council, or commissioner of public works may also be authorized to sign the memorandum of understanding (MoU) and represent your city in the Initiative.

By following the series of steps outlined in this section, your city will be enrolled in the Quality of Life Initiative. Formal registration grants you access to resources and support materials, solidifying your commitment to the global effort to enhance quality of life.

Visit the Quality of Life Initiative Portal:

1

- If your city is interested in joining the Quality of Life Initiative, use the link to register your city.

- Once registered, you gain access to preliminary information to formalize your participation.

- Your city's authorized representative should review this information before formally expressing interest to join the initiative

Preliminary information includes: a summary of expectations of the city, the implementation guidelines (this document), and the standard Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

Submit a formal expression of interest and sign the memorandum of understanding

2 MOU

- The authorized representative should fill out and submit the expression of interest (EoI) form available through the portal. This form captures basic information about your city and its preliminary commitment to joining the Initiative.

- Once the EoI form is submitted, a tailored MoU can be downloaded for official signing by the authorized representative. The signed MoU should be uploaded to the portal.

Acknowledgement of receipt

3

- The UN-Habitat Quality of Life Initiative Secretariat will acknowledge receipt of the submitted EoI and signed MoU and will take the appropriate steps to verify the application.

- Once verified and approved, your city will receive a formal acceptance letter issued by the Secretariat.

Receive the Quality of Life Initiative knowledge and communication package:

4

Now that your city has completed the application process, the Platform will provide you access to a complete knowledge and communication package that includes:

1. All technical documents, presentations and metadata guides for the Quality of Life Index

2. Communications, branding and PR package

3. Coming soon: Information on the recognition and awards process

Planning

Sub Steps

2.1 – Do you know what quality of life means to your city's inhabitants?

2.2 – Who are your Quality of Life Initiative stakeholders?

2.3 – What is the recommended workplan and what resources are needed?

You have successfully registered your city, signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), and received the knowledge and communication package. Your city is now ready to proceed to the planning stage.

This stage is detailed in the following section and involves understanding what quality of life means to your city's inhabitants, identifying stakeholders and their roles in the Quality of Life Initiative process, as well as developing a detailed workplan for implementation and managing the necessary resources.

Step 2 – Planning

Step 2.1 – Do you know what quality of life means to your city's inhabitants?

Once your city has formally registered for the Quality of Life Initiative, the next step is to assess what you do and do not know about the priorities and concerns of your city's inhabitants regarding quality of life. There are nine key domains to consider here. For instance, if you were asked what residents genuinely care about when it comes to health & well-being and quality of life, could you confidently say you know the answer for most people? Is it the shortage of specialist healthcare services in your city? Or the cost of healthcare? Perhaps it is the availability of childcare for working parents? It is essential that you bring this understanding into the design of your Quality of Life Index.

Additionally, you must be certain that your knowledge is both current and reliable, particularly in recognizing whether the answers to these core questions vary by factors such as age, gender, income or geographic location within the city.

If you are uncertain whether your information is up-to-date and accurate, some preliminary groundwork may be necessary. This could involve your preferred methods of community outreach, such as online surveys, community forums or other engagement platforms. Gathering as much relevant information as possible is critical. Once this is complete, you will be better prepared to proceed to step 2.2, with a clearer understanding of who should participate in the Local Layer workshops.

Step 2.2 – Who are your Quality of Life Initiative stakeholders?

Once you have your knowledge base and have determined what you do and do not know about quality-of-life concerns in your city, you should identify the key stakeholders who need to be actively engaged in the implementation process. This step, commonly known as stakeholder mapping, involves identifying and effectively engaging all necessary persons, groups or organizations with a vested interest in the city, aligning the efforts of your city with the diverse needs and interests of your inhabitants and ensuring that those participating in the formal exercises can bring all the information you need to design an effective Index of your city.

For the successful application of the Quality of Life Initiative, it is vital to adopt an inclusive approach, mapping a diverse set of stakeholders who can contribute with their expertise, resources and perspectives. This ensures that the voices of your city's residents – particularly those who are often underrepresented – are heard and integrated into the planning and implementation process.

One of the greatest strengths of the Quality of Life Initiative is its participatory approach, which emphasizes the importance of measuring and planning for the well-being of your residents.

We strongly encourage your city to explore innovative methods for incorporating public and resident voices, concerns and perceptions into the Quality of Life implementation and assessment process. These efforts are highly valued and recognized by the Quality of Life Initiative, and they contribute to the possibility of earning recognition.

More information and guidance on the stakeholder groups and their role in the Quality of Life Initiative will be available soon as part of the Guidelines annex !

Government agencies

Local government departments, alongside regional and national government entities, play a crucial role in planning, implementing and regulating various aspects of urban life. While the local government acts as the convening partner, it's essential to involve a diverse range of city-level departments and stakeholders to ensure comprehensive engagement in the Quality of Life initiative.

Inhabitants and community organizations

Engaging with the ordinary inhabitants and community organizations of your city is essential for understanding their needs, priorities and perceptions. This stakeholder group represents the voices of diverse groups directly impacted by your city's policies and services.

Private sector

Private sector entities have a vested interest in the well-being of the communities where they operate and can bring innovative solutions to urban challenges.

Data experts

It is one thing to identify priority areas; it is another to ensure that the data is available to measure them. Data analysis and insights are critical for measuring the effectiveness of the Quality of Life Initiative and making informed decisions.

Academia

Academia provides research, data and theoretical frameworks that enhance the understanding of urban issues and their connection to quality of life. Students can also assist in data collection and analysis, contributing to the practical application of the Initiative.

Civil society and international development community

Civil society and international development partners play a vital role in supporting the Quality of Life Initiative through expertise, funding, and global best practices.

Step 2.3 – What is the recommended workplan and what resources are needed?

Setting up a project timeline and determining resource requirements is essential to ensuring your city's efforts are well-organized, transparent and sustainable. The following table lists the implementation steps outlined throughout the Quality of Life Initiative guidelines, which guarantee successful delivery of the Quality of Life Index. Your city should utilize this table to plan its implementation and map the required resources accordingly.

Based on your city's resources and available capacity, the implementation process may take four to seven months. While the specific steps may be shorter, this timeline considers time required for administrative and authorization processes at your local government.

It is recommended that your city assign a team of two or three focal points with urban planning, policy and technical expertise to lead the process and support multilevel coordination throughout its implementation. To effectively implement the process, at least one local government official in an authoritative capacity should be appointed to supervise the process.

Stage	Step	Sub Step
1 Joining	1 Onboarding	1.1 – Joining
		1.2 – Registering for the Initiative
	2 Planning	2.1 & 2.2 – Information gathering & Stakeholder mapping
		2.3 – Workplan development and resource management
2 Implementing	3 Learning about the Quality of Life Index	3.1 – Learning about the Global Layer
		3.2 – Learning about the Local Layer
	4 Developing the indicators	4.1 – Crowd-sourcing
		4.2 – Preparing for the Local Layer workshop
		4.3 – Inception meeting
		4.4 – Hosting the Local Layer workshop
		4.5 – Refining the Local Layer indicators
	5 Data collection & Index computation	5.1 – Data collection for the Global Layer indicators
		5.2 – Data collection for the Local Layer indicators
		5.3 – Computing the Quality of Life Index
		5.4 – Validating the collected data
3 Managing	6 Index interpretation & management	6.1 – Index and data interpretation
		6.2 – Index and data management

Timeline	Stakeholders	Resources/ budget considerations
1 - 2 Months	Local government – City leader	Minimal to no budget needed
		Initial consideration and planning for budget related to partnerships with local universities, private sector or research institutes
		Local government
3 - 4 Months	Local government focal point/team	No budget needed
		No budget needed
	Local government focal point/team	Consider costs related to crowdsourcing tools. Explore partnerships with local tech companies or startups for innovative crowdsourcing solutions.
	Local government focal point/team Designated workshop facilitator	Allocate budget for workshop preparation, including venue rental, materials, and facilitator fees. Consider partnerships with local universities or other institutions for expert facilitation. consider using government-owned facilities to minimize venue costs.
	Local government focal point/team Designated workshop facilitator Workshop stakeholders and participants	No budget needed (virtual)
		Budget planned during workshop preparation for venue, catering, and facilitation. Consider sponsorships or partnerships with private sector or academic entities (host) to share costs.
	Local government focal point/team Designated workshop facilitator	No budget needed (virtual)
	Local government focal point/team Designated workshop facilitator In coordination with stakeholders and data experts	Allocate resources for data acquisition, possibly involving fees for accessing certain databases or hiring data analysts as needed. Consider partnerships with national statistical offices, and research institutions for access to data.
		Similar to sub step 5.1, with additional consideration for partnerships with academic institutions, local businesses, or NGOs to gather and verify data.
	Local government focal point/team	No budget needed
	Focal point/ team with stakeholders	No budget needed if done virtually
1 - 2 Months	Local government focal point/team in coordination with relevant stakeholders	No budget needed
		Costs for ongoing data management, including software subscriptions, data storage, and regular updates. Consider partnerships with tech companies or universities for data management solutions.

Stage 2
Implementing

Timeline   2–3 months

You previously learned that the Quality of Life Index consists of two layers of indicators. Before you initiate the technical process under Stage 2 of Implementation, it is important to learn about the Global and Local Layer indicators.

Step 3

Learning about the Quality of Life Index

Sub Steps

3.1 – What is the Global Layer of indicators?

3.2 – What is the Local Layer of indicators?

Step 3 – Learning about the Quality of Life Index
3.1 – What is Global Layer of indicators?

The Global Layer of indicators was developed as a universal set of metrics designed to assess the quality of life in cities from a global perspective. The indicators encompass both objective and subjective metrics, providing a comprehensive overview of quality of life in cities. To respond to the challenges of quality-of-life measurement and ensure that data can be obtained in a diversity of cities and collected at regular intervals, emerging and frontier approaches to data collection are incorporated into this Initiative. This includes the use of mobile-ping data, satellite imagery and social media surveys, among other more conventional forms of data such as administrative data.

For the technical specifications of the Global Layer, please refer to the Technical Methodology & Metadata Guidebook available in the technical package provided after registration.

The following table lists the indicators under each of the nine quality-of-life domains. The list includes 28 domain-specific indicators and 1 cross-cutting indicator (under "Benchmark").

This cross-cutting indicator will be used as a benchmark to validate the performance of the Index against overall life satisfaction. The table also indicates the type of data relative to its method of collection, which will be further explained under step 5.

#	Domain/ Indicator	SDG	UMF Domain	Type of Data
1	**Basic Services & Mobility**			
1.1	Proportion of the population that feels safe walking along around the area they live after dark	16	Safe Society	Social media survey
1.2	Proportion of population that has convenient access to public transport	11	Sustainable Economy	Satellite imagery
1.3	Mobile internet penetration rate, speed and latency	9	Inclusive Society	Mobile-ping data
1.4	Proportion of population satisfied with the quality of public transport in the city	11	sustainable economy	Social media survey
1.5	Proportion of people seen in their neighborhood after dark	16	safe society	Mobile-ping data
2	**Culture & Recreation**			
2.1	Median number of visits to cultural sites, sporting or recreation facilities	11	Inclusive Culture	Mobile-ping data
2.2	Median dwell time of people in identified leisure and recreation sites per month	11	Safe Culture	Mobile-ping data
2.3	Percentage of population satisfied with public sport and cultural facilities provided by the city	11	Inclusive Culture	Social media survey
3	**Economy**			
3.1	Proportion of the working population reporting strongly agree or agree with the statement 'it is easy to find a good job in my city'	8	Inclusive Economy	Social media survey
3.2	Average annual unemployment rate (by age and gender)	8	Resilient Economy	Administrative data
3.3	Percentage of population living below the national poverty line	1	Safe Economy	Administrative data

#	Domain/ Indicator	SDG	UMF Domain	Type of Data
4	**Education**			
4.1	Completion rate (elementary education, lower secondary education, upper secondary education)	4	Resilient Society	Administrative data
4.2	Percentage of population satisfied with the quality of public schools and educational facilities in the city	4	Resilient Society	Social media survey
5	**Environment**			
5.1	Annual mean levels of fine particulate matter (i.e. PM 2.5 and PM 10) in cities (population weighted)	11	Safe Environment	Google AQI
5.2	Change (from last year) in green space per capita	15	Sustainable Environment	Satellite imagery
5.3	Proportion of population that feels 'somewhat not concerned' or 'not concerned at all' about their cities' future in light of climate change	13	Resilient Environment	Social media survey
5.4	Percentage of households living within 15 minutes of public open space (by foot)	11	Inclusive Environment	Satellite imagery
5.5	Percentage of population satisfied with the green spaces provided by the city	11	Inclusive Environment	Social media survey
6	**Governance**			
6.1	Proportion of population that are happy with the local public administration	16	Inclusive Governance	Social media survey
6.2	Percentage of population that reports having confidence in local law enforcement institutions (i.e., police and courts)	10	Sustainable Governance	Social media survey
6.3	Intentional homicide rate	16	Safe Governance	Administrative data
7	**Health & Wellbeing**			
7.1	Average overall mental health rating	3	Resilient Society	Social media survey
7.2	Healthy life expectancy at birth (HALE)	3	Sustainable Society	Administrative data
7.3	Percentage of population satisfied with public healthcare facilities provided by the city	3	Inclusive Society	Social media survey
8	**Housing**			
8.1	Shelter cost to income ratio	11	Inclusive Economy	Administrative data
8.2	Proportion of population reporting 'it is easy to find good housing in my city at a reasonable price'	11	Safe Society	Social media survey
9	**Social Cohesion**			
9.1	Proportion of population that reports very or somewhat strong sense of attachment to their city	16	Inclusive Society	Social media survey
9.2	Proportion of the population that reports having people to turn for help (family, friends and neighbors)	16	Resilient Culture	Social media survey
BM	**Benchmark**			
BM1	Taking everything in your life into consideration, on a scale of 1 to 10, how satisfied are you with your life these days?	3	Sustainable Culture	Social media survey

3.2 – What is the Local Layer of indicators?

As previously mentioned, quality-of-life priorities will differ by community. Therefore, the Index includes a layer of indicators that are defined by the residents of the city themselves. The Local Layer allows your city to set indicators that capture those quality-of-life values, priorities, and contextual and cultural nuances that are specific to your context.

The Local Layer of indicators is crucial for tailoring the Quality of Life Index to reflect the unique conditions, priorities and challenges of each city.
Unlike the Global Layer of indicators, which has been designed through a global consultation process, it is the responsibility of the city to determine the Local Layer indicators that are most important to them. This is done through a local consultation process.

To aid in the development of the Local Layer, step 4 provides a step-by-step guide for cities to develop and implement their Local Layer indicators as part of the Quality of Life Index.

The Local Layer of Indicators Workshop

The process of identifying local indicators is conducted through a two-day in-person workshop, hosted by a skilled and independent facilitator such as an external person with expertise in urban monitoring and workshop facilitation.

The workshop aims to identify quality-of-life priorities in your city across the nine domains and select relevant indicators for measuring those priority areas.

Step 4
Indicators Development

Now that you have learned about the Global and Local Layer indicators, it is time to develop your city's Local Layer indicators. This section of the guidelines walks you through each step of preparing for the local layer indicators workshop, hosting it, and arriving at a refined list of local layer indicators before starting the process of data collection.

Sub Steps

4.1 – How do you incorporate crowd-sourcing?

4.2 – How do you prepare for the Local Laye rindicators workshop?

4.3 – What is the pre-workshop inception meeting?

4.4 – How do you develop your Local Layer indicators?

4.5 – How to refine the list of Local Layer indicators?

Step 4 – Indicators Development

4.1 – How do you incorporate crowdsourcing into developing your city's Local Layer indicators?

Consider how truly representative and impactful your city's Local Layer indicators could be if they were shaped by directly capturing your inhabitants' current concerns and priorities. While the workshop provides a structured environment to develop these indicators, it's challenging to fully capture the diverse perspectives of your community in a two-day session with stakeholder representatives.

Crowdsourcing can provide rich, invaluable information by gathering input from your inhabitants on their quality-of-life priorities and understanding why addressing these priorities would enhance their quality of life. The insights gathered from this process can be directly integrated into the workshop programme, ensuring that the priorities and perspectives of your community are effectively captured and addressed.

Below is a summarised list of various crowdsourcing objectives, methods, and tools that your city could implement. Further information on crowdsourcing and partnerships will be available soon as part of the guidelines annex.

Crowdsourcing objectives

Compiling information about the views on and priorities for quality of life from your city's inhabitants can be a very open-ended exercise. It should also be an ongoing process that captures views as they change over time.

To provide some focus in this first phase, you could use either of the following frameworks for discussion:

1. **Using the nine domains as the framework, either:**

   - Rank the domains in order of priority for policy and investment focus.

   - Define within each domain what the core priorities for quality of life should be and why.

2. **Deploy the social media survey questions from the Global Layer of the Index.**

   This information can then be used by the workshop participants to guide their thinking on the complementary priorities and indicators that should be included in the Local Layer.

If your city already employs crowdsourcing methods, that's fantastic. If not, this is a perfect opportunity to implement an innovative approach that taps into the real pulse of your city.

This not only ensures that the indicators truly reflect the needs and priorities of your inhabitants but also fosters a greater sense of community ownership in the Quality of Life Initiative.
Share with us your crowdsourcing success story!

Crowdsourcing methods

01

Online Surveys:
Distribute online surveys through your city's official website and social media channels to gather input from a wide audience.

02

Public Forums and Digital Town Halls:
You could host virtual town halls where residents can voice their concerns and suggest indicators in real time.

03

Social Media Engagement:
Engage your city's inhabitants with polls and discussion threads via social media to quickly gather diverse opinions.

04

Interactive Mapping Tools:
Where applicable, use GIS-based tools to let residents mark areas of concern or opportunity in the city, offering spatial data for analysis.

International Development Partners

Local Media Outlets

Social Media Influencers

Digital Marketing Agencies

Environmental Organizations

Data Analytics Firms

Youth Organizations

Examples from our pilot cities

Talk Vancouver is an online public consultation and engagement platform run by the City of Vancouver, Canada. It allows residents, workers, and students over the age of 15 to participate in surveys, provide feedback, and engage with city projects and initiatives. By joining the platform, participants can share their views on various local issues, helping shape decisions on topics such as city planning, infrastructure, and environmental initiatives. (Welcome to Talk Vancouver)

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Partnerships for crowdsourcing

Consider the following partnerships for deploying crowdsourcing mechanisms, as they could aid with reach, funding and gathering of responses.

Academic institutions

Technology companies

Chambers of commerce

Urban planning firms

The City&Me developed in Niš, Serbia, is designed to foster communication and interaction between citizens and local authorities, promoting sustainable urban living. It allows users to engage in eco-friendly activities, such as walking, cycling, and recycling, and rewards them with tokens (CM tokens) that can be exchanged for goods and services at selected partners. (City&Me, AppAdvice).

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4.2 – How do you prepare for the Local Layer indicators workshop?

Objective of the workshop

The objective of this workshop, through a consultative process, is to arrive at a list of Local Layer indicators, that corresponds to challenges and priorities in your city, under each of the nine quality-of-life domains. That means:

1 **Identifying the quality-of-life priorities** for your city within each relevant urban domain.

2 **Documenting the causal links** between the priorities and potential changes in quality of life, ensuring a clear understanding of how addressing these priorities will improve inhabitants' well-being.

3 **Agreeing on the optimum (and measurable) indicators** for measuring whether those priorities are being successfully and effectively addressed.

4 **Initiating data collection** by identifying and compiling high-quality data for the selected indicators.

Be mindful of the overall principles of the Index: It is important that the best possible Local Layer indicators be selected to reliably measure the priority aspects of quality of life. Consequently, the focus should be on "must-have" rather than "nice-to-have" indicators for the quality-of-life issues that are a true priority for your city.

Pre-workshop planning & preparation

Below is a list of the requirements needed to successfully deliver the workshop.

General logistics requirements

- **Determine the date for the two-day workshop in advance,** to ensure successful participation from a representation of stakeholder groups. It is suggested to announce the workshop and invite participants at least two weeks prior to conducting the workshop.

- **Develop the agenda for each day.** It is suggested that each day should be composed of two 2-hour sessions with a 1-hour break in between.

- **Identify the location for the workshop to manage reservations and needed resources as necessary**. Many cities have successfully hosted the workshop at municipal premises.
The city can also reach out to civil society organizations, private sector entities or academic partners to (co-)host the event.

Location requirements

- **Room size:** Large enough to fit up to 20 people comfortably. Experiences among participating pilot cities have shown that a U-shaped seating plan is optimal.

- **Equipment needed:** Screen, A/V, easels, white board for facilitator to take notes during sessions.

Participants

- **Identify a skilled workshop facilitator.** This could include professionals with expertise in urban planning, data or social science, or public policy. The facilitator's role is to guide participants through discussions and exercises designed to identify the key local indicators.

- **Plan for having as many participants as you need to cover the nine quality-of-life domains,** based on the stakeholder mapping completed in step 2.2. Aim to keep the number below 20. This will help ensure the discussions remain constructive and manageable.
  Experiences have shown that smaller workshop groups lead to more productive discussion. However, it is important to ensure adequate and inclusive representation.

- **Prepare invitations for the participants** and stakeholder representatives.

4.3 – What is the pre-workshop Inception Meeting?

Before the workshop, it is advisable to organize a pre-workshop inception meeting. This provides an opportunity to update all stakeholders on the details of the initiative and identify the municipalities interested in participating. Organizing the inception meeting is crucial to the success of the Local Layer indicators workshop, as it ensures that all those participating have the information, they need for effective engagement in the workshop.

The inception meeting introduces the Quality of Life Initiative, the compulsory indicators that comprise the Global Layer and the Local Layer process to the identified participants prior to the workshop.

This way, all participants are familiar with the Initiative and the objectives of the workshop, and they have the necessary context and information to participate in an effective and meaningful way.

It is recommended to host the inception meeting at least one week prior to the workshop. In most instances, the inception meeting can be done online and is scheduled for one hour. The designated workshop facilitator leads the inception meeting and presents on the background of the Initiative, describes the format and structure of the workshop and answers any questions the participants may have ahead of the workshop.

A copy of the pre-workshop inception meeting PowerPoint presentation template is available in the technical package shared after registration.

Key considerations

- **Anticipate Non-Attendance:** Despite emphasizing the importance of attending the inception meeting, some participants or stakeholders may not be present. In that case, the designated facilitator should be prepared to begin the two-day workshop with a summary of the Initiative, the Index and the workshop's objectives to ensure everyone is aligned.

- **Addressing Questions:** During the inception meeting, the facilitator should expect and be ready to address technical questions related to indicators or other topics relevant to the city's quality of life. While answering these questions, the facilitator should guide that conversation towards the workshop, encouraging participants to delve deeper into technical discussions during the designated sessions.

    Remember, the purpose of the inception meeting is to ensure that all participants enter the workshop with a clear and thorough understanding of the Initiative and the objectives of the workshop. It is the workshop itself where priorities will be identified, and indicators will be selected.

- **Confirm Logistics:** The facilitator, along with the leading local government representative, should leave the inception meeting with clear confirmation that all workshop logistics and planning requirements are in place and ready for execution.

4.4 – How to develop the Local Layer Indicators?

The set-up of the workshop

The setup of the workshop should promote an interactive environment that encourages active participation and ensures that all voices are captured during the meeting. Consider the following elements:

- **Seating arrangement:** You may want to arrange the seating in a U-shape which allows all participants to face each other, promoting open dialogue and interaction. Ensure that there is enough space in the centre for the facilitator to move freely while still being able to visually and audibly interact with all the participants.

- **Visual aids:** Set up a board or flip chart that is clearly visible to all participants. The facilitator could use this board to document key points and ideas as they emerge during the discussion.

- **Assign a note taker:** Assign a designated note taker who will sit in a position where they can clearly hear the discussion and see the board. Based on the experience of piloting this process, it is highly recommended you assign a dedicated person that is not the facilitator to document the discussion points for each domain during the sessions. This is crucial in ensuring that all insights and decisions are accurately captured, and the final list of local indicators is developed.

Format of the Workshop

The following proposed format was successfully implemented and fine-tuned with the aid of 10 pilot cities under the Quality of Life Initiative.

DAY 1

The objective of the first day of the workshop, led by the designated facilitator, is to encourage and challenge participants to discuss your city's most critical issues and priorities from a quality of life perspective. This discussion will be structured across each of the nine domains and informed by inputs gathered from the city's inhabitants.

The workshop will ensure that participants take into account the lived experiences and priorities expressed by the city's inhabitants, placing their views at the heart of the discussion.

As noted in step 4.2, some participants may not have attended the inception meeting prior to the workshop. In that regard, it is prudent to reintroduce the Quality of Life Initiative and the Quality of Life Index, and to highlight the objective of the two-day workshop, with a focus on the deliverable and expected outcomes of the first day.

Session 1 – Priority Definition / Duration: Two hours

Objective: To identify the critical and current urban priorities pertaining to quality of life in your city under the nine quality-of-life domains. .

Basic services & mobility

Culture & recreation

Economy

Education

Environment

Governance

Health & well-being

Housing

Social cohesion

The facilitator will guide participants through each domain, prompting them to focus on the most pressing quality-of-life issues currently faced by the city. If your city has implemented a crowdsourcing or sentiment analysis strategy, the facilitator will present the gathered information at the beginning of each domain discussion. This data will help participants to address the most relevant challenges and priorities from the perspective of your city's inhabitants.

The facilitator's role is to encourage participants to think critically and to challenge their assertions about the priorities, asking for specific examples to support their claims. The aim is to delve into the root causes of the problems to confirm their impact on quality of life, without overly influencing participants' perspectives.

Each facilitator will have a slightly different way of managing the exercise, but at the end of this session it is important that the facilitator leave some time to reflect on and group the priority issues. It is very likely that some of the issues are effectively the same, just expressed in a different way. These should be combined into a single issue.

This session should be held on the morning of Day 1 to allow a sufficient break before commencing the second session. It is worth noting that sometimes these discussions can go on beyond the two-hour period.
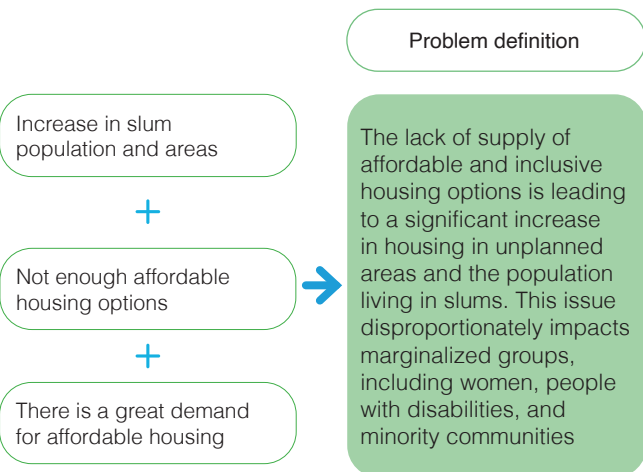
In these cases, we recommend the facilitator:

1. Always be aware of the time and keep conversations focused on the purpose.

2. Allow a short break after two hours to allow participants to refresh themselves and reflect on the outcomes thus far.

3. Agree with the participants to reconvene for a specified amount of time (e.g. one hour). Time may be made up at some other point over the two days, either by having a shorter lunch, going longer or curtailing Session 4.

From experience with the pilot cities, it is more likely that Sessions 1 and 3 will run long, rather than Sessions 2 and 4. Facilitators should be mindful of this when managing time.

During the break between the sessions, the facilitator should summarize the priorities in clear statements and put this in a visible location for participants to review while they are taking their break. These statements can be in the form of cause and consequence. For example, the lack of affordable housing (cause) is leading to an increase in the proportion of residents living in slums (consequence).
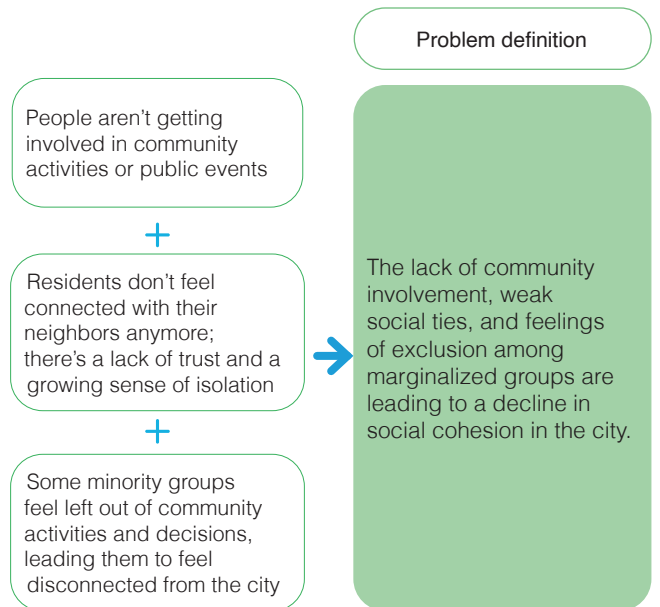
Example 1 - Session 1

The example below demonstrates various statements regarding a priority/challenge faced by the city, and how it can be challenged and further developed by the facilitator. An example from one of the pilot cities regarding the housing domain can be found below.

Problem definition

Increase in slum population and areas

+

Not enough affordable housing options

+

There is a great demand for affordable housing

The lack of supply of affordable and inclusive housing options is leading to a significant increase in housing in unplanned areas and the population living in slums. This issue disproportionately impacts marginalized groups, including women, people with disabilities, and minority communities

Example 2 - Session 1

An additional example below highlights some of the statements within the social cohesion domain and illustrates how it is scrutinized and further developed by the facilitator.

Problem definition

People aren't getting involved in community activities or public events

+

Residents don't feel connected with their neighbors anymore; there's a lack of trust and a growing sense of isolation

+

Some minority groups feel left out of community activities and decisions, leading them to feel disconnected from the city

The lack of community involvement, weak social ties, and feelings of exclusion among marginalized groups are leading to a decline in social cohesion in the city.

**Session 2 – Benefit Identification /
Duration: Two hours**

Objective: This session has two primary objectives:

1. To reconfirm the priorities identified in Session 1. In fact, during this session it is likely that you will agree to amend or even remove some of those priorities.

2. To identify the tangible benefits of addressing priority issues under each of the nine domains, using a quality-of-life lens. By focusing on the causal links between the city's actions and their impact on quality of life, participants will document how targeting specific urban challenges leads to meaningful improvements for residents.

   This process will ensure that priorities are aligned with the goal of enhancing quality of life in a sustainable and inclusive manner and, most importantly, it will help inform the thinking for Session 3 about how to measure progress on the priorities.

In view of objective 2 in particular, it is important that the facilitator keep the purposes of Sessions 1 and 2 separate. Participants can use the time between the two sessions to reflect on the findings.

The workshop facilitator could approach this session by guiding participants to use the quality-of-life lenses – accessibility, choices, connectedness & belonging, equity, inclusion and safety – to assess the benefits of addressing the identified priorities in each domain.

This reframing will provide a comprehensive understanding of how specific actions can improve urban living conditions for all residents, including women, the elderly, marginalized groups and people with disabilities. For example, prioritizing housing affordability through the "affordable" and "accessible" lenses will highlight the benefits to low-income households and ensure that housing is accessible to people with disabilities. Similarly, enhancing public space safety and connectedness promotes community well-being, particularly for vulnerable groups like women and the elderly. These discussions will help shape actionable solutions and inform post-implementation strategies that are responsive to the diverse needs of your city's inhabitants.

Example 1 - Session 2

The example below demonstrates the identified benefit based on the concept of theory of change of addressing the city's housing priority/challenge, as defined in Session 1.

Problem definition	Benefit identification
The lack of supply of affordable and inclusive housing options is leading to a significant increase in housing in unplanned areas and the population living in slums. This issue disproportionately impacts marginalized groups, including women, people with disabilities, and minority communities.	By increasing the supply of affordable and inclusive housing options, the city can significantly reduce the growth of unplanned areas and improve living conditions for its inhabitants. Enhanced housing availability would lead to more stable and safe living environments, reducing the socioeconomic disparities and fostering a more inclusive and connected community.

Example 2 - Session 2

The example below demonstrates the identified benefit based on the concept of theory of change of addressing the city's social cohesion priority/challenge, as defined in Session 1.

Problem definition	Benefit identification
The lack of community involvement, weak social ties, and feelings of exclusion among marginalized groups are leading to a decline in social cohesion in the city.	Through targeted initiatives that are accessible, inclusive and safe for all inhabitants, including marginalized groups, the city can enhance trust, build stronger social bonds, and create a more connected and engaged community. This will lead to a more cohesive society where everyone feels valued and involved in the life of the city, ultimately improving overall quality of life.

DAY 2

Building on the priorities and benefits captured under each domain during Day 1 of the Workshop, Day 2 of the workshop is focused on selecting the best indicators that help report on and quantify the priorities identified in Session 1, enabling your city's local government to deliver a targeted, evidence-based action plan that aims to reach the impact identified in Session 2.

> **!** **Please note** that Day 2 sessions are dedicated to indicator selection, and hence it is important to know that the data collection process takes place after the workshop, as explained further in steps 5 and 5.2.

Session 3 – Indicator Selection / Duration: Two hours

This session focuses on selecting both ideal and backup indicators that correspond to the compiled list of priorities areas and identified benefits under each domain.

A general rule is that the process of selecting the indicators should follow the SMART objectives, meaning it is best to prioritize indicators that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound.

Objective	Explanation	Example
Specific	The indicator should clearly define what it is measuring and why	Measuring "percentage of households with access to clean drinking water" rather than just "access to water."
Measureable	The indicator should be quantifiable, allowing for easy tracking and comparison.	A measurable indicator might be "number of parks per 10,000 residents."
Achievable	The indicator should be realistic and attainable given your city's resources and constraints.	An achievable indicator could be "percentage increase in enrollment in public schools within five years."
Relevant	The indicator should align with the city's strategic priorities and the specific needs of its residents.	Focusing on "number of new affordable housing units constructed" is relevant if your city is facing housing shortages.
Timebound	The indicator must have a clear timeframe for achieving the goal, providing a deadline for evaluation.	A time-bound indicator could be "reduction in traffic-related fatalities over two years."

The Quality of Life Initiative Technical Team has completed an extensive research programme and identified the following factors to consider when you go through the process of selecting the indicators.

1. Are there existing local indicators and initiatives that align with the identified priorities?

If yes, begin the selection process by examining these indicators. This will help avoid redundancy and leverage the work that has already been done. Sources for these indicators are further explored in step 5.2.

2. Does the indicator measure one or more of the following lenses of quality of life:

Accessibility

Affordability

Choice

Connectedness & belonging

Equity

Inclusion

Safety

Satisfaction & adequacy

3. Is the indicator relevant to the city's strategic priorities and within their jurisdictional area?

4. Is the indicator measuring an input or an outcome?

While the former can be useful, in many or most cases, the latter is preferable. For example, an input metric might be the number of parks built for a city. An outcome would be the number of people who regularly visit a park in the city. The latter (the outcome) is a much more direct measure of quality of life, as it measures a tangible outcome (people enjoying themselves in the park) rather than a potential impact (you may build a park, but if it is in the wrong place, badly designed, dangerous or of poor quality, people may not use it).

5. Is the indicator consistently directional?

That is, it is very clear which direction of change indicates an increase or decrease in quality of life. A good example is that cleaner air is positively and directly related to improved quality of life.

6. Is the indicator a unique measure of quality of life, or does it correlate highly with another indicator and therefore constitute a duplication of measurement?

Duplicates should be removed. See example below

Example:

- Percentage of population with access to healthcare services

- Number of healthcare facilities per capita

Both indicators measure aspects of healthcare accessibility. The first indicator measures how many people can access healthcare facilities, thus the second indicator does not offer additional insights into accessibility.

Consider selecting subjective indicators that can be collected through social media surveys. The global layer indicators already include several subjective indicators that will be gathered via a social media survey (more details can be found in Step 5.1). You can also add your local layer subjective indicators to the existing social media survey that has been developed and available in your received technical package.

Important considerations when selecting indicators:

Adapt to data availability: If your city has limited access to readily available data, consider selecting only one indicator per domain for the Local Layer.

Leverage robust data sources: If your city has good access to various data sources, you may choose to include multiple indicators under each domain for the Local Layer.

Keep it manageable: For effective and timely implementation, it is recommended that the total number of Local Layer indicators should not exceed 15–20.

Avoid duplication: If the Global Layer indicators already address the main priorities within a specific domain and are sufficient for measuring quality of life for that domain, you can limit additional indicators to avoid redundancy.

Dos and don'ts for indicator selection:

Do:

- Choose indicators that are directly relevant to the city's strategic goals.

- Ensure indicators are clear and easily understood by all stakeholders.

- Prioritize indicators that have a strong causal relationship with the desired quality-of-life outcomes.

- Focus on indicators that are unique and not overly correlated with other selected indicators.

Don't:

- Select indicators that are difficult or impossible to measure accurately or sustainably.

- Include indicators that are nice to have but do not reflect core priorities.

- Choose indicators that measure something the city has no way of influencing, even through lobbying.

- Include indicators that duplicate the Global Layer indicators.

The indicator selection is critical to the overall success of the work. Consequently, it will likely be necessary to have some post-workshop discussions to refine and sharpen the selection of Local Layer indicators. It is good practice to have a list of the Global Layer indicators on hand to identify and remove any duplication.

Below is a continuation of the examples provided for Sessions 1 and 2, followed by the indicators selected. The purpose of these examples is to demonstrate the rationale in the process of selecting the most suitable indicators.

Example 1 - Session 3

The example below demonstrates the identified benefit based on the concept of theory of change of addressing the city's housing priority/challenge, as defined in Session 1.

Problem definition   Benefit identification

The lack of supply of affordable and inclusive housing options is leading to a significant increase in housing in unplanned areas and the population living in slums. This issue disproportionately impacts marginalized groups, including women, people with disabilities, and minority communities.

By increasing the supply of affordable and inclusive housing options, the city can significantly reduce the growth of unplanned areas and improve living conditions for its inhabitants. Enhanced housing availability would lead to more stable and safe living environments, reducing the socioeconomic disparities and fostering a more inclusive and connected community.

Indicator Selection

Proportion of the population living in slums

The selected indicator is highly appropriate for measuring progress in addressing the problem and achieving the desired benefit. It is both a direct reflection of the issue/priority and a metric for evaluating the success of addressing this priority over time.

Example 2 - Session 3

The example below demonstrates the identified benefit based on the concept of theory of change of addressing the city's social cohesion priority/challenge, as defined in Session 1.

Problem definition   Benefit identification

The lack of community involvement, weak social ties, and feelings of exclusion among marginalized groups are leading to a decline in social cohesion in the city.

Through targeted initiatives that are accessible, inclusive and safe for all inhabitants, including marginalized groups, the city can enhance trust, build stronger social bonds, and create a more connected and engaged community. This will lead to a more cohesive society where everyone feels valued and involved in the life of the city, ultimately improving overall quality of life.

Indicator Selection

Percentage of people actively participating in community events or civic activities annually Survey question: "In the past year, how often have you participated in community events or civic activities (e.g. neighbourhood meetings, public forums, local festivals) i) in your neighbourhood, or ii) elsewhere in your city?"

This subjective indicator effectively measures social cohesion and civic engagement, providing valuable insights into community participation and potentially helping to guide policies to enhance inclusiveness.

**Session 4 – Data Discovery /
Duration: One to two hours**

On the afternoon of Day 2, a final session will start the data discovery process. This will primarily be a technical discussion on data availability, data quality, proxy data options, data access and resource implications. This will be based on the indicators selected under each domain during Session 3.

Additional data experts/technical personnel may be required to provide a detailed understanding of the data available to the city for this last session.

Note that as it is expected that some indicators may be replaced or removed after the workshop, this session will only be a preliminary step in the identification and compilation of data. A successful outcome will be a reasonable understanding of data sources and gaps for the selected indicators, in preparation for step 5, and a general agreement about how the participants, the city and the facilitator will cooperate to collect the data.

The outcome of the workshop

The expected outcome/deliverable of this workshop is a compiled report that clearly captures and articulates the findings of each session (1 through 4) of Day 1 and 2, for each domain. This will be the responsibility of the facilitator, with support from the note taker.

The table below is a sample template of the compiled outcome of all 4 sessions for each domain category. Please refer to the workshop outcomes PowerPoint presentation template available in the technical package provided after registration.

Domains 1 -9

Problem Definition	Benefit Identification	Indicator Selection	Data Discovery

Key Considerations for the workshop

1 **Engaging a skilled facilitator:**
It's essential to have a facilitator who can effectively probe participants to ensure that the issues discussed are representative of the entire community, rather than the concerns of just a few individuals. The facilitator should prepare for the inception meeting and workshop using the detailed Facilitator's Guidelines provided in the shared technical package.

2 **Inclusive representation among participants**:
Ensure that the group of participants (up to 20 people) reflects the diversity of views within your community, including marginalized groups such as women, the elderly, people with disabilities, and other minority communities. This will help ensure that all voices are heard, and the indicators developed are comprehensive and inclusive.

3 **Interactive engagement:**
Encourage participants to speak freely and share their perspectives, ensuring that the environment feels like a collaborative focus group rather than a formal meeting. The facilitator should engage participants through questions and prompts, ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to contribute.

4 **Focus on positives and negatives:**
Emphasize the importance of capturing both challenges and strengths to create a balanced and actionable set of indicators.

5 **Encouraging critical thinking:**
Prevent groupthink by fostering an environment where participants feel comfortable challenging ideas and critically analysing the issues at hand.

6 **Accounting for data disaggregation:**
Recognize that quality of life can vary significantly across different groups. Whenever possible, it is more valuable to disaggregate data by demographic group, so efforts should be made to determine how this can be done.

7 **Focus on cause and effect:**
Encourage participants to thoroughly consider the cause-and-effect relationship – that is, the link between the cause of a quality-of-life strength or weakness and the effect of that feature on quality of life. For example, the high cost of maternal healthcare (cause) can result in higher rates of infant mortality (consequence). The challenge is often in identifying the true, underlying cause. Not getting this right increases the risk of focusing on the wrong intervention.

Example:
Park maintenance and community health

- **Observation**: Low community physical health due to increased sedentary behaviour (effect).
- **Superficial cause:** Lack of awareness about fitness programmes.
- **True cause:** Poor maintenance of local parks and recreational spaces discourages outdoor activities.
- **Cause-and-effect relationship:** Poor park maintenance (cause) leads to fewer physical activities, resulting in poorer physical health (effect).

8 **Avoiding preconceived solutions**:
Avoid jumping to predetermined priorities or solutions. Ensure that all problems are thoroughly explored before moving to solutions.

9 **Cultural sensitivity:**
Emphasize the importance of cultural sensitivity during the workshop, especially when discussing issues that might be sensitive or contentious in different communities.

10 **Partnerships:**
Consider highlighting the importance of partnerships with academic institutions, NGOs and private sector entities to support the workshop's data collection and analysis efforts.

4.5 – How do you refine the list of Local Layer indicators?

It is expected and highly recommended that following the Local Layer workshop, the facilitator, in coordination with the local government and the Quality of Life Initiative focal point, should carefully analyse the workshop outcomes under each domain.

1. **Check for duplication with the Global Layer:**

   Ensure that the local indicators are unique and do not overlap with those already included in the Global Layer.

2. **Remove indicators that are difficult to collect:**

   Prioritize indicators for which data is available or can be reliably collected. Further guidance on the process of data collection will be available in step 5.

3. **Eliminate non-measurable indicators:**

   Focus on indicators that are clear, quantifiable and can be tracked over time.

4. **Prioritize indicators that can be addressed by your local government:**

   Ensure that selected indicators relate to issues within your local government's capacity to address and influence, even if it is just through advocacy to higher levels of government or other entities.

5. **Assess relevance to the local context:**

   Consider whether each indicator accurately reflects the specific challenges and opportunities discussed and documented through the workshop.

6. **Balance between subjective and objective indicators:**

   It is recommended that you consider a mix of both types to capture a comprehensive view of quality of life. Local subjective indicators can be included in the social media survey (see step 5 for further information).

7. **Consider data availability and reliability:**

   Prioritize indicators for which reliable and verified data sources exist.

Step 5

Data Collection and Index computation

By this step of the process, you have a good understanding of the Global Layer indicators, successfully completed the workshop and developed a list of Local Layer indicators based on your city's priorities and challenges.

The next step is the data collection and Index computation. This chapter guides you through the data collection process and identifies resources for both Global Layer and Local Layer indicators. Once the process is completed, you will have the values needed to populate your city's Excel sheet and start computing the Quality of Life Index.

Sub Steps

5.1 – How do you collect data for the Global Layer?

5.2 – How do you collect data for the Local Layer?

5.2 – How do you compute the Quality of Life Index?

5.4 – How do you validate the collected data?

Step 5 – Data collection and Index computation

Data collection considerations

It is important before you begin the data collection process to note the following data collection considerations.

- **Readily available data:**
  Leveraging data that is already available can significantly reduce the time and resources needed for data collection. But do not compromise the robustness of the Index. Data collection should be led by the objective of measuring and valuing what matters, not by what data is available.

- **Credible and updated data:**
  Ensure that data is sourced from reliable, updated and verified providers, such as national statistics offices, reputable institutions or companies specializing in data compilation and analysis. Outdated or unverified data would compromise the accuracy of the Index.

- **Data timeliness:**
  Collect data that is recent and reflects the current situation in your city. Timely data ensures that the Quality of Life Index accurately represents present conditions and can inform effective policymaking. Broadly speaking, we do not recommend using data from earlier than 2017.

- **Data disaggregation:**
  Where applicable, it is recommended to collect disaggregated indicators. Consider data disaggregated by relevant demographic characteristics (e.g. age, gender, persons with disabilities, etc.) and geographic location (e.g. district, neighbourhood, etc.). Disaggregated data is essential for uncovering disparities among various groups in your city and planning for more targeted solutions.

- **Inclusivity and representation:**
  Make sure that data collection efforts are inclusive and represent all segments of the population, including marginalized and vulnerable groups. This ensures that the Quality of Life Index captures the experiences and needs of all residents.

- **Flexibility and innovation in data collection:**
  Be adaptable in your approach to data collection by using a variety of methods and exploring innovative sources. For example, if survey responses are low, consider supplementing them with qualitative methods like focus groups or interviews. Additionally, innovative data sources such as mobile phone data, satellite imagery and social media analytics can provide unique insights that traditional methods may overlook.

5.1 – How do you collect data for the Global Layer?

The Global Layer indicators have predefined and well-developed methodologies, data sources and computational methods outlined in the *Measurement of Quality of Life Methodology and Metadata guide* included in your technical package. This guide serves as a comprehensive resource for understanding how each indicator is defined, the sources of data needed and the methodologies to be used.

We recommend a member of your team with indicator/data competency utilize the Global Layer metadata as a resource when collecting the data which should be entered into the Excel sheet provided in the shared technical package.

Earth observatin and GIS:
Provides objective, spatially accurate data that is widely available and useful for areas where traditional data may be scarce. These methods help in measuring aspects like environmental quality and urban expansion.

Administrative data:
Generated by your local government bodies, this data is derived from records of public services, healthcare, education and other civic amenities. It provides detailed and often real-time insights into various aspects of city management and urban life.

The Global Layer indicators data sources

The sources/methodologies developed to collect the data for the Global Layer indicators are innovative and globally applicable. The metadata guide provides the technical methodology needed for your city to implement and collect data for each Global Layer indicator successfully.
Below is a summary of each source/methodology.

Social media survey:
Capturing residents' perceptions and experiences enriches the narrative by providing a human-centric perspective that numbers alone cannot offer. This method is designed to capture a representative sample by targeting different demographic groups through social media ads, ensuring broad and inclusive participation.

Mobile data:
Reveals actual behaviour patterns and preferences, offering insights that are not captured by conventional indicators such as proximity-based measures.

Consider the following steps for the Global Layer data collection process

1. **Review and follow the methodology and metadata guide:** Begin by thoroughly reviewing the Measurement of Quality of Life Methodology and Metadata guide. This document contains detailed definitions, data sources, disaggregation options and methodologies for each indicator.

2. **Reach out to data providers:** Engage with various data providers, such as international organizations, government entities, academic institutions and the private sector, to gather the necessary data as outlined in the metadata guide. Each provider may offer different data sets that are critical for computing your city's indicators.

3. **Normalize and compute indicators:** Follow the normalization procedures described in the metadata guide. Once normalized, compute the indicator value for each domain to ensure consistency and comparability across different data sets. More information on data normalization can be found in step 5.3.

4. **Present results to stakeholders:** Share the collected data and computed indicator values with relevant stakeholders to conduct a sense check and validate the results. This collaborative review process helps ensure data accuracy and reliability.

5.2 – How do you collect data for the Local Layer?

By now, you have selected and refined your city's list of Local Layer indicators during the workshop. Here is a step-by-step guide to facilitate the data collection process based on the type of indicator under each domain.

For objective indicators

1.

The first thing to consider, as a lightweight approach, is whether certain selected indicators were already reported and included in any of the following UN-Habitat data initiatives:

- **Voluntary Local Reviews (VLR):**
  Check if your city has published a recent VLR report, which often includes indicators aligned with the SDGs. Some of your Local Layer indicators might already be included in that report.

  > **Nis VLR:** The city of Nis in Serbia, was part of our pilot cities participating and implementing the Quality of Life Index process. It is launching its first VLR, and successfully utilised the data available through its VLR Report to collect a few of its Local Layer Indicators

- **City Prosperity Index (CPI) reports:**
  If your city has been involved in CPI assessments, these reports contain valuable data sets and indicators that can directly be used for your selected Local Layer indicators.

- **Urban Monitoring Framework (UMF) reports/ databases:**
  Check if your city has previously engaged in UMF activities. The UMF database and reports can provide a wealth of data relevant to your selected indicators.

2.

Next, determine the category which your selected indicators fall under, as this will help direct you to the source of that data. Consider the following categories and their potential sources:

Satellite mapping and remote sensing:
Utilize satellite imagery and remote sensing data to collect data for spatial indicators.

Geographic information system (GIS) Data:
Leverage GIS data for indicators requiring georeferenced data and for network analysis. Examples include transportation networks and green spaces, among others.

National statistics office data and surveys:
Reach out to your national/state/provincial statistical agencies to obtain census data, data from household surveys, and other official statistics. These sources often provide reliable, standardized data that can be used to normalize/ benchmark your local indicators.

Administrative data:
For specific indicators on health & well-being, education, crime and tourism, reach out to your stakeholders in line ministries and thematic departments, such as health, tourism, education and other specific local government institutions. This data is often detailed and can be used to measure various indicators across the nine domains.

3.

If certain indicators cannot be collected through traditional methods, consider the following strategies for obtaining the required data:

A. Partnering with academic institutions

Urban labs and research centres:
Explore opportunities for your city to collaborate with universities that have urban research labs or centres focused on urban studies, geography, public policy or social sciences. These institutions often conduct studies and surveys that can provide valuable data.

Graduate programmes and thesis projects:
Engage with graduate programmes where students might be required to undertake research projects or theses. These students may have collected or analysed data related to your indicators as part of their academic work.

Academic conferences and publications:
Explore and access data and findings presented in academic conferences or published in journals, which may offer new insights or supplementary data for your indicators.

B. Partnering with the private sector and/or local community organizations

Chambers of commerce and business associations:
Work with local chambers of commerce, business associations or industry groups. They may have access to economic, commercial or employment data that is relevant to your indicators.

Tech companies and start-ups:
Collaborate with technology firms, especially those in GIS, satellite imagery or data analytics, to provide innovative data collection solutions. Start-ups focusing on urban tech might offer cutting-edge tools or data that can enhance your collection efforts.

Real estate and construction companies:
Investigate partnering with real estate industry bodies, developers or construction firms that maintain detailed records on housing, land use and infrastructure, which can be valuable for urban development indicators.

4.

Lasty consider data from global sources, available through UN and other Global organizations databases.

- **UN-Habitat Global Urban Indicator Database:**
  The UN-Habitat Global Urban Indicator Database is a rich resource providing well-recognized methodologies for collecting SDG-based indicators.

- **UNICEF Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS):**
  MICS provides data on key health, education and social indicators, particularly focusing on children and women. This resource can be valuable for indicators related to social services, public health and education.

- **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD):**
  Access OECD databases for economic, environmental and social data. OECD reports often provide benchmarks and international comparisons that can be used to inform your local data.

- **World Bank Open Data:**
  The World Bank offers a wide range of data sets, including economic indicators, poverty levels and infrastructure metrics. These can be valuable for both indicator normalization and, in combination with some local level microsimulation, direct data collection.

- **World Health Organization (WHO) Global Health Observatory:**
  WHO provides data on public health, including disease prevalence, health service access and more.

- **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Institute for Statistics (UIS):**
  Utilize data from UIS for educational indicators, literacy rates and cultural metrics, which can be relevant for education and cultural domains.

For subjective indicators

Utilizing citizen-generated data:

- **Social media survey:**
  The Quality of Life Initiative includes subjective indicators in the Global Layer, data for which will be collected via a social media survey. If your city has selected subjective indicators for the Local Layer, these can be seamlessly integrated into the Global Layer social media survey, providing a comprehensive view of public sentiment. This survey can be distributed through your city's social media channels, ensuring broad reach and engagement.

- **Existing tools:**
  If your city already utilizes existing tools for citizen engagement, such as community apps, feedback forms or public consultation platforms, these can be integrated into the data collection process. Leveraging these tools can enhance the richness of the data collected and ensure that a diverse range of voices is heard in the Quality of Life Initiative.

- **Other community surveys and participatory tools:**
  Engage local communities through field surveys, focus groups and other participatory tools to gather qualitative and quantitative data directly from your inhabitants. This approach provides valuable insights into public perceptions, needs and experiences, offering a direct connection to the indicators selected for the Quality of Life Initiative.

- **Crowdsourced data:**
  Leverage crowdsourcing platforms to collect data on specific urban issues.
  This approach empowers your city's inhabitants to contribute real-time information on topics such as transportation, public safety and environmental conditions, providing a dynamic snapshot of local challenges and opportunities. Crowdsourced data can complement more traditional data collection methods and offer a broader perspective on urban life.

5.3 – How do you compute the Quality of Life Index?

In this step, the aim is to provide a general understanding of how the Quality of Life Index is computed, so that you can familiarize yourself with its essential aspects.

A more technical guided explanation, including detailed computations, normalization, weighting and aggregation of indicators, will be provided as part of the guidelines appendix, currently being developed. In this section of the guidelines, we will simplify those concepts for practical understanding.

Building an Index

An index, also known as a composite indicator, is a statistical tool that combines multiple indicators into a single measure. This measure offers a broad understanding of complex concepts like quality of life that individual indicators cannot capture alone.

An index, however, is not just a collection of random indicators. Instead, it requires a sound theoretical basis, the identification of relevant indicators, and several critical decisions around computation. While there are different approaches to developing and constructing an index, the following method is commonly used. Further details can be found in the Handbook on Constructing Composite Indicators: Methodology and User Guide, produced by OECD.

Step #	Step	Explanation
1	**Theoretical framework**	Establishing the underlying theory or concept that the index aims to measure, which guides the selection of indicators.
2	**Data selection**	Choosing relevant indicators that align with the theoretical framework and represent the different dimensions of the concept being measured.
3	**Imputation of missing data**	Handling any missing data in the selected indicators, often through methods like interpolation or estimation, to ensure a complete data set. In some cases, it is better to leave the data "empty".
4	**Multivariate analysis**	Analysing the relationships between indicators to identify patterns, correlations and redundancies before combining them into an index.
5	**Normalization**	Converting indicators to a common scale so they can be combined, ensuring that indicators with different units or scales are comparable.
6	**Weighting & aggregation**	Assigning weights to indicators based on their importance and combining them into a single index score, often through a weighted average.
7	**Uncertainty & sensitivity analysis**	Assessing how changes in data, weights or methodology affect the index, to ensure its robustness and reliability.
8	**Back to the data**	Revisiting and refining the data or indicators used based on findings from earlier steps, ensuring they are still relevant and accurate.
9	**Links to other indicators**	Connecting the index to other relevant indicators or data sets to provide additional context or enhance its explanatory power.
10	**Visualization of the results**	Presenting the index in a clear and accessible way, often through charts, graphs or maps, to communicate the findings to stakeholders effectively.

Computing the Index for the Global Layer

The global indicators are predefined and standardized for all cities. The data collection process, as explained in step 5.1, follows specific methodologies such as social media surveys, mobile data and GIS mapping, which are outlined in the Measurement of Quality of Life Methodology and Metadata guide.

Once the data for the Global Layer indicators is input into the provided Excel sheet, the system automatically normalizes, weights and aggregates the values to produce the Global Layer of the Quality of Life Index.

Here is a simplified breakdown of the process:

- **Normalization:**
  Each data point is transformed to a common scale (0–100) so that different indicators can be compared. For example, the best possible outcome for an indicator is represented as 100, and the worst as 0. This makes it easier to compare various data sets across cities.

- **Weighting:**
  Different aspects of quality of life may have different levels of importance. In the Global Layer, the weighting is preset and applied automatically in the Excel sheet, reflecting the importance of each indicator based on global standards.

- **Aggregation:**
  After normalization and weighting, the indicators are combined corresponding to the automated method in the Excel sheet to generate the index values. A simple average aggregation has been adopted for this initiative. This gives a comprehensive picture of how your city is performing across various dimensions of quality of life.

How the Excel sheet works for the Global Layer indicators

The provided Excel sheet in the technical package simplifies the Index computation process for the Global Layer. You only need to input data, and the system will automatically handle normalization, weighting and aggregation. This ensures that even if you are not familiar with technical computations, you can still generate reliable Quality of Life Index Global Layer values for your city.

Computing the Index for the Local Layer

The process for the Local Layer is similar but with more flexibility, as your city had chosen its own indicators that reflect local priorities. The steps below outline a generalized guide for computing the index for your local indicators:

- **Normalization:**
  Just like the Global Layer, each local indicator must be normalized to a 0–100 scale. This ensures that indicators from different data sources or representing different units can be compared.

- **Weighting:**
  For the Local Layer, your city has the ability to assign weights to the indicators based on what is most important for you. You might, for example, decide to give more weight to housing affordability than cultural participation, depending on local priorities.

- **Aggregation:**
  Aggregation combines the normalized components into a single composite indicator, providing a concise summary of the multidimensional concept under consideration. The choice of aggregation method depends on the nature of the data and the objectives of the composite indicator. Common aggregation techniques include simple average, weighted average, factor analysis and principal component analysis. As stated above, simple average aggregation has been adopted for this initiative.

5.4 – How do you validate the collected data?

Validating collected data and index values prior to sharing and uploading data through the Quality of Life Platform is essential to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the Quality of Life Index values for your city.

It is also good practice to undertake a sense check in order to identify potential outliers and problematic data sets. Verifying the data involves a few simple and easy-to-follow steps.

1.
Assemble a validation team:

It is recommended to include the same stakeholder groups and participants from-0 the Local Layer Indicator selection workshop, or, at least, those with the relevant subject matter knowledge about the indicators and the data proposed for measuring them.

2.
Initial Review and Preparation

- Ensure data is organized according to predefined indicators.

- Check for completeness, consistency and accuracy. Address any discrepancies before the validation workshop.

3.
Conducting the Data Validation workshop/ meeting

- Present findings from the data collection exercise for both the global and local indicators.

- Showcase relevant information such as the data values, mode of computation, source, administrative level and year. It is also useful to supplement with temporal data (e.g. previous year) to show directionality.

4.
Group discussions and validation:

- Share and discuss with the relevant stakeholders the results of your data collection and index values.

- Reference the metadata guides provided and validation checklists.

- Flag and resolve any discrepancies.

5.
Finalizing and approving data:

- Document validated data and any changes made.

- Obtain final approval from stakeholders.

Stage 3
Managing

Timeline 1–2 months

Stage 3 marks the beginning of managing the Quality of Life Index values for your city. By this stage, you have collected data for both the Global and Local Layers and computed your city's index values. The next critical step is to interpret and analyse what these figures mean in relation to your city's progress.

This stage serves as a brief introduction to Part III of the guidelines (post-implementation), which is currently under development. In the following section, you learn the process of uploading the data to the Quality of Life Platform and use its innovative tools and features to support your analysis and evidence-based planning. Moving forward, you will have access to best practices, relevant policies, and forthcoming details about the award process.

Step 6

Index Interpretation & Management

Sub Steps

6.1 - How to interpret your city's Quality of Life values?

6.2 - How to manage your city's Quality of Life Index?

Step 6 – Index interpretation & management

6.1 - How do you interpret your city's Quality of Life Index values?

Your city's commitment to measuring the Quality of Life Index is highly recognized by the Quality of Life Initiative. By using this index and its evidence-based process, your city gains the information needed to drive policy and urban planning changes that improve residents' quality of life.

To sustain this momentum beyond the guided implementation, it is crucial to develop and adopt a robust data interpretation and management mechanism for the Global, Local, and combined Quality of Life Index values. This ensures the continuous accuracy and relevance of the Quality of Life Index, guiding your city towards sustained improvement of its inhabitants' lives.

While the Quality of Life Index is not a tool used for comparison, the Global Layer indicators are meant to measure quality-of-life attributes that are common to most (if not all) cities. By contrast, the Local Layer indicators may only be relevant to your city and are important for measuring the progress made in improving quality-of-life priorities for your city's inhabitants.

When the indicators are combined, the resulting index values operate as a tool for your city's policy and planning interventions. The Index has been explicitly designed to be an effective policy and planning and monitoring tool, not a tool for ranking cities.

Guided example – Understanding index values and policy actions

To make informed decisions using the Quality of Life Index, it's important for cities to interpret their index values meaningfully. This example illustrates how a city can analyse its Quality of Life Index, identify root causes behind low and high scores, and take practical steps to improve. We'll focus on a real-world scenario related to physical activity and health.

Example: Health & well-being domain

Layer	Indicator	Normalized score	Raw value
Global	Healthy life expectancy at birth (HALE) (Females)	Global minimum (F): 44.63 years Global maximum (F): 73.65 years Score (min-max): 90.87	71 Years
Global maximum (F): 73.65 years	Amount of physical activity per week (Females) This was a survey question: "On average, how much time do you spend engaging in physical activity per week?"	Global minimum (F): 150 minutes/week Global maximum (F): 300 minutes/ week Score (min-max): 11.67	167.5 minutes/ week

A. Analyse the scores

1. High scores:

- HALE Index score (90.87): This score suggests that the city is performing well in terms of healthy life expectancy at birth. The real value of 71 years indicates that, on average, residents can expect to live in good health until this age. The normalization computation is done using the min-max function described earlier. Although not a perfect score (of 100), the city's normalized HALE value for females of 90.87 is still quite high.

  What your city can do: Celebrate the policies that have helped achieve this result. Investigate which public health measures, healthcare services or environmental factors (such as clean air and good sanitation) have played a key role in improving life expectancy. Can these successes be replicated in other areas of health & well-being, such as mental well-being or preventive care? Sharing this success with residents can also build public trust in city governance.

  Identify how various sectors, such as environmental policy (air quality, clean water), infrastructure (hospitals, parks) and social services (public health, education) contribute to life expectancy. Collaborate across sectors to ensure that these areas are continually reinforced and assess whether successes in these areas can be translated to other domains, such as mental health.

2. Low Scores:

- Physical activity Index score (11.67): This is a relatively low level of physical activity for inhabitants. It suggests that people are not meeting the recommended levels of physical activity, which is least 150 to 300 minutes of moderate physical activity per week (or the equivalent of vigorous activity) for all adults, and an average of 60 minutes of moderate physical activity per day for children and adolescents (see WHO guidelines on physical activity at www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240015128). When normalized, the Index value is 11.67.

What your city can do: Low physical activity could be due to a variety of factors, including lack of access to parks, recreational facilities or walkable streets. Engage with stakeholders such as public health officials, community leaders and residents to understand why this is happening. In many cases, a lack of awareness, safety concerns or insufficient infrastructure could be the root causes.

Consider not only public health interventions but also the roles of urban planning (availability of parks and green spaces), transportation (accessibility of recreational areas) and community safety (whether people feel safe using these spaces). A lack of physical activity could be due to insufficient pedestrian infrastructure, unsafe neighbourhoods or limited public transportation, all of which require collaboration across multiple sectors. Involve transportation, urban planning and safety sectors alongside health departments to design interventions. For instance, creating safer, walkable streets (urban planning and public safety) or improving public transport routes to parks (transportation) can make a significant difference.

B. Policy and project examples from other cities

To tackle low physical activity levels, many cities around the world have implemented successful projects that can serve as inspiration:

1. Barcelona's "Superblocks"[1]:

Barcelona's "Superblocks" initiative aims to reduce traffic and increase pedestrian space in certain neighbourhoods. The project has significantly increased physical activity levels, as streets become car-free zones where residents can walk, cycle and socialize safely.

2. Bogotá's "Ciclovía"[2]:

Bogotá's weekly "Ciclovía" initiative opens streets to pedestrians and cyclists every Sunday. Over 1.7 million people participate, promoting physical activity and social interaction while reducing pollution.

3. New York City's "Green Gym"[3]:

New York City's "Green Gym" initiative has installed outdoor gyms in public parks to make exercise more accessible. The project particularly benefits lower-income and underserved communities by providing free and convenient fitness opportunities.

4. Copenhagen's affordable housing and public space planning[4]:

Overview: Copenhagen's successful integration of affordable housing with accessible public spaces demonstrates how urban design can promote health & well-being. Housing developments are intentionally located near parks, biking trails and other public amenities, creating vibrant, active communities. This approach has led to a rise in physical activity and a boost in social interaction among residents.

By implementing similar projects, your city can encourage more physical activity, improving overall health & well-being scores over time.

C. Analyse disaggregated data

To get a clearer picture, consider disaggregating your data by demographics, such as age, gender or income. For example, are older adults less active than younger residents? Do certain neighbourhoods have fewer opportunities for physical activity? Disaggregated data helps identify specific groups that might benefit from tailored interventions.

D. Use insights for policy and strategic planning

Policy adjustment:

Based on your findings, adjust existing policies or introduce new ones that promote physical activity. For example, you could create more green spaces, launch community fitness programmes or improve public transportation access to recreational areas. You could also work with private companies to sponsor fitness events or build new recreational facilities.

1 K. Burrowes and J. Schilling, "Lessons from Barcelona's Super-blocks Model," Urban Institute, vol. 12, October 2021, pp. 1–12.

2 Olga Sarmiento and others, "The Ciclovía-Recreativa: a mass-rec-reational program with public health potential", Journal of Physical Activity and Health, vol. 7, No. S2 (January 2010), pp. S163–S180.

3 S. Meddis, "New York City's Green Gym Initiative: Promoting Acces-sible Fitness in Public Spaces," Journal of Urban Health, vol. 9, no. 3, September 2018, pp. 45–58.

4 Lina Fayed, Abeer Elshater and Rowaida Rashed, "Copenhagen: a model for regenerative cities", paper presented at "Architecture and Urbanism: A Smart Outlook" conference, Cairo, October 2020

Policies promoting physical activity need to cut across sectors. For example, increasing green spaces is not just a task for urban planners; it also involves public health (programming exercise classes or fitness events in parks), transportation (improving access) and safety (providing adequate lighting and security). A coordinated strategy across departments can ensure that interventions are impactful and sustainable.

Strategic planning:

Integrate these insights into your city's long-term planning. If certain neighbourhoods have low levels of activity, prioritize infrastructure improvements in those areas, such as building parks, adding walking paths or enhancing lighting for safety. Consider awareness campaigns to educate residents on the importance of regular physical activity.

Encourage city leaders to involve multiple departments in the planning process. For example, prioritize infrastructure improvements in areas with low activity levels while collaborating with local schools to encourage physical education or with employers to support workplace wellness programmes.

By analysing the Quality of Life Index in this way, your city can not only identify areas for improvement but also take actionable steps to enhance the quality of life for all residents. Understanding the reasons behind both high and low scores allows for targeted interventions, ensuring that your city's policies and projects align with its unique needs and priorities.

6.2 – How do you manage your city's index through the Quality of Life Initiative Impact Platform

Overview of the Quality of Life Initiative Impact Platform

The Quality of Life Initiative Impact Platform is designed to help your city monitor and enhance urban well-being in the 21st century. Acting as a modern "operating system" for governments, it empowers rapid decision- making to support existing policies, policy development, and the implementation and monitoring of projects.

Built upon the Quality of Life Index framework, the platform integrates global and local indicators to help your city address a range of challenges and seize opportunities across the nine domains that influence quality of life: housing, health, basic services & mobility, governance, environment, economy, social, and culture & recreation. The platform provides four key technological solutions for your city:

- **City Dashboard:**
  A real-time visualisation of quality-of-life metrics, enabling city officials to track progress and prioritise improvements.

- **Impact Map:**
  A geographic visualisation tool that displays how various factors affect your city's neighbourhoods and regions.

- **AI City Assistant:**
  A conversational AI tool that allows city administrators to interact with city data using natural language processing (NLP), providing insights on demand.

- **Federated Data System:**
  A decentralised data infrastructure that ensures data privacy and control, supporting regional compliance (e.g., data sovereignty).

Key stakeholders & Benefits

- **Local Governments:**
  Gain actionable insights into public services, health, and urban infrastructure. The platform supports data-driven decision-making with indicators tailored to city-specific conditions, tracked and measured for tangible outcomes.

- **Inhabitants:**
  Empowered to engage with the platform to understand your city's strengths and areas for improvement, supporting informed decisions on factors influencing daily life.

- **United Nations**:
  Enables standardised reporting and global comparisons, supported by insights from both the global layer and the local layer's actions and impacts.

- **National Governments**:
  Facilitates national reporting and comparisons across cities through the platform's global index.

- **Researchers & NGOs**:
  Provides access to anonymised, aggregated, and disaggregated data for research, supporting advocacy for policy improvements and resource allocation.

Summary of steps: Using the Quality of Life Initiative Impact Platform

As the designated City Admin for your city, you have access to the QoL Impact Platform's features through your City Dashboard.

1. Login and access:
Gain access to the platform via a secure customized link (qolimpact.com/city/ YOURCITY/admin) sent to your official email. This will take you directly to your city's main dashboard, where you can begin managing your city's Quality of Life Index.

2. Platform navigation:
From the dashboard, you can log in or out, change language settings, and access links for uploading data, editing city information, and managing indicators.

3. Data upload and management:

- **Global Indicators:** Download and complete the provided CSV template with the required fields (normalised score, raw data, and year), then upload it to the platform. Review and edit as necessary.

- **Local Indicators:** Add your local indicators by entering the indicator name, description, and relevant data fields. Assign these indicators to their relevant domains and upload them to the dashboard

4. City profile customization
Use the "Edit City Info" button to update your city's population and enhance the "How's Life" section with information about the city's unique qualities.

5. Domain scores management:
Review and adjust scores across the nine Quality of Life domains—such as Health, Economy, and Environment—using data from both global and local indicators to provide an overview of performance by domain.

6. Indicators and initiatives tracking:

- Monitor and update both global and local indicators regularly. It is recommended that you update your global and local indicators on an annual or biannual basis.

- Track your city's local initiatives and projects that contribute to improving quality of life using project cards, where you can set targets and performance indicators.

7. Project cards and KPIs tracking:

- Use project cards to organise and track quality-of-life projects, assigning key performance indicators (KPIs) and monitoring progress.

- Sort by domain or refresh indicators as needed to keep your project data up to date.

8. AI City Assistant:
Utilise the AI assistant to access curated resources, conduct research, and explore case studies and best practices in areas such as policies, laws, and quality of life improvements.

Please refer to the Annex for detailed instructions on each step and platform feature. This summary provides an efficient, centralised approach for your city to manage, monitor, and enhance quality of life.

Conclusion

By the end of the implementation timeline outlined in these guidelines, your city will have established a comprehensive and actionable Quality of Life Index, tailored to its unique local context. This index will equip city leaders with valuable insights into both globally and locally defined indicators, measuring key aspects of residents' well-being across multiple domains, including health, housing, environment, social cohesion, and more. Upon successful completion of the process, your city will achieve the following:

A bespoke Quality of Life Index:

A fully developed Quality of Life Index built on both global and local data layers. This index will provide a holistic view of the city's performance across critical domains, highlighting key priorities and areas for improvement to enhance the well-being of residents.

Global and Local Layer Indicators:

A comprehensive set of Global Layer Indicators aligned with international standards, offering a universal assessment of the city's quality of life.
A tailored set of Local Layer Indicators, co-created through workshops and stakeholder engagement, reflecting the specific priorities and challenges unique to the city.

Key Priorities and Actionable Insights:

A detailed analysis of the key priorities and issues identified through the index, guiding city leaders on areas requiring targeted interventions. This will enable more effective resource allocation and the prioritisation of projects with the greatest impact on residents' quality of life.

Disclaimer:
These guidelines are currently under development and will be updated accordingly. All technical documents mentioned will be provided as a package following registration. The guidelines annex is being developed and will be shared soon.
A forthcoming Part III will include a post-implementation guide to equip your city with the knowledge and best practices needed to translate index values and data into policy and actionable outcomes.

ANNEX 1

Detailed Steps for Using the Quality of Life Initiative Impact Platform

How To Login

Your access is tied to your official email. Once your city has been registered and approved, you will receive a customized link.

1. Go to www.qolimpact.com/login.
   You will see the screen below:
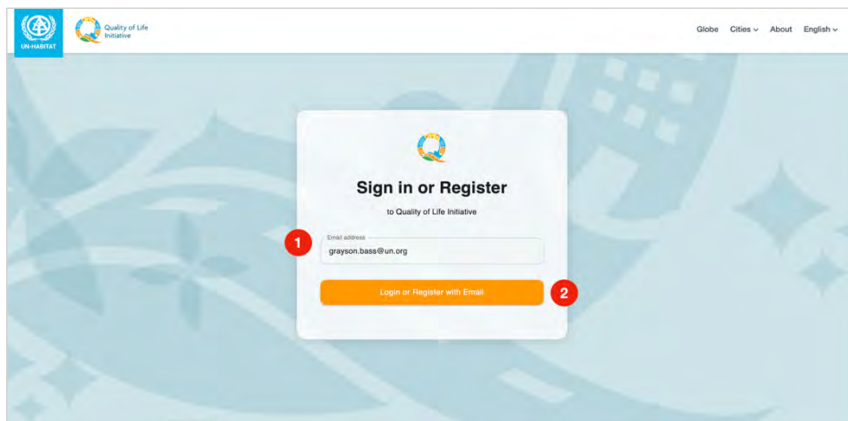
2. Enter your email and click the button to receive a login email with a customized link.
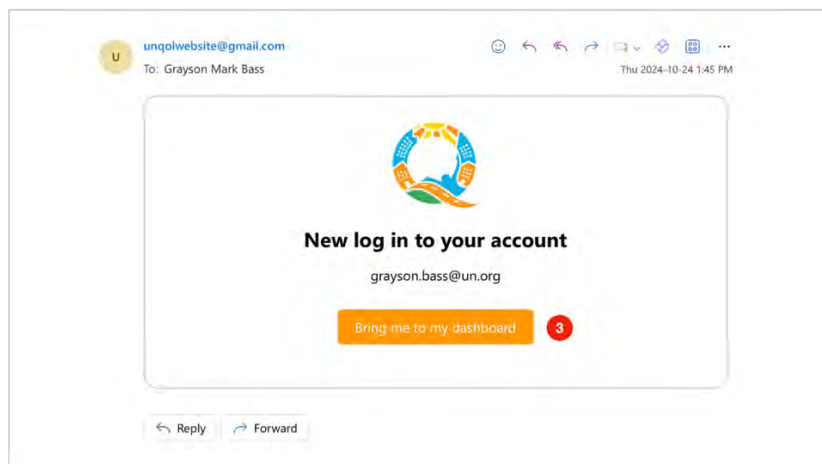
3. Click the customized link in the email (qolimpact.com/city/YOURCITY/admin) to access your main City Admin Dashboard.

Main City Admin Dashboard

Upon logging in, your dashboard provides access to all tools, features, and reporting functions to support your city's Quality of Life Initiative journey. Key features include:
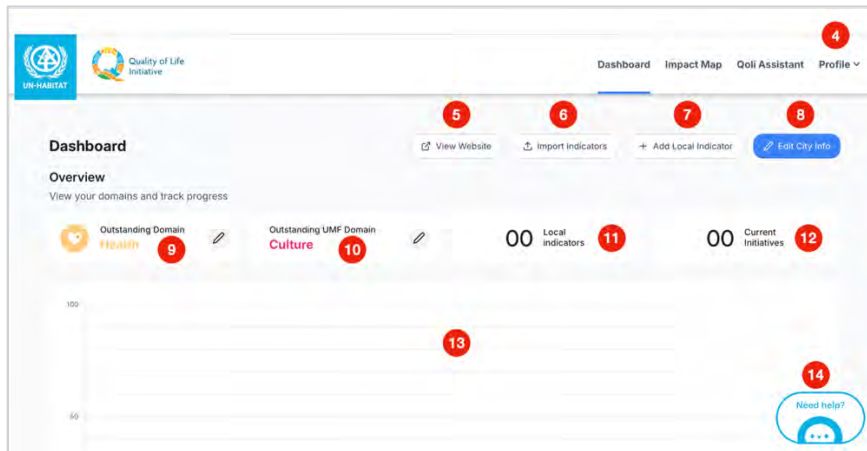
4. **Login/logout** and **language settings** (available in English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Serbian, Hindi, and Chinese).
5. **Quick link** to your city's public page.
6. **Link to import and upload global indicators**, which includes:
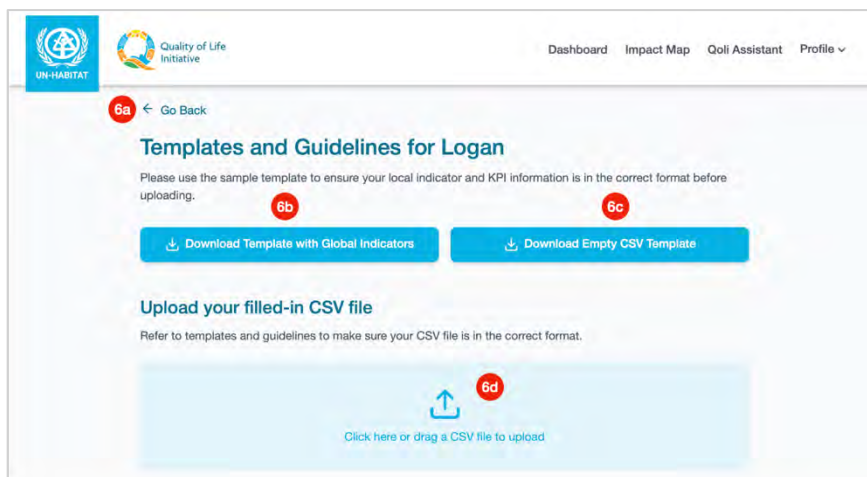
- o **6a)** A link back to your dashboard.
- o **6b)** A downloadable CSV template for inputting and reporting global layer data, where you should complete only columns (A) Normalized_Score, (B) Raw_Data, and (C) Year.

- **6c)** click to download an empty CSV file to add local indicators

  Once you have added the data, make sure you save the file in .CSV format.
- **6d)** After adding data, save the file in .CSV format and drag and drop or upload the global layer CSV file.
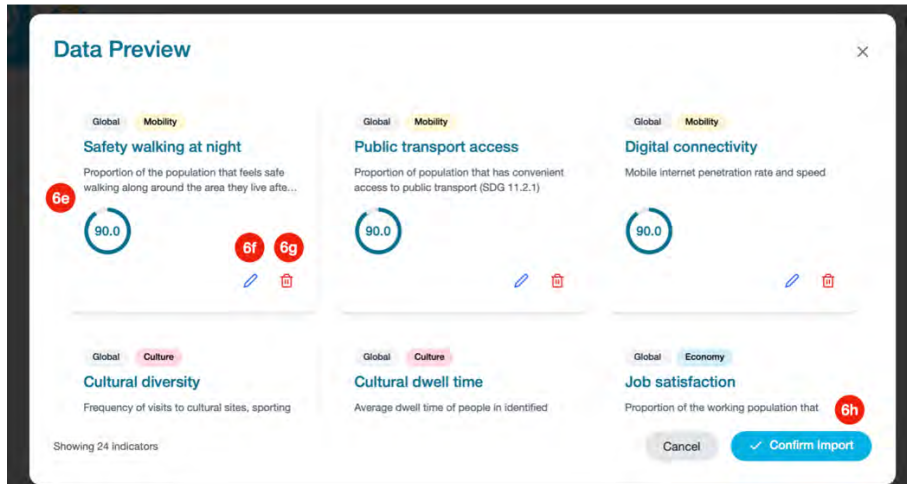
Confirmation: A message confirms a successful upload, directing you to a review screen to:
- **6e)** Review global indicator scores.
- **6f)** Edit scores if necessary.
- **6g)** Delete an indicator (not recommended).

Adding Local Indicators

These represent unique QoL measurements specific to your city.

7. **Click Add Local Indicators** and fill in the following:
   - 7a) Indicator name (will be displayed publicly).
   - 7b) Optional long name for additional detail. This is not required, but allows you to add more detail if it is helpful

- o **7c)** Description, explaining why and how it's measured.
- o **7d)** QoL Domain to which the indicator applies.
- o **7e)** UMF domain (optional)
- o **7f)** Confirmation as a Local Indicator.
- o **7g)** Normalized score (will be displayed publicly).
- o **7h)** Raw data for further context. (optional)
- o **7i)** Measurement unit (can be entered as text).
- o **7j)** Year of data collection.
- o **7k)** Indicate whether the data is **Actual** or **Proxy** (please note this will change to Public or Private so you can create indicators and projects for your city to improve QoL that are not shared publicly).
- o **7m)** Specify the level of government for data collection.
- o **7n)** Define the data source.
- o **7p)** To add more local indicators, as needed

Click the blue button to save the information and add the local indicator. This will then take you back to the main dashboard page.
Within the platform you are also able to highlight your city and decide on how you want to present your city to the rest of the world - the "How's Life" section on your city's public city page.

City Profile Customisation

8. **Click the Edit City Info button:**
   - o **8a)** Add population in millions (e.g., if fewer than 1 million, report as "0.XXXXXX").
   - o **8b)** Edit the "How's Life" section with details about your city, why it joined the Quality of Life Initiative, its importance to the community, and domains you wish to emphasise.
   - o **8c)** Save changes to update your city's public page.

Domain Score Management

These scores, represented by "Petals" on your city's public page, reflect data across each QoL domain.
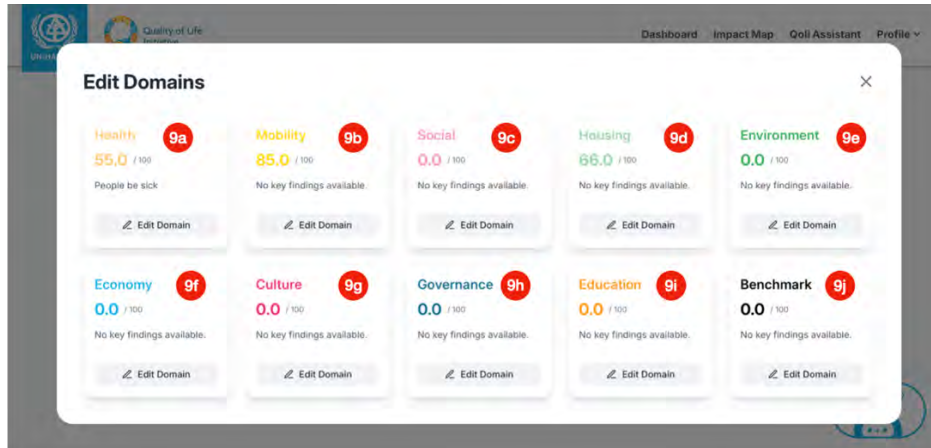
Select the domain to edit (based on an average of Global Layer scores) and access:
- o **9a–9j)** Options to edit domain scores for Health & Wellbeing, Basic Services & Mobility, Social Cohesion, Housing, Environment, Economy, Culture & Recreation, Governance, Education, and the Benchmark Score.

9. Closing this window returns you to the dashboard, where you can edit the **UMF Score**.

10. **UMF Score.**
    Click the edit button to update your city's UMF Score
    Once completed this will also update the UMF score on your city's page.
    (*please note that this feature may be automated in the following releases*)
    Closing the window will take you back to the dashboard.

Tracking Local Indicators & Initiatives
Both numbers are auto-calculated from dashboard data.

11. **Local Indicators**: Counts the total number of Local Indicators.
12. **Local Initiatives**: Tracks the number of QoL projects or initiatives.
13. **Indicator quick view**: Displays Global and Local Indicators, sorted by domain, showing normalised scores on a scale of 0–100.

Qoli AI CITY ASSISTANT

Provides real-time support for report creation, law/policy searches, and a curated library of case studies.
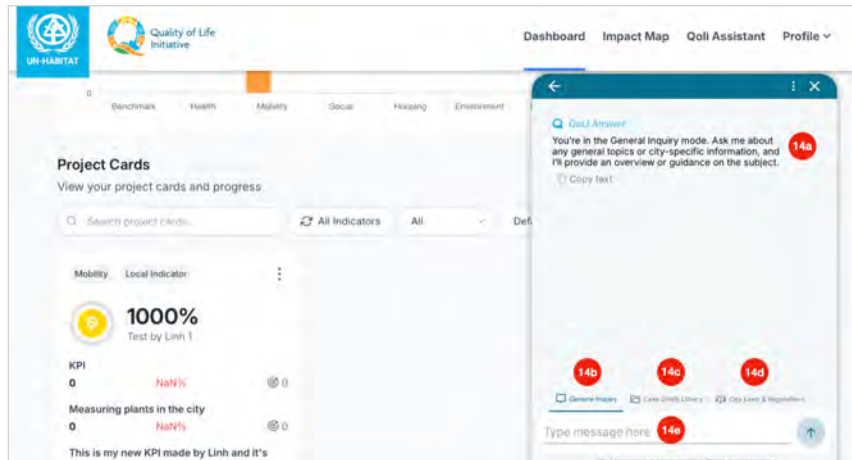

14. **Access QoLi AI Assistant** you can click directly on QoLi to open the AI assistant as a chatbot for quick reference (note: for more functionality including chat history, you will need to navigate to a different area of the dashboard clicking on the QoLi Assistant tab at the top of the page in the menu bar). 14a) Responses appear as text.

QoL Assistant Modes:

- **14a) QoLi AI Assistant Chat -** this is where the text and responses from the AI Assistant appear.
  There are three modes for the QoL Assistant, General, QoL Case Study, and City Laws & Regulations

- **14b) Qoli AI Assistant General Inquiry -** this mode supports general questions and can help you compose text for your "How's Life" section as well as answer simple queries (please note as this is a "General" use function, like most AI tools it can make mistakes at an error rate of about 10%)/

- **14c) QoLi AI Assistant Case Study -** this allows you to search case studies related to different Domains of Quality of Life from around the world. This is a curated list of case studies by the UN and is intended to be updated regularly.

- **14d) QoLi AI Assistant City Laws & Regulations -** this includes National, State/Provincial, Regional, and Municipal Laws, By-laws, Strategies, and Policies. This allows you to search relevant laws related to Quality of Life.

Project Cards

Tracks initiatives and sets QoL based – key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to support your city's improvement of quality of life. (Note: this function is optional. It is designed to help your city quickly identify Quality of Life-based initiatives and measure them. This functionality will be updated through stakeholder consultation).
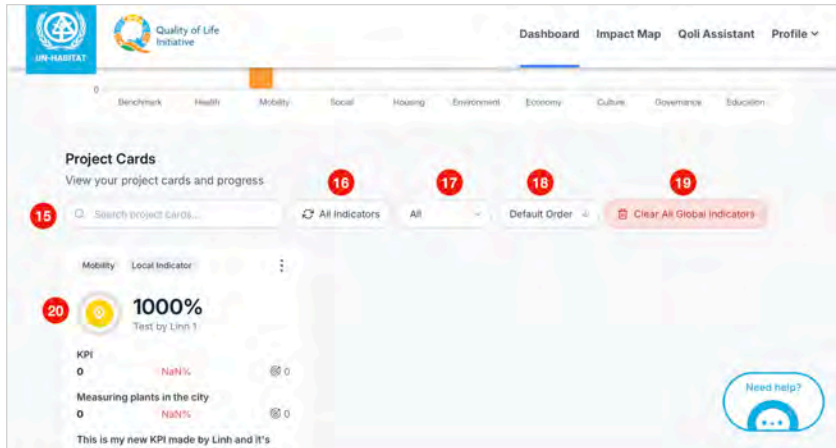
15.   **Search project cards** by project or initiative.
16.   **Refresh Indicators**: Updates all indicators.
17.   **Sort by Domain**: Organises project cards by Quality of Life domain.
18.   **Revert to Default Order**: Restores standard indicator order.
19.   **Clear All Global Indicators**: Erases global indicators in a single action.
20.   **Editing Project Cards**

Clicking on the three vertical dots allows you to edit each project, set targets, and describe what you are doing.
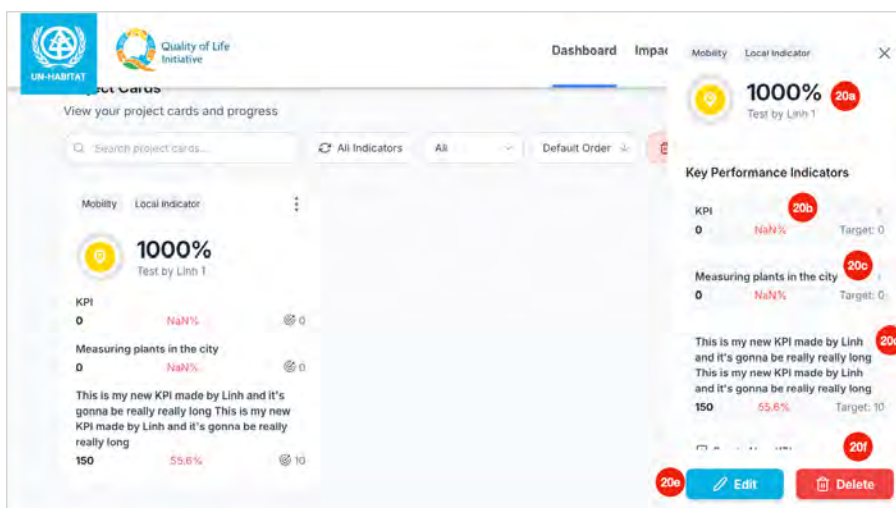

- o   **20a) Shows the Local Indicator** - this is what is being improved or measured
- o   **20b) Displays the primary KPI** - this shows the description starting point, the current state, and the target

- o **20c) Displays the secondary/supporting KPI** - this shows the description starting point, the current state, and the target
- o **20d) Displays Additional KPIs and Targets** - this can be added depending on your priorities and measurement
- o **20e) Allows you to edit KPIs, Descriptions, and Targets** - this
- o **20e) Allows you to delete the local indicator** - to avoid "mass deletion" events, each indicator can only be deleted individually.

Quality of Life Initiative - AI City Assistant Full Interface

The platform comes with an AI assistant that can support report creation, law, by-law, policy, and strategy search, and help you discover a curated library of case studies that improve quality of life.
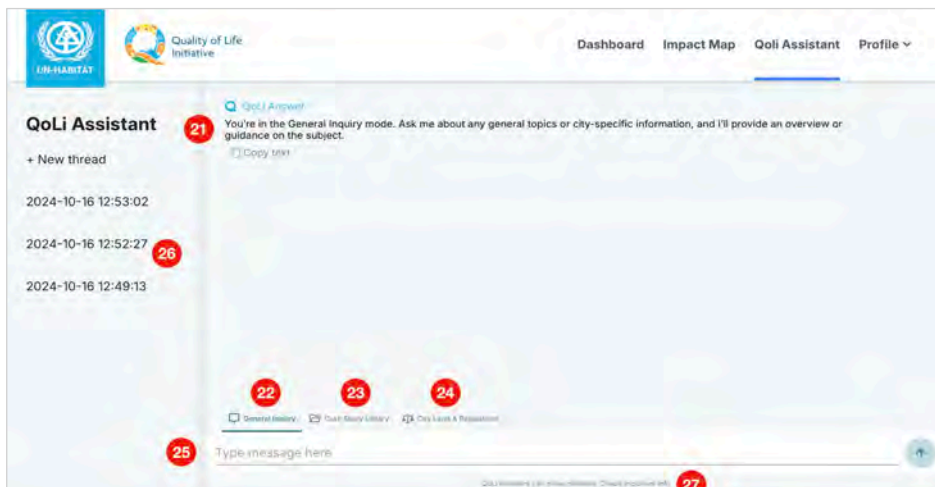
The QoLi Assistant Tab is a full screen interface for accessing the AI features of the platform.

21. **QoLi Responses** - like a text/chat exchange, QoLi responses appear here.
22. **General Inquiry Mode -** this functions as general AI tool and can help you write or provide quick general research
23. **QoLi Responses -** search and get summaries to a curated list of Quality of Life improvement projects according to domain you would like to improve
24. **City Laws and Legislation -** each city has a custom set of laws, by-laws, policies, and strategies unique to their community.
25. **Text entry -** where you can type and ask questions
26. **QoLi Chat history -** where you can go back and look at previous questions/answers
27. **Warning -** like all AI tools, please use with caution…the intelligence is "artificial" not real. Use your best judgement and verify through other reliable sources anything you intend to base a final decision on. The QoLi AI City Assistant is to help make your work improving QoL more efficient, not to do all of it.