SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INDICATOR QUESTIONS

These questions have been created to better explain what each sustainable development indicator means. Questions are divided into a 'project developer/technical' audience or a 'general stakeholder' audience. Please note that these questions are examples, and are meant for guidance purposes only (e.g. during the Local Stakeholder Consultation), and therefore The Gold Standard is not liability for any misuse of these questions.

SD Indicator	Description	Questions for project developer or technical audience	Questions for general stakeholder audience (e.g. local residents)
Air quality	Air quality refers to changes compared to the baseline in indoor and outdoor air pollution levels which may have a negative impact on human health or the environment, including particulates, NOx, SOx, lead, carbon monoxide, ozone, POPs, mercury, CFCs, Halogens. Odour is also considered to be a form of air pollution.	1. Outdoor air pollution – Will the project measurably reduce or increase particulates, NOx, SOx, Halogens and other non-greenhouse gas emissions compared to the baseline? 2. Outdoor air pollution – Will the project measurably reduce or increase bothersome odours in the local vicinity as compared to the baseline? 3. Indoor air pollution – Will the project lead to a measurable reduction or increase in common indoor pollutants such as Particles of Incomplete Combustion (PIC) in homes or schools/educational institutions?	4. Has there been a problem with the outdoor air quality (dirty air, big smoke clouds, smog, etc.) in your region/village in the past? Do you think that the new project can help with these problems? Or will it likely worsen the situation? Why? 5. Have there been bad odor problems in the past? Do you think this project will help or worsen this problem? 6. In the past, has there been a problem with the indoor air quality inside your homes (for example, respiratory problems, or asthma or allergy problems)? Do you think that the new project can help with or aggravate these problems? Why?
Water quality and quantity	Water quality and quantity refer to the changes compared to the baseline in: • Change in water balance and/or availability in ground- and surface water and its	1. Does the project respect existing water usages and rights of local communities? E.g. does the project consume water resources at the expense of communities relying on the same resources for subsistence, and were agreements negotiated with affected	4. Do you think that the new project will improve or worsen the local water conditions? How? What are the main concerns about water in your village or region? 5. Are there currently any concerns about local

	impacts on the environment and human health, level of aquifer and seasonal variability. • Release of pollutants. These changes can be measured in different ways, including biological oxygen demand and chemical oxygen demand, thermal pollution, concentrations of mercury, SOx, NOx, POPs, lead, coliforms (bacteria from animal waste), water salinity, etc. Changes may be also be observed and recorded in a qualitative fashion (e.g. water takings or diversions; waste water discharges)	stakeholders? 2. Does the project respect the needs of local ecosystems? Does it contribute to the depletion or contamination of local reservoirs or aquifers, etc.? → In order for this question to be answered, the following information should typically be available and provided/discussed as part of the consultation process and project documentation: - Existing local upstream and downstream water needs, consumptions and formal or customary rights of local communities relying on the same water reservoirs or streams - Potential unresolved dispute with regards to water resources to be used by the project or evidence of settlements achieved through free and informed consent and negotiations - Government licenses for water resources allocation - Water needs of local ecosystems to sustain biological life within the watershed of the project location, - Replenishment capacities of local water reservoirs, and management requirements for the maintenance of critical aquifer recharge areas 3. Is the project associated with an efficient use of the water resources and does it maintain or improve their quality? Are there plans for a reduction of water consumption compared	water levels? Do you think this project will cause the water levels to go up or down, or do you think the water levels will not be affected? Why? 6. Are there any concerns about local water quality? 7. What are the main uses of the water sources in your area? How are these water bodies protected and managed? Do you think the project will have any positive or negative effect on these water sources and how they will be used in the future? 8. How is wastewater (for example sewage) typically dealt with? Is it treated and then released into the local water body? Do you think the proposed project will make this situation better, worse or unchanged? Why?

		to the baseline over time? Are there provisions for wastewater recycling? Is the wastewater treatment appropriate? etc. → In order for this question to be answered, the following information should typically be available and provided/discussed as part of the consultation process and project documentation: - Properties of local water resources and wastewater streams - Water withdrawal, discharge and potential runoff - Water management plan	
Soil condition	Soil condition refers to changes compared to the baseline in: • Pollution of soils – pollution of soils can be caused by lead, SOx, NOx, mercury, cadmium, salinity, possibly combined with a corresponding negative impact on human health and/or on soil productivity. • Organic matter content • Erosion level	1. What is the overall likely impact of the project on the environment and human health due to soil contamination by pollutants such as mercury, cadmium, etc.? 2. What is the impact of the project on soil erosion and what would be the consequences in the absence of mitigation or restoration measures? 3. What is the impact of the project on the organic matter content of the soil?	4. Do you think that heavy metals or other pollutants affect the soil in your area? Do you know of people in your community who have become sick due to these pollutants? Could the project affect the pollution levels in the soil? How? 5. Is there a problem with soil loss in your area, for example by wind or water? Could the project positively or negatively impact the soil fertility?
Other pollutants	This indicator refers to changes compared to the baseline in other pollutants of the environment, which are not already considered above, such as the level of	1. Is the proper disposal of the waste produced by employees or waste generated during the construction and operation of machines (project site, road, etc.) included in the project planning?	5. Do you think the project will affect the noise level locally? Why? Could it disturb the population and/or wildlife? 6. Do you think the project will create excess artificial light or glares, compared to the

	noise/light, frequency of noise/light and time occurrence (daytime/nighttime, weekdays/weekend). 'Visual pollution' due to a severe alteration of the landscape is also a relevant issue for consideration.	2. Does the project result in noise exceeding levels prescribed by law? Does it occur at night? 3. Does your project create shadow effect and will it cause problems to the local residents? 4. Is the landscape significantly altered and is it likely to lead to any acceptance issues in the local community?	situation before? Why? 7. Do you think the project presents any problems visually?
Biodiversity	Contribution to biodiversity refers to changes compared to the baseline in: • Number of gene pools (i.e. genetic diversity within a species), species and habitats existing within the project's impact boundaries. • Alteration or destruction of natural habitat • Depletion level of renewable stocks like forests, fisheries	1. Are there any endangered species in this area? Is there any type of inventory of the local flora and fauna? If so, are there any concerns about the project altering habitats or populations? Or otherwise contributing to their recovery or conservation? 2. Is there any chance that the project will affect local genetic diversity, for example by physically separating a population in half, thereby reducing the species' reproductive selection pool? 3. What possible contributions can the project make to protect or enhance local habitats such as rivers, forests, wetlands or grasslands? 4. Is the project destroying or altering any natural habitat or agricultural resources, such as forests, natural watersheds, crop or grazing land that the local people depend on?	5. Does this project negatively or positively affect the local fauna and flora, e.g. trees, small or large animals etc.? Why? Does the project affect animal habitat such as scrublands or small ponds? Does the project affect important animal food sources like grass, leaves, etc.? 6. Do you hunt or trap animals, go fishing, or gather wild plants to feed your family or to sell in the market? If so, do you have any concerns about how this project could affect these activities? How could the project help the situation? 7. Have any scientists or other professionals, or village experts ever told you that you live in a special area, full of many different types of plants and animals? Which of them are considered special or traditional in your culture? Do you use any of them for medicinal or spiritual purposes? Will they be affected by the project? Could this project help? 8. Have you noticed less plant or animal

			species (types) in this area in the past few years? In what ways could this project help those plants or animals to come back? How could local people help with this task? 9. Do you think there are chemicals in the local water, soil or air that are making the animals and plants sick? How could the project help to fix this problem?
Quality of employment	Quality of employment refers to changes compared to the baseline in: • Labour conditions, such as job-related health and safety • Qualitative value of employment, such as whether the jobs resulting from the project are highly or poorly qualified, temporary or permanent, • Whether the jobs created are likely to benefit more men than women or vice-versa	1. Does the project involve the creation of local jobs? 2. Would you employ low skilled labor and train them to perform high skilled tasks? 3. How many of the jobs that are being created are temporary and how many are permanent? 4. Are you providing proper working conditions at the project site, in line with the law of your country? 5. Does the project address issues like the right to collective bargaining, social security, medical facilities or proper sanitation for the workers? 6. Are employment opportunities available for both men and women?	7. Do you think that this project offers opportunities for more qualified employment (compared to the average in the region)? 8. Do you think that this project could provide more permanent jobs? Are the jobs in your area mostly temporary? 9. Do you think that the safety conditions in this project would be better or worse than the average conditions in the region? Why? 10. Do you think men and women have the same opportunities to apply for and obtain a job created by the project? What about any other particular vulnerable groups in your community? Is there something that the project or the PP could do to help those that are in a disadvantaged position? 11. What suggestions would you give to the PP that may help the quality of employment in your community?
Livelihood of the poor	Livelihood of the poor refers to changes compared to the baseline	1. How has the project contributed to poverty alleviation i.e. change in the standard of living	8. Could this project help poor people to become less poor? How?

	in: • Poverty alleviation, e.g. changes in living standards, number of people living under the poverty line • Access to health care services (hospitals, doctors, medication, nurses etc.), affordability of services, reliability and quality of services, and disease prevention and treatment, including HIV AIDS, measles, TB, malaria, cholera and others. • Access to water and sanitation including access to drinking water, access to toilets/washrooms. Waste management facilities that offer the possibility of deposing waste in a sanitary way. • Access to an appropriate quantity, quality and variety of food that is a prerequisite for health. • Changes in proneness to natural disasters that may be climate change related (e.g. droughts, flooding, storms,	conditions? 2. How will the project lead to increased access to health care services? Will there be any increase in prevention and treatment services like hospitals, medicines, availability of nurses, doctors, etc. available to the local stakeholders continually? 3. Has there been any improvement in the waste management facilities due to the project, for e.g. improvement in sanitation facilities, etc.? 4. Would the project reduce community's vulnerability to natural disasters or long-term environmental change (e.g. climate change, desertification, etc.) 5. Has the project led to overall economic improvement creating more opportunities indirectly in and around the region of the project? 6. Will the project improve the access to water for drinking and irrigation? 7. Are these services partially available in the project area? If yes, then will the project extend these services to stakeholders that do not have access to these services presently?	9. Could the project lead to better local sanitation or health? How? 10. Could this project provide better protection against natural disasters, such as floods, or forest fires? How? 11. Could this project help the local community to manage and use natural resources in a more efficient way (e.g. less cutting of trees for firewood, or providing better manure for the crops)? How?

	locust swarms, etc.) or unrelated (e.g. earthquakes, volcano outbreaks) • Long-term changes that differ from natural disasters in the sense that they occur steadily/increasingly but not suddenly (e.g. community's dependency on river water from a river with diminishing volumes of water) Changes must be directly related to the service and not an unintended impact.		
Access to affordable and clean energy services	Access to energy services refers to changes compared to the baseline in: • Presence, affordability and reliability of services • Reducing dependency of fuel/energy imports that may lead to more sustainable and affordable energy services locally. Also, decrease in risk of conflicts caused by the scarcity of energy resources may be included.	1. Will this project provide previously unconnected communities access to the grid, or contribute significantly to reducing the frequency of local grid failures, or ensure that communities out of reach of the national grid have a reliable and consistent energy source? 2. Could this project allow energy services to become more affordable by the local community, for example by lowering monthly energy bills? 3. Will this project measurably reduce the amount of fuel imports needed regionally?	4. Are you satisfied with your present fuel (for energy or cooking)? Is fuel currently easily available and affordable to you? Do you think the project can lead to a better scenario for fuel or energy availability or affordability? 5. Do you think the project will contribute to a long lasting solution for your fuel/energy needs?
Human and institutional	Human and institutional capacity refers to changes compared to the	1. Were relevant educational training programs or awareness campaigns organized in the	7. Was there any training program arranged to understand the project? Was it helpful?

capacity	baseline in: • Education & skills: Access to primary, secondary and tertiary schooling as well as affordability and quality of education. Educational activities which are not part of the usual schooling system, such as environmental training, awareness raising for health or other issues, literacy classes for adults, and other knowledge dissemination. • Gender equality: Livelihood and education for women that may include special schooling opportunities as well as other woman-specific training, awareness-raising, etc. • Empowerment. Changes in the social structure, e.g. caused by a change in the distribution of income and assets. This may result in shifts in decision-making power at project level (e.g. participation in project executive board, ownership of some of the revenues or carbon credits to fund beneficial activities, etc.), community level (e.g.	context of the project (or will they be organized) to build human and institutional capacity locally? Will these educational/vocational training programs be ongoing, and what type of programs are they (e.g. adult literacy, environmental awareness, etc.)? 2. Is this project providing specific opportunities for women, in terms of employment, education or health? 3. Is this project providing specific opportunities to ethnic groups who have previously been marginalized? 4. Are there any changes in access to education for the local community related to the implementation of this project? 5. Will the project result in an improvement in education access to children in the project area for e.g. – creation of schools, providing teachers to an existing school on a continual basis? 6. Does the community participate directly or indirectly in the project? How?	8. Were you invited or trained in a training program /campaign? Did you find it appropriate and helpful? 9. Do you think this project can provide additional training, education and/or employment opportunities for children, women, or specific community or religious groups? 10. Is their any health awareness campaign or environmental management program arranged for future?

	community council) or at a higher level. Especially in communities with diversified ethnic or religious structures, changes in income and asset distribution may have an impact. Some form of direct involvement in the project may support participation in project decision-making.		
Quantitative employment and income generation	Quantitative employment and income generation refers to changes compared to the baseline in: • Number of jobs • Income from employment in the formal and informal sector. Other income, such as the ownership of carbon credits, may be included	1. Does this project create more jobs as compared to the baseline situation? 2. Does this project employ local people for local jobs? 3. How do wages for the jobs created compare with the local average? 4. As a result of the project, can you envision indirect jobs being created? 5. Are you offering competitive salaries that meet the minimum wage requirement?	6. What is the main way of making money in your area? Can this project bring new jobs? What kind? Based on available skill, who should get those jobs? 7. Will this project create indirect jobs in the area? 8. Could this project encourage people to invest in something new in order to create additional income? How? 9. Do you think that the salaries offered to workers in this project would be better than the average salary? Why?
Access to investment	Access to investment refers to changes compared to the baseline in: • Investment into a country/region or technology. Without proper access to investment, projects may	1. Is the project likely to lead to an increase of foreign investment into the region by contributing to a greater level of confidence among potential foreign investors? 2. Is the project considered a pioneer initiative in this region? Has the region been ignored, neglected or considered but deemed too risky or inappropriate by foreign investors? Can	3. Do you think this project will inspire others to invest in your region? How?

	demonstrate credibility and reliability of loan takers and trust in the financial structure. Hence future investments into similar or other activities may be enabled. Only if financing possibilities are limited in the country/region or technology, a positive impact from demonstration of investment may exist. Investments may come from national or international sources. Bilateral and unilateral investment should be distinguished, since the former do have this effect of demonstrating the viability of the host as a destination for investment, whereas the latter have this to a much lesser extent.	the project potentially be seen as a showcase activity and thus enhance the attractiveness of the region for future foreign investments?	
Technology transfer and technological self- reliance	Technology transfer and technological self-reliance refer to changes compared to the baseline in: • Technology development as well as adaptation of new technologies to unproven circumstances. Technology can be sourced from outside or inside the country as long as it	1. Is the technology used for this project imported from another country, or from a wealthier region of the host country? 2. Does the project participant intend to train the local community on the technology? How? 3. Will additional technical equipment or skills be sourced from within the local community or region? How will this help the region to develop?	4. Do you think that the project introduces new technologies to your region? 5. Do you think that the new technology introduced is appropriate and will be sustainable in the region? 6. Does it seem like the investors have planned for sufficient training of the employees to operate the new technology properly and safely? 7. Do you think that the technology used in the

	is new to this particular region and introduced in a proven sustainable way. Demonstrating the viability of technologies new to a country/region may help in transforming the energy sector. • Activities that build usable and sustainable know-how in a region/country for a technology, where know-how was previously lacking. This capacity building enables spill-over effects to the area by replicating similar or different projects • Amount of expenditure on technology between the host and foreign investors regarding the contribution of domestically produced equipment, royalty payments and license fees, imported technical assistance or the need for subsidies and external technical support		project is important to the development of your region? Can your region learn from the new project technology?