



Measuring SDG progress in Asia and the Pacific: Is there enough data?

Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Pacific 2017

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Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Pacific 2017

Measuring SDG progress in Asia and the Pacific: Is there enough data?



Foreword



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the United Nations and
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With the adoption of an initial set of 244 global SDG indicators, the following questions arose for the Asia-Pacific region:

- How many of these global indicators have sufficient data allowing for progress assessment of the 17 goals and 169 targets for the region and subregions?
- How does data coverage vary across Asia-Pacific subregions and income groups?
- To what extent is disaggregated data available to address the issue of “leave-no-one-behind” for the 17 goals?

The 2017 edition of the Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Pacific addresses these questions for two primary purposes. The first is to inform key stakeholders of the specific goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for which progress assessment can be conducted currently at the regional and subregional levels using the global indicators. The second is to identify and prioritize statistical capacity development needs in the region so that the gaps in data availability and quality can be addressed.

The report highlights that data availability across the 17 goals is uneven. With trend analysis possible for 50 per cent or more of the indicators under these goals, the best performing goals are Goal 7 (Affordable and clean energy), Goal 8 (Decent work and economic growth) and Goal 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure). At the other end, indicators under Goals 13 (Climate action) and 14 (Life below water) have either only one data point or no data at all for over half of ESCAP member States. Data is missing for over half of the indicators for Goals 1 (No poverty), 5 (Gender equality), 6 (Clean water and sanitation), 10 (Reduce inequalities), 11 (Sustainable cities and communities), 12 (Responsible consumption and production), 13 (Climate action), 14 (Life below water) and 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions). At the target level, only 50 of the 169 SDG targets can be considered ready for progress assessment, with at least one indicator with two or more data points for at least half of the countries in the region.

This edition of the Statistical Yearbook offers a wealth of information for national policy makers and development professionals. The data on which the Yearbook is based is also available on the ESCAP online statistical database with a set of tools to visualize trends and compare country situations. Also available are SDG country datasheets, a supplementary product of the 2017 edition of the Statistical Yearbook, offering an overview of each country in the region with regard to the SDGs. The datasheets present the latest data available for each indicator, together with regional figure as comparator.

I am confident that the information contained in this publication will continue to support the efforts of governments, development partners and the citizens of Asia and the Pacific in fulfilling the ambitions of the Sustainable Development Goals.



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I. The need to understand data availability for SDG indicators in the Asia-Pacific region

A. Role of SDG indicators in implementing the 2030 Agenda

The United Nations General Assembly in July 2017 adopted an initial set of 244 global indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. These indicators are to be refined annually and reviewed comprehensively by the United Nations Statistical Commission in 2020 and 2025.¹

The global indicators have been used for preparing a Secretary-General report to inform follow-up and review of SDG implementation at the annual High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development convened under the auspices of the United Nations Economic and Social Council. As such, they are a central piece of a systematic follow-up and review framework that world leaders have committed to in 2015 in implementing the Agenda at national, regional and global levels. More specifically, the indicators will be used for following up and reviewing progress, in order to help countries in implementing the Agenda and to ensure that no one is left behind. The indicators are also key to promoting accountability, supporting effective international cooperation in achieving the Agenda, fostering exchange of best practices and mutual learning, mobilizing support to overcome shared challenges, and identifying new and emerging issues.² The global indicators are to be complemented by indicators to be developed by Member States, for follow-up and review at regional and national levels.¹

B. Why review data availability for the global SDG indicators?

Having accurate, timely and comparable data for all the global indicators is essential for the functioning of the “robust, voluntary, effective, participatory, transparent and integrated” follow-up and review framework. However, the reality is far from this. The Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators highlighted that more than half of the indicators either have very limited data coverage across the countries around the world, or do not even have existing agreed definitions or measurement standards.³ This is why, in endorsing the 2030 Agenda and the global indicator framework, governments have repeatedly emphasized the importance of strengthening statistics and data, including having two specific targets in the 2030 Agenda.⁴

Many countries have undertaken assessment of data availability and gap analyses in their national contexts as a key step in national implementation of the SDGs. Such analyses have generally pointed to the large gaps in data collection, processing and dissemination against the global indicators at the national level, even in advanced statistical systems. These analyses also highlighted the need to mobilize financial and technical support for data and monitoring at the national level.⁵

It is also important to understand which indicators have sufficient data for assessing the status and progress in SDG implementation at the regional level. The reason is that regional level follow-up and review form an integral

part of the overall accountability framework for SDG implementation. This means that policy priority-setting to achieve the SDGs should be informed by knowledge of goal and target areas where the Asia-Pacific region and subregions are progressing well in, where the progress has been slow or stagnant, or where things have been deteriorating. For instance, the inaugural edition of the Sustainable Development Goals Baseline Report for Asia and the Pacific (2016) drew on the analysis of 50 indicators to establish a baseline for SDG implementation at regional and subregional levels. The report used a smaller subset, of 32 of such indicators, to assess the size of the gaps that need to be closed if the SDGs are to be achieved by 2030.⁶ According to the report, fewer SDG indicators could be used to assess the development dimensions introduced by the SDGs (or new goals/targets) compared to those addressed by the MDGs. Goals and targets related to the environment and biodiversity, in particular, had more pronounced data gaps, and also tracking inequality in all its dimensions was difficult using existing data. The report thus identified data scarcity as a major challenge, stemming both from insufficient resources as well as unfinished work related to development of measurement and methodological guidance for many SDG indicators.

This report sets up to provide a more systematic and in-depth analysis of whether or not there is enough data to measure SDG progress in the Asia-Pacific region. In order to answer this broad question, the report attempts to address questions such as the following:

- How many of the global SDG indicators have sufficient data allowing for progress assessment of the goals and targets for the Asia-Pacific region and subregions?
- How does data coverage vary across subregions, income groups, as well as across the 17 goals?
- To what extent is disaggregated data available to address the issue of “leave-no-one-behind” for the 17 goals?

The analysis in this report is done for two primary purposes. The first is to inform key stakeholders of the specific goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for which progress assessment can be conducted currently at the regional and subregional levels using the global indicators. The second is to identify and prioritize statistical capacity development needs in the region so that the gaps in data availability and quality can be addressed.

C. Organisation of the report

The remainder of the report is divided into four parts:

- **Part II** lays out in detail the methodology used, including the assumptions and caveats of the study;
- **Part III** presents the findings of the review of data availability in the Asia-Pacific region;
- **Part IV** analyses the link between data availability and the frequency of the most common data sources in the region; and
- **Part V** discusses the road ahead to enhancing data availability in the region.

II. Analysing data availability for the global SDG indicators: methodology

This section lays out the details of the approach in analysing data availability for the global indicators. It first describes the definitions that were used in classifying several possible scenarios of analysing the indicators to assess the implementation of the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda. Then it presents the assumptions and caveats of the analysis.

A. Defining data availability

Depending upon how the indicators are analysed to inform SDG implementation, data availability of the indicators can be examined in several ways. This report considers two types of analyses of the indicators. One is the analysis of the status of a situation at one point in time. This can be, for instance, the prevalence of extreme income poverty as measured by international line, for the entire Asia-Pacific region, or for each of the subregions for a particular year. Such analysis requires data aggregated to the region or subregions for only one time point for the particular indicator.

The second type of analysis is describing the change in the status of situation as measured by an indicator. In the case of poverty rate, this would be about whether the poverty rate for the region or each of the subregions rose, or declined, or stayed the same between two specific points in time. Obviously, the analysis of change requires two data points. The exact number of data points required for analysis of the pattern of change, or trend, depends upon many factors, including the issue at hand, the nature of change, etc. But having two data points is the minimum for detecting any change, or lack of it.

In line with the above, the analysis of data availability in this report was conducted for the following four scenarios:

1. **Trend analysis possible (Trend OK):** if a particular indicator has **two or more data points available for 50 per cent (or more) of the countries**⁷ in the Asia-Pacific region or relevant country grouping between the years 2000 and 2017.
2. **Only status analysis possible (Status OK):** if a particular indicator **has only one data point available for 50 per cent (or more) of the countries** in the Asia-Pacific region or relevant country grouping between the years 2000 and 2017.
3. **Limited status analysis possible (Status Limited):** if a particular indicator has **at least one data point available but for less than 50 per cent of the countries** in the Asia-Pacific region or relevant country grouping between the years 2000 and 2017.
4. **No analysis possible (No Data):** if **no data points are available for any of the countries** in the Asia-Pacific region or relevant country grouping between the years 2000 and 2017.

B. Assumptions and caveats of the study

The analyses to be presented below are based on the information on 232 indicators, obtained from the SDG Indicators Global Database hosted by the United Nations Statistics Division.⁸ The database contains country-level data as well as global and regional aggregates compiled through the UN system and other international organizations.

Important assumptions of the analyses and caveats in interpreting the results include the following:

1. Data availability at global level vis-à-vis national level.

In compiling the global indicators, the various custodian agencies typically implement set procedures and processes to obtain the data from national and other sources, check and validate such data, and conduct calculations using agreed definitions and methods. In some cases, they compile indicators by applying statistical models drawing on data from a variety of sources. These procedures and processes, among others, ensure the cross-country and cross-time comparability of the indicator data. As such, data availability presented in this report can best be interpreted as data accessibility at the global level.

Data accessibility at any level, both national and global, is an important issue for the Asia-Pacific region. All national statistical systems collect data at the level of individual persons, households, enterprises, etc, or micro-data. However, it is yet to be a reality that such micro-data are disseminated and made accessible for use by policy-makers, researchers, civil society and other relevant stakeholders at various levels. In some cases, such data are stored in formats that are not directly useable. The analyses presented in this report would provide an indication of the development areas where statistical information is more readily accessible in the public domain and where such information is sparse. Data are useful if they are available and disseminated, and ideally, data with some level of disaggregation should be available for multiple years for each global SDG indicator for all countries. This would allow comprehensive tracking of global, regional and/or national-level progress.

2. Time lag in processing statistical data.

The review is based only on data accessible through the SDG Indicators Global Database. In some cases, recent national data might not yet be reflected in the global database. This can happen if there is a considerable lag between data collection and data processing and dissemination. At the same time, the Global Database may reflect proxy values for some indicators.

3. Several DG indicators measure multiple components (variables) and/or disaggregation characteristics in the same indicator.

For instance, indicator 4.1.1 says “Proportion of children and young people: (a) in grades 2/3; (b) at the end of primary; and (c) at the end of lower secondary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by sex”. Not only does the indicator have multiple components, but it can also be disaggregated by multiple characteristics beyond sex, such as location, age groups, ethnicity etc. For this review, indicators such as 4.1.1 are classified as “Trend OK”, “Status OK” or “Status limited” if at least one of the components or disaggregation characteristics has at least one data point.

4. The limited geographical scope or non/limited applicability of certain SDG indicators is not considered.

Not all of the global SDG indicators apply to all countries. For instance, indicators on extreme income poverty are applicable only to less developed countries. Similarly, indicators related to oceans/marine resources may not be applicable for land-locked developing countries.

There are other indicators such as those related to official development assistance (ODA) and qualitative indicators pertaining to

norms, strategies and practices, that global agencies rather than the countries themselves are responsible for compiling.⁹ These indicators account for about 15 per cent of all SDG indicators.

While some cases of limited geographical scope or non/limited applicability may be more obvious than others, it is difficult to judge all cases without consulting individual countries. Thus, for this review, neither limited geographical scope nor the non/limited applicability of indicators has been considered in assessing data availability.

5. Data points have been counted for 244 indicators.

Some of the indicators are repeated in the global SDG monitoring framework. In other words, some of the 232 indicators are used

multiple times across the various SDGs and targets. Taking into consideration such repetition, altogether 244 indicators are used across all the goals and targets. This analysis focuses on identifying the SDGs where progress assessment is possible or where statistical capacity development should be prioritized. Hence, 244 indicators have been considered instead of 232.¹⁰

6. Other dimensions of statistical information quality have not been reviewed.

While the review focuses on data availability, other dimensions of quality (such as relevance, accuracy, reliability, timeliness, punctuality, clarity, coherence comparability, and methodological soundness) are beyond the scope of this review.¹¹

III. Data availability in the Asia-Pacific region: main findings

This section first gives an overview of data availability across all the 244 global SDG indicators. It then goes into detail to show which of the goals and targets can be assessed given the current status of data availability. The section further provides a picture of data availability of the indicators across Asia-Pacific subregions and countries by income levels. Finally, the section looks at data disaggregation.

Here is a preview of the major findings:

Across 244 global indicators:

- Trend analysis at the regional level is possible for only about one-fourth of all global SDG indicators (i.e. 64 indicators), with two or more data points available for these indicators for 50 per cent or more countries in the Asia-Pacific region. Only 89 per cent of Tier I indicators (for which data are supposed to be regularly produced by countries) have some data (at least one data point).

Across the 17 goals and 169 targets:

- At the regional level, Goal 7 (Affordable and clean energy), Goal 8 (Decent work and economic growth) and Goal 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure) are ahead of other goals, with trend analysis possible for more than half of the corresponding indicators. While Goal 7 represents the environmental dimension of development, Goals 8 and 9 represent the economic dimension.¹²
- There is no data available at the regional level for several goals representing the social and environmental dimensions of development, i.e. 50 per cent or more of the indicators under Goal 1 (No poverty), Goal 5

(Gender equality), Goal 6 (Clean water and sanitation), Goal 10 (Reduce inequalities), Goal 11 (Sustainable cities and communities), Goal 12 (Responsible consumption and production), Goal 13 (Climate action), Goal 14 (Life below water) and Goal 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions).

- Less than a third of the SDG targets (i.e. only 50 of the 169 SDG targets), are currently ready for progress assessment. These are targets that have at least one indicator with two or more data points available for 50 per cent or more countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

Across subregions and countries of different income levels:

- While most Asia-Pacific subregions are doing more or less equally well on Goal 7 (Affordable and clean energy), Goal 8 (Decent work and economic growth), Goal 12 (Responsible consumption and production) and Goal 15 (Life on land), wider variations in subregional performance is seen on several other goals (e.g. Goal 1 (No poverty) and Goal 2 (Zero hunger)).
- Countries in the high and upper-middle income categories as not necessarily doing better in terms of data availability as compared to countries in the lower-middle and low income categories. Infact trend analysis is possible for fewer indicators addressing the social dimension of development in high and upper-middle income categories.

Disaggregated data:

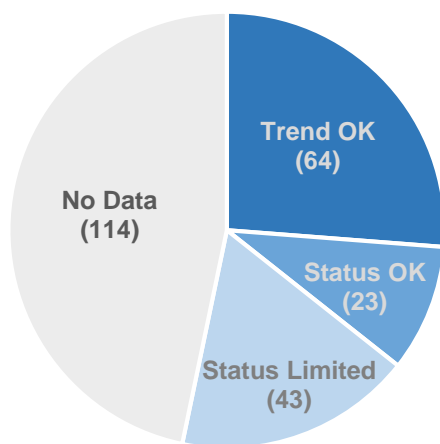
- Disaggregated data are missing or sparse, with sex-disaggregated data available for as few as 22 SDG indicators.

These findings are explained in more details in the rest of this section.

A. Data availability across the 244 global SDG indicators

Over 50 per cent of the SDG indicators have at least some data available

Figure 1 - Summary of data availability status for SDG indicators, percentage of indicators*



Note: Percentages based on 244 indicators

* As of December 2017

For the total of 244 global SDG indicators, it is possible to conduct trend analysis for 64, or about 25 per cent, because they have two or more data points available for more than half the total number of countries in the Asia-Pacific region (Trend OK). In addition, about 9 per cent of the indicators, or 23 of them, have only one data point for 50 per cent or more countries in the region. Thus, it is possible to use such indicators to describe the status of SDG implementation. At the same time, 18 per cent of the indicators, or 43, are Status Limited, as they have at least one data point but for

fewer than half of the countries in the region. Putting these three groups together, a total of 130 indicators, or more than half, have at least one data point available between the years 2000 and 2017 (figure 1). However, 114 out of 244 indicators, or almost 47 per cent, have no data available for any of the countries in the Asia-Pacific region (see Appendix I for details).

Tier I indicators are on track but not fully up to speed

To facilitate implementing the global indicator framework, the Interagency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) classified all indicators into three tiers based on “their level of methodological development” and the “availability of data at the global level”.

- Tier I: Indicator is conceptually clear, has an internationally established methodology and standards, and data are regularly produced by countries;
- Tier II: Indicator is conceptually clear, has an internationally established methodology and standards, but data are not regularly produced by countries; and
- Tier III: Indicator has no internationally established methodology or standards, but methodology/standards are being (or will be) developed or tested.

The IAEG-SDGs classified¹³ 82 indicators as Tier I indicators, implying that just over a third of all SDG indicators should have data available in all countries.¹⁴ However, based on data shown in table 1, 89 per cent of Tier I indicators have some data (Trend OK, Status OK or Status Limited). Some Tier I indicators have no data points for any of the countries in the region (table 2). The majority of these are under Goal 17 and pertain to government revenues and budget. One possibility is that while data for these indicators may be available in countries, the indicators have not been compiled.

Table 1 - Data availability status by tier classification

SDG	Number of corresponding indicators	Trend OK			Status OK			Status Limited			No Data		
		Tiers			Tiers			Tiers			Tiers		
		I	II	III	I	II	III	I	II	III	I	II	III
1. No poverty	14	1	1		1	1			2			2	6
2. Zero hunger	13	4	1		1	1			2		1		3
3. Good health and well-being	27	9	4		4	2			1			3	4
4. Quality education*	11	3							4	1			1
5. Gender equality *	14	1				1		1	3			3	4
6. Clean water and sanitation	11	1			1			2	1			3	3
7. Affordable and clean energy	6	4											2
8. Decent work and economic growth	17	6	2	1				3	2				3
9. Industry, innovation and infrastructure	12	5	1		2						1		3
10. Reduce inequality*	11	1						3					6
11. Sustainable cities and communities	15					1		2	1			4	7
12. Responsible consumption and production	13		1	1	1					1			9
13. Climate action	8					1						1	6
14. Life below water	10				1						1		8
15. Life on land *	14	2	3			2						2	3
16. Peace justice and strong institutions	23	3		1	1	1		1	3		1	5	7
17. Partnerships for the goals	25	7				1		3	1	1	5		7
Total	244	47	13	3	12	11	0	15	20	3	9	23	82

* SDGs with indicators classified under multiple tiers not included i.e.

Goal	Tier	Indicator number	Goal	Tier	Indicator number
04	II/III	4.1.1	10	I/II	10.b.1
	I/II/III	4.5.1	15	I/III	15.a.1
05	I/III	5.5.1		I/III	15.b.1

Table 2 - Tier I indicators with no data in Asia and the Pacific

Indicators	
2.b.1	Agricultural export subsidies
9.a.1	Total official international support (official development assistance plus other official flows) to infrastructure
14.4.1	Proportion of fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels
16.6.1	Primary government expenditures as a proportion of original approved budget, by sector (or by budget codes or similar)
17.1.1	Total government revenue as a proportion of GDP, by source
17.1.2	Proportion of domestic budget funded by domestic taxes
17.3.1	Foreign direct investment (FDI), official development assistance and South-South cooperation as a proportion of total domestic budget
17.12.1	Average tariffs faced by developing countries, least developed countries and small island developing States
17.19.1	Dollar value of all resources made available to strengthen statistical capacity in developing countries

Tier II indicators have limited or no data available and require more capacity building, while Tier III indicators need further methodological work and/or identification of alternative estimation techniques. About two-

thirds of Tier II indicators, and interestingly, six Tier III indicators (table 3), have at least some data available (Trend OK, Status OK or Status limited) (See Appendix II for details).

Table 3 - Tier III indicators with at least some data available*

Tier III indicators with Trend OK		Data type ¹⁸	Tier III indicators with Status Limited		Data type
8.4.1/ 12.2.1	Material footprint, material footprint per capita, and material footprint per GDP	Country data	4.2.1	Proportion of children under 5 years of age who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being, by sex	Country data
16.10.1	Number of verified cases of killing, kidnapping, enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention and torture of journalists, associated media personnel, trade unionists and human rights advocates in the previous 12 months	Global monitoring data or Not available	12.4.2	Hazardous waste generated per capita and proportion of hazardous waste treated, by type of treatment	Missing**
			17.18.2	Number of countries that have national statistical legislation that complies with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics	Global monitoring data

Notes:

* These 6 indicators could be classified as either “Trend OK” or “Status Limited” only.

** The indicator was not classified into any of the “data type” categories of the SDG Indicators Global Database

- Excludes indicators that are classified under multiple tiers.

B. Data availability across the 17 goals and 169 targets

Indicators related to the economic dimension of development have better data availability

The 17 SDGs address the three dimensions of sustainable development – the economic, social and environment. The goals and underlying targets are supposed to, in principle, represent the three dimensions of development in order to achieve an integrated approach within each area. However, while several goals and targets

represent one or more dimensions of development, the integration of all three dimensions is somewhat partial within each area.¹² Various agencies have been using different ways to classify the goals and targets as economic, social and environmental.¹⁵

Given the above, for the purpose of simplicity in the analysis here, each SDG is classified under only one dimension of development based on the most prominent concentration of objectives within the goal. Therefore, the analysis here assumes that each SDG has only one primary focus. The classification used is as follows (table 4):

Table 4 - SDGs classified by the three dimensions of sustainable development

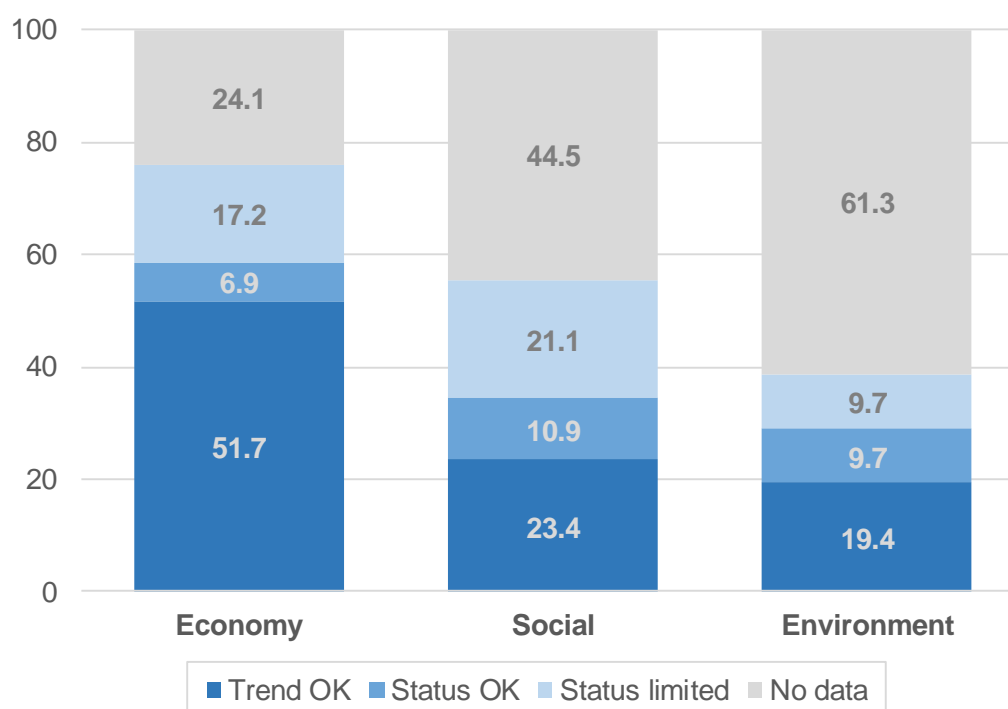
Dimension	SDG	Total number of corresponding indicators per dimension
Economy	SDGs 8 and 9	29
Social	SDGs 1-5; 10-11; 16	128
Environment	SDGs 6-7; 12-15	62
Not classified	SDG 17	25
Total		244

The results of the analysis (figure 2) show that trend analysis is mostly possible for indicators falling under the goals classified as economic (i.e. Goals 8 and 9; 52 per cent of corresponding indicators), followed by the indicators falling under the goals classified as social (i.e. Goals 1-5, 10-11 and 16; 23 per cent of corresponding indicators). Indicators under the goals classified as environment (Goals 6-7, and 12-15), need urgent action to improve data availability, with trend analysis possible for only 19 per cent of the indicators and no data for as high as 61 per cent of its indicators.¹⁶

It is thus evident that countries are mostly prioritising data production for targets and indicators related to the economy. On the other hand, many of the targets and indicators related to the social dimension overlap with the MDGs and thus, have relatively good data availability. Also, traditionally, national statistical offices in most countries in the region have been conducting population and housing censuses at least once a decade, which provide a baseline

for national economic and social information needs. Not only does the population and housing census form the basis for household survey samples but it is also critical for compiling a range of economic statistics, such as GDP information on a per capital basis.¹⁷ In addition to census data, indicators related to the economic and social dimensions typically come from other data sources that are relatively well established in many countries in the region such as labour force surveys, establishment surveys, household income and expenditure surveys, demographic and health surveys etc., as well as specific administrative records.

On the other hand, indicators related to the environment, which mostly represent the new dimensions introduced by the SDGs, do not have well established standards or data sources across all indicators. While some indicators may come from e.g. agricultural surveys, others require geospatial data and real-time data collection/monitoring (e.g. of water, soil, air quality).¹⁷

Figure 2 - Data availability in the Asia-Pacific region by the three dimensions of development**Notes:**

- Refer to table 4.

- Percentage of total number of indicators under the corresponding goals for each dimension.

Data availability across the 17 goals is uneven

Data availability at the goal level

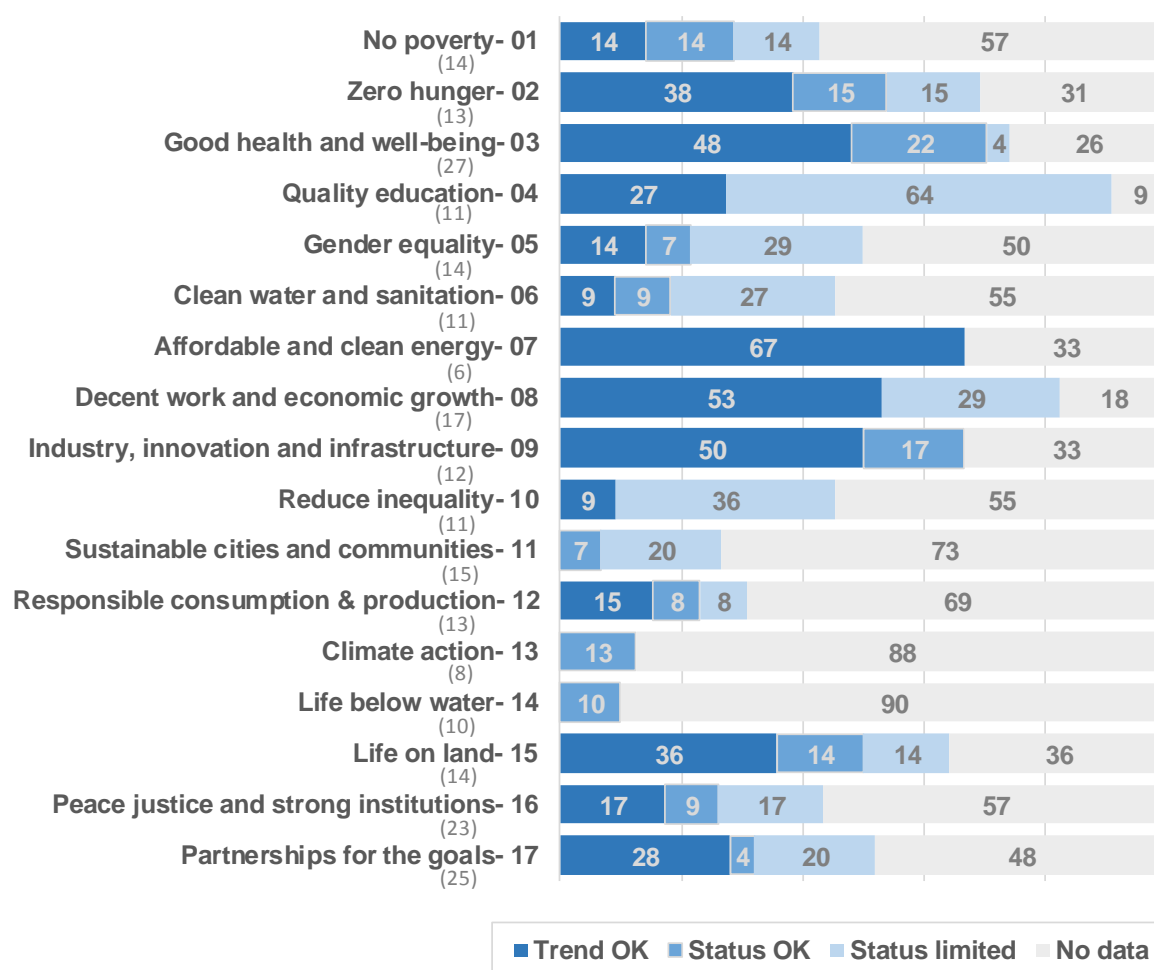
Significant variation in data availability is seen across the 17 goals at the regional level (figure 3).

- Trend analysis is possible for 50 per cent or more of the indicators under Goal 7 (Affordable and clean energy), Goal 8 (Decent work and economic growth) and Goal 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure), which can be considered as the best performing goals. While Goal 7 represents the environmental dimension of

development, Goals 8 and 9 by and large represent the economic dimension.

- Although not illustrated in figure 3, only 5 indicators have two or more data points for all 58 countries in the Asia-Pacific region. These are 3.3.2 (tuberculosis), 7.2.1 (renewal energy share), 8.4.2 and 12.2.2 (domestic material consumption), 15.5.1 (red list index) and 16.10.1 (violence against journalists, trade unionists and human rights advocates). Most of these indicators are either classified as “estimated” or “global monitoring data”, which are likely to be compiled by international agencies.¹⁸

Figure 3 - Data availability in the Asia-Pacific region by SDG goal, percentage of indicators



Note: Reflects the percentage of total number of indicators for each SDG; Numbers in parenthesis indicate number of indicators under each goal.

- One or more data points are available (Trend OK, Status OK or Status Limited) for 50 per cent or more of the indicators under Goal 2 (Zero hunger), Goal 3 (Good health and well-being), Goal 4 (Quality education), Goal 7 (Affordable and clean energy), Goal 8 (Decent work and economic growth), Goal 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure), Goal 15 (Life on land) and Goal 17 (Partnership for the goals). These represent a mix of the economic (Goals 8 and 9), social (Goals 2-4) and the environmental dimensions (Goals 7 and 15).
- No data points are available for any of the countries in the region for 50 per cent or more of the indicators under Goal 1 (No

poverty), Goal 5 (Gender equality), Goal 6 (Clean water and sanitation), Goal 10 (Inequality), Goal 11 (Sustainable cities), Goal 12 (Responsible consumption and production), Goal 13 (Climate action), Goal 14 (Life below water), and Goal 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions). Data availability is particularly poor for Goals 13 and 14. Indicators under Goals 13 and 14 have either only one data point or no data at all. Thus, the paucity of data is mostly seen on the environmental dimension (Goal 6 and Goals 12-14) and the social dimension (Goals 1, 5, 10-11 and 16).

Data availability at the target level

The situation of data availability at the indicator level translates into a similar picture at the target level. Table 5 examines data availability at the target level and highlights the percentage of targets under each goal where

assessing progress is currently possible. For the purposes of this analysis, a target's progress can be assessed if at least one indicator under the target has two or more data points available for 50 per cent or more countries in the region, i.e. Trend OK.

Table 5 - Percentage of targets under each SDG where progress assessment is possible in Asia and the Pacific

SDG	Number of corresponding indicators	Number of corresponding targets	Number of Trend OK targets	Percentage of Trend OK targets
1. No poverty	14	7	2	29
2. Zero hunger	13	8	3	38
3. Good health and well-being	27	13	8	62
4. Quality education	11	10	3	30
5. Gender equality	14	9	1	11
6. Clean water and sanitation	11	8	1	13
7. Affordable and clean energy	6	5	3	60
8. Decent work and economic growth	17	12	7	58
9. Industry, innovation and infrastructure	12	8	5	63
10. Reduce inequality	11	10	1	10
11. Sustainable cities and communities	15	10	0	0
12. Responsible consumption and production	13	11	1	9
13. Climate action	8	5	0	0
14. Life below water	10	10	0	0
15. Life on land	14	12	4	33
16. Peace justice and strong institutions	23	12	4	33
17. Partnerships for the goals	25	19	7	37
	244	169	50	

Based on the condition that at least one indicator must be Trend OK, assessing progress is possible for 50 per cent or more targets for only four goals. These are Goal 3 and Goals 7-9. It is likely that Goal 3 meets this threshold because it has several overlapping dimensions with the MDGs and has more well understood indicators. Most of the indicators for goal 3 are classified as "estimated" or "modelled" by international agencies. While several indicators under Goals 7 and 9 are classified as "estimated", "modelled" or "global monitoring data", Goal 8 has a large number of indicators classified as "country data" or "country adjusted".¹⁸

On the other hand, progress can be assessed for less than 20 percent of the targets for Goals 5-6 and Goals 10-14. While Goal 5 (Gender equality and women's empowerment) and Goal 6 (Water and sanitation) represent dimensions covered by the MDGs but still have persisting data gaps, Goals 10-14 represent several new dimensions introduced by the SDGs related to inequality, the environment, biodiversity, and sustainability.

C. Variability across subregions and countries in Asia and the Pacific

Subregional variation in data availability for some goals is more prominent than for others

As described earlier, Tier III indicators require methodological development, and thus, would more-or-less have similar data availability status across countries irrespective of their national context, capacity, subregion they belong to or development/income status.

By dropping Tier III indicators from the analysis, it is seen that trend analysis is possible for 50 per cent or more Tier I and Tier II indicators for Goal 7 (Affordable and clean energy), Goal 8 (Decent work and economic growth), Goal 12 (Responsible consumption and production) and Goal 15 (Life on land) for all five Asia-Pacific subregions¹⁹ (figure 4). Of these, Goal 12, in particular, has a majority of its indicators in Tier III. Trend analysis is also possible for 50 per cent or more Tier I and Tier II indicators for Goal 2 (Zero hunger), Goal 3 (Good health and well-being) and Goal 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure) for three or four Asia-Pacific subregions. When Tier III indicators were included in the analysis earlier, one could see that trend analysis was possible for 50 per cent or more of the indicators only under Goals 7-9.

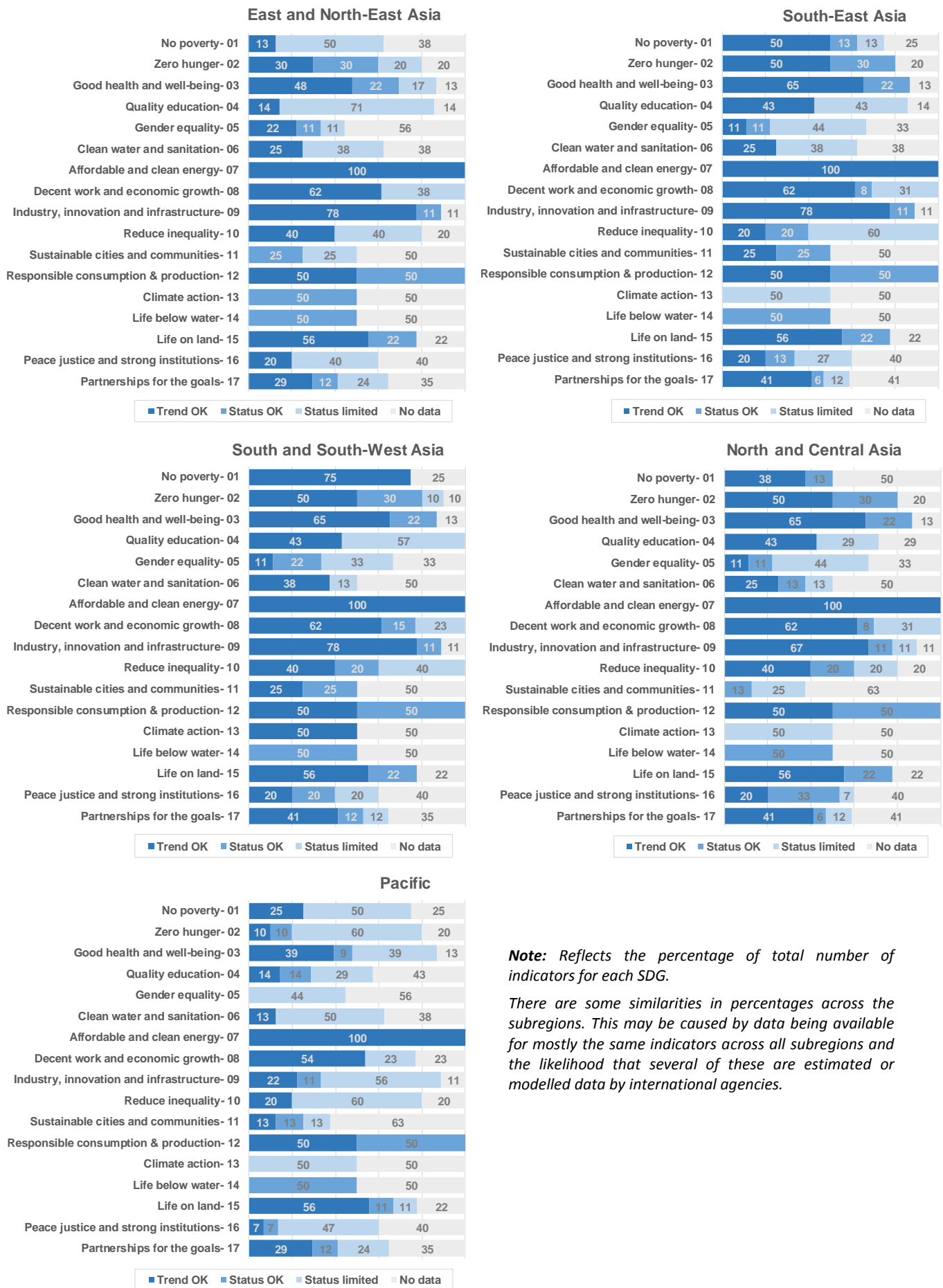
However, in spite of the exclusion of Tier III indicators from the analysis, large data gaps (no data for 50 per cent or more Tier I and Tier II indicators) are seen across all subregions for Goal 11 (Sustainable cities and communities), Goal 13 (Climate action) and Goal 14 (Life below water). This points to the need for

strengthening statistical capacity to enhance production of data for the corresponding indicators.

However, there are wide variations across subregions on Goal 1 (No poverty), with possibility for trend analysis ranging from 13 per cent of Tier I and Tier II indicators in East and North-east Asia to 75 per cent of Tier I and Tier II indicators in South and South-West Asia. For the same goal, no data is available for between a quarter of Tier I and Tier II indicators for South-East Asia, South and South-West Asia and the Pacific to 50 per cent of Tier I and Tier II indicators in North and Central Asia. Similarly, for Goal 2 (Zero hunger), possibility for trend analysis varies from 10 per cent of Tier I and Tier II indicators in the Pacific to 50 per cent of Tier I and Tier II indicators in South-East Asia, South and South-West Asia and North and Central Asia.

In general, the differences in data availability across countries can be explained by such factors as variation in policy priorities, related applicability/relevance of indicators, statistical capacity, institutional arrangements and overall development status. Certain goals are less relevant to certain subregions depending on say income level of majority of countries in the particular subregion (discussed in more detail in the next section) or whether most of the countries in the particular subregion are landlocked (in which case indicators related to oceans and marine resources, for instance, may be less relevant). Goals 1 and 2, for example, are likely to be less applicable to a number of countries in North and North-East Asia as they fall in the high or upper-middle-income group.²⁰ However, some other variations are more difficult to explain.

Figure 4 - Subregional variation in data availability, percentage of indicators by SDG



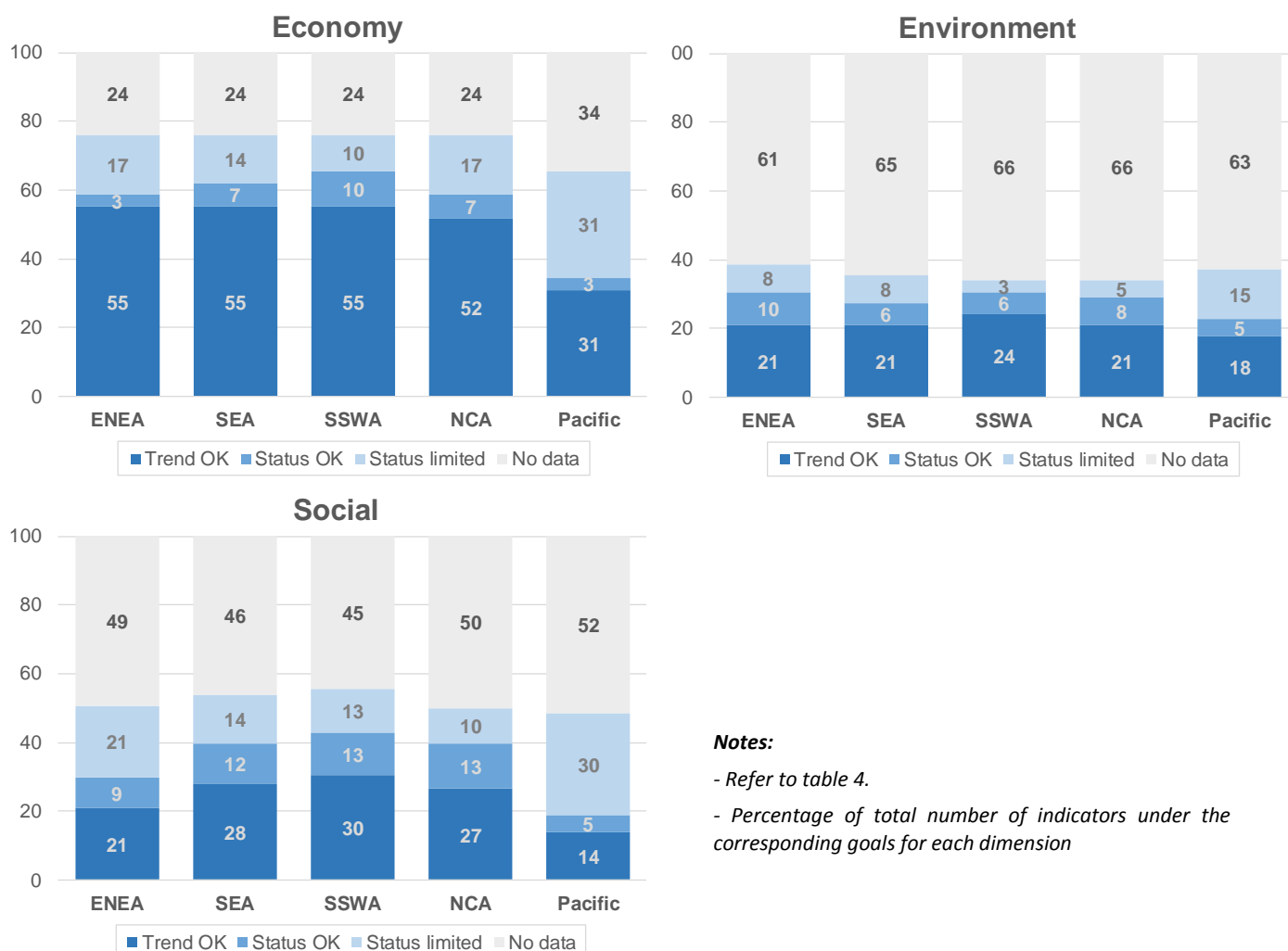
Note: Reflects the percentage of total number of indicators for each SDG.

There are some similarities in percentages across the subregions. This may be caused by data being available for mostly the same indicators across all subregions and the likelihood that several of these are estimated or modelled data by international agencies.

An analysis by the three pillars of development reveals once again that even at the subregional level, indicators under goals related to the economy have the highest possibility for trend

analysis, while indicators under goals related to the environment have the largest data gaps (figure 5).

Figure 5 - Subregional variation in data availability, by the three dimensions of development



Notes:

- Refer to table 4.
- Percentage of total number of indicators under the corresponding goals for each dimension

The level of data availability may be linked to a country's income level and the applicability of the SDGs and targets

A data availability assessment was also done for Tier I and Tier II indicators by GNI-based income groups in the region (See appendix IV for Asia and the Pacific countries in each GNI-based income group). As illustrated in figure 6, countries in all four GNI-based income groups appear to have the same performance in terms of data availability in some cases. For instance, for Goal 7 (Affordable and clean energy), all

income groups have 100 per cent Tier I and Tier II indicators with Trend OK; for Goal 12 (Responsible consumption and production), all income groups have 50 per cent indicators each with Trend OK and Status OK; and for Goal 14 (Life below water), all income groups have 50 per cent indicators each with Status OK and No Data. However, in other goals, such as Goal 1 (No poverty), there is considerable variation between the countries in different income groups. High and upper- middle income countries have Trend OK at only 13 per cent of Tier I and Tier II indicators, while the lower-

middle and low income countries have Trend OK at 50 and 63 per cent of Tier I and Tier II indicators respectively.

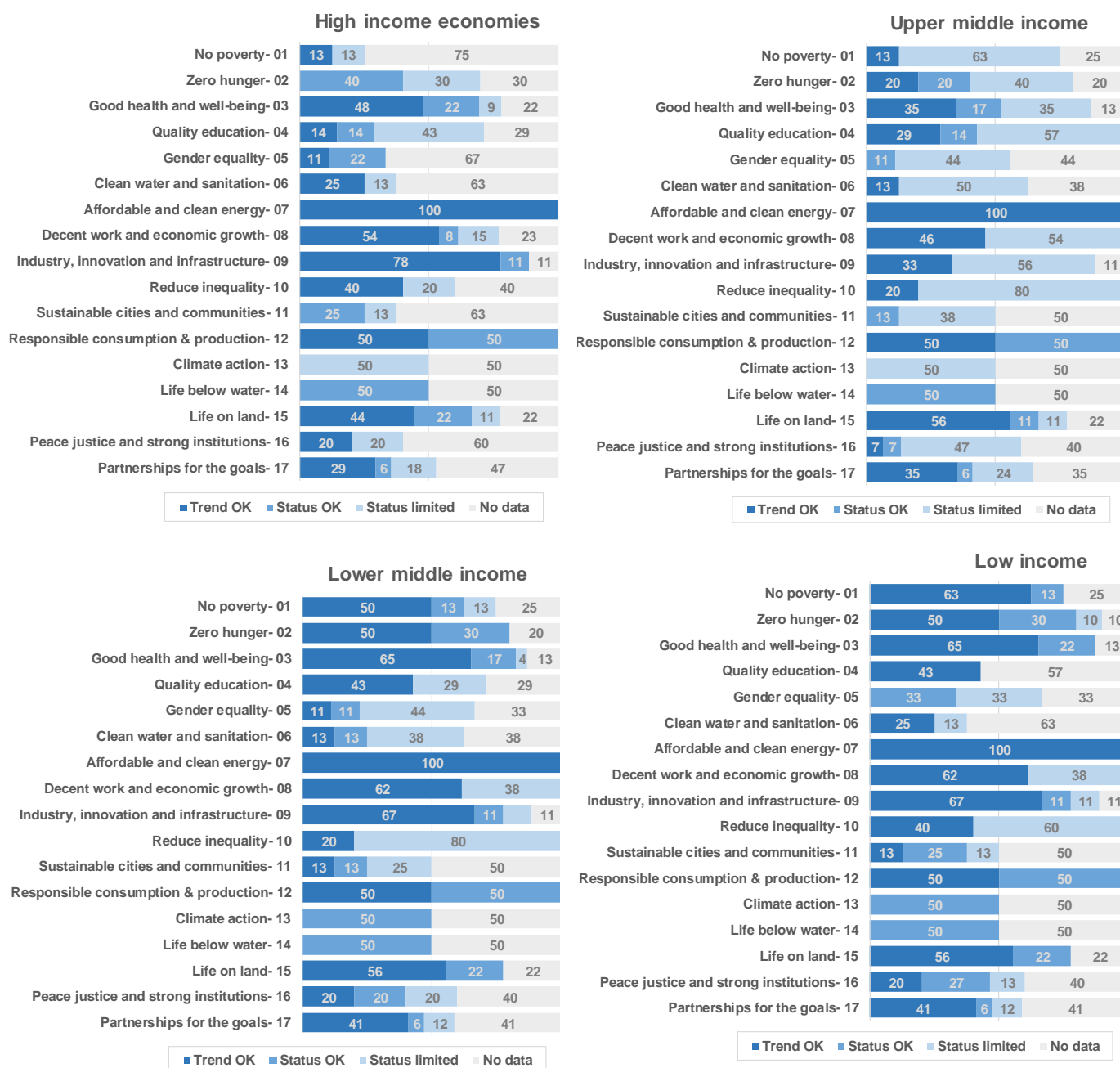
Some of the variations in data availability across goals can be explained by the limited applicability of some goals and corresponding targets to all income groups. For instance, several targets under Goals 1-6 address multi-dimensional aspects of poverty, including hunger, health and well-being, education, water and sanitation, and gender equality. These domains may be less applicable to high income countries and, to some extent, to upper-middle income countries. For these two income groups, trend analysis is possible for only up to a maximum of 48 per cent of Tier I and Tier II indicators under Goals 1 through 6 (figure 6). For the high income countries, in fact, 75 per cent of Tier I and Tier II indicators under Goal 1 have no data. The availability of data for Goal 1 (No poverty) improves as we move from upper-middle to lower-middle and further to low income countries. This is against the general assumption that high income countries in general have better data availability. Therefore, the availability of data might reflect the relative relevance of goals and targets to countries in the different income groups.

In addition, the lower-middle income countries and, in particular, the low income countries, often benefit from internationally supported

household survey programmes. Surveys funded by international agencies, such as the Living Standards Measurement Study, the Demographic and Health Survey and the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey among others, provide data for a range of indicators related to the multi-dimensional aspects of poverty. This may also partially explain better data availability on corresponding goals for countries in the low income range.

Variations in availability in other cases may be more difficult to explain as the limited applicability of goals and targets is less of an issue. For instance, Goal 13 (Climate action), which should in principle be largely applicable across all income groups, has 50 per cent indicators with Status Limited for the high income and upper-middle income countries, and 50 per cent indicators with only Status OK for the lower-middle and low income countries. In spite of the exclusion of Tier III indicators, all four income groups, however, consistently have 50 per cent or more Tier I and II indicators with no data for Goal 13. This, again, points to the need to strengthen statistical capacity to improve production of the corresponding indicators, in addition to the need for developing statistical standards for the corresponding Tier III indicators under the same goal.

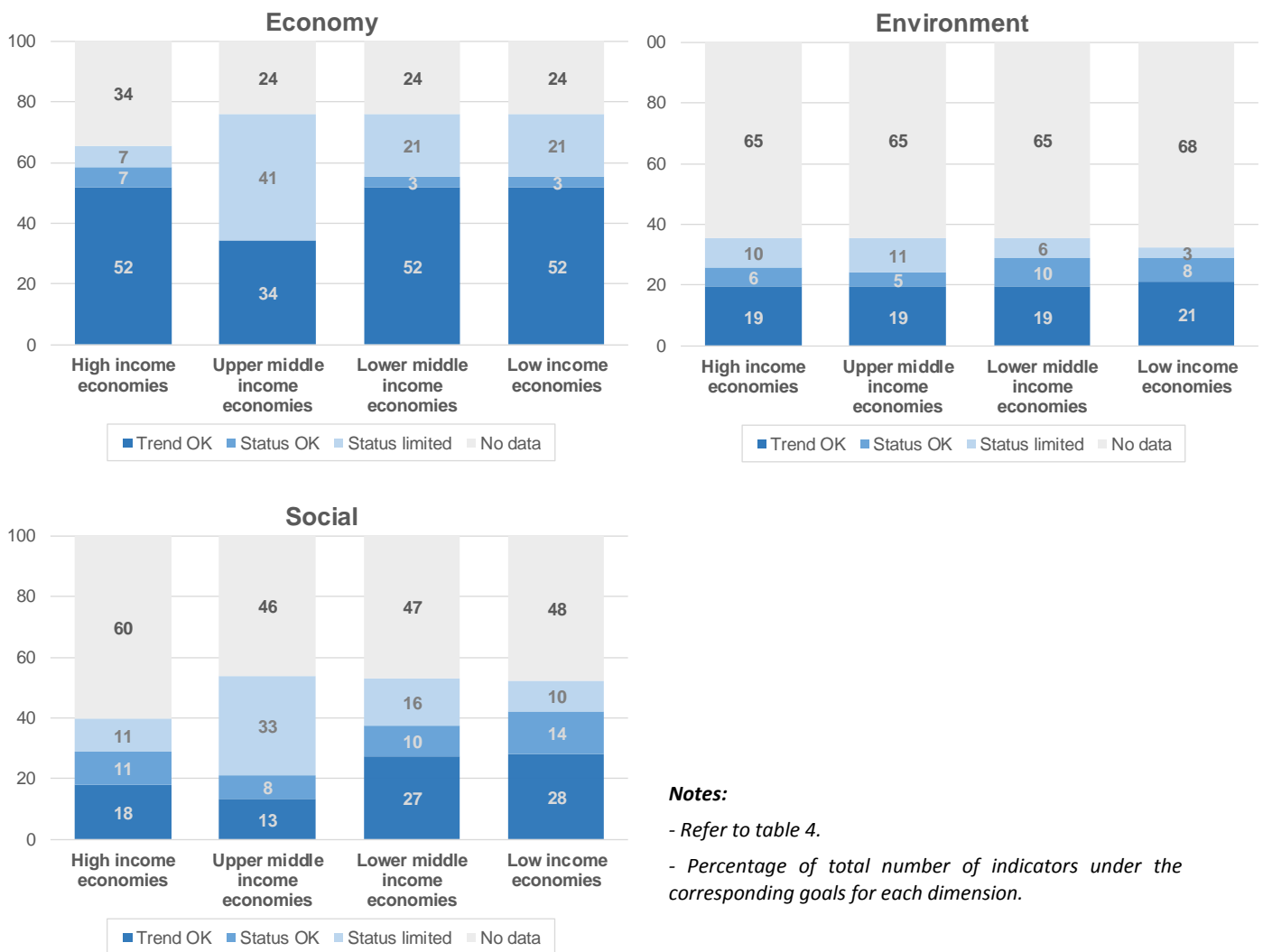
Figure 6 - Variation in data availability across GNI-based income groups in the Asia-Pacific region, percentage of indicators by SDG



An analysis by the three pillars of development reveals the consistent finding that trend analysis is possible for a higher percentage of indicators pertaining to dimensions of the economy as compared to the social or

environmental dimensions irrespective of the income category. Figure 7 reveals that 65 per cent or more indicators under goals pertaining to the environment have no data irrespective of the income category.

Figure 7 - Variation in data availability across GNI-based income groups in the Asia-Pacific region, by the three dimensions of development



Notes:

- Refer to table 4.
- Percentage of total number of indicators under the corresponding goals for each dimension.

D. Availability of disaggregated data

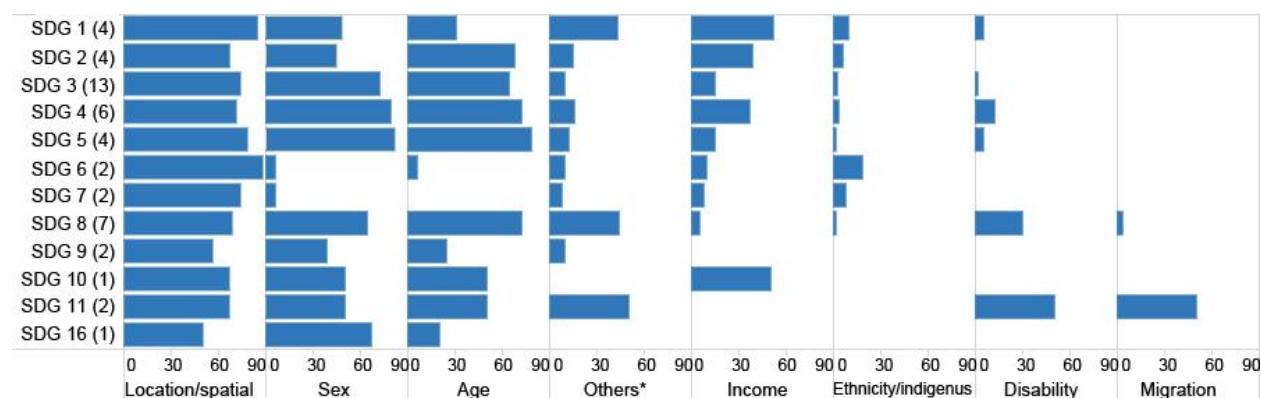
Disaggregated data is sparse or not available

The 2030 Agenda enshrines the ambitious vision of leaving no one behind. Thus, the global monitoring framework must reflect opportunities and development outcomes for all population groups. This calls for strengthening disaggregating data for SDG indicators. Consequently, the statistical community recommended that SDG indicators

should be disaggregated (where relevant) by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location etc., in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics.²¹

Despite this ambition, a survey of national statistical offices (NSO) conducted by the Asian Development Bank and ESCAP on SDG data compilation in mid-2017 revealed limited availability of disaggregated data for 48 selected indicators spanning 12 SDGs in 21 countries in Asia and the Pacific (figure 8).

Figure 8 - Availability of disaggregated data for selected countries in Asia and the Pacific



Notes

* Others: e.g. education, occupation, religion etc.

- Numbers in parentheses represent number of indicators evaluated under each goal.

- Percentage for each goal is the average number of “yes” responses across the indicators for a particular disaggregation characteristic to the total number of “yes and “no” responses.

As illustrated in figure 8, while disaggregated data was largely available for basic characteristics such as location, sex and age, there was limited or no disaggregated data for population groups based on ethnicity, disability and migratory status. This could be the case because countries that responded to the survey may have previously identified priority population groups and issues in national data collection and compilation, and thus, focused on compiling disaggregated data for only those characteristics identified to be of policy interest. Alternatively, other national agencies could be the custodians of such disaggregated data, and the NSOs responding to the survey may have been unaware of its existence, thereby reflecting limited coordination at the national level. However, it may simply be that demand for data on various population groups may not yet have been established at the national level.

The SDGs emphasize that realizing gender equality and empowering women will contribute critically to overall progress. Gender equality and women’s empowerment issues therefore cut across all SDGs. While SDG 5 exclusively focuses on these issues, disaggregation by sex and other relevant characteristics is strongly emphasized across all relevant targets and indicators.²²

Despite this emphasis, sex-disaggregated data is available for only about 22 SDG indicators, with Status Limited for the majority of these indicators (table 6). While several SDG indicators explicitly mention disaggregation by sex, the data is not available.

Table 6 - Availability of sex-disaggregated data

	Indicator	Trend OK	Status OK	Status Limited
1.1.1	International poverty	√		
1.3.1	Social protection floors/systems			√
3.3.1	HIV infections			√
3.4.2.	Suicide mortality rate	√		
3.a.1	Tobacco use		√	
4.1.1	Reading and mathematics proficiency of children and young people			√
4.2.2	Organised learning before primary entry age	√		
4.3.1	Formal and non-formal education and training			√
4.4.1	ICT skills			√
4.6.1	Literacy and numeracy skills			√
4.c.1	Organized teacher training		√	
5.4.1	Unpaid domestic and care work			√
5.b.1	Ownership of a mobile telephone			√
8.3.1	Informal employment			√
8.5.1	Hourly earnings of employees			√
8.5.2	Unemployment rate	√		
8.6.1	Youth not in education, employment or training			√
8.7.1	Child labour			√
8.8.1	Occupational injuries			√
16.1.1	Intentional homicides		√	
16.2.2	Human trafficking			√
16.2.3	Young women/men experiencing sexual violence			√

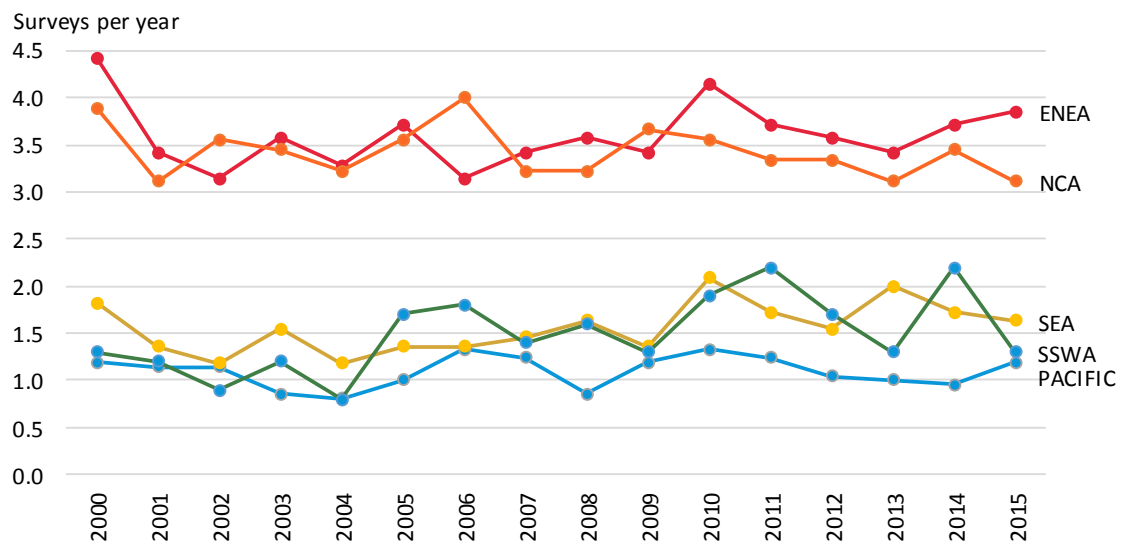
IV. The link between data availability and the frequency of data production and dissemination

The typical data sources for most SDG indicators are the population and housing censuses, agricultural censuses, economic surveys and censuses, periodic household surveys (multi-purpose, focused or special surveys) and administrative sources, including data generated through civil registration and other administrative systems of governments, utilities and central banks. Non-traditional sources of data, such as big data, are being explored to fill in data gaps. However, the intermittent frequency of data collection may explain some of the limitations in data availability across various targets and indicators.

There are several SDG indicators for which population data are critical. Population and housing censuses, an important source for such data, are typically conducted every 10 years, with an intercensal survey in some cases. Accordingly, between the years 2000 and 2017, the majority of the countries in the region had only one or two population and housing censuses that could be used for compilation of SDG indicators.

In addition to the censuses, household surveys are key data sources for a large number of indicators across various goals. However, the frequency of household surveys in the region varies across countries and is erratic in some cases.²³ Only about 30 per cent of the countries in the region had three or more household surveys in most of the years between 2000 and 2017, and about 40 percent of countries had only one or two household surveys in most years for the same time period. The remaining 30 percent of the countries conducted household surveys on an irregular basis (once every few years).

Figure 9 shows the variation in data collection frequency for population and housing census, agricultural census and selected household surveys across subregions in Asia and the Pacific.²⁴ Of the five subregions, only East and North-east Asia and North and Central Asia have conducted three or more of these data collection exercises on an annual basis between the years 2000 and 2015. There is also quite a bit of variation from one year to the next within each subregion. The infrequency of data collection for population and housing censuses and the variation in other data collection exercises limit the availability of data.

Figure 9 - Average number of household surveys per year by Asia-Pacific subregions, 2000-2015

Note: Based on Population and housing census, Agricultural census, Agricultural survey, Demographic and health survey, Household income and expenditure survey, Labour force survey and Multiple indicator cluster survey.

There is also a considerable time lag between when the data is collected and when it is disseminated or published. For instance, for indicator 1.1.1 (Proportion of population below the international poverty line, by sex, age, employment status and geographical location (urban/rural)), for the 12 countries in the region for which information was available,²⁵ the time lag from the implementation of the questionnaire to the date of publication of the first survey report or the date of the first press release varied from a minimum of 3 months to a maximum of 29 months. For the majority, the lag was at least as long as one year.

The intermittent frequency of some data sources and the time lag may reflect limited national statistical capacity, limited national budgets for data collection and compilation, as well as the existing workload of national statistical offices. At the same time, data sources are in many cases interdependent.¹⁷ For

instance, weak administrative data systems may need to be complemented by household surveys for several population and social indicators; or census data may be required to obtain per capita economic statistics. This interdependence may sometimes influence the frequency and need for certain data sources. However, conducting annual surveys is neither feasible nor recommended in all cases because of the amount of time and resources needed.

Some of these limitations and challenges can be addressed by leveraging technological advancements and diversity of data sources. Data gaps can be filled by exploring non-traditional data sources and tools, such as big data, including geospatial information, and also through the application of advanced data integration techniques.²⁶

V. Summary and the road ahead

The report paints a mixed picture about what is feasible for status and progress assessment in SDG implementation at the regional and subregional levels and across income groups in Asia and the Pacific. There is sufficient data at present that would allow several indicators to be used to assess status or change for a number of goals. This is in particular the case with the two goals focusing on the economic pillar (Goal 8 (Decent work and economic growth) and Goal 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure)). This is also the case for some of the goals representing the social pillar of the 2030 Agenda, in particular Goal 3 on Good health and well-being. But there are major data gaps for the global indicators across the 17 goals. This is even the case for the two goals representing the economic pillar. Data gaps are larger for indicators measuring the goals representing the social pillar, and the gaps are particularly large for goals representing environmental sustainability.

The analysis points to several broad directions for collective actions so that high quality, timely and reliable disaggregated data are available to support the follow-up and review at various levels. These include, among others: developing measurement standards, definitions and statistical guidelines for the compilation of indicators; strengthening statistical production and dissemination in accordance with agreed international standards and good practices so as to fill the gaps in availability and quality requirements; enhancing the policy-data nexus to address the requirements for data disaggregation; ensuring political, institutional and financial support for sustained production, dissemination and use of statistical products and services to inform decision-making.

A. Improving data for Tier III indicators: developing measurement standards, definitions and statistical guidelines

One of the top priority areas of work for addressing data gaps concerns indicators categorised as Tier III. As was emphasized, as many as 93 of the 244 global indicators, do not have internationally agreed methodologies and standards and are classified as Tier III. Some of the goals corresponding to the environmental pillar have a particularly large proportion of indicators classified as Tier III. This includes the goals on responsible consumption and production (Goal 12, has 11 Tier III indicators out of 13 in total), climate action (Goal 13 has 6 Tier III indicators out of 8), and life below water (Goal 14 has 8 Tier III indicators out of 10). But some of the goals on the social pillar also have large numbers of Tier III indicators, including the goals on eliminating poverty (6 out of 14), reducing inequality (6 out of 11), and sustainable cities and communities (7 out of 15).

What and by whom?

The international statistical community has embraced the challenge and has been striving to establish the methodology and standards to guide the collection, processing and dissemination of statistics and data for compiling these indicators. This has particularly been the case with the global statistical agencies, which are tasked with leading the overall development of measurement frameworks for the Tier III indicators.

For instance, countries and development partners in Asia and the Pacific have spearheaded the development of the disaster-related statistics framework (DRSF) ²⁷ and its

guidelines for implementation. These include a basic range of disaster-related statistics, which will provide a key reference for harmonizing and improving the comparability of data for related monitoring and indicator frameworks (such as SDGs and Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction). Most of the indicators related to disaster risk reduction are Tier II or Tier III, and are part of Goal 1 (No poverty), Goal 11 (Sustainable cities) and Goal 13 (Climate action). The main challenge for monitoring progress towards disaster risk reduction targets in the SDGs is poor availability of national statistics that are based on internationally consistent use of concepts, terminologies, and scope of measurement. The DRSF recommends how to measure populations in hazard-exposure areas, identify and produce statistics for vulnerable groups, record the economic impacts from disasters, and reduce investment risk. Before the DRSF is adopted and implemented, it is expected to undergo further review during 2018 to consolidate a set of good practices.

B. Improving data for Tier I and II indicators: strengthening statistical production and dissemination in line with agreed international standards

After all, more than 150, or almost two-thirds of 244, global indicators have established methodology and standards. These are the indicators classified as Tiers I and II. But even for these indicators, the analyses of this report highlighted several key gaps. This includes very limited data availability for almost 60 Tier I and Tier II indicators, i.e. there was only one data point between 2000 and 2017, allowing for no more than assessment of status of SDG implementation at regional and subregional levels. For about 30 Tier I and Tier II indicators, there is no data at all at present.

In addition to issues of data availability, other aspects related to the quality of statistical information are also critical for SDG progress monitoring. SDG data should be relevant, accurate, reliable, timely, comprehensive, coherent and comparable as well as methodologically sound.

For instance, population and GDP estimates, which are published by most countries in the Asia-Pacific region, are used extensively as denominators for indicators across the 17 SDGs. Quality issues for these key statistics are compounded when computing composite indicators. This negatively affects the accuracy and credibility of SDG progress-tracking across various targets and indicators.

At the same time, population estimates in many cases are not released /collected frequently enough, are often incomplete and are not comparable. GDP estimates, on the other hand, often do not capture for example, the informal sector economy, which, in reality, forms a critical and large component of the economy in several countries of the region. This omission also greatly affects the comprehensiveness of the available data.

These facts point to the need to continuously apply internationally agreed statistical measurement frameworks, definitions, standards, processes and procedures in the collection, processing, dissemination and analysis of statistics and data to fill the gaps in both availability and quality.

What and by whom?

In Asia and the Pacific, efforts have been well underway to support member States in producing and disseminating a basic range of population, economic, social and environmental statistics. These are evident from the various regional statistical development initiatives that have been

formulated and implemented under the auspices of the regional inter-governmental forum on statistics development in Asia and the Pacific, the Committee on Statistics.²⁸ These initiatives span a wide range of statistical domains and focus on both methodological improvements and system-level capacity strengthening.

One example of such efforts is supporting countries in the region to strengthen environmental statistics through the application of existing statistical frameworks, such as the System of Environmental Economic Accounting (SEEA).²⁹ SEEA is a statistical standard for measuring linkages between the economy and the environment. It can be utilized to guide data production for several SDG indicators related to natural resources and biodiversity. Certain constraints hinder the development of these accounts. These include the lack of data or the existence of fragmented data from various sources; the lack of technical capacity in national statistical offices; and the lack of professional collaboration and data sharing arrangements between relevant national agencies. Addressing such challenges in the region requires building capacity to enhance basic statistical infrastructure (such as business and population registers, surveys, use of administrative data, statistical processes etc.). Additionally, specific assessments, technical assistance and work planning are necessary for prioritizing environmental statistics and SEEA accounts. Finally, by increasing collaborative efforts of statisticians and policy experts from national statistical offices, planning offices and environment departments, knowledge and expertise can be shared and regional learning can be enhanced. Regional support has focused on supporting countries in overcoming such constraints. As a result, more than half of the countries in Asia and the Pacific are either already producing

SEEA accounts or are piloting or planning to produce such accounts.³⁰

C. Improving disaggregated data by enhancing the policy-data nexus

As mentioned earlier, the leave-no-one-behind tenet is at the heart of the 2030 Agenda, which raises attention to the need for improving disaggregated data for a range of characteristics such as income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographical location etc. The data availability review revealed that while sex disaggregated data was better than disaggregated data for other characteristics, it was available for only a very limited number of indicators.

What and by whom?

Increasing the availability of disaggregated data as well as improving the relevance and usability of data requires national statistical offices to engage with policy counterparts to identify key population groups and issues for target interventions. These targeted groups and issues must then be incorporated into national monitoring and indicator frameworks of relevant development strategies and plans. It is also critical that the strengths and weaknesses of the legal and institutional arrangements for national statistical systems be reviewed to increase SDG readiness. This may warrant changes such as revising and/or updating National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) or national statistical master plans.

Technical solutions are needed to produce the disaggregated data required for SDG progress assessment as well as to improve the reliability, timeliness and coherence of data. This will require: (a) assessing whether existing data and statistics are adequate for compiling relevant national development indicators for high priority policy goals, targeted areas (e.g.

poverty reduction, gender equality, etc.) and/or population groups (e.g. persons with disabilities, migrants, rural women and girls, etc.); (b) identifying and piloting feasible solutions that focus on innovatively using data sources (e.g. household surveys, censuses, administrative data (e.g. civil registration and vital statistics), geospatial data and other big data sources) to address the gaps in data availability and quality; and (c) applying statistical methods (e.g. small area estimation, synthetic data generation, etc.) by integrating data from multiple sources.

The statistical community in Asia and the Pacific is collaborating to address some of these issues.³¹ The collaboration aims to build statistical capacity by (1) establishing an enabling policy environment to create and sustain demand for statistics for inclusive development; (2) strengthening the production and dissemination of data; and (3) enhancing the accessibility and use of statistics to inform policy debates. In addition to building statistical capacity, a series of interventions under this framework will identify key national policy issues, develop related monitoring and indicator frameworks, foster political support and mobilize resources for statistics at the national and regional levels.

D. Ensuring political, institutional and financial support for sustained production, dissemination and use of statistical products and services

Political, institutional and financial support are essential for the successful advancement of the 2030 Agenda. A broad coalition of data for development experts estimated in a 2015 study that a total of US\$1 billion per annum will be required for 77 of the world's lower-income countries³² to "catch-up and put in place statistical systems capable of supporting and measuring the SDGs."¹⁷ This requires

mobilisation of national budgets within the framework of national strategies for the development of statistics, as well as contributions from donors to the extent of approximately US\$300 million per annum in order to support country efforts. The study however, emphasises the need for countries and donors to harness the data revolution, to reduce the costs of traditional methods, though additional investments are required to adopt new methods and innovative technologies.

What and by whom?

In Asia and the Pacific, the statistical community agreed on a collective vision which communicates the shared level of ambition to transform national statistical systems by the year 2030. They also agreed to a framework for action, which translates the vision into collaborative action to be taken at the national, subregional and regional levels.

The collective vision and framework for action thus serves as a guide for strengthening statistical capacity in support of the implementation of SDGs in Asia and the Pacific. Through this vision and framework, the programme of work for statistics over the next few years at the national and regional levels is expected to strengthen collaborative efforts to engage data users; enhance resources for statistics; assure quality and instill trust in statistics; and integrate statistics for analysis through methodological work, modernization of business processes and skills strengthening. This will require relevant stakeholders, including governments, civil society, private sector, academia as well as international organisations, to address limitations in statistical methodology, capacity and financial resources in order to improve the production, dissemination and use of statistics. It also needs national statistical systems to diversify

data sources (including use of big data, geographical information and administrative data) and involve non-conventional data producers, owners and users. By expanding outreach to stakeholders of the broader national data ecosystem, the production and utilization of data in the Asia-Pacific region can be enhanced.

At the global level, the 2030 Agenda included two targets on “Data, monitoring and accountability.”⁴ This inclusion signals that statistics development is as important as development issues such as poverty elimination, universal access to quality education, environmental sustainability, etc. In other words, it has elevated the importance of statistics to the same level as other development goals.

At the regional level, the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development in 2017 “urged Governments to make statistics development a national development target embedded in national development plans with the highest importance.”³³ This is a good start, and translating words into actions requires the vision and resolution of the leaders and the public in the region.



Appendices

Appendix I: Summary of data availability status by SDGs

SDG	Number of corresponding indicators	Trend OK	Status OK	Status Limited	No Data
1. No poverty	14	2	2	2	8
2. Zero hunger	13	5	2	2	4
3. Good health and well-being	27	13	6	1	7
4. Quality education	11	3	0	7	1
5. Gender equality	14	2	1	4	7
6. Clean water and sanitation	11	1	1	3	6
7. Affordable and clean energy	6	4	0	0	2
8. Decent work and economic growth	17	9	0	5	3
9. Industry, innovation and infrastructure	12	6	2	0	4
10. Reduce inequality	11	1	0	4	6
11. Sustainable cities and communities	15	0	1	3	11
12. Responsible consumption and production	13	2	1	1	9
13. Climate action	8	0	1	0	7
14. Life below water	10	0	1	0	9
15. Life on land	14	5	2	2	5
16. Peace justice and strong institutions	23	4	2	4	13
17. Partnerships for the goals	25	7	1	5	12
TOTAL	244	64	23	43	114

Note: data as of December 2017.

Appendix II: List of SDG indicators by tier classification¹ and availability status

Tier I indicators

1. Availability status: Trend OK

Indicators number	Indicators name
1.1.1	International poverty
2.1.1	Prevalence of undernourishment
2.2.1	Prevalence of stunting
2.2.2	Prevalence of malnutrition
2.a.2	Official flows to the agriculture sector
3.1.2	Births attended by skilled health personnel
3.2.1	Under-five mortality
3.2.2	Neonatal mortality
3.3.2	Tuberculosis
3.3.3	Malaria
3.3.5	Neglected tropical diseases
3.6.1	Road traffic deaths
3.b.2	ODA to medical research and basic health sectors
3.c.1	Health worker density
4.2.2	Organised learning before primary entry age
4.b.1	ODA for scholarships
4.c.1	Organized teacher training
5.5.1	Seats held by women in national parliaments and local governments (Tier I/III) ²
5.5.2	Proportion of women in managerial positions
6.a.1	ODA to water and sanitation
7.1.1	Access to electricity
7.1.2	Reliance on clean energy
7.2.1	Renewable energy share
7.3.1	Energy intensity
8.1.1	Real GDP per capita growth rate
8.10.1	Commercial bank branches and automated teller machines
8.10.2	Adults with a bank account
8.2.1	Real GDP per employed person growth rate
8.5.2	Unemployment rate
8.a.1	Aid for Trade
9.2.1	Manufacturing value added
9.2.2	Manufacturing employment

¹ Tier classification for the global SDG indicators as of 20 April 2017. The analyses for this report were completed prior to the release of the revised tier classification dated 15 December 2017.

² Indicators in blue represent those in multiple tiers.

9.4.1	CO ₂ emission intensity
9.5.1	Research and development expenditure
9.c.1	Population covered by a mobile network
10.6.1	Voting rights in international organizations
15.1.1	Forest area
15.1.2	Sites for terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity
16.1.1	Intentional homicides
16.3.2	Unsentenced detainees
16.8.1	Membership/voting rights in international organizations
17.10.1	Worldwide weighted tariff-average
17.11.1	Developing/least developed countries' share of global exports
17.3.2	Personal remittances
17.4.1	Debt service
17.6.2	Fixed Internet broadband subscription by speed
17.8.1	Internet users
17.9.1	Financial and technical assistance
2. Availability status: Status OK	
1.2.1	National poverty
2.1.2	Food insecurity in the population
3.5.2	Harmful use of alcohol
3.7.1	Family planning satisfied with modern methods
3.9.1	Household and ambient air pollution
3.a.1	Tobacco use
6.b.1	Participation in water and sanitation management
9.1.2	Passenger and freight volumes
9.5.2	Number of researchers
12.4.1	International agreements on hazardous waste
14.5.1	Protected marine areas
16.9.1	Birth registration
3. Availability status: Status limited	
4.5.1	Inequality indices for education indicators (I/II/III)
5.b.1	Ownership of a mobile telephone
6.1.1	Safely managed drinking water services
6.2.1	Safely managed sanitation services
8.6.1	Youth not in education, employment or training
8.7.1	Child labour
8.8.1	Occupational injuries
10.1.1	Income per capita of the bottom 40% of population
10.4.1	Labour share of GDP
10.a.1	Tariff line on imports
10.b.1	Total resource flows for development (I/II)
11.1.1	Urban population living in slums
11.6.2	Urban particulate matter
15.a.1	ODA and public expenditure to biodiversity and ecosystems (I/III)

15.b.1	ODA and public expenditure to biodiversity and ecosystems (I/III)
16.a.1	Independence of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRI)
17.18.3	National statistical plan funded/under implementation
17.19.2	Population and housing census in the last 10 years; birth/death registration
17.2.1	ODA as share of donors GNI
4. Availability status: No data	
2.b.1	Agricultural export subsidies
9.a.1	Official international support to infrastructure
14.4.1	Fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels
16.6.1	Government expenditure/original budget
17.1.1	Government revenue by source
17.1.2	Domestic budget funded by domestic taxes
17.12.1	Average tariffs faced by developing countries, LDCs and SIDS
17.19.1	Financial resources to strengthen statistical capacity in developing countries
17.3.1	FDI, ODA, South-South cooperation as share of domestic budget

Tier II indicators

1. Availability status: Trend OK	
Indicators number	Indicators name
1.a.2	Government spending on education/health/social protection
2.a.1	Agriculture orientation index
3.1.1	Maternal mortality
3.4.1	Cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes or chronic respiratory disease
3.4.2	Suicides
3.9.3	Unintentional poisoning
8.4.2	Domestic material consumption
8.9.1	Tourism direct GDP
9.b.1	Medium and high-tech industry value added
12.2.2	Domestic material consumption
15.2.1	Sustainable forest management
15.4.1	Sites for mountain biodiversity
15.5.1	Red List Index
2. Availability status: Status OK	
1.3.1	Social protection floors/systems
2.5.2	Local breeds at risk of extinction
3.9.2	Unsafe water/sanitation and lack of hygiene
3.d.1	Health capacity and emergency preparedness
5.3.1	Women married before age 15 and 18
11.5.2	Economic loss from disasters
13.1.1	Countries with disaster risk reduction strategies
15.4.2	Mountain Green Cover Index

15.6.1	Fair and equitable sharing of benefits of genetic resources
16.5.2	Businesses asked for a bribe
17.16.1	Progress in development effectiveness in support of the SDGs
3. Availability status: Status limited	
1.5.1	Deaths/missing from disasters
1.5.2	Economic loss from disasters
2.5.1	Conservation of genetic resources for food and agriculture
2.c.1	Food price anomalies
3.3.1	HIV infections
4.1.1	Reading and mathematics proficiency of children and young people (II/III)
4.3.1	Formal and non-formal education and training
4.4.1	ICT skills
4.5.1	Inequality indices for education indicators (I/II/III)
4.6.1	Literacy and numeracy skills
4.a.1	School equipment/infrastructure
5.2.1	Violence against women (by intimate partner)
5.4.1	Unpaid domestic and care work
5.6.1	Informed decisions on reproductive health
6.4.2	Water stress
8.3.1	Informal employment
8.5.1	Hourly earnings of employees
10.b.1	Total resource flows for development (I/II)
11.5.1	Deaths/missing persons from disasters
16.10.2	Policies on public access to information
16.2.1	Children experiencing physical punishment by caregivers
16.2.2	Human trafficking
17.15.1	Use of country-owned results frameworks and planning tools in development cooperation
4. Availability status: No data	
1.2.2	Poverty according to national dimensions
1.5.3	National disaster risk reduction strategy
3.3.4	Hepatitis B
3.7.2	Adolescent births
3.8.2	Household expenditures on health
5.2.2	Violence against women (by non-intimate partner)
5.3.2	Female genital mutilation/cutting
5.a.1	Secure rights over agricultural land
6.3.1	Wastewater safely treated
6.5.1	Integrated water resources management
6.5.2	Transboundary water cooperation
11.2.1	Convenient access to public transport
11.3.1	Land consumption rate
11.6.1	Urban solid waste collected
11.b.1	National disaster risk reduction strategy
13.1.2	National disaster risk reduction strategies

15.7.1	Poached or illicitly trafficked wildlife
15.c.1	Poached or illicitly trafficked wildlife
16.1.3	Physical, psychological or sexual violence
16.1.4	Safety feeling walking alone in neighborhood
16.2.3	Young women/men experiencing sexual violence
16.3.1	Violence reporting to authorities
16.5.1	Public asked for a bribe

Tier III indicators

1. Availability status: Trend OK	
Indicators number	Indicators name
5.5.1	Seats held by women in national parliaments and local governments (Tier I/III)
8.4.1	Material footprint
12.2.1	Material footprint
16.10.1	Violence against journalists, trade unionists and human rights advocates
2. Availability status: Status OK	
No indicators in this category	
3. Availability status: Status limited	
4.1.1	Reading and mathematics proficiency of children and young people (II/III)
4.2.1	Children developmentally on track
4.5.1	Inequality indices for education indicators (I/II/III)
12.4.2	Hazardous waste generated/treated
15.a.1	ODA and public expenditure to biodiversity and ecosystems (I/III)
15.b.1	ODA and public expenditure to biodiversity and ecosystems (I/III)
17.18.2	National statistical legislation
4. Availability status: No data	
1.4.1	Household access to basic services
1.4.2	Land tenure rights
1.5.4	Local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national strategy
1.a.1	Domestic resources to poverty reduction
1.a.3	Grants allocated to poverty reduction
1.b.1	Government spending benefiting vulnerable groups
2.3.1	Agricultural production per labour unit
2.3.2	Income of small-scale food producers
2.4.1	Area under productive and sustainable agriculture
3.5.1	Treatment for substance use disorders
3.8.1	Essential health services coverage
3.b.1	Population covered by all vaccines in national programme
3.b.3	Health facilities with essential medicines
4.7.1	Sustainable development mainstreaming in education

5.1.1	Legal frameworks on gender equality
5.6.2	Laws and regulations on access to sexual and reproductive health care
5.a.2	Legal framework on equal rights to land ownership
5.c.1	Tracking of public allocations for gender equality
6.3.2	Water quality
6.4.1	Water use efficiency
6.6.1	Change in water-related ecosystems
7.a.1	Financial flows to clean energy
7.b.1	Energy efficiency investments
8.8.2	Compliance of labour rights
8.9.2	Jobs in tourism industries
8.b.1	National strategy for youth employment
9.1.1	Population within 2 km of an all-season road
9.3.1	Small-scale industries in total industry value added
9.3.2	Small-scale industries with a loan or line of credit
10.2.1	People below 50% of median income
10.3.1	Discrimination and harassment
10.5.1	Financial Soundness Indicators
10.7.1	Recruitment cost borne by employees
10.7.2	Countries with well-managed migration policies
10.c.1	Remittance costs
11.3.2	Civil society participation in urban planning and management
11.4.1	Expenditure on preservation of cultural and natural heritage
11.7.1	Urban open space for public use
11.7.2	Physical or sexual harassment
11.a.1	Urban and regional development plans
11.b.2	Local disaster risk reduction strategy in line with national strategy
11.c.1	Financial support to LDCs for sustainable/resilient buildings
12.1.1	Sustainable consumption and production (SCP) national action plans
12.3.1	Global food loss index
12.5.1	National recycling rate
12.6.1	Companies publishing sustainability reports
12.7.1	Sustainable public procurement policies
12.8.1	Mainstreaming sustainable development in education
12.a.1	Financial support on research for sustainable consumption
12.b.1	Sustainable tourism strategies
12.c.1	Fossil-fuel subsidies
13.1.3	Local disaster risk reduction strategies
13.2.1	Policies/strategies for climate change adaptation
13.3.1	Integration of climate change in education
13.3.2	Capacity building on climate change
13.a.1	Developed countries commitment of \$100 billion
13.b.1	Climate change special support to LDCs and SIDS
14.1.1	Costal eutrophication and floating plastic
14.2.1	National exclusive economic zones managed using ecosystem-based approaches
14.3.1	Average marine acidity

14.6.1	Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing
14.7.1	Sustainable fisheries
14.a.1	Research budget to marine technology
14.b.1	Access rights for small-scale fisheries
14.c.1	Implementation of United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
15.3.1	Proportion of land that is degraded
15.8.1	Prevention or control of invasive alien species
15.9.1	Integration of biodiversity value in development planning
16.1.2	Conflict-related deaths
16.4.1	Illicit financial flows
16.4.2	Seized small arms and light weapons recorded and traced
16.6.2	People satisfaction with public services
16.7.1	Population representation in public institutions
16.7.2	Population trust in decision-making
16.b.1	International human rights violation
17.13.1	Macroeconomic dashboard
17.14.1	Policy coherence of sustainable development
17.17.1	Commitment to public-private and civil society partnerships
17.18.1	SDG indicators disaggregation
17.5.1	Investment promotion regimes for LDCs
17.6.1	Science/technology cooperation agreements
17.7.1	Funding for of environmentally-sound technologies

Note: SDG indicators highlighted in blue represent those that are classified under multiple tiers.

Appendix III: Source of data and statistical methods used for the report

The present study is based on SDG data compiled from designated custodian agencies through the SDG Indicators Global Database*. Data were obtained from the SDG Indicators Global Database in July 2017 and uploaded to the ESCAP database** in order to aggregate data for the Asia-Pacific region, subregions, and income groupings.

The SDG Indicators Global Database presents data for SDG indicators with a number of data series attached to each indicator. While some indicators have no data series yet attached to them, and hence no data, most SDG indicators with data have multiple series attached to them. This makes it necessary to consolidate these data series at the indicator level to know the status of data availability for each indicator.

While various methods can be used to aggregate availability for each indicator with multiple data series, the following principles have been applied for simplicity and ease of implementation:

- Time series representing disaggregation (sex, urban/rural, etc.) have been

eliminated to keep only series representing the total population covered or the entire country/area.

- Some indicators are represented by data series addressing distinct issues. For example, indicator 2.2.2 addressing child malnutrition requires to measure two distinct issues: wasting and overweight, with two different set of series. In those cases, the series with the highest number of data points over the period 2000 to 2017 have been selected to represent the data availability of that indicator.
- For each selected series, countries are classified into three categories depending on the number of data points (data values for a specific year) available:
 - Countries with no data point
 - Countries with only one data point
 - Countries with at least two data points
- Finally, a classification of indicators (based on its selected series) is made by counting the number of countries in each of the three above categories using the following principles:

Trend analysis is possible (“Trend OK”)	At least 50% of countries in the Asia-Pacific region (or subregion/country grouping) with at least two data points
Only status analysis is possible (Status OK)	At least 50% of countries in the Asia-Pacific region (or subregion/country grouping) with at least one data point
Limited status analysis is possible (Status Limited)	Less than 50% of countries in the Asia-Pacific region (or subregion/country grouping) with at least one data point
No data	No data

The results of the indicator classification process are presented in Appendix II: List of SDG indicators by tier structure and availability status

* <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database/>

** http://data.unescap.org/escap_stat/

Appendix IV: Asia-Pacific subregions and income groups

The study presents data aggregated by subregional and income level groupings.

Subregions in the Asia-Pacific region are:

- **East and North-East Asia (ENEA):** China; Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPR Korea); Hong Kong, China; Japan; Macao, China; Mongolia; Republic of Korea.
- **South-East Asia (SEA):** Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Viet Nam.
- **South and South-West Asia (SSWA):** Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Turkey.
- **North and Central Asia (NCA):** Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan.
- **Pacific:** American Samoa, Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia, Guam, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of) (Micronesia (F.S.)), Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu.

The income groups are defined on the basis of Gross National Income (GNI per capita). The income groups have been determined by applying a k-means clustering algorithm to the GNI per capita variable. Further information on the clustering method is available from the "Statistical methods" page on the ESCAP Online Statistical database at:

http://data.unescap.org/escap_stat/.

The income groupings are as follows:

- **Asia-Pacific Low income:** Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, DPR Korea, India, Kyrgyzstan, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Viet Nam.
- **Asia-Pacific Lower-middle income:** Armenia, Azerbaijan, Fiji, Georgia, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Rep. of), Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (F.S.), Mongolia, Philippines, Samoa, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tonga, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu.
- **Asia-Pacific Upper-middle income:** American Samoa, China, Cook Islands, French Polynesia, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Maldives, Nauru, Niue, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Russian Federation, Turkey.
- **Asia-Pacific High income:** Australia; Brunei Darussalam; Guam; Hong Kong, China; Japan; Macao, China; New Caledonia; New Zealand; Republic of Korea; Singapore.



Endnotes

¹ United Nations (2017) “Work of the Statistical Commission pertaining to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” (A/RES/71/313).

² United Nations (2015) “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” (A/RES/70/1).

³ <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/iaeg-sdgs/tier-classification/>.

⁴ Targets 17.18 and 17.19 on data, monitoring and accountability in the global SDG framework.

⁵ United Nations (2016) “Synthesis of Voluntary National Reviews 2016”; and (2017) “Synthesis of Voluntary National Reviews 2017”.

⁶ The analysis used national values for 30 per cent of the proposed global SDG indicators to assess regional achievements for each SDG in the baseline year 2015, and applied a subset of these indicators to illustrate the progress made since 2000 and the progress needed to meet the 2030 targets. See <http://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/ESCAP_SYB2016_SDG_baseline_report.pdf> for details.

⁷ i.e. 29 or more countries, since the Asia-Pacific region has 58 countries. Fifty per cent of the countries is assumed as sufficient number for any meaningful analysis.

⁸ <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database/>.

⁹ Though countries concerned may need to report/provide data for the compilation.

¹⁰ Indicators that repeat in the global indicator framework are the following <<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/indicators-list/>>:

1. 8.4.1/12.2.1
2. 8.4.2/12.2.2
3. 10.3.1/16.b.1
4. 10.6.1/16.8.1
5. 15.7.1/15.c.1
6. 15.a.1/15.b.1
7. 1.5.1/11.5.1/13.1.1
8. 1.5.3/11.b.1/13.1.2
9. 1.5.4/11.b.2/13.1.3

¹¹ As defined in the Generic National Quality Assurance Framework (NQAF) prepared by the expert group on NQAF <<https://unstats.un.org/unsd/dnss/docs-nqaf/GUIDELINES%208%20Feb%202012.pdf>>.

¹² Classification of SDGs under the economic, social and environmental dimensions of development is based on analysis as contained in the study commissioned by the German Council for Sustainable Development (2015) “Sustainable Development Goals and Integration: Achieving a better balance between the economic, social and environmental dimensions”.

¹³ <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/iaeg-sdgs/tier-classification/>. As of 20 April 2017, the tier classification contained 82 Tier I indicators (or 83 with repeated indicators), 61 Tier II indicators (or 67 with repeated indicators) and 84 Tier III indicators (or 88 with repeated indicators). In addition to these, there were 5 indicators (or 6 with repeated indicators) that were classified under multiple tiers (different components of the indicator are classified into different tiers). The analyses for this report were completed prior to the release of the revised tier classification for the global SDG indicators dated 15 December 2017.

¹⁴ This would however, depend on applicability of the indicator to country context. For instance, indicators related to malaria or protected marine areas may not be applicable to all countries.

¹⁵ See for instance (i) United Nations Development Programme (2017) “SDG Accelerator and Bottleneck Assessment”; (ii) Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2016) “An SDG-based results framework for development co-operation”, Draft Note by the Results Team of the Development Co-operation Directorate; and (iii) Study commissioned by the German Council for Sustainable Development (2015) “Sustainable Development Goals and Integration: Achieving a better balance between the economic, social and environmental dimensions”.

¹⁶ Does not include Goal 17 as it is not classified under economic, social or environmental dimensions.

¹⁷ Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) (2015) “Data for Development: A Needs Assessment for SDG Monitoring and Statistical Capacity Development”.

¹⁸ Classification is based on communication with the United Nations Statistics Division as on 02 August 2017. As per the SDG Indicators Global Database <<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database/?indicator=>>, “data type” identifies/classifies the source of the data according to the following categories: country data (C); country adjusted (CA); estimated (E); global monitoring data (G); modelled (M); non-relevant (N); and not available (NA). While some of these categories are self-explanatory, exact definitions for these categories is not available.

¹⁹ The Asia-Pacific region is divided into 5 subregions: East and North-east Asia, South-East Asia, South and South-West Asia, North and Central Asia and the Pacific.

²⁰ The East and North-East Asia subregion includes China; Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPR Korea); Hong Kong, China; Japan; Macao, China; Mongolia; Republic of Korea. Of these, Hong Kong, China; Japan, Republic of Korea, Macao, China fall under Asia-Pacific High Income countries and China falls under Asia-Pacific Upper-middle income countries.

²¹ General Assembly resolution 68/261.

²² Due to non-availability or very limited availability of disaggregated data, it was not possible to do an assessment of data availability across all disaggregation characteristics (proposed by the SDGs) for this report.

²³ The argument here aims at demonstrating the typical availability of household surveys in countries as a source of data for the SDGs, recognizing the fact that not all of these surveys are internationally recommended to be conducted on an annual basis.

²⁴ The household surveys considered in the analyses here are Agricultural Survey, Demographic and Health Survey, Household Income and Expenditure Survey, Labour Force Survey and Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey.

²⁵ Researched from <<http://iresearch.worldbank.org/PovcalNet/povOnDemand.aspx> >; websites of national statistical offices; IHSN Survey catalogue; and other sources.

²⁶ E.g. small area estimation, synthetic population generation etc.

²⁷ Facilitated by ESCAP and based on a series of pilot studies in the region and in consultation with the Asia-Pacific Expert Group on Disaster-related Statistics.

²⁸ <http://www.unescap.org/committee/committee-on-statistics>.

²⁹ Since 1992, countries have used the SEEA as a basis for compiling, assessing and reporting data on “themes” relating to natural assets, the supply of these assets to the economy, their use, the residuals their use entails and the expenditures made to manage and protect them. The SEEA defines 33 inter-linked “accounts” such as water assets, water supply and use, and wastewater. The benefits of applying these guidelines is that they provide a “whole system” view (all assets, all suppliers, all users). They also link to economic statistics (e.g., water use by the manufacturing industry can be divided by the value added by that industry to derive efficiency measures), and they provide a platform to integrate data from different data providers.

³⁰ In the Asia-Pacific region, about 20 countries are producing SEEA accounts and another 15 are piloting or planning to produce accounts. The most common accounts in the region are land (relevant for SDG 15), water (relevant for SDG 6), energy (relevant for SDG 7 and 13) and solid wastes (relevant for SDG 12), reflecting national development priorities.

³¹ For the Implementation Plan for the Regional Strategy to improve Population and Social Statistics in Asia and the Pacific see <[https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/pre-ods/E.ESCAP_.CST\(5\).3.Implementation_plan.English.pdf](https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/pre-ods/E.ESCAP_.CST(5).3.Implementation_plan.English.pdf)>.

³² These were countries that qualified for concessional borrowing through the International Development Association (IDA).

³³ ESCAP (2017) Report of the Fourth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (E/ESCAP/FSD(4)/3), Chair’s Summary, para. 24.



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