Forum: Sustainable Development Goals 11

Issue: Creation of Sustainable Cities to make them more Inclusive and Safe

Student Officer: Emilia Kis

Position: Deputy Chair

Introduction

This issue centers around SDG 11, “Sustainable Cities and Communities”. More than half of the total world population is now living in cities, and it is set to rise by 60% by 2030. However, these cities also contribute to approximately 70% of global carbon emissions. As well as a usage of 60% of resources.

These urban cities have accumulated sewage dwellers, weak and unorganized infrastructure of both houses and poor piping systems across the cities (such as sewage and gas) and dysfunctional transportation systems. These further result in pollution on both land and air, worsening conditions within the city for its residents, as well as unplanned street brawls making for an unsafe environment.

In addition, the current Covid-19 situation has resulted in further restrictions in densely packed cities, in accordance with social distancing measures and quarantine. Not only does this impact citizens' public health, but also their economic standing and occupations, having many lose their jobs and not have enough money to provide for their families. And so, with overcrowding and poorly managed systems all round lead to higher exposure to the virus. So now, more than ever, change needs to be instated within these communities.

Definition of Key Terms

SDGs

SDGs or Sustainable Development Goals were adopted by the General Assembly in 2015, which includes reaching 17 Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. This is built upon the principles of “leaving no one behind” and considers all aspects of life and trying to make living for all people as sustainable as possible.

Urban

Based off of or in a city or town.

Sustainable Cities

A city structurally built considering economic, environmental and social impacts aiming to be both technologically advanced while also balancing sustainability and eco-friendliness.

Inclusive

In this case, it means to include variables that are usually not considered and instead apply and embed them into the system.

Sewage dwellers

Also referred to as “Mole People”, these are homeless people that live under an urban city in places such as: tunnels, subway stations or sewers.

Slum Household

A group of people/individuals living under the same roof, without resources such as: access to clean water, access to sanitation, a sufficient living area and good structural integrity of the house occupied.

Background Information

Adopted by world leaders in Rio De Janeiro in 2012, the 17 sustainable development goals aim to solve-or at least reduce-urgent environmental, political and economic challenges that the world is facing today. The SDGs are the predecessor of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), developed in 2000 but sadly failed to achieve its goals by the set time frame of 2015, thus the introduction of the SDGs.

However, MDGs helped set a base in important areas such as: providing sanitation and water in previously struggling nations, reducing income poverty (lifting people out of poverty), decreasing child mortality rates as well as significantly improving maternal health. Also kick-starting a global movement for free primary education, and so giving leaders a path to set for the future generations. All in all, they’ve given HIV/AIDS the fight of its life by combating it significantly alongside other treatable diseases including: malaria and tuberculosis.

SDG 11

This goal aims to “make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”. In 2018 alone, 29% of the total world populations lived in slums, and the numbers haven’t dwindled in the slightest. Though the MDGs have helped decrease it from 39% to our current numbers but that is still too much.

Transportation

It is a crucial factor in day to day life. As it uses up most energy in current urban cities and is in highest demand for both developed and developing nations. Transportation and lack thereof can lead to a number of complications and has already slowed down economic advances in LEDCs (Low Economically Developed Countries) as well as MEDCs (More Economically Developed Countries). Experts state that in order to sufficiently provide all transportation needs there have to be 4 attributes to transportation: equitable in access (fair and impartial to community), efficient, safe and climate responsive (suitable for all weather). Considering factors of-usage of transport, road networks, safety, transport fatalities and frequency of data-a recent study and data analysis has shown that from 38 countries across Asia, Europe, North America and in Latin American Countries (LACs) an increase in global public transport demand between 2001-2014 has shot up by nearly ⅕.

Enhance Inclusive and Sustainable Urbanisation and Capacity in all Countries

The average rate of physical expansion of cities exceeded that of the average population growth by a rate of 1.5%. The leading causes for this are: population growth, rising GNP (Gross National Product) and incomes, cheaper agricultural lands, modes of transport and the rapid growth of informal settlements. This is referred to as Urban Sprawl. In countries like Western Asia, Sub-saharan Africa, LAC, East Asia, Oceania and Northern Africa it is only continuing to expand and grow while in South-East Asia, Europe, North America, and Japan it is only decreasing as they're all MEDCs and land-rich countries.

Participation in one's community is always important and required in a well functioning Urban City. Thus, votes are being held in these cities on how to better improve the community of the city and have actively participating members of the community. And so a system of "direct participation" has been implemented in 46 countries and data across public consultations, participatory budgeting, elections, protests and demonstrations and through many more indicators have been collected to indicate functionality of that certain community and its willing citizens involved in its affairs. The countries with the most developed public participation at an urban city level are: East and South-East Asia as well as Australia and New Zealand while other parts of the world such as: South Asia, Europe and North America are less willing to participate in these events. These factors are important for the social factors and development of these cities.

Decrease Losses Through Natural Disasters and Economic Loss over GDP (Gross Domestic Product)

Lack of proper infrastructure and poorly built systems makes today's Urban overpopulated cities at a high risk of exposure to natural disasters. From 1990-2013 nearly 90% of mortality internationally was affected by such disasters in Low-middle class economies that saw a recent spike in urban

expansion. These disasters can significantly decrease economic growth as well as drive millions more into poverty. This shows through economic losses of $314 billion in these countries in contrast to the previous average of $153 in the previous decade, causing great alarm.

Providing Access to Safe, Inclusive and Accessible Green and Public Spaces

A safe and efficient public space can help a city's environmental and economic growth in many ways: it will increase appeal to tourists and locals, and cause a spike in efficient and effective transportation. As well as social effects of: enhanced safety, social mixing, equality among individuals, health and overall well being. In order to have a well functioning economy, cities need to take into consideration the use of space. Recent data analytics have shown that: space given to streets ranging from the city core to the suburbs is 25% and 15% in cities in Europe, North America and Oceania. Unfortunately, cities in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Carribean give less than 15% of the land to the streets in cities and less than 10% in suburbs, noticing a significant change between the 2 different parts of the data.

All parts of the community need protection but particularly vulnerable and most commonly affected parts of these populations are: women, children, elderly and people with disabilities. So, the UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime) has allocated the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (ICCS) to aid these parts of the community by providing a standard classification of criminal offences, to enhance consistency and to be able to compare international statistics. This data shows a dramatic increase in victimization crimes from 2009 onwards.

Already Completed or Partially completed but Functioning Sustainable Cities

As this goal has progressed over the years, many countries have taken incentive and developed their own sustainable cities.

The first of which was Masdar City located in Abu Dhabi, though its construction is not fully complete. Designed with clean technologies and renewable energy, it is the first fully ecological and sustainable city. The city uses 40% less energy and water. Adding to the fact that no resident is more than 200m away from the closest mode of public transport. This project was brought to light in 2006, it’s construction officially beginning in 2008. It’s main way of obtaining energy that doesn’t involve fossil fuels such as oil is through renewable energy resources such as solar energy. And so, Masdar City made other cities keen to be the next of a “Global revolution of intelligent cities”.

Downtown Doha/Msheireb

At the heart of Doha is the 35 hectare development of Msheireb Sustainable Downtown Doha. It’s development initially started in 2010 and by 2020 90% of it is complete and open to the public. Its ‘green features’ rain harvesting qualities as well as using overhangs to keep walking outside cool,

in contrast to normal weather conditions. As well as using sustainable energy such as solar energy, which has solar panels built into 100+ buildings. It's onsite water treatment of non-drinking water-using Reverse Osmosis (OR) plants- is used for the district cooling of the city as well as using non drinking water as flushing water. In addition, it is the 'first known' development to use condensate water from air conditioning in Qatar.

In order to accommodate the citizens public or any form of transportation needs, Msheireb is equipped with one of the world's largest underground connected car parks that can accommodate thousands of vehicles at a time. Not to mention the underground metro station under construction that has the capacity to accommodate 25,000 passengers/hour. As well as having the first operational tram in Qatar. In addition, it also allows residents and visitors to pass from Msheireb to its neighboring souq in an underground pass.

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

This UN run organisation stands for human rights and abides by the UN standard and norms for crime prevention on the whole of a population. This legacy particularly stands for women's rights and making sure minorities are protected.

193 Countries/Member States

193 member states, part of the UN, agreed to and adopted the 17 SDGs some of these countries include: Australia, Mongolia, France, Serbia and Japan.

Msheireb Properties

A real estate company that provides assistance in achieving Qatar's 2030 national vision.

Mahindra

Is a Rural Housing finance that assists rural communities around India to take up loans, and provides fixed loans as they're more understandable as well as it being equipped with life and property insurance.

¡Échale! A Tu Casa

Is a housing social enterprise that provides minimum wage families across america (approximately 25,000 families) to kick-start and finance their initial construction of houses, using $3 million.

Neighbourly

This organisation particularly focuses on SDG 11 at making sure that all cities are inclusive to all, safe, resilient and sustainable for future generations. It's an app that helps match large corporations to local charities in order for them to cooperate and make the community as good as possible.

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of Event
2000	MDGs were created
February 2008	Construction began for Masdar City
2012	Idea for SDGs born
1st January 2016	SDGs officially came into force

Relevant UN Treaties and Events

- 2030 Agenda for SDGs (2015) (A/RES/70/1)
- SDG indicators adopted (2016 March)

Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

Hamburg-futur 2 festival:

The sustainable approach was first used in 2018 here. This music festival hosts up to 4000-5000 guests a year. It uses reusable dishware, renewable energy production on site as well as serves organic foods and bans all transport to the site by car. It offers free tickets to visitors.

Vienna - Grätzloase

It is a yearly project conducted by the Umbrella Organisation in Vienna. It is about transforming public places and reorganising them through the practices of the community, improving social bonds. Citizens of the city send in submission for the suggestion of the next project and the best ideas are selected. There is also another group involved with this project called "Walking Trees", they plant and place trees in public places (i.e.: Parking garages) to emphasize the importance of greening the city. As well as other organisations taking part as well, such as gardening clubs, bringing all parts of the community together.

Possible Solutions

Introducing Renewable Technologies based on leading Geographical Factors

The key to starting a sustainable city is by monitoring ways in which the city utilises its energy resources and already available weather conditions to be able to make use of all its resources efficiently. In sunny and clear skyed places, solar energy and solar panels are most efficient as they provide sufficient energy to be maintained within the community without generating any carbon waste (aside from manufacturing). Another geographical and weather advantage is in geothermal areas like Iceland where there are geysers that release a sufficient amount of warm air to be able to generate energy efficiently without relying on non-renewable resources.

Popularize use of Biomass in Agricultural Parts of Communities

Utilise resources and use manure from farm animals to produce energy for that given part of the community. Though it produces carbon emissions, it's still a more cost reducing and efficient way of using resources to generate energy instead of continuing to burn fossil fuels.

Organize Transportation Systems in the City in accordance to Schedules

Make a city voting and evaluate results from participants in the community to create an organised system of public transport that effectively and efficiently provides the city with proper modes of transportation (eg: instate a tram that connects all parts of the city and starts running when working time starts but deals with onslaught of workers by also having public bus system assistance in order to accommodate every worker), as to not use their cars, generating less waste from the city.

Guiding Questions

1. How is your delegation affected by this?
2. In what ways can you improve sustainability in your delegation? (i.e.: list renewable energy resources and how they help)
3. How can you implement public transportation to your delegations?
4. What are ways of reducing Carbon emissions across Urban Cities? Why?
5. How will you make sure the community remains safe and inclusive to all?
6. What are ways of sustainably getting rid of waste?

Bibliography

https://innovation.sacyr.com/-/the-world-s-first-sustainable-city-is-in-the-middle-of-a-desert

https://sdg-tracker.org/cities

https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/197282018_background_notes_SDG_11_v3.pdf

https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals/goal-11-sustainable-cities-and-communities.html

https://www.lusail.com/the-project/sustainability/

https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals/background.html

https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/978-1-78756-921-820181003/full/html

https://sdgfunders.org/blog/how-17-companies-are-tackling-sustainable-development-goals-and-your-company-can-too/

https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/metadata-compilation/Metadata-Goal-11.pdf

Appendix or Appendices

I. https://bankimooncentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/12_BKMC_SDG11-Best-Practices_Adamec_Franz_Holzinger-FINAL-March-2020.pdf (these include a more wide and detailed array of solutions already implemented and are filled with great ideas!)

II. https://www.nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/biomass-energy/
https://www.britannica.com/science/solar-energy
https://www.nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/tidal-energy/
https://www.nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/hydroelectric-energy/
https://www.irena.org/geothermal
https://www.ge.com/renewableenergy/wind-energy/what-is-wind-energy
(These are sources on all the renewable energy)

III. https://books.google.com.qa/books?hl=en&lr=&id=GJfzDQAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PT11&dq=modes+of+sustainable+public+transport&ots=zIS4NawoNK&sig=zC1Hx9_f8bGY2RTS4pqHvCbMfuo&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=modes%20of%20sustainable%20public%20transport&f=false

https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0967070X06000801
https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0967070X05001393
(PDF's on public transport, the summary has all the chapters and useful info)