STADS MAKERS FONDS

Msc Urban Studies

Brussels Centre for Urban Studies

Designing an Impact Model

A Tool for Evaluating Stadsmakerfonds Social Impact Through Real Estate

Produced By Master Students at the Brussels Centre for Urban Studies

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Introduction

Across Belgium, many buildings are vacant; industries have moved on to different locations, and institutions have been closed down. Conventional real estate development rarely addresses this issue. Instead, they prioritize profits and change the character of the buildings, whose purposes often are to serve only investors, not residents.

Stadsmakersfonds (SMF) takes a different approach. As a cooperative investment fund, it initiates and funds adaptive reuse initiatives that regard existing buildings as community assets instead of just commodities. By restoring underutilized buildings, SMF not only preserves architectural and cultural heritage but also establishes social values, such as making accessible spaces for work, creativity, sport, and assembly.

What is unique about the SMF project is that it operates through its dedicated legal entity, which is a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV). This allows the fund to gather project-specific partners such as healthcare organizations, social entrepreneurs, and local governments. This ensures that the people who can contribute most to the project's social impact have a genuine influence on it. This approach is significant because it challenges the assumption that financial return and social impact are difficult to achieve together. SMF demonstrates that the two can be designed to reinforce each other when local communities, the state, and investors act as partners.

SMF has been developing its own “kompas,” which is an impact measurement tool. Our primary focus was to refine it and ensure its adaptability across a diverse range of SMF projects. In this report, we clarify the issues with the current SMF’s kompas, show research on different measurement tools and social impact, introduce our tool, reflect on challenges, and discuss future directions.

Problem Statement

Current Process

The primary objective of this proposal was to develop a specialized impact model or "kompas" tailored to evaluate Stadsmakersfonds (SMF)'s diverse portfolio of real-estate projects, utilizing applicable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) tailored to SMF's projects (Figure 1).

The existing SMF model is composed of four core values: (A) Programmatic Ambition (Society), (B) Spatial Ambition, (C) Partners, and (D) Feasibility. As a cooperative investment fund, SMF prioritizes a pluralistic value system, encompassing financial, social, and personal dimensions over the traditional paradigm of profit maximization.



Figure1: SMF Original Kompass(English Translation)

Limitations of the Kompas

The current spider-web visualization serves as a conceptual anchor for the organization's goal of transforming unique sites into exemplary social impact projects. However, we identified that there are significant operational limitations. The current kompas remains primarily a design tool for visualization rather than a functional measurement instrument that creates user accountability across each stage of development. Also, SMF does not currently collect impact data in a structured or systematic manner that can inform progress by referring to the kompas. Furthermore, the model lacks a robust theoretical foundation, leading to challenges in practical application and data-driven decision making.

Establishing an Academic Foundation

A key contribution of the partnership with MUS lies in establishing a robust academic foundation for the development of the impact measurement tool. Because the initial model lacked a technical baseline and a grounding in existing literature, it had no established mechanism to measure the impact effectively. Therefore, to develop a more accountable and credible evaluation tool, SMF worked to integrate established frameworks and Key Performance Indicators into SMF's existing kompas.

KPI Measurement Dimensions: Phasing and Layering

The challenges identified by the SMF underscore the need for a measurement tool that accounts for the complex lifecycle of redevelopment projects. Impact must be monitored across multiple layers, such as project, organizational, and societal levels. Simultaneously, through distinct chronological phases: project selection, development, operation, and the post-SMF phase(Success of SPVs). This multi-layered and longitudinal approach is necessary to capture the full scope of the organization's effectiveness, from localized user satisfaction to its broader role as a challenger and innovator within the real estate industry.
In summary, SMF ideally requires a measurement framework capable of encompassing both the temporal dimensions of a project and the varying scales or scopes of its impacts. Identifying appropriate KPIs under these conditions was one of SMF's primary challenges, which they asked the MUS team to explore.

Responding to The Challenge:
MUS Academic Review

In response to these challenges, the MUS team explored industry-standard sustainability frameworks, evaluation tools, and best practices for selecting key performance indicators.

Considerations from the research can be found below:

The New European Bauhaus (NEB)

What It Offers

The NEB is a European Union initiative that integrates design, culture, and community engagement to shape spaces that bridge environmental ambition with social transformation and everyday lived experience. It has been authored and reviewed by leading experts and researchers from European universities and research institutes (*New European Bauhaus*, 2022).

The NEB's desired spaces are under these core values, forming their kompas (Figure 2): Beautiful, Sustainable, and Together. Beautiful upholds the value of improving physical and mental well-being, prioritizing emotional needs through activating cultural, social, and natural qualities of a place. Sustainable supports environmental sustainability. Together goes beyond inclusion, so equality, accessibility, and affordability are centered (*New European Bauhaus kompas*, 2022).

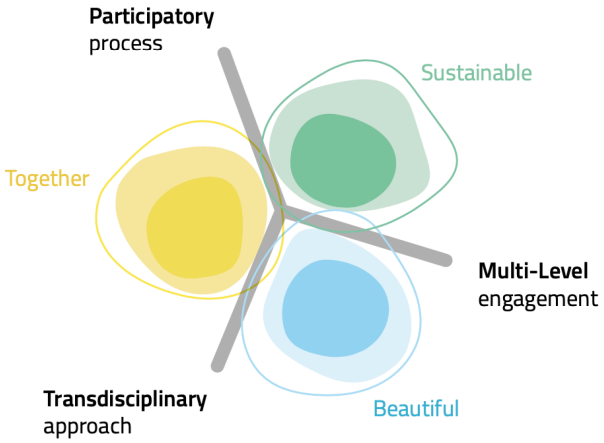


Figure 2: NEB Compass

Additionally, the NEB also has working principles when applied: Participatory, Multi-Level Engagement, and Transdisciplinary. Overall, these titles support the participation from multiple sectors, from the community to government, in order to gather transdisciplinary knowledge (*New European Bauhaus kompas*, 2022).

What MUS Adopted

These NEB values and working principles align closely with SMF's ambitions, which are to develop spaces that are local, transformative, and physically beautiful while creating genuine social impacts. Additionally, the NEB evaluates each project's realization of NEB's core values and working principles into three ambition levels. For example, each level has its own set of

definitions describing the level of impact. The higher the level, the more demanding the criteria become and reflect a scale from local to transformative impact. Within these scales, it is implied that impact will evolve at different stages throughout the process, which was a key concern for SMF. The MUS team found both this scoring guide and consideration of staged development compelling and integrated it as a mechanism for selecting and scoring key performance indicators (KPI) that were tailored to SMF's driving principles. This helps create a process of accountability while providing an evaluation process for indicators that cannot easily be measured. Additionally, the NEB provided an in-depth list of potential indicators that the MUS team was able to interpret and translate them to match with the values and goals of SMF.

GRO

What It Offers

GRO is a sustainability meter for construction and renovation projects in the Belgian regions. It helps design teams to make sustainable ambitions concrete and translate them into choices in the design and construction process (Fuhr et al., 2025). The definition of GRO's sustainability is based on the core themes: climate-responsive design, energy, water, social qualities, circular construction, healthy building, biodiversity, and management (Fuhr et al., 2025). 7 themes out of 8 themes, excluding social qualities, focus on the sustainability of the physical aspects of the buildings, such as design and inner structures. Moreover, social qualities also measure the physical inclusivity of the building, such as the visibility of the building from the road and the bicycle station (Fuhr et al., 2025).

What MUS Adopted

Most of GRO's indicators are focused on the material construction process, centering on sustainable practices and environmental impact. While this is a priority for SMF in their projects, the MUS remained focused on social impact indicators for assessment and did not rely heavily on the GRO tool except for a KPI evaluating "Cleanliness." The MUS team encourages SMF to refer to GRO when selecting KPI's that support the construction process.

Strategic Alignment Model (SAM)

What It Offers

The SAM model (Figure 3) was created because information technology (IT) innovation significantly changed business structures. According to Henderson and Venkatraman (1989), the SAM model serves as a tool for companies to make sure that their business model is aligned with the current market and its internal structure, maximizing the strategic value of IT.

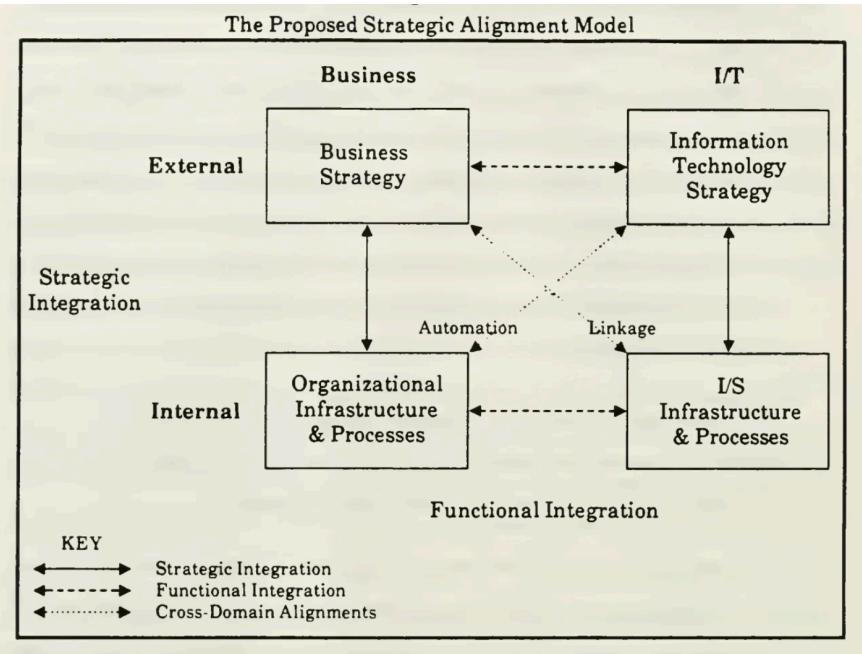


Figure 3: Strategic Alignment Model

The SAM proposes that effective strategic management requires balancing four dimensions: business strategy, internal infrastructure (skills and processes), IT strategy, and IT infrastructure. In order for a firm to most effectively streamline their operational capacities, there needs to be an alignment within and between their functions and their strategies (Henderson and Venkatraman, 1989). If one domain is not fulfilling an established target, it highlights a gap in the process and pinpoints whether that gap is a strategic or operational challenge, while also considering if it's a limitation of the tool or the (business) model itself. Using a strict interpretation of the model, all four domains must fulfill their objectives in order to achieve strategic alignment.

What MUS Adopted

SMF requested that the MUS team incorporate the SAM into their evaluation process and kompas, believing that it offered a framework for integrating social strategy with a real-estate strategy. Working with the SMF team, MUS adopted the four boxes (business strategy, internal infrastructure, IT strategy, and IT infrastructure) and translated them into: social strategy/ operationalized social structures, real estate strategy/ operationalized real estate structure. SMF added an additional level that would evaluate user experience as well as building condition, and would sit below the operational level in the SAM.

This would create a framework for SMF to evaluate social impact (business model) alongside a real-estate project (IT) on three levels: ground, operational, and strategic. Having this framework allows SMF to visualize where there is alignment or gaps in projects that have both material and social importance. Further, it created an outline for introducing KPI's into each domain.

Additional Considerations: Selecting Social Indicators

What we learned:

Social impact is a broad concept, including not just measurable outcomes but all the ways an intervention changes how people live, work, relate to one another, and participate in society (Feor et al., 2023). Thus, analyzing social impacts entails identifying social changes that are a direct or indirect outcome of the intervention under consideration, in comparison to all other events and changes, and determining which of these alterations have significant social consequences for the persons concerned. This requires a large amount of work, including measuring three conditions: the social conditions in the affected community before the intervention, the social conditions that would exist at a later date without the intervention, and the social conditions that exist at a later date with the intervention. (Olsen et al., 1978). Central to this process is developing a better understanding of the local community, and indicators should be informed by the vocalized needs of local residents and target populations.

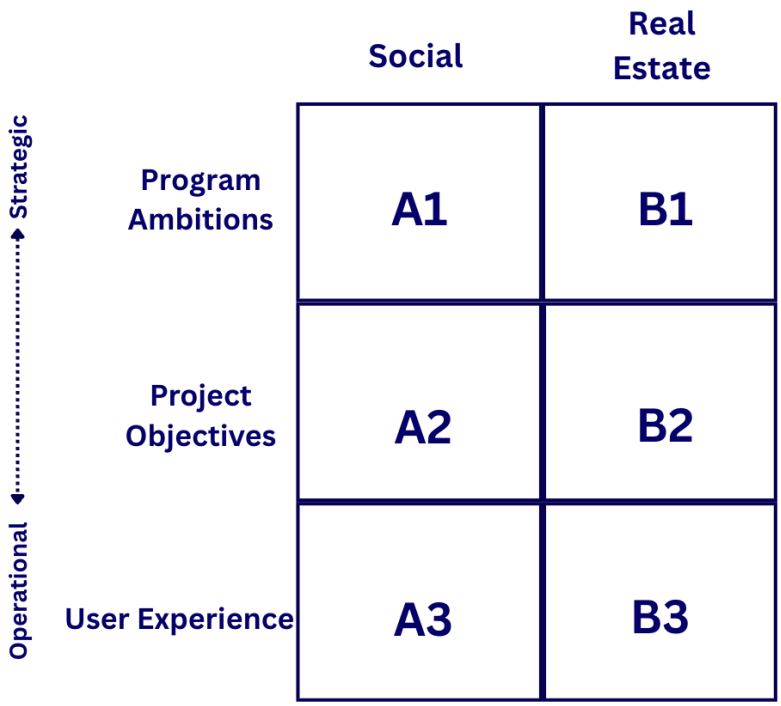
Regarding the selection of social indicators, evaluators will select objective and subjective indicators that inform questions about desired impact (Olsen et al., 1978). While objective analysis will more clearly reflect impact, some objective indicators require collecting an amount of data that can prove too challenging. Additionally, it is advisable to have only one indicator per evaluating factor (Olsen et al. 1978). Using multiple indicators per factor risks dealing with an unmanageable volume of data, and developing empirically supported weighted systems remains a challenge. Furthermore, the process might involve combining noncomparable items in a single index, for example, comparing "apples and oranges," which then loses all intuitive meaning (Olsen et al., 1978).

Forming The Tool

The four core values of Programmatic Ambition (Society), Spatial Ambition, Partners, and Feasibility found in SMF's current kompas formed the foundation from which our tool was eventually built. We drew indicators from established and currently operating models, forming a list of around 100 KPIs, each of which we attempted to connect to SMF values. From here, we filtered through this list, drawing the most applicable and relevant aspects of each indicator in SMF's context, while combining concepts and assessment points across indicators, to formulate the final list of 28 KPIs.

Each of these KPIs was subsequently given a definition to outline and specify the scope of assessment. These were taken from available research with a reliance on the NEB Handbook and formed the basis of how each indicator's 1-5 scale was formulated. Scores were determined in relation to how well the project addresses the set definition of what an indicator should address, setting the standard for the highest point of achievement (5).

This list was then transferred into the adapted *Strategic Alignment Model* framework and distributed throughout the six indicator categories. For indicators that cover more overarching



ambitions of the project at the strategic level, these were placed in the *Program Ambitions* (A1/B1) categories and divided into either the Social domain (A1) or the Real Estate domain (B1). This category assesses the extent to which SMF impacts higher-level metrics in the industry, such as innovation and scalability, as well as social impact metrics such as social inclusivity. Moving down the tool, indicators in the *Project Objectives* (A2/B2) categories assess more granular metrics at the project level, such as budget and finances, circular construction, and community participation - also split between Social Impact (A2) or Real Estate (B2). *User Experience (A3/B3)* addresses the finer details of the project at the user level, assessing satisfaction and engagement with the project, as well as evaluating the building condition.

“The Tool” - Evaluating Stadsmakersfond

MUS students with Stadsmakersfond created an interactive tool to evaluate key performance indicators that best reflect the mission and values of SMF projects. Essential functions of the tool are to show strategic alignment between real-estate strategy and social strategy, measure progress throughout the four stages of development, and score indicators based on the quality of activities and results across all SMF projects.

Tool Framework

The tool is an adaptation of John C. Henderson and N. Venkata's Strategic Alignment model. The model is divided into a 2x3 framework with 6 interconnected domains. The domains situated on the left side of the tool evaluate social impact (A), and the domains situated on the right side of the tool reflect real-estate strategy (B). The model is further broken down by 3 three levels: **A/B 1, A/B 2, and A/B 3.**

1. A/B 1 Strategic Potential - An evaluation of the overall project impact, capacity, and scalability. Questions of how this project will impact the community, the region, or possibly the world from both a real-estate and social perspective.
2. A/B 2 - Translation of the mission into project activity and performance. What activities on a project level are taking place to fulfill strategic potential?
3. A/B3 - User Experience/ Building Condition - An evaluation of how the space is perceived and used. What is the quality of the building/ how are users experiencing their time in the space?

A project obtains "Strategic Alignment" when it secures functional integration between the social strategy (A) and real-estate strategy (B) while also supporting a strategic fit between internal operations/experiences (2,3) with overall project goals (1).

**For this report, the MUS team exclusively focused on developing the social impact of the model (A)*

Indicator Selection

The MUS team selected indicators that reflect SMF values, process, and desired impact. Indicators used in the example tool were selected by the MUS team and SMF because they are considered most relevant to SMF projects and can be reasonably measured. Definitions and scores were determined by the MUS team using information from its literature review. NEB was the primary tool referenced when establishing definitions and scores (citations of each score can be found in the appendix). The MUS team then adapted scores to reflect the evaluation of the selected KPI across each stage. This allows for detailed descriptions and evolution of KPI's across phases with the goal of holding administrators of the tool accountable at each stage of the process.

Stages

The development process was defined by SMF and categorized into four stages. These stages include: Feasibility, Design/Permitting, Construction, and Exploitation.

Four Stages:

Real-Estate Strategy	Definition of Stages
1) Feasibility	Evaluation of project potential: Can SMF secure enough funding? Can the site support the envisioned social objective? Have essential partners committed to the project?
2) Design/ Permitting	Development details, administrative navigation, and government approval
3) Construction	Implementation: The material development of the site design. Management of budget + constructing within scope + fulfillment of design goals
4) Exploitation	Operationalization of the building: Is it fulfilling it's designed expectations? Is it seen as a model for future projects? Has it positively changed the social dynamics of a neighbourhood?

Scoring

The MUS team determined scores using a 1-5 scale. 1 reflects the poorest score and 5 the highest. Each KPI has it's own unique scoring scale that can be found in the indicator manual in the appendix. The 1-5 scoring reflects the degree to which the stated KPI is fulfilled. Indicators are comprised of both objective and subjective scores. Objective scores should reflect available data. Subjective indicators should be considered a discussion tool for administrators to measure progress throughout the project. Additionally, each KPI falls under one of SMF's core values reflected on its kompas. SMF can visualize the strength of its project using its original kompas by assessing the strength of a KPI in the context of its kompas.

Scoring Value:

1	**No execution of KPI**
2	**Subpar Execution of KPI**
3	**Average Execution of KPI**
4	**Fulfilling Execution of KPI**
5	**Transcending Execution of KPI**

Additional Notes on the Tool

Diary:

The diary cell creates space for the administering team to justify the selection of a score at each stage throughout the process. The administering team should make decisions collectively, and not be made by an individual team member. It is also an opportunity to narrate stories, successes, and challenges that may be helpful for information sharing.

Grouping KPI with SMF Driving Principles:

The MUS team connected the selected KPI with SMF's driving principles to highlight the distribution of KPIs and to clearly show a project's strengths/ weaknesses in accordance with SMF's strategic vision. Once fully implemented, indicators should strive to be equally distributed to proportionately evaluate each ambition. The current distribution remains uneven as Spatial Ambition and Feasibility will require more input from the SMF real estate team.

Completed Tool:

Link to the Tool: MUS KPI Scoring Sheet



Social Domain										
A1. Project Ambitions	KPI definition	Definition for Each Scale	Feasibility	Diary	Design + Permit	Diary	Construction	Diary	Exploitation	Diary	Averaged Results Across
Does the project create an innovation?	Community projects require innovation to create an impact in a community. This can be achieved through the involvement of innovative organizations and actors who work on experimenting with new ideas, and also providing space for co-creation between these actors. This can also mean the bridging of interdisciplinary gaps through unique collaborations between diverse stakeholders/local entrepreneurs. The project will eventually create an enhancement in this industry, spawning innovative techniques and ideas that create a larger impact for its users.	1. The project stagnates due to a lack of innovation; partners remain unchanged and singular. There is little growth, and it remains singular in direction. 2. The project partners rarely adapt or innovate; the project maintains a singular focus with no room for growth. 3. Innovation from/between partners helps grow the project in a new direction(s). However, innovations are rare and remain unprioritized. 4. Innovation and collaboration between partners direct how the project evolves over time. Continual encouragement of collaboration significantly impacts new directions. 5. The project is a frontrunner in social impact innovation, with new collaborations continually resulting in new and improved project directions.	5		2		3		5		
Does the project have an impact on legislation (projects in policy plans, new laws, ...)?		1. Project did not impact legislation as intended 2. Project impacted legislation very minimally, limiting project directions 3. Project impacted legislation moderately, allowing some freedom in project directions but still not idea 4. Most elements of legislation were passed from desired change 5. Desired legislation was passed in full	3		2		4		5		
Social Opportunities	The promotion and participation of individuals in the project's social activities. Participation requires that the project offer physical space and organizational structures, especially a commitment to engage in outreach activities specifically targeting the hardest-to-reach, more marginalized population, typically more distant from civic or cultural practices	1. The activities fail to foster any interaction; tenants remain isolated, and there is no mutual trust or collaboration. 2. Activities provide short-term entertainment but fail to create any lasting relationships or sense of community among tenants. 3. The funded activities result in a basic sense of belonging and occasional, informal interactions between tenants. 4. The activities successfully foster new local relationships, strong mutual trust, and active cross-pollination (e.g., tenants actively collaborating on joint projects or exchanging roles/jobs). 5. A self-sustaining, vibrant community ecosystem. The initial budget allocated for activities leads to profound societal development.	3		3		2		3		

Connecting to SMF Kompas Example of SMF Kompas with MUS Indicators

Society	Spatial Ambition	Partners	Feasibility
Does the project create an innovation? (A1)	Scaling Up (A1)	Sharing knowledge (A1)	Co-investment (A1)

Social Opportunity (A1)	Space for Circular Economy (A1)	Non-profit association or legal structure (A1)	Neighborhood Financing (A2)
Social Inclusivity (A1)	Space for Community Builders (A2)	Volunteers (A2)	Affordability < 10% market price (A2)
How does this project contribute to the "inclusion" of the target group? (A1)	Opening Hours (A3)	Internal collaboration development (A2)	
Does the project have an impact on legislation (A1)	Comfort(A3)	Diversity of users/tenants (A2)	
Target Group Representation (A2)	Full Accessibility (A3)	Outreach (A3)	
Space for Informal Meetings (A2)	Cleanliness(A3)	Neighborhood participation (A2)	
Affordability for Tenants (A2)			
Events (A3)			
User Satisfaction (A3)			

Future Considerations for SMF

After forming SMF's KPI list and distributing it into the SAM, it is evident that there is an imbalance in how the indicators are spread across the model. While there are 9 under *Program Ambitions* and 11 under *Project Objectives*, there only appears to be 7 indicators in the *User Experience* category. This provides SMF with a preliminary finding that its current value system from which these KPIs were based is comparatively more focused on project ambitions and broader strategic goals over micro-scale metrics assessing user satisfaction and needs. Moving forward, this may be an indication to SMF that this dimension should be explored more greatly if they decide to progress with this tool. This would provide them with a more grounded and all-encompassing value system and assessment tool that can better align their projects towards making a social impact.

Reflections and Challenges: Building the Tool

The MUS team was faced with many challenges in the process of producing the best tool possible in the time given. One of the main and recurring difficulties was attempting to transfer the knowledge gained from our social impact sector research into a tangible and practical deliverable. SMF valued a tool that had academic rigor, but equally prioritized a tool that was easily accessible for daily users. Fearing that if steps were too tedious or time-consuming, administrators would ignore the tool altogether.

Limitations of Academic Rigor in Daily Use

Research into evaluating the impact of socially-oriented projects places a heavy emphasis on community input, structural accountability, and maximizing objective analysis in the assessment process (Ottaviani et al. 2021, Vanclay 2020). Undertaking this methodology approach requires heavy investments of time and resources that are not always practical, nor possible for daily use. For a cooperative like SMF with limited resources and an ambitious range of priorities, applying a tool too rooted in academic rigor would impose operational hurdles that risked resulting in the disengagement with the tool altogether. This level of intense evaluation may be best preserved for an external evaluator rather than integrated into daily activities. As a result, it became a balance of including academically informed approaches with daily practicalities.

Phasing and weighing

Initially, to incorporate phases into each KPI, the MUS team presented a scoring guide for each KPI at each stage. This meant 1 KPI would be evaluated four times throughout the process. The MUS team believed each stage reflected unique questions that would require a different set of scoring criteria. SMF believed this risked creating too much repetition throughout the process and offered a cumbersome amount of detail that would discourage administrators. As a result, the team decided on a single 5-point score for each KPI based on the Exploitation phase, representing the eventual output that a chosen KPI is leading towards. Phasing would still be evaluated by adopting the same scale at the different phases along the project timeline. A draft of our original indicators across the four phases can be found in this link - we believe they could provide a useful context in the impact evaluation space and the difficulties with implementing rigorous, phase-specific metrics: First Draft of Indicators.

The team also considered the application of weighting KPIs based on their level of importance at the project scale. This would improve the validity of the scoring system, adding an extra evaluative dimension that would further reflect a tool that placed higher stakes on more vital KPIs compared to those with seemingly less importance. However, this challenged the team to find an empirical basis for a weighing system that, we discovered, would be too heavily reliant on subjectivity for the case of SMF. Weighting allocations would need to be informed by an

empirical review to prevent bias. The team thus decided against a weighting system, with each KPI being interpreted in isolation while being contextualized under the four key values of the SMF kompas.

Final Considerations and a Potential Future for “The Tool”

For SMF, the structure of the SAM presents them with an opportunity to inspect the distributive value of a model, highlighting how well its list of indicators covers the six SAM principles. An effective KPI list should cover these principles equally, signifying that it fully encompasses the cross-disciplinary priorities that these projects must consider. This adds an extra evaluative dimension above the purely score-based metrics that the 1-5 scoring brings for each indicator, inciting a more critical look into the effectiveness of SMF’s indicators.

In this way, the SAM framework can operate as a stress-test for the SMF’s values and their corresponding KPIs, questioning whether they equally address each of the SAM principles. If the KPIs are unequally distributed, for example, a much higher proportion of KPIs falls under A1 compared to B3, this may be an indication to SMF that they should be changed to be more proportionally distributed into B3.

Taking a broader perspective, the SAM structure can also be utilized to evaluate the evaluation structures of other real estate organisations striving to make a social impact. Using the six categories as a framework to fill in with their own KPIs, companies can similarly use the tool to examine how well their indicators are distributed across the six principles of the SAM. This can potentially lead to a new industry standard for impact evaluation procedures, allowing companies to take a reflexive look at their current process and highlight important assessment areas they may be neglecting.

AI Statement

Generative AI tools were used for language refinement and idea clarification. All analysis, interpretations, and final writing decisions are the authors’ own

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Selected Indicators for SMF Kompas:

A1- Social Strategy

1) Does the project create innovation?

Definition:
Community projects require innovation to create an impact in a community. This can be achieved through the involvement of innovative organisations and actors who work on experimenting with new ideas, and also providing space for co-creation between these actors. This can also mean the bridging of interdisciplinary gaps through unique collaborations between diverse stakeholders/local entrepreneurs.

The project will eventually create an enhancement in this industry, spawning innovative techniques and ideas that create a larger impact for its users.

Examples:
- The site is highlighted as a model in a research project
- Site is used as inspiration for new projects
- Innovative strategies used become a new industry standard

Recruitment of innovative organisations:
- Locally oriented, industry unique
- Potentially platforming start-ups, small-scale, or new organisations
- Ensuring a diversity in competencies/ industries to foster new cross-disciplinary collaborations
- Diversity of people, backgrounds, and experiences

Score:
1. The project stagnates due to a lack of innovation; partners remain unchanged and singular. There is little growth, and it remains singular in direction.
2. The project partners rarely adapt or innovate; the project maintains a singular focus with no room for growth.
3. Innovation from/between partners helps grow the project in a new direction(s). However, innovations are rare and remain unprioritized.
4. Innovation and collaboration between partners direct how the project evolves over time. Continual encouragement of collaboration significantly impacts new directions.
5. The project is a frontrunner in social impact innovation, with new collaborations continually resulting in new and improved project directions.

2) Does the project have an impact on legislation

Definition:
Impacting legislation requires not only innovation from the project, but also ongoing involvement with local policy processes - its ideas can then be more formally integrated into local or regional legislation. A clear ambition to adapt new ideas into policy changes is needed and should be done through mutual collaboration with governing bodies[1].

Examples:

- Changing zoning laws of a given area to accommodate mixed project endeavors
- Introducing new funding schemes/tax adjustments to create affordable options in the project
- Piloting a new industry standard for low-carbon, resilient design

Score:

1. Project did not impact legislation as intended
2. Project impacted legislation very minimally, limiting project directions
3. Project impacted legislation moderately, allowing some freedom in project directions but still not ideal
4. Most elements of legislation were passed from desired change
5. Desired legislation was passed in full

3) Social Opportunities

Definition:
The promotion and participation of individuals in the project's social activities. Participation requires that the project offer physical space and organizational structures, especially a commitment to engage in outreach activities specifically targeting the hardest-to-reach, more marginalized population, typically more distant from civic or cultural practices.

Examples:

- Co-design of activity plans with local stakeholders in the surrounding area.
- Calls for initiatives.
- Organization of friendly collective events.
- Dedicating a space for reception with free access.

Score:

[1]European Commission, Joint Research Centre, Lourenço, P. B., Maloutas, T., Santamouris, M., Widera, B., Ansaloni, F., Balaras, C., Katurić, I., Kolokotsa, D., Rossetto, T., Senatore, G., Tomaszewicz, A., Medeiros, E., Gkatzogias, K., Pohoryles, D., Romano, E., Acri, M., Becerik-Gerber, B., Bisello, A., Campbell, A., Canelas, P., Cimellaro, G. P., Cotella, G., Dimoudi, A., Istrati, D., Jokilehto, J., Lagaros, N., Manley, E., Menteşe, E., Moro, A., Potluka, O., Rivera, F., Roupas, C., Ruge, P., Sadia, T., Salihbegović, A., Salwa, M., Skovgaard Nielsen, R., Stefanakis, A., Tedeschi, M., Torabi Moghadam, S., Tulumello, S., van der Zwet, A., Vecco, M. (2024), A practical guide to the New European Bauhaus self-assessment method and tool, Gkatzogias, K., Romano, E. and Negro, P. editors, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2760/9581060, JRC139118.

1. The activities fail to foster any interaction; tenants remain isolated, and there is no mutual trust or collaboration.
2. Activities provide short-term entertainment but fail to create any lasting relationships or sense of community among tenants.
3. The funded activities result in a basic sense of belonging and occasional, informal interactions between tenants.
4. The activities successfully foster new local relationships, strong mutual trust, and active cross-pollination (e.g., tenants actively collaborating on joint projects or exchanging roles/jobs).
5. A self-sustaining, vibrant community ecosystem. The initial budget allocated for activities leads to profound societal development.

4) Social Inclusivity

Definition:

How does this project contribute to the "inclusion" of the target group? Projects that are inclusive of a target group refer to a process that considers the needs, interests, and services of the identified group(s). This should be considered through design standards and programmatic output. It goes beyond the implementation of physical accessibility and centers on the more invisible and intangible qualities and characteristics of places, which oftentimes determine the inclusion or exclusion of certain groups or individuals[2].

Examples:

- Has the target group been involved in the design process?
- What structural and intangible factors have been considered throughout the development process?
- Do activities within the space reflect the needs, interests, or desired services of the target group(s)
    - Are activities within the space designed by members of the target group(s) or

Score:

1. The Site Doesn’t Support the Target Population
2. The Site Offers New Opportunities for the Target Population
3. The Site is a Central Resource for the Target Population
4. The Site serves as an incubator for the Target Population
5. The Site serves as a replicable model for the Target Population

[2] New European Bauhaus. (2022). New European Bauhaus kompas: A guiding framework for decision and project makers wishing to apply the NEB principles and criteria to their activities. https://new-european-bauhaus.europa.eu/tools-and-resources/use-kompas_en

5) Can this project still scale up (additional projects)?

Definition:
Interpretation of the Program Ambition: The "Acupuncture" Approach
SMF views its projects as "acupuncture on the nerve pathways of our society". The ambition is to strategically transform unique, underutilized buildings and sites into highly visible, exemplary social impact projects. Scaling up is not necessarily about the developer building more square meters, but rather about "acupuncture", creating exemplary projects that inspire systemic market transformation, policy changes, and knowledge replication (Stadsmakersfonds n.d.)[3].

Example:

- Does this project inspire new projects?
- Is it seen as a model for other projects?
- Does this project reflect the long-term societal and market transformations?

Score:

1. Zero scaling. The project remains a one-off anomaly. It fails to inspire any replication, and traditional market actors dismiss it as unviable.
2. The project is praised but seems "too unique" to replicate. It has no measurable influence on local policy or the practices of other real estate developers.
3. The project inspires moderate replication. A few local initiatives adopt similar participatory or temporary-use concepts.
4. The model is widely copied, spurring documented legislative influence that prompts local/regional government changes to zoning, subsidies, or procurement criteria favoring social impact.
5. The project will drive a complete systemic transformation, overcoming traditional market risk aversion and sustainably anchoring social processes within the broader societal fabric.

6) How does this project provide space for the circular economy?

Definition:
This KPI aims to foster reliance on local producers and suppliers rather than outsourcing. By establishing local networks and increasing the number of local partnerships, the project seeks to generate a smaller environmental footprint from its economic activity

Examples:

- Spaces for small-scale, local production instead of outsourcing.
- Spaces where goods are circulated instead of bought new.
- Shared storage for local producers

[3] Stadsmakersfonds (n.d.). “Zet je schouders onder de stad”. *Stadsmakersfonds.* https://www.stadsmakersfonds.be/. Accessed 20 May 2025

Score:

1. No local partnerships or circular activities are generated.
2. Few local partnerships or isolated circular initiatives.
3. Some stable partnerships and recurring circular activities.
4. Numerous local partnerships, active exchange networks, and visible reduction in external sourcing.
5. Dense network of local producers and suppliers, frequent collaborations, and clear contribution to reduced environmental footprint.

7) Is there a non-profit association or legal structure (project charter) that takes charge of the project's mission?

Definition:

Legal structure ensures the consistency of the entire life cycle of the projects and the success of the project by defining, documenting, and communicating[4]. A governing document (statutes, charter, or articles of incorporation) maintains the mission, accountability mechanisms toward stakeholders, and the public. By doing so, the objective is that the legal or organizational structure takes responsibility for the projects and also represents the project's mission.

Example:

- The legal structure demonstrates long-term stewardship capacity. It represents the project's mission

Score:

1. No efforts to expand the use of charter
2. A project charter is under discussion for refining through the utilization of it
3. A project charter is refined for repeatability.
4. A project charter is shared.
5. Other organization(s) start to use and represent the project's mission

8) Are partners investing in the mission? E.g. subsidies

Definition:

Co-financing is a combined financing program or intervention by two or more financial contributors (even when they have different goals) to achieve each goal more effectively. Also, co-financing helps the public sector to budget for interventions that give benefits to multiple organisations simultaneously [5].

[4] Joslin, R., & Müller, R. (2016). The relationship between project governance and project success. *International Journal of Project Management*, *34*(4), 613–626. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijproman.2016.01.008

[5] McGuire, F., Vijayasingham, L., Vassall, A., Small, R., Webb, D., Guthrie, T., & Remme, M. (2019). Financing intersectoral action for health: A systematic review of co-financing models. *Globalization and Health*, *15*, 86. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12992-019-0513-7

Example:

- Partner contributions can be either financial or any kind. Such contributions, which can be in the form of staff time, expertise, equipment, or space, are recognized as legitimate forms of co-investment.

Score:

1. No efforts for model creation for the future partner investment
2. The problems and advantages of the current partner investment operation are identified.
3. There is a discussion for refining the partner investment system
4. The partner investment model is refined and shared.
5. A new project considers the incorporation of this refined model.

9) Are the mission and accumulated knowledge shared publicly?

Definition:
Collaboration and information-sharing metrics measure how well a project manages and shares information among all stakeholders. These metrics are centered around a Common Data Environment (CDE), a unified digital ecosystem that provides real-time, integrated data access throughout the entire asset lifecycle. This reduces fragmentation, mitigates risk, and enables advanced technologies such as digital twins and parametric design.

Example:

- Collaboration and information sharing are standardized process that replaces isolated data with a unified digital ecosystem where all stakeholders access and edit integrated, real-time data.

Score:

1. No efforts toward sharing operational knowledge, performance data, or lessons learned
2. Operational knowledge is retained internally and shared only informally within the managing team
3. Performance data and lessons learned are documented and shared with most stakeholders through accessible reports or public communications
4. A digital platform enables ongoing access to operational data and accumulated knowledge for most stakeholders, supporting continuous improvement and transparency
5. The project openly publishes its operational knowledge, performance outcomes, and lessons, demonstrating a long-term commitment to transparency and collective learning

A2 - Operationalization of Social Strategy

1) Neighborhood Financing: Diversified Funding

Definition:
Community development projects that are socially motivated can't rely on the same financial models as conventional development projects. Projects depend on a diversity of revenue sources that may include a combination of: Donations, Grants, Private Support, Public Funding, Subsidies, etc

Guiding Questions:

- What can of funding opportunities can this project attract?
- How can we diversify our funding strategy? What are the plans to do this?
- What can help the project sustain after
- Is the building owned by community/tenant members, the non-profit sector, for profit sector?

Score:

1. Project Operating Budget is Insecure
2. Site Maintaining Essential Funding
3. Site is generating revenue to be reinvested in the site/programming
4. Site is generating revenue from multiple funding streams (private, public, philanthropic)
5. Site has accumulated the target amount of financial security and represents a funding structure that exemplifies best practices for community development projects

2) Affordability - <10% market price

Definition:
Affordability refers to the ability of target group(s) to access, reside, and consume at rates that are reflective of their purchase capacity. While difficult to operationalize through a single indicator, affordability can refer to larger questions and goals involving de-commodification to ensure access, and where the primary goal isn't profit.

Examples:

- What are the target rates to support target populations?
- How can this project challenge traditional market logic while maintaining desired building standards?
- Has the project pursued a multi-dimensional approach to support a reduced funding structure
    - Local, regional, federal subsidies?

Score:

1. Less than 20% of the provided services are accessible for free or at an affordable cost for all.

2. At least 20% but less than 50% of the provided services are accessible for free or at an affordable cost for all, but their provision in the long term cannot be guaranteed.
3. At least 50% of the provided services are accessible for free or at an affordable cost for all, but their provision in the long term cannot be guaranteed
4. At least 20% but less than 50% of the provided services are (and will be) accessible for free or at an affordable cost
5. At least 50% of the services provided are (and will be) accessible for free or at an affordable cost for all.

3) What percentage of tenants falls under the target group?

Definition:
Projects are designed with a certain impact to support an identified group of people. When inhabiting a new space, it is essential to monitor that the occupants reflect the groups the project was designed to serve. Each project should have a set target for the percentage of occupants that fall under the target groups, and SMF should consider accommodations for this target group throughout the four stages of development.

Who are the target groups?

- Vulnerable populations
- Social enterprises
- Local community actors
- Neighbours, tenants, people and organisations interested in the specific theme of the project (From Stadsmakersfonds - Impact measurement)

Score:

1. All units are allocated purely by market criteria (to the highest bidder).
2. Most units (>55%) are allocated by market criteria.
3. There is an equal mix of units allocated by market and affordable criteria.
4. Most units (>55%) are allocated strictly by affordable and social criteria.
5. All units are allocated entirely by affordable/social criteria with highly targeted active outreach

4) How much budget is allocated for substantive activities for tenants/other users?

Definition:
This KPI evaluates the proportion of the total project budget that is specifically reserved for funding participatory events and stakeholder engagement during the design and implementation stages.

Examples:

- Participatory and Co-creation Events
- Social and Cultural Services

- Outreach and Inclusion Activities

Score:

1. The budget is largely unspent, and the activities fail to attract tenants or visitors.
2. Only a narrow, homogeneous group of users participates in the activities, indicating the budget is not serving the broader community.
3. The allocated budget is successfully spent to deliver the planned events, attracting a steady, baseline number of users and visitors.
4. The events successfully attract a large volume of tenants, and diverse target groups are actively utilizing the services.
5. The budget effectively catalyzes widespread, enthusiastic participation from across all demographics within the building and the surrounding neighborhood.

5) Internal Collaboration Development

Definition:

Effective collaboration involves a bottom-up, participatory approach. This is not only essential for fostering awareness and acceptance but also crucial for understanding the diverse needs and perspectives of the stakeholders. To effectively engage stakeholders, it is necessary to thoroughly research them, as they have different degrees of willingness and ability to contribute to the project in terms of structure, tools, knowledge, resources, compliance, ideas, creativity, or legitimacy. Additionally, public participation in the project must be considered.

Examples:

- public meetings or large stakeholder events,
- stakeholder and expert workshops,
- deliberative interviews,
- focus groups,
- targeted questionnaires

Score:

1. No efforts
2. There is a discussion among collaborators for further collaboration
3. Study needs further collaboration from various groups, such as public or large meetings, deliberative interviews, stakeholder and expert workshops, targeted questionnaires, or political consultations
4. Study needs for future projects that aim for collaboration from many groups and make reports
5. The reports are shared and used

6) How is neighborhood participation supported (information sessions, communication)

Definition:
Effective neighborhood participation requires proactive, accessible, and inclusive communication strategies. This is not only essential for building trust and local acceptance but also for capturing the lived experience, local knowledge, and everyday concerns of residents most directly affected by the project [6]

Score:

1. No efforts to maintain neighborhood communication after project completion
2. There is a discussion within the neighborhood for refining for better neighborhood participation
3. Study needs for better neighborhood participation through deliberative interviews, workshops, or targeted questionnaires, and actually reflect on the activities
4. Analyze feedback from deliberative interviews, workshops, or targeted questionnaires and actually reflect on the activities for future projects
5. Reports are shared publicly, lessons are integrated into future project phases or new projects, and the neighborhood retains an active voice in long-term governance or management

7) Diversity of users/tenants

Definition:
Diversity of users/tenants encompasses the range and numbers of disadvantaged groups included in participatory management practices, activities, and interventions, tracking their sense of empowerment and ability to participate[7]

Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2030 - Council of European Union

1. Gender
2. LGBTQ+
3. Disability
4. Ethnic Origin
5. Age
6. Socio-economic disadvantage

Score:

1. Project remains tailored towards a single, homogenous target group

[6] New European Bauhaus. (2022). New European Bauhaus kompas: A guiding framework for decision and project makers wishing to apply the NEB principles and criteria to their activities.
https://new-european-bauhaus.europa.eu/tools-and-resources/use-kompas_en

[7] Worden, K., Hazer, M., Pyke, C., & Trowbridge, M. (2020). Using LEED green rating systems to promote population health. Building and Environment, 172, 106550.

2. Diversity is not achieved across target groups, diversity strategy is minimally effective
3. Project sees diversity across target groups, diversity strategy produces further growth in diversity and outreach
4. Project sees diversity across target groups, diversity strategy effective in outreach and reducing barriers to entry for these groups
5. Project sees diversity across target groups, diversity strategy has maximised inclusivity and the needs of all target groups

8) Volunteers

Definition:
Volunteers provide human resources at a subsidized or no cost. They are able to provide additional sources of skills and talent while improving client relationships and engagement with the project [8].

Score:

1. The project lacks any volunteers
2. The project's volunteers are scarce and minimally benefit performance
3. Volunteers are irregular but add value to project performance and user experience
4. Volunteers are regularly used and improve project performance and user experience
5. Volunteers significantly improve and innovate the project towards its mission

9) Space for Informal Meetings / Common or Third Space

Definition:
Spaces without a specific, institutionalized purpose that bring people together. These can be perceived as "third spaces" which the organization is not renting out, allowing individuals to use the space without being obliged to consume. These spaces should be designed to be open and accessible, fostering sociability amongst users of the space while promoting comfort for surrounding communities[9].

Examples:

- A central, shared open area where users, passers-by, and stakeholders can interact daily
- Ambiguous shared spaces able to be used for spontaneous events, free of charge
- Small, flexible, semi-public rooms or kiosks that residents or local groups can self-manage for rotating uses.

Score:

[8] Haski-Leventhal, D., Meijs, L. C. P. M., Lockstone-Binney, L., Holmes, K., & Oppenheimer, M. (2018). Measuring Volunteerability and the Capacity to Volunteer among Non-volunteers: Implications for Social Policy. Social Policy & Administration, 52(5), 1139–1167. https://doi.org/10.1111/spol.12342
[9] Martinuzzi, C., & Lahoud, C. (2020). *Public space site-specific assessment: Guidelines to achieve quality public spaces at neighbourhood level*. UN-HABITAT

1. Informal spaces are not used and remain disconnected from the purpose of the project
2. Informal spaces are used, but not for their intended functions
3. Informal spaces are used as intended, but lack diverse activities; the function stagnates
4. Informal spaces platform diverse activities among users and partners
5. Informal spaces act as vital infrastructure for project growth

10) Affordability (for tenants)

Definition:
This KPI evaluates the extent to which the project provides financially accessible spaces for tenants, ensuring that rental and operational costs remain manageable for a diverse range of users and organisations. This measures the actual percentage of housing units or community services that are delivered at affordable rates

Example:

- Are the spaces affordable for the tenants?
- Will this affordability be sustained for the long term?

Score:

1. Less than 20% of the provided services are accessible at an affordable cost.
2. At least 20% but less than 50% of services are affordable, but long-term provision is not guaranteed
3. At least 50% of the provided services are successfully delivered at an affordable cost, though long-term guarantees are missing.
4. At least 20% to 49% of the services are guaranteed to be affordable in the long term
5. At least 50% (up to 100%) of all services are guaranteed to be accessible at a strictly affordable cost for all in the long term

11) How does this project provide space for community builders?

Definition:
What is a community builder? Community Builders refers to actors or organisations that are working on community-oriented work. Their goal could be driving cross-pollination initiatives, such as building tenants working together on projects or trading roles to develop a community that is both inspiring and readily accessible.

Example:

- Physical places: workspace,co-working areas, event spaces
- Events and programs: talk events, workshops

Score:

1. No significant contribution from any community stakeholder was recorded.
2. Limited outputs, characterized by a limited number of users or events and weak relevance.
3. Consistent participation yields a satisfactory level of relevant services.

4. Strong outputs, evidenced by high usage metrics, the proliferation of multiple relevant programs, and the establishment of emerging collaborations.
5. Extensive outputs through high volume and diversity of users, frequent collaborations, and strong satisfaction with content relevance.

A3 - User Experience

1) Outreach: (Social Media/Newsletter/Website)

Definition:
Outreach is necessary to ensure the involvement and participation of individuals in the activities and services offered within the project. Participation requires that the project offer a physical space as well as organizational structures, especially a commitment to engage in outreach activities specifically targeting the hardest-to-reach, more marginalized population, typically more distant from civic or cultural practices.

Examples:
- Co-design of the activity plan with local stakeholders.
- Calls for initiatives.
- Organization of friendly collective events.
- Dedicating a space for reception with free access.

Score:
1. No user engagement with outreach efforts
2. Low user interaction with outreach efforts
3. Users use social media/websites as a way to stay engaged
4. Monthly increase of followers on social media/ email listserve
5. Program Events and Resources are shared widely by users on their social media platforms

2) Events

Definition:
Events bring together different stakeholders, target populations, and community members to share ideas, knowledge, and wisdom. It is a way to strengthen social and support networks, while also creating the opportunity to develop new ones.

Examples:
- Who is planning and designing the events?
- How are events designed to balance the different interests/ needs of groups from multiple sectors and backgrounds?
- How are hard-to-reach and easily overlooked groups incorporated in the outreach strategy and planning process?
- What activities are included to encourage network and social mixing?

Score:

1. Events don't attract new interest in programming - same members in attendance
2. Events generate some greater visibility of programs/ vision/ resources
3. Events have facilitated greater community engagement/ partner interest
4. Events have fostered networking between the community, partners, and stakeholders
5. Events have contributed to the launch of new projects or partnerships

3) Cleanliness

Definition:

Cleanliness is a fundamental component of a building's attractiveness. A clean, well-kept environment radiates positive behavioral norms and makes users feel secure.
This KPI reflects the answer to the question: Do users actually experience the space as clean and well-maintained?

Example:

- High standards of cleanliness contribute to a consistently positive user experience
- Enhancing the attractiveness of the space.
- A strong culture of shared responsibility for cleanliness is established.

Score:

1. High user dissatisfaction regarding cleanliness in surveys.
2. Frequent user complaints about cleanliness.
3. Acceptable user satisfaction scores regarding cleanliness.
4. High user satisfaction.
5. Exceptional user satisfaction (top scores in user experience monitoring).

4) Comfort

Definition:

User experience of comfort could encompass thermal, visual, and acoustic comfort, as well as the user's ability to influence their environment. This KPI evaluates how well a building supports the physical and mental health, well-being, and productivity of its users.

Score:

1. Users report severe dissatisfaction regarding drafts, extreme temperatures, glare, or intrusive noise
2. There are frequent user complaints about local discomfort
3. Users occasionally need to adapt their clothing or manually adjust blinds to remain comfortable.
4. User experience surveys show high satisfaction, with the environment actively supporting alertness and well-being.
5. User satisfaction surveys record top scores, proving that the environment significantly and consistently enhances the users' psycho-social well-being, health, and daily comfort

5) Full Accessibility

Definition:
The NEB defines full accessibility as adjusting every detail of the built space to accommodate a large and varied group of potential users, with a focus on details of importance in relation to cognitive, physical and sensory abilities[10].

Universal Design is a widely acknowledged approach to achieving full accessibility and involves the design of products, environments, programmes and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialised design [11]

Score:

1. Users frequently encounter barriers that prevent independent movement throughout the site
2. Some features of the site are fully accessible, but barriers remain common throughout the site
3. The space meets basic standards but lacks intuitive, inclusive design
4. The space is easy to navigate for most people, including those with mobility or sensory needs
5. The space is universally designed and anticipates diverse needs

6) Opening Hours

Definition:
The opening hours of a project should maximise the inclusivity and accessibility for all target participants. There should be a considered approach to best accommodate the diverse schedules of their user base, which may mean remaining open on weekends and after working hours. This should also coincide with the project's operational aims and the optimal opening hours that will achieve this.

Score:

1. Opening hours significantly inhibit user engagement and accessibility
2. Opening hours accommodate a small fraction of intended user base
3. Some users are fully accommodated by opening hours, while others need to reschedule other commitments
4. Opening hours accommodate most of user base who rarely have clashes with other commitments
5. Opening hours fully accommodate the schedules of the entire user base

[10] New European Bauhaus. (2022). New European Bauhaus kompas: A guiding framework for decision and project makers wishing to apply the NEB principles and criteria to their activities.
https://new-european-bauhaus.europa.eu/tools-and-resources/use-kompas_en

[11] Centre for Excellence in Universal Design (1997). The 7 principles of universal design. *North Carolina State University*

7) User Satisfaction

Definition

User satisfaction reflects the performance of SMF projects including, meeting the needs, expectations, and aspiration of users. Good projects make users feel the spaces are relevant, responsive, and meaningful.

Score:

1. Users express dissatisfaction
2. Users feel that some of their needs are met
3. Users feel that basic needs are met
4. Users feel that beyond the needs, they are inspired by the projects
5. Users feel inclined to contribute to future events or projects