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ASIA AND PACIFIC COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS

Twenty-ninth session

Kathmandu, Nepal
19 – 24 May 2024

AGENDA ITEM 4

New Developments in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Indicators

Executive Summary

FAO continues to progress in numerous methodological areas related to its custodianship of SDG indicators, with a particular focus on the farm-survey based indicators, including on data disaggregation; statistical progress assessment; the development of a proposal for a new SDG indicator on dietary diversity in the context of the 2025 Comprehensive Review of the SDG indicator framework; and the finalization of a proxy indicator for measuring productive and sustainable agriculture.

On data disaggregation, FAO has now published a comprehensive set of training materials on data disaggregation and Small Area Estimation (SAE) for SDG Indicators based on survey data, on the basis of which it is rolling out trainings and on-demand technical assistance. On statistical progress assessment, FAO recently pioneered a target- and Goal-level assessment method, with which it assessed – for the first time – the world's overall progress towards SDG 2. FAO is also actively engaged in the 2025 Comprehensive Review of the SDG indicator framework and has submitted a proposal for an additional indicator on healthy diets, in collaboration with UNICEF and with the support of several countries. Finally, the Organization has finalized the methodological development of a proxy indicator for measuring productive and sustainable agriculture based on a combination of key national-level economic, solution and environmental indicators. The proxy has been approved by the UN Statistical Commission as a "practical interim solution" for assessing global and regional progress, while FAO continues to support countries in producing the official SDG Indicator 2.4.1 at farm-level.

Suggested actions by APCAS

The Commission is invited to:

- share their perspectives on the adoption of the data disaggregation techniques and progress assessment methods and indicators proposed by FAO within the Asia-Pacific region, and their specific challenges in this area.
- express their initial views on the proposed addition of an SDG indicator on healthy diet in the SDG Global indicator framework during its 2025 Comprehensive Review

- take note of the proxy indicator for SDG indicator 2.4.1 as a practical interim solution to report on productive and sustainable agriculture, in particular at regional and global level, and express their views on how to improve the reporting of countries on the official indicator.

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I. Introduction

1. This paper provides an overview of the latest initiatives undertaken by FAO in four methodological areas: data disaggregation; statistical progress assessment; the proposal for a new SDG indicator on dietary diversity; and the development of a proxy indicator for measuring productive and sustainable agriculture. Section 1 will therefore summarize FAO's latest work on developing innovative methods for data disaggregation of SDG Indicators – particularly farm survey-based indicators, while section 2 delves into FAO's advanced tools and methodologies designed to assess SDG progress comprehensively at the national, regional, and global levels. The third section discusses FAO's activities in the context of the 2025 Comprehensive Review of the SDG indicator framework, currently ongoing under the leadership and oversight of the IAEG-SDG. FAO, in partnership with UNICEF, has proposed a new indicator under SDG target 2.2 to address the absence of specific measures for healthy diets. This proposed indicator comprises two components focusing on healthy diets: one for children and the other for women. The last section outlines FAO's proposed proxy indicator for productive and sustainable agriculture, which aims to overcome the challenges posed by the low reporting rate of the official 2.4.1 indicator due to the poor availability of farm survey data. This alternative approach seeks to facilitate global and regional monitoring of agricultural sustainability in the absence of survey-based data on the original indicator. Overall, the paper extends an invitation to APCAS members to share their perspectives on these methodologies and new indicators. This inclusive dialogue aims to foster collaboration and ensure the effective implementation of these tools and indicators for advancing sustainable development efforts in the Asia-Pacific region.

II. Innovative methods for data disaggregation of SDG Indicators

2. In addition to reporting SDG Indicators at the national level, with the adoption of the global SDG Indicator framework, member states have endorsed an overarching principle of data disaggregation stating that "SDG Indicators should be disaggregated, where relevant, by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability and geographic location, or other characteristics, in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics[1]".

3. The production of high-quality disaggregated estimates of SDG indicators imposes significant challenges to national statistical systems, both in terms of data requirements and operational complexity. At its forty-seventh session, the UN Statistical Commission requested the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) to form a working group on data disaggregation, with the objective of strengthening national capacities and develop the necessary statistical standards and tools to produce disaggregated data. This led to – among other results – identifying a minimum set of core disaggregation dimensions for each SDG indicator, and preparing a comprehensive compilation of categories and dimensions for current and future data disaggregation of SDG indicators[2]. In addition, the working group on data disaggregation established a task force on small area estimation (SAE) with

[1] Report of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (E/CN.3/2017/2)
[2] All resources and tools produced by the working group on data disaggregation can be accessed at the present link: https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/iaeg-sdgs/disaggregation/

the goal of developing tools and case studies to facilitate the implementation of SAE approaches for disaggregating SDG indicators[3] based on survey data. In this framework, FAO - as a leading member of the working group on data disaggregation and the task force on SAE- has conducted extensive methodological work on data disaggregation and produced several resources for Member countries.

4. First, FAO published a set of data disaggregation guidelines for SDG indicators based on survey data, which were presented and discussed at the 28th session of APCAS. The Guidelines (FAO, 2021) provide statistical methods and software tools to address data disaggregation of all SDG Indicators under FAO custodianship having sample surveys as their primary data source. Examples of such indicators are Indicators 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.3.1, 2.3.2, and 5.a.1. The publication also includes a case study of an indirect estimation method adopted to produce disaggregated estimates of SDG indicator 2.1.2 (prevalence of food insecurity). In 2022, the methodology presented in the case study has been refined and tested on microdata from selected countries, in order to produce a Technical Report presenting the practical steps and the statistical software to implement the discussed methods (FAO, 2022a).

5. Additional data disaggregation activities on SDG Indicator 2.1.2 have been implemented in 2023 with the governments of Chile, Colombia, and Dominican Republic in the context of a technical cooperation project initiated by the FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean. The project was intended to provide technical support to three countries in the region for producing food insecurity maps based on the application of SAE techniques on SDG Indicator 2.1.2. Activities implemented in the context of this project allowed refining a methodology to map food insecurity at granular sub-national level that could be replicated in virtually all countries with minimum modifications provided that:

1) The country implements a representative survey collecting microdata to estimate SDG indicator 2.1.2 at the national level;

2) Suitable sources of auxiliary variables to be used for the implementation of small area estimation techniques are available (e.g. a recent census, administrative registers, geospatial information systems).

6. FAO has also implemented a case study on data disaggregation and SAE focused on SDG indicators 2.3.1 and 2.3.2. The experiment was performed with microdata from the Integrated Household Survey of Mali and auxiliary information retrieved from multiple trustworthy geospatial information systems. This case study is extensively discussed and documented in a FAO technical report (FAO 2023a), and an article included in a special issue of the Statistical Journal of the IAOS (Khalil et al, 2022). Technical assistance on approaches documented in the above-mentioned publications could be provided to APCAS Members expressing their interest in producing subnational estimates of indicators monitoring target 2.3.

7. Concerning Goal 5, in 2021, the FAO developed a practical case study based on SAE techniques to disaggregate SDG indicator 5.a.1 by sex and at granular sub-national level. This experiment was implemented using microdata from the Ugandan National Panel Survey and its results, along with the practical steps and software for its replication, have been summarized in a technical report that was published during the first trimester of 2022 (FAO, 2022b). This exercise has then been replicated with some modification in Nepal, where microdata from the 2016 Demographic and Health Survey have been integrated with area-level auxiliary information extracted from the 2011 Population and Housing Census to produce proxy estimates of SDG indicator 5.a.1 at the district level.

8. All the above-mentioned activities and case studies allowed FAO to build the necessary experience to produce a comprehensive set of training materials on data disaggregation and SAE for SDG Indicators based on survey data. This material, which was reviewed by several SAE experts from academia and national statistical offices, has been used to deliver three virtual trainings to 10 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe and Central Asia (Armenia, Benin, Botswana, Georgia, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Mali, Moldova, Nepal, and South Africa).

[3] The Task Force on Small Area Estimation has developed and published a WIKI Toolkit on SAE methods, which provides information and guidelines on the production of disaggregated SDG estimates through SAE. The Toolkit is a living resources subject to continuous updates. It can be accessed at the present link: https://unstats.un.org/wiki/display/SAE4SDG/SAE4SDG

III. Enhanced tools and methods for SDG progress assessment at the national, regional, and global level

9. The statistical methodology developed by FAO to measure the current status and trend of SDG indicators was discussed during the 29th session of APCAS, where the FAO Chief Statistician recommended Member countries to adopt standard and harmonized approaches for assessing the progress made towards the achievement of the SDGs. This methodology has remained substantially stable since then and has been systematically adopted to produce the FAO annual SDG Progress Reports.

10. With 2023 marking the mid-point of the 2030 Agenda, the UN Statistics Division as well as custodian agencies have been urged to find ways of performing current status and trend assessments not only at the level of individual indicators, but also for targets and goals as a whole. Although an agreement on an UN-wide harmonized approach for such a Goal-level assessment has not been reached yet[4],FAO has proposed a simple method that has been used for the first time in 2023 for a comprehensive assessment of Goal 2. The selected procedure is articulated in the three steps summarized below:

- **Step 1:** The trend and the current status assessments are implemented for all indicators with data available under a given target.
- **Step 2:** The estimated progress values are inserted into a scoring function that linearly normalizes the values of the current status and trend on a continuous scale from 0 to 4.
- **Step 3:** For targets monitored by more than one indicator, the single measures are averaged into target-level scores. Finally, the scores for all targets under a given goal are summarized through arithmetic mean, yielding an overall Goal-level assessment.

11. The methodological details for the implementation of the three steps listed above are provided in the technical annex of the FAO 2023 SDG Progress Report[5] (FAO, 2023b).

12. After computing the target and goal level current status and trend scores, these are categorized in the five classes reported in **Table 1** and **Table 2** below to formalize the assessment.

Table 1. Assessment categories for current status scores

Score current status	Interpretation for goal level and for targets with numerical yardstick	Interpretation for targets without numerical yardstick	
4	Goal/target achieved	Best performers	
[3–4)	Close to achieving the goal/target	Above-median performers	
[2–3)	Moderate distance to achieving the goal/target	Median performers	
[1–2)	Far from achieving the goal/target	Below-median performers	
[0–1)	Very far from achieving the goal/target	Worst performers	

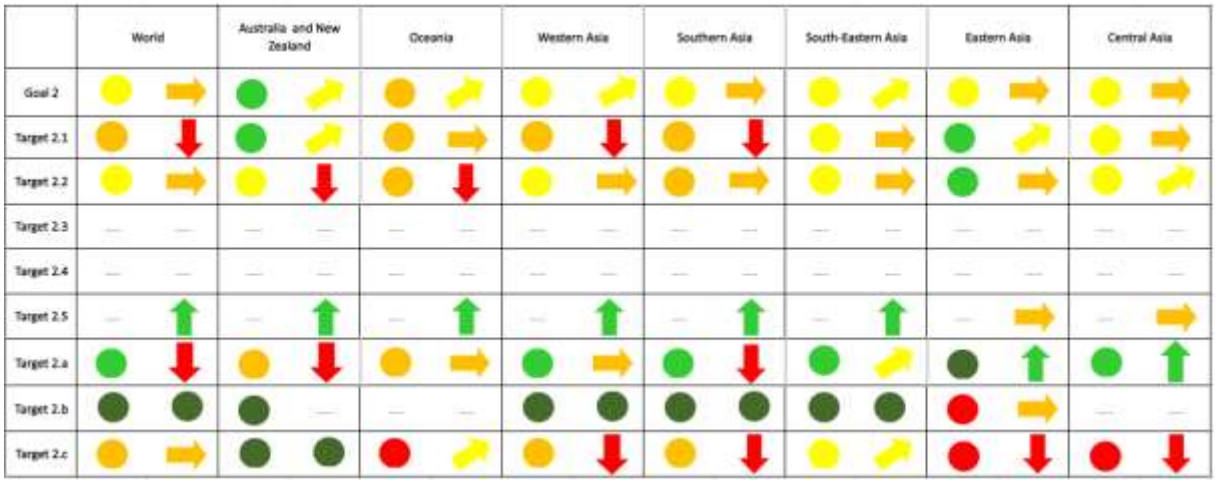
Table 2. Assessment categories for trend scores

[4] At the moment of writing the FAO is co-chairing a UN Task Force for the development of a Goal and Target level assessment approach for the annual SDG Progress Chart produced by UNSD.
[5] Tracking progress on food and agriculture-related SDG indicators 2023

Score trend	Interpretation for goal level and for targets with numerical yardstick	Interpretation for targets without numerical yardstick	
4	Goal/target achieved	Improvement	
[3–4)	Improvement towards the goal/target	Improvement	
[2–3)	Slight improvement towards the goal/target	Slight improvement	
[1–2)	No improvement towards the goal/target	No improvement	
[0–1)	Deterioration away from the goal/target	Deterioration	

13. By applying the approach discussed above, it is possible to assess the progress toward SDG 2 for Asia and the Pacific as a whole and its constituent sub-regions. As can be seen in the **Figure 4** below, the region shows a "moderate distance" from SDG 2, with some sub-regions having registered "slight improvement toward" the Goal since 2015. The worst performance in most of the sub-regions is observed with respect to target 2.c, which indicates the proportion of countries recording abnormally high or moderately high food prices, according to the Indicator of Food Price Anomalies. In particular, out of the 7 sub-regions, 4 have displayed a "deterioration" from the target, and they all are either far or very far from achieving the target, except for Australia and New Zealand which represent a positive outlier both at goal 2 level and in respect to target 2.c.

Figure 4. Goal and target level assessment of progress on SDG 2 in Asia and the Pacific



14. FAO is aware of the methodological complexities of conducting a progress assessment for all SDG indicators, which is a pre-requisite for a systematic Goal-level assessment based on the approach proposed here. It has therefore developed a dedicated Shiny app[6] which can automatically produce a progress assessment based on the official or customized SDG indicator datasets, provided that a few minimum parameters are specified for a given indicator (baseline and latest year; existence of a numerical target; desired direction). For the time being, the app allows performing the assessment for all SDG indicators under FAO custodianship, for all targets under Goal 2, and for this Goal as a whole. This can be a valuable complementary tool for countries wishing to develop more data-driven and statistically sound Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) for future HLPFs. In addition, the FAO is currently working at a new version of the app to automatize the assessment of all indicators, targets, and Goals in Global Monitoring Framework.

[6] The current version of the Shiny App can be accessed at the following link: https://foodandagricultureorganization.shinyapps.io/SDG_progress_assessment/

IV. The 2025 Comprehensive Review of the SDG indicator framework (MDD-W)

15. By the time of APCAS, the 2025 Comprehensive Review of the SDG indicator framework[7] will be in full swing. This is the second – and last – such comprehensive review within the time horizon of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Between 1-30 April 2024, the IAEG-SDG will organize an open call for proposals, during which any proposals for indicator changes (replacements, deletions, refinements, adjustments and additional indicators) will need to be submitted to the Secretariat by 30 April. The IAEG-SDG will hence examine all proposals based on the following key criteria:

- The review will aim to maintain the same number of indicators currently in the framework so as not increase the reporting burden on national statistical systems;
- Any proposed new indicator must have an agreed methodology and data available for at least 40% of countries;
- An additional indicator may be considered only in exceptional cases when a crucial aspect of a target is not being monitored by the current indicator(s) or to address a critical or emerging new issue that is not monitored by the existing indicators;
- A deletion may be considered when a tier II indicator has not been able to submit any data to the global SDG monitoring or is proven to be challenging for countries to implement, and a replacement will be proposed if the deleted indicator is the only indicator monitoring the corresponding target;
- Adjustments or replacements will be considered when the indicator does not map well to the target or does not track the target well.

16. Bearing these criteria in mind, FAO is currently focusing its efforts on two fronts: on the one hand, it has redoubled its capacity development initiatives in support of the Tier II indicators under FAO responsibility and correspondingly presented a series of "Tier II workplans" to the IAEG-SDG, to stave off any risk of these SDG indicator being dropped or replaced. Where it has not been possible for countries to start reporting on an indicator in sufficient numbers (e.g. SDG indicator 2.4.1 on sustainable agriculture), FAO has proposed an alternative proxy indicator, which has been approved by the IAEG-SDG (see section IV below).

17. On the other hand, FAO has allied with UNICEF to jointly propose a new indicator under SDG target 2.2 on the Prevalence of minimum dietary diversity, by population group (children aged 6-23.9 months and non-pregnant women aged 15 to 49 years) (percentage), whereby UNICEF would be responsible for the component on infants and young children (MDD-IYC) and FAO responsible for the component on women (MDD-W). The proposal aims to cover a critical gap in the SDG indicator framework, which currently lacks any direct measure of healthy diets. Moreover, the proposal fulfils all the IAEG-SDG criteria in that the indicator already has a well-established methodology; data is available for at least 40% of countries; and the approval of the indicator would represent but a minimal additional reporting burden on countries.

18. The absence of a specific indicator on dietary diversity, which is a cornerstone of healthy diets, leads to a neglect of the pivotal role that balanced nutrition plays in realizing the objectives of the 2030 Agenda. Consequently, efforts to formulate evidence-based strategies for enhancing nutrition and health outcomes through dietary interventions are significantly impeded.

19. At the same time, it is widely recognized that unhealthy dietary patterns stand as a primary driver of poor health outcomes and the proliferation of non-communicable diseases globally. Conversely, dietary diversity emerges as a long-standing public health principle widely advocated in food-based dietary guidelines[8], the World Health Organization's (WHO) 'Healthy Diet' factsheet, FAO and WHO's guiding principles for 'Sustainable healthy diets', and UNICEF's Conceptual Framework

[7] IAEG-SDGs 2025 Comprehensive Review Process IAEG-SDGs — SDG Indicators (un.org)
[8] Herforth A, Arimond M, Álvarez-Sánchez C, Coates J, Christianson K, Muehlhoff E. A Global Review of Food-Based Dietary Guidelines. Adv Nutr. 2019 Jul 1;10(4):590-605. doi: 10.1093/advances/nmy130

on Maternal and Child Nutrition. As a matter of fact, lack of dietary diversity heightens the risk of micronutrient deficiencies, particularly among vulnerable demographic groups such as children and women, thereby compromising overall health as well as physical and cognitive development.

20. The joint FAO-UNICEF proposal therefore aims to fill this gap. Adopting the "*prevalence of minimum dietary diversity"* – Minimum Dietary Diversity for Infants and Young Children (MDD-IYC) and Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women (MDD-W) – will offer a simple, efficient, and cost-effective means of assessing dietary diversity, particularly among vulnerable groups, explicitly identified in Target 2.2, like children and women.

21. MDD-IYC was first released in 2008 by WHO-UNICEF[9], with updated operational guidance in 2021[10], while MDD-W was developed in 2015 by FAO[11]. MDD-W has been validated to indicate improved intakes of 11 micronutrients at the population level across multiple countries[12]. Additionally, the MDD-W data collection method – a non-quantitative list-based 24-hour dietary recall – has been validated against objective dietary intake[13] observations and quantitative 24-hour recalls in various countries[14].

22. Concerning the data sources and availability of MDD-IYC and MDD-W, the estimates for the first are derived predominantly from household surveys involving caregivers of children aged 0 to 23 months. These surveys, notably conducted through major programs such as the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) and the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS), have been instrumental in collecting data aligned with global standards across more than 250 surveys spanning 110 countries (UNICEF Global Database). Regarding MDD-W, the DHS have systematically collected nationally representative statistics in ten countries, and there are plans for further expansion in 2024. Moreover, the Gallup World Poll has provided data for 56 countries between 2021 and 2023, with an additional 36 countries slated for inclusion in 2024. FAO aims to gather data on 92 countries by the end of 2024, encompassing 47% of all nations worldwide.

23. Overall, leveraging MDD-IYC and MDD-W indicators not only aids the interpretation of advancements or stagnation in other SDG targets but also steers global development priorities enabling nations to benchmark progress in fostering healthy dietary practices effectively. Furthermore, this integration highlights the paramount importance of promoting healthy diets as a central aspiration for transformative agri-food systems and securing a platform for continued monitoring of dietary patterns in the post-SDG era.

V. Measuring productive and sustainable agriculture (SDG indicator 2.4.1 and its proxy)

24. Since the final endorsement of the methodology of SDG Indicator 2.4.1 on productive and sustainable agriculture in March 2019, FAO has invested substantial efforts in providing capacity development support to countries as to ensure their regular reporting of the indicator. FAO organized a

[9] Working Group on Infant and Young Child Feeding Indicators. Developing and Validating Simple Indicators of Dietary Quality and Energy Intake of Infants and Young Children in Developing Countries: Summary of findings from analysis of 10 data sets. Report

[10] Indicators for assessing infant and young child feeding practices: definitions and measurement methods. Geneva: World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 2021. Licence: CC BYNC-SA 3.0 IGO; https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/igo

[11] FAO. 2021. Minimum dietary diversity for women. Rome. https://doi.org/10.4060/cb3434en

[12] Women's Dietary Diversity Project (WDDP) Study Group. Development of a Dichotomous Indicator for Population-Level Assessment of Dietary Diversity in Women of Reproductive Age. Curr Dev Nutr. 2017 Nov 2;1(12):cdn.117.001701. doi: 10.3945/cdn.117.001701

[13] Hanley-Cook GT, Tung JYA, Sattamini IF, Marinda PA, Thong K, Zerfu D, Kolsteren PW, Tuazon MAG, Lachat CK. Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women of Reproductive Age (MDD-W) Data Collection: Validity of the List-Based and Open Recall Methods as Compared to Weighed Food Record. Nutrients. 2020 Jul 9;12(7):2039. doi: 10.3390/nu12072039

[14] Uyar BTM, Talsma EF, Herforth AW, Trijsburg LE, Vogliano C, Pastori G, Bekele TH, Huong LT, Brouwer ID. The DQQ is a Valid Tool to Collect Population-Level Food Group Consumption Data: A Study Among Women in Ethiopia, Vietnam, and Solomon Islands. J Nutr. 2023 Jan;153(1):340-351. doi: 10.1016/j.tjnut.2022.12.01

number of training workshops and bilateral trainings in 2019 and – on account of the COVID-19 pandemic – delivered four virtual trainings in 2020–2021, covering more than 100 countries across all regions of the world. To further facilitate country reporting, FAO also published a compendium of key methodological documents (FAO, 2022), as well as an e-learning course on the indicator, in 2019 (available in English, French and Spanish).

25. These efforts have helped some 40 countries report partial data on SDG Indicator 2.4.1, though only a very small number of countries have reported complete data. This is due to a multiplicity of factors, including the inherent complexity of the indicator, the difficulty in leveraging alternative data sources, the low frequency of agricultural surveys in countries (which took an additional hit with the COVID-19 pandemic), as well as low technical and financial means to include the 2.4.1 module in new agricultural surveys.

26. The current dearth of data on SDG Indicator 2.4.1 creates a critical information gap in SDG reporting. SDG Indicator 2.4.1 aims to measure the sustainability of agriculture, which is central to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It has come even more to the forefront of international discourse in the recent period, including at the Food Systems Summit, the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) and the Stockholm+ 50 meeting. Therefore, since 2022 FAO has decided to try to fill this information gap and report on progress toward SDG Target 2.4 by means of a provisional, alternative measure. This proxy measure consists of a set of seven established metrics linked to the sustainability and productivity in agriculture, computable from existing national statistics, which mirror – to the extent possible – the corresponding themes of the original 2.4.1 indicator (**Table 3**).

Table 3. Principal aspects of the proxy proposal for 2.4.1

Dimension	**2.4.1 sub-indicator theme**	**2.4.1 Country Coverage (as of Dec. 2023)**	**Proposed Proxy metric**	**Proxy Country Coverage**
Economic	Land productivity	13%	Gross production value per hectare	96%
Economic	Resilience	11%	Gross output diversification	96%
Environment	Soil quality	5%	Nitrogen Use Efficiency	81%
Environment	Water availability	8%	Agriculture component of water stress (6.4.2 disaggregation)	90%
Environment	[No equivalent theme]	-	Greenhouse gas emissions intensity	80%
Social	Food security	8%	Agricultural value added per worker (link to 2.3.2)	72%
Social	Decent Employment	11%	Informal employment in agriculture (link to SDG 8.3.1)	51%

27. The proxy indicator is based on an innovative methodology that builds on the Progress Toward Sustainable Agriculture (PROSA) analytical framework (Ignaciuk *et al.*, 2021) launched by FAO in 2021. In contrast to SDG indicator 2.4.1, designed for farm-level data collection across its 11 sub-indicators, the 7 proxy measures diverge by capturing and analyzing data directly at the national level. Moreover, unlike the original SDG indicator 2.4.1, where each sub-indicator is assigned a specific sustainability threshold, the assessment approach for the 7 proxy measures evaluates both the current status (**Annex 1**) alongside the direction and consistency of their trends (**Annex 2**).

28. Therefore, each country will be assigned one of the following scores (and corresponding assessment levels) for its current status and trend toward productive and sustainable agriculture:

Score	Trend towards productive and sustainable agriculture
1 to < 1.5	Band 1: Deterioration away from productive and sustainable agriculture
1.5to < 2.5	Band 2: Slight deterioration from productive and sustainable agriculture
2.5to < 3.5	Band 3: No improvement towards productive and sustainable agriculture
3.5 to < 4.5	Band 4: Slight improvement towards productive and sustainable agriculture
4.5 to 5	Band 5: Improvement towards productive and sustainable agriculture

Score	Current status with respect to productive and sustainable agriculture
1 to < 1.5	Band 1: Very far from achieving productive and sustainable agriculture
1.5 to < 2.5	Band 2: Far from achieving productive and sustainable agriculture
2.5 to < 3.5	Band 3: Moderate distance to achieving productive and sustainable agriculture
3.5 to< 4.5	Band 4: Close to achieving productive and sustainable agriculture
4.5 to 5	Band 5: Productive and sustainable agriculture already achieved

29. The underlying progress assessment methodology aligns with the system-wide approach adopted for the global SDG Progress Chart, consistent with FAO's own methodology for its SDG Progress Report. However, countries are still expected to use the full SDG 2.4.1 methodology when more detailed farm-level data are available.

30. Echoing this notion, the latest (55th) session of the UN Statistical Commission acknowledged *the [2.4.1] as a practical interim solution…. and encouraged the custodian agency to work with countries to strengthen capacity building activities for the official indicator*". Thus, the 2.4.1 proxy seeks to provide an interim solution for assessing global and regional progress in sustainable and productive agriculture until more comprehensive country data becomes accessible and a sufficient number of countries are able to produce SDG Indicator 2.4.1 so as to allow the calculation of regional and global aggregates.

VI. Conclusions and Recommendations

31. FAO continues to invest significant efforts in developing a wide range of methodological tools to enhance countries' ability to derive meaningful insights from SDG indicators, with the ultimate objective of fostering more evidence-based policy and decision-making and hence catalysing the necessary transformation for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. FAO has thus published a comprehensive set of training materials on data disaggregation and Small Area Estimation (SAE) for SDG Indicators based on survey data, as well as released a dedicated Shiny app capable of automatically producing a progress assessment based on SDG datasets. Such tools have been amply communicated through information, advocacy and training sessions, and it is now up to countries themselves to adopt them and use them for their intended purposes. Meanwhile, FAO remains committed to supporting countries enhance their capacities through targeted technical assistance upon request.

32. The ongoing 2025 Comprehensive Review of the SDG indicator framework is the second – and last – Comprehensive Review in the 2030 Agenda's time horizon. FAO, UNICEF and a coalition of countries have identified healthy diets a key missing aspect in the indicator set for SDG 2, and have

hence developed and proposed an additional indicator consisting of two components: the Minimum Dietary Diversity Score applied to children and to women. APCAS members are therefore encouraged to actively express their views on this proposal.

33. FAO has finalized the methodological development of a proxy indicator for measuring productive and sustainable agriculture based on a combination of key national-level economic, solution and environmental indicators. The proxy has been approved by the UN Statistical Commission as a "practical interim solution" for assessing global and regional progress, while FAO continues to support countries in producing the official SDG indicator 2.4.1 at farm-level. Countries are therefore encouraged to continue transmitting requests to FAO for technical assistance on the official SDG indicator 2.4.1, which will generally require an upgrade of existing farm survey instruments.