

# Diagnosis on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda

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## Research Article

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### Abstract

**Non-technical summary.** Rapid population growth in urban areas requires an effective transposition of sustainable development goals to the urban realm, for which the New Urban Agenda was adopted by most countries worldwide. The progress report of its implementation was discussed in this study to identify strengths and weaknesses in the process that assist nations in the design and application of effective actions to achieve a more sustainable urban development.

**Technical summary.** The adoption of the 2030 Agenda represents a daunting challenge for countries worldwide, which found its continuation in the New Urban Agenda (NUA) geared predominantly toward urban settlements. Although the achievement of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) has been widely monitored by global and national institutions, the progress of the NUA has not been properly addressed to date. With the purpose of filling this gap, this study aims to gauge the implementation level of the NUA through the analysis of all status reports issued hitherto by countries, on the basis of the reporting template designed to this effect by the United Nations. Findings revealed the scarce attention paid to report national progress on the application of the NUA, particularly marked in the most developed economies. Reporting guidelines showed a poor coverage of the SDGs, being mostly focused on a limited number of these as well as the institutional and economic dimensions. The low level of NUA implementation and the questionable effectiveness of the reporting framework for monitoring are main conclusions. Some recommendations were lastly suggested to enhance the application process of the NUA.

**Social media summary.** Most countries worldwide show little interest in the application of the New Urban Agenda.

## 1. Introduction

Although the New Urban Agenda (NUA) (UN, 2016a) can be regarded as an extension of the 2030 Agenda (UN, 2015), more specifically, as the transposition of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) to the urban realm, the first United Nations (UN) Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat I), held in 1976, marked the inception of further opportunities associated with urbanization to strengthen the social, economic, environmental, and institutional domains of communities (Bridges, 2016). The recognition of the need for sustainable human settlements and the impacts of rapid urbanization, mainly in the least developed countries, was the main conclusion of this conference (UN, 1976), which also laid the foundation for the creation of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) in 1978. UN-Habitat pursues the promotion of sustainable towns and cities worldwide within the UN system.

Two primary topics inspired the second UN Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) in 1996: adequate housing and viable human settlements. The Istanbul Declaration and Habitat Agenda was adopted in this conference to express the commitment of governments to reach the objectives of sustainable human settlements and adequate housing for all (UN, 1996). Under the projection that 70% of world population will be housed in cities by mid-century (World Bank, 2024), the UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) was celebrated in 2016 to arrive at a consensus on defining a new global standard for encouraging sustainability in cities (UN, 2016b). At the end of Habitat III, the Quito Declaration provided 175 paragraphs as part of the NUA, a call for countries to build cities safer and more sustainable, resilient, and inclusive. All in line with the 17 SDGs and particularly with SDG11: Sustainable cities and communities (Arslan et al., 2016). Developing synergies between SDG11 and the NUA is pivotal to foster an effective sustainable urbanization process. Additionally to the principles drawn from Habitats I and II, the NUA is fundamentally based on the ‘right to the city’, a term coined by Lefebvre (1968) to underscore the importance of inclusivity, accessibility, and democracy in urban areas.

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In contrast to the SDGs, the NUA was initially conceived without a concrete monitoring instrument to assess progress (Diaz-Sarachaga, 2019), which significantly hinders the understanding of urban challenges (Khalid et al., 2018) and making-decision process (Klopp & Petretta, 2017). The formulation of SDGs as an appraisal framework for the NUA was also discarded before the start of Habitat III (Schindler, 2017). A set of guidelines to assist countries in annually reporting on the implementation of the NUA was nevertheless released by the UN in 2019 (Urban Agenda Platform, 2024).

The efficient monitoring of the NUA requires globally standardized and comparable data (Robin et al., 2019) that is often hampered by a low production of urban information (McPhearson et al., 2016), mainly due to difficulties of localities devoid of support from national governments (Acuto & Parnell, 2016). But quantitative disclosures must also be accompanied by the development of knowledge capacities that feed into the NUA (Caprotti et al., 2017). With this objective, this study aims to diagnose the current state of the NUA after it comes into effect. Grounded on the guidelines established for the UN to report the progress in the implementation of the NUA, all national reports published until November 2023 were examined to outline shortcomings in the process. Three research questions (RQs) were formulated to organize the study: (RQ1) what is the current status of reporting?, (RQ2) what is the correspondence between UN guidelines and the SDGs?, and (RQ3) which level of coverage of UN guidelines do countries display in their reports and what is their linkage with the SDGs?

This study makes a twofold contribution to the extant body of knowledge. First, it critically reviews the template specifically designed to report the progress on the application of the NUA worldwide in order to identify weaknesses and opportunities for improvement. And second, it provides a realistic vision on the status of the implementation process and its implication in the achievement of the SDGs at the national level and on a regional scale that permits to design effective action plans for the countries lagging behind and thus, increase the efficiency of the NUA regulatory framework as an instrument for boosting sustainable development in the urban environment. The novelty of this work lies in the joint analysis of all countries that employed the same reporting framework in the appraisal of the implementation of the NUA.

The article is further arranged into five sections. After determining the theoretical framework of the research, Section 3 depicts the proposed methodology, and results are presented in Section 4. Finally, main conclusions are summarized.

## 2. Background

Literature on the NUA embraces a broad range of topics (Cociña et al., 2019), though, urban governance is predominant among them (Hague, 2018). The NUA hence rests on participatory processes and the paramount role played by inhabitants as the core of urban development plans seeking equality of rights and opportunities for all as well as promoting social diversity (Parnell, 2016). Multi-level collaboration and integrated governance are also outlined in the NUA, comprising the participation of actors at the same level and in different levels along with the implication of different stakeholders (Leck & Simon, 2018). Dahiya and Das (2020) discussed the relevance of the NUA in terms of governance, decentralization, and democratization of cities. Urban decentralization has nonetheless come under criticism because

power sharing has not been accompanied by financial capacity of local governments (Haase et al., 2018).

The commitments made by each country that signed the NUA include the development of a respective National Urban Policy (NUP) as a framework to guide and monitor the attainment of urban objectives in each country (Hohmann, 2017). This instrument also assists in the incorporation of SDG11 in local governance (Sietchiping & Omwamba, 2020). Despite the emphasis on NUPs, a few number of countries have applied explicit urban policies; for instance, only a third of European member countries of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) have met this requirement (OECD, 2016). In this vein, the inconsistency and inadequacy of the NUA has been highlighted because it is mostly based on ideas rather than statistics, analyses, or forecasting models (Okraszewska et al., 2019).

Urban planning was regarded as a crucial response in the NUA to handle major urbanization challenges (Corbett & Mellouli, 2017) from differing viewpoints, inter alia, climate change (Bandauko et al., 2021), informal urbanization (Alfaro d'Alençon et al., 2018), women safety (Mahadevia & Lathia, 2019), human wellbeing (Turok & Parnell, 2009), informality (McGranahan et al., 2016), public spaces (Moser, 2017), typology of urban space (Satterthwaite, 2016), and social housing (Mycoo, 2017); however, attention was principally focused on transport and mobility (Okraszewska et al., 2018). Walkability and urban cycling are promoted in the interest of enhancing health and shifting toward a sustainable mobility approach (Privitera, 2020). Furthermore, they contribute to devise measures concerning the betterment of road safety and transportation design, and therefore, the reduction of urban pollution (Pucher & Buehler, 2017), among other benefits.

Several geographical areas have been subject of study to examine the application of the NUA. Inclusiveness of women was addressed in India by increasing governance of basic amenities, proposing activities and services, and considering gender issues in planning and design (Mehaffy et al., 2019). The implementation of SDG11 in the Indian Urban Policy was analyzed in Vaidya and Chatterji (2020). Recommendations of the NUA were adopted by the Rwandan government in fundraising to provide free public spaces for citizens throughout the country (Gubic & Baloi, 2019). Grounded in the African context, Van Noorloos and Kloosterboer (2018) assessed the impact of urban and territorial planning on sustainable urbanization in the frame of the NUA.

The uncritical application of all metrics defined in the NUA and SDG11 was seriously questioned in Angola as a practice to sideline interests of minorities (Silva, 2020). Other African governments realized the urge to coordinate policies to strengthen sustainable urban development in accordance with SDG11 and the NUA (Krellenberg et al., 2019). In this respect some nations such as Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, South Africa, and Uganda have enacted NUPs as drivers of the NUA (Cartwright et al., 2018). In Europe, Patterson (2020) explored the connection between the existing urban regulatory framework and the NUA in the United Kingdom.

Although the engagement of private sectors and social agents in the fulfillment of the NUA is a common denominator for the Asia-Pacific cities (Bajracharya & Khan, 2020), some countries such as Indonesia were more concerned about the proliferation of sub-national levels of government, which interferes in the application of the NUA across the country as stated in Salim and Hudalah (2020). The Caribbean region faces particular

challenges related to the NUA, which recommends the draft of a specific NUA reflecting the singularities of the Caribbean Small Island Developing States (Mycoo & Bharath, 2021). A similar insight was employed by Watson (2021) to suggest distinct actions for the Global North to perform the objectives of the NUA.

The tenets of the NUA hold many parallels with other initiatives prior to Habitat III Conference, for example, the 1996 Charter of the New Urbanism powered by the Congress for the New Urbanism, a nonprofit organization headquartered in the United States. The Charter consists of a collection of urban characteristics to guide public policy, development practice, urban planning, and design under the premise that human settlements are a combination of the art of building, the making of community, and the preservation of the environment (CNU, 2024). Notwithstanding the above, the potential for reductionism in the NUA was highly emphasized due to the exclusion of some forms of urban space in detriment of new tendencies in global urban policies (Caprotti et al., 2017). Alternatively, the definition of adequate indicators (Valencia et al., 2019) and the production of urban data (Simon et al., 2016) are both essential to perform diagnostics on the progress of the NUA (Garcia-Peña et al., 2021). Finding a balance between available urban statistics and the set of existing metrics has consequently become a formidable challenge for local governments (Kitchin et al., 2015). Some solutions were proposed to remedy data gaps, that is, the development of proxies (Alkema et al., 2013), but the nexus between the production of urban knowledge and local needs should be explored in depth to streamline the NUA (Dovey & Ristic, 2017). This study is intended to bridge this gap by analyzing all reports issued by countries in the process of implementing the NUA to identify main weaknesses that shed light on the present situation.

### 3. Methodology

Figure 1 displays the tiered protocol designed to discuss the operationalization of the NUA from its entry into force in October 2016. First, the document containing the UN guidelines for reporting the implementation of the NUA was examined. Afterward, the present status of the reporting produced by the signatory countries of the NUA was ascertained. The correlation between the UN guidelines and the 2030 Agenda was established in the third phase. Coverage of the guidelines by nations was appraised in the last stage.

#### 3.1 Preliminary revision of the status report template on the NUA

Because the guidelines of the UN status report template on the NUA are clustered in a three-tier scheme encompassing: parts, themes, and subthemes, a qualitative content analysis was undertaken to categorize all matters covered. An exploratory review provided an initial coding characterizing the scope of each guideline with any of the keywords included in the description of themes and subthemes. A second review employed those codes to recognize the main focal points of the guidelines. Besides, the qualitative or quantitative nature of the guidelines was pinpointed, for which next criteria were applied: (i) feasibility of devising an indicator that may be quantitatively measured, and (ii) data availability in publicly accessible sources.

#### 3.2 Reporting on the application of the NUA worldwide

All national reports available on the repository of the Urban Agenda Platform (2024) were comprehensively screened to shed

light on the current status of reporting (RQ1). Several aspects were specifically examined to this end: (i) identification of the countries that released annual progress reports; (ii) group of engaged countries based on the UN M49 Standard Country or Area Codes for Statistical Use of the United Nations Statistics Division (Europe and Northern America, sub-Saharan Africa, Northern Africa and Western Asia, Central and Southern Asia, Eastern and South-Eastern Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Oceania) (UNSTATS, 2024); (iii) language employed; (iv) year of publication; and (v) degree of alignment with the UN guidelines.

#### 3.3 Linking the NUA with the sustainable development goals

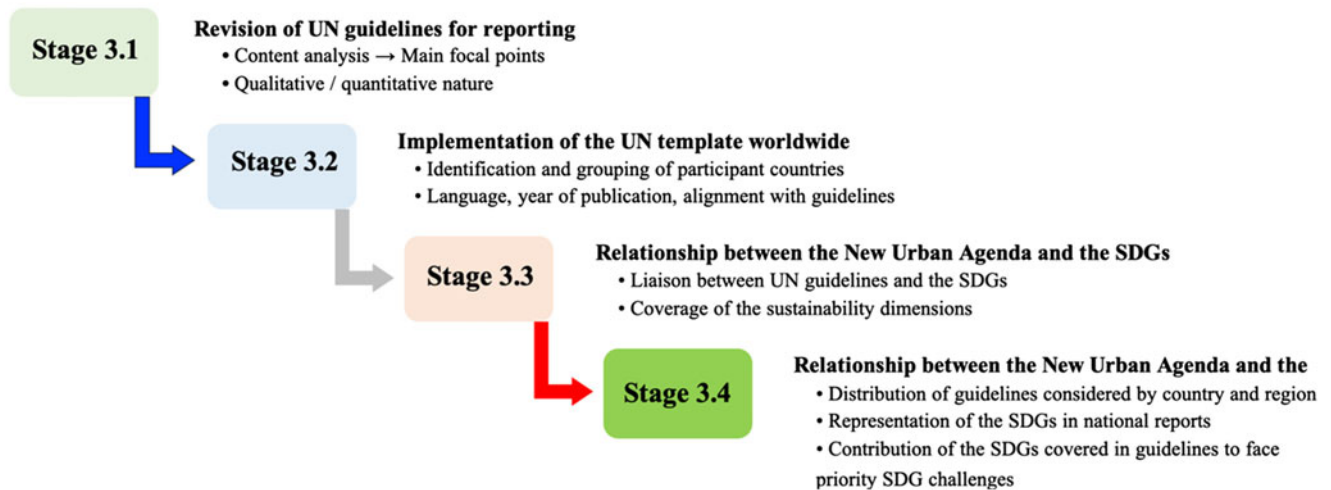
Although the NUA emanates from the 2030 Agenda and consequently from the SDGs (Table 1), it is pertinent to explore their connection with the recommended UN guidelines for presenting the progress of the implementation of the NUA and its contribution toward the SDGs in order to address RQ2. The liaison between guidelines and the SDGs was established by accurately correlating the description of the former with the scope of the 169 SDG targets and 232 SDG indicators comprised in the 17 SDGs. Both were taken as reference in this process because they better itemize the extent of each SDG. Hence there is the possibility that each guideline is related to more than one SDG. Special attention was paid to SDG11 centered on cities. The coverage of the four sustainability pillars was reviewed by the same method considering the dimensions associated with SDGs (Table 1), mostly accepted in literature (Diaz-Sarachaga et al., 2018).

#### 3.4 Achievement of the UN guidelines by the national reports

All national reports were examined to determine the guidelines pertaining to actions led by nations in the attainment of the NUA. They were then organized in the seven geographical areas listed in 3.2 to perform a study per region. A transversal analysis examining how the distinct areas dealt with UN guidelines was also completed.

The absence of metrics hampered attempts to evaluate progress on each guideline. The SDG index ranking was therefore used to compare efforts made by nations toward the SDGs and their advancement on the NUA for the years in which status reports were published. This composite index was built by Bertelsmann Stiftung and Sustainable Development Solutions Network in 2015 to benchmark the progress of UN members in the accomplishment of the SDGs. Data availability was determinant to select diverse indicators representing each SDG to be scored in a range from 0 to 100 points. The arithmetic mean of all SDG scores determines the value of the SDG index to rank countries (Diaz-Sarachaga et al., 2018). Furthermore, a traffic-light chart assesses where a country stands on each SDG to identify priority actions to meet them. The framework also specifies the SDGs associated with major challenges to be faced by each country. The performance on these challenges is rated by a four-level scale: on track, moderately increasing, stagnating, and decreasing (SDSN, 2020).

Next protocol was proposed with the intention of analyzing the quality of national reports on the implementation of the NUA in relation to SDGs monitoring. Drawing on the relationship between the UN guidelines and SDGs defined in 3.3, the progress reports were reviewed to first determine the SDGs tackled by the UN guidelines per nation. Second, the SDGs with decreasing performance related to the major challenges prescribed for



**Figure 1.** Methodological approach.  
Source: Authors.

countries in the SDG index framework were listed. Lastly, the correlation between both initiatives was appraised by studying the correspondence among the SDGs identified following the two prior steps.

#### 4. Results

This section was organized along the lines of the four methodological phases previously outlined. UN guidelines were introduced in Section 4.1, whereas the subsequent sections responded to the three RQs posed in Section 1.

**Table 1.** Sustainable development goals

SDG no.	Extent	Dimension
SDG1	No poverty	Social
SDG2	Zero hunger	Social
SDG3	Good health and well-being	Social
SDG4	Quality education	Social
SDG5	Gender equality	Social
SDG6	Clean water and sanitation	Environmental
SDG7	Affordable and clean energy	Environmental
SDG8	Decent work and economic growth	Economic
SDG9	Industry, innovation, and infrastructure	Institutional
SDG10	Reduced inequalities	Social
SDG11	Sustainable cities and societies	Institutional
SDG12	Responsible consumption and production	Economic
SDG13	Climate action	Environmental
SDG14	Life below water	Environmental
SDG15	Life on land	Environmental
SDG16	Peace, justice, and strong institutions	Institutional
SDG17	Partnerships for the goals	Institutional

Source: UN (2015).

#### 4.1 Review of the UN guidelines for reporting the application of the NUA

As response to resolution RES/71/256 adopted by the UN General Assembly in December 2016 (UN- Habitat, 2016), a set of guidelines were formulated to provide a common framework for countries in the preparation of reports to monitor the progress on the implementation process of the NUA. The document encompasses three distinct parts. The first one presents 28 guidelines grouped into three themes: social inclusion and ending poverty; inclusive urban prosperity; and sustainable and resilient development of cities. Thirty guidelines for an effective implementation were advised in the second part, focused on three themes such as building the urban governance structure, urban spatial development, and means for implementing. The last part contains no guidelines for monitoring and review of reports for local, subnational, and national governments.

Table A1 shows all guidelines on the basis of a categorized structure. After reviewing the depiction of the 58 guidelines, a list of 16 codes was determined grounded on related themes/sub-themes as follows: poverty (1.1/1.1.1), social inclusion (1.1/1.1.1), housing (1.1/1.1.2), basic services (1.1/1.1.3), social prosperity (1.2/1.2.1), economic development (1.2/1.2.1), environmental preservation (1.3/1.3.1), urban resilience (1.3/1.3.1), responsible resources consumption (1.3/1.3.2), energy efficiency (1.3/1.3.2), capacity building (2.1, 2.2, 2.3/2.3.2), digitalization (2.3/2.3.3), funding (2.3/2.3.1), cultural heritage (2.2), urban development (2.2), and sustainable mobility (2.2).

Capacity building (16), housing (6), and economic development (5) were the topics most referred to in the UN guidelines. Poverty, energy efficiency, culture heritage, sustainable mobility, and urban development, contrarily, were only represented by one guideline each as exhibited in Table 2.

Only 48 of the 56 guidelines satisfy the two criteria proposed in Section 3.1 and therefore, they are eligible for being assessed for quantitative indicators. The complex formulation of metrics to quantitatively appraise guidelines 2.1.1.3 ('Develop legal and policy frameworks to enhance the ability of governments to implement urban policies'), 2.1.1.4 ('Build the capacity of local and subnational governments to implement local and metropolitan multilevel governance'), 2.2.1.1 ('Implement integrated and



**Table 2.** Coding of UN guidelines

Code	Related guidelines	Code	Related guidelines
Poverty	1.1.1.1	Responsible resources consumption	1.3.2.1, 1.3.2.2, 1.3.2.3
Social inclusion	1.1.1.2, 1.1.1.3, 1.1.1.4, 2.1.1.6	Energy efficiency	1.3.2.4
Housing	1.1.2.1, 1.1.2.2, 1.1.2.3, 1.1.2.4, 1.1.2.5, 2.2.1.2	Capacity building	2.1.1.1, 2.1.1.3, 2.1.1.4, 2.1.1.5, 2.2.1.1, 2.2.1.5, 2.2.1.6, 2.3.2.1, 2.3.2.2, 2.3.2.3, 2.3.2.4, 2.3.2.5, 2.3.2.6, 2.3.2.8, 2.3.3.4, 2.3.3.5
Basic services	1.1.3.1, 1.1.3.2, 1.1.3.3, 1.1.3.4, 2.3.3.1, 2.3.3.2, 2.3.3.3	Funding	2.1.1.2, 2.3.1.1, 2.3.1.2, 2.3.1.3, 2.3.1.4, 2.3.2.7
Social prosperity	1.2.1.1, 1.2.1.2	Culture heritage	2.2.1.3
Economic development	1.2.1.3, 1.2.1.4, 1.2.2.1, 1.2.2.2, 1.2.2.3		
Environmental preservation	1.3.1.1, 1.3.1.2	Sustainable mobility	2.2.1.7
Urban resilience	1.3.1.3, 1.3.1.4	Urban development	2.2.1.4

Source: Authors.

balanced territorial development policies'), 2.2.1.6 ('Strengthen the role of small and intermediate cities and towns'), 2.3.3.2 ('Expand deployment of frontier technologies and innovations to enhance shared prosperity of cities and regions'), and 2.3.2.8 ('Increase cooperation and knowledge exchange on science, technology and innovation to benefit sustainable urban development') alongside the inexistence of related statistical data do not make it possible to devise quantitative indicators for them.

This study has deliberately omitted the proposal of specific indicators to avoid potential bias in their interpretation due to the broad scope of the guidelines.

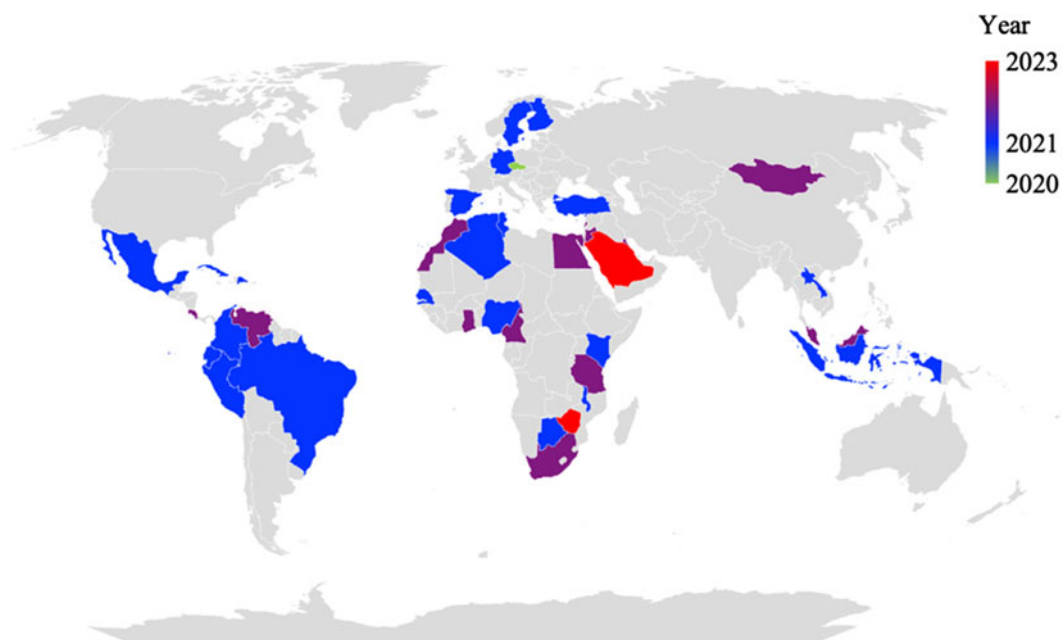
#### 4.2 Implementation level of the NUA

From the 194 nations embroiled in the completion of the NUA (UN, 2016a), just 40 countries posted reports on its application

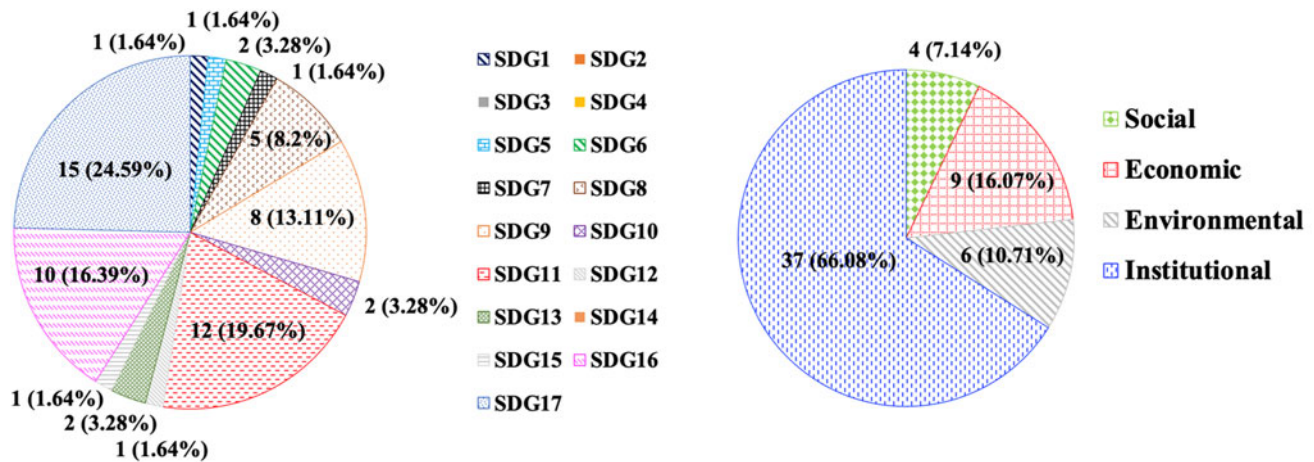
until November 2023, representing by one-fifth of the total. Figure 2 illustrates the countries that published status reports. The highest number of reports corresponded to Northern Africa and Western Asia (11), sub-Saharan Africa (10), and Latin America and the Caribbean (9). On the other hand, no country from Central and Southern Asia and Oceania submitted any report. Europe and Northern America and Eastern and South-Eastern Asia regions presented respectively, six and four reports. Among the 38 OECD member countries, only nine issued reports.

English was the preferred language in reporting (28), meanwhile, Arabic, French, and Spanish accounted for four reports each. Regarding the publication year, 2021 (23) and 2022 (14) displayed the largest number of reports, unlike 2020 (1) and 2023 (2).

In response to RQ1, the level of reporting on the progress of the NUA was very low to this day, seeing that 20.61% of the

**Figure 2.** Regional distribution of nations reporting the implementation status of the NUA.

Source: Authors.



**Figure 3.** Sharing of the UN guidelines by SDG and sustainability domain.  
Source: Authors.

countries adhered to this initiative have released a national report. Geographical spread was also quite uneven. Paradoxically, the less developed nations have published more reports than the richest economies, which is consistent with the literature reviewed in Section 2. Although the 38 OECD countries pursue the promotion of policies to improve the economic and well-being of people worldwide, fewer than a quarter issued the NUA progress report. And only Germany, representing the seven most advanced economies in the world, elaborated an annual report. Alternatively, Czech Republic, Dominican Republic, Germany, Spain, and Zimbabwe discarded the application of the guidelines suggested by the UN.

The arbitrary use of distinct languages and report forms alongside the irregular temporary distribution of publications denote the absence of precise directives on that subject, and generally on the reporting process itself.

### 4.3 Composition of the UN guidelines regarding the 2030 Agenda

The uneven allocation of the guidelines by sustainability dimensions and related SDGs is shown in Figure 3 giving response to RQ2. SDG17: Partnerships for the goals (15); SDG11: Sustainable cities and societies (12); SDG16: Peace, justice, and strong institutions (10); and SDG9: Industry, innovation, and infrastructure (8) had the greatest correspondence, ranging from 24.59% (SDG17) to 13.11% (SDG9) of all guidelines. On the contrary, SDG8: Decent work and economic growth (5); SDG6: Clean water and sanitation; SDG10: Reduced inequalities and SDG13: Climate action (2 each); and SDG1: No poverty, SDG5: Gender equality, SDG7: Affordable and clean energy, SDG12: Responsible consumption and production and SDG15: Life on land (1 each) covered by 28% of the totality of guidelines. SDG2: Zero hunger, SDG3: Good health and well-being, SDG4: Quality education, and SDG14: Life below water were nevertheless not represented in the reporting template.

In terms of sustainability facets, the institutional domain (37) prevailed over the other dimensions: economic (9), environmental (6), and social (4). Even though the 12 guidelines associated with SDG11, only three out of the 10 SDG11 targets were linked to them, namely, SDG11.b: Adoption and implementation of

integrated policies and plans toward inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation, and adaptation to climate change, and resilience to disasters (4); SDG11.1: Access for all to adequate, safe, and affordable housing and basic services (3); and SDG11.7: Universal access to safe, inclusive, and accessible, green and public spaces (1).

Despite the fact that 13 out of the 17 SDGs are tied to the UN guidelines, the representativeness of the SDGs in the report form is controversial. A finite number of SDGs (5) have agglutinated 50 of all guidelines (82%). And similarly, institutional and economic facets concentrated the majority of guidelines with 66 and 16%, respectively. This acute focus on governance matters was strongly highlighted by Corbett and Mellouli (2017) and Hague (2018). It is however very striking that some topics traditionally associated with the less developed countries such as hunger (SDG2), good health and well-being (SDG3), and education (SDG4) were fully overlooked, even when these countries predominantly reported the progress on the application of the NUA. The outcome was less surprising when environmental issues occupied the third place in preference, which is in accordance with the scarce literature on this topic, mainly directed toward climate change (Bandaiko et al., 2021). As might be expected, the correspondence between UN guidelines and SDG11 was quite high, a wide gamut of urban issues were thus tackled to reach this goal through the adoption of the NUA (Sietchiping & Omwamba, 2020; Vaidya & Chatterji, 2020).

### 4.4 Guidelines reported by countries

This section discloses how the 36 nations that published reports on the application of the NUA in English, French, or Spanish from 2020 to 2023 approached the guidelines devised by the UN, for which subthemes of Table A1 were used as references. Reporting of Egypt, Kuwait, Jordan, and Tunisia were discarded due to language constraints derived from their publication in Arabic. Given that there are no subthemes for themes 2.1: Urban governance and 2.2: Urban spatial planning, both were regarded in the analysis that answers RQ3 about the level of coverage shown on the reporting template.

Concerning the Europe and Northern America region (Figure 4), Sweden, Germany, and Czech Republic submitted

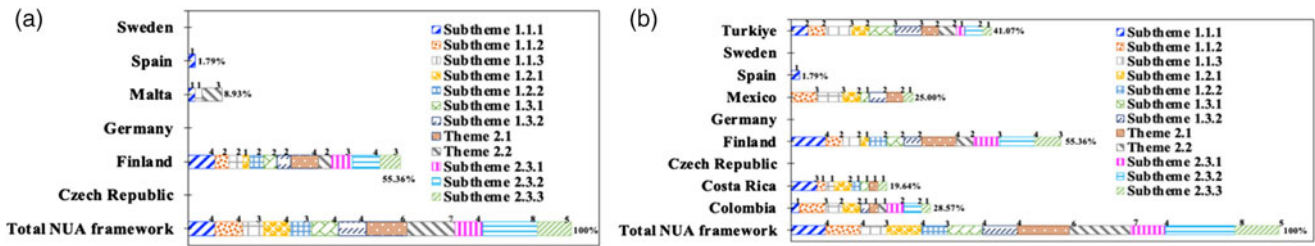


Figure 4. Guidelines deemed by country in Europe and Northern America (a) and OECD (b). Source: Authors.

reports completely out of alignment with the guidelines. From the rest of the nations, all subthemes (12) were handled by Finland as opposed to Malta (3) and Spain (1). Subtheme 1.1.1: Social inclusion/poverty was prevalent in these three nations; nevertheless, Finland was the unique one in implementing the four prescribed guidelines for this subtheme.

Turkiye, Mexico, Costa Rica, and Colombia together with the above European countries were the OECD members reporting on the NUA progress. The performance of Turkiye was notable, covering all the 12 subthemes, excluding subtheme 1.2.2: Sustainable prosperity. Colombia, Costa Rica, and Mexico addressed sequentially, 10, 8, and 7 subthemes.

The nine countries releasing national reports in sub-Saharan Africa evidenced a higher yield in comparison to the seven nations of Northern Africa and Western Asia (Figure 5). With regard to the latter area, Turkiye (11) fulfilled the highest number of subthemes, followed by Saudi Arabia and Palestine with 9 and 6 ones, while Morocco and Bahrain, and Algeria and Lebanon met 5 and 4 subthemes, accordingly. No country achieved the total guidelines defined for each subtheme in the UN report. Ghana (10), Tanzania (9), Cameroun and Nigeria (7 each), and

Botswana and South Africa (6 each) embraced most subthemes in sub-Saharan Africa. Senegal (4), Malawi (3), and Zimbabwe (1), on the contrary, showed the lowest alignment with the form. And Kenya launched a national report at its option. Only South Africa and Nigeria completed all the guidelines included in at least a subtheme, namely 1.1.2: Adequate housing.

Four countries from Eastern and South-Eastern Asia posted reporting on the NUA (Figure 6). Both Mongolia and Indonesia tackled 11 out of the 12 subthemes, as distinct from Lao and Malaysia with 2 and 1 ones, respectively. All the four guidelines of subtheme 1.3.1: Urban resilience were present in the reports of Indonesia and Mongolia. In addition, the first-mentioned also covered the three guidelines of subtheme 1.1.3: Access to basic services. In contrast to the unstructured depictions of Dominican Republic and Brazil, the situation in Latin America and the Caribbean was markedly improved. The amount of subthemes ranged from 10 (Colombia) to 4 (Cuba). Within the mid-range, Costa Rica and Ecuador (8 each), Mexico (7), Venezuela (6), and Peru (5). The four guidelines of subtheme 1.1.2: Adequate housing were met by Cuba.

Some commonalities were discovered in the evaluation of the subject matters coded in Table 2 that gathered the maximum

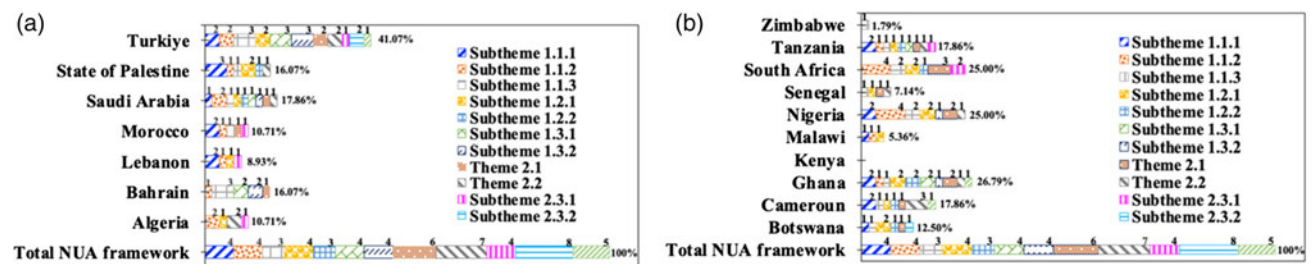


Figure 5. Distribution of guidelines by nation of Northern Africa and Western Asia (a) and sub-Saharan Africa (b). Source: Authors.

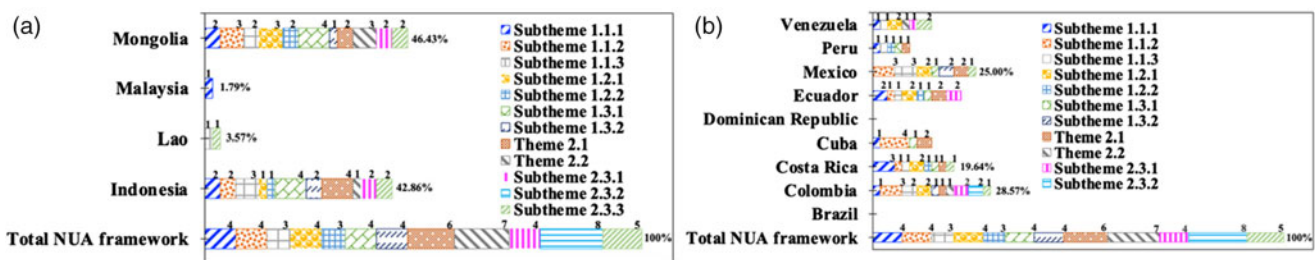


Figure 6. Guidelines shared among countries in Eastern and South-Eastern Asia (a) and Latin America and the Caribbean (b). Source: Authors.

**Table 3.** SDG index ranking of countries in 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023

Country	2020	2021	2022	2023	Country	2020	2021	2022	2023
Algeria	56	<b>66</b>	64	71	Malawi	152	<b>149</b>	145	135
Bahrain	82	<b>100</b>	102	111	Malaysia	60	67	<b>72</b>	78
Botswana	121	<b>115</b>	116	118	Malta	32	33	<b>33</b>	41
Brazil	53	<b>61</b>	53	50	Mexico	69	<b>80</b>	74	80
Cameroun	133	134	<b>134</b>	139	Mongolia	107	106	<b>109</b>	106
Colombia	67	<b>68</b>	75	76	Morocco	64	69	<b>84</b>	70
Costa Rica	35	50	<b>47</b>	52	Nigeria	160	<b>160</b>	139	146
Cuba	55	<b>49</b>	40	46	Peru	61	<b>63</b>	58	65
Czech Rep.	<b>8</b>	12	13	8	Saudi Arabia	97	98	96	<b>94</b>
Dominican Rep.	73	<b>65</b>	68	62	Senegal	127	<b>126</b>	126	121
Ecuador	46	<b>53</b>	63	74	South Africa	110	107	<b>108</b>	110
Finland	3	<b>1</b>	1	1	Spain	22	<b>20</b>	16	16
Germany	5	<b>4</b>	6	4	Palestine <sup>a</sup>	N.A.			
Ghana	100	114	<b>110</b>	122	Sweden	1	<b>2</b>	3	2
Indonesia	101	<b>97</b>	82	75	Tanzania	131	132	<b>130</b>	134
Kenya	123	<b>118</b>	118	123	Turkiye	70	<b>70</b>	71	72
Lao	116	<b>110</b>	111	115	Venezuela	118	122	<b>120</b>	117
Lebanon	95	93	<b>97</b>	95	Zimbabwe	125	125	131	<b>138</b>

<sup>a</sup>Palestine was omitted as it is not a UN country member.

In bold font and italics the ranking of the country that reported the progress status of the NUA in this year.

Source: SDSN (2020, 2021, 2022, 2023).

and minimum amount of UN guidelines per region. Latin America and the Caribbean (12); OECD (11); and Northern Africa and Western Asia (10) regarded housing as priority; simultaneously OECD (11), Northern Africa and Western Asia (10); and Europe and Northern America (6) noted the importance of social inclusion and poverty. Sub-Saharan Africa (12) and Eastern and South-Eastern Asia (8) instead put the attention on social prosperity and urban resilience, respectively. On the other hand, Latin America and the Caribbean (2); sub-Saharan Africa (1); and Eastern and South-Eastern Asia (0) disregarded capacity building. Similarly, urban development was overlooked in Latin America and the Caribbean (2) and OECD (5) areas. Basic services and social prosperity were hardly observed in Northern Africa and Western Asia (1) and Europe and Northern America (1).

The coverage of UN guidelines by nations belonging to distinct geographical zones was also very disparate. Finland (31) and Spain (1) reflected a huge gap in Europe and Northern America, and OECD zones. Mongolia (26) and Turkiye (23) collected the highest number of guidelines in Eastern and South-Eastern Asia, and Northern Africa and Western Asia, while the performance of Malaysia (1) and Lebanon (5) was the opposite in these areas. The tendency was similar in Latin America and the Caribbean, and sub-Saharan Africa, with Colombia (16) and Ghana (15) at the top, but Peru (5) and Malawi (3) on the bottom.

On the basis of the publication year of the monitoring report on the application of the NUA, it was determined the ranking granted by the SDG index report (Table 3), the SDGs handled by the UN guidelines in each national report (Table 4), and the

major challenges associated with the SDGs to be faced by countries pursuant the SDG index report (Table 5). All to evaluate how guidelines relate to factual SDGs monitoring and priorities of countries.

Sixteen nations suffered a setback in their rankings from 2020 to 2023, while 15 improved their position (Table 3). And four countries (Czech Republic, Kenya, Lebanon, and South Africa) remained unchanged. Bahrain (29) and Ecuador (28) lost the highest number of places, while Indonesia (26) and Malawi (17) significantly enhanced their rankings. Despite fluctuations in the SDG index ranking, no substantial variations in the evolution of the SDGs were detected during this time. It is therefore consistent the use of data from the SDG index report dating from the year of release of the NUA progress report. The countries of sub-Saharan Africa in a combined way reflected the best performance, unlike those of Northern Africa and Western Asia with the worst pattern. Europe and Northern America experienced no mean change.

As revealed in Table 4, SDG11 and SDG6 were predominantly present in the national reports of 23 countries, followed by SDG8 represented in 20 nations. On the other hand, SDG7 and SDG15 were addressed by six countries, whereas SDG2, SDG3, SDG4, and SDG14 were completely ignored in all reports. Eastern and South-Eastern Asia, and Northern Africa and Western Asia were the regions that displayed the highest average of SDGs tackled per country with 7.25 and 7.16, respectively. The six countries of Europe and Northern America only reached a mean of 2.83 SDGs.

Table 5 reflects the breakdown by country of the SDGs encompassing the major challenges highlighted by the SDG index report



**Table 4.** SDGs represented in the national reports of the NUA status

	SDG no.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Europe and Northern America	Czech Rep.																	
	Finland	√				√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√			√	√
	Germany																	
	Malta	√					√			√		√						
	Spain	√																
	Sweden																	
Northern Africa and Western Asia	Algeria								√			√					√	√
	Bahrain						√	√		√		√	√	√		√		√
	Lebanon	√							√			√						√
	Morocco	√				√	√				√	√						√
	Saudi Arabia						√		√	√	√	√	√	√				√
	Turkiye	√				√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		√	√	√
Sub-Saharan Africa	Botswana	√				√	√		√	√							√	
	Cameroun	√				√	√		√	√	√	√					√	
	Ghana	√				√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√		√	√	√
	Kenya																	
	Malawi	√							√			√						
	Nigeria	√				√	√		√	√	√	√	√				√	√
	Senegal						√		√			√					√	
	South Africa					√	√	√	√	√		√						√
	Tanzania	√				√	√		√	√	√	√		√			√	√
	Zimbabwe						√											
Eastern and South-Eastern Asia	Indonesia	√				√	√	√	√	√	√	√		√		√	√	√
	Lao						√										√	
	Malaysia	√																
	Mongolia	√				√	√		√		√	√	√	√		√	√	√
Latin America and the Caribbean	Brazil																	
	Colombia					√	√	√	√	√	√	√					√	√
	Costa Rica	√				√	√		√	√	√	√				√	√	
	Cuba					√					√	√		√				√
	Dominican Rep.																	
	Ecuador	√				√	√		√	√	√	√		√				√

(Continued)

Table 4. (Continued.)

SDG no.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Mexico					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
Peru	✓				✓	✓			✓				✓				
Venezuela	✓					✓		✓			✓					✓	✓

Palestine was omitted as it is not a UN country member.  
Source: Authors.

for the year in which the national report on the NUA was issued. Most countries, ranging from 27 to 22 ones, are tied, respectively, to SDG2, SDG16, SDG15, SDG3, SDG14, and SDG10. But SDG17 (7), and SDG12 and SDG13 (8 each) comprised of the lowest amount of challenges. Sub-Saharan Africa averaged 19 challenges per nation, rather than the 1.8 ones of Europe and Northern America.

After comparing the SDGs corresponding to the major challenges defined by the SDG index report and the SDGs related to the guidelines of the 35 national reports examined (excluding Palestine as it is not a UN country member), only 26 (74.28%) countries showed a match between challenges and guidelines. Nigeria exhibited the highest level of alignment with eight SDGs (SDG1, SDG5, SDG6, SDG8, SDG10, SDG11, and SDG16). Algeria (SDG8), Ecuador (SDG10), Lebanon (SDG8), Malawi (SDG1), Malta (SDG1), Morocco (SDG5), and Zimbabwe (SDG6) only had an overlap. SDG2, SDG3, SDG4, and SDG14 were overlooked by all the nations. Instead, SDG6 (14) and SDG16 (13) captured the attention of the higher number of countries.

All reports of the six countries of Northern Africa and Western Africa addressed any of the challenges posed by the SDG index report. Sub-Saharan Africa (90%), Eastern and South-Eastern Asia (75%), Latin America and the Caribbean (66.66%), and Europe and Northern America (33.33%) displayed a lower coverage level. Similarly, sub-Saharan Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean followed by Eastern and South-Eastern Asia, and Northern Africa and Western Africa led the regions with the largest number of SDGs representing challenges lined up with UN guidelines with 10 and 8, respectively; Europe and Northern America only with three SDGs.

Some inconsistencies were found when comparing priority subjects derived from the guidelines handled by the countries assessed with the major challenges outlined in the SDG index report, and also represented by the SDGs covered in the national reports. For instance, Europe and Northern America and Northern Africa and Western Asia were mainly concerned about social inclusion and poverty, but SDGs were mostly focused on environmental and economic facets. Housing was a priority for Latin America and the Caribbean, but SDGs pointed toward poverty, gender equality, reduced inequalities, or environment.

Responding to RQ3, the published national reports on the whole revealed a low degree of correspondence with the guidelines suggested in the UN reporting framework. Finland, the nation accounting the greatest amount of guidelines, barely reached the 60% of the total. No strong correlation between the wealthiest nations (OECD) and the covered guidelines was determined, although countries in underdeveloped regions exhibited a better performance. In the same vein, the linkage between the SDGs represented by the guidelines followed a similar trend. Europe and Northern America showed worse records than the other regions. Guidelines designed to ensure the effective implementation of the NUA were the least represented.

## 5. Conclusions

The implementation process of the NUA endorsed in October 2016 by 194 countries was diagnosed in this article around three RQs. All national progress reports issued on this subject until November 2023 were thoroughly examined to determine the present status of reporting. The correlation between the NUA report form proposed by the UN and the SDGs was also

**Table 5.** Major challenges established in the SDG index report

	SDG no.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Europe and Northern America	Czech Rep. <sup>a</sup>													√				√
	Finland <sup>b</sup>												√	√				
	Germany <sup>b</sup>												√	√				
	Malta <sup>c</sup>		√				√						√		√			
	Spain <sup>b</sup>		√											√			√	
	Sweden <sup>b</sup>		√											√		√	√	√
Northern Africa and Western Asia	Algeria <sup>b</sup>		√	√					√						√	√		
	Bahrain <sup>b</sup>		√			√								√	√	√		
	Lebanon <sup>c</sup>		√	√		√			√			√			√	√	√	
	Morocco <sup>c</sup>		√	√		√			√	√					√	√		
	Saudi Arabia <sup>d</sup>		√			√								√	√	√	√	√
	Turkiye <sup>b</sup>					√			√	√	√				√	√	√	√
Sub-Saharan Africa	Botswana <sup>b</sup>		√	√	√			√	√	√	√		√			√	√	
	Cameroun <sup>c</sup>	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√				√	√	√
	Ghana <sup>c</sup>		√	√		√	√				√	√			√		√	
	Kenya <sup>b</sup>	√	√	√			√	√		√	√	√			√	√	√	
	Malawi <sup>b</sup>	√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√	√					√	√	
	Nigeria <sup>b</sup>	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√			√		√	
	Senegal <sup>b</sup>	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√			√		√	
	South Africa <sup>c</sup>	√	√	√					√	√		√			√	√	√	
	Tanzania <sup>c</sup>	√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√			√	√	√	√
Zimbabwe <sup>d</sup>	√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√	√						√	√	
Eastern and South-Eastern Asia	Indonesia <sup>b</sup>		√	√			√			√	√	√			√	√	√	
	Lao <sup>b</sup>			√			√			√	√					√	√	√
	Malaysia <sup>c</sup>		√	√		√		√			√					√	√	
	Mongolia <sup>c</sup>		√	√			√	√				√	√	√		√	√	
Latin America and the Caribbean	Brazil <sup>b</sup>			√					√		√		√		√	√	√	
	Colombia <sup>b</sup>			√			√		√	√	√				√	√	√	
	Costa Rica <sup>c</sup>		√		√		√			√	√				√	√	√	
	Cuba <sup>b</sup>									√					√	√	√	
	Dominican Rep. <sup>b</sup>		√	√							√						√	√
	Ecuador <sup>b</sup>		√	√								√				√	√	

(Continued)

Table 5. (Continued.)

SDG no.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Mexico <sup>b</sup>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Peru <sup>b</sup>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Venezuela <sup>c</sup>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Palestine was omitted as it is not a UN country member.

Publication year: <sup>a</sup>2020, <sup>b</sup>2021, <sup>c</sup>2022, <sup>d</sup>2023.

Source: SDSN (2020, 2021, 2022, 2023).

analyzed along with how countries covered the guidelines displayed therein. A protocol based on the SDG index was designed to analyze the quality of national reports in relation to SDGs monitoring. Main conclusions are summarized below:

- The small number of national reports (40) on the application of the NUA worldwide suggests a low commitment (20.61%) of most countries to fulfill this global initiative. In particular, the implication of the most advanced economies on the planet was sparse, only six reports (15%) were published by countries in this segment. This is in stark contrast to the majority compromise adopted by nations on the achievement of the SDGs as reflected in the ranking of countries displayed in the SDG index reports.
- Despite the NUA was essentially devised as the pivotal instrument to operationalize the 2030 Agenda and thereby the SDGs in the urban realm, the guidelines defined by the UN partially (76.47%) represent all the 17 SDGs. Likewise, the distribution of the guidelines among the SDGs and sustainability domains is unbalanced toward the institutional (66.08%) and economic (16.07%) facets.
- The complete absence of monitoring and evaluation guidelines in the NUA report template prevents the quantitative evaluation of countries' progress, which greatly complicates the successful implementation of the NUA.
- On the whole, UN guidelines were scarcely covered in the reports issued by the examined countries, irrespective of their geographical area. The best performance corresponded to Finland (55.36%), Mongolia (46.43%), and Turkiye (41.07%). Spain (1.79%) had the worst record. No pattern was thus identified to correlate the level of guidelines coverage with the geographical distribution of countries.
- No consensus was found in the guidelines handled by the national reports in determining the priority topics to be faced worldwide. Housing was the most referred to, but only for the nations of three zones.
- Significant differences were identified between the core issues suggested by the items of the UN report form, the major challenges defined by each country in the SDG index report, and the SDGs associated with the guidelines covered by the national reports. This proves the current inconsistency between the NUA and the SDG index, the composite metric specifically developed to assess and monitor the performance of nations on the SDGs.

Consequently, the UN report template is seriously questioned as an effective tool to assist in the application of the NUA. On the basis of the successful monitoring and assessment process used for the SDGs, the next recommendations are suggested to enhance the implementation of the NUA: (i) definition of quantitative indicators for monitoring, (ii) establishing a ranking of countries' performance, (iii) capitalizing on the SDGs experience, and (iv) use of the English as the sole reporting language.

The main limitation of this study is the theoretical nature of the NUA, which hinders the accurate evaluation and monitoring of its implementation. For that reason, the report template developed to this end presents serious flaws as the lack of tracking metrics that undermine its value as an efficient instrument toward the NUA. Besides, the absence of historical data and the reduced commitment of countries on reporting are also additional constraints encountered. New lines of investigation put the focus on addressing prior issues by defining a comprehensive suite of representative metrics to monitor the achievement of the guidelines



defined in the reporting form. Furthermore, additional guidelines to increase the representation of the SDGs and the four sustainability dimensions are also to be conceived. Lastly, the contribution of the NUA as model to design national policies for urban and regional planning might be a subject of future research.

**Data.** The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author (J.M.D.-S.), upon reasonable request.

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**Author contributions.** Concept and design: J.M.D.-S.; analysis and interpretation of the data: J.M.D.-S.; drafting of the paper: J.M.D.-S.; critical review for intellectual content: J.M.D.-S.; final approval of the version to be published: J.M.D.-S. and J.L.S. All authors agree to be accountable for all aspects of the work.

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## Appendix

**Table A1.** Guidelines for reporting on the implementation of the NUA (Urban Agenda Platform, 2024)

Part no.	Theme #.#.	Subtheme #.#.#.	Guideline #.#.#.#.
1. Transformative Commitments for Sustainable Urban Development	1.1. Sustainable urban development for social inclusion and ending poverty	1.1.1. Social inclusion and ending poverty	1.1.1.1. Eradicate poverty in all its forms <sup>a</sup>
			1.1.1.2. Reduce inequality in urban areas by promoting equally shared opportunities and benefits <sup>a</sup>
			1.1.1.3. Achieve social inclusion of vulnerable groups (women, youth, older persons and persons with disabilities, and migrants) <sup>a</sup>
			1.1.1.4. Ensure access to public spaces including streets, sidewalks, and cycling lanes <sup>a</sup>
		1.1.2. Access to adequate housing	1.1.2.1. Ensure access to adequate and affordable housing <sup>a</sup>
			1.1.2.2. Ensure access to sustainable housing finance options <sup>a</sup>
			1.1.2.3. Establish security of tenure <sup>a</sup>
			1.1.2.4. Establish slum upgrading programs <sup>a</sup>
		1.1.3. Access to basic services	1.1.3.1. Provide access to safe drinking water, sanitation, and solid waste disposal <sup>a</sup>
	1.1.3.2. Ensure access to safe and efficient public transport system <sup>a</sup>		
	1.1.3.3. Provide access to modern renewable energy <sup>a</sup>		
	1.2. Sustainable an inclusive urban prosperity and opportunities for all	1.2.1. Inclusive urban economy	1.2.1.1. Achieve productive employment for all including youth employment <sup>a</sup>
			1.2.1.2. Strengthen the informal economy <sup>a</sup>
			1.2.1.3. Support small- and medium-sized enterprises <sup>a</sup>
			1.2.1.4. Promote an enabling, fair, and responsible environment for business and innovation <sup>a</sup>
1.2.2. Sustainable Prosperity for all		1.2.2.1. Diversity of the urban economy and promote cultural and creative industries <sup>a</sup>	
		1.2.2.2. Develop technical and entrepreneurial skills to thrive in a modern urban economy <sup>a</sup>	
		1.2.2.3. Develop urban-rural linkages to maximize productivity <sup>a</sup>	
1.3. Environmentally sustainable and resilient urban development	1.3.1. Resilience, mitigation, and adaptation of cities and human settlements	1.3.1.1. Minimize urban sprawl and loss of biodiversity resulting from it <sup>a</sup>	
		1.3.1.2. Implement climate change mitigation and adaptation actions <sup>a</sup>	
		1.3.1.3. Develop systems to reduce the impact of natural and human-made disasters <sup>a</sup>	
		1.3.1.4. Build urban resilience through quality infrastructure and spatial planning <sup>a</sup>	
	1.3.2. Sustainable management and use of natural resources	1.3.2.1. Strengthen the sustainable management of natural resources in urban areas <sup>a</sup>	
		1.3.2.2. Drive resource conservation and waste reduction, reuse, and recycling <sup>a</sup>	
		1.3.2.3. Implement environmentally sound management of water resources and urban areas <sup>a</sup>	
		1.3.2.4. Adopt a smart-city approach that leverages digitization, clean energy, and technologies <sup>a</sup>	

(Continued)

Table A1. (Continued.)

Part no.	Theme #.#.	Subtheme #.#.#.	Guideline #.#.#.#.	
2. Effective implementation	2.1. Building the urban governance structure: establishing a supportive framework		2.1.1.1. Decentralize to enable subnational and local governments undertake their assigned responsibilities <sup>a</sup>	
			2.1.1.2. Link urban policies to finance mechanisms and budgets <sup>a</sup>	
			2.1.1.3. Develop legal and policy frameworks to enhance the ability of governments to implement urban policies	
			2.1.1.4. Build the capacity of local and subnational governments to implement local and metropolitan multilevel governance	
Part #	Theme #.#	Subtheme #.#.#	Guideline #.#.#.#	
	2.2. Planning and managing urban spatial development		2.1.1.5. Implement participatory, age- and gender-responsive approaches to urban policy and planning <sup>a</sup>	
			2.1.1.6. Achieve women's full participation in all fields and all levels of decision-making <sup>a</sup>	
			2.2.1.1. Implement integrated and balanced territorial development policies	
			2.2.1.2. Integrate housing into urban development plans <sup>a</sup>	
			2.2.1.3. Include culture as a priority component of urban planning <sup>a</sup>	
			2.2.1.4. Implement planned urban extensions and infill, urban renewal and regeneration of urban areas <sup>a</sup>	
			2.2.1.5. Improve capacity for urban planning and design, and training for urban planners at all levels of government <sup>a</sup>	
2.3. Means of implementation	2.3.1. Mobilization of financial resources		2.2.1.6. Strengthen the role of small and intermediate cities and towns	
			2.2.1.7. Implement sustainable multimodal public transport systems including non-motorized options	
			2.3.1.1. Develop financing frameworks for implementing the NUA at all levels of government <sup>a</sup>	
			2.3.1.2. Mobilize endogenous (internal) sources of finance and expand the revenue base of subnational and local governments <sup>a</sup>	
			2.3.1.3. Formulate sound systems of financial transfers from national to subnational and local governments based on needs, priorities, and functions <sup>a</sup>	
			2.3.1.4. Mobilize and establish financial intermediaries (multilateral institutions, regional development banks, subnational and local development funds, pooled financing mechanisms, etc.) for urban financing <sup>a</sup>	
			2.3.2. Capacity development	2.3.2.1. Expand opportunities for city-to-city cooperation and fostering exchanges of urban solutions and mutual learning <sup>a</sup>
				2.3.2.2. Implement capacity development as an effective, multifaceted approach to formulate, implement, manage, monitor, and evaluate urban development policies <sup>a</sup>
				2.3.2.3. Build capacity at all levels of government to use data for evidence-based policy formulation

(Continued)



**Table A1.** (Continued.)

Part no.	Theme #.#.	Subtheme #.#.#.	Guideline #.#.#.#.
			including collecting and using data for minority groups <sup>a</sup>
			2.3.2.4. Build capacity at all levels of government to work with vulnerable groups to participate effectively in decision-making about urban and territorial development <sup>a</sup>
			2.3.2.5. Engage local government associations as promoters and providers of capacity development <sup>a</sup>
			2.3.2.6. Implement capacity development programs on the use of legal land-based revenue financing, and other tools <sup>a</sup>
			2.3.2.7. Implement capacity development programs of subnational and local governments in financial planning and management <sup>a</sup>
			2.3.2.8. Increase cooperation and knowledge exchange on science, technology, and innovation to benefit sustainable urban development
Part #	Theme #.#.	Subtheme #.#.#.	Guideline #.#.#.#.
		2.3.3. Information technology and innovation	2.3.3.1. Develop user-friendly, participatory data and digital platforms through e-governance and citizen-centric digital governance tools <sup>a</sup>
			2.3.3.2. Expand deployment of frontier technologies and innovations to enhance shared prosperity of cities and regions
			2.3.3.3. Implement digital tools, including geospatial information systems to improve urban and territorial planning, land administration and access to urban services <sup>a</sup>
			2.3.3.4. Build capacities at all levels of government to effectively monitor the implementation of urban development policies <sup>a</sup>
			2.3.3.5. Strengthen all levels of government and the civil society in the collection, disaggregation, and analysis of data <sup>a</sup>
3. Follow-up and review			

<sup>a</sup>Suitable guidelines for being quantitatively assessed using indicators.