Overview

This report is organized in three parts:

- Part I provides a regional snapshot of progress since 2000 (starting of the MDGs) and acceleration that is required in order for the region to achieve the 16 goals by 2030. This is further elaborated in a dashboard across the target areas, highlighting the size of the gaps between a “business-as-usual” scenario and the required pace of progress by 2030.

- Part II then sets out a more detailed, goal-by-goal baseline for the region for selected targets, drawing on the latest data available on the proposed global indicators as well as supplementary statistical information.

- Part III concludes by highlighting key findings of the baseline report and the regional vision for transforming official statistics to tackle challenges in meeting the statistics and data requirements for the follow-up and review of the 2030 agenda. It also emphasize critical role of data disaggregation for achieving the leave-no-one-behind ambition of the SDGs.

A preview of some highlights of the analyses:

The Asia-Pacific region needs acceleration of efforts across all goals in order to achieve the SDGs by 2030

The region has progressed very slowly or stagnated in over one third of the SDGs since 2000, calling for re-doubling the efforts. In 2015, the region has not even completed half of the work it could or committed to do since 2000 under several SDGs. The region has made little or no overall progress in ending hunger and achieving food security and agricultural sustainability, ensuring good health and well-being for all, achieving gender equality, ensuring availability of clean water and sanitation for all, ensuring access to affordable and clean energy by all, and promoting peaceful and inclusive societies. Achieving these regional ambitions by 2030 requires stronger high-level political commitment, right-based and people-centred planning, and effective financing for development. The load of unfinished work left in 2015 calls for stronger commitment and synergy by high-level policy makers in the region for advancing the sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific.

In one third of the SDG areas, the region needs to reverse the trend of development in order to achieve the vision of the 2030 Agenda. The situation in Asia and the Pacific has worsened since 2000 in the following SDGs which were not included in the MDGs: between and within countries inequalities have increased; cities and human settlements in the region are less inclusive, less safe and unsustainable; resource use for consumption and production is unsustainable; and natural forest areas, terrestrial ecosystems and biodiversity are increasingly being lost. In order to achieve the vision of the 2030 Agenda, the region urgently needs innovative policies and programmes.

The rate of progress is diverse across target areas. In target areas where the region needs to accelerate its progress, a diverse rate of progress has been observed since 2000. In
order for effectively managing limited resources, the region needs to prioritize investing on quality education, health, sustainable agriculture and research and development. The region also needs to take urgent actions towards reducing adolescent fertility, increasing pre-primary organized learning and teachers’ training opportunities at primary level, increase population reliance on clean fuels and technology, and improve mental health and well-being of the people. In areas where the region has regressed since 2000, the biggest backslide has happened in material footprint which has more than doubled in the past decade.

Prioritizing data needs at the national level and integrating statistical planning into national development plans are key for successful implementation of the SDGs in the Asia-Pacific region

Statistical development is an inseparable part of the national development planning. Only less than 30 per cent of the proposed 232 SDG indicators can currently be used for regional monitoring due to lack of statistics at the national level in Asian and the Pacific countries. Data is particularly scarce on indicators proposed for monitoring of the targets that are newly introduced by SDGs. This highlights the need for building and strengthening a virtuous cycle between clearly articulated policy priorities and adequate support for statistics and data. The formulation and implementation of national statistical development strategies must be informed by data requirements for monitoring of the national development plans in order to secure the necessary political, institutional and financial support. Consequently, sustainable development policies and programmes will benefit from more, high-quality data and statistics.

Identifying and acknowledgement of the “people” who are likely to be left behind is the first step in producing disaggregated statistics. In order for disaggregated statistics to inform the formulation of policy interventions, the most vulnerable, discriminated against and excluded groups of people have to be identified, acknowledged and understood. As encouraged by the global SDGs indicator framework, countries have to identify the population groups, beyond what is proposed in the framework, that are relevant and required for monitoring their own national policies and programmes.