

# The Sustainable Development Goals Report

## 2018



United Nations



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# The Sustainable Development Goals Report **2018**



United Nations  
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# Foreword

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides a global blueprint for dignity, peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and in the future. Three years into the implementation of the Agenda, countries are translating this shared vision into national development plans and strategies.

*The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2018* highlights progress being made in many areas of the 2030 Agenda. Since the turn of the century, the maternal mortality ratio in sub-Saharan Africa has declined by 35 per cent and the under-five mortality rate has dropped by 50 per cent. In South Asia, a girl's risk of marrying in childhood has declined by over 40 per cent. And, in the least developed countries, the proportion of the people with access to electricity has more than doubled. Globally, labour productivity has increased and unemployment rate decreased. More than 100 countries have sustainable consumption and production policies and initiatives.

However, the report also shows that, in some areas, progress is insufficient to meet the Agenda's goals and targets by 2030. This is especially true for the most disadvantaged and marginalized groups. Youth are three times more likely to be unemployed than adults. Less than half of all children and adolescents meet minimum standards in reading and mathematics. In 2015, 2.3 billion people still lacked even a basic level of sanitation service and 892 million people continued to practise open defecation. Close to 1 billion mostly rural people still lack electricity. In sub-Saharan Africa, the HIV incidence among women of reproductive age is 10 times the global average. Nine out of 10 people living in cities breathe polluted air. And, while some forms of discrimination against women and girls are declining, gender inequality continues to hold women back and deprives them of basic rights and opportunities.

Conflict, climate change and growing inequalities add additional challenges. After a prolonged decline, the number of undernourished people rose from 777 million in 2015 to 815 million in 2016, mainly due to conflicts and drought and disasters linked to climate change. In 2017, the North Atlantic hurricane season was the most costly ever, and the past five-year average global temperature is the highest on record.

Without evidence of where we stand now we cannot confidently chart our path forward in realizing the Sustainable Development Goals. To that end, this report also reflects on the challenges faced in the collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of reliable, timely, accessible and sufficiently disaggregated data, and calls for better evidence-based policymaking. Today's technology makes it possible to collate the data we need to keep the promise to leave no one behind. But, we need political leadership, resources and commitment to use the tools now available.

With just 12 years left to the 2030 deadline, we must inject a sense of urgency. Achieving the 2030 Agenda requires immediate and accelerated actions by countries along with collaborative partnerships among governments and stakeholders at all levels. This ambitious Agenda necessitates profound change that goes beyond business as usual. In doing its part, the United Nations has launched reform initiatives to reposition the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda. The objective is to be more effective, cohesive and accountable. We stand ready to work with all Member States to make the Sustainable Development Goals a reality for everyone, everywhere.



ANTÓNIO GUTERRES  
Secretary-General, United Nations

# Overview

The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2018 reviews progress in the third year of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This overview presents highlights of progress and remaining gaps for all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), based on the latest available data, and examines some of the interconnections across Goals and targets. Subsequent chapters focus in more depth on the six Goals under review at the high-level political forum on sustainable development in July 2018.

While people overall are living better lives than they were a decade ago, progress to ensure that no one is left behind has not been rapid enough to meet the targets of the 2030 Agenda. Indeed, the rate of global progress is not keeping pace with the ambitions of the Agenda, necessitating immediate and accelerated action by countries and stakeholders at all levels.

## Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere

**Only 45 per cent** of the world's population are covered by at least one social protection cash benefit



**Economic losses** attributed to disasters were **over \$300 billion** in 2017

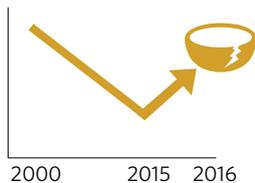


While extreme poverty has eased considerably since 1990, pockets of the worst forms of poverty persist. Ending poverty requires universal social protection systems aimed at safeguarding all individuals throughout the life cycle. It also requires targeted measures to reduce vulnerability to disasters and to address specific underserved geographic areas within each country.

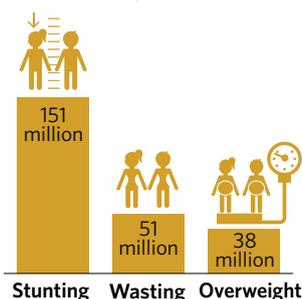
- ▶ The rate of extreme poverty has fallen rapidly: in 2013 it was a third of the 1990 value. The latest global estimate suggests that 11 per cent of the world population, or 783 million people, lived below the extreme poverty threshold in 2013.
- ▶ The proportion of the world's workers living with their families on less than \$1.90 per person a day declined significantly over the past two decades, falling from 26.9 per cent in 2000 to 9.2 per cent in 2017.
- ▶ Based on 2016 estimates, only 45 per cent of the world's population were effectively covered by at least one social protection cash benefit.
- ▶ In 2017, economic losses attributed to disasters were estimated at over \$300 billion. This is among the highest losses in recent years, owing to three major hurricanes affecting the United States of America and several countries across the Caribbean.

## Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

**World hunger is on the rise again:** 815 million people were undernourished in 2016, up from 777 million in 2015



**Stunting, wasting and overweight** still affected millions of children under age 5 in 2017



After a prolonged decline, world hunger appears to be on the rise again. Conflict, drought and disasters linked to climate change are among the key factors causing this reversal in progress.

- ▶ The proportion of undernourished people worldwide increased from 10.6 per cent in 2015 to 11.0 per cent in 2016. This translates to 815 million people worldwide in 2016, up from 777 million in 2015.
- ▶ In 2017, 151 million children under age 5 suffered from stunting (low height for their age), 51 million suffered from wasting (low weight for height), and 38 million were overweight.
- ▶ Aid to agriculture in developing countries totalled \$12.5 billion in 2016, falling to 6 per cent of all donors' sector-allocable aid from nearly 20 per cent in the mid-1980s.
- ▶ Progress has been made in reducing market-distorting agricultural subsidies, which were more than halved in five years—from \$491 million in 2010 to less than \$200 million in 2015.
- ▶ In 2016, 26 countries experienced high or moderately high levels of general food prices, which may have negatively affected food security.

## Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

Many more people today are living healthier lives than in the past decade. Nevertheless, people are still suffering needlessly from preventable diseases, and too many are dying prematurely. Overcoming disease and ill health will require concerted and sustained efforts, focusing on population groups and regions that have been neglected.

### Reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health

- ▶ The maternal mortality ratio has declined by 37 per cent since 2000. Nevertheless, in 2015, 303,000 women around the world died due to complications during pregnancy or childbirth. Over the period 2012–2017, almost 80 per cent of live births worldwide occurred with the assistance of skilled health personnel, up from 62 per cent in 2000–2005.
- ▶ Globally, from 2000 to 2016, the under-5 mortality rate dropped by 47 per cent, and the neonatal mortality rate fell by 39 per cent. Over the same period, the total number of under-5 deaths dropped from 9.9 million to 5.6 million.
- ▶ Even in the region facing the greatest health challenges, progress has been impressive. Since 2000, the maternal mortality ratio in sub-Saharan Africa has been reduced by 35 per cent, and the under-5 mortality rate has dropped by 50 per cent.
- ▶ In 2018, the global adolescent birth rate is 44 births per 1,000 women aged 15 to 19, compared to 56 in 2000. The highest rate (101) is found in sub-Saharan Africa.

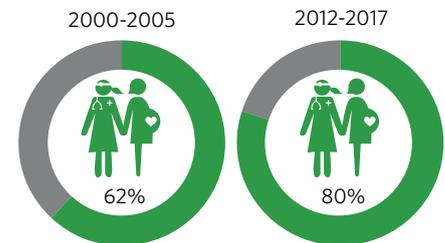
### Infectious diseases and non-communicable diseases

- ▶ Globally, the incidence of HIV declined from 0.40 to 0.26 per 1,000 uninfected people between 2005 and 2016. For women of reproductive age in sub-Saharan Africa, however, the rate is much higher, at 2.58 per 1,000 uninfected people.
- ▶ In 2016, 216 million cases of malaria were reported versus 210 million cases in 2013. There were 140 new cases of tuberculosis per 100,000 people in 2016 compared to 173 cases per 100,000 in 2000. Hepatitis B prevalence declined among children under 5— from 4.7 per cent in the pre-vaccine era to 1.3 per cent in 2015.
- ▶ In 2016, 1.5 billion people were reported to require mass or individual treatment and care for neglected tropical diseases, down from 1.6 billion in 2015 and 2 billion in 2010.
- ▶ Unsafe drinking water, unsafe sanitation and lack of hygiene continue to be major contributors to global mortality, resulting in about 870,000 deaths in 2016. These deaths were mainly caused by diarrhoeal diseases, but also from malnutrition and intestinal nematode infections.
- ▶ Globally, 32 million people died in 2016 due to cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes or chronic respiratory disease. The probability of dying from these causes was about 18 per cent in 2016 for people between 30 and 70 years of age.
- ▶ In 2016, household and outdoor air pollution led to some 7 million deaths worldwide.

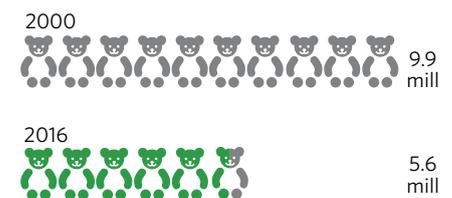
### Health systems and funding

- ▶ Globally, almost 12 per cent of the world's population (over 800 million people) spent at least one tenth of their household budgets to pay for health services in 2010, up from 9.7 per cent in 2000.
- ▶ Official development assistance (ODA) for basic health from all donors increased by 41 per cent in real terms since 2010, reaching \$9.4 billion in 2016.
- ▶ Available data from 2005 to 2016 indicate that close to 45 per cent of all countries and 90 per cent of least developed countries (LDCs) have less than one physician per 1,000 people, and over 60 per cent have fewer than three nurses or midwives per 1,000 people.

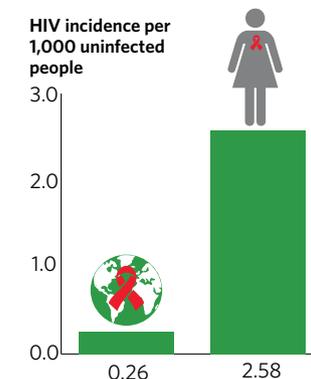
### Births attended by skilled health personnel increased globally



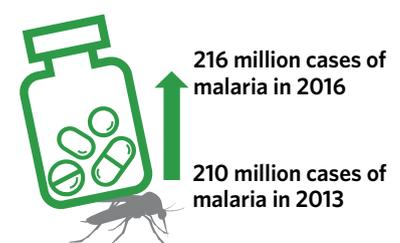
### Under-5 deaths fell between 2000 and 2016



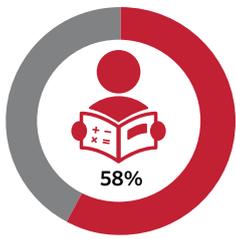
### HIV incidence rate for women of reproductive age in sub-Saharan Africa is 10 times higher than the global average



### The world is not on track to end malaria by 2030



## Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all



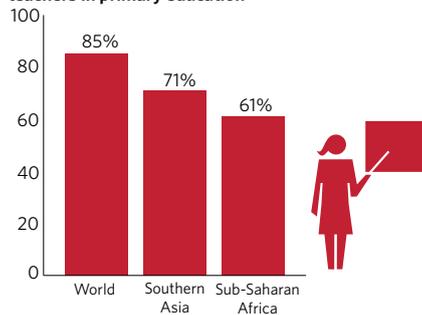
**More than half of children and adolescents are not achieving minimum proficiency in reading and mathematics**

More than half of children and adolescents worldwide are not meeting minimum proficiency standards in reading and mathematics. Refocused efforts are needed to improve the quality of education. Disparities in education along the lines of gender, urban-rural location and other dimensions still run deep, and more investments in education infrastructure are required, particularly in LDCs.

- ▶ At the global level, the participation rate in early childhood and primary education was 70 per cent in 2016, up from 63 per cent in 2010. The lowest rates are found in sub-Saharan Africa (41 per cent) and Northern Africa and Western Asia (52 per cent).
- ▶ An estimated 617 million children and adolescents of primary and lower secondary school age worldwide—58 per cent of that age group—are not achieving minimum proficiency in reading and mathematics.
- ▶ In 2016, an estimated 85 per cent of primary school teachers worldwide were trained; the proportion was only 71 per cent for Southern Asia and 61 per cent for sub-Saharan Africa.
- ▶ In 2016, only 34 per cent of primary schools in LDCs had electricity and less than 40 per cent were equipped with basic handwashing facilities.

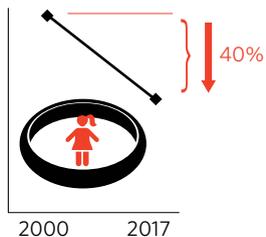
### More trained teachers are needed for quality education

Percentage of trained teachers in primary education



## Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

### Child marriage in Southern Asia decreased by over 40 per cent between 2000 and 2017



While some forms of discrimination against women and girls are diminishing, gender inequality continues to hold women back and deprives them of basic rights and opportunities. Empowering women requires addressing structural issues such as unfair social norms and attitudes as well as developing progressive legal frameworks that promote equality between women and men.

- ▶ Based on 2005–2016 data from 56 countries, 20 per cent of adolescent girls aged 15 to 19 who have ever been in a sexual relationship experienced physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner in the 12 months prior to the survey.
- ▶ Globally, around 2017, an estimated 21 per cent of women between 20 and 24 years of age reported that they were married or in an informal union before age 18. This means that an estimated 650 million girls and women today were married in childhood. Rates of child marriage have continued to decline around the world. In Southern Asia, a girl's risk of marrying in childhood has dropped by over 40 per cent since around 2000.
- ▶ Around 2017, one in three girls aged 15 to 19 had been subjected to female genital mutilation in the 30 countries where the practice is concentrated, compared to nearly one in two around 2000.
- ▶ Based on data between 2000 and 2016 from about 90 countries, women spend roughly three times as many hours in unpaid domestic and care work as men.
- ▶ Globally, the percentage of women in single or lower houses of national parliament has increased from 19 per cent in 2010 to around 23 per cent in 2018.



**Women spend about three times as many hours in unpaid domestic and care work as men**

## Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

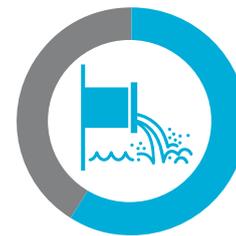
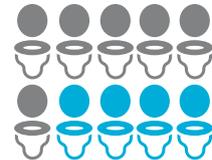
Too many people still lack access to safely managed water supplies and sanitation facilities. Water scarcity, flooding and lack of proper wastewater management also hinder social and economic development. Increasing water efficiency and improving water management are critical to balancing the competing and growing water demands from various sectors and users.

- ▶ In 2015, 29 per cent of the global population lacked safely managed drinking water supplies, and 61 per cent were without safely managed sanitation services. In 2015, 892 million people continued to practise open defecation.
- ▶ In 2015, only 27 per cent of the population in LDCs had basic handwashing facilities.
- ▶ Preliminary estimates from household data of 79 mostly high- and high-middle-income countries (excluding much of Africa and Asia) suggest that 59 per cent of all domestic wastewater is safely treated.
- ▶ In 22 countries, mostly in the Northern Africa and Western Asia region and in the Central and Southern Asia region, the water stress level is above 70 per cent, indicating the strong probability of future water scarcity.
- ▶ In 2017–2018, 157 countries reported average implementation of integrated water resources management of 48 per cent.
- ▶ Based on data from 62 out of 153 countries sharing transboundary waters, the average percentage of national transboundary basins covered by an operational arrangement was only 59 per cent in 2017.

**3 in 10 people** lack access to safely managed drinking water services



**6 in 10 people** lack access to safely managed sanitation facilities



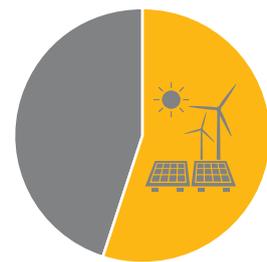
Data from 79 countries show **59 per cent** of all wastewater is safely treated

## Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

Ensuring access to affordable, reliable and modern energy for all has come one step closer due to recent progress in electrification, particularly in LDCs, and improvements in industrial energy efficiency. However, national priorities and policy ambitions still need to be strengthened to put the world on track to meet the energy targets for 2030.

- ▶ From 2000 to 2016, the proportion of the global population with access to electricity increased from 78 per cent to 87 per cent, with the absolute number of people living without electricity dipping to just below 1 billion.
- ▶ In the least developed countries, the proportion of the people with access to electricity more than doubled between 2000 and 2016.
- ▶ In 2016, 3 billion people (41 per cent of the world's population) were still cooking with polluting fuel and stove combinations.
- ▶ The share of renewables in final energy consumption increased modestly, from 17.3 per cent in 2014 to 17.5 per cent in 2015. Yet only 55 per cent of the renewable share was derived from modern forms of renewable energy.
- ▶ Global energy intensity decreased by 2.8 per cent from 2014 to 2015, double the rate of improvement seen between 1990 and 2010.

**55 per cent** of renewable energy was derived from modern forms in 2015

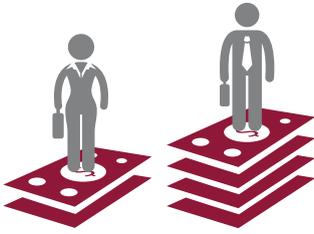


**4 in 10 people** still lack access to clean cooking fuels and technologies

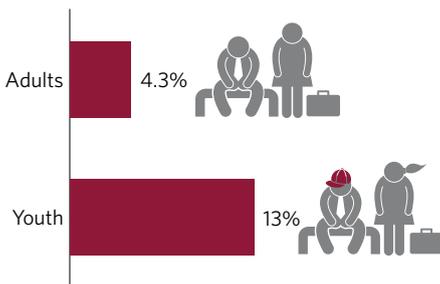


## Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

**Earning inequalities are still pervasive: men earned 12.5 per cent more than women in 40 out of 45 countries with data**



**Youth were three times more likely to be unemployed than adults in 2017**

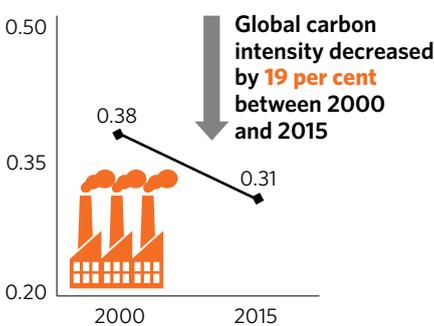


Globally, labour productivity has increased and the unemployment rate has decreased. However, more progress is needed to increase employment opportunities, especially for young people, reduce informal employment and labour market inequality (particularly in terms of the gender pay gap), promote safe and secure working environments, and improve access to financial services to ensure sustained and inclusive economic growth.

- ▶ In 2016, real gross domestic product (GDP) per capita grew at 1.3 per cent globally, less than the 1.7 per cent average growth rate recorded in 2010–2016. For LDCs, the rate fell sharply from 5.7 per cent in 2005–2009 to 2.3 per cent in 2010–2016.
- ▶ Labour productivity at the global level, measured as output produced per employed person in constant 2005 US dollars, grew by 2.1 per cent in 2017. This is the fastest growth registered since 2010.
- ▶ Globally, 61 per cent of all workers were engaged in informal employment in 2016. Excluding the agricultural sector, 51 per cent of all workers fell into this employment category.
- ▶ Data from 45 countries suggest that gender inequality in earnings is still pervasive: in 89 per cent of these countries, the hourly wages of men are, on average, higher than those of women, with a median pay gap of 12.5 per cent.
- ▶ The global unemployment rate in 2017 was 5.6 per cent, down from 6.4 per cent in 2000. The decline has slowed since 2009, when it hit 5.9 per cent. Youth are three times more likely to be unemployed than adults, with the global youth unemployment rate at 13 per cent in 2017.
- ▶ In high-income countries, almost every adult has an account at a bank or other financial institution, compared to only 35 per cent of adults in low-income countries. Across all regions, women lag behind men in this regard.

## Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

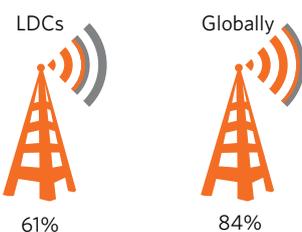
CO<sub>2</sub> emissions intensity (kg CO<sub>2</sub>/USD)



Steady progress has been made in the manufacturing industry. To achieve inclusive and sustainable industrialization, competitive economic forces need to be unleashed to generate employment and income, facilitate international trade and enable the efficient use of resources.

- ▶ The global share of manufacturing value added in GDP increased from 15.2 per cent in 2005 to 16.3 per cent in 2017, driven by the fast growth of manufacturing in Asia.
- ▶ Globally, the carbon intensity decreased by 19 per cent from 2000 to 2015— from 0.38 to 0.31 kilograms of carbon dioxide per dollar of value added.
- ▶ In 2015, medium-high- and high-technology sectors accounted for 44.7 per cent of total manufacturing value added globally. The value added reached 34.6 per cent in developing economies, up from 21.5 per cent in 2005.
- ▶ By 2016, the proportion of the population covered by a third generation (3G) mobile broadband network stood at 61 per cent in the LDCs and 84 per cent globally.

**Proportion of population covered by a 3G mobile broadband network was lower in the LDCs in 2016**



## Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries

Efforts have been made in some countries to reduce income inequality, increase zero-tariff access for exports from LDCs and developing countries, and provide additional assistance to LDCs and small island developing States (SIDS). However, progress will need to accelerate to reduce growing disparities within and among countries.

- ▶ Between 2010 and 2016, in 60 out of 94 countries with data, the incomes of the poorest 40 per cent of the population grew faster than those of the entire population.
- ▶ In 2016, over 64.4 per cent of products exported by LDCs to world markets and 64.1 per cent of those from SIDS faced zero tariffs, an increase of 20 per cent since 2010. Developing countries overall had duty-free market access for about 50 per cent of all products exported in 2016.
- ▶ In 2016, receipts by developing countries from member countries of the Development Assistance Committee of the OECD, multilateral agencies and other key providers totalled \$315 billion; of this amount, \$158 billion was ODA. In 2016, total ODA to LDCs and SIDS from all donors totalled \$43.1 billion and \$6.2 billion, respectively.
- ▶ Based on provisional data, among the \$613 billion in total remittances recorded in 2017, \$466 billion went to low- and middle-income countries. While the global average cost of sending money has gradually declined in recent years, it was estimated at 7.2 per cent in 2017, more than double the target transaction cost of 3 per cent.

Products exported by SIDS facing zero tariffs increased by **20 per cent** between 2010 and 2016



Remittances to low- and middle-income countries represented **over 75 per cent** of total global remittances in 2017



## Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Many cities around the world are facing acute challenges in managing rapid urbanization—from ensuring adequate housing and infrastructure to support growing populations, to confronting the environmental impact of urban sprawl, to reducing vulnerability to disasters.

- ▶ Between 2000 and 2014, the proportion of the global urban population living in slums dropped from 28.4 per cent to 22.8 per cent. However, the actual number of people living in slums increased from 807 million to 883 million.
- ▶ Based on data collected for 214 cities/municipalities, about three quarters of municipal solid waste generated is collected.
- ▶ In 2016, 91 per cent of the urban population worldwide were breathing air that did not meet the World Health Organization air quality guidelines value for particulate matter (PM 2.5); more than half were exposed to air pollution levels at least 2.5 times higher than that safety standard. In 2016, an estimated 4.2 million people died as a result of high levels of ambient air pollution.
- ▶ From 1990 to 2013, almost 90 per cent of deaths attributed to internationally reported disasters occurred in low- and middle-income countries. Reported damage to housing attributed to disasters shows a statistically significant rise from 1990 onwards.

In 2016, **4.2 million people** died from ambient air pollution



Damage to housing due to natural disasters showed a **statistically significant rise** between 1990 and 2013



## Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns



Globally by 2018, **108 countries** had national policies on sustainable consumption and production



**93 per cent** of the world's 250 largest companies are now reporting on sustainability

Decoupling economic growth from resource use is one of the most critical and complex challenges facing humanity today. Doing so effectively will require policies that create a conducive environment for such change, social and physical infrastructure and markets, and a profound transformation of business practices along global value chains.

- ▶ The per capita “material footprint” of developing countries grew from 5 metric tons in 2000 to 9 metric tons in 2017, representing a significant improvement in the material standard of living. Most of the increase is attributed to a rise in the use of non-metallic minerals, pointing to growth in the areas of infrastructure and construction.
- ▶ For all types of materials, developed countries have at least double the per capita footprint of developing countries. In particular, the material footprint for fossil fuels is more than four times higher for developed than developing countries.
- ▶ By 2018, a total of 108 countries had national policies and initiatives relevant to sustainable consumption and production.
- ▶ According to a recent report from KPMG, 93 per cent of the world’s 250 largest companies (in terms of revenue) are now reporting on sustainability, as are three quarters of the top 100 companies in 49 countries.

## Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

2017 was the **most costly** North Atlantic hurricane season on record



The majority of countries have ratified the **Paris Agreement** and provided nationally determined contributions (NDCs)



The year 2017 was one of the three warmest on record and was 1.1 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial period. An analysis by the World Meteorological Organization shows that the five-year average global temperature from 2013 to 2017 was also the highest on record. The world continues to experience rising sea levels, extreme weather conditions (the North Atlantic hurricane season was the costliest ever recorded) and increasing concentrations of greenhouse gases. This calls for urgent and accelerated action by countries as they implement their commitments to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

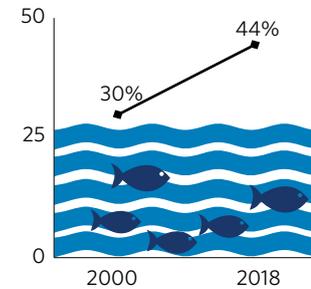
- ▶ As of 9 April 2018, 175 Parties had ratified the Paris Agreement and 168 Parties (167 countries plus the European Commission) had communicated their first nationally determined contributions to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Secretariat.
- ▶ In addition, as of 9 April 2018, 10 developing countries had successfully completed and submitted the first iteration of their national adaptation plans for responding to climate change.
- ▶ Developed country Parties continue to make progress towards the goal of jointly mobilizing \$100 billion annually by 2020 to address the needs of developing countries in the context of meaningful mitigation actions.

## Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

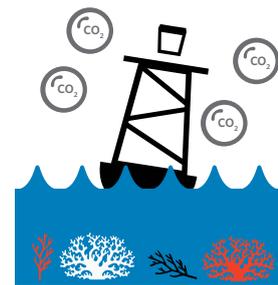
Advancing the sustainable use and conservation of the oceans continues to require effective strategies and management to combat the adverse effects of overfishing, growing ocean acidification and worsening coastal eutrophication. The expansion of protected areas for marine biodiversity, intensification of research capacity and increases in ocean science funding remain critically important to preserve marine resources.

- ▶ The global share of marine fish stocks that are within biologically sustainable levels declined from 90 per cent in 1974 to 69 per cent in 2013.
- ▶ Studies at open ocean and coastal sites around the world show that current levels of marine acidity have increased by about 26 per cent on average since the start of the Industrial Revolution. Moreover, marine life is being exposed to conditions outside previously experienced natural variability.
- ▶ Global trends point to continued deterioration of coastal waters due to pollution and eutrophication. Without concerted efforts, coastal eutrophication is expected to increase in 20 per cent of large marine ecosystems by 2050.
- ▶ As of January 2018, 16 per cent (or over 22 million square kilometres) of marine waters under national jurisdiction—that is, 0 to 200 nautical miles from shore—were covered by protected areas. This is more than double the 2010 coverage level. The mean coverage of marine key biodiversity areas (KBAs) that are protected has also increased—from 30 per cent in 2000 to 44 per cent in 2018.

Mean coverage of **marine KBAs increased between 2000 and 2018**



Open ocean sites show **current levels of acidity have increased by 26 per cent since the start of the Industrial Revolution**



## Goal 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

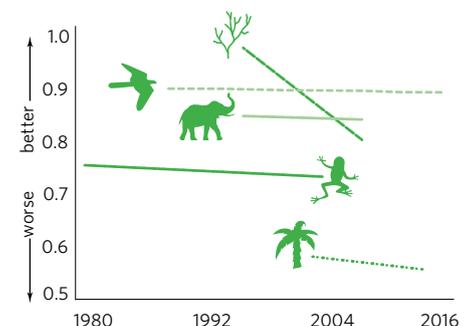
Protection of forest and terrestrial ecosystems is on the rise, and forest loss has slowed. That said, other facets of terrestrial conservation continue to demand accelerated action to protect biodiversity, land productivity and genetic resources and to curtail the loss of species.

- ▶ The Earth's forest areas continue to shrink, down from 4.1 billion hectares in 2000 (or 31.2 per cent of total land area) to about 4 billion hectares (30.7 per cent of total land area) in 2015. However, the rate of forest loss has been cut by 25 per cent since 2000-2005.
- ▶ About one fifth of the Earth's land surface covered by vegetation showed persistent and declining trends in productivity from 1999 to 2013, threatening the livelihoods of over one billion people. Up to 24 million square kilometres of land were affected, including 19 per cent of cropland, 16 per cent of forest land, 19 per cent of grassland and 28 per cent of rangeland.
- ▶ Since 1993, the global Red List Index of threatened species has fallen from 0.82 to 0.74, indicating an alarming trend in the decline of mammals, birds, amphibians, corals and cycads. The primary drivers of this assault on biodiversity are habitat loss from unsustainable agriculture, deforestation, unsustainable harvest and trade, and invasive alien species.
- ▶ Illicit poaching and trafficking of wildlife continues to thwart conservation efforts, with nearly 7,000 species of animals and plants reported in illegal trade involving 120 countries.
- ▶ In 2016, bilateral ODA in support of biodiversity totalled \$7 billion, a decrease of 21 per cent in real terms from 2015.

**Land degradation threatens the security and development of all countries**

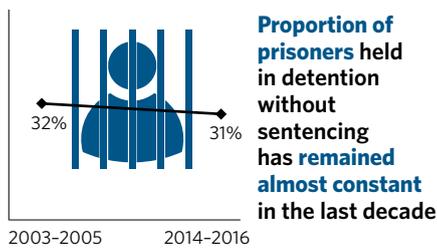


The Red List Index shows **alarming trend in biodiversity decline for mammals, birds, amphibians, corals and cycads**



## Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

**More than 570 different trafficking in persons flows were detected between 2012 and 2014**



**Proportion of prisoners held in detention without sentencing has remained almost constant in the last decade**



**Globally, 73 per cent of children under 5 have had their births registered**

Many regions of the world continue to suffer untold horrors as a result of armed conflict or other forms of violence that occur within societies and at the domestic level. Advances in promoting the rule of law and access to justice are uneven. However, progress is being made in regulations to promote public access to information, albeit slowly, and in strengthening institutions upholding human rights at the national level.

- ▶ Nearly 8 in 10 children aged 1 to 14 years were subjected to some form of psychological aggression and/or physical punishment on a regular basis at home in 81 countries (primarily developing), according to available data from 2005 to 2017. In all but seven of these countries, more than half of children experienced violent forms of discipline.
- ▶ More than 570 different flows involving trafficking in persons were detected between 2012 and 2014, affecting all regions; many involved movement from lower-income to higher-income countries.
- ▶ In 2014, the majority of detected trafficking victims were women and girls (71 per cent), and about 28 per cent were children (20 per cent girls and 8 per cent boys). Over 90 per cent of victims detected were trafficked for sexual exploitation or forced labour.
- ▶ The proportion of prisoners held in detention without being sentenced for a crime remained almost constant in the last decade: from 32 per cent in 2003-2005 to 31 per cent in 2014-2016.
- ▶ Almost one in five firms worldwide report receiving at least one bribery payment request when engaged in regulatory or utility transactions.
- ▶ Globally, 73 per cent of children under 5 have had their births registered; the proportion is less than half (46 per cent) in sub-Saharan Africa.
- ▶ At least 1,019 human rights defenders, journalists and trade unionists have been killed in 61 countries since 2015. This is equivalent to one person killed every day while working to inform the public and build a world free from fear and want.
- ▶ Freedom-of-information laws and policies have been adopted by 116 countries, with at least 25 countries doing so over the last five years. However, implementation remains a challenge.
- ▶ Since 1998, more than half of countries (116 of 197) have established a national human rights institution that has been peer reviewed for compliance with internationally agreed standards (the Paris Principles). However, only 75 of these countries have institutions that are fully compliant.

## Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

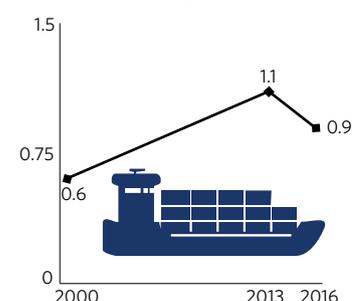
Goal 17 seeks to strengthen global partnerships to support and achieve the ambitious targets of the 2030 Agenda, bringing together national governments, the international community, civil society, the private sector and other actors. Despite advances in certain areas, more needs to be done to accelerate progress. All stakeholders will have to refocus and intensify their efforts on areas where progress has been slow.

- ▶ In 2017, net ODA totalled \$146.6 billion in 2017, a decrease of 0.6 per cent from 2016 in real terms. ODA as a share of donors' gross national income (GNI) remained low, at 0.31 per cent.
- ▶ In 2016, remittances to low- and lower-middle-income countries were more than three times the amount of ODA they received.
- ▶ In LDCs, debt service as a proportion of exports of goods and services increased for five consecutive years—from a low of 3.5 per cent in 2011 to 8.6 per cent in 2016.
- ▶ In 2016, high-speed fixed-broadband reached 6 per cent of the population in developing countries, compared to 24 per cent in developed countries.
- ▶ Total ODA for capacity-building and national planning amounted to \$20.4 billion in 2016, representing 18 per cent of total aid allocable by sector, a proportion that has been stable since 2010.
- ▶ The developing regions' share of world merchandise exports declined for two consecutive years: from 45.4 per cent in 2014 to 44.2 per cent in 2016, a sharp contrast to an average annual 1.2 percentage point increase between 2001 and 2012. For LDCs, the share of world merchandise exports decreased from 1.1 per cent to 0.9 per cent between 2013 and 2016, compared to the rise from 0.6 per cent to 1.1 per cent between 2000 and 2013.
- ▶ In 2017, 102 countries or areas were implementing national statistical plans. Sub-Saharan Africa remained in the lead, with 31 countries implementing such plans; however, only three of them were fully funded.
- ▶ In 2015, developing countries received \$541 million in financial support from multilateral and bilateral donors for all areas of statistics. This amount represented only 0.3 per cent of total ODA, short of what is needed to ensure that countries in developing regions are better equipped to implement and monitor their development agendas.
- ▶ During the decade from 2008 to 2017, 89 per cent of countries or areas conducted at least one population and housing census.

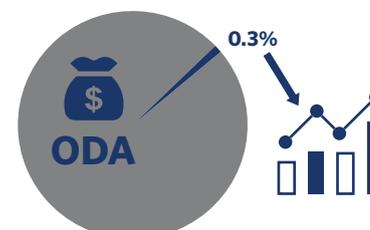


ODA for capacity-building and national planning was **\$20.4 billion in 2016**, which has been stable since 2010

**LDCs' share of world merchandise exports fell between 2013 and 2016, after a long period of increase**



**In 2015, developing countries received only 0.3 per cent of total ODA to support all areas of statistics**



# Interlinked nature of the Sustainable Development Goals

Three years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, countries are taking bold actions to achieve the ambitious vision of this transformative plan. As they do so, they face daunting problems: a changing climate, conflict, inequality, persistent pockets of poverty and hunger, rapid urbanization and environmental degradation. Policymakers in every country need to reflect on how societies can be made more resilient while confronting these challenges. A good place to start is by establishing robust water and sanitation infrastructure, ensuring access to clean and affordable energy, building safe and ecologically friendly cities, protecting ecosystems, and instituting sustainable consumption and production patterns.

Transitioning towards more sustainable and resilient societies also requires an integrated approach that recognizes that these challenges—and their solutions—are interrelated. This section provides a perspective on the interlinked nature of the SDGs in the context of the Goals and themes under review at the July 2018 high-level political forum on sustainable development.

## Transitioning towards sustainable and resilient societies hinges on responsible management of finite natural resources

Land- and water-based ecosystems and the rich biodiversity they support provide food, clean water and air, and raw materials that fuel economic growth. They provide natural sites for human settlements and mitigate climate change. However, population growth, agricultural intensification, urbanization and industrial production are creating competition for natural resources, including land and water. Overuse is contributing to their rapid depletion and consequent environmental degradation.

More than 2 billion people are affected by water stress, which will only increase with population growth and the effects of climate change. Agriculture accounts for almost 70 per cent of global water withdrawal, which is projected to increase significantly to meet food needs.

This poses a fundamental challenge to sustainable development. Effective implementation of integrated water resources management (IWRM) at all levels is critical to reversing this situation. In 2017, 157 countries reported average IWRM implementation of less than 50 per cent, highlighting the need for accelerated action and increased financing for water resources management.

Forests cover 31 per cent of the world's land area, and forested watersheds and wetlands supply almost 75 per cent of the world's fresh water. Forests also play a central role in building and maintaining soil fertility, slowing land degradation, halting landslides in mountainous areas and protecting against certain natural disasters. Studies show that, in 2011, the economic value of forests globally was an estimated \$16.2 trillion. Deforestation and forest degradation are still a concern, pointing to the need to fully implement sustainable forest and land management practices.

Biodiversity loss is escalating. About one fifth of the Earth's land surface covered by vegetation showed persistent and declining trends in productivity between 1999 and 2013. Urgent actions are needed to protect and restore ecosystems and the biodiversity they support. These efforts can help mitigate climate change and provide increased resilience in the face of growing human pressures and mounting natural disasters.

Sustainable and resilient societies will also require the establishment of strong national frameworks for sustainable consumption and production, environmentally sensitive business practices and consumer behaviour, and adherence to international norms on the management of hazardous chemicals and wastes. By 2018, a total of 108 countries had national policies and initiatives relevant to sustainable consumption and production.

## Access to basic services is not only a fundamental human right, but also a stepping stone to sustainable development

Every citizen has the right to safe drinking water, adequate sanitation, electricity or other forms of energy, safe transport, waste collection, education and health care. Provision of these basic services goes hand-in-hand with economic growth, social inclusion, poverty reduction and equality. For example, reliable road and transport networks connect farmers in poor and remote communities to major agricultural markets, and make health and education services more accessible.

Globally, significant strides have been made in improving the quality of and access to basic services, while making them more inclusive. However, in many countries, the poor and most vulnerable have been left behind. In 2015, 4.5 billion people (61 per cent of the world's population) still lacked access to safely managed sanitation services, and 892 million people—mostly in rural areas of Southern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa—practised open defecation.

That same year, about 2.1 billion people (29 per cent of the world's population) lacked access to safely managed drinking water supplies. In situations where water must be collected outside the home, women bear primary responsibility. A study of 25 sub-Saharan countries found that each day women spend a combined total of at least 16 million hours collecting drinking water, men spend 6 million hours on this task, and children spend 4 million hours. This burden leaves women less time to engage in other activities, such as attending school or participating in the labour market. The situation is much worse in areas affected by conflict, where walking long distances to gather water or fuelwood often puts women and children in harm's way.

One billion people (13 per cent of the global population) are currently living without electricity. Rural residents make up 87 per cent of the global deficit in access to electricity, which is strongly associated with poverty. Access rates are four times higher in the wealthiest

20 per cent of households compared to the bottom quintile in the 20 countries with the largest access deficits. Three billion people, mostly women and children, are still cooking with polluting fuel and inefficient stoves, adversely affecting their health and well-being.

Improving the lives of the poor and most vulnerable requires significant investments in quality basic services.

### **Social protection systems provide a safety net for the vulnerable**

Challenges to sustainability and resilience manifest themselves differently for different population groups. Social protection systems can have a levelling effect. They help prevent and reduce poverty and inequality at every stage of people's lives and make societies more inclusive and stable. Despite significant progress in many parts of the world in extending social protection, the human right to social security is not yet a reality for most people. Based on 2016 estimates, only 45 per cent of the world's population were effectively covered by at least one social protection cash benefit, leaving 4 billion people behind.

In 2016, only 22 per cent of the unemployed received unemployment cash benefits, 28 per cent of persons with severe disabilities collected disability cash benefits, 35 per cent of children were covered by some form of social protection, and 41 per cent of women giving birth received maternity cash benefits. Although 68 per cent of people above retirement age received a pension, the benefits were often not enough to lift older people out of poverty. Major work lies ahead to ensure social protection for all who need it.

### **The path to resilient cities must address growing social, economic and environmental challenges**

Since 2008, more than half the world's population has lived in urban areas, a proportion that is expected to rise to 60 per cent by 2030. Cities and metropolises are engines of growth, generating nearly 80 per cent of global GDP. But they also face mounting problems: increasing air pollution, unplanned land use, growing populations living in slums and lack of basic services.

In addition, climate change has increased the frequency and severity of natural disasters. With their dense populations and growing concentration of economic activities, cities are becoming more vulnerable to such disasters. By 2050, an estimated 680 million people will be exposed to cyclones and 870 million to earthquakes—an increase from 310 million and 370 million, respectively, in 2000. Urban habitats in small island developing States are the fragile areas where urbanization, vulnerability to natural disasters, and climate change intersect, with often dire consequences. In the Caribbean for instance, more than half the population live within 1.5 kilometres of the sea. This resulted in record economic losses in 2017's catastrophic North Atlantic hurricane season.

With sound urban planning and management, cities can become inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable as well as dynamic hubs of innovation and enterprise. Globally, 152 countries have national urban policies in place to promote more coordinated and interconnected urban development that sets the stage for sustainable urbanization. More work is still needed to ensure effective implementation of such policies.

### **A resilient society can deflect the threat of conflict**

Over the last decade, the number of violent conflicts has increased significantly, leading to the forced displacement of millions of people (the number in 2017 reached another record high of 68.5 million). According to recent analyses, one of the effects of conflict is a rise in hunger and food insecurity. And for the first time in more than a decade, the number of people who are undernourished has increased—from 777 million in 2015 to 815 million people in 2016. Conflict is one of the main drivers of food insecurity in 18 countries, where 74 million people are in need of urgent humanitarian assistance.

Forced displacement as a result of conflict also influences urbanization patterns, particularly slum formation. In countries around the world, from Asia to Africa, people displaced from conflict are finding their way to slums, where even basic water and sanitation facilities are scarce, and where thousands of people live in uninhabitable conditions.

While the causes of conflict vary widely, the effects of climate change only exacerbate them. Climate-related events such as drought threaten food and water supplies, increase competition for these and other natural resources and create civil unrest, potentially adding fuel to the already-disastrous consequences of conflict.

Investing in good governance, improving the living conditions of people, reducing inequality and strengthening the capacities of communities can help build resilience to the threat of conflict and maintain peace in the event of a violent shock or long-term stressor.

### **Migration can work for all in building more inclusive and sustainable societies**

Globally, the number of international migrants reached an estimated 258 million in 2017, up from 173 million in 2000. Migration contributes to inclusive and sustainable economic growth and development, in both countries of origin and destination. In 2017, remittance flows to low- and middle-income countries reached \$466 billion, more than three times the amount of ODA they received that year. Remittances constitute a significant source of household income, improving the situation of families and communities through investments in education, health, sanitation, housing and infrastructure. Countries of destination also benefit, since migrants often fill critical labour gaps, create jobs as entrepreneurs, and pay taxes and social security contributions. Rising above adversity, many migrants become the most dynamic members of society, contributing to the development of science and technology and enriching their host communities by adding to cultural diversity. Nevertheless, many migrants remain highly vulnerable, and investments in sustainable and resilient societies will benefit them as well. Improving living conditions in countries of origin will help minimize the adverse drivers that compel people to leave their homes. In countries of destination, providing universal access to basic services such as education, health care and social protection ensures that the human rights of migrants will also be respected, empowering them to become productive members of society. A win-win situation for all.



LIU Zhenmin  
Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs

# A data revolution in motion

On 6 July 2017, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a global indicator framework to monitor the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as a voluntary and country-led endeavour. The 232 global indicators are complemented by indicators at the regional and national levels developed by United Nations Member States. Data from national statistical and data systems are the basis for the compilation of global indicators.

Such systems around the world have been the source of many important initiatives to develop new tools and frameworks to integrate new data sources, with the aim of fully harnessing the power of the data revolution and achieving the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda. These efforts are especially important in identifying those left furthest behind, since data are increasingly disaggregated by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics. This type of detailed information is the basis upon which effective policies are shaped.

## Assessments of countries' statistical capacities reveal enormous challenges

Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda in September 2015, developing countries have begun a process to mainstream the SDGs into their national development plans and monitoring and evaluation frameworks. Countries have also developed indicator frameworks to review progress towards the Goals. In many national statistical systems, the data requirements for the SDG indicators are being added to existing work programmes and to national strategies for the development of statistics. The aim is to organize data producers, identify sources, draw attention to data gaps and launch necessary capacity development activities.

### Implementing a national monitoring framework in Bangladesh

Since 2016, the Government of Bangladesh has actively implemented the SDG national monitoring framework. A principal coordinator position was created within the Office of the Prime Minister to spearhead the process and forge coordination. Many parts of the government, including the General Economics Division of the Planning Commission and the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics have published reports to identify and map data gaps and integrate the global SDG indicators into the Seventh Five-Year Plan (2016–2020).

The data gap analysis found that data on 70 indicators are available, and 108 can be generated by modifying existing censuses and surveys (for disaggregation). An additional 63 indicators will require new surveys or censuses to generate information for measuring performance in reaching SDG targets.

The first step in developing these plans or strategies for SDG indicators is an assessment of a country's statistical capacity through consultations with all members of the national statistical system. The United Nations Statistics Division in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs carried out such an assessment as part of a pilot project in six countries—three in Africa and three in Asia. It revealed that, on average, data for only 40 of the applicable global SDG indicators (20 per cent) are currently available; another 47 global indicators (23 per cent) are considered easily feasible, meaning that the data source is, in principle, available. Moreover, existing capacity is heavily reliant on external assistance. Additional resources are required to monitor additional indicators.

## Standards for SDG data and metadata exchange will improve transparency and efficiency

Working with data for the full implementation and review of the SDGs entails exchange and sharing of a large amount of data stored in different databases maintained by the various producers. A standard known as Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX) provides a common language and vocabulary for data sharing and consumption. Since October 2016, a group of experts from countries and international agencies responsible for the development of the indicators have worked to develop an SDMX-based standard for SDG data exchange.

The first draft data structure for the SDG indicators became available in early 2018. The national statistical offices of Cambodia and the United Republic of Tanzania are currently piloting its use. Once finalized, the SDMX standard is expected to be adopted by countries and international agencies to improve data exchange, dissemination and transparency in the global and national reporting of the SDG indicators. The standard for data will be complemented by a standard for metadata.

## National reporting and dissemination platforms are key instruments for SDG implementation and review

Tools to gather, present and disseminate SDG data are key to ensuring their extensive and effective use by policymakers. National reporting and dissemination platforms for SDGs are indispensable to policymakers and, indeed, to all stakeholders for understanding where progress is being made and informing future interventions. They also serve a critical function in national data compilation, since they bring together data and metadata from across the entire statistical system. This helps ensure data quality and improve coordination of the national statistical system.

In the past, initiatives to set up online national reporting and dissemination platforms have delivered mixed results for users. A conference in early 2018 brought together more than 60 experts from national statistical offices, international and regional organizations

that support reporting and dissemination platforms in countries, as well as donors and other solution-providers. The conference focused on users' needs, reviewed best practices and showcased solutions and possible ways forward for countries. The meeting produced principles and guidelines for the development and implementation of national reporting and dissemination platforms to guide countries in the establishment of their national platforms.

### **Designing a free, reusable and customizable national reporting platform for the SDGs**

In 2016, the United States General Services Administration collaborated with the Office of Management and Budget to develop and launch an online national reporting platform for the SDGs. The innovation behind the initiative is the adaptation of an existing product with an established open-source community, offering a solution that is country-led, free for any country or organization to replicate and fully customizable. The Office for National Statistics in the United Kingdom further developed the tool and established it as its own national reporting platform for the SDGs. New enhancements include the ability to display disaggregated data for indicators—a feature that helps identify and prioritize those furthest behind. Both online platforms are works in progress. The USA-UK collaboration continues to support other countries in adopting their platforms and developing additional features, such as enhanced data visualization. For more information, see: <https://sdg.data.gov/> and <https://sustainabledevelopment-uk.github.io>.

### **Using geospatial data can ensure that no one is left behind**

Among the different categories of disaggregation called for in the 2030 Agenda, “place”, or geographic location, is critical for ensuring that no one is left behind. Geographic location is needed to know where a situation is present or where an event has occurred, and to allow decision makers to respond. Since 2011, the United Nations has made great strides in strengthening the global data ecosystem by establishing the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management. The geospatial community, working closely with the statistical community, has investigated how geospatial information can be used for improving the production of many SDG indicators.

The integration of geospatial information with data and statistics for SDGs is also instrumental in enabling data inter-operability across data ecosystems and linking data sets within and across countries. National statistical offices and national geospatial agencies are now collaborating to establish a Federated Information System for the SDGs. This hub will be a repository for national SDG information and will also transmit this information to a global data hub.

### **Providing access to geospatial and statistical data through an SDG data hub**

In November 2017, Ireland launched its national Hub for Sustainable Development Goals, an online platform that provides access to over 100 layers of geo-statistical data, data visualization tools and web applications relating to specific SDG targets. The hub is part of a broader collaboration initiated in September 2016 between the Central Statistics Office of Ireland and Ordnance Survey Ireland. The hub provides open and transparent access to integrated geospatial and statistical data in support of the government's agenda for public-sector reform.

This collaboration is clearly a boon to all stakeholders, enabling synergies across national authorities responsible for the production and dissemination of geospatial and statistical data. At the same time, it demonstrates the value of visualizing SDG statistical data within a geospatial context and re-purposing existing systems and architectures to combine text, graphs and maps to tell data stories. This tool is helping galvanize action for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at local and national levels. For more information, see: <http://irelandsdg.geohive.ie/>.

### **The United Nations World Data Forum is bringing data communities together**

Bringing together different data communities of producers and users, and harnessing the power of technology and other innovative tools are essential to fulfilling the data demands of the 2030 Agenda. The United Nations World Data Forum provides a space in which all data producers can come together as a community, have a productive dialogue with users and policymakers, and identify ways to mobilize the necessary resources for data development. The forum was established by the United Nations Statistical Commission—an intergovernmental body comprising national statistical authorities from around the world—to allow all data producers, including those outside the traditional statistical systems, to present innovative approaches for data compilation, processing and communication.

Capacity development and resource mobilization for data are central to the activities of the United Nations World Data Forum. Capacity development is guided by the Cape Town Global Action Plan, launched at the first forum in 2017. The results of a joint survey—undertaken by the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century and the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development—are a powerful reminder of the capacity needs of developing countries. Countries report that at the top of their list of most urgent needs are improved use of administrative data, better disaggregation by disability, among other dimensions, and statistics related to income, poverty and the environment.

The second United Nations World Data Forum will take place in October 2018 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. It will build on the success of the first forum, focusing on the following thematic areas:

- ▶ New approaches to capacity development for better data
- ▶ Innovations and synergies across data ecosystems
- ▶ Leaving no one behind
- ▶ Understanding the world through data
- ▶ Building trust in data and statistics
- ▶ How far have we come?



## HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM GOALS IN FOCUS

### Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

Safe drinking water and sanitation are basic human rights. Access to fresh water, in sufficient quantity and quality, is also a prerequisite to achieving many dimensions of sustainable development, including health, food security and poverty reduction. Water-related ecosystems are essential to life and have always provided natural sites for human settlements, bringing benefits such as transportation, natural purification, irrigation, flood protection and habitats for biodiversity. However, population growth, agricultural intensification, urbanization and industrial production are beginning to overwhelm and undermine nature's ability to fulfil key functions and provide key services. The challenges of meeting future water needs in a sustainable manner are daunting, but they can be overcome. The implementation of integrated water resources management at all levels (including the transboundary level) and mainstreaming water and sanitation into the policies and plans of other sectors are critical.

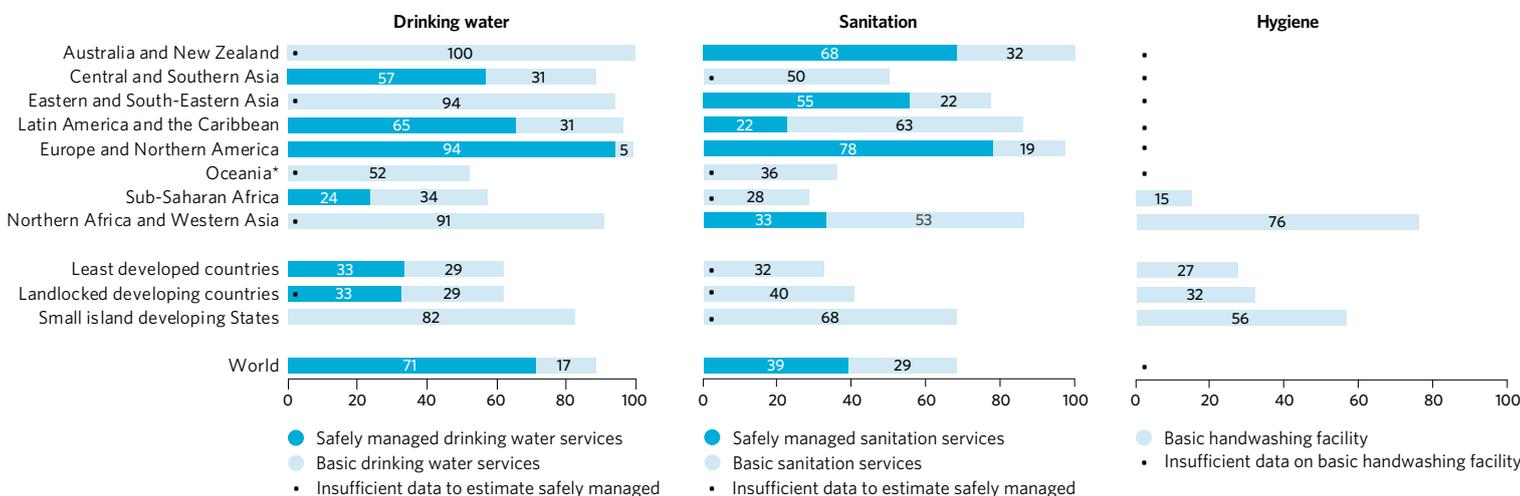


#### A majority of the world's population still lack safe sanitation, and 3 in 10 lack safe drinking water

In 2015, 5.2 billion people (71 per cent of the global population) used safely managed drinking water services—that is, an improved water source located on premises, available when needed and free from contamination. An additional 1.3 billion people (17 per cent of the population) used a basic drinking water service—an improved water source not more than 30 minutes away. This means that 844 million people still lacked even a basic level of service.

Based on estimates from 84 countries in 2015, 39 per cent of the global population used safely managed sanitation services—basic facilities that safely dispose of human waste. An additional 29 per cent of the global population used a basic sanitation service—an improved facility that is not shared. That year, 2.3 billion people lacked even a basic level of service, and 892 million people continued to practise open defecation. Only 27 per cent of the population in least developed countries had basic handwashing facilities.

Proportion of the population using safely managed and basic drinking water, sanitation and hygiene services, 2015 (percentage)

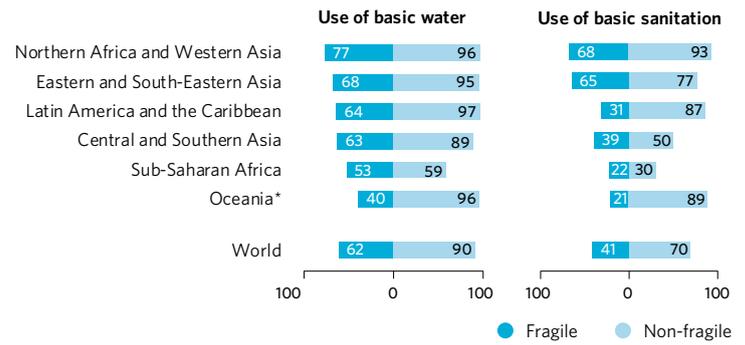


Note: Oceania\* refers to Oceania excluding Australia and New Zealand, throughout the publication.

## Conflict, violence and instability are curtailing progress on water and sanitation

Conflict, violence and instability can derail progress towards universal access to basic water and sanitation services. Using the World Bank's harmonized classification of fragile states, an estimated 484 million people worldwide lived in fragile situations in 2015. Of these, 284 million people lacked basic sanitation services and 183 million lacked basic drinking water services. Globally, people living in fragile states are twice as likely to lack basic sanitation and about four times as likely to lack basic drinking water services as populations in non-fragile situations, with significant differences observed across all regions.

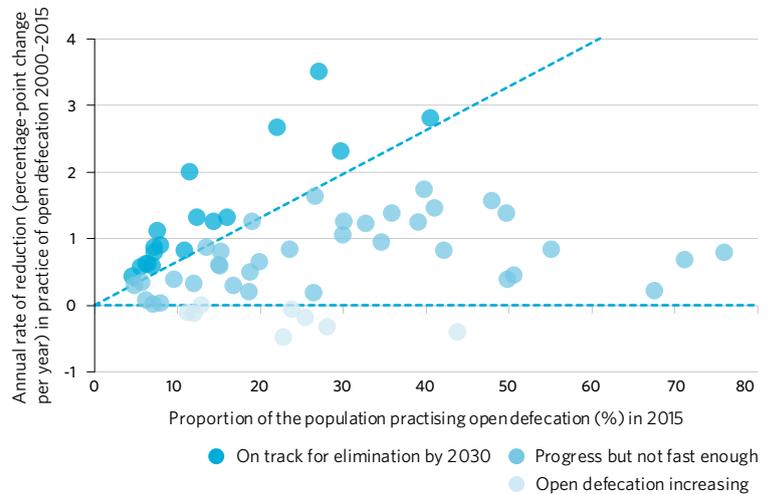
Proportion of the population using basic water and basic sanitation services in fragile and non-fragile states, 2015 (percentage)



## Accelerated progress is needed in more than 40 countries to end open defecation by 2030

Between 2000 and 2015, the proportion of the global population practising open defecation declined from 20 per cent to 12 per cent. However, faster progress will be needed to end the practice by 2030. Among the 62 countries where at least 5 per cent of the population practised open defecation in 2015, 18 countries are currently on track to meet the 2030 target. In another 36 countries, the current rate of progress is too slow to reach the target. For the remaining eight countries, open defecation rates have actually increased since 2000.

Proportion of the population practising open defecation in 2015 and annual rate of reduction in the practice of open defecation, 2000-2015 (percentage)

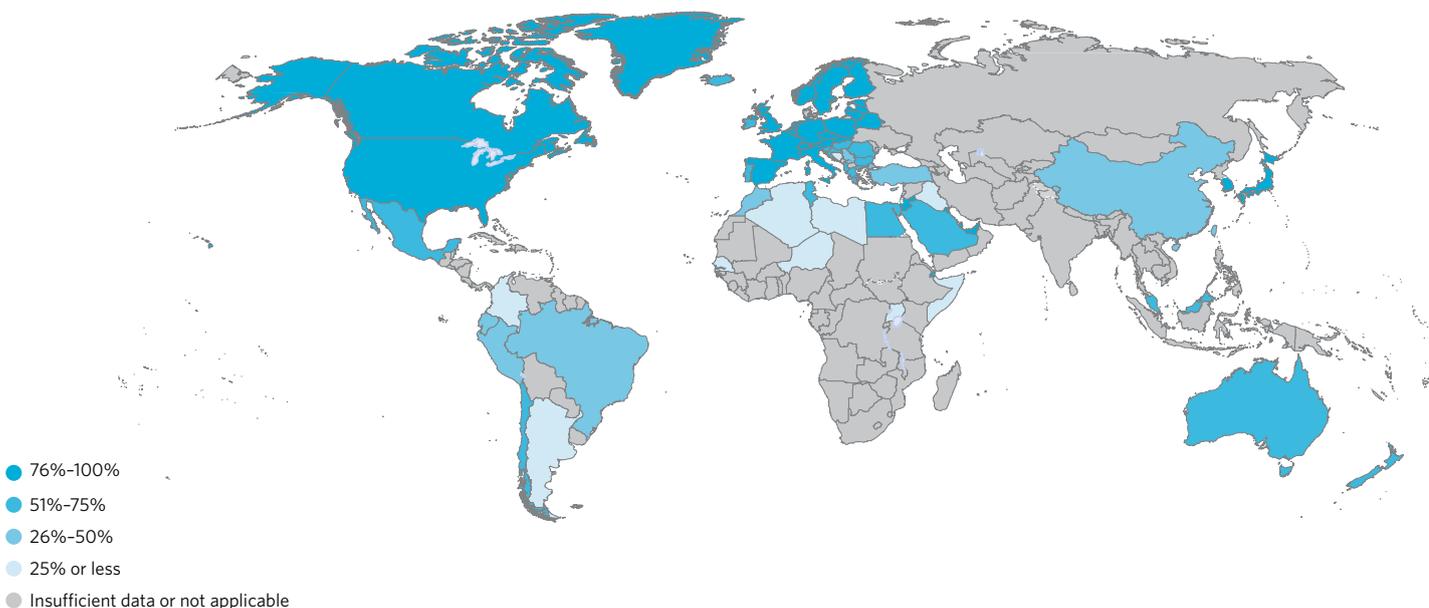


## Untreated household wastewater poses a risk to both public health and the environment

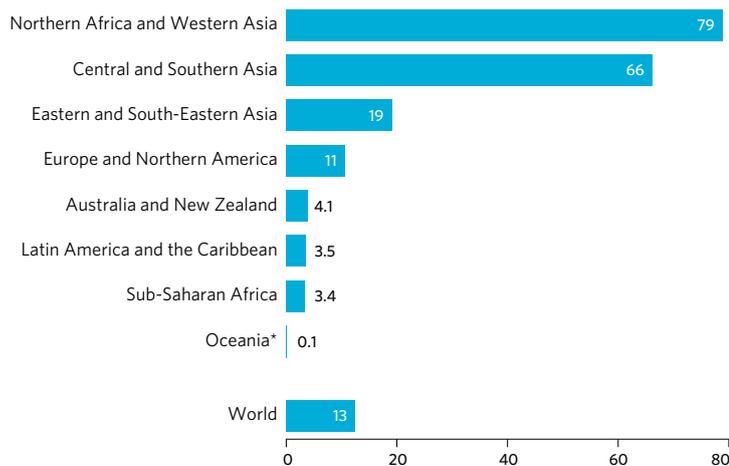
Untreated wastewater from households degrades overall water quality, posing a risk to public health. It can contaminate drinking water sources and limit opportunities for safe and productive reuse of water. Preliminary estimates from household data in 79 mostly high- and high-middle-income countries (excluding much of Africa and Asia)

show that, in 22 countries, less than 50 per cent of all household wastewater flows are safely treated. Of the 59 per cent of wastewater flows that are treated, 76 per cent are households with a sewer connection, and 18 per cent are treated through an on-site facility, such as a septic tank.

Proportion of safely treated wastewater flows from households, 2015 (percentage)



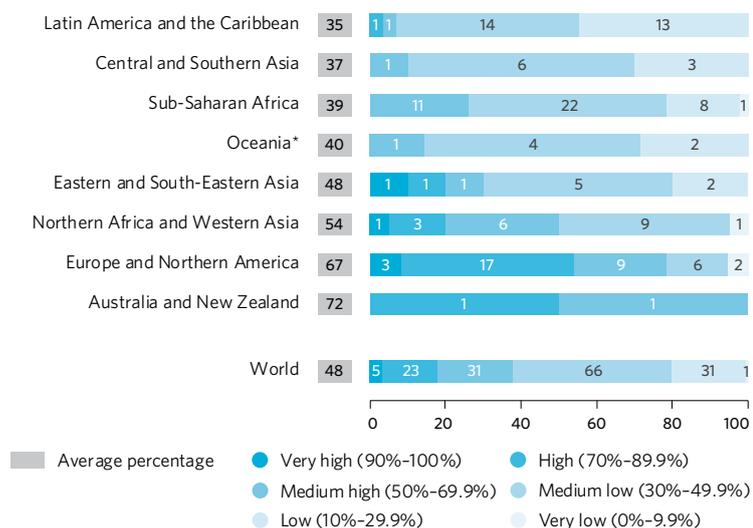
**Level of water stress: freshwater withdrawal as a proportion of available freshwater sources, around 2014 (percentage)**



**Northern Africa and Western Asia are hardest hit by water stress, indicating the strong probability of future water scarcity**

In 22 countries (mostly in Northern Africa and Western Asia and in Central and Southern Asia), water stress—defined as the ratio of freshwater withdrawn to total renewable freshwater resources—is above 70 per cent. This indicates a strong probability of future water scarcity. In 15 of these countries, withdrawals totalled more than 100 per cent of the renewable freshwater resources in the country. Such challenges are typically addressed by making use of non-conventional water resources, such as reused wastewater, desalinated water, and drainage water used directly for agriculture. Efforts in countries most affected by water stress need to focus on increasing water use productivity and efficiency through these and other methods.

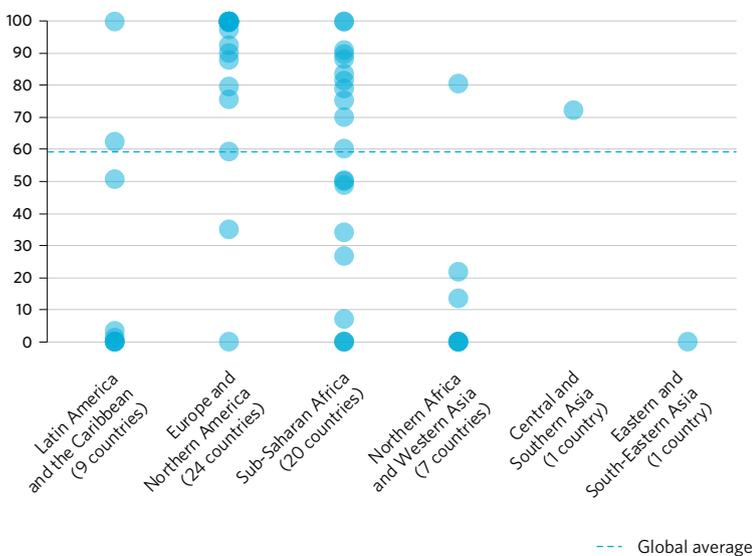
**Average percentage of implementation of integrated water resources management (IWRM) and the number of countries in each IWRM implementation category, 2017**



**Redoubled efforts are needed in most countries to better manage their water resources**

Implementation of integrated water resources management (IWRM) supports the use of water in a way that balances the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. In 2017, 157 countries reported average IWRM implementation of 48 per cent, with scores ranging from 10 per cent to 100 per cent. Despite regional differences, each region contains examples of countries with relatively high implementation, showing that the level of development is not necessarily a barrier to implementation. Comparison of surveys conducted in 2007 and 2011 on the implementation of IWRM indicates that modest progress is being made towards the target. However, based on experiences from the field, high rates of implementation typically take at least a decade to be achieved. Most countries need to accelerate current progress to come close to the target by 2030, particularly regarding financing for water resources management.

**Proportion of transboundary basin areas with an operational arrangement for water cooperation, 2017 (percentage)**



Note: No data available for Oceania\*.

**Cooperation among countries sharing rivers, lakes and aquifers needs to accelerate**

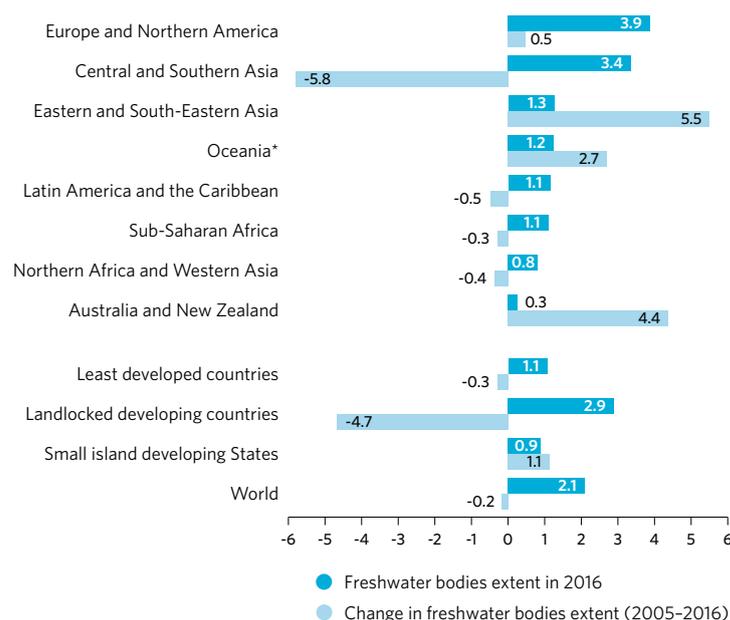
A total of 286 transboundary river and lake basins and 592 transboundary aquifers are shared by 153 countries. This reliance on transboundary waters creates interdependencies among countries on political, environmental, economic and security issues, and makes cooperation a necessity. In 2017, based on data from 62 out of 153 countries sharing transboundary waters, the average percentage of national transboundary basin area covered by an operational arrangement was 59 per cent. High levels of cooperation exist across Europe and Northern America and for many major river and lake basins in sub-Saharan Africa. Globally, the types of cooperative arrangements vary greatly in terms of their scope, function and form. Most arrangements cover rivers and lakes, but are rarely dedicated to aquifers. It is encouraging that steps are being taken to revise outdated arrangements, strengthen existing forms of cooperation, and negotiate new cooperative agreements. However, a significant effort is needed to ensure that, where appropriate, transboundary basins across the world are covered by operational arrangements.



## Lack of abundant surface water in the poorest countries heightens their vulnerability to climate change and water scarcity

Water-related ecosystems are home to diverse plant and animal species, and the source of many sustainable goods and services, including food and water for drinking, energy, agriculture and recreation. Regional trend data show that the extent of surface water increased in some regions from 2001 to 2015. However, this is likely to be largely the result of new reservoir construction, flood irrigation and extreme weather events exacerbated by climate change. Globally, slightly more than 2 per cent of land is covered by freshwater bodies, but they are unevenly distributed across countries. Europe and Northern America have almost 4 per cent of their total land covered by freshwater bodies, while coverage in least developed countries and small island developing States is only around 1 per cent. Although landlocked developing countries have a higher proportion of water bodies, this share has declined over the last decade.

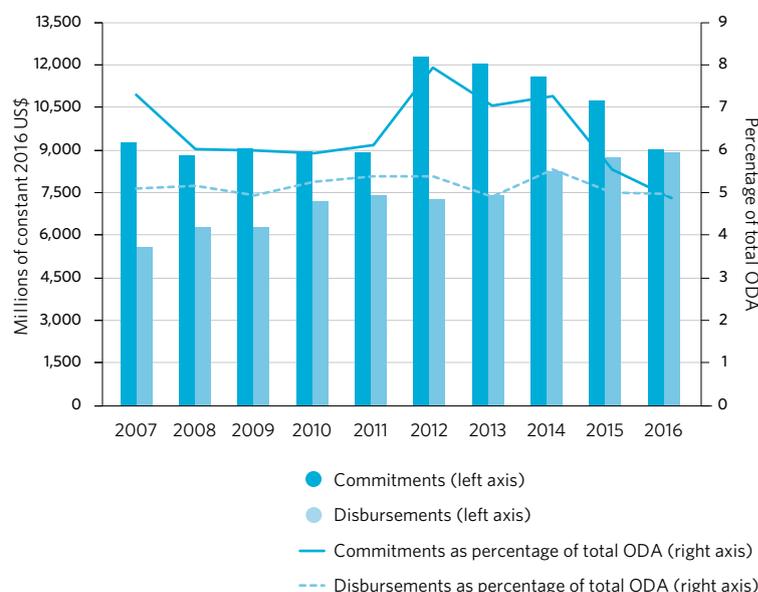
Proportion of land area covered by freshwater bodies, 2016 and change in proportion of land area covered by freshwater bodies 2005–2016 (percentage)



## Funding commitments to the water sector dropped by more than 25 per cent from 2012 to 2016

Ensuring water and sanitation for all will require financial resources and technical capacity to support and sustain needed investments in capital infrastructure. While total official development assistance (ODA) committed and disbursed across all sectors steadily increased between 2011 and 2016, the share of ODA commitments to water-related activities declined. Such activities include drinking water supply, sanitation and hygiene, agricultural water resources, flood protection and hydroelectric power. Between 2011 and 2016, commitments to the water sector decreased from a peak of \$12 billion to \$9 billion; however disbursements to water-related activities increased from \$7.4 billion to \$9 billion. As commitments fall, disbursements may also get smaller in the future. Furthermore, any reduction in external aid is likely to hamper progress towards Goal 6: a 2017 survey found that over 80 per cent of countries reported insufficient financing to meet national water, sanitation and hygiene targets.

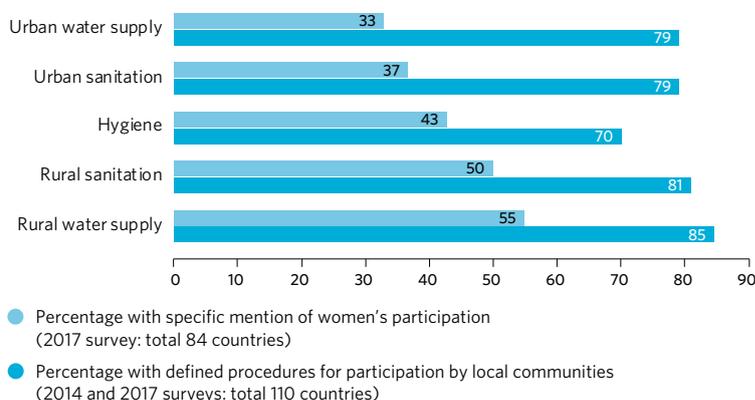
Official development assistance commitments and disbursements to the water sector, 2007–2016 (millions of constant US\$ and percentage of total ODA)



## Over half of countries have policies or procedures for the participation of women in rural water supply

Policies and procedures for participation by local governments in the management of water and sanitation can help ensure that communities are informed, consulted and represented in the delivery of these vital services. Data for 110 countries from two surveys—in 2014 and 2017—show that 85 per cent of countries reported that they have policies or procedures in place for the participation of local communities in the management of rural water supply, 81 per cent have the same for rural sanitation, and 79 per cent for urban water supply and sanitation. The role of women's participation is increasingly important as a measure of equity. Among the 84 countries participating in the 2017 survey, the number of countries that had policies specifically mentioning women's participation is higher for rural communities than for urban areas.

Proportion of countries with defined procedures in law or policy for participation by service users/communities, and proportion of countries with policies specifically mentioning women's participation, 2014 and 2017 (percentage)





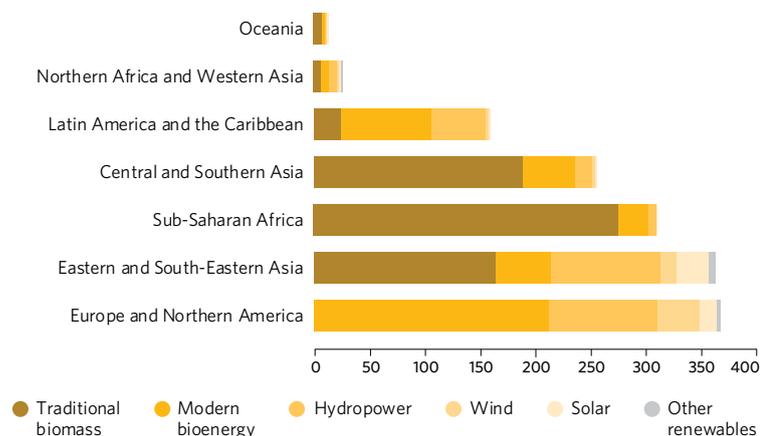
## HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM GOALS IN FOCUS

### Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

Recent advances in sustainable energy are encouraging signs for ensuring access to affordable, reliable and modern energy for all. Access to electricity is outpacing population growth in many countries. In addition, energy efficiency continues to improve, which is offsetting carbon dioxide emissions, reducing energy demand and making energy more affordable. Although renewable energy in the electricity sector has advanced rapidly, accelerated progress is also needed in the areas of transport, heating and cooling. Despite some steps forward, 41 per cent of the world's population still lack access to clean cooking fuels and technologies. Overall, progress on Goal 7 remains too slow to be on track to meet the global energy targets for 2030.



Amount of individual renewable energy sources in total final energy consumption, 2015 (millions of tons of oil equivalent)

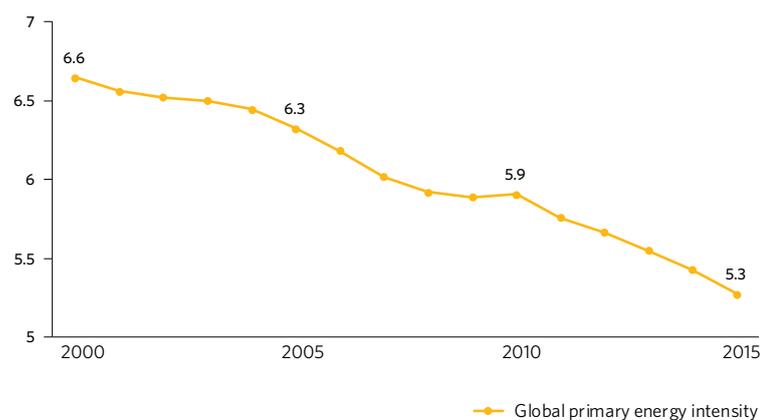


Notes: Oceania includes Australia and New Zealand. Traditional biomass is the residential use of fuelwood and charcoal in non-OECD countries. Modern bioenergy includes all other uses of biomass. Other renewables include geothermal and marine energy.

### Faster uptake of modern forms of renewable energy is needed to meet an ambitious SDG target

The share of renewables in final energy consumption increased modestly, from 17.3 per cent in 2014 to 17.5 per cent in 2015. Only 55 per cent of the renewable share was derived from modern forms of renewable energy. The remainder represents traditional uses of biomass (such as fuelwood and charcoal), of which a significant proportion is used by the 3 billion people still using polluting cookstoves. In absolute terms, renewable energy consumption grew by 18 per cent from 2000 to 2015. In 2015, electricity accounted for half of the increase (mostly from wind and solar energy); the other half was mostly bioenergy for heat and transport. Based on the current trend, the share of renewable energy in total energy consumption is projected to reach just 21 per cent by 2030, falling short of the substantial increase called for in the SDG target.

Global primary energy intensity, 2000–2015 (megajoules per 2011 US\$ PPP)



### Low- and middle-income countries are seeing the fastest declines in energy intensity, outpacing richer countries

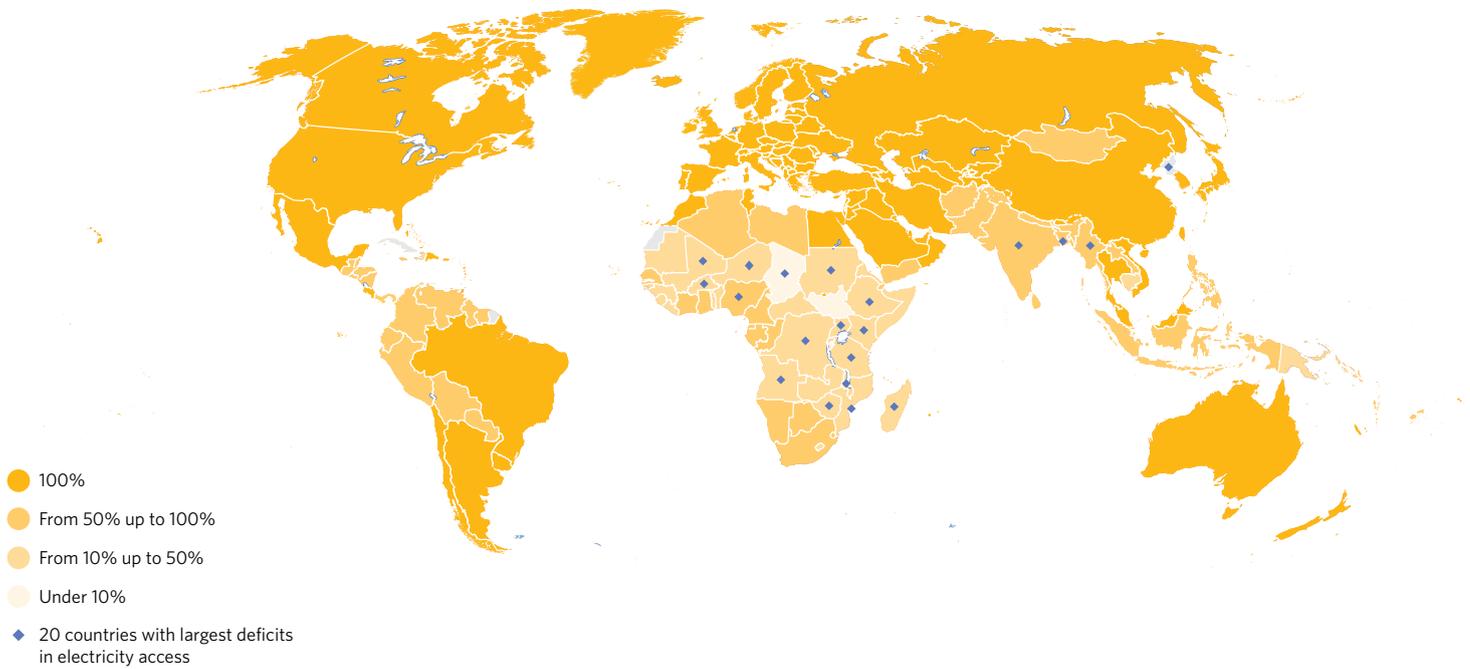
Global energy intensity—the ratio of energy used per unit of GDP—decreased by 2.8 per cent in 2015, faster than in any year since 1990 and double the rate of improvement between 1990 and 2010. High-income countries showed consistent declines, but at a slower pace than low- and middle-income countries. Emerging economies in Asia and the Pacific and in Africa have now surpassed the global rate of improvement in energy intensity, but their intensity levels are higher than the world average. Among end-use sectors, industry made significant progress, reducing intensity by 4.2 per cent in 2015. To reach the SDG target, global energy intensity needs to improve at an annual rate of 2.7 per cent over the period 2016–2030, requiring sustained momentum and the systematic adoption of energy efficiency policies in countries that are falling behind.

## Vast swaths of Africa and Asia are still without electricity, although progress is being made

From 2000 to 2016, the proportion of the global population with access to electricity increased by almost ten percentage points, reaching 87 per cent. This was the first time since 1990 that the absolute number of people living without electricity dipped below the symbolic threshold of one billion. Substantial gains in access rates were achieved in rural areas, in part due to slower population growth, but also aided by an upswing in off-grid solar electricity. Still, access rates to electricity in rural areas (at 76 per cent) are much lower than in urban areas (97 per cent), and rural residents make up 87 per cent of the global deficit in access.

The largest deficits in electricity are found in Southern Asia and sub-Saharan African. However, both regions have made substantial progress. From 2000 to 2016, the electricity access rate increased from 60 per cent to 86 per cent in Southern Asia and from 26 per cent to 43 per cent in sub-Saharan Africa. Despite these promising developments, the outlook for electrification shows that the world is not yet on track to achieve universal access by 2030. Some 40 countries have met the target since 2010; another 98 countries will need to intensify their efforts to do so.

Share of the population with access to electricity, 2016 (percentage)

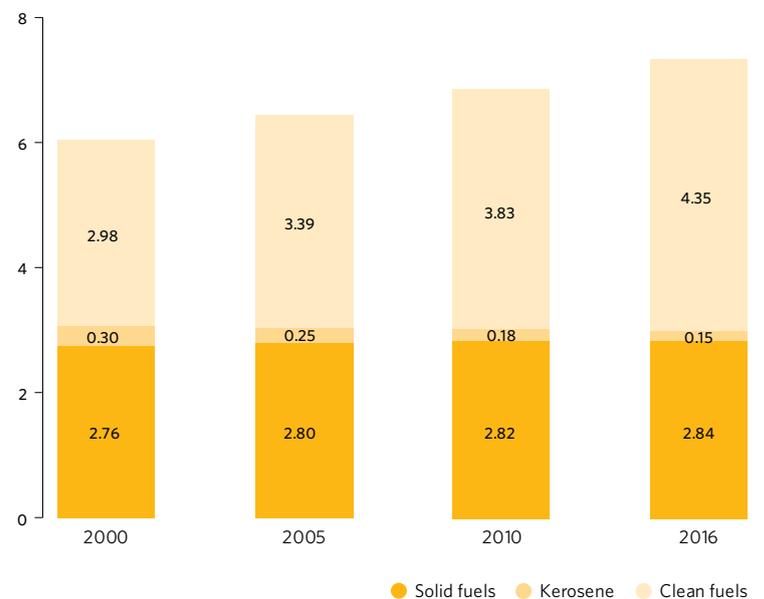


## A staggering 41 per cent of the global population still lack access to clean cooking fuels and technologies

Over the period 2000–2016, 1.4 billion people gained access to clean cooking fuels and technologies. However, these advancements were mostly offset by population growth during this period. In 2016, 59 per cent of the population had access to clean cooking fuels and technologies, an increase of only 10 percentage points since 2000.

The health and well-being of some 3 billion people are adversely impacted by the lack of clean cooking fuels. This is especially true for women and children, who are typically the main procurers and users of household energy. Sub-Saharan Africa, Oceania\* and many parts of Asia have the largest populations using polluting fuels. In 2016, some 2.8 billion people still used solid fuels with inefficient stoves, leading to high levels of household air pollution. If current trends continue, 2.3 billion people will continue to use traditional cooking methods in 2030. The solution lies in transitioning to cleaner fuels and technologies, like gas and electricity, and improvements in stove efficiency. Addressing issues of affordability, lack of consumer awareness about the benefits of clean cooking, and minimal financing for producers of clean cooking energy technologies are key to accelerating the rate of access to clean cooking.

Number of people with primary reliance on clean fuels, kerosene and solid fuels, 2000, 2005, 2010 and 2016 (billions of people)



Note: Solid fuels include wood, coal, charcoal, dung and crop waste.



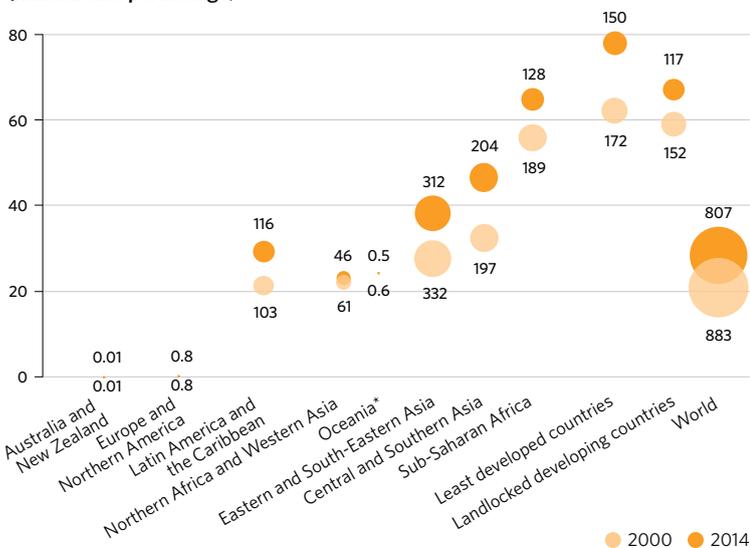
## HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM GOALS IN FOCUS

### Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

As the world becomes increasingly urbanized, many countries face growing numbers of slum dwellers, worsening air quality and insufficient basic urban services and infrastructure. Urban sprawl continues, with the physical expansion of cities increasing at a rate 1.5 times that of population growth, highlighting the need for better urban planning and more efficient transportation systems. To address many of these challenges, 152 countries have developed national urban policies that support sustainable urbanization. Although progress is being made, efforts must be redoubled to ensure that all urban inhabitants have access to safe and adequate housing, clean air and basic services, and live in resilient and sustainable communities.



Number and proportion of the urban population living in slums, 2000 and 2014 (millions and percentage)

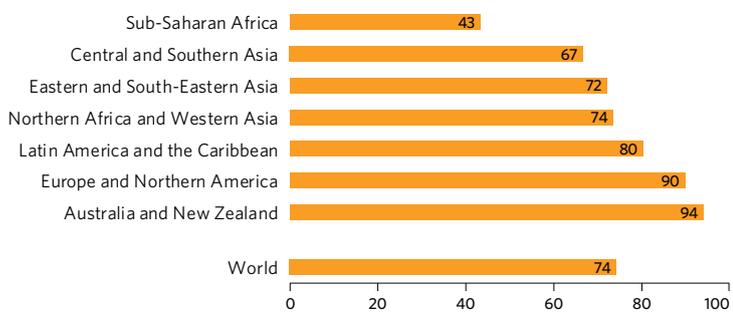


Notes: The size of the bubbles represents the number (in millions) of people living in slums; the location of the bubbles on the vertical axis represents the proportion of the population living in slums. For the first time, data this year include developed as well as developing countries. For this reason, values may be slightly different than those presented in previous reports.

### Urban population growth is outpacing improvements in slum conditions

Over the last 15 years, countries have steadily improved urban slums, managing to move millions of people out of substandard conditions and providing them with adequate housing. As a result, between 2000 and 2014, the proportion of the world's urban population living in slums declined by 20 per cent (from 28.4 to 22.8 per cent). However, the rate of new home construction lagged far behind the rate of urban population growth, and the number of people living in slums actually increased from 807 million to 883 million over this period. The majority of those living in slums are located in three regions: Eastern and South-Eastern Asia (332 million), Central and Southern Asia (197 million) and sub-Saharan Africa (189 million).

Proportion of the municipal solid waste generated that is collected, 2001-2015 (data from 214 cities/municipalities in 103 countries) (percentage)



Notes: Oceania\* only has data for one city and therefore does not appear in the chart. Global and regional averages are calculated based on available city data and may change in future reports as more comprehensive city data become available.

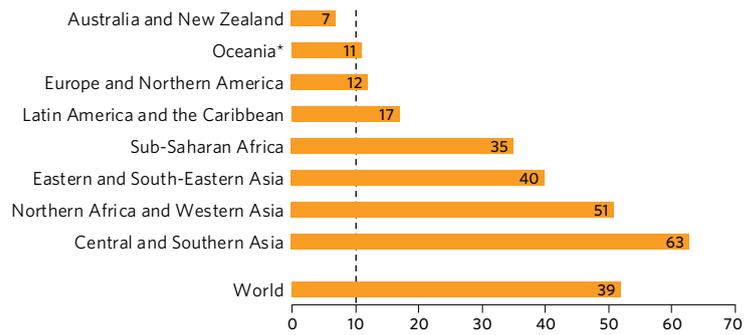
### Managing solid waste remains a major environmental challenge in cities in several regions

The safe collection, removal, treatment and disposal of solid waste are among the most critical services in the urban environment. As urban populations grow, income levels rise and economies become more consumer oriented, the volume of solid waste generated will only get larger. Data from 214 cities or municipalities in 103 countries show that about three quarters of municipal solid waste generated is collected. In sub-Saharan Africa, less than half of all municipal solid waste generated is collected, with adverse effects on the health of residents. Moreover, even when waste is collected, it is often not treated and disposed of in a sustainable and environmentally sound manner. Managing such waste continues to be a major challenge facing urban areas in several regions.

## Ninety per cent of urban dwellers worldwide are breathing unsafe air, resulting in millions of deaths

Air pollution threatens the health of most city dwellers. In 2016, in all regions except Australia and New Zealand, the annual mean levels of fine particulate matter (PM2.5) exceeded the World Health Organization air quality guidelines of 10 micrograms or less per cubic metre. In the Central and Southern Asia, and the Northern Africa and Western Asia regions, the mean level was more than five times the guideline value. This means that 9 out of 10 people living in urban areas lacked clean air, and more than half of these people were exposed to air pollution levels at least 2.5 times higher than the safe threshold of particulate matter concentration. In 2016, an estimated 4.2 million people died as a result of high levels of ambient air pollution. Air pollution does not recognize borders, and improving air quality demands sustained and coordinated government action at all levels.

Annual exposure to ambient fine particulate matter (PM2.5) in urban areas, population weighted (micrograms per cubic metre)

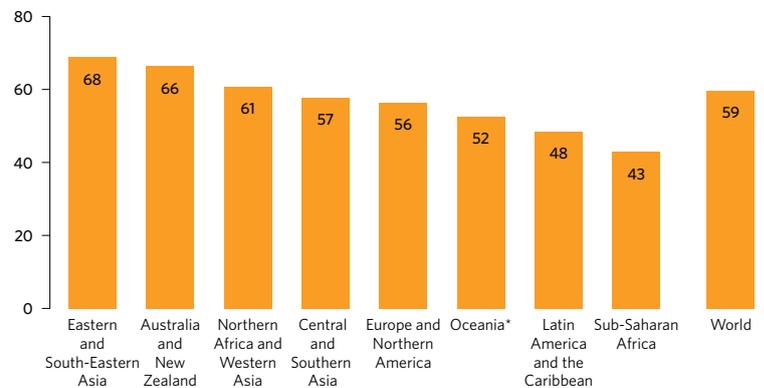


Note: The vertical line represents the World Health Organization air quality guidelines value for particulate matter (PM 2.5) of 10 micrograms or less per cubic metre.

## More than half of the built-up areas in cities worldwide are public open spaces

Public open spaces in the world's cities—parks, boulevards, gardens, playgrounds, streets—play a vital role in social and economic life by providing a place where people can interact. The added benefits of such spaces often include cleaner air and increased walkability, which contribute to physical and mental health. Land use planners recommend that 15 to 20 per cent of urban land be allocated to public spaces (excluding streets) and between 30 and 35 per cent to streets. Data from 231 cities show that 59 per cent of their built-up land consists of urbanized open spaces (approximately half of which is occupied by streets). Latin America and the Caribbean and sub-Saharan Africa are the only regions where this proportion is below 50 per cent for the sample of cities included.

Share of built-up area that is urbanized open space, 2014 (data from 231 cities) (percentage)

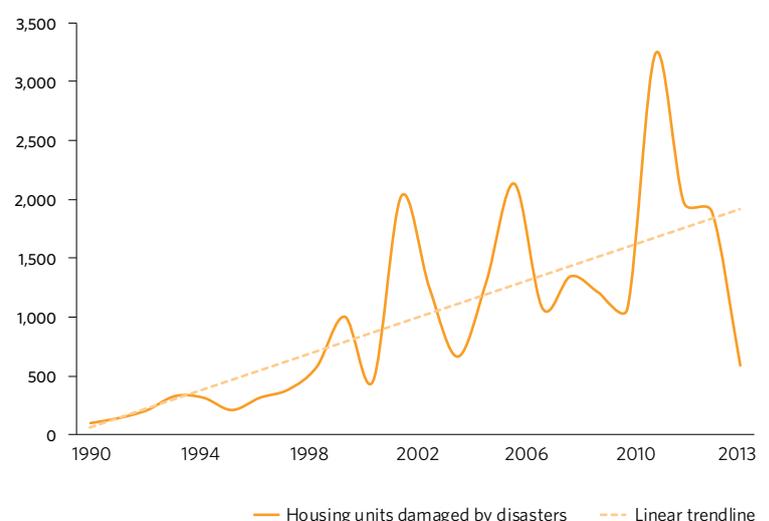


Note: Global and regional averages are calculated based on available city data and may change in future reports as more comprehensive city data become available.

## Disaster risk reduction measures are urgently needed to strengthen the resilience of the world's cities

Reported damage to housing attributed to disasters shows a statistically significant rise from 1990 onwards (even when taking into account the observed high degree of year-to-year variance). Meanwhile, the number of deaths from small- to medium-scale disasters has also demonstrated an upward trend over the same period. Low-income households and small businesses are affected more frequently than middle- and high-income households. This is a result of high exposure to hazards, vulnerable conditions and lower coping capacity. To save lives, prevent and reduce losses, and strengthen the resilience of cities, it is essential to promote public and private investments that take disaster risk reduction into consideration. Many countries have developed measures to reduce disaster risk in vulnerable urban areas, including investments in drainage infrastructure in flood-prone areas, risk-informed urban and land use planning, and appropriate building codes and other regulations.

Total number of housing units damaged by disasters annually, 1990–2013 (data from 90 countries) (thousands)



## HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM GOALS IN FOCUS

### Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

How societies use and manage their natural resources fundamentally shapes their quality of life. One of the core objectives of the 2030 Agenda is to decouple economic growth from resource use and environmental degradation, notably through improved resource efficiency, while improving people’s well-being. This can occur through a shift towards more sustainable consumption and production patterns. Such a shift requires national public policies that create conducive environments, social and physical infrastructure and markets, and a transformation of business practices along global value chains.



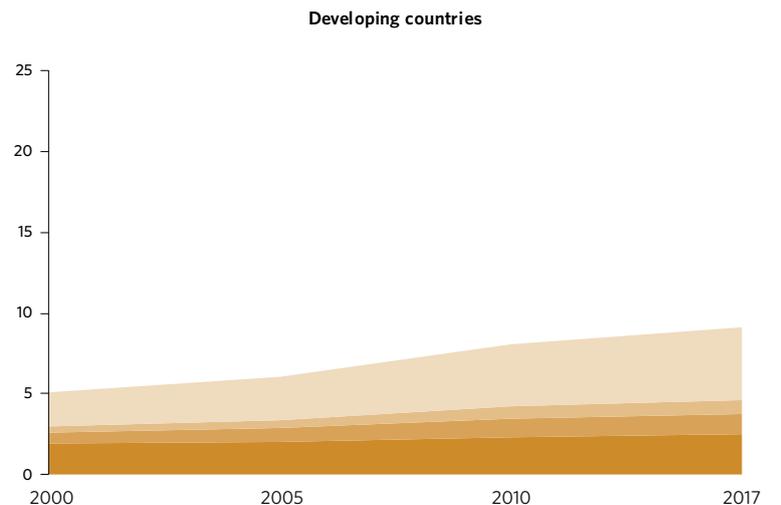
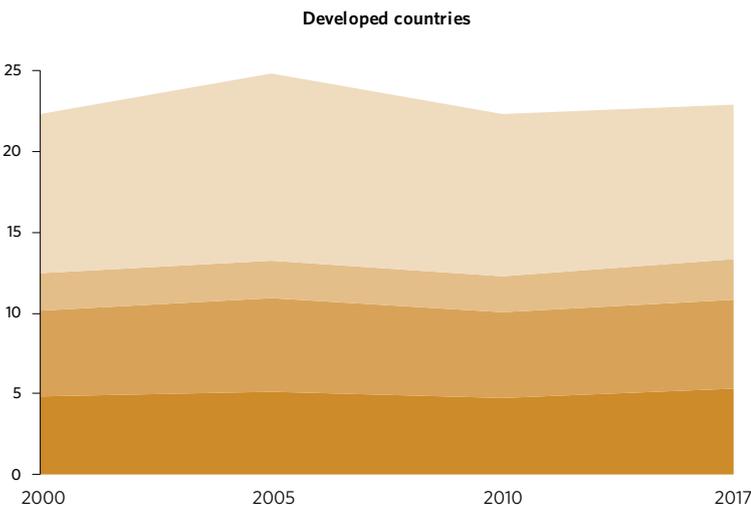
#### The material footprint of developing countries has grown, but is still far smaller than that of developed countries

The “material footprint” of an economy refers to the total amount of raw materials extracted globally—across the entire supply chain—to meet that economy’s final consumption demand. People rely on such materials to meet basic needs—for food, clothing, water, shelter, infrastructure and many other aspects of life. Across much of the developing world, an increase in the material footprint is required to enhance the living standards of growing populations. At the same time, it is important to decrease reliance on raw materials and increase their recycling to reduce environmental pressure and impact.

The per-capita material footprint of developing countries grew from five metric tons in 2000 to nine metric tons in 2017, representing a significant improvement in material standard of living. Most of the increase is attributed to a rise in the use of non-metallic minerals, pointing to growth in the areas of infrastructure and construction.

For all types of materials, developed countries have at least double the per-capita footprint of developing countries. In particular, the material footprint for fossil fuels is more than four times higher for developed than developing countries. Because fossil fuels directly impact the environment in various ways, the need to decouple their use from economic growth is key to achieving sustainable consumption and production.

Material footprint per capita by type of raw material, 2000–2017 (metric tons per capita)



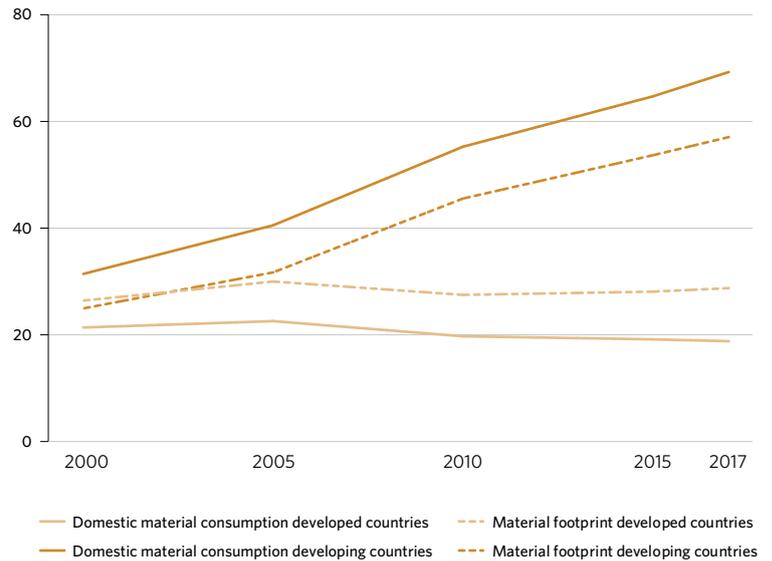
● Biomass ● Fossil fuels ● Metal ores ● Non-metallic minerals

## Extraction of raw materials in the developing world is supporting the consumption patterns of richer nations

Domestic material consumption (DMC) refers to materials extracted within a country for use in production processes. Material footprint, on the other hand, takes into account resources found within a country or imported, and is calculated on the basis of final demand. If the DMC is higher than the material footprint, it indicates that a country is exporting materials, usually minerals or biomass. Conversely, if the DMC is lower, it suggests that materials are being imported.

Over the last two decades, DMC has risen rapidly in developing countries to meet the material needs of a growing population and to support improved standards of living. The data also show that a large gap exists between the DMC and the material footprint of both developed and developing countries, but in opposite directions. This implies that at least some of the materials extracted from developing countries are being used to satisfy the consumption habits of developed countries. Although developed countries have not increased either their total material footprint or their DMC, they have not been able to close the gap between their DMC and material footprint.

Domestic material consumption and material footprint, 2000-2017 (billion metric tons)

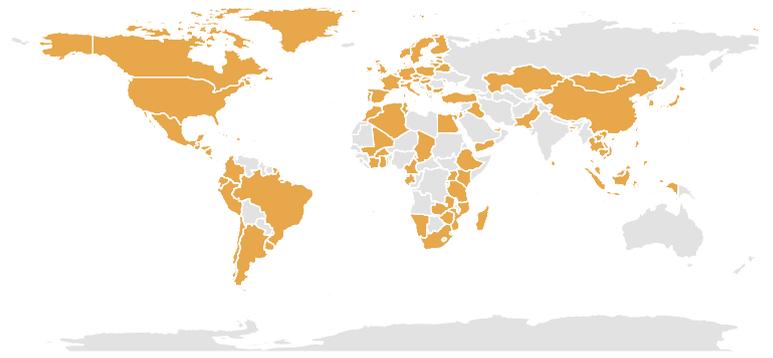


## In part prompted by the SDGs, more and more countries are developing policies to promote sustainable consumption and production

Sustainable consumption and production policies are a key mechanism for improving living standards without compromising the resource needs of future generations. Such policies aim to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, increase resource efficiency and promote more sustainable lifestyles.

The development of such instruments has intensified through the adoption of Agenda 2030. In 2018, 71 countries plus the European Union reported on macroeconomic policies or other regulatory, voluntary or economic instruments that supported the shift towards sustainable consumption and production patterns across their economies or specific sectors. Taking into account information collected from previous surveys, a total of 108 countries have or had national policies and initiatives relevant to this shift. Europe has taken the lead in that movement, having initiated nearly half of the policy instruments identified, followed by Latin America and the Caribbean and sub-Saharan Africa.

Countries with national policies and initiatives relevant to sustainable consumption and production, 2015-2018



## More multinationals and other large companies are reporting on sustainability, but the practice needs to expand to smaller enterprises



A sustainability report by a company provides information on the economic, environmental and social impacts of its activities. Sustainability reporting is an important tool for corporate transparency and accountability, one that plays a key role in attaining the Goals of the 2030 Agenda. While still relatively new, sustainability reporting is gaining momentum, driven by new

private sector partnerships to achieve the SDGs along with growing interest from companies (especially large companies), regulators, investors and other stakeholders. According to a recent report from KPMG, 93 per cent of the world's 250 largest companies (in terms of revenue) are now reporting on sustainability, as are three quarters of the top 100 companies in 49 countries.

That said, more methodological work is required to develop a set of core corporate sustainability indicators and align these with overall SDG monitoring. The main challenges are to integrate environmental, social and governance reporting into existing company financial and non-financial reporting models; facilitate harmonization of sustainability reporting requirements and practices; and assure the comparability and reliability of information and data provided by companies on non-financial issues. Another challenge is the lack of expertise and resources for reporting by small and medium-sized enterprises, which play a key role in some economies, especially in developing countries.



## HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM GOALS IN FOCUS

### Goal 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

Implementation of Goal 15 is showing some encouraging signs. Forest loss has slowed. A growing number of forest areas are being sustainably managed, integrating policies and practices that protect forest ecosystems and address drivers of degradation. All regions continue to make progress on conferring official protection status to areas critical to global biodiversity. However, land degradation is increasing due to competing pressures for food, energy and shelter. Biodiversity loss is occurring at an alarming rate. In addition, invasive species, the illicit poaching and trafficking of wildlife, and falling trends in ODA in support of biodiversity continue to thwart efforts to protect and restore vital ecosystems and species. Accelerated action is urgently needed to preserve and promote the sustainable use of ecosystems on which all life depends.



#### Full implementation of sustainable forest management plans is needed to halt deforestation

The Earth's forest areas continue to shrink, down from 4.1 billion hectares in 2000 (31.2 per cent of total land area) to about 4 billion hectares (30.7 per cent of total land area) in 2015. The loss of forests has been uneven across regions, with the most dramatic declines occurring in sub-Saharan Africa, South-Eastern Asia and Latin America. This is primarily due to the conversion of forest to agricultural land, which is responsible for an estimated 73 per cent of forest loss in tropical and subtropical regions. Despite the decline in forest area, the rate of forest loss has dropped by 25 per cent since the period 2000-2005.

Sustainable forest management has demonstrated positive results in combating the continued loss of forests. Encouragingly, more land has been designated as permanent forest areas, coupled with planning, monitoring and stakeholder engagement and adoption of legal frameworks for sustainable forest management. Globally, the proportion of protected forest areas and forests under long-term management plans is increasing. Moreover, 2017 data show a positive global trend in forest areas that have been independently certified as sustainably managed, with increases in most regions. However, deforestation and forest degradation are still concerns in some regions, particularly tropical regions, pointing to the need to fully implement sustainable forest- and land-management practices.

#### Progress toward sustainable forest management dashboard

Region	Forest area annual net change rate, change from 2005-2010 to 2010-2015	Above-ground biomass stock in forest, change from 2010 to 2015	Proportion of forest area within legally established protected areas, change from 2010 to 2015	Proportion of forest area under a long-term forest management plan, change from 2005 to 2010	Forest area certified, change from 2015 to 2017
Central and Southern Asia	▲	▼	●	▲	▼
Eastern and South-Eastern Asia	▲	▼	▲	▲	▲
Northern Africa and Western Asia	▼	▲	▲	▲	●
Sub-Saharan Africa	●	●	▲	▲	▲
Europe and Northern America	▲	▲	●	●	▲
Latin America and the Caribbean	●	▲	▲	▲	▲
Oceania*	●	●	▲	▲	▼
World	●	●	▲	▲	▲

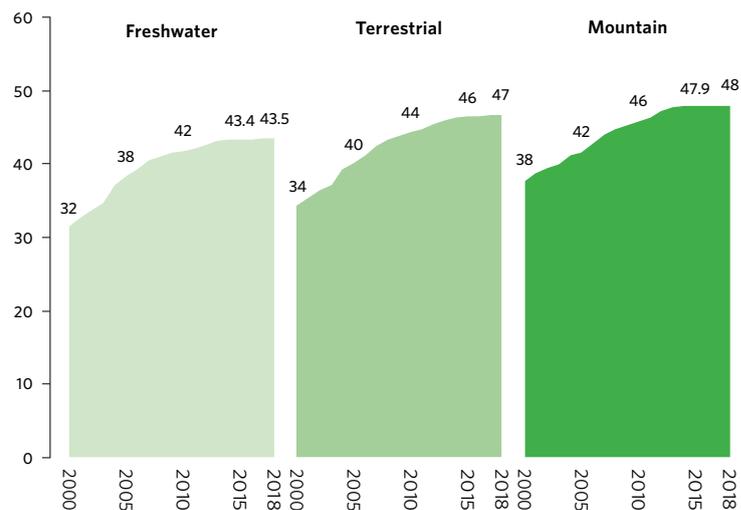
▲ Positive change ● No/small change ▼ Negative change

Note: The forest area annual net change rate is calculated using a compound annual change formula.

## More areas critical to global biodiversity are being protected

Areas critical to global biological diversity are known as key biodiversity areas (KBAs). The proportion of KBAs covered by protected areas continues to increase in freshwater, terrestrial and mountain ecosystems. On average, for all three types of ecosystems, the proportion of KBAs covered by protected areas increased by more than 10 percentage points from 2000 to 2018. Europe and Northern America has the highest average coverage of protected freshwater, terrestrial and mountain KBAs (at 55 per cent, 63 per cent and 68 per cent, respectively). This region also has the highest annual average growth rates for terrestrial and freshwater KBAs that are protected. Oceania has the fastest annual average growth rate for mountain KBAs covered by protected areas (at 1 per cent annually) and has seen the largest overall increase since 2000 (19 per cent). The protection of KBAs safeguards critical natural capital and ecosystem functions that support human well-being and enhance the resiliency of communities.

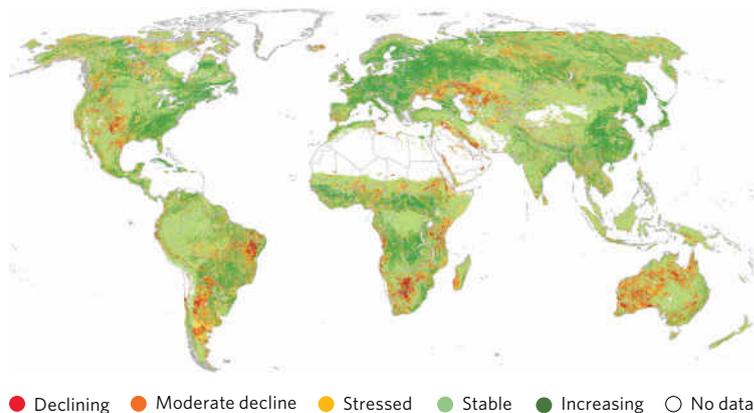
Average proportion of each freshwater, terrestrial and mountain KBA that is covered by protected areas, 2000–2018 (percentage)



## Land degradation threatens the livelihoods of over one billion people

The degradation of soil and land continues due to heightened competition for land use, undermining the security and development of all countries. From 1999 to 2013, approximately one fifth of the Earth's land surface covered by vegetation showed persistent and declining trends in productivity, primarily due to land and water use and management. Up to 24 million square kilometres of land are affected (an area the size of China, India and the United States of America combined), including 19 per cent cropland, 16 per cent forest land, 19 per cent grassland and 28 per cent rangeland. For grasslands and rangelands, the global extent of areas experiencing declining productivity exceeds those showing increases. South America and Africa are most affected by diminished productivity: in some dryland areas, advanced stages of land degradation are leading to desertification. Reversing these worrying trends through sustainable land management is key to improving the livelihoods and resilience of over 1 billion people inhabiting degraded lands.

Global map of land productivity, 1999–2013

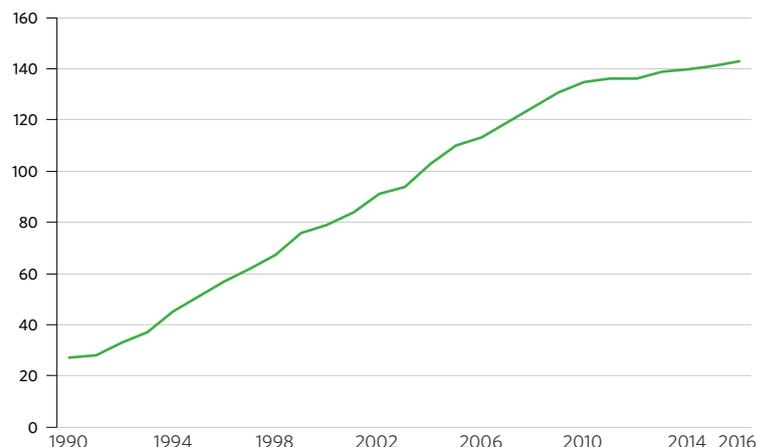


Note: The map shows five classes of persistent land productivity trajectories over the period 1999–2013. Land productivity is an essential variable for detecting and monitoring active land transformations typically associated with land degradation processes. It can be expressed as an equivalent of terrestrial net primary productivity per unit of area and time, and reflects the overall capacity of land to support biodiversity and provide ecosystem services.

## Action to combat invasive species is intensifying, though they remain a major contributor to biodiversity loss

Invasive alien species, including plants, animals, fungi and microorganisms, are recognized as one of the most serious causes of biodiversity loss and decline, after habitat loss. The impact is most severe for small island developing States. In response, the number of countries that have enacted national legislation to prevent and manage the spread of such species has increased by 19 per cent since 2010. Moreover, three quarters of countries that are party to the Convention on Biological Diversity have included relevant targets in their national biodiversity strategies. Over 88 per cent of 81 countries surveyed have a government department or national agency responsible for managing invasive species. However, over a third of these countries have no allocated budget for this effort and have not accessed any global mechanism to seek funding. To compound the problem, the overall rate of biological invasions shows no sign of slowing down, with growth in both the number of invasive species and their spread due to increased trade and transport.

Cumulative number of countries reporting to the Convention on Biological Diversity on national legislation relevant to the prevention or control of invasive alien species (1990–2016)





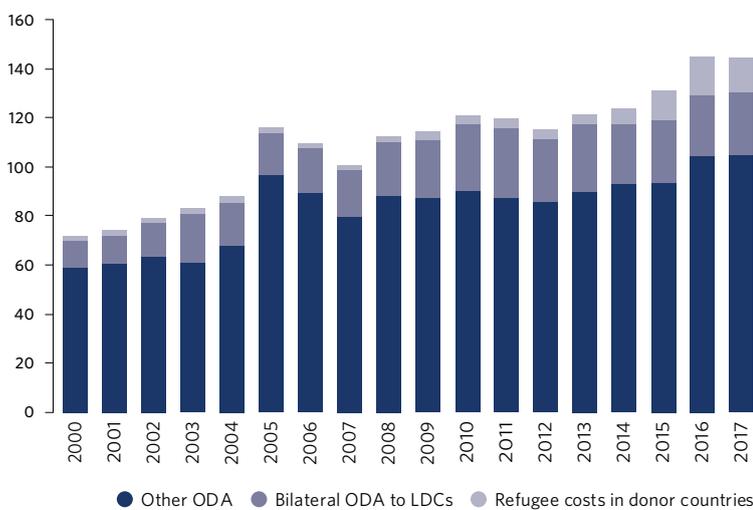
## HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM GOALS IN FOCUS

### Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

While primary responsibility for achieving the ambitious Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda rests with individual countries, international support and partnerships are critical, especially for the poorest countries and for countries facing special challenges due to their geographic location. Goal 17 seeks to strengthen global partnerships to achieve the Agenda’s goals, bringing together national governments, the international community, civil society, the private sector and other actors.



Net official development assistance from OECD-DAC countries, 2000–2017 (billions of constant 2016 US\$)

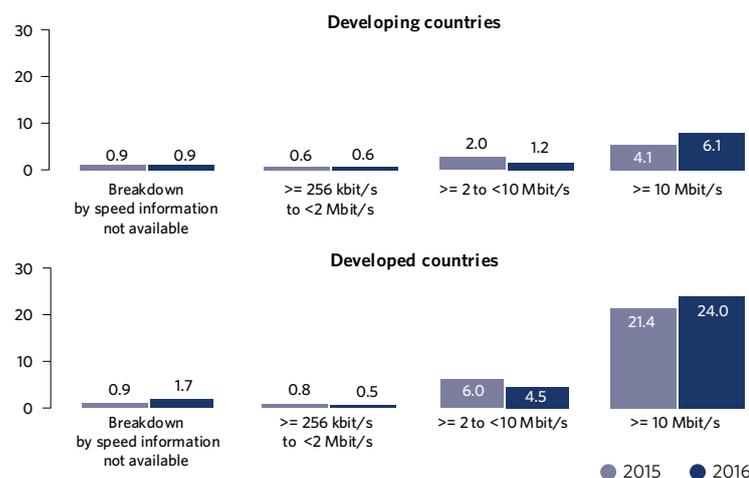


#### Official development assistance dropped slightly in 2017, due to lower costs for refugee assistance

In 2017, net official development assistance (ODA) from member countries of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) totalled \$146.6 billion. This represents a slight drop (of 0.6 per cent) in real terms from the 2016 level. The decline is mainly attributed to lower spending on refugees inside donor countries: in 2017, DAC countries reportedly spent \$14.2 billion, or 9.7 per cent of total ODA, to host refugees in their countries; this represents a drop of 13.6 per cent in real terms compared to 2016. Bilateral ODA from DAC countries to LDCs increased by 4.0 per cent in real terms since 2016.

The United Nations has set a benchmark for ODA contributions of at least 0.7 per cent of a country’s gross national income (GNI). However, only five DAC countries—Denmark, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom—met this target. Overall, ODA remained at 0.31 per cent of GNI in 2017. Humanitarian aid totalled \$15.5 billion in 2017, an increase of 6.1 per cent in real terms compared to 2016.

Fixed-broadband subscriptions per 100 inhabitants in developing and developed countries, by type of speed, 2015 and 2016



#### High-speed fixed broadband Internet connection remains largely inaccessible across the developing world

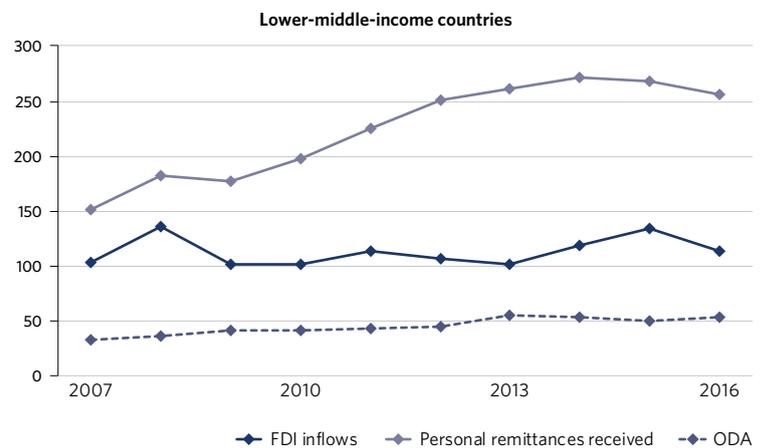
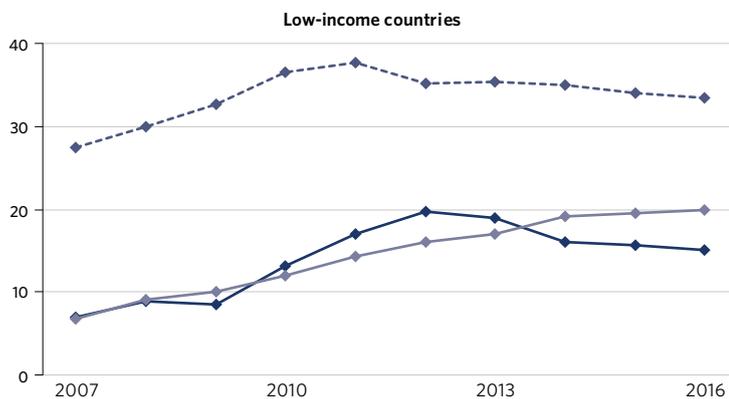
Despite a global rise in subscriptions for high-speed fixed broadband, access to this type of Internet connection remains largely unavailable for residents across the developing world. In 2016, only 6 per cent of the population in these countries had access to high-speed fixed broadband Internet, compared to 24 per cent in the developed regions. Such access can enhance international cooperation, improve access to science, technology and innovation, and facilitate knowledge-sharing. Conversely, limitations in the capacity and speed of fixed-broadband connections affect the quality and functionality of this development tool, widening existing inequalities.

## Remittances are a lifeline for families and communities in low- and lower-middle-income countries

Together, the volume of foreign direct investment (FDI), ODA and remittances by international migrants to low-income countries grew from \$41.2 billion in 2007 to \$71.4 billion in 2013, then dropped slightly to \$68.5 billion in 2016. Most of the increase is attributed to the steady rise of remittance inflows, from \$6.8 billion in 2007 to \$19.9 billion in 2016. ODA remained the largest source of external financing for low-income countries, while in lower-middle-income countries, remittances accounted for most (61 per cent) of the external financial flows. Flows to lower-middle-income countries grew from \$287.9 billion in 2007 to \$452.9 billion in 2015, then dropped slightly to \$422.1 billion in 2016.

Despite the upward trend in volume over the last decade, the growth of ODA and FDI has stagnated over the last several years. Compared to the two other types of external finance, personal remittances tend to be a more reliable, less volatile, source of income. In 2016, remittances to low- and lower-middle-income countries were more than three times the amount of ODA and were greater than ODA and FDI combined. Along with FDI and ODA, remittances can ease the credit constraints of poor households, facilitate asset accumulation and business investments, and reduce poverty.

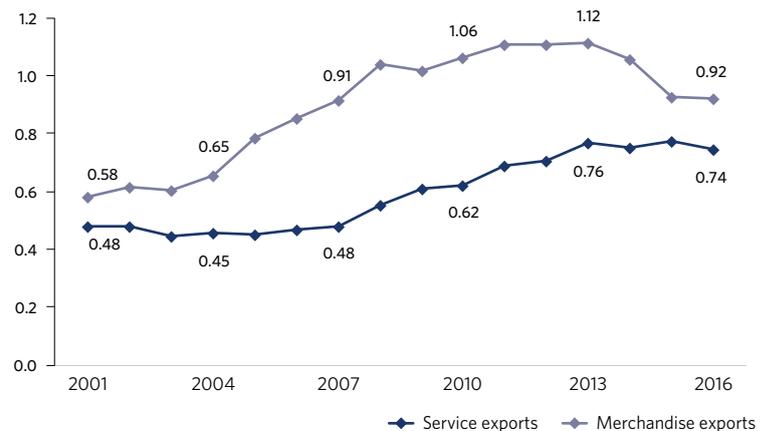
Volume of foreign direct investment (FDI), ODA and personal remittances flows, 2007-2016 (billions of current US\$)



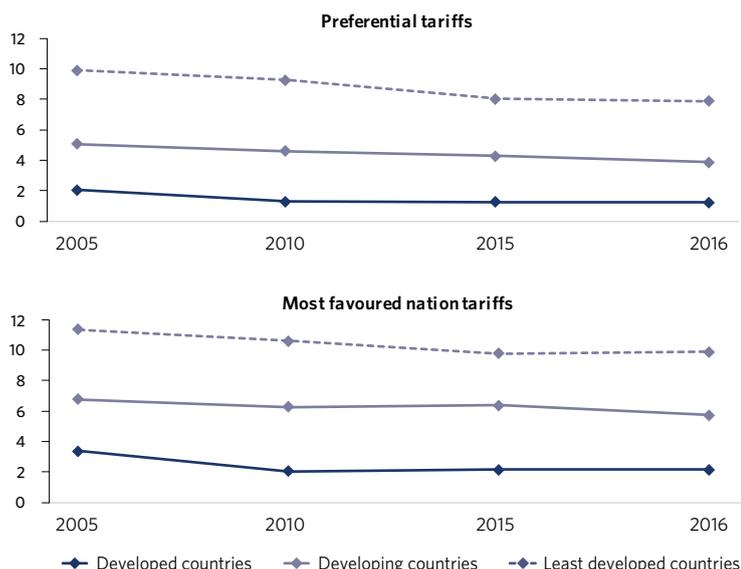
## Market shares of developing regions and LDCs have declined

Stagnation in global trade since 2011 has been accompanied by a break in the expansion of world market shares among developing regions and LDCs. Among developing regions, the share of global merchandise exports declined for two consecutive years: from 45.4 per cent in 2014 to 44.2 per cent in 2016, a sharp contrast to an average annual increase of 1.2 percentage points between 2001 and 2012. Among LDCs, the share of global merchandise exports decreased from 1.1 per cent in 2013 to 0.9 per cent in 2016, compared to a rise from 0.6 per cent to 1.1 per cent between 2000 and 2013. A similar trend was seen for service exports: the LDC share of such exports stood at 0.74 per cent in 2016, a slight drop from the 2013 level. Much of the decline in their share of global exports can be attributed to a drop in commodity prices, since exports from many LDCs are concentrated in primary commodities such as minerals, ores and fuels.

Share of global merchandise and service exports from least developed countries, 2001-2016 (percentage)



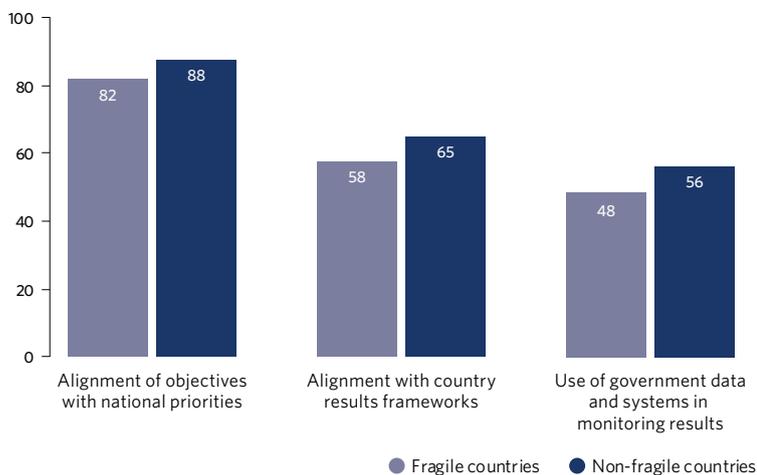
**Trade-weighted average of import tariffs applied under preferential and most favoured nation agreements, 2005-2016 (percentage)**



**Tariffs on imports continue to fall for developed and developing countries alike**

For all groups of countries, tariffs on imports levied under preferential trade agreements, which include bilateral and regional free-trade agreements, have been declining over time. In 2016, the trade-weighted average preferential tariff rate applied to imports from LDCs was 7.9 per cent, a 2 percentage-point drop from 2005. For developing regions, the average preferential tariff rate in 2016 was 3.9 per cent, a drop of 1.2 percentage points over the same period. Most favoured nation tariff rates, which member countries of the World Trade Organization apply to one another unless they are part of a preferential trade agreement, have also declined for all groups of countries.

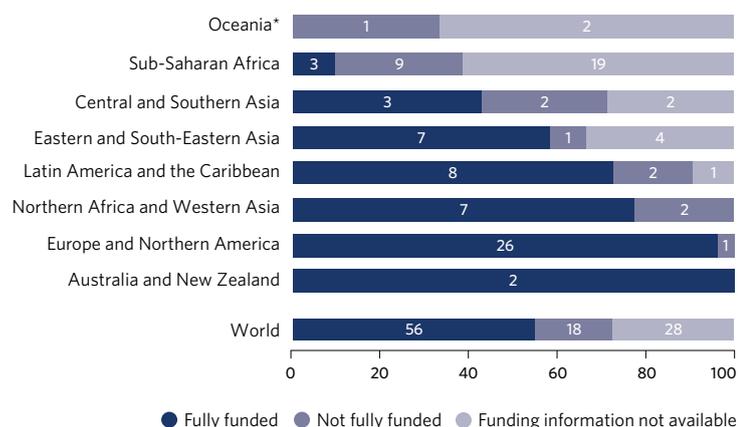
**Extent of use of country-owned results frameworks and planning tools by providers of development cooperation in fragile and non-fragile countries, 2016 (percentage)**



**Greater effort is needed to align development cooperation with country-defined development priorities and results, particularly in fragile countries**

Development partners need to do more to align their support with governments' national development strategies and results frameworks, particularly in fragile countries, respecting the country's policy space and leadership in establishing its own path towards sustainable development. Forty fragile countries participated in a global exercise in 2016 to monitor the alignment of development projects to national frameworks and priorities. It found that 82 per cent of new development projects had objectives aligned with national priorities. However, when defining the expected results of these projects, only 58 per cent of results indicators were drawn from country-led results frameworks. More than half of the projects relied on parallel systems and data to monitor progress and development results, instead of integrating these monitoring efforts into existing government systems.

**Number and proportion of countries implementing national statistical plans, by funding status, 2017 (number and percentage)**



Note: Data labels represent the number of countries implementing national statistical plans. The horizontal axis and the length of the bar describes the proportion of countries implementing such plans.

**Most countries in sub-Saharan Africa have national statistical plans, but few of them are fully funded**

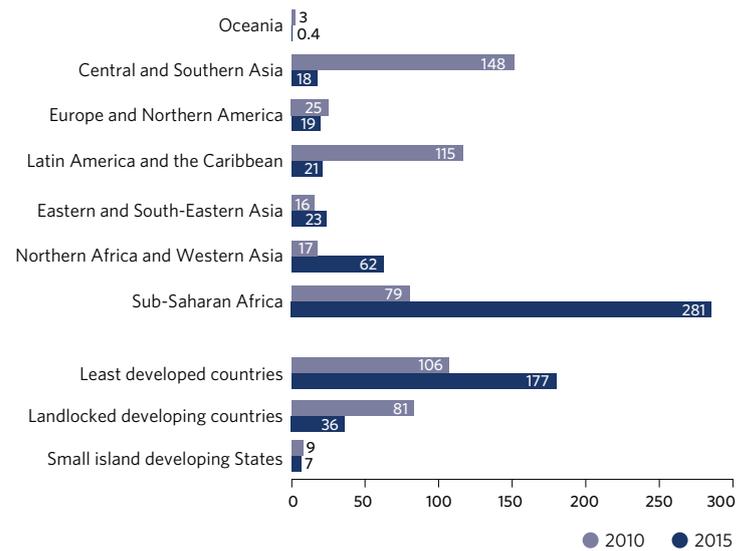
In 2017, 102 countries or areas were implementing national statistical plans. Sub-Saharan Africa led this effort among developing regions, with plans in 31 countries under way. However, among 56 countries worldwide with fully funded plans, 26 were in Europe and Northern America, and only three were in sub-Saharan Africa. Establishing strong, coherent and feasible national statistical plans that have political support has proven effective in building capacity across entire national statistical systems. This allows countries to respond to the growing demand for data while also providing a framework through which to mobilize both national and international resources.

In 2017, 71 out of 98 countries for which information was available had national statistical legislation that was compliant with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics. Out of these 71 countries, 34 were in Europe and Northern America. More developing countries will need to put in place solid and politically backed statistical legislation that allows the national statistical system to operate in a transparent and independent manner.

## The share of ODA for statistical capacity-building remains low, despite growing demands

In 2015, developing countries received \$541 million in financial support from multilateral and bilateral donors for all areas of statistics. Support for statistics in LDCs amounted to \$177 million in 2015, compared to \$106 million in 2010. Despite growing awareness of the importance of statistics, prompted largely by the SDGs, the share of ODA dedicated to statistics has hovered at around 0.3 per cent since 2010. Continued and increased technical and financial support is needed to ensure that countries in developing regions have the necessary data to fully implement and monitor their national development agendas.

Total official development assistance<sup>†</sup> dedicated to statistical capacity-building activities, 2010 and 2015 (millions of current US\$)



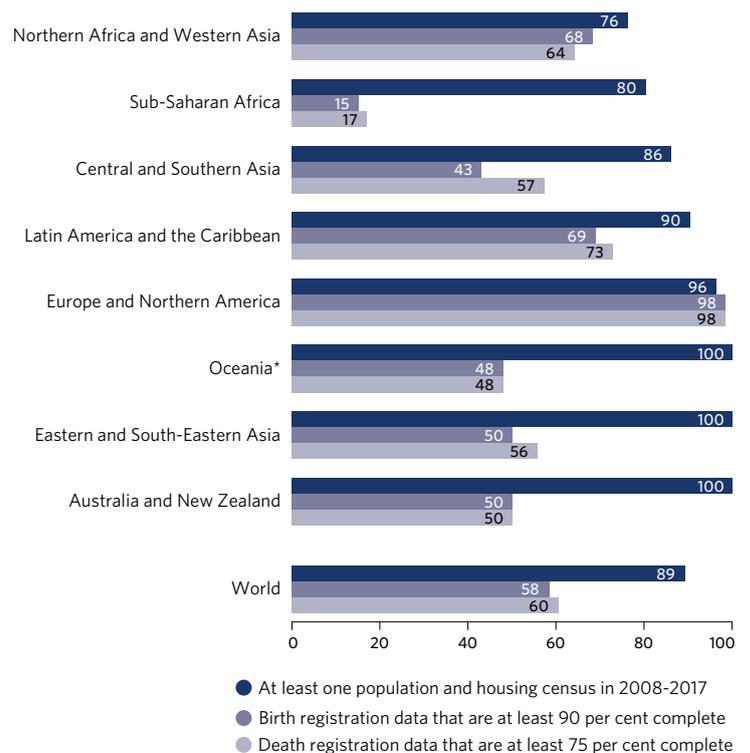
<sup>†</sup> Country-specific commitments only. Unallocated commitments to multiple countries/regions (valued at \$186 million) are excluded.

## Censuses and vital statistics are still not universal

Population and housing censuses provide basic information on the size, growth, distribution, location and characteristics of a country's population. They result in a wide range of statistical information, allowing detailed disaggregation of data needed to formulate, implement and monitor development policies and programmes. During the decade from 2008 to 2017, 89 per cent of countries or areas around the world conducted at least one population and housing census.

On the other hand, coverage of birth and death registration and the completeness of vital statistics remains a challenge, even among countries that have functioning civil registration systems. Over the period 2012-2016, 143 countries or areas had birth registration data that were at least 90 per cent complete; in sub-Saharan Africa, only 8 out of 53 countries met this standard. Over the same period, 148 countries or areas had death registration data that were at least 75 per cent complete; in sub-Saharan Africa, this was the case in only 9 out of 53 countries.

Proportion of countries that conducted at least one population and housing census, 2008-2017; proportion of countries with death registration data that are at least 75 per cent complete and proportion of countries with birth registration data that are at least 90 per cent complete, 2012-2016 (percentage)



## Note to the reader

### Global indicator framework for the follow-up and review of the Sustainable Development Goals

The information presented in this report is based on the latest available data as of May 2018 on selected indicators of the global SDG framework. The indicators presented are those for which sufficient data are available to provide an overview at the regional and global levels. The global indicator framework<sup>1</sup> was developed by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) and adopted by the General Assembly on 6 July 2017 in resolution 71/313. This set of indicators is intended for the review of progress at the

global level. The selection of indicators in this report is not intended to represent a selection based on their importance, as all Goals, targets and indicators are equally important.

The composition of regions and subregions in this report is based on United Nations geographic divisions with some modifications necessary to create, to the extent possible, groups of countries for which a meaningful analysis could be carried out.<sup>2</sup>

### Data sources and the basis for this analysis

For most of the indicators presented in this report, values represent regional and/or subregional aggregates. In general, the figures are weighted averages of country data, using the population of reference as a weight. They are calculated from national data collected by international agencies, based on their respective mandates and specialized expertise, from national statistical systems. The national data provided to the international statistical system are often adjusted for international comparability and, where lacking, are estimated. As decided by the Statistical Commission and in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/6, estimates used for the compilation of global indicators are to be produced in full consultation with national statistical authorities.

A database of available global, regional and country data and metadata for the SDG indicators accompanying this report is being maintained by the United Nations Statistics Division and is available at <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs>.

Although the aggregate figures presented are a convenient way to track progress, the situation of individual countries within a given region may vary significantly from regional averages. Presenting aggregate figures for all regions also obscures another reality: the lack, in many parts of the world, of adequate data to assess national trends and to inform and monitor the implementation of development policies.

### Investing in data for the full implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals

Quality data are vital for governments, international organizations, civil society, the private sector and the general public to make informed decisions and to ensure an accurate review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. That said, tracking progress on the SDGs requires the collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of an unprecedented amount of data and statistics at subnational, national, regional and global levels, including those derived from official statistical systems and from new and innovative data sources.

Many national statistical systems across the globe face serious challenges in this regard. As a result, accurate and timely information about certain aspects of people's lives are unknown, numerous groups and individuals remain "invisible", and many development challenges are still poorly understood. In General Assembly resolution 70/1, Member States recognized the crucial role of strengthened data collection and capacity-building and committed to addressing the data gap (paragraph 57). The Cape Town Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data, adopted at the 48th Session of the Statistical Commission in 2017, provides a roadmap for the modernization and strengthening of statistical systems.

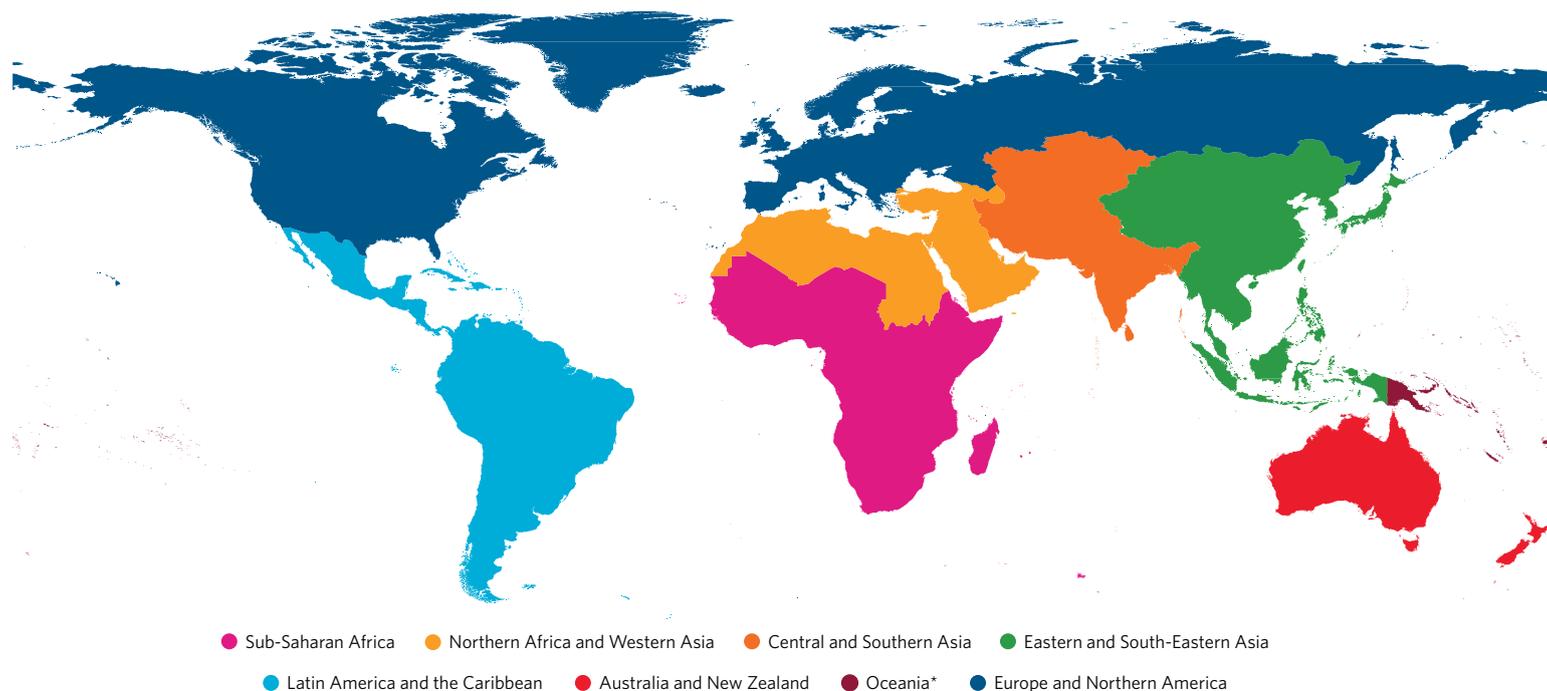
Where possible, global monitoring should be based on comparable and standardized national data obtained through well-established reporting mechanisms from countries to the international statistical system. The collaboration between national statistical systems and regional and international organizations is essential for ensuring an effective flow of international comparable data. Such mechanisms can be improved by strengthening the coordination function of national statistical offices in the national statistical systems.

Producing data for the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda requires strong political commitment and increased resources to support global and national efforts to strengthen statistical systems. In addition, new data sources and technologies for data collection and for the integration of different sources of data will need to be explored, including through partnerships with civil society, the private sector and academia. The integration of geospatial information and statistical data will be particularly important for the production of a number of indicators.

<sup>1</sup> The complete list of indicators is available at <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/indicators-list>.

<sup>2</sup> The composition of these subregions is shown in the next section, "Regional groupings".

## Regional groupings



- Notes:
- Oceania\* refers to Oceania excluding Australia and New Zealand, throughout the publication.
  - The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

This report presents data on progress made towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals worldwide and by various groups. The country groupings are based on the geographic regions defined under the Standard Country or Area Codes for Statistical Use (known as M49)<sup>3</sup> of the United Nations Statistics Division. The geographic regions are shown on the map above. For the purpose of presentation, some of the M49 regions have been combined.

The use of geographic regions as the basis for country groupings is a major change from *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2016* and the progress reports on the Millennium Development Goals. Previously, data were presented for countries in “developed” regions and countries in “developing” regions, which were further broken down into geographic subregions. Although there is no established convention for the designation of “developed” and “developing” countries or areas in the United Nations system, data for some indicators in this report are still being presented for developed and

developing regions and countries for the purpose of statistical analysis only, and are based on the practice employed by the international agencies that provided the data.<sup>4</sup>

In addition, the text and figures present, to the extent possible, data for least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, which are country groups requiring special attention.

A complete list of countries included in each region and subregion and country group is available at <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/regional-groups>.

The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the United Nations Secretariat concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

<sup>3</sup> Full details of the M49 standard can be found on the United Nations Statistics Division website at <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/methodology/m49>.

<sup>4</sup> A discussion note, “Update of the regional groupings for the SDG report and database”, of 31 October 2016 describes the details of this change and is available at <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/regional-groups>.

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ALLIANCE OF SMALL ISLAND STATES  
ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS  
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC  
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA  
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA  
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE  
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN  
FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION  
INTERNATIONAL ENERGY AGENCY  
INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION  
INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND  
INTERNATIONAL RENEWABLE ENERGY AGENCY  
INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION  
INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTRE  
INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR CONSERVATION OF NATURE  
INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION  
JOINT UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME ON HIV/AIDS  
OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS  
OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES  
ORGANIZATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT  
PARTNERSHIP IN STATISTICS FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE 21ST CENTURY (PARIS21)  
SECRETARIAT OF THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY  
SUSTAINABLE ENERGY FOR ALL  
UNITED NATIONS CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT FUND  
UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND  
UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT  
UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION  
UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME  
UNITED NATIONS DIVISION FOR OCEAN AFFAIRS AND THE LAW OF THE SEA  
UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION  
UNITED NATIONS ENTITY FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN (UN-WOMEN)  
UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME  
UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE  
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME  
UNITED NATIONS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION  
UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY FOR DISASTER REDUCTION  
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For more information, visit the United Nations Statistics Division Sustainable Development Goals website at <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs>.



“... Narrow the gaps. Bridge the divides. Rebuild trust by bringing people together around common goals. Unity is our path. Our future depends on it.”

— *ANTÓNIO GUTERRES,*  
*SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS*

