

# Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

## Transforming institutional settings in Asia and the Pacific

**The Future of Economic Statistics  
Agenda item 4 Institutional Setting**

**Gemma Van Halderen  
Director, Statistics Division**



# Who is ESCAP?

The **United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific**

*"...the regional development arm of the United Nations for the Asia-Pacific region"*

One of five Regional Commissions of the United Nations

Works closely with other UN programmes and agencies, the Asian Development Bank, NGOs and civil society

53 Member States (including China) and 9 Associate Members

Two thirds of the world's population is located in the ESCAP region. China is ranked No. 1 by population.



# ESCAP Committee on Statistics

*“ ... by 2030, **national statistical systems** are **enabled and empowered** to lead development of and to deliver innovative, trusted and timely products and services for urgently needed and evolving statistical requirements of Agenda 2030.”*

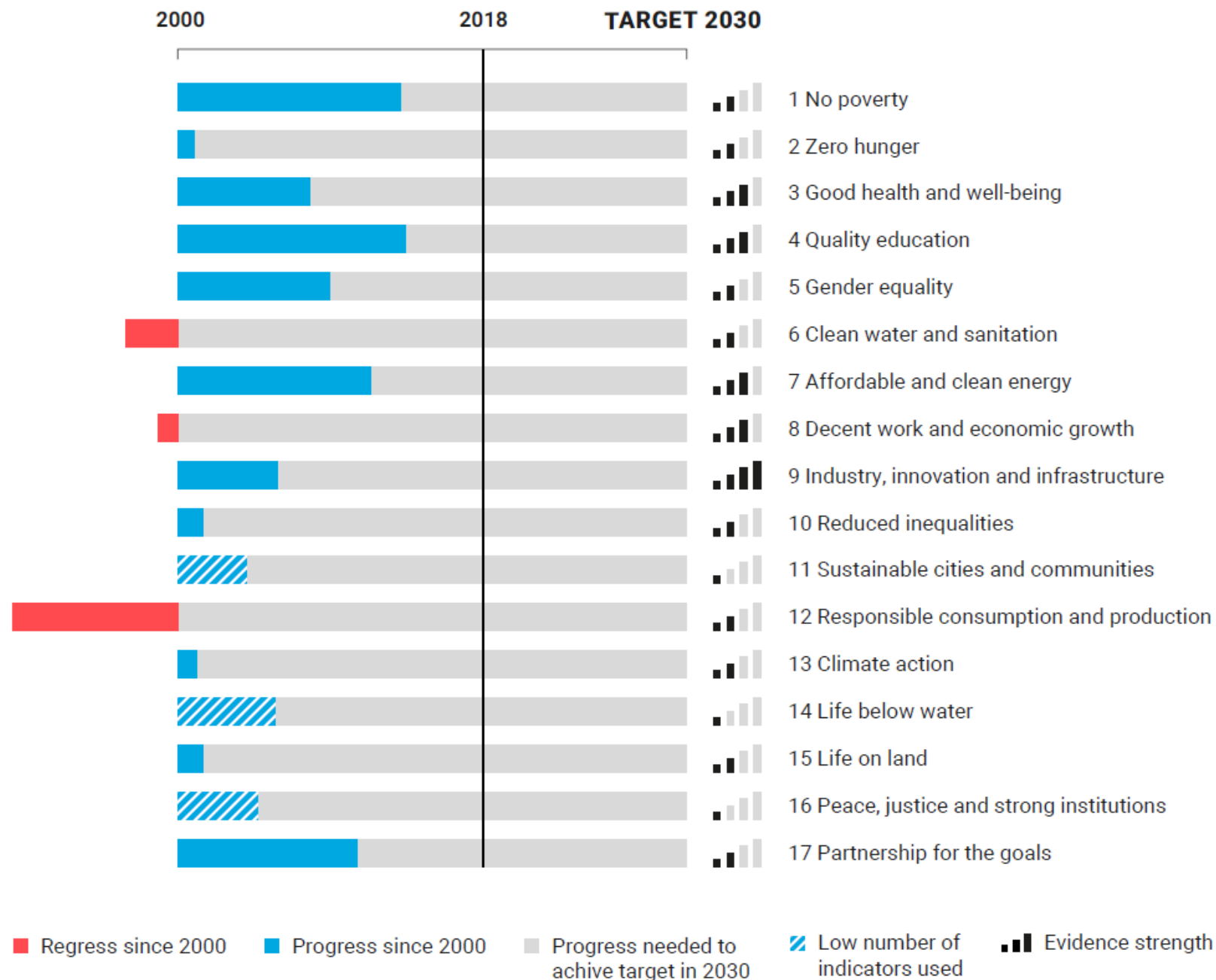


## How is Asia and the Pacific going?

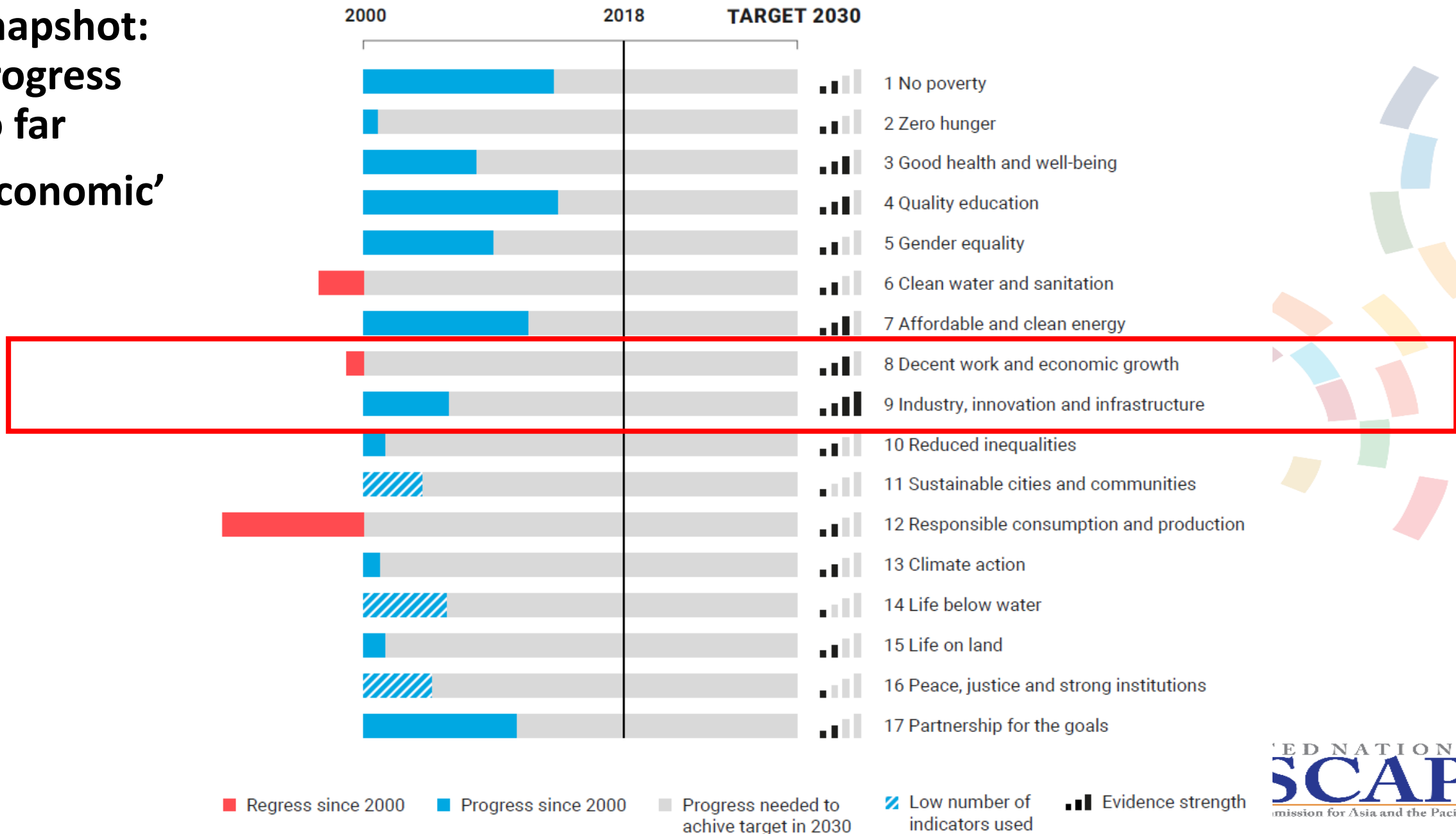
- How much progress has been made since 2000 in regards with each of the 17 SDGs?
- How likely will the targets be achieved by 2030, judging by pace of progress thus far?



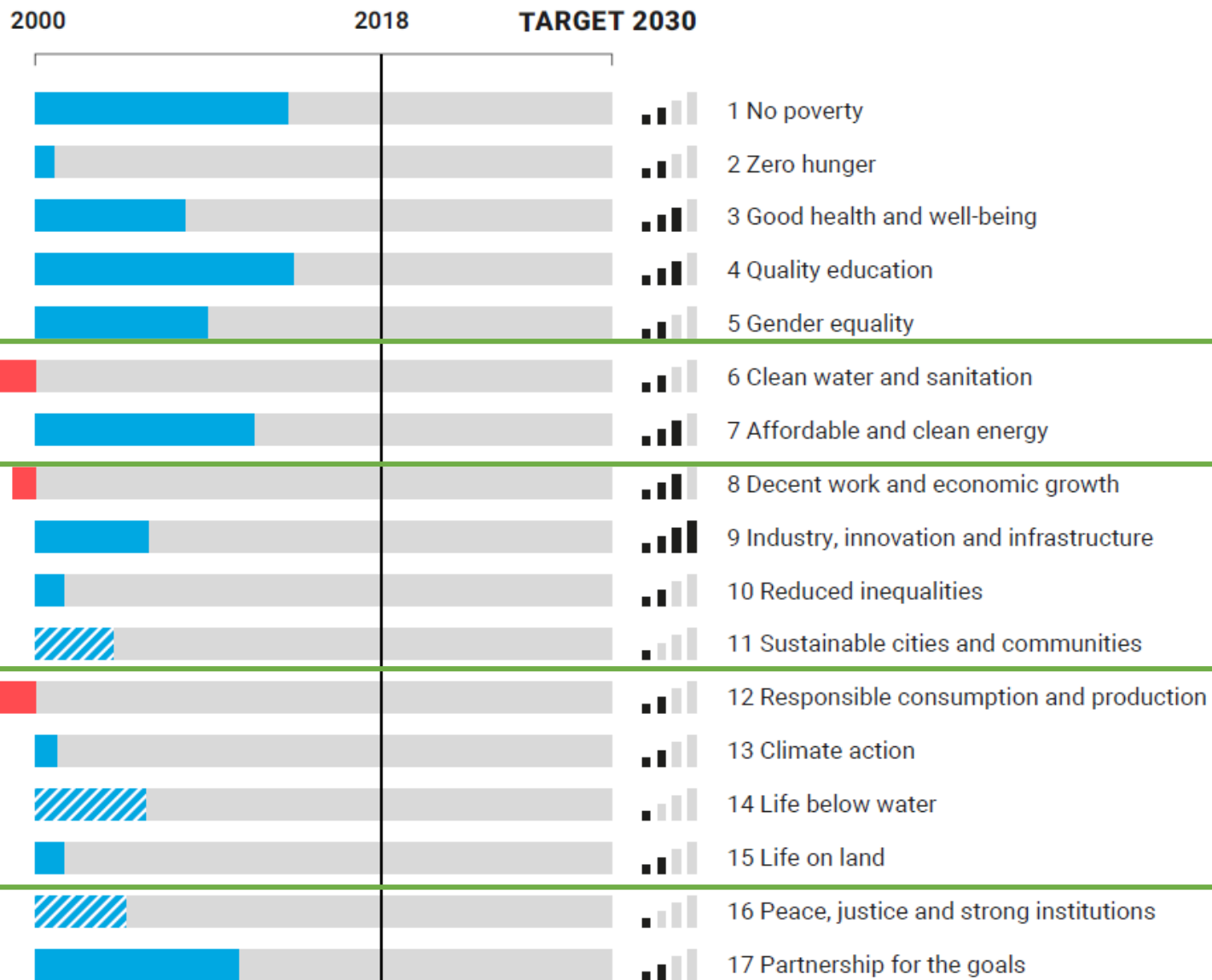
# Snapshot: progress so far



# Snapshot: progress so far 'Economic'



# Snapshot: progress so far 'Environmental'



■ Regress since 2000   
 ■ Progress since 2000   
 ■ Progress needed to achieve target in 2030   
  Low number of indicators used   
 ■■■ Evidence strength

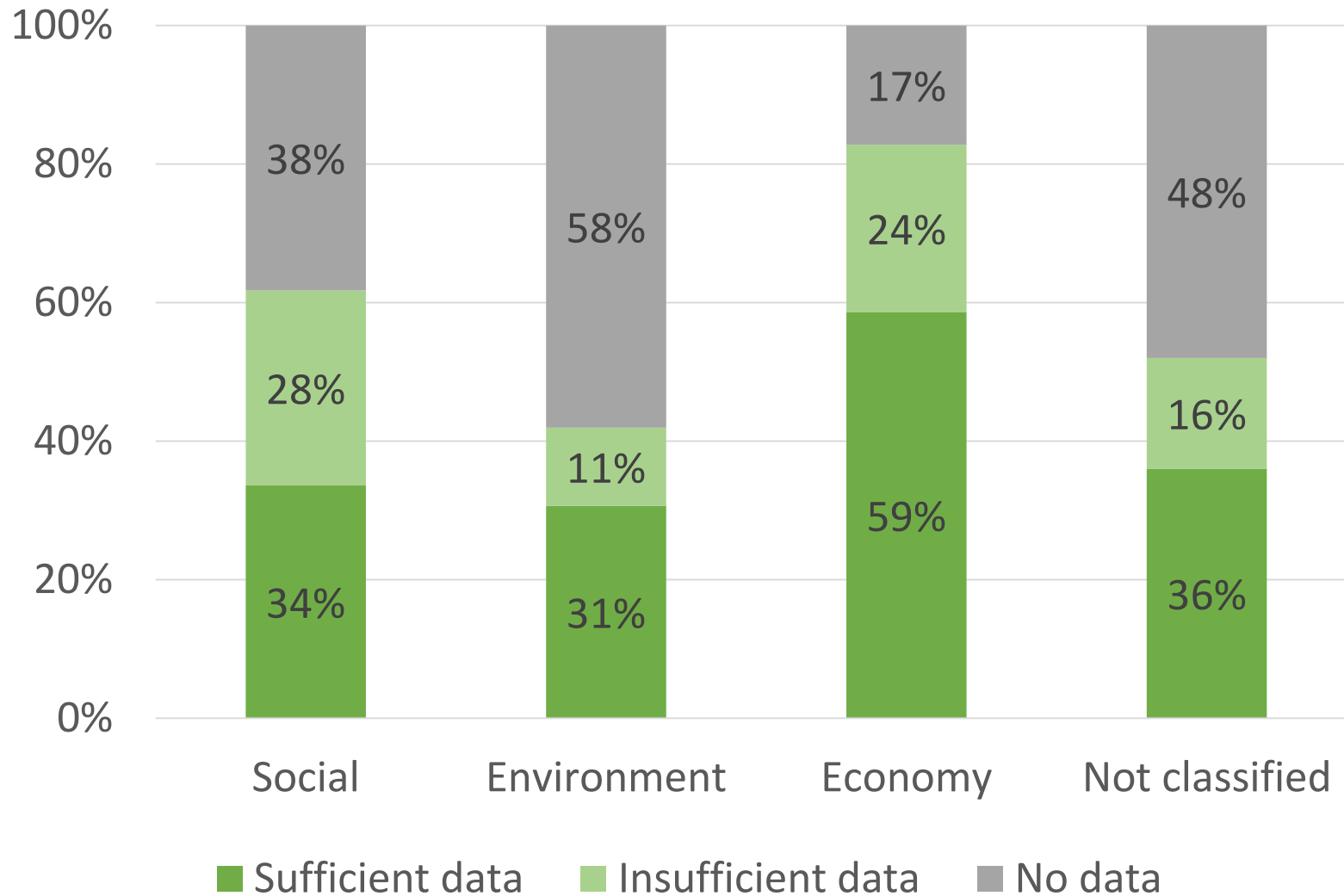








# SDG data availability in Asia-Pacific by development dimension



**Economy, SDGs 8, 9, 29 indicators**

**Social, SDGs 1-5; 10-11; 16, 128 indicators**

**Environment, SDGs 6,7; 12-15, 62 indicators**

**Not classified, SDG 17, 25 indicators**

## Key messages

### Lots of data gaps

- Economic statistics are not the worst

### Lots of 'technical assistance' required

- How should countries actually produce these indicators?

### Lots of 'statistical infrastructure' gaps

- how do we know when a statistic based on a new data source complies with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics?
- How do we **enable and empower** NSOs to use new data sources and new data methods?

# Enablement

Enabling NSOs to

- coordinate the NSS
- Fill data gaps
- Use statistical infrastructure
- Use new methods
- Use new data sources



The Sustainable Development Goals highlight the need for new data and partnerships

Global Goals Retweeted

 **Amina J Mohammed**  @Amina... · 1d

In 2015, 193 countries adopted the [#2030Agenda](#), promising to provide universal and affordable access [#ForTheWeb](#)  in least developed countries by 2020. On [#Web30](#) , let's be clear: achieving the [#GlobalGoals](#) depends on narrowing the digital gap.



About the Sustainable Development Goals - United Nations Sustainable...  
un.org

14 245 501



# Non traditional data sources





# Australia: Using scanner data for CPI



- **Transactions** data used to compile ~ 25% of CPI
  - Initial method directly replaced field collected prices with unit values derived from transactions data
  - Current method applies multilateral methods to make use of price and expenditure information and full range of products
- Increasingly using **webscraped** data (used to compile ~10% of CPI)
- The ABS **consulted widely** with the statistical and user community prior to implementing
- **Quality benefits:**
  - census of products used (no sampling),
  - expenditure data re-weights index each period
- **Cost benefits:**
  - less labour intensive,
  - more frequent and more items can be priced,
  - potential to develop spatial price indexes





# Indonesia: Using mobile phone data



- 350 million active mobile phone numbers
- All numbers need to be registered
- Location based services and call detailed records
- Used for: foreign tourists at cross border posts, domestic visitors, commuter estimation and event based analysis (Asian Games and IMF-WB Annual meeting)

# Afghanistan: Using geospatial data for population estimates



Last census was in 1979

Significant uncertainties in national and subnational estimates

One-third of country covered by a rolling census (SDES), but insecurity preventing additional data collection

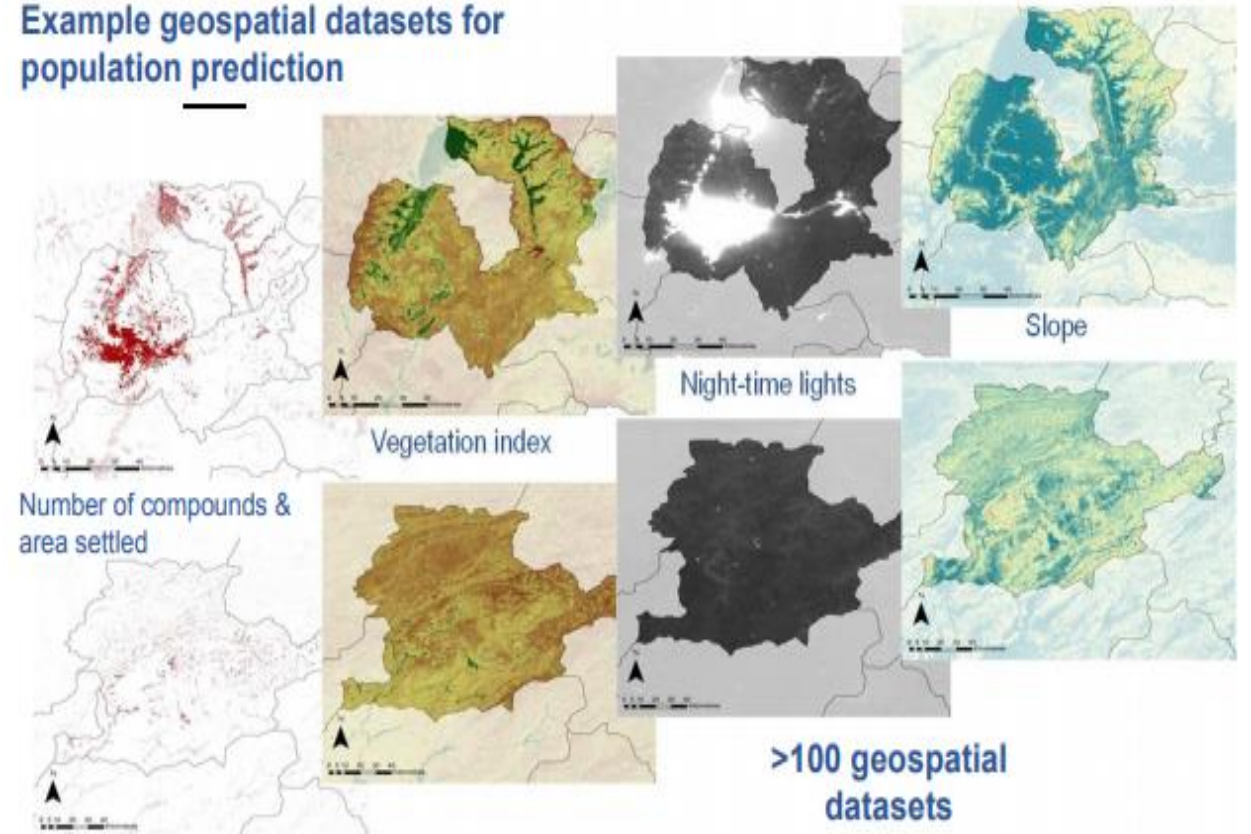
Exploration of new methods for obtaining subnational population numbers

High resolution population mapping

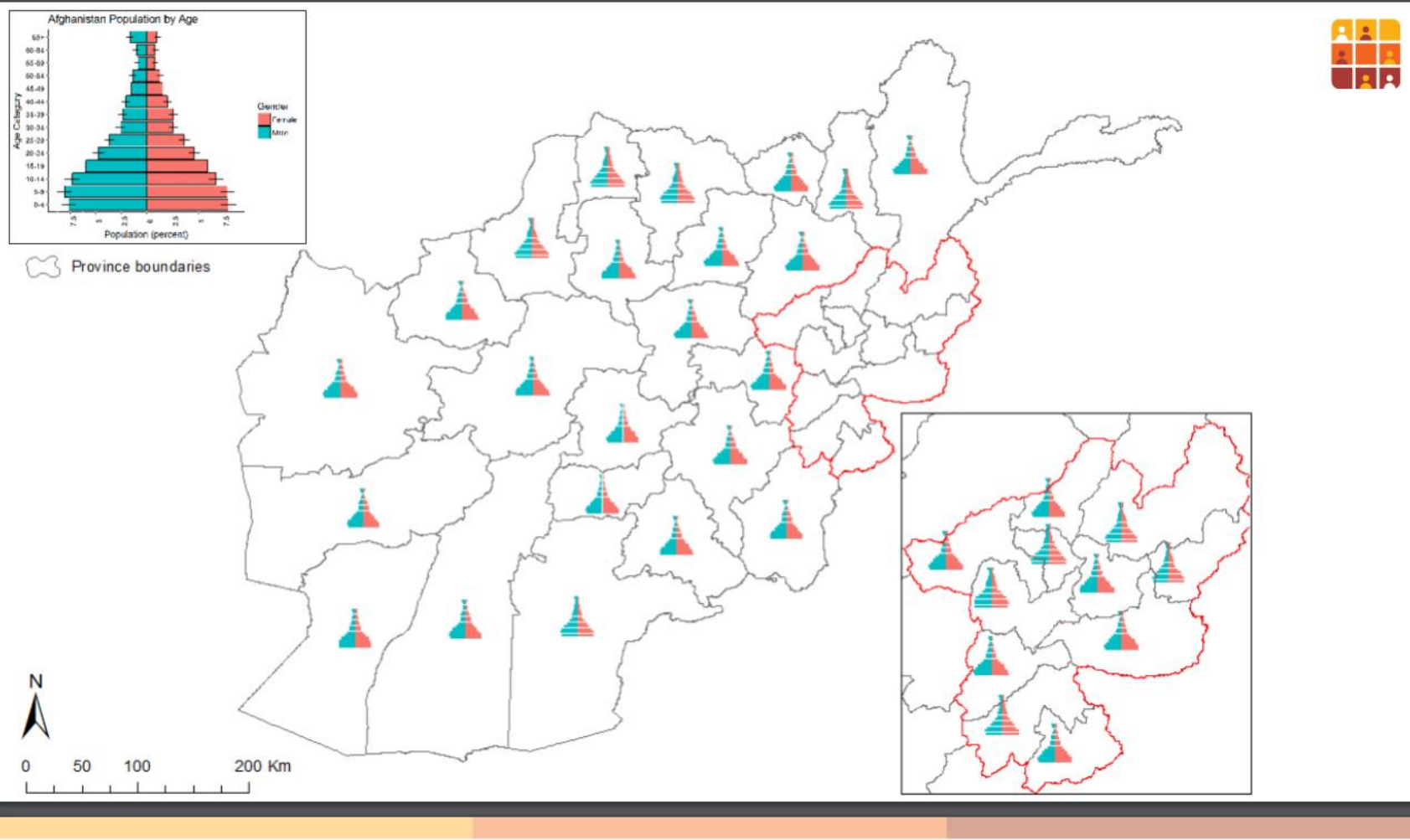
Model based estimates

Using bottom-up approaches to derive population estimates

Example geospatial datasets for population prediction



# Afghanistan: Using geospatial data for population estimates



[http://ggim.un.org/unwgic/presentations/1.4-Donna\\_Clarke.pdf](http://ggim.un.org/unwgic/presentations/1.4-Donna_Clarke.pdf)

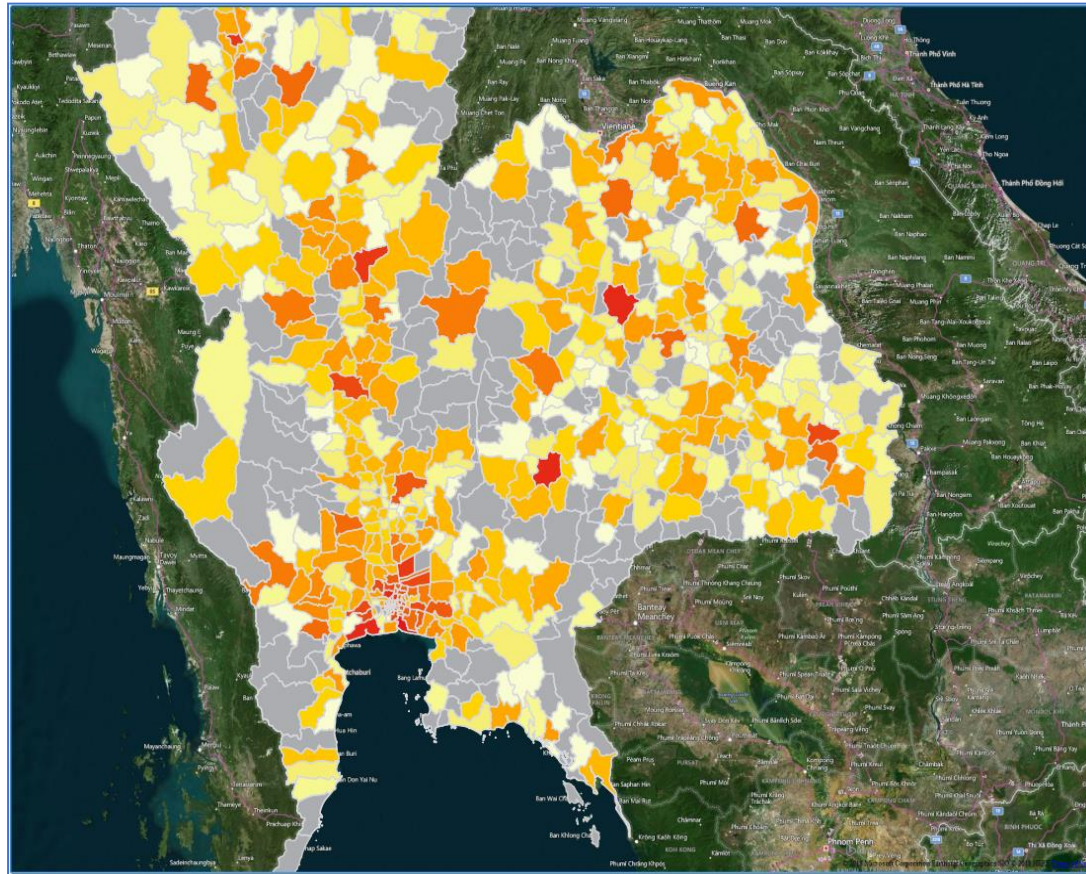
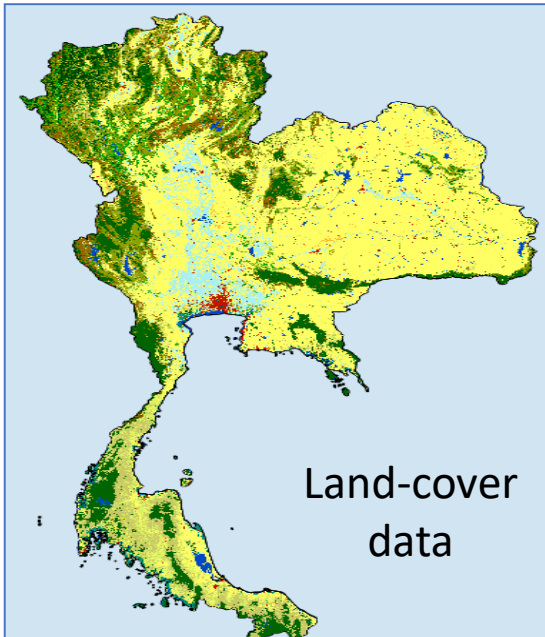
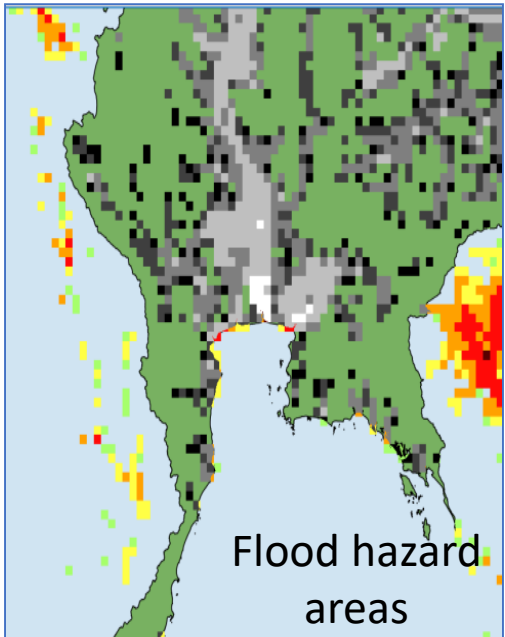
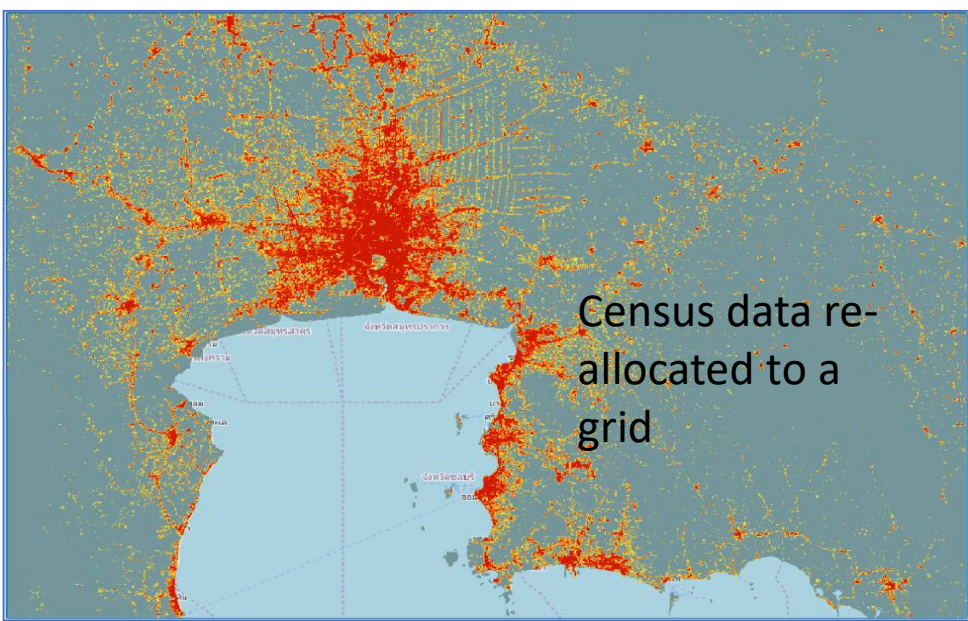


# Non traditional data methods





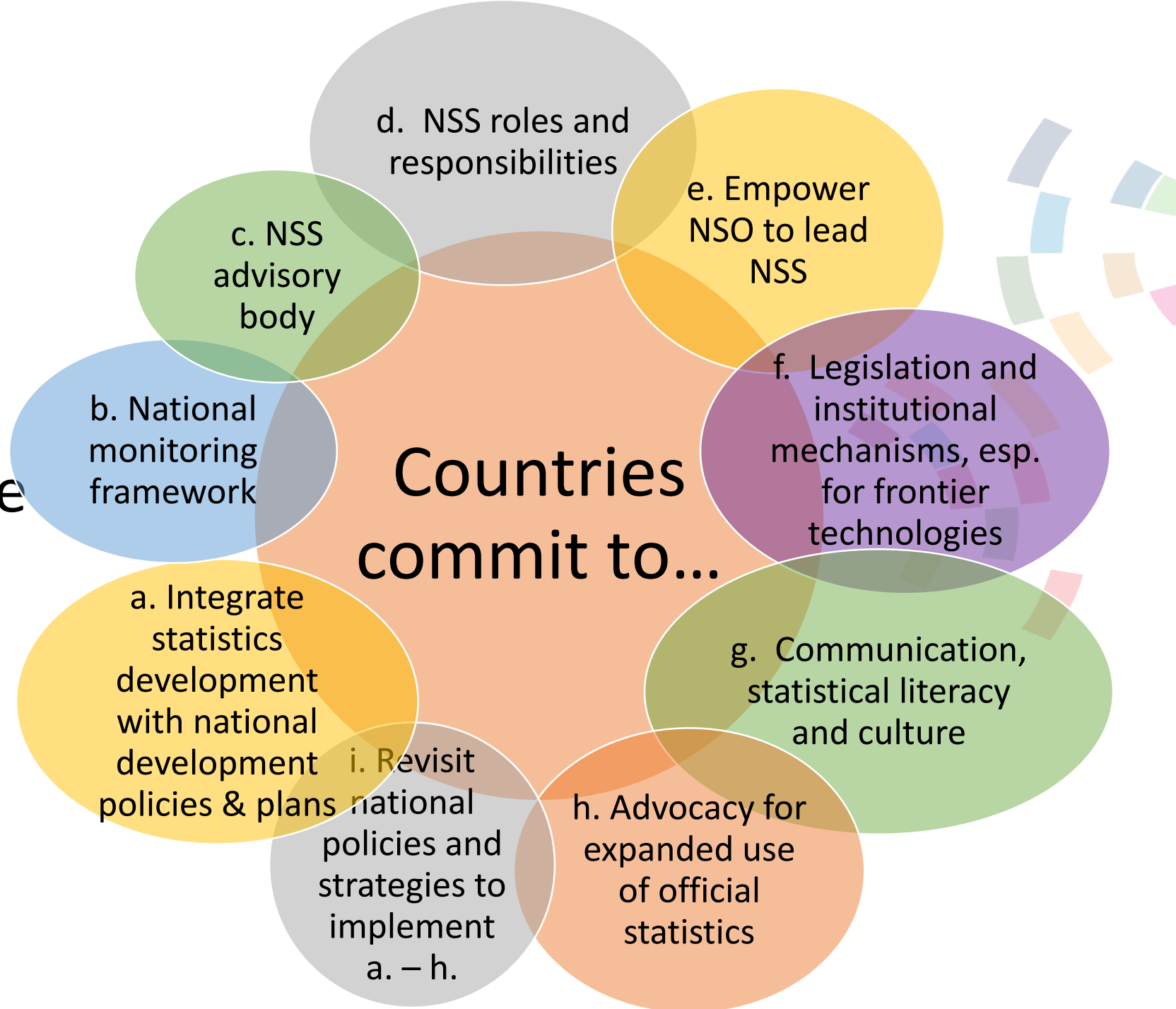
# Thailand: using GIS for disaggregation



# Empowerment

Agenda 2030 is a country-led agenda

In Asia-Pacific, countries have made nine commitments including to use frontier technologies, big data, new methods



# UN ESCAP is supporting the enablement of NSOs



## Technical support and capacity building

Using geospatial/earth observation data for official statistics, Bangkok, June 2018

Using mobile phone data for official statistics workshop, Jakarta, June 2019

ISI Symposium on Data Science and Official Statistics, August 2019

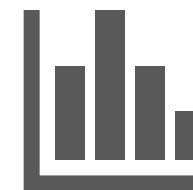


## Convening and consensus building

Global Working Group on Big Data for Official Statistics

Task Team on skill, capacity development

ISI Special Topic Session: Big Data and Official Statistics in Asia and the Pacific (STS 358) (China, Thailand, Indonesia, Nepal, Philippines, Australia)



## Research and analysis

Using GIS for disaggregation

Using scanner and web-scraped data for CPI: lessons from Asia-Pacific (forthcoming)

Big data and official statistics: a practical guide (forthcoming)



---

The UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development increases the need for **innovation** –including new institutional settings, new data sources, new methods, new partnerships, new conversations

---

Everyone in national statistical systems need to **work together** – statisticians, geospatial experts, digital community, line ministries, private sector, civil society, lawyers, planning ministries, politicians

---

Keeping in mind the need to produce **official statistics** not just data or statistics

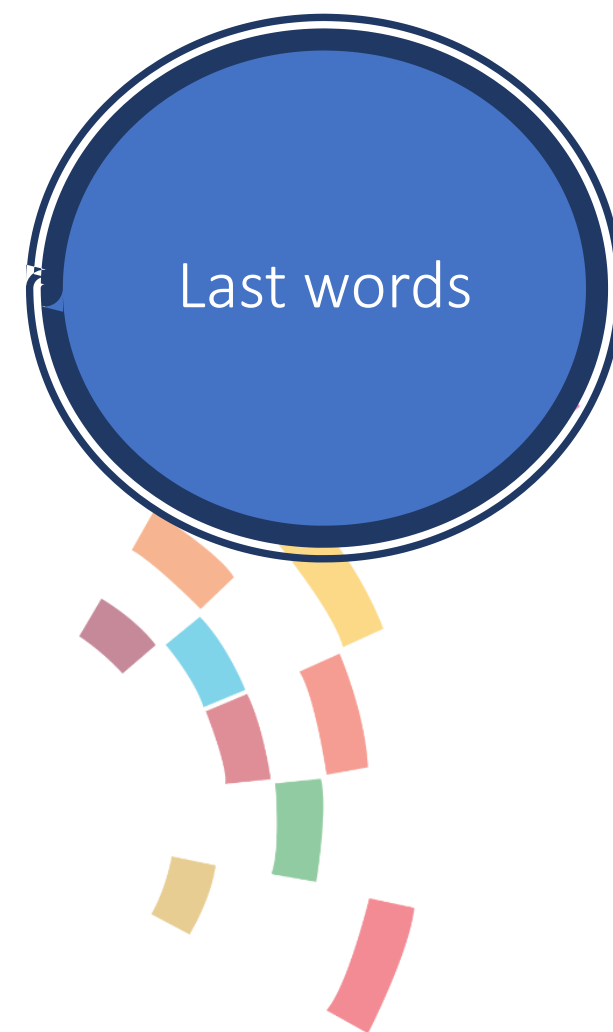
---

**Institutional transformation** is as essential as statistical transformation

---

UN ESCAP is supporting NSOs to be **enabled and empowered**

---





Thanks.... 😊

