



Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
Committee on Statistics**Eighth session**

Bangkok and online, 23–25 August 2022

Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda*

Progress on strengthening national statistical systems for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: monitoring progress in line with the document entitled “Advancing official statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: a collective vision and framework for action by the Asia-Pacific statistical community” and the Declaration on Navigating Policy with Data to Leave No One Behind**Summary of progress towards commitments contained in the collective vision and framework for action and the Declaration on Navigating Policy with Data to Leave No One Behind****Note by the secretariat***Summary*

The present document contains an update on the progress made by statistical systems in Asia and the Pacific on the action areas and commitments set out in the document entitled “Advancing official statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: a collective vision and framework for action by the Asia-Pacific statistical community” and in the Declaration on Navigating Policy with Data to Leave No One Behind. Statistical systems of the region are on track on nearly one third of the performance indicators contained in the monitoring and evaluation framework, but progress is too slow or it has regressed on the rest of the indicators. Performance indicators for statistical development and use of statistics in policymaking have worsened since 2018. Information document ESCAP/CST/2022/INF/1 contains more detail on the summary of progress contained in the present document.

The Committee on Statistics may wish to express its views on the summary of progress made to date as contained in the present document and ESCAP/CST/2022/INF/1 and provide guidance and recommendations on priority areas for future work.

* ESCAP/CST/2022/L.1/Rev.1.

I. Background

1. At its fifth session, in 2016, the Committee on Statistics endorsed the document entitled “Advancing official statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: a collective vision and framework for action by the Asia-Pacific statistical community”,¹ to strengthen statistical capacity to produce and disseminate official statistics. In 2019, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) endorsed the Declaration on Navigating Policy with Data to Leave No One Behind,² to strengthen national statistical systems. In the Declaration, members and associate members of ESCAP requested the Executive Secretary to prepare an overview of progress, every two years, for review by the Committee.

2. At its seventh session, in 2020, the Committee reviewed a draft monitoring and evaluation framework for the collective vision and framework for action and the Declaration on Navigating Policy with Data to Leave No One Behind developed by the secretariat and the first progress report (baseline report).³ The Committee endorsed the draft monitoring and evaluation framework, subject to the amendments suggested by members and associate members of the Commission.

3. The secretariat, under the guidance of the Bureau of the Committee and in consultation with the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century, incorporated the proposed amendments to the draft monitoring and evaluation framework. The revised framework was circulated among all members and associate members of the Committee for final review on 5 October 2021. The final monitoring and evaluation framework⁴ was shared with members and associate members of the Committee on 4 May 2022.

II. Key findings from the progress report

4. Overall, since the adoption of the Declaration in 2018, sufficient progress has been made by the national statistical systems of the Asia-Pacific region on approximately one third of the performance indicators, and the statistical systems of the region are on track to achieve the 2030 targets for 7 out of 20 indicators if the current pace can be maintained. However, improvement or a breakthrough is needed on indicators for which current progress is too slow (annex).⁵

5. The region is moving in the wrong direction on investing in statistical development and using statistics in policymaking.

6. Data availability on the performance indicators has improved since 2018. On average, data were available for 43 countries per indicator in 2018. This increased to 47 countries per indicator in 2021.

¹ See E/ESCAP/CST(5)/1/Rev.1.

² ESCAP/75/4/Add.1.

³ See ESCAP/CST/2020/1, paras. 10–34, and annex III.

⁴ ESCAP/CST/2020/CRP.1/Rev.1.

⁵ A more detailed progress report is contained in information document ESCAP/CST/2022/INF/1.

A. Action area A: engaging users and investing in statistics

7. Progress on action area A has been mostly positive. Significant progress has been made on commitment 4 (g), communication and statistical literacy, but, to completely fulfil this commitment, current trends on the use of social media and data openness must be maintained and efforts to better communicate statistical products must be redoubled.

8. Efforts must also be redoubled to ensure that users are represented in high-level advisory bodies to the national statistical system in line with commitment 4 (c).

9. The situation is worsening on commitment 4 (h), statistical advocacy and awareness-raising, due to a decline in funding for the development and implementation of national statistical plans since 2018. Commitment 4 (h) is aligned with indicator 17.18.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals and underscores the urgency of leveraging investment in statistics for the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific.

B. Action area B: assuring quality of and instilling trust in statistics

10. Progress on action area B has been mixed. The region is on track in implementing national statistical plans. However, progress is too slow on the development and implementation of national strategies for the development of statistics, which is needed to integrate statistics development with national development policies and plans in line with commitment 4 (a).

11. The region has made sufficient progress on aligning national statistical legislation with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, which is necessary to empower heads of national statistical offices in line with commitment 4 (e).

12. Very little progress has been made on subscription to the Enhanced General Data Dissemination System or Special Data Dissemination Standard, and no progress has been made on enhancing the use of statistics. Overall, much more must be done to deliver on commitment 4 (i), to align national strategies/policies with the commitments made in the Declaration.

C. Action area C: using integrated statistics for integrated analysis

13. Two out of the three indicators are on track for action area C and commitment 4 (b) to develop a national monitoring framework and indicator set and integrate them with budgeting, namely the overall data coverage score; and existence of an official country-operated, dedicated online portal that can be used for reporting progress on the Sustainable Development Goals.

14. However, almost no progress has been made on expanding the availability of necessary data sources (censuses, surveys, administrative data and geospatial data, private sector data/citizen generated data).

D. Action area D: modernizing statistical business processes

15. The region is on track to meet the target for the data infrastructure pillar of the World Bank Statistical Performance Indicators (a combination of indicators for legislation and governance, methods and standards, skills development, partnership and finance for statistics), which is necessary for commitment 4 (d). Nevertheless, the region must step up to deliver on

commitment 4 (f) to take advantage of new and innovative technologies for official statistics, measured by the participation of countries in activities related to the Committee of Experts on Big Data and Data Science for Official Statistics, which is the global working group.

E. Action area E: developing requisite skill sets

16. The overall progress has been very slow on action area E. The secretariat has produced one out of four guidelines/materials identified in the collective vision and framework for action, and now needs to work closely with member States to produce the remaining materials before 2030. The region has made almost no progress on the overall score for the five pillars of the World Bank Statistical Performance Indicators (data use, data services, data products, data sources and data infrastructure). The five pillars and 22 dimensions assess the maturity of national statistical systems.

F. Partner commitments

17. Progress made by partners in supporting the five action areas is mixed. In the Declaration, members and associate members of the Commission called upon development partners, including international, regional and subregional partners, for support in implementing the collective vision and framework for action. The performance indicators on partner commitments include: commitment 5 (a), to provide coordinated technical, financial, technological and capacity-building assistance; commitment 5 (b), to consult a national statistical office/national statistical system before conducting any statistical study or survey; and commitment 5 (c), to continue to strengthen international statistical standards and provide technical support.

18. Data are not available for indicator P.2 and data for the other two indicators show that progress has been insufficient. Total support received (in United States dollars) for statistical development has declined, thus hampering regional progress in fulfilling commitment 5 (a). Some progress has been made on increasing the number of participants from the region in the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific training courses, but this needs acceleration to deliver on commitment 5 (c).

Annex

Data on performance indicators

<i>Action areas and partner commitments</i>	<i>Commitment</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Baseline value</i>	<i>Latest value</i>	<i>2030 target</i>
Action area A: engaging users and investing in statistics	4 (c) A high-level advisory body to national statistical system to represent users	c.1 Existence of an agency/board/institution that advises the chief statistician on national statistical organization activities (percentage of countries)	2018 = 52.4%	2021 = 55.6%	100%
	4 (g) Communication and statistical literacy	g.1 Whether the national statistical office issues press releases at least quarterly (percentage of countries)	2018 = 59.5%	2021 = 59.6%	100%
		g.2 Whether the national statistical office uses social media (Facebook and/or Twitter) to disseminate data and information (percentage of countries)	2018 = 27.1%	2021 = 60.0%	100%
		g.3 Open data inventory overall data openness score (average score; target = average top 5 countries)	2018 = 44.9	2020 = 50.5	85
4 (h) Statistical advocacy and awareness raising	h.1 Whether the national statistical plan is fully funded (Sustainable Development Goal indicator 17.18.3) (percentage of countries)	2018 = 69.0%	2021 = 58.8%	100%	
Action area B: assuring quality of and instilling trust in statistics	4 (a) Integrate statistics development with national development policies and plans	a.1 National strategy for the development of statistics current status (percentage of countries with score 0; score = 0–3)	2018 = 10.8%	2021 = 8.1%	0%
		a.2 Whether there is a national statistical plan under implementation (Sustainable Development Goal indicator 17.18.3) (percentage of countries)	2018 = 67.3%	2021 = 85.7%	100%
	4 (e) Empower heads of national statistical offices to assume lead role in national statistical system	e.1 Whether the national statistical legislation complies with Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics (Sustainable Development Goal indicator 17.18.2) (percentage of countries)	2018 = 70.8%	2021 = 86.4%	100%
	4 (i) National strategies/policies aligned with commitments	i.1 Use of statistics index (average index score; target = average top 5 countries)	2019 = 24.5	2020 = 23.8	35
i.2 Subscription to Enhanced General Data Dissemination System (e-GDDS), or Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS) (percentage of countries)		2018 = 82.1%	2019 = 85.7%	100%	

<i>Action areas and partner commitments</i>	<i>Commitment</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Baseline value</i>	<i>Latest value</i>	<i>2030 target</i>
Action area C: using integrated statistics for integrated analysis	4 (b) Develop national monitoring framework and indicator set and integrate with budgeting	b.1 Open data inventory overall data coverage score (average standard score, 0-100; target = average top 5 countries)	2018 = 43.0	2019 = 48.5	58
		b.2 Existence of an official country-operated, dedicated online portal which can be used for reporting Sustainable Development Goal progress, detailed either in the government web page or national statistical office website (percentage of countries)	2018 = 20.7%	2021 = 36.5%	100%
		b.3 Data sources pillar (pillar 4) of Statistical Performance Indicators (average score; target = average top 5 countries)	2018 = 46.9	2019 = 47.7	78
Action area D: modernizing statistical business processes	4 (d) Specify national statistical system roles and responsibilities and transform business processes	d.1 Data infrastructure pillar (pillar 5) of Statistical Performance Indicators (average score; target = average top 5 countries)	2018 = 46.0	2019 = 48.9	97
		4 (f) Take advantage of new, innovative technologies and build partnerships for data sharing	f.1 Member of the global working group (or its subgroups) and/or at least one big data project on the global platform (percentage of countries)	2018 = 25.9%	2021 = 25.9%
Action area E: developing requisite skill sets	4 (a) Integrate statistics development with national development policies and plans	a.3 Completion of a priority set of four guidelines/materials identified in the document entitled “Advancing official statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: a collective vision and framework for action by the Asia-Pacific statistical community”	2018 = 0	2021 = 1	4
		a.4 World Bank Statistical Performance Indicators overall score (average score; target = average top 5 countries)	2018 = 61.3	2019 = 61.9	86
Partner commitments	5 (a) Provide coordinated technical, financial, technological and capacity-building assistance	P.1 Total support to development in statistics received each year (total annual commitments in constant dollars; target = 10-year average) (Sustainable Development Goal indicator 17.19.1)	2018= \$90.1 million	2019 = \$76 million	\$117.4 million
	5 (b) Consult national statistical office/national statistical system before conducting any statistical study or survey	P.2 Satisfactory consultation with national statistical offices by custodian agencies and providers of statistical support (percentage of countries interviewed with satisfactory consultation)	n/a	n/a	100%
	5 (c) Continue to strengthen international statistical standards and provide technical support	P.3 Number of participants from Asia and the Pacific in the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific training courses	2018 = 2,657	2021 = 3,005	5% annual growth