The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2023: Special Edition

Technical Note for Progress Assessment

1. Introduction

To ensure the effectiveness of the transformative 2030 development agenda, a comprehensive assessment of progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their targets is crucial, especially as we approach the midpoint of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. This technical note describes the methodologies employed to assess the progress of the SDG targets across the 17 SDGs at the global level.

Among the 169 targets, 138 targets can be assessed based on available global trend data and analysis conducted by custodian agencies, while 31 targets lack sufficient data points or additional analysis for the assessment. This progress assessment is published in Section II of "The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2023: Special Edition."

At the global level, the goals and targets are monitored using the global indicator framework adopted by the General Assembly. These indicators serve as crucial metrics for gauging progress. Data and information used in this progress assessment are from the global SDG database.[1] Additionally, custodian agencies also provide progress assessments, offering expert insights and analysis to complement the data. The data points used are either global aggregates or the most appropriate data points in measuring the targets at the global level.

2. "Trend to target" as a measure of progress

For each SDG indicator/target, the "trend to target" measure answers the question: *"How likely are we to meet the target by 2030?"* This measure then uses three categories to classify the likelihood of achieving the target:

- **Score 3 - on track or target met**: *"The target has already been achieved or is on track to be achieved by 2030."*
- **Score 2 - fair progress, but acceleration needed**: *"To date there has been some progress towards the target, but moderate or significant acceleration is needed to achieve the target by 2030."*
- **Score 1 - stagnation or regression**: *"To date there is either minimal progress or regression from the baseline, and the target is unlikely to be achieved by 2030."*

An "insufficient data" designation is given to indicators/targets where either:

1. there are no data or not sufficient data from the global SDG database, or
2. there are no supplementary data or information from the custodian agencies.

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[1] Maintained by the United Nations Statistics Division and available at https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/dataportal/

3. Methodology

3.1 SDG data structure and selection of data to include in the assessment

An indicator may contain multiple data series and/or disaggregation by different dimensions (such as age, sex, location, etc.) In these cases, only data from the series and disaggregation that best represent the entire reference population are selected for the progress assessment. For example, Indicator 7.1.1 ("Proportion of population with access to electricity") has three disaggregation levels for "ALLAREA," "RURAL," and "URBAN." Only data from the "ALLAREA" disaggregation level are included in the analysis.

3.2 Scoring

The assessment gives a score to each of the selected series. The scoring methodology distinguishes between series that have 2030 numerical targets and those without such targets.

a. Series in indicators with 2030 target values

For series that have 2030 target values and at least two different data points (one for the baseline and one for the latest year), a score is assigned through calculations.

First, calculate the actual compound annual growth rate ($CAGR_a$) between the baseline year (b) and the latest year (t) for which data are available:

$$CAGR_a = (\frac{v_t}{v_b})^{\frac{1}{t-b}} - 1$$

Next, use the $CAGR_a$ from the previous step to extrapolate the expected value (v_{2030e}) for the series in 2030, assuming that the current rate of progress is maintained:

$$v_{2030e} = v_t \times (1 + CAGR_a)^{2030-t}$$

Lastly, assign a score to the series based on below criteria:

- **3** if $\frac{v_{2030e}-v_b}{v_{2030}-v_b} \geq 0.95$
- **2** if $0.10 \leq \frac{v_{2030e}-v_b}{v_{2030}-v_b} < 0.95$
- **1** if $\frac{v_{2030e}-v_b}{v_{2030}-v_b} < 0.10$

Where:

$$b \ is \ the \ baseline \ year \ (e.g. 2015)$$

$$t \ is \ the \ latest \ year \ with \ available \ data \ (e.g. 2022)$$

$$v_b \ is \ the \ baseline \ value \ in \ year \ b$$

$$v_t \text{ is the current value in the latest year } t$$

$$v_{2030} \text{ is the target value in } 2030$$

$$v_{2030e} \text{ is the expected value in } 2030$$

When $v_b = v_{2030}$ – that is to say, the baseline value is equal to the 2030 target value – the ratio $\frac{v_{2030e} - v_b}{v_{2030} - v_b}$ is undefined because $v_{2030} - v_b = 0$. In these rare cases, the scoring is manually set to "3" since the target is already achieved.

b. Series in indicators without numerical target values

A score is assigned to series with no 2030 target values, and which have at least two data points, through the calculation of the compound annual growth rate.

First, calculate the actual compound annual growth rate ($CAGR_a$) between the baseline (b) and the latest year (t) for which data are available:

$$CAGR_a = (\frac{v_t}{v_b})^{\frac{1}{t-b}} - 1$$

Next, assign a score to the series based on below criteria:

If an <u>increase</u> in value is desirable	If a <u>decrease</u> in value is desirable
3 if $CAGR_a \geq 0.02$ *2* if $0.005 \leq CAGR_a < 0.02$ *1* if $CAGR_a < 0.005$	*3* if $CAGR_a \leq -0.02$ *2* if $-0.005 \geq CAGR_a > -0.02$ *1* if $CAGR_a > -0.005$

In a few instances, the values of the series are growth rates (e.g. Indicator 8.1.1: Annual growth rate of GDP per capita). Calculating CAGR of growth rates would not be meaningful, and expert judgment is used to assign the score, where the progress methodology used for Indicator 8.1.1 in previous progress assessment was used.

c. Series without at least two data points from the global SDG database and other adjustments

The progress assessment of certain targets or adjustments of some existing assessments are based on expert insights and analytical work conducted by custodian agencies, such as forecasting for 2030 or providing expert assessments to complement available data. These data and progress assessment can be found in the Statistical Annex, which includes aggregate data categorized by SDG regions in Part I, along with short progress assessments provided by custodian agencies in Part II. Below are a few examples:

- For target 1.2, since the target is national poverty target, global aggregates by SDG regions were not available in the tables of the statistical annex. The custodian agency conducted a forecasting analysis from available country datasets, concluding "Given historical trends, less than 40% of countries will have halved national poverty by 2030." Based on the expert assessment, the assessment score is 2.

- For target 2.5, the calculation based on the methodology described in section 3.2.b should be "score 3 - on track or target met." However, the custodian agency's expert insights indicate "Data on both the extent of animal genetic resources conservation and the risk of extinction faced by livestock breeds show that we are still far from maintaining the genetic diversity of farmed and domesticated animals." Based on the expert assessment, the adjusted score is 2.

- In the case of targets 4.7, 12.8, and 13.3, a multipurpose indicator is used to measure their progress. The global aggregate value was not available for this indicator (Indicator 4.7.1/12.8.1/13.3.1), but data were reported by many countries. The custodian agencies provided progress assessment based on national data: "Nearly all countries (94%) report that climate change education is taught as part of the curriculum in schools and universities. However, evidence from elsewhere suggests otherwise. An analysis of national curriculum frameworks in 100 countries found that nearly half (47%) contained no mention of climate change." Based on the expert assessment, the assessment score is 2.

4. Aggregation

When two or more indicators are used to assess the progress of one target, the arithmetic mean of the indicators is used. Series scores are aggregated into indicator scores, which are in turn aggregated into target scores based on the following criteria:

Mean Score	Band	Trend towards Target	Color Code
2.5 to 3	3	On track or target met	
1.5 to <2.5	2	Fair progress, but acceleration needed	
1 to <1.5	1	Stagnation or regression	

This allows us to report the share of targets that are on track, progressing, or stagnating/regressing for each of the 17 Goals on Page 8 of The SDGs Report 2023.