

# Spatial Justice Benchmarking Tool (Policymakers)



The Spatial Justice Benchmarking Tool (SJBTool) is a qualitative evaluation tool designed to benchmark how justice considerations are addressed in urban governance and planning at the scale of a city or region. It supports evaluation and structured reflection. The tool defines levels of justice, ranging from Low to Embedded, by assigning a score that reflects the degree to which assessed elements meet the components of the Spatial Justice Conceptual Model.

The tool is intended to spark discussion and reflection based on the three co-constitutive dimensions of Spatial Justice: distribution, procedure, and recognition. Using this lens makes it possible to pay closer attention to how benefits and burdens are redistributed, how people are engaged in policy and decision-making processes, and how the needs and aspirations of disadvantaged individuals, groups, and communities are recognised.

#### How to use this tool:

1. Start by clarifying what is being assessed, such as a vision, policy, or project.
2. Review each column on the right-hand side. Each column represents a component of the Spatial Justice Conceptual Model (SJCM).
3. Discuss how well the assessed material aligns with each component and assign a rating from Low to Embedded.
4. Use post-it notes to record ideas, observations, or recommendations. Place these directly on the relevant component for reference.

#### Contact and further information:

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|          | DISTRIBUTIVE DIMENSION  |   |   | PROCEDURAL DIMENSION   |  |  | RECOGNITION DIMENSION   |   |  |
|----------|---|---|---|--|--|--|---|---|--|
| EMBEDDED | The plan/project/ vision clearly addresses how benefits and burdens are shared across the city. It considers all three dimensions of Spatial Justice. This is shown by explicitly stating what is distributed, how decisions are made, and who is affected. | The plan/project/ vision clearly addresses access to benefits and burdens across the city. All dimensions of Spatial Justice are considered, with explicit attention to what is provided, how access is organised, and who is affected. | The plan/project/ vision clearly addresses the appropriation of benefits and burdens across the city. All dimensions of Spatial Justice are considered, with explicit attention to what is appropriated, how this occurs, and by whom.  | The plan/project/vision clearly addresses how people are engaged in decision-making processes. All dimensions of Spatial Justice are considered, with explicit attention to what processes are used, where engagement takes place, how it is organised, and who is involved. | The plan/project/ vision clearly addresses how internal processes adapt to advance justice. All dimensions of Spatial Justice are considered, with explicit attention to which processes change, where this occurs, how adaptations are implemented, and who is responsible. | The plan/project/ vision clearly integrates Spatial Justice into government action. All dimensions of Spatial Justice are considered, with explicit attention to what actions are taken, where they apply, how they are carried out, and who they affect.        | The plan/project/ vision clearly validates disadvantaged individuals and groups in laws and regulations. All dimensions of Spatial Justice are considered, with explicit attention to who is recognised, what or where protections apply, and how they are implemented.             | The plan/project/ vision clearly recognises the practices of marginalised or non-hegemonic groups. All dimensions of Spatial Justice are considered, with explicit attention to who is recognised, what practices or spaces are involved, and how this recognition is enacted.                        | The plan/project/vision clearly considers the aspirations, values, and livelihoods of marginalised or non-hegemonic communities and diverse lifestyles. All dimensions of Spatial Justice are addressed, with explicit attention to who is concerned, what or where is affected, and how these considerations are integrated.              |
| GROWING  | The plan shows emerging attention to how benefits and burdens are shared across the city. More than one dimension of Spatial Justice is considered, with some clarity on what is redistributed and how.   | The plan shows growing attention to access to benefits and burdens across the city. More than one dimension of Spatial Justice is considered, with some clarity on what is made accessible and how.                                     | The plan shows growing attention to the appropriation of benefits and burdens across the city. More than one dimension of Spatial Justice is considered, with some clarity on what is open to appropriation and how.                    | The plan shows growing attention to how people are engaged in decision-making processes. More than one dimension of Spatial Justice is considered, with some clarity on how engagement occurs and who or where it involves.  | The plan shows growing attention to how internal processes adapt to advance justice. More than one dimension of Spatial Justice is considered, with some clarity on how changes are made and who or where they apply.  | The plan shows growing attention to Spatial Justice in government action. More than one dimension of Spatial Justice is considered, with some clarity on what actions are taken and where, and partial attention to how they are implemented or who they affect. | The plan shows growing attention to validating disadvantaged individuals and groups in laws and regulations. More than one dimension of Spatial Justice is considered, with some clarity on who is recognised and partial attention to where protections apply or how they operate. | The plan shows growing attention to recognising the practices of marginalised or non-hegemonic groups. More than one dimension of Spatial Justice is considered, with some clarity on who is recognised and partial attention to the practices or spaces involved, or how recognition is implemented. | The plan shows growing attention to the aspirations, values, and livelihoods of marginalised or non-hegemonic communities and diverse lifestyles. More than one dimension of Spatial Justice is considered, with some clarity on who is concerned and partial attention to what or where is affected, or how these concerns are addressed. |
| BASIC    | The plan shows initial consideration of how benefits and burdens are distributed across the city. It identifies where services or resources are allocated, without further detail on how or for whom.   | The plan shows basic consideration of access to benefits and burdens across the city. It identifies where or which services or resources are addressed, without clarifying how access is ensured or for whom.                           | The plan shows basic consideration of the appropriation of benefits and burdens across the city. It identifies where or which materials or services are open to change, without clarifying how this occurs or who can appropriate them. | The plan shows basic consideration of how people are engaged in decision-making processes (such as policies, regulations, or standards). It specifies either how engagement takes place or who is engaged, but not both.   | The plan shows basic consideration of how internal processes adapt to advance justice. It specifies how this is addressed, without clarifying where changes apply or who is responsible.   | The plan shows basic consideration of Spatial Justice in government action. It specifies one aspect of action, such as what is done, where it applies, how it is carried out, or who is addressed, but not in an integrated way.                                 | The plan shows basic consideration of disadvantaged individuals and groups in laws and regulations. It specifies who is recognised, without clarifying where protections apply or how they are enforced.  | The plan shows basic consideration of recognising the practices of marginalised or non-hegemonic groups. It specifies who is recognised, without clarifying what practices or spaces are involved or how recognition is operationalised.  | The plan shows basic consideration of the aspirations, values, or livelihoods of marginalised or non-hegemonic communities and diverse lifestyles. It specifies who is affected, where this applies, or how these concerns are taken into account.   |
| STARTING | The plan expresses a general concern about how benefits and burdens are distributed across the city, without specifying actions, mechanisms, or affected groups.  | The plan expresses a general concern about access to benefits and burdens across the city, without specifying locations, mechanisms, or affected groups.  | The plan expresses a general concern about the appropriation of benefits and burdens across the city, with early acknowledgement of how people use and programme spaces, but without clear mechanisms or responsibilities.              | The plan expresses a general concern about how people are engaged in processes such as policy, planning, or projects, without specifying methods, actors, or stages of engagement.   | The plan expresses a general concern about how internal processes, such as procedures, values, or standards, might adapt to promote justice within institutions, without specifying changes or responsibilities.   | The plan expresses a general concern for Spatial Justice in government action, without specifying actions, locations, methods, or affected groups.   | The plan expresses a general concern for validating disadvantaged individuals and groups in laws and regulations, without specifying legal measures or protections.   | The plan expresses a general concern for recognising the practices of marginalised or non-hegemonic groups, without specifying which groups, practices, or forms of recognition.  | The plan expresses a general concern for the aspirations, values, or livelihoods of marginalised or non-hegemonic communities and diverse lifestyles, acknowledging their existence and relevance without specifying measures or impacts.  |
| LOW      | The plan does not address how benefits and burdens are distributed across the city.   | The plan does not address access to benefits and burdens by citizens across the city.   | The plan does not address the appropriation of benefits and burdens by citizens across the city.  | The plan does not address how people are engaged in processes such as policy-making, planning, or projects.  | The plan does not address how internal processes, such as procedures, values, or standards, adapt to promote justice within institutions.  | The plan does not address Spatial Justice in government action.  | The plan does not address the validation of disadvantaged individuals and groups in laws and regulations.   | The plan does not address the recognition of practices of marginalised or non-hegemonic groups.   | The plan does not address the aspirations, values, or livelihoods of marginalised or non-hegemonic communities or diverse lifestyles.  |
|          | COMPONENT 1   | COMPONENT 2   | COMPONENT 3   | COMPONENT 1  | COMPONENT 2  | COMPONENT 3  | COMPONENT 1   | COMPONENT 2   | COMPONENT 3  |
|          | FAIR ALLOCATION   | IMPROVE ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITIES   | EMPOWER PEOPLE TO ADAPT AND ADOPT   | DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT  | FOSTER INTERNAL ADAPTIVENESS   | INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIVENESS   | LEGAL EMPOWERMENT   | SUPPORT FOR COLLECTIVE CARE PRACTICES   | RECOGNISE AND FOSTER THE PLURIVERSE  |
|          | This component focuses on ensuring that resources are fairly distributed to address inequality. It concerns the material or service provision of public goods, basic services, cultural goods, economic opportunities, and healthy environments.            | This component highlights efforts to enhance people's ability to reach and benefit from key opportunities. It concerns affordability, availability, connectivity, etc.  | This component emphasizes empowering individuals and groups to actively shape and utilise available resources. It concerns the design, programming, and openness to people's agency.  | This component focuses on the ongoing involvement of citizens in decision-making processes. The easiness of people to approach the institution.  | This component focuses on the institution's internal flexibility and adaptability to evolving circumstances, incorporating feedback, and adjusting policies, practices, and programs to better reflect justice   | This component focuses on how the institution address external stakeholders. It concerns ensuring that processes are fair, transparent, and sustainable, in views to uphold justice and that it legitimatises social sustainability.                             | This component emphasises the importance of legal frameworks in recognising and protecting the intrinsic value and dignity of individuals and groups as moral agents.   | This component highlights actions to sustain and uplift collective efforts and everyday practices in disadvantaged communities, such as solidarity networks and the management of communal resources.   | This component calls for a profound transformation of values to enable novel socioeconomic and institutional arrangements, advocating for considering the values, qualities, and unique socio-spatial dynamics of non-hegemonic cultures and communities.  |

# Spatial Justice Benchmarking Tool



The Spatial Justice Benchmarking Tool (SJB) is a qualitative evaluation tool designed to benchmark how justice considerations are addressed in urban governance and planning at the scale of a city or region. It supports evaluation and structured reflection. The tool defines levels of justice, ranging from Low to Embedded, by assigning a score that reflects how well what is being assessed (a plan, vision, policy, or project) aligns with the components of the Spatial Justice Conceptual Model.

The tool is intended to spark discussion and reflection on Spatial Justice considerations. Using this lens allows closer attention to how benefits and burdens are redistributed, how people are engaged and policy and decision-making processes are made more responsive, and how the needs and aspirations of disadvantaged individuals, groups, and communities are recognised.

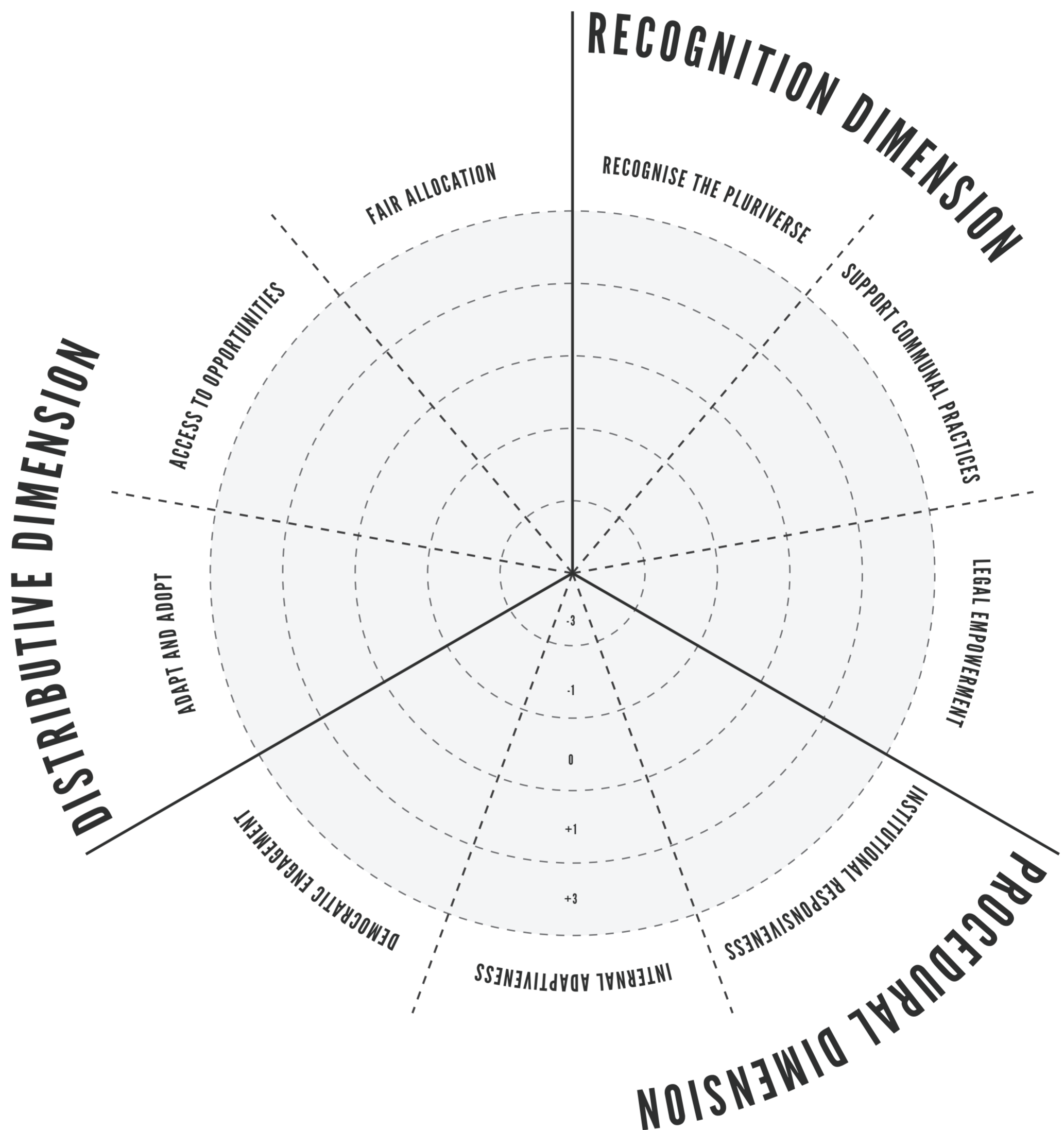
#### How to use this tool:

1. Start by clarifying what is being assessed, such as a plan, policy, vision, or project.
2. Review each column on the right-hand side. Each column represents a component of the Spatial Justice Conceptual Model (SJC).
3. Discuss how well the assessed material aligns with each component and assign a rating from Low to Embedded.
4. Use post-it notes to record ideas or recommendations discussed by the group. Place these directly on the relevant component for reference.
5. Calculate a quick median of the component scores for each dimension. Use a thicker pen to mark this median score along the dimension axis. Connect these points to form a triangle, which helps visualise the strength and balance of each dimension.

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**Low (-3)** No consideration for the component.  
**Starting (-1)** General considerations: it touches an aspect.  
**Basic (0)** Explicit concerns: the component is mentioned.  
**Growing (+1)** In-depth concern: connect the component with other dimension.  
**Embedded (+3)** Integrated concern: it connects the component with all dimensions.



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| COMPONENT 1  | COMPONENT 2  | COMPONENT 3  | COMPONENT 1   | COMPONENT 2   | COMPONENT 3   | COMPONENT 1   | COMPONENT 2   | COMPONENT 3   |
|--|--|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| <b>FAIR ALLOCATION</b><br><br>This component focuses on ensuring that resources are fairly distributed to address inequality. It concerns the material or service provision of public goods, basic services, cultural goods, economic opportunities, and healthy environments. | <b>IMPROVE ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITIES</b><br><br>This component highlights efforts to enhance people's ability to reach and benefit from key opportunities. It concerns affordability, availability, connectivity, etc. | <b>EMPOWER PEOPLE TO ADAPT AND ADOPT</b><br><br>This component emphasizes empowering individuals and groups to actively shape and utilise available resources. It concerns the design, programming, and openness to people's agency. | <b>DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT</b><br><br>This component focuses on the ongoing involvement of citizens in decision-making processes. The easiness of people to approach the institution. | <b>FOSTER INTERNAL ADAPTIVENESS</b><br><br>This component focuses on the institution's internal flexibility and adaptability to evolving circumstances, incorporating feedback, and adjusting policies, practices, and programs to better reflect justice considerations. | <b>INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIVENESS</b><br><br>This component focuses on how the institution address external stakeholders. It concerns ensuring that processes are fair, transparent, and sustainable, in views to uphold justice and that it legitimatises social sustainability. | <b>LEGAL EMPOWERMENT</b><br><br>This component emphasises the importance of legal frameworks in recognising and protecting the intrinsic value and dignity of individuals and groups as moral agents. | <b>SUPPORT FOR COLLECTIVE CARE PRACTICES</b><br><br>This component highlights actions to sustain and uplift collective efforts and everyday practices in disadvantaged communities, such as solidarity networks and the management of communal resources. | <b>RECOGNISE AND FOSTER THE PLURIVERSE</b><br><br>This component calls for a profound transformation of values to enable novel socioeconomic and institutional arrangements, advocating for considering the values, qualities, and unique socio-spatial dynamics of non-hegemonic cultures and communities. |