



International Federation of
Consulting Engineers (FIDIC)

My Take on FIDIC Webinar - Urban Sustainability Management (Based on ISO 37101 Standard)

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As I look back on Monday, 22 January 2018, 17:30-18:30 Central European Time (Geneva time) I suddenly realize I had made the most excellent decision to register for a webinar by FIDIC Sustainable development Committee (SDC).

I participated in one among a series of one-hour awareness-raising webinars (organized by FIDIC, UNEP, ISOCARP, ICLEI, and the Global Cities Institute) offering participants the opportunity to discuss Urban Sustainability



Management and receive a comprehensive yet condensed understanding of the ISO 37101 standard and supporting tools.



Please travel with me through the next few paragraphs as *I tip my hat* to the standardization bodies from some 50 countries that joined forces with ISO to develop a common language and methodology for implementing urban sustainability management. An immediate outcome of which was the ISO 37101 standard published in July 2016.

Being a young Engineer – (just emerging in the Construction Industry) my heart was set ablaze as I tuned-in to interact with experts who had been involved in drafting the standard and developing its tools. And while I spent most the time engaged in observing the on-going presentations, be ye assured, you can take the experience I gained to any bank – and they will tell you it is worth a million dollars!



It was thrilling to know that ISO 37101 has been designed to help communities **define their sustainable development objectives** and put in place a **strategy** to achieve them. Moreover, like other management system standards it is based on continual improvement and the PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) approach, which means users are required to adjust regularly their objectives and strategy to ensure they are constantly moving forward.





This is where the rubber meets the road; ISO 37101 defines "sustainable development" as *development that meets the environmental, social and economic needs of the present without compromising the ability of **future generations** to meet their own needs.*

I was awestruck by this awareness and challenged all at the same time, as I pondered on the efforts put forth by all those individuals (and/or organizations) that had participated in one way or the other to initiate, develop and to push forward all matters relating to Sustainability Development Goals. And I knew that, eventually (just like in a relay race) this baton of responsibility will soon be passed to my generation.

The six **purposes of sustainability**, and twelve **sustainability issues** (or action areas) discussed during this webinar, pierced through and spoke directly to the knowledge I have attained during my current involvement in an urban development project.

As you are aware, *only struck matches catch aflame*, this one-hour awareness webinar has certainly done its work in me, by igniting a passion to develop my understanding on Urban Sustainability Management and all issues pertaining Sustainability Development. And I look forward to be a part of the global community that is so dedicated not only in meeting its own present needs, but on ensuring the future generations are not deprived in meeting their needs as well. These pursuits stems from selfless and generous hearts.



Once again, I extend my tribute to the **FIDIC Secretariat** and most specifically to **Mr. Jean Félix**, Chair of the FIDIC Sustainability Committee, on behalf of all those individuals behind this FIDIC Webinar Platform.

If it happens they feel their efforts are not reaching anywhere, I would wish to encourage them by pointing out some attributes of a river, an extract from an old tale.



Consider the river. It starts as but a small stream in the distant mountains. Sometimes it flows slowly, sometimes quickly, but always it sails downward, taking the low ground as its course. It willingly permeates every crack in the earth and willingly embraces every crevice in the land, so humble is its nature. When we listen to the water, it can scarcely be heard. When we touch it, it can scarcely be felt, so gentle is its nature.

Yet in end, what happens to this calm and quiet river?

*For as it was, so it is, so it will always be: forever flowing, growing deeper, broader, ever more powerful as it journeys down to the ocean, providing life and **sustenance** to all."*