

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

Report on 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**

Summary

The present information document contains an update on the progress made by statistical systems in Asia and the Pacific on their commitments with regard to the collective vision and framework for action (E/ESCAP/CST(5)/1/Rev.1) and the Declaration on Navigating Policy with Data to Leave No One Behind (ESCAP/CST/2018/7). Progress is assessed using the most recent data, based on the monitoring and evaluation framework and guidelines developed by the secretariat with the Committee on Statistics and its Bureau (ESCAP/CST/2020/CRP.1/Rev.1).

Findings of the analysis suggest that since 2018, statistical systems of the Asia-Pacific region have collectively made sufficient progress on nearly one-third of the performance indicators contained in the monitoring and evaluation framework but progress is slow on the remaining indicators and the region is moving in the wrong direction on investing in statistical development and use of statistics in policy making. The report provides a detailed progress assessment on the five action areas from the Collective Vision and 12 commitments set out in the Declaration.

A summary of the results from this progress report is presented in document ESCAP/CST/2022/2 for the Committee’s review and guidance.

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

** The present document is being issued without formal editing.

I. Background

1. Two important documents set out commitments by leaders of national statistical systems in the Asia-Pacific region for advancing official statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: a collective vision and framework for action,¹ (“Collective Vision”) endorsed by the Committee on Statistics at its fifth session in 2016 to strengthen statistical capacity to produce and disseminate official statistics, and the Declaration on Navigating Policy with Data to Leave No One Behind,² (“Declaration”) endorsed by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) at its seventy-fifth session in 2019 to strengthen national statistical systems.

2. The Declaration requests the Executive Secretary to prepare an overview of progress, including a status update on each of the topics mentioned in paragraphs 4 (a) to 4 (i) and 5 (a) to 5 (c) in implementing the present Declaration, every two years, for review by the Committee on Statistics.

3. In 2019, ESCAP led the development of a draft monitoring and evaluation framework for the Collective Vision and the Declaration together with guidelines for implementation of the framework. In its seventh session in 2020, the Committee reviewed the draft monitoring and evaluation framework and the first progress report (baseline report)³ and endorsed the framework, subject to the amendments suggested by member States.

4. The secretariat, under 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 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. Monitoring and evaluation framework

5. The monitoring and evaluation framework provides a results matrix (annex I) with 20 performance indicators for reporting on progress on statistical capacity development in the region, together with baseline values and target values for 2030. The results matrix also aligns the performance indicators with 12 commitments (from the Declaration) and five action areas and 11 objectives (from Collective Vision). The framework also provides metadata for each performance indicator to support production of the report and updating process.

6. The framework also proposed an approach for analysis and a template for presenting the results (annex II) which is the basis for this report.

III. Progress report

7. Overall, since the adoption of the Declaration by the Committee in 2018, national statistical systems of the Asia-Pacific region have collectively made sufficient progress on nearly one-third of the performance indicators; the region

¹ See E/ESCAP/CST(5)/1/Rev.1.

² ESCAP/75/4/Add.1.

³ See ESCAP/CST/2020/1.

⁴ ESCAP/CST/2020/CRP.1/Rev.1.

is on-track to achieve 2030 targets for seven out of 20 indicators if the current pace can be maintained. However, improvement or a breakthrough is needed on most of the indicators for which current progress is too slow (figure 1).

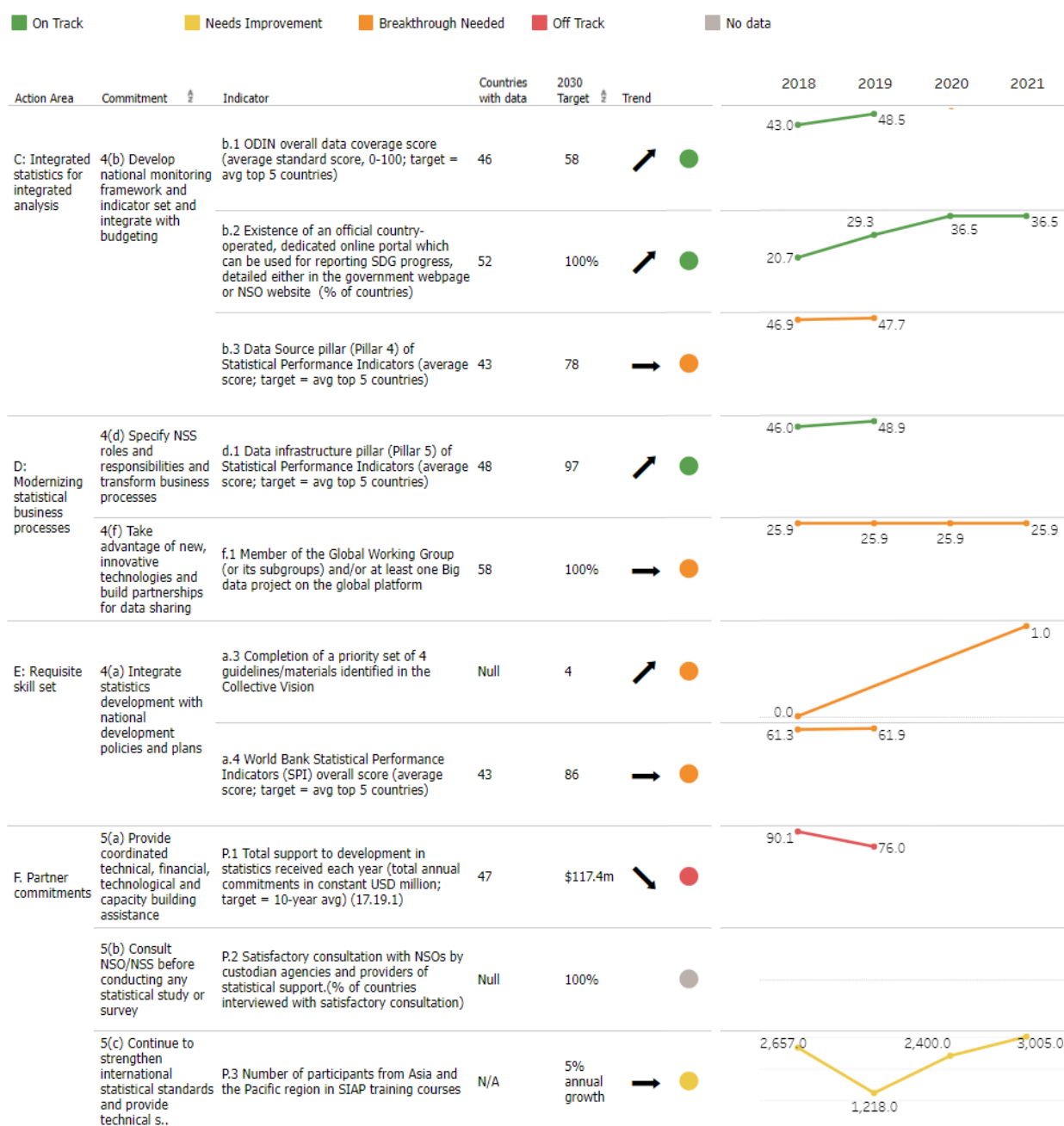
8. Two areas where the region is moving in the wrong direction are investing in statistical development (indicators h.1 and p.1) and use of statistics in policy making (indicator i.1).

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

Figure I
Progress dashboard on performance indicators



Figure I
Progress dashboard on performance indicators (cont.)



Source: Monitoring and evaluation framework. Available from <https://data.unescap.org/data-analysis/collective-vision> (accessed 24 May 2022)

Abbreviations: NSS, National Statistical System; NSO, National Statistical Office; ODIN, Open Data Inventory; NSDS, National Strategy for the Development of Statistics; FPOS, Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics; SDG, Sustainable Development Goals; GWG, Global Working Group; USD, United States dollars; SIAP, the United Nations Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific.

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

10. Three commitments from the Declaration are mapped on this action area; 4(c) A high-level advisory body to national statistical system to represent users, 4(g) Communication and statistical literacy, and 4(h) Statistical advocacy and awareness raising.

11. The national statistical systems in the region have made significant progress on commitment 4(g) with two indicators (use of social media and overall data openness score) being on-track to achieve the regional target by 2030, and one indicator (issuing regular press releases) making no progress. To fulfil this commitment, statistical systems in the region need to maintain current trends on the use of social media and data openness and double their efforts to better communication of the release of their statistical products.

12. The Asia-Pacific statistical systems also need to double efforts to fulfil commitment 4(c) to ensure that users are represented at high level decision making for production and dissemination of official statistics.

13. Situation is unfortunately worsening on commitment 4(h) as funding for development and implementation of national statistical plans has decreased since 2018. The fact that this is also one of the official indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals (indicator 17.18.3), underscores the urgency for leveraging investment in statistics for full implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the Asia-Pacific region.

B. Action area B: Assuring quality and instilling trust in statistics

14. Action area B in the Collective Vision relates to three commitments from the Declaration; *4(a) Integrate statistics development with national development policies and plans, 4(e) Empower heads of national statistical offices to assume lead role in national statistical system, and 4(i) National strategies/policies aligned with commitments.*

15. In regard to commitment 4(a), the region is on-track on implementing national statistical plans (indicator a.2) but progress is very slow on development and implementation of National Strategies for Development of Statistics.

16. In fulfilling commitment 4(e), the region has made sufficient progress on assuring compliance of national statistical legislations with fundamental principles of official statistics.

17. The statistical systems in Asia and the Pacific have made very little progress on subscribing to enhanced General Data Dissemination System or Special Data Dissemination Standard, and made no progress on enhancing use of statistics. Overall, statistical systems in the region need to do much more to align national strategies/policies with the commitments made in the Declaration.

C. Action area C: Integrated statistics for integrated analysis

18. This action area corresponds to commitment 4(b): *Develop national monitoring framework and indicator set and integrate with budgeting.*

19. Two out of the three indicators used to monitor this action area and commitment are on-track: overall data coverage and existence of an official country-operated, dedicated online portal which can be used for reporting progress on the Sustainable Development Goals.

20. However, there has been almost no progress 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

21. Action area D is measured by fulfilling two commitments: *4(d) Specify national statistical system roles and responsibilities and transform business processes and 4(f) Take advantage of new, innovative technologies and build partnerships for data sharing.*

22. Progress on this action area is mixed. The region is fulfilling commitment 4(d) and is on-track to meet its 2030 target for overall data infrastructure index (a combination of indicators for legislation and governance, methods and standards, skills development, partnership and finance for statistics). Nevertheless, the region must step up to make better use of new and innovative technologies for official statistics (measured by indicator f.1 on activities related to Committee of Experts on Big Data).

E. Action area E: Requisite skill set

23. Given the cross-cutting nature of this action area, commitment *4(a) on integrating statistics development with national development policies and plans* is mapped on both this area as well as action area B but measured by different indicators (a.3 and a.4).

24. The overall progress has been very slow on this action area. One out of four guidelines/materials identified in the Collective Vision is completed and the secretariat needs to work closely with member states to produce the rest of the materials before 2030. The region has made almost no progress on the overall score for Statistical Performance Indicators (SPI) measuring five different pillars (data use, data services, data products, data sources, and data infrastructure). These five pillars and 22 dimensions assess the maturity of national statistical systems.

F. Partners commitments

25. Progress in this action area is mixed. It looks at partner commitments in the Declaration made by subregional, regional, and global development partners to support member states in implementing the Collective Vision and the Declaration: *5(a) Provide coordinated technical, financial, technological and capacity building assistance, 5(b) Consult national statistical office/national statistical system before conducting any statistical study or survey, and 5(c) Continue to strengthen international statistical standards and provide technical support.*

26. One indicator does not have data (indicator P.2), and the other two indicators show that progress is not sufficient. 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 Asia-Pacific region in the United Nations Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific training courses, but this needs acceleration to support commitment 5(c).

IV. Conclusion and issues for consideration by the Committee

27. The regional progress on the five action areas in Collective Vision and 12 commitments of the Declaration is mixed. While the region is making the needed progress on one-third of the indicators, most recent data show that the region has made no or insufficient progress of the remaining performance indicators.

28. While the region is on-track to achieve its 2030 targets on key areas such as openness, accessibility, coverage and communication of data, as well as compliance with fundamental principles of official statistics, it is off-track on indicators related to the use of data and financing statistical development.

29. The Committee may wish to:

(a) Discuss the progress made with regard to the five action areas set out in the Collective Vision and 12 commitments set out in the Declaration (nine national commitments and three commitments by development partners);

(b) Provide guidance on priorities and actions needed for accelerating regional progress on implementation of the Collective Vision and the Declaration.

Annex I

Results matrix by commitment

A. Country commitments

<i>Commitment</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Baseline¹</i>	<i>2030 Target</i>	<i>Count²</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Action Area</i>	<i>Objective</i>
4(a) Integrate statistics development with national development policies and plans	a.1 National Strategy for Development of Statistics Current Status (score = 0 to 3, based on the status of National Strategy for Development of Statistics)	2018 = 10.8%	0%	n=37	Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century Statistical Capacity Monitor – indicator 165 (https://statisticalcapacitymonitor.org/indicator/165)	B: Assuring quality and instilling trust in statistics	B1: Legal framework for national statistical system with national statistical office as lead
4(a) Integrate statistics development with national development policies and plans	a.2 Whether there is a national statistical plan under implementation (sustainable development goal 17.18.3) (% of countries)	2018 = 67.3%	100%	n=49	Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century Statistical Capacity Monitor; UN sustainable development goal Database – indicator 136 (https://statisticalcapacitymonitor.org/indicator/136)	B: Assuring quality and instilling trust in statistics	B1: Legal framework for national statistical system with national statistical office as lead
4(a) Integrate statistics development with national development policies and plans	a.3 Completion of a priority set of 4 guidelines/materials identified in the Collective Vision	2018 = 0	4	N/A	ESCAP Statistics Division; the United Nations Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific	E: Requisite skill set	E1: Guidance materials and training for 2030 Agenda statistics
4(a) Integrate statistics development with national development policies and plans	a.4 World Bank Statistical Performance Indicators (SPI) overall score (average score; target = average top 5 countries)	2018 = 61.3	86	n=43	World Bank Statistical Performance Indicators (SPI) (https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IQ.SPI.OVRL)	E: Requisite skill set	E2: National statistical systems have required skills and capacities for sustainable development goal monitoring
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	58	n=44	Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century Statistical Capacity Monitor -indicator 78 (https://statisticalcapacitymonitor.org/indicator/78)	C: Integrated statistics for integrated analysis	C1: Integrated statistical measurement framework for Sustainable Development Goals.
4(b) Develop national monitoring framework	b.2 Existence of an official country-operated, dedicated	2018 = 20.7%	100%	n=58	Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century Statistical Capacity Monitor -indicator 143	C: Integrated statistics for	C1: Integrated statistical measurement framework for

¹ Baselines values are updated based on the most recent data as of 30 April 2022.

² Data availability was updated based on the most recent data as of 30 April 2022.

<i>Commitment</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Baseline¹</i>	<i>2030 Target</i>	<i>Count²</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Action Area</i>	<i>Objective</i>
and indicator set and integrate with budgeting	online portal which can be used for reporting Sustainable Development Goal progress, detailed either in the government webpage or national statistical office website (% of countries)				(https://statisticalcapacitymonitor.org/indicator/143)	integrated analysis	Sustainable Development Goals.
4(b) Develop national monitoring framework and indicator set and integrate with budgeting	b.3.Data Source pillar (Pillar 4) of Statistical Performance Indicators (average score; target = average top 5 countries)	2018 = 46.9	78	n=43	World Bank Statistical Performance Indicators (https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IQ.SPI.PIL4)	C: Integrated statistics for integrated analysis	C2: Data integration from multiple sources
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 (% of countries)	2018 = 52.4%	100%	n = 42	Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century Statistical Capacity Monitor – indicator 67 (https://statisticalcapacitymonitor.org/indicator/67)	A: Engaging users and investing in statistics	A1: National statistical system responsive to needs of users
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 = avg top 5 countries)	2018 = 46.0	97	n=48	World Bank Statistical Performance Indicators (https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IQ.SPI.PIL5)	D: Modernizing statistical business processes	D1: Map national statistical system business processes (with Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM) or Generic Activity Model for Statistical Organizations (GAMSO))
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 17.18.2) (% of countries)	2018 = 70.8%	100%	n=24	Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century Statistical Capacity Monitor – indicator 135 (https://statisticalcapacitymonitor.org/indicator/135)	B: Assuring quality and instilling trust in statistics	B1: Legal framework for national statistical system with national statistical office as lead
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	2018 = 25.9%	100%	n=58	Global Working Group on Big Data website (https://unstats.un.org/bigdata/)	D: Modernizing statistical business processes	D2: Implement modernization tools (e.g. Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX))

<i>Commitment</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Baseline¹</i>	<i>2030 Target</i>	<i>Count²</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Action Area</i>	<i>Objective</i>
4(g) Communication and statistical literacy	g.1 Whether the national statistical office issues press releases at least quarterly (% of countries)	2018 = 59.5%	100%	n=42	Paris 21 Statistical Capacity Monitor – indicator 98 (https://statisticalcapacitymonitor.org/indicator/98/)	A: Engaging users and investing in statistics	A1: National statistical system responsive to needs of users
4(g) Communication and statistical literacy	g.2 Whether the national statistical office uses social media (Facebook and/or Twitter) to disseminate data and information (% of countries) ³	2018 = 27.1%	100%	n=48	Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century Statistical Capacity Monitor – indicator 110 (https://statisticalcapacitymonitor.org/indicator/110/)	A: Engaging users and investing in statistics	A1: National statistical system responsive to needs of users
4(g) Communication and statistical literacy	g.3 Open Data Inventory overall data openness score (average score; target = average top 5 countries)	2018 = 44.9	85	N=44	Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century Statistical Capacity Monitor – indicator 85 (https://statisticalcapacitymonitor.org/indicator/85/)	A: Engaging users and investing in statistics	A1: National statistical system responsive to needs of users
4(h) Statistical advocacy and awareness raising	h.1 Whether the national statistical plan is fully funded (sustainable development goal 17.18.3) (% countries)	2018 = 69.0%	100%	n=29	Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century Statistical Capacity Monitor – indicator 138 (https://statisticalcapacitymonitor.org/indicator/138/)	A: Engaging users and investing in statistics	A2: National statistical system resourced to meet user needs
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	35 ⁴	n=24	Paris 21 Statistical Capacity Monitor – indicator 127 (https://statisticalcapacitymonitor.org/indicator/127/)	B: Assuring quality and instilling trust in statistics	B2: National strategies for development of statistics aligned to NDP and the Sustainable Development Goals
4(i) National strategies/policies aligned with commitments	i.2 Subscription to enhanced General Data Dissemination System (e-GDDS) or Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS) -Data dissemination standards (% countries)	2018 = 82.1%	100%	n=56	Paris 21 Statistical Capacity Monitor – indicator 202 (https://statisticalcapacitymonitor.org/indicator/202/)	B: Assuring quality and instilling trust in statistics	B3: QA framework for national statistical system

³ This indicator does not cover all possible platforms used by national statistical systems in Asia-Pacific and therefore needs modifications. PARIS21 and World Bank are currently working on the methodology and ESCAP will revise this indicator in future when new methods are available.

⁴ Target value was revised based on the updated indicator baseline values.

B. Partners commitments and additional indicators related to Action Area E

<i>Commitment</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Baseline</i>	<i>2030 Target</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Action Area</i>	<i>Objective</i>
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 \$ million; target = 10-year average) (17.19.1)	2018= \$90.1m	\$117.4m	n=46	Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century Statistical Capacity Monitor – Indicator 121 https://statisticalcapacitymonitor.org/indicator/121 Source: Partner Report on Support to Statistics (PRESS) https://paris21.org/press	F. Partner commitments	All
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 (% of countries interviewed with satisfactory consultation)	N/A	100%	N/A	ESCAP Statistics Division - informal interviews/discussions between United Nations Statistics Division and main providers of statistical support (e.g. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Population Fund etc.) during regional meetings.	F. Partner commitments	
5(c) Continue to strengthen international statistical standards and provide technical support	P.3. Number of participants from Asia and the Pacific region in the United Nations Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific training courses	2018 = 2657	5% annual growth	N/A	United Nations Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific Director report to Governing Council https://unsiap.or.jp/about/governing.html	F. Partner commitments	

Annex II

Monitoring and evaluation dashboard performance reporting template

Instructions

The following template has been developed as a simple dashboard for reporting on progress on this monitoring and evaluation framework. The template is to be completed every two years starting in 2020, with data for each indicator incorporated into the relevant ‘Reporting Values’ column in the template (i.e. for 2020, 2022, 2024, 2026, 2028, 2030). In addition to reporting the data values for each indicator, the dashboard will include an assessment of both the direction and favourability of the trend using arrow symbols (ì= improving; è= no change; î = worsening) as well as the current status of the indicator with regard to its 2030 target value using traffic light symbols (● = on track/achieved; ● = needs improvement; ● = breakthrough needed; ● = off track). The methods for assigning trend arrows and status traffic lights are set out in the tables below. ESCAP will use existing regional platforms to consult results and data with national statistical offices prior to biannual reports to the Committee.

Trend


Improving	ì	Greater than 5 per cent change in the desired direction
No change	è	5 per cent or less change in either direction ¹
Worsening	î	Greater than 5 per cent change in the wrong direction

Status

On track/Achieved	●	Observed compound annual growth rate (CAGR) > 90 per cent of desired CAGR needed to reach target. Or target is already achieved.
Needs improvement	●	Observed compound annual growth rate (CAGR) 50-90 per cent of desired CAGR needed to reach target
Breakthrough needed	●	Observed compound annual growth rate (CAGR) 0-49 per cent of desired CAGR needed to reach target
Off track	●	Going backwards

¹ Dashboard will identify cases in which “no change” is due to the fact that target is already achieved.

Dashboard reporting template – by commitment

					REPORTING VALUES						Trend	
												
		<i>n</i>	<i>BASE</i>	<i>TARGET</i>	2020	2022	2024	2026	2028	2030	TREND	STATUS
Commitment title	List of indicators under each commitment	Number of countries with data	Baseline value of indicator	2030 target value								