URBAN SUSTAINABILITY IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

Circles of sustainability

Chapter 7. Generating an Urban Sustainability Profile

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WITH LIAM MAGEE, ANDY SCERRI, MANFRED STEGER
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The Urban Profile Process is intended as a way of developing an interpretative description of the sustainability of an urban region and its immediate hinterland. There are many such tools for measuring sustainability, but most of those tools either depend on developing hugely expensive banks of statistics or on turning to one-off, narrow and limited surveys. As cities become larger and more complex places, located in a world slipping into unsustainability, the complexity of measurement has redoubled. Measurement needs to be equally attuned to things as different as carbon emissions and the spirit of place. The lyrics of Leonard Cohen’s song ‘The Future’ point to this complexity with a particular poignancy: we have crossed a threshold; the order of the soul has been overturned.

The Urban Profile Process uses a systematic series of qualitative questions organized around the four-domain model laid out earlier in Chapter 3. By answering these questions across the full range of the social practices and meanings it is intended that a simple figurative representation can be developed of the complexity of a given situation at a given time (thus meeting the requirement of simple complexity discussed earlier). The sustainability profile template laid out in this chapter is intended as way of developing a comprehensive understanding of an urban region – a city, a metropolis, a town, a municipality or a village.

The depth of the analysis depends very much on who is enlisted to use the tool and how much time they put into it. Using the Urban Profile Process it is possible to generate a clear and simple graphic representation of the sustainability profile of that region in a very short time, but that does not mean that the graphic representation is anything more than a starting point. On the other hand, with sufficient time and resources, the tool can be used to frame a process that is thorough, deep and ongoing.
What we are trying to measure are basic questions across the four domains:

1. At what level and how sustainable is the ecological resilience of the urban region? Here the question refers the extent to people’s impact upon and involvement with nature can enhance both their own physical well-being and the capacity of the urban and hinterland environment to flourish in the face of external impact.

2. At what level and how sustainable is the economic prosperity of the urban region? Prosperity does not mean the level of wealth or material possessions. It is worth remembering that the term derives from Latin *prosperare*, according to expectation for, *pro*, and hope, *spes*. The basic question refers to the issue of what extent can local urban communities engage in activities relevant to their economic well-being and be confident about the sustainability of their local economies in the face of changing structures and pressures in and beyond their locale.

3. At what level and how sustainable is political engagement of people in the city? Here the urban profile gives an understanding of the extent to which members of communities can participate and collaborate meaningfully in structures and processes of power that affect them and others.

4. Finally, at what level and how sustainable is the cultural vitality of the urban region? This refers to the extent to which communities are able to maintain and develop their beliefs, celebrate their practices and rituals, and cultivate diverse systems of meaning, and its long-term sustainability.

Pilot studies have already been conducted in a number of cities across the world using the various drafts of the process tool in development. Some of those are represented in Figure 7.1. Each of these figures represents a qualitative assessment by local and other experts of the sustainability of the respective urban areas. The quality and the standing of the assessment depend on the expertise of the persons who are conducting the assessment. Optimally, we suggest that the assessment group should comprise three to ten people with different and complementary expertise about the urban area in question. Deliberation, discussion and debate is ideally right at the heart of the process. Table 7.1 is intended for recording the names and expertise of the persons on the assessment panel.

The assessment panel should meet for a sustained period to conduct the assessment. The amount of time taken depends upon the nature of the assessment. (See Table 7.2.) Two hours is possible for a rapid assessment; 4 hours is minimal for an aggregate assessment, but a day would be better to allow for proper contestation and discussion. It might, however, take significantly longer for an annotated assessment. And a comprehensive assessment would take from a few months to a year, depending on how much dedicated time is given to it. Ideally, individuals on the panel should read through the questions before meeting as a panel and when necessary seek information about issues with which they are not familiar.
FIGURE 7.1  Circles of Sustainability Urban Profiles
### TABLE 7.1 Urban Profile Assessors on the Assessment Panel

The profile mapping process can be done by different kinds of respondents. Different people have different knowledge sets, all of which can be valuable in making an urban assessment. In order to understand the nature of the assessment, we just need to know what kind of knowledge held by each respondent in the Assessment Panel.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kind of Respondent</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position and/or Training</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Internal Expert Assessors</strong></td>
<td>Internal Expert Assessors</td>
<td>That is, individuals who live in the urban region in question and have expert knowledge of that region or a significant aspect of that region.</td>
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<td>* Here ‘expert knowledge’ is defined as either being trained in some aspect of urban planning/administration, etc., or working in that capacity for some time.</td>
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<td><strong>2. External Expert Assessors</strong></td>
<td>External Expert Assessors</td>
<td>That is individuals who do not live in the urban region in question but have expert knowledge of that region or a significant aspect of that region.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3. Lay Assessors</strong></td>
<td>Lay Assessors</td>
<td>That is, individuals who live in the urban region in question, and who have extensive local knowledge of the region or an aspect of the region, (without necessarily either being trained in urban planning, administration, or working in the field).</td>
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*In approaching the tool, the following guidelines are given:

If you are conducting a rapid assessment only the general question in each set needs to be answered. That question works as a proxy question for that whole area of sustainability. If you are conducting an aggregate assessment at least six of the questions in each set of seven questions need to be answered. If one of the questions in each set is deemed to be particularly inappropriate for your urban area, you can either choose to replace that one question by alternative question that you formulate for yourself or choose not to answer that question and leave the assessment blank.

In most cases, the questions will be weighted equally in finalizing the assessment – that is, unless a prior round of assessment is done to rank and weight the questions in each perspective in relation to each other.*
### TABLE 7.2 The Nature of the Assessment Process

The profile mapping process can be done at five levels: Please indicate which profile exercise you intend to complete by ticking the box or boxes below.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Profile Description</th>
<th>Ticking or Marking</th>
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<td>1.</td>
<td><strong>Rapid Assessment Profile</strong></td>
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<td>By responding to the single ‘general question’ under each ‘perspective’ by marking the 9-point scale.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td><strong>Aggregate Assessment Profile</strong></td>
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<td>By responding to the ‘particular questions’ under each ‘perspective’ by marking the 9-point scale.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td><strong>Annotated Assessment Profile</strong></td>
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<td>By completing the exercise at level 2 and writing detailed annotations about how the points on the scale were derived.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td><strong>Comprehensive Assessment Profile, I</strong></td>
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<td>By completing the exercise at level 3 and writing a major essay on the urban area using the questions to guide the writing.</td>
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<td><strong>Comprehensive Assessment Profile, II</strong></td>
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<td>By completing the exercise at level 3 and assigning metrics-based indicators to each point on the scale.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td><strong>A Certified Assessment</strong></td>
<td>[ ] and/or</td>
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<td>By completing an Assessment Profile at one of the previous levels, and then negotiating with the UN Cities Programme Secretariat to have their Global Advisors critical respond and certify that assessment.</td>
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### Definitions for the purposes of this questionnaire

- **Sustainability** is defined as activity that ‘meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’. This is the minimal definition of what in the questionnaire calls a level of ‘satisfactory sustainability’.
- **Positive sustainability** is defined as practices and meanings of human engagement that make for an ongoing lifeworld that projects natural and social flourishing or vibrancy.
- **Urban area, or area**, as used in the questionnaire means the area that you have defined as the basis for making this assessment. The concept of local is used to mean the space within the urban area.
- **Urban region** means the urban area and its immediate hinterlands, including its peri-urban extensions, adjacent agricultural and rural land, and its water catchment areas if they are in the immediate vicinity of the urban area.
Broader region is taken to mean within 2 to 3 hours’ land transport from the urban region.

Concepts such as good and appropriate are to be defined in terms of the values

**The scale for critical judgement**

The questionnaire asks for critical judgement on a nine-point scale of sustainability from critical sustainability to vibrant sustainability. The period in question is the present (unless otherwise specified) and the limits of projection are the next thirty years or one generation, using the United Nations’ definition of sustainable development as development that meets the needs of the people now, without compromising the needs of the next generation.

**Critical sustainability**, at the least sustainable end of the sustainability spectrum, means a level of sustainability that requires critical or urgent change now in order to be assured of continuing basic viability over the next thirty years and thus into the adult lives of the next generation.

**Vibrant sustainability**, at the other end of the spectrum, means a level of sustainability that is currently active in reproducing vibrant social and environmental conditions that augur well for long-term positive viability for the next generation and beyond.

**Basic sustainability**, the midpoint on the scale, signifies a level of sustainability that allows, all other pressures being equal, for a basic equilibrium over the coming period meeting the needs of the next generation. See Table 7.3.

The Urban Profile process works on the basis of a four-domain model with each domain is divided into seven perspectives, and seven questions are asked about each perspective (see the questionnaire in the Appendix to this chapter).

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<th>TABLE 7.3 The Scale of Sustainability</th>
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<td>Unsatisfactory Basic Satisfactory Highly Satisfactory</td>
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<td>Good Vibrant factory</td>
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APPENDIX: URBAN PROFILE QUESTIONNAIRE

Ecology

1. Materials and energy

General Question: How sustainable is energy production for the urban area?

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Particular Questions

How sustainable are the following aspects of the urban area?

1. The availability of material resources in the broader region
2. The availability of food grown in the immediate urban region
3. The availability of minerals and metals sourced from the broader region
4. The proportion of electricity produced for the urban area by renewable means
5. The dependence of the urban area on fossil fuels
6. The use of recycled materials
7. The translation of resource-use monitoring into reduction strategies
   * Optional alternative question:
2. Water and air

*General Question:* How sustainable are the levels of air quality and water quality in the urban environment?

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Critical  Bad  Highly  Unsatisfactory  Basic  Satisfactory  Highly  Satisfactory  Good  Vibrant

*Particular Questions*  
*Number 1–9*

1. The bodies of water in the urban region
2. The ready access of all to potable water distributed with minimum energy-use
3. The continuous presence of good quality air in the urban region
4. The liveability of the urban region’s climate
5. The carbon footprint of the urban area
6. The development of climate-change adaptation strategies for the urban area
7. The translation of air and water quality in the area monitoring into quality-improvement strategies
   • *Optional alternative question:*

3. Flora and fauna

*General Question:* To what extent is biodiversity sustainable across the urban region?

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Critical  Bad  Highly  Unsatisfactory  Basic  Satisfactory  Highly  Satisfactory  Good  Vibrant

*Particular Questions*  
*Number 1–9*

1. The resilience of regional ecosystems to past and present urbanization
2. The biodiversity of the region now by comparison with the time of its first major settlement
3. The rate of native plant species’ extinction in the urban region across the last 100 years
**Particular Questions**

How sustainable are the following aspects of the urban region?

**Number 1—9**

4. The tree coverage of the urban region – native or otherwise
5. The continuing viability of native species of birds and animals in the urban region
6. The relation of people in the urban region to non-domesticated animals and birds
7. The translation of monitoring of flora and fauna into sustainability-improvement strategies
   • Optional alternative question:

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**4. Habitat and settlements**

*General Question:* How well does the urban area relate ecologically to the landscape on which it is built?

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**Particular Questions**

How sustainable are the following aspects of the urban region?

**Number 1—9**

1. The human liveability of the regional topography
2. The extent of original habitat still viable in the urban region
3. The existence of natural spaces – either original habitat or parks and gardens – as integral and accessible to all local neighbourhoods
4. The limiting of building in areas prone to natural risks such as flooding and landslides
5. The use of appropriate materials in buildings
6. The retrofitting of buildings and infrastructure to respond to environmental issues
7. The translation of habitat monitoring in the urban area into robust conservation strategies
   • Optional alternative question:

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**5. Built form and transport**

*General Question:* Does the form of the urban area and its transport system support sustainable living?

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Particular Questions: How sustainable are the following aspects of the urban area? Number 1–9

1. The spread of the urban area – with particular concern in relation to urban sprawl
2. The access of people to the different social amenities across the urban area through overlapping transport modes
3. The accessibility of mass transit systems in the urban area – particularly as extending to the urban fringes and non-formal zones
4. The degree of dependence on cars
5. The level of support for using non-motorized transport such as bicycles and walking through provision of safe walking paths, protected bike-lane networks, low-speed residential zones, etc.
6. The implementation of energy-use reduction practices for air and sea transport
7. The translation of transport monitoring into quality-improvement strategies

Optional alternative questions:

6. Embodiment and sustenance

General Question: How sustainable is the urban area in supporting the physical health of people?

1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9

Critical  Bad  Highly Unsatisfactory  Basic  Satisfactory  Highly  Satisfactory  Good  Vibrant

Unsatisfactory  Satisfactory

Particular Questions How sustainable are the following aspects of the urban area? Number 1–9

1. The general physical health of residents
2. The rate of infant mortality in the urban area
3. The level of physical exercise enacted regularly by all people in the urban area
4. The hygiene of urban streets for all people
5. The nutrition of food generally eaten by residents
6. The level of urban agriculture in the urban area, including in people's home sites
7. The translation of physical health monitoring into quality-improvement strategies

Optional alternative question:
7. Emission and waste

**General Question:** How sustainable is the way that the urban area deals with emissions and waste?

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**Particular Questions**

1. The level of carbon emissions in the urban area
2. The amount of hard waste produced by the urban area
3. The treatment of sewerage, including the subsequent dispersal of the treated products
4. The storm-water drainage system in the urban area
5. The composting of household green and vegetable waste
6. The level of hard-waste recycling in the urban area
7. The translation of emissions and waste monitoring into quality-improvement strategies
   • **Optional alternative question:**

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**Economics**

1. Production and resourcing

**General Question:** How sustainable are the broad patterns of production and resource access in the urban area?

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**Particular Questions**

1. The general prosperity of the urban area
2. The local manufacturing base of the urban area for producing basic goods
3. The access in the urban area to necessary primary resources
4. The arts communities in the urban area

(Continued)
Particular Questions

How sustainable are the following aspects of the urban area?

5. The level of design expertise in the urban area
6. The labour resources of the urban area
7. The translation of economic monitoring into quality-improvement strategies
   • Optional alternative question:

2. Exchange and transfer

General Question: How sustainable is the current movement of money, goods and services into and through the urban area?

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Particular Questions

How sustainable are the following aspects of the urban area?

1. The opportunity to participate in ethical trade – for example locally through community gardens and produce markets or globally through fair-trade networks
2. The availability of basic goods, including through non-commercial and low-cost outlets
3. The fair redistribution of financial resources through processes such as the tax system
4. The resilience of external trade relations, including through bilateral exchange agreements between cities
5. The provision of material aid and social support to people in need beyond the immediate the urban area
6. The levels of debt carried by different sectors of the urban area – both public and private
7. The translation of financial monitoring into quality-improvement strategies
   • Optional additional question:

3. Accounting and regulation

General Question: How robust are the various accounting and regulatory frameworks in the urban area?

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### Particular Questions

**How sustainable are the following aspects of the urban area? Number 1–9**

1. The transparency of public spending
2. The robustness of financial auditing systems that apply in the urban area\(^1\)
3. The appropriateness of regulation of goods and services\(^2\)
4. The application of consistent land-use regulation
5. The appropriate regulation of financial systems that affect the urban area
6. The appropriate regulation of labour practices, including health and safety considerations
7. The translation of the monitoring of regulatory systems into quality-improvement strategies
   - **Optional alternative question:**

### 4. Consumption and use

**General Question:** How sustainable are the current consumption patterns of the urban area?

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### Particular Questions

**How sustainable are the following aspects of the urban area? Number 1–9**

1. The reuse of goods, including through personal exchange and second-hand outlets
2. The development of responses to food security and vulnerability to seasonal shortages of food
3. The ongoing availability to all of goods and services deemed necessary for good living
4. The ongoing availability to all of basic utilities – such as water, electricity and gas
5. The capacity of local people to respond to peak-oil issues, including rising costs
6. The accuracy of advertising circulated locally in providing information about consumption goods
7. The translation of the monitoring of consumption patterns into strategies for enhancing good production and good use
   - **Optional alternative question:**
5. Labour and welfare

**General Question:** How sustainable are the conditions of work across the urban area?

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**Particular Questions**

How sustainable are the following aspects of the urban area?

1. The range of livelihoods available in the area to those with appropriate skills
2. The possibility for all of meaningful productive vocations
3. The relative equity of access to secure employment in the area across differences of gender, age and ethnicity
4. The capacity of the labour force to work productively
5. The safety of workers
6. The comprehensiveness of general welfare support processes across the urban area
7. The translation of the monitoring of labour practices into strategies for enhancing the comprehensiveness of good working conditions

*Optional alternative questions:*

6. Technology and infrastructure

**General Question:** To what extent is basic infrastructure in urban area appropriate and supportive of a broad cross section of needs?

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**Particular Questions**

How sustainable are the following aspects of the urban area?

1. The appropriateness of technologies and public infrastructure used to support the ongoing development of the urban area
2. The robustness of information storage systems available to people in the urban area
3. The adoption of new technologies in transport such as hybrid vehicles and intelligent transport systems
4. The quality of the building stock, both commercial and housing, in the urban area
Particular Questions
How sustainable are the following aspects of the urban area?

5. The resourcing of the education system with appropriate technologies and infrastructure readily available to locals
6. The resourcing of the health system with appropriate technologies and infrastructure readily available to locals
7. The translation of the monitoring of technological use into strategies for enhancing positive technological application
   • Optional alternative question:

7. Wealth and distribution

General Question: Is the wealth of the urban area sustainable; and is it distributed in way that benefits all?

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Particular Questions
How sustainable are the following aspects of the urban area?

1. The public use of wealth of the urban area for maximum social benefit for all
2. The maintenance of the inherited social wealth of the urban area – for example the maintenance of heritage buildings or public spaces for maximum social benefit
3. The relative equity of wage levels for different groups – as categorized by job, but also across difference of gender, age and ethnicity, etc.
4. The affordability of local housing for all
5. The relative equity of accumulated wealth of the residents of the urban area
6. The effectiveness of processes for redistributing wealth in the urban area
7. The translation of the monitoring of wealth accumulation into strategies for enhancing the social benefits for all
   • Optional alternative question:

Politics

1. Organization and governance

General Question: How well does the current system of governance function to maximize benefits for all?\(^{14}\)

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### Developing methods and tools

#### Particular Questions

How sustainable are the following aspects of the urban area?

1. The political legitimacy of the various levels of government relevant to the urban area
2. The capacity of the leaders of the various kinds of governance relevant to the urban area
3. The visions projected by the relevant levels of government for positively managing the form of the urban region – for example in relation to managing urban growth
4. The capacity of the administrative staff in the various levels of bureaucracy
5. The authority of the various levels of governance to carry out policy
6. The transparency of decision-making processes
7. The translation of the monitoring of administrative practices into strategies for enhancing the quality of governance
   - **Optional alternative question:**

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### 2. Law and justice

**General Question:** How well does the dominant legal system work?[^15]

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#### Particular Questions

How sustainable are the following aspects of the urban area?

1. The protection of human rights in the urban area
2. The civil order of the urban area
3. The responsiveness of local residents to legal requirements
4. The treatment of all locals as equal before the law – this includes the specified articulation of complementary systems of justice such as customary or traditional law
5. The fairness and circumspection of the dominant legal system
6. The appropriateness of legal judgements in relation to various levels of penalty and punishment
7. The translation of the monitoring of the legal system into strategies for enhancing the quality of legal administration
   - **Optional alternative question:**

[^15]: Note: The number refers to a specific reference or page number in the original source.
3. Communication and critique

General Question: How sustainable is social communication access in the urban area?

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Particular Questions

How sustainable are the following aspects of the urban area?

1. The level of positive freedom for political expression in the urban area
2. The range of newspapers, broadcasters and public communications systems circulating information relevant to people living in the urban area
3. The proportion of households with open access to mediated communications – including radio, television, Internet and other social communications
4. The quality of public political analysis – both mainstream and alternative – easily accessible in the urban area
5. The openness of the urban region to non-violent political protest being enacted and heard
6. The level of respect for privacy by public and private information gatherers
7. The translation of the monitoring of the media systems into strategies for enhancing the quality of media communication
   * Optional alternative question:

4. Representation and negotiation

General Question: How well are citizens of the urban area represented politically?

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Particular Questions

How sustainable are the following aspects of the urban area?

1. The active membership of residents in non-governmental organizations and advocacy groups – trades unions, professional associations, clubs, religious affiliations, etc.
2. The active participation of local people in the political processes of the urban area
3. The power of local people to affect political decision-making processes relevant to the urban area

(Continued)
### 5. Security and concord

**General Question:** How secure and peaceful is the urban area?

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**Particular Questions**

How sustainable are the following aspects of the urban area?

1. The level of personal security in relation to human security issues – such as food security, natural disaster, economic crisis or military threat
2. The physical safety of workplaces
3. The level of personal security in relation to domestic violence or day-to-day street conflict
4. The provision of shelter for residents of the urban area without homes or those leaving behind difficult circumstances such as domestic violence
5. The provision of active support for immigrants from outside the urban area escaping conflict, persecution or poverty
6. The provision of affordable insurance processes supported by formal guarantees
7. The translation of the monitoring of security threats into strategies for enhancing the quality of personal security for all

• Optional alternative question:

### 6. Dialogue and reconciliation

**General Question:** Is meaningful dialogue possible between groups with significant political difference in the urban area?

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**Particular Questions**

How sustainable are the following aspects of the urban area?

- 4. The availability of municipal representatives for consultation with residents
- 5. The active possibility of civil negotiation between groups with different interests – such as unions and business
- 6. The active and legitimate contestation of political power and office
- 7. The translation of the monitoring of the political systems into strategies for enhancing the quality of public participation

• Optional alternative question:
Particular Questions

How sustainable are the following aspects of the urban area?

1. The recognition of differences of identity – including, in particular, recognition of the original inhabitants of the urban region
2. The existence of active processes for negotiating different understandings of past events and histories of conflict
3. The existence of active processes – formal and informal – for handling tensions between communities distinguished by ethical, racial, religious, class, gender or sexual differences
4. The level of social trust in other people
5. The possibilities for enacting rituals and processes of remembrance and renewal
6. The existence of processes – formal and informal – for welcoming new arrivals
7. The translation of the monitoring of political tensions into strategies for enhancing the reconciliation processes
   • Optional alternative question:

7. Ethics and accountability

General Question: How ethical is social life in the urban area?

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Particular Questions

How sustainable are the following aspects of the urban area?

1. The grounding of municipal policies in clearly enunciated ethical principles
2. The public accountability of powerful public figures – for example corporate, media and union leaders
3. The general integrity brought to day-to-day transactions in public and private life
4. The active role of public integrity and anti-corruption offices and organizations
5. The possibility of meaningful public debate over ethical principles and their interpretation
6. The institution of processes for responding consequentially to breaches in accountability
7. The translation of the monitoring of corruption issues into strategies for enhancing integrity processes
   • Optional alternative question:
Culture

1. Identity and engagement

General Question: Does the urban area have a positive cultural identity that brings people together over and above the various differences in their individual identities?

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Particular Questions

1. The active cultural diversity of different local communities and groups
2. The sense of belonging and identification with the local area as a whole in a way that connects across community and group differences
3. The tolerance and respect for different language groups and ethnic groups in the urban area
4. The tolerance and respect for different religions and communities of faith in the urban area
5. The possibility of strangers to the urban area establishing and maintaining personal networks or affinity groups with current residents
6. The sense of home and place
7. The translation of the monitoring of community relations into strategies for enhancing identity and engagement
   * Optional alternative question:

2. Creativity and recreation

General Question: How sustainable are creative pursuits in the urban area – including sporting activities and creative leisure activities?

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Particular Questions

1. The level of participation in and appreciation of the arts – from painting to storytelling
2. The level of involvement in performance activities such as music, dance and theatre as participants and spectators
Generating an urban sustainability profile

3. Memory and projection

General Question: How well does the urban area deal with its history in relation to projecting visions of possible alternative futures?

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4. Belief and meaning

General Question: Do residents of the urban area have a strong sense of purpose and meaning?

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1. The level of knowledgeable engagement in cultural pursuits in the urban area
2. The possibilities for counter-ideologies being discussed and debated publicly
3. The level of thoughtful consideration that lies behind decisions made on behalf of the people of the urban area
4. The sense of meaning that local people have in their lives
5. The extent to which people of different faiths or spiritualities feel comfortable practicing their various rituals, even when their beliefs are not part of the dominant culture
6. The possibility that passions can be publicly expressed in the urban area without descending into negative conflict
7. The translation of the monitoring of ideas and debates into strategies for enhancing positive engagement

• Optional alternative question:

5. Gender and generations

General Question: To what extent is there gender and generational well-being across different groups?

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Particular Questions

How sustainable are the following aspects of the urban area?

1. The equality of men and women in public and private life
2. The positive expression of sexuality in ways that do not lead to intrusion or violation
3. The contribution of both men and women to bringing up children
4. The availability of child care in the urban area – whether formal or informal, public or private
5. The positive engagement of youth in the life of the urban area
6. The availability of aged care in the urban area – whether formal or informal, public or private
7. The translation of the monitoring of gender and generational relations into strategies for enhancing positive engagement.

• Optional alternative question:
6. Enquiry and learning

*General Question:* How sustainable is formal and informal learning in the urban region?

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*Particular Questions*

1. The accessibility of active centres of discovery – ranging formal scientific research institutes to places of playful discovery for children
2. The active participation of people in the urban area in deliberation and debate over ideas
3. The accessibility of active centres of social enquiry – both formal and informal – ranging in focus from scientific research to interpretative and spiritual enquiry
4. The active participation of people in formal and informal education, across gender, generation, ethnicity and class differences
5. The existence of local cultures of writing – from philosophical and scientific to literary and personal
6. The setting aside of time in the various education processes – both formal and informal – for considered reflection
7. The translation of the monitoring of education practices into quality-improvement strategies
   • *Optional alternative question:*

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7. Well-being and health

*General Question:* What is the general level of well-being across different groups of residents?

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*Particular Questions*

1. The sense of control that people have in the urban area over questions of bodily integrity and well-being
2. The level of knowledge that people in the urban area have in relation to basic health issues

(Continued)
Particular Questions

How sustainable are the following aspects of the urban area?

3. The availability of consulting professionals or respected community elders to support people in time of hardship, stress or grief
4. The capacity of the urban area to meet reasonable expectations that people in the urban area hold about health care or counselling
5. The participation of people in practices that promote well-being
6. The cultural richness of cuisine and good food
7. The translation of the monitoring of health and well-being practices into quality-improvement strategies

• Optional alternative question:

Notes

1 Sunil Dubey is the main co-author of this chapter with Paul James.
2 Remember here that ‘broader region’ here means within 2 to 3 hours’ land transport. ‘Material resources’ includes all resources from water, food and energy to concrete and steel.
3 Remember here that ‘urban region’ means the urban area and its immediate hinterlands.
4 Here ‘natural spaces’ means vegetated spaces – either original habitat or created natural settings such as parks.
5 Here ‘appropriate materials’ might be taken to mean such things as materials that appropriate to the climate or materials that are recycled, locally sourced or sustainably produced.
6 Here ‘mass transit systems’ should be taken to include both public and private transport systems such rail and bus networks.
7 Here in the ecological domain the emphasis is on physical health. Mental health is considered in the cultural domain.
8 ‘Arts communities’ might be taken to include different artists from musicians and painters to craft workers.
9 ‘Design expertise’ might be taken to include architects and planners to graphic designers and jewelry designers and so on.
10 ‘Labour’ includes both manual and intellectual labour resources from artisans and physical workers to doctors and engineers.
11 Here consideration of the question should take in both public and private auditing systems.
12 Here, as elsewhere, the question of ‘appropriateness’ should be judged in relation to general public outcomes, including the poor or vulnerable, rather than outcomes pertaining to any one sectional interest.
13 ‘Welfare’ is broadly defined here to include, on one hand, social security, pensions and in-kind state support to individuals or families and, on the other hand, support that comes from social networks, philanthropy and personal relations.
14 Here the ‘current system of governance’ includes nationally, regionally, municipally and locally.
15 Here the ‘dominant legal system’ includes the national, municipal and local levels of law and their intersection.