

Generic Sustainable Development Scorecard

Currently, the mainstream development value is sustainable development (SD) enshrined in Agenda 21 adopted by 118 governments in the Rio Summit of 1992, and the mainstream quantitative development indicators are the Millennium Development Goals' targets adopted by the United Nations in the 60th Session of the UN General Assembly in September 2000.¹

MDGs were first formulated for use at the national level. The next task is to translate the MDG targets into a generic M&E in development applicable also at the local or community level. The figure below shows an initial attempt to combine and reconcile metacapitals² and MDG targets. The resulting categories for the generic SD Scorecard which span both metacapitals and MDG targets are provided labels in Column 2.

Generic Sustainable Development Scorecard			
METACAPITAL	PROPOSED CATEGORIES FOR A GENERIC SD SCORECARD	LACK OR OPPOSITE	MDG TARGETS <small>http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/goals/gti.htm</small>
TANGIBLE			
Financial capital	1 Financial assets and incomes, size and distribution	poverty	Goal 1: eradicate extreme hunger and poverty Goal 8, Target 15: debt management for Goal 8, Target 18
Physical infrastructures Technology	2 Physical infrastructures, equipment 3 Process technologies and systems, intellectual property	hardware deprivation intellectual deprivation	Goal 8, Target 18 Goal 8, Target 18
Generative tangible systems	4 Tangible assets to reproduce and support other metacapitals	short-sighted tools	Goal 2: universal primary education (schools etc.)
Information infrastructures	5 Information systems	ICT poor	Goal 8, Target 18
INTANGIBLE			
Human capital; Positive psychological capital Spiritual capital	6 Human livelihood and life skills, education and health	ignorance, disease	Goal 2: achieve universal primary education Goal 4: reduce child mortality Goal 5: improve maternal health Goal 6: combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, etc. Goal 7, Indicator 28: proportion using solid fuels
Cultural capital Relationship capital; Access rights; Social contracts/arrangements	7 Attitudes, beliefs, wisdom and spirituality 8 Trust, fairness and relationships within and with stakeholders, including trading, investment and property arrangements	criminality war, conflict	(gap) Goal 3: gender equality & empower women Goal 8: global partnership for development
Structural/process capital; Institutional capital Generative intangible systems	9 Values, vision, institutions, policies, programs including good governance and leadership 10 Intangible assets to reproduce and support other metacapitals	lawlessness innovationless	Goal 7, Target 11: secure tenure of urban dwellers Goal 8, market access indicators
NATURAL			
Natural capital Organic capital, including biodiversity and biotech production systems	11 Size and health of reproducing/reproducible organic systems whether naturally-occurring, cultured or man-made	barren	Goal 7, Indicator 25: percent land area forested
Inorganic capital Renewables income	12 Stock of non-renewables 13 Per capita flow of renewables	depletion infertile	(gap) Goal 1: eradicate extreme hunger and poverty Goal 7, Indicator 27: energy use
Inorganic flow systems Organic flow systems=generative/regenerative natural systems	14 Production and management of inorganic wastes 15 Recycling of organic wastes	pollution eutrophication	Goal 7, Target 28: carbon dioxide and ODS Goal 7, Target 28: carbon dioxide and ODS

Metacapital, MDG Targets and Proposed SD Scorecard Categories

We note some observations and comments:

- Natural capital must be disaggregated further to match MDG targets. Specifically, the MDG targets can be interpreted as distinguishing between organic and inorganic stocks and processes.
- Two metacapitals – cultural capital and inorganic capital (related to depletion of stock of non-renewable resources and major source of non-biodegradable pollution) – do not have matching entries in MDG targets.
- Consensus on usage of terms remains an objective in this evolving discipline. For example, Malhotra uses the term “cognitive social capital” to refer to trust, solidarity and lack of conflict.³
- Certain MDG targets correspond to self-renewal or self-reproduction capacities in each of the three macro-categories of tangible assets, intangible assets and natural capital. Here the label “generative systems” is introduced.
- MDG targets do not exhaust or completely span each generic SD Scorecard category except the many MDG targets for Category 6 corresponding to human capital. This distribution may be reflective of pressing global priorities as judged by the UN General Assembly during the Millennium Summit.

The International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (or ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability), an association of over a thousand local governments from 68 countries, had adopted the “triple bottom line” or “people, planet, profit” concept consistent with SD criteria.⁴ A simple, convenient and practice-based SD scorecard for local communities, with a generic and a localized component, is a concrete step towards a universal standard for local development.

¹ See: <http://www.un.org/millennium/summit.htm>

² See the previous paper entitled “Knowledge for Poverty Alleviation: A Framework for Design and Evaluation of Development Projects for Low-Income Communities.”

³ Malhotra, Y. “Measuring Knowledge Assets of a Nation: Knowledge Systems for Development.” UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2003.

⁴ <http://www.iclei.org/>