

**Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)**

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Item 12 of the provisional agenda

The Sustainable Development Goals Monitor

1. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015, have given a new impetus to global efforts for achieving sustainable development. They bring a unified and structured view of development challenges via 232 indicators agreed upon through a consultative process among Member States represented by their national statistical offices.
2. The SDG Monitor presents an easy view on progress made in the Arab region under each of the 17 SDGs. Each Goal is represented by a number of indicators and related targets, along with information on latest averages and trends. In selecting the indicators, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) took into consideration the policy priorities of the Arab region, the significance and policy relevance of indicators and the availability of data.
3. The Monitor allows for comparison of the status and progress in a particular Goal in the Arab region with a good performing region and the world. It uses infographics and colours to present information in a user-friendly style. The latest data for each indicator are made available, some with disaggregation by sex. The green color indicates a “favourable status” or “on target” (evaluated according to target criteria).
4. In addition, the Monitor presents the trend for each indicator measured towards improvement or decline in reference to a base year. The trend is marked in green or red to provide readers with quick information on how well the regions and the world are doing, where progress is indicated in green colour and regress or “not doing well” are indicated in red colour.
5. In some cases, proxy indicators have been used in lieu of the official SDG indicators when data on averages were not made available. Each proxy indicator has been selected carefully to represent the Goal and the official SDG targets. This is not the final solution, and official SDG indicators will gradually replace the proxy indicators as data become available. However, it was important for ESCWA to come up with a practical solution, while working with national statistical offices and other statistics producers on building capacities for increased production of SDG-related data and statistics.
6. For the benefits of data comparability and the correct calculation of Arab regional averages, ESCWA used data from international sources, such as the World Bank, the Open Data portal, etc., complemented by data from the United Nations System databases and custodian agencies. In some exceptions, ESCWA calculated the Arab regional average of some indicators, and this is indicated by an asterisk on each indicator.
7. The SDG Monitor is complemented by the SDG Data Portal, which comprises all data on SDG indicators, and allows users to perform more detailed and focused analysis of the status and progress with respect to SDGs.
