SDGs: The Second Half of the Journey

Assessing Progress, Closing Gaps, and Defining Future Perspectives

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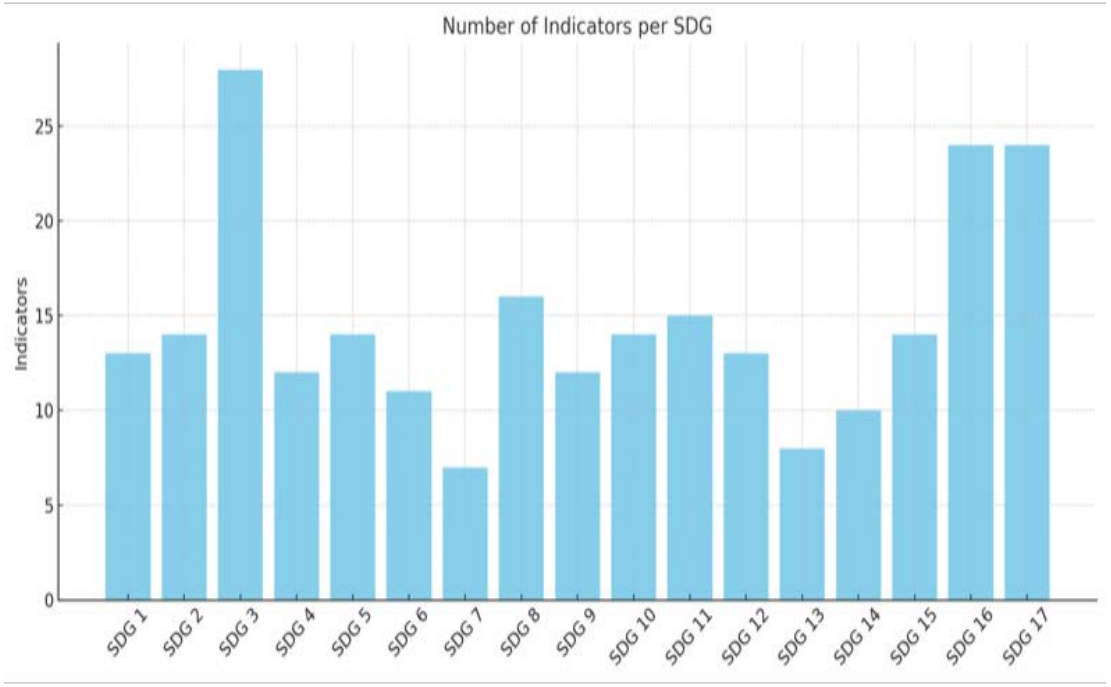
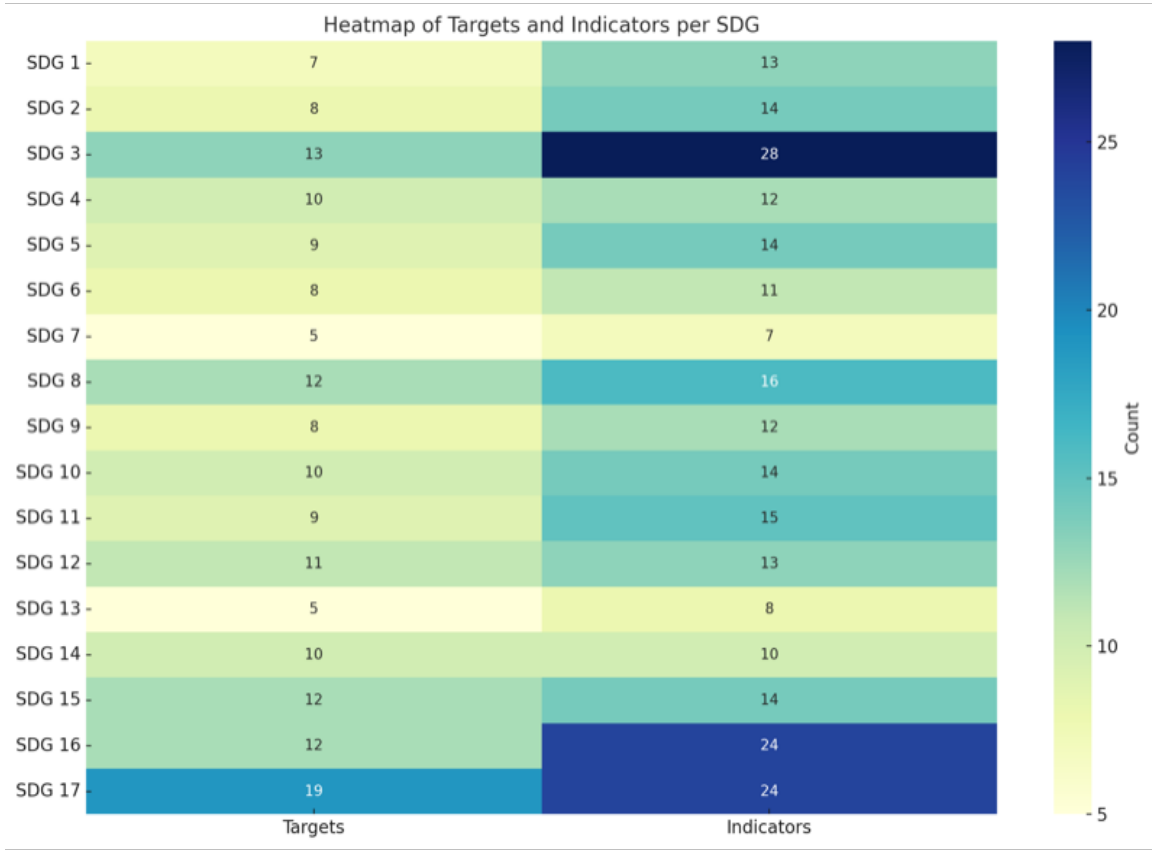
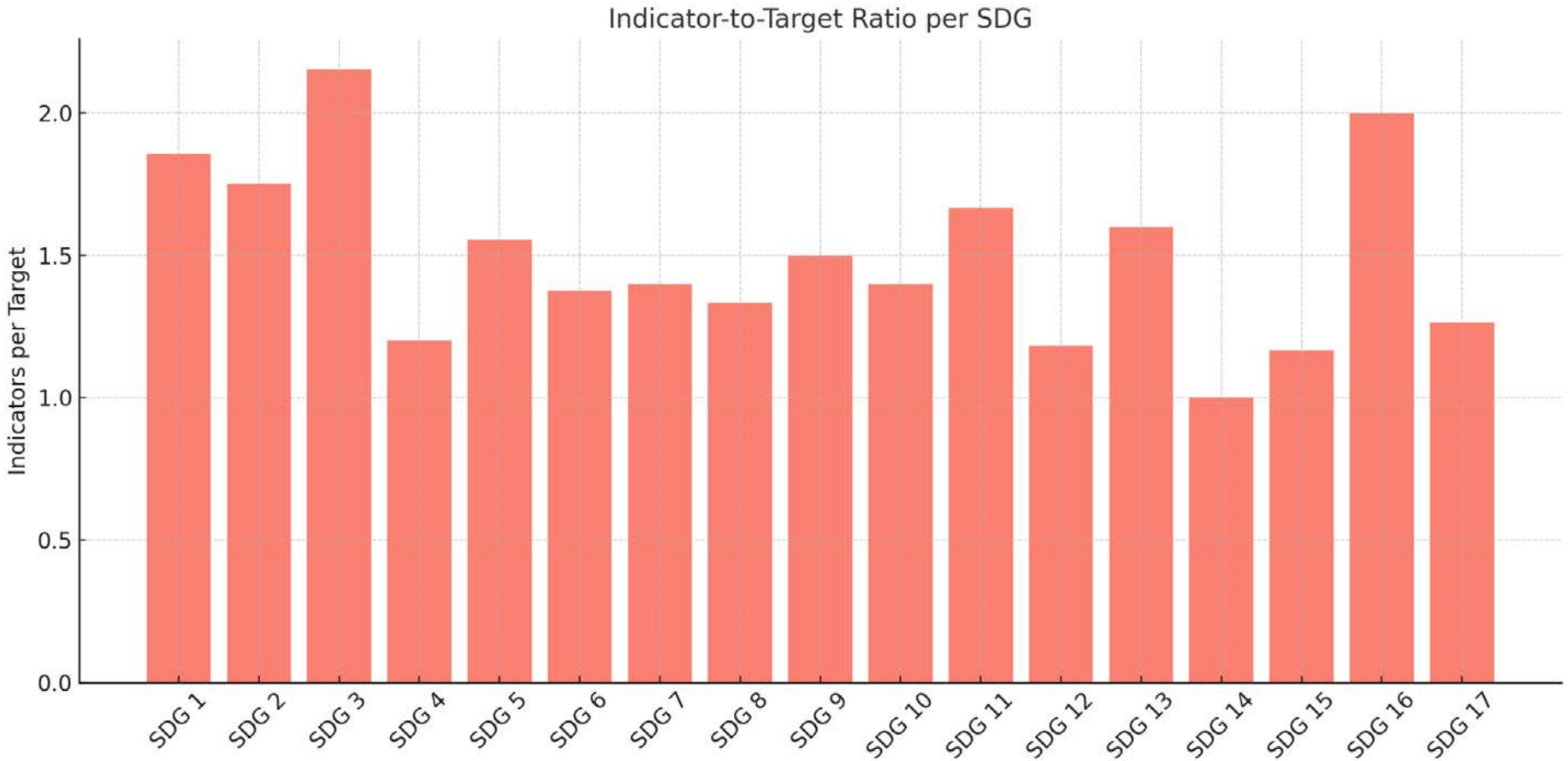
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

SDGs Targets and Indicators





INDICATOR to TARGET RATIO per SDG



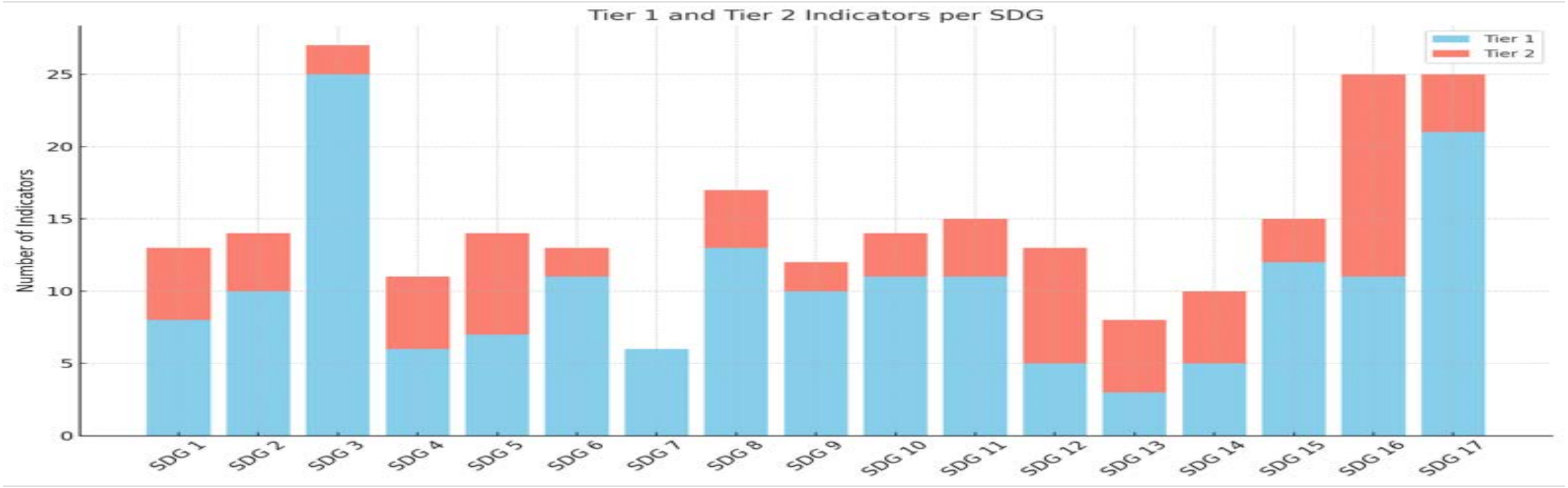
SDG Indicator Imbalance: Key Findings

It is necessary to strengthen statistical capacity, streamline overlapping indicators, and ensure equal attention is given to all SDGs.

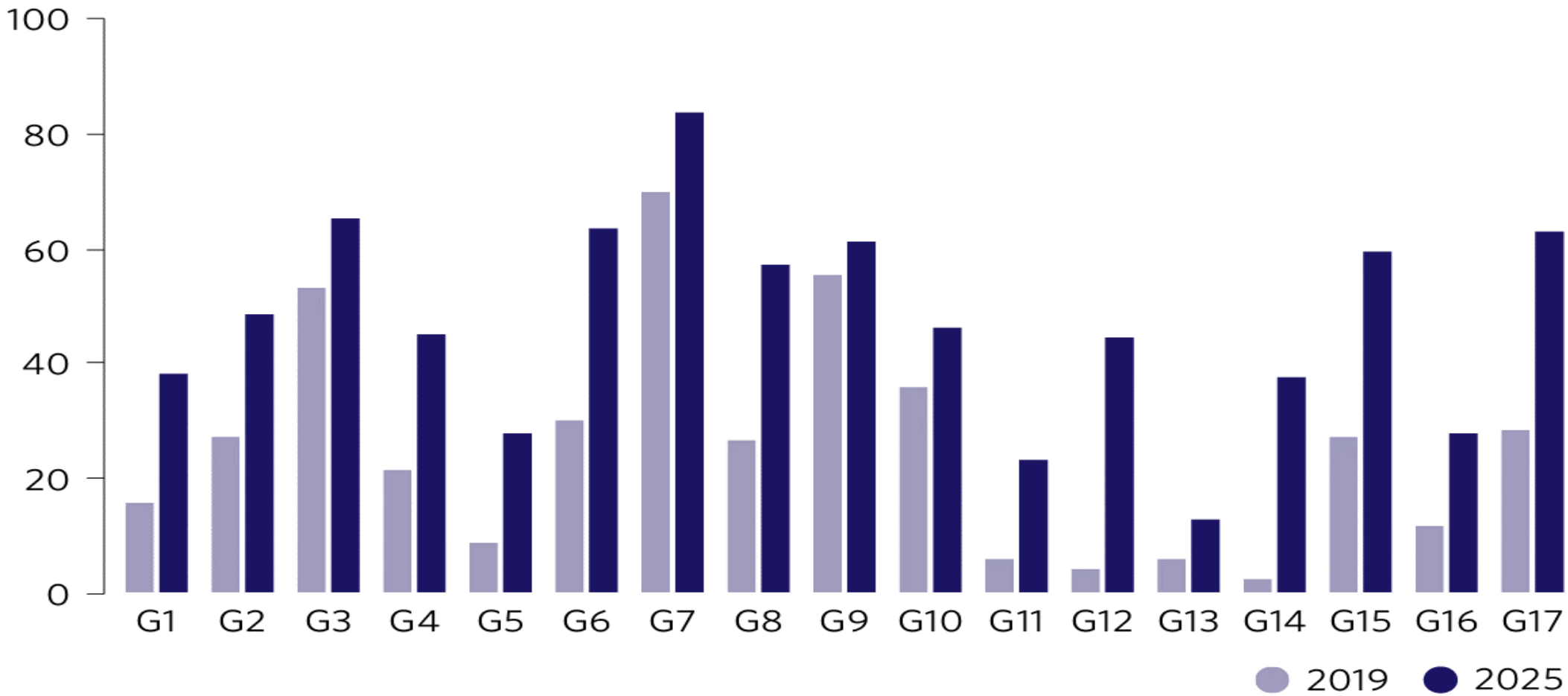
- **Most data-dense:**
  SDG 3 Health – 23
  SDG 16 Governance – 24
  SDG 17 Partnerships – 24
- Multiple indicators per target → complexity of monitoring

- **Least measurable:**
  SDG 7 Energy – 7
  SDG 13 Climate – 8
  SDG 14 Oceans – 10
- Risk of underestimation during implementation

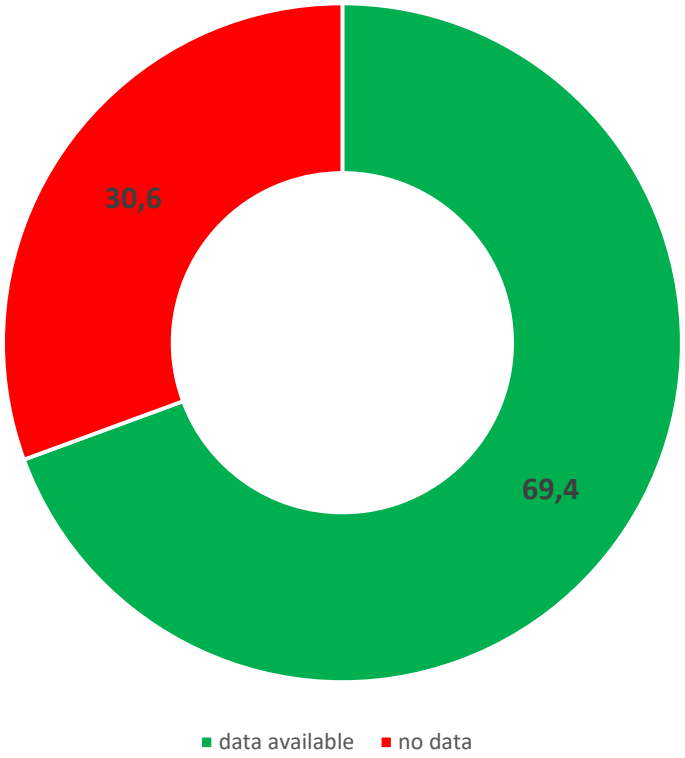
Availability of Data



Proportion of countries or areas with trend data (at least two data points since 2015), comparing 2019 and 2025 databases, by Goal (percentage)



Data Gaps and Their Consequences



Monitoring is hindered: the lack of reliable data prevents the assessment of progress and policy effectiveness.
Exclusion: vulnerable and remote groups often remain “invisible” in statistics.
Limited crisis response capacity: insufficient data reduces governments’ ability to respond quickly to shocks (e.g., pandemics).
Decision-making under uncertainty: poor data quality leads to reactive or suboptimal measures and hinders integrated strategies.

“Trend to Target” as a Measure of Progress

- For each SDG target, the “trend to target” indicator answers the question: **“How likely are we to achieve this target by 2030?”**
- This indicator uses five categories to classify the likelihood of achieving the target:
- **On track or target met:** “The target has already been achieved or is on track to be achieved by 2030.”
- **Moderate progress, but acceleration needed:** “To date, moderate progress has been made towards the target, but acceleration is needed to achieve it by 2030.”
- **Marginal progress, significant acceleration needed:** “To date, only marginal progress has been made towards the target, and significant acceleration is required to achieve it by 2030.”

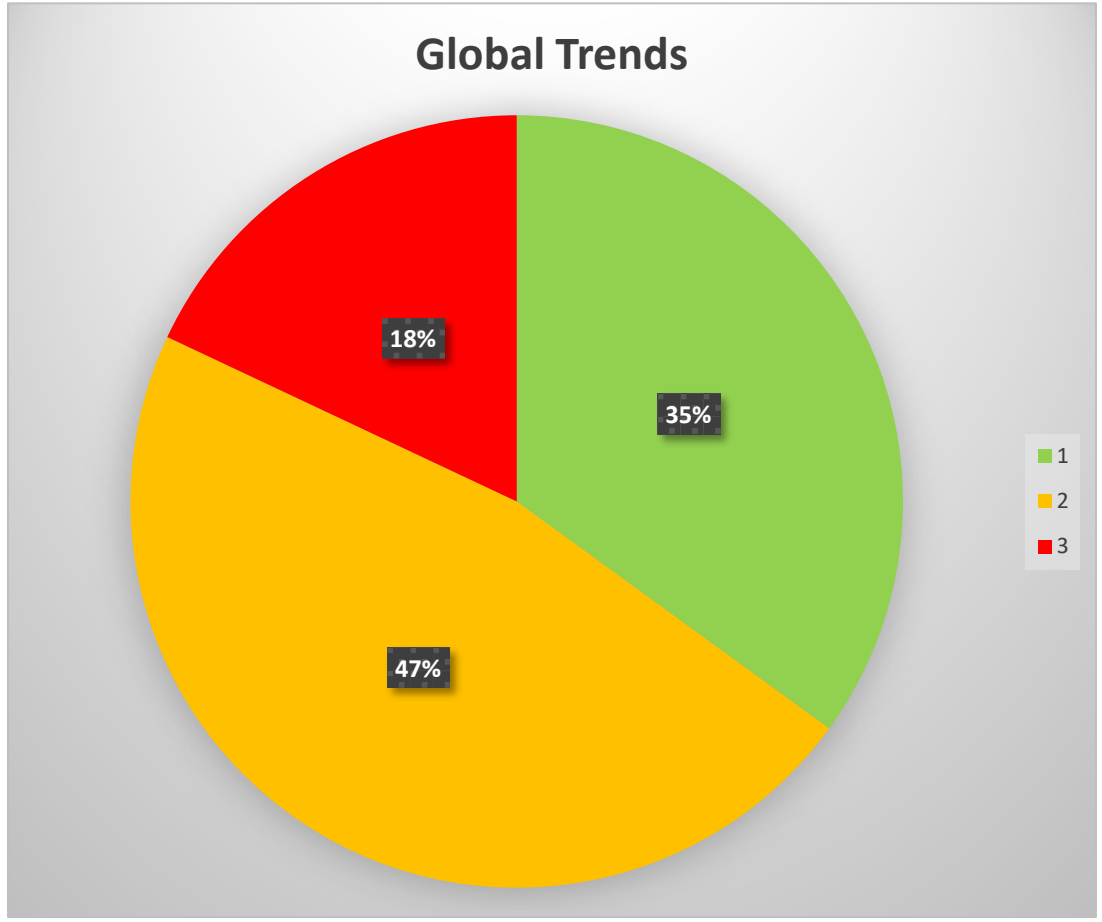
Stagnation: “To date, there has been little or no progress compared to the baseline, and the target is unlikely to be achieved by 2030.”

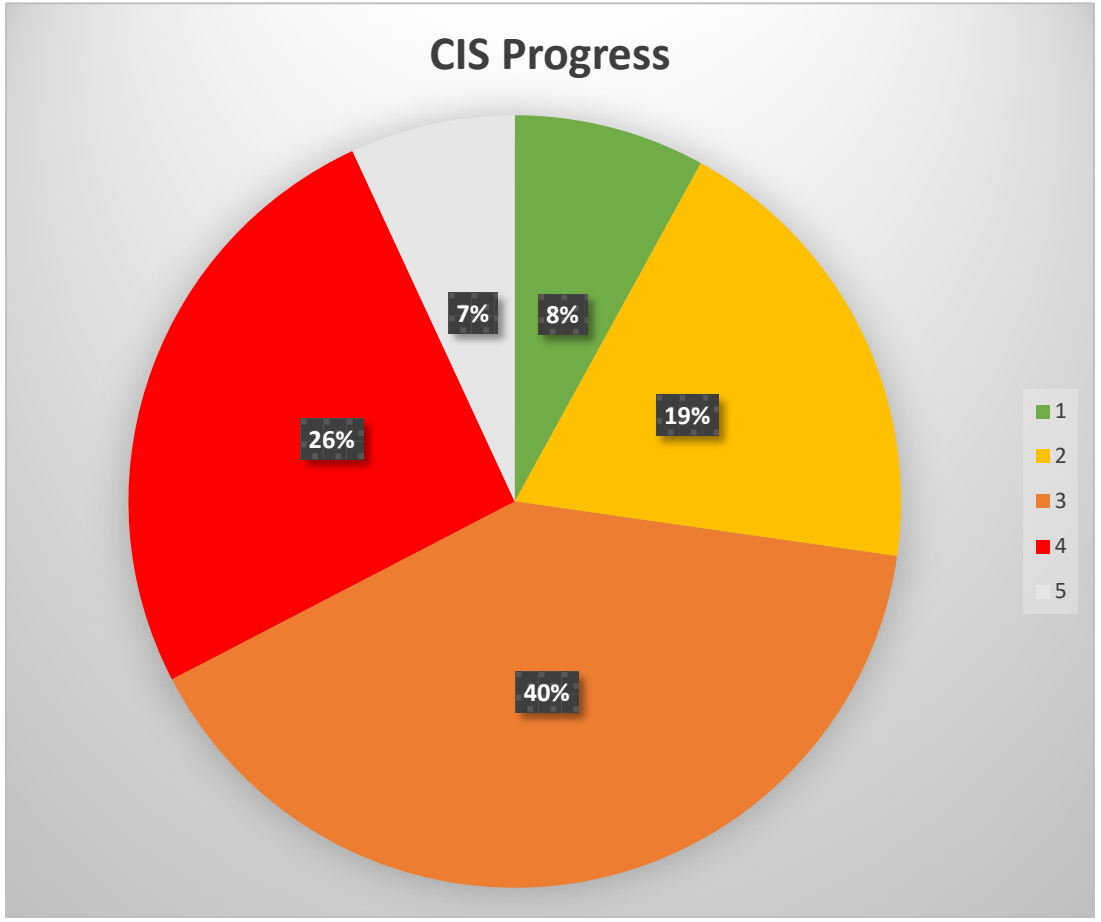
Regression: “To date, the situation has worsened compared to the baseline, and the target is unlikely to be achieved by 2030.”

* The “trend to target” indicator is used to assess the likelihood of achieving the goals by 2030 at the global level.

* However, specialized agencies and regional commissions are encouraged to continue using both the **“trend to target”** method and the **“distance to target”** method when conducting analyses within regional and thematic progress assessments.

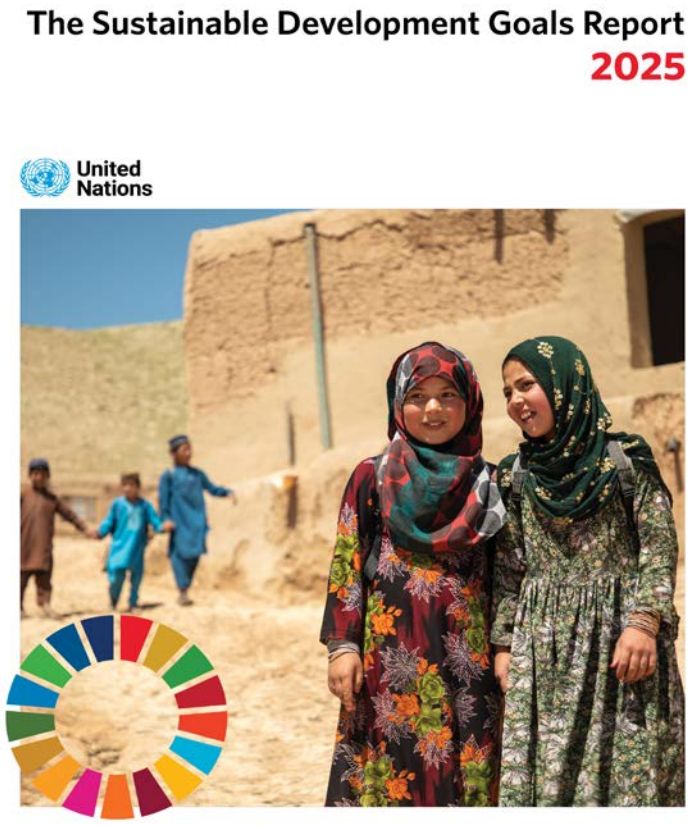
Progress in Achieving the SDGs





Midterm Results (2015–2025) – Positive

- Extreme poverty has declined
- Coverage of social benefits has expanded
- Health care is improving:
  - Reduced rates of stunting and wasting among children
  - Decline in maternal mortality and under-five child mortality
  - Fewer new cases of HIV/AIDS
  - Reduced mortality from malaria
- Improved access to education for 100 million children
- Rising literacy rates
- Narrowing gender gap in education
- Growing share of women in parliaments and local governments
- Greater access to drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene services
- Expanding access to electricity and clean fuels
- More effective disaster risk reduction activities
- Expanded protected areas in biodiversity regions
- Rapid growth in digital connectivity and internet use



Midterm Results (2015–2025) – Negative

Poverty and Hunger: persistent extreme poverty and rising food insecurity.

Inequality and Vulnerability: gender disparities; systemic barriers for women, marginalized communities, persons with disabilities, and forcibly displaced people.

Environmental Crisis: climate change, biodiversity loss, and environmental pollution.

Geopolitics and Conflicts: undermining progress and increasing humanitarian needs.

Economic Constraints: slow growth, rising debt, limited international finance; structural inequalities affecting least developed countries.

Institutional Weakness: fragile governance, limited capacity, and insufficient global solidarity.

SDG Outlook to 2030 and Beyond

Before 2030

- 169 SDG targets
- Uneven progress (35% on track)
- Major challenges: poverty, hunger, climate
- Overlapping crises (COVID-19, conflicts, debt)
- Large data gaps

Urgent need for course correction

After 2030

- New agenda “SDGs 2.0”
- More compact framework
- Focus: climate, sustainability, justice
- Integration with ESG and the role of the private sector
- More flexible system (review every 5 years)
- Regional differentiation
- Reliance on AI and big data

Risks: goal fatigue, digital inequality

Promising Data Sources and Technologies for the SDGs

New Data Sources

- Satellite imagery and remote sensing
- Internet of Things (IoT) sensors
- Citizen-generated data (citizen science)
- Crowdsourcing and community observations
- Big data and web scraping

Technologies

- Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML)
- Cloud platforms and data storage
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
- Automation and data flow integration
- Blockchain for transparency and trust

Global Initiatives and UN Data Commons platform

UN Data Commons: Centralized platform integrating authoritative SDG data and AI-powered search, launched in 2023 enables easy exploration and visualization.

Power of Data Initiative: Promotes national data partnerships, political leadership, and system-wide transformation to accelerate SDGs
data4sdgs.org

Data For Now: Enhances timeliness, coverage, and quality of SDG data through robust methods and multi-agency collaboration.
data4sdgs.org

2025 SDG Indicator Review: IAEG-SDGs process to refine, revise, and update indicators while minimizing burden on countries.
unstats.un.org

SUCCESSFUL CASES

Collective Intelligence for Climate Data (UNDP): Citizens contribute local climate observations, improving real-time environmental monitoring and adaptation efforts.	Air Quality Data Gap Closure: Countries like Japan, the US, and the UK closed air-quality data gaps, enabling public pressure and policy action that improved air quality.	Digital Healthcare Scheduling (Experian Health): Automated appointment scheduling closed 56 % more care gaps, improving patient convenience	Census Data Integration (Japan): Sophisticated translation and integration of Japan's census data allowed more accurate audience modelling.	Close the Gap – ICT Access (EU Social Fund Plus): Repurposes unused IT equipment to provide affordable technology and training, benefiting over 3 million people across 50 countries.

CONCLUSIONS

- The Sustainable Development Goals remain a vital instrument till 2030.
- It is difficult to predict how the instrument will evolve after 2030.
- What is certain is that both before and after 2030, the development of statistics will advance through the application of new methods, the creation of new infrastructure, and the implementation of new approaches to financing this fundamental area of our work. Innovative data solutions and the strengthening of multilateral cooperation are of key importance for sustainable development both today and beyond 2030.


Thank
You!