

Halfway to 2030 in Latin America and the Caribbean

Progress and recommendations
for acceleration

Sixth report on regional progress and challenges
in relation to the 2030 Agenda for [Sustainable
Development](#) in Latin America and the Caribbean



Forum of the Countries
of Latin America and
the Caribbean on
**SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT**

Santiago
25–28 April **2023**



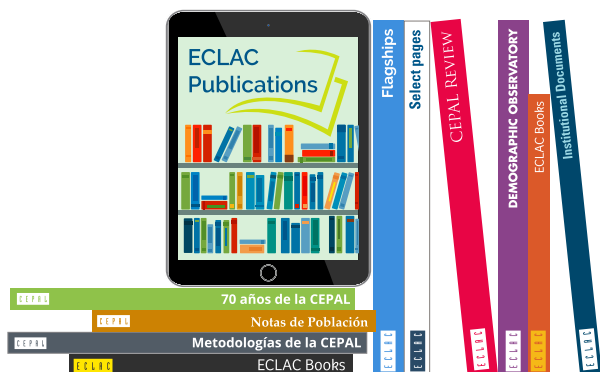
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Explanatory notes for graphs and tables:

Three dots indicate that data are not available or are not separately reported.

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A slash between years (e.g. 2022/2023) indicates a 12-month period falling between the two years.

Individual figures and percentages in tables may not always add up to the corresponding total because of rounding.

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Foreword

The countries of Latin America and the Caribbean are halfway through the time frame set for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that underpin the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The progress towards the Goals and targets was drastically hampered by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, which has taken a heavy toll across the globe since 2020 and undermined efforts to achieve the Agenda in many regions of the world, including Latin America and the Caribbean, hardest hit by the pandemic. The last biennium has also been marked by global developments that have adversely affected progress towards the SDGs, such as the conflict in Ukraine, trade tensions and geopolitical conflicts, forced migration and a resurgence of inflation.

The cascading shocks that have affected the countries have created a real development crisis in the region. Economic growth of just 1.2% is expected in 2023. However, the development challenges date back further: 2023 marks the end of a 10-year period over which growth in the region will have averaged only 0.8%, lower than the 2% recorded in the lost decade of the 1980s.

It is not only the economic slowdown and recent shocks but also the slow growth in the 10 years from 2014–2023 that have cumulatively undermined the achievement of many of the SDGs, putting many of the targets off-track and at risk of not being met by 2030. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) estimates

that only 25% of the targets for which information is available appear to be on course to be met by 2030. However, an estimated 48% of them are moving in the right direction, albeit too slowly, and the remaining 27% are moving backwards.

There is an urgent and vital need to implement policies and take action to reverse negative trends, strengthen those that are moving in the right direction but are insufficient to achieve the targets, and ensure that the targets that are currently on track will be achieved.

This report looks at three key issues. First, it reviews overall progress towards the achievement of all the SDGs, with a more in-depth focus on progress towards five of them: clean water and sanitation (Goal 6); affordable and clean energy (Goal 7); industry, innovation and infrastructure (Goal 9); sustainable cities and communities (Goal 11); and partnerships for the goals (Goal 17). Given the worrying trend towards backsliding in some indicators and targets, immediate action will be needed to incentivize investment, strengthen institutions and related governance, and mobilize joint efforts and shared commitments, engaging the public and private sectors and civil society.

Second, it posits that getting back on track to meet the SDG targets by 2030 requires not only greater investment and financing but also a paradigm shift in public policymaking. Specifically, there is a need to improve governance, shore up institutions and partnerships, and envisage longer time horizons in public policy. The vision for society set forth in the 2030 Agenda calls for the design of forward-looking public policies that bring together all social actors to build desirable scenarios for the future, as well as the road maps and processes for dialogue and participation required to achieve them. The scale of the challenges facing the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean is such that it necessitates dialogue and decisions that are not limited to the short-term, and in this sense, the SDGs can be of great help in articulating and shaping a shared vision of the future.

Third, the report analyses the institutional processes that have been put in place for the implementation and monitoring of the SDGs. It describes how countries have linked their development plans and planning processes to the SDGs, and how they continue to actively participate in voluntary national reviews to assess and improve policies. It

also highlights the growing interest in carrying out actions to implement the 2030 Agenda at the subnational level and illustrates how voluntary local reviews have emerged as a means for subnational stakeholders to support the implementation and monitoring of the SDGs. Equally important to note is the active engagement of civil society and its establishment of internal mechanisms as well as partnerships with governments to proactively monitor and advocate for progress on the SDGs in a positive and constructive manner.

As this report shows, it is clear that the 2030 Agenda has generated an institutional footprint that has unequivocally strengthened countries' capacities to meet the challenges of the future and paved the way for building solid partnerships and enhancing evidence-based policies. This institutional footprint is key to driving and coordinating new forward-looking actions in pursuit of the SDGs.

Building on the institutional capacities developed over the past eight years through the establishment of institutional processes and mechanisms to monitor and analyse progress towards the SDGs, this report is a call to action on a number of transformative initiatives whose synergistic capacity and forward-looking vision can bring together multiple actors and have a positive impact on several Goals at the same time.

We at ECLAC trust that the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, with the unwavering support of the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, will breathe new life into the commitments and means of implementation of the SDGs, with high-impact initiatives that will kick-start and speed up progress towards the achievement of the Goals and targets, and that will also revive and nurture the hopes of the people of the region that a more prosperous, productive, inclusive and sustainable future is possible, and that it is already in the making.

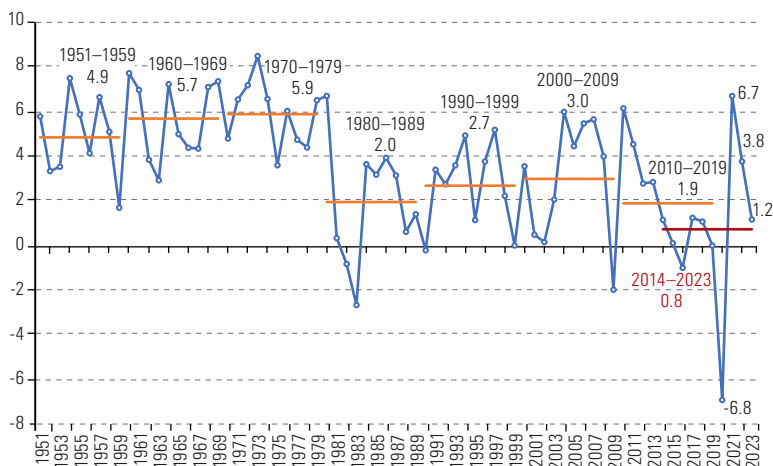
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I. Latin America and the Caribbean is facing a development crisis

Latin America and the Caribbean is facing difficulties and uncertainties caused by cascading global crises (relating to the climate, biodiversity, health, employment, education, food security and the cost of living), creating major challenges that must be overcome to fulfil the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Low global economic growth and inflationary pressures, both stemming from the crisis caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, have been exacerbated by the conflict in Ukraine. This has resulted in larger external debt burdens, less fiscal space and increased volatility in the global financial system. Following the rebound in regional GDP growth in 2021 (6.7%) and an estimated expansion of 3.8% in 2022, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) projects growth of 1.2% for 2023. However, the region seems to be in a long-term low-growth trap, as the ten years ending in 2023 will be the decade with the slowest growth (0.8% on average) since 1950 (see figure 1).

This trend of low growth is related to limited productivity growth, but also to patterns in investment (especially public investment), which has become a structural constraint on growth in Latin America and the Caribbean, since a sustained recovery in investment is key to sustainable and inclusive growth. The region's overall investment-to-GDP ratio is among the lowest in the world and has stalled at around 19% for the past three decades.

Figure 1
Latin America and the Caribbean: GDP growth rate, 1951–2023
 (Percentages)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of official figures.

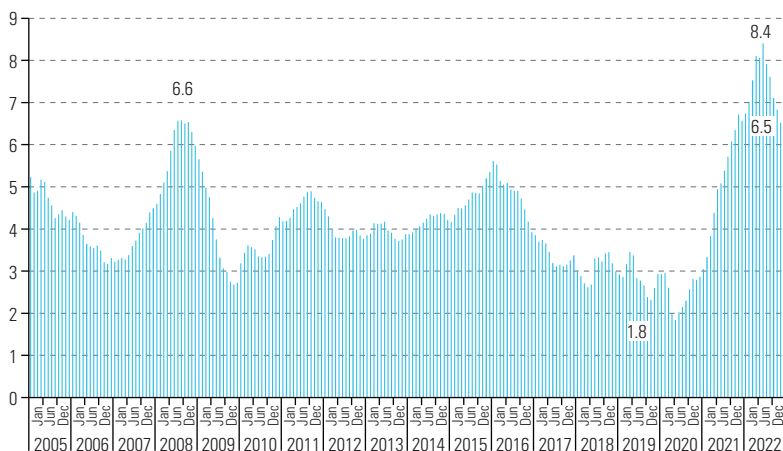
Note: The figure for 2022 is an estimate and that for 2023 is a projection.

Macroeconomic conditions over the last decade have not been conducive to achieving the SDGs. Prior to 2020, fiscal deficits in the region were large and persistent, especially in the Caribbean countries, which were also affected by successive natural disasters. The region's capacity to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic was limited, leading to larger fiscal deficits; however, the general trend of fiscal consolidation has reasserted itself, as countries have withdrawn emergency programmes put in place to address the pandemic.

Sluggish economic growth has been caused primarily by stagnant labour productivity, accompanied, as is to be expected, by low quality job creation and significant gender and age asymmetries in labour markets. The pandemic caused an unprecedented decline of 8.2% in the number of employed persons in 2020. Although the normalization of activities in 2021 and 2022 resulted in a return to pre-pandemic employment levels, the challenge of creating quality jobs remains; in 2022, the average labour informality rate for the region is estimated to have been 48.1%, but with substantial differences between rural areas (76.2%) and urban areas (44.8%).

Inflation in the region, as in the rest of the world, has accelerated. In June 2022, the region's 12-month inflation averaged 8.4% and, while it has since slowed—to 6.5% at the end of 2022—it is still 3.6 percentage points higher than in December 2019 (see figure 2).

Figure 2
Latin America and the Caribbean: variation in the 12-month consumer price index (CPI), January 2005–December 2022
(Percentages)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of official figures.

Note: The averages do not include the following economies that are subject to chronic inflation: Argentina, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Cuba, Haiti and Suriname.

To tackle the higher inflation, the region's monetary authorities have had restrictive monetary policies in place since mid-2021, accompanied by foreign-exchange measures. The rise in inflation has posed a major dilemma for the region's authorities: it reduces consumers' purchasing power, thereby exacerbating poverty and inequality, but restrictive monetary policies could intensify the slowdown in economic activity by discouraging consumption and investment.

Meanwhile, the globalization process is facing changes owing to technological revolutions that create tension between the three "global factories" —the United States, the European Union and China— as well as, more recently, a heightening of geopolitical tensions. Following the 2008–2009 financial crisis, trade in both goods and services has

been less buoyant than in previous years, dragged down by declines in tourism and foreign direct investment (FDI). The COVID-19 pandemic deepened these trends and accentuated the slowdown in globalization (except in its digital dimension, as expressed by growth in the trade in services enabled by information and communications technology (ICT)). The scenario of increased regionalization of supply chains and their governance poses a risk that global trade will fragment, in terms of both production and regulations. Such a situation, if it were to occur, would be very costly for Latin America and the Caribbean, since, unlike other regions, it has not managed to establish a highly integrated regional market that would enable it to reduce exposure to changes in its key extraregional partners' trade and production policies. For some Latin American and Caribbean countries, this regionalization also offers some opportunities relating to restructuring of production chains.

For the region to raise its economic growth rates and thus create more favourable conditions for progress towards the SDGs, productive development policies are essential, to achieve faster, sustained, inclusive and sustainable growth. The aim is to bring about changes in the production matrix, making it more technologically sophisticated and knowledge-intensive, more diversified and capable of creating better jobs and, therefore also making it more inclusive, while decarbonizing the matrix and making it more sustainable. The proposed structural change would have environmental benefits: an analysis of the region's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reveals that they mainly originate from primary activities. This means that structural change in Latin America and the Caribbean would not only make it possible to move towards activities with higher value added, but also to reduce pollution per unit of economic value.

Although it accounts for just 10% of global GHG emissions, Latin America and the Caribbean —especially Central America and the Caribbean— is much more vulnerable to the effects of climate change than the most polluting regions. In addition to the intrinsic value of preserving the diversity of life forms on the planet, the profound impacts on nature of activities that undermine sustainability create risks for production systems and social well-being, and particularly for fulfilment of the SDGs.

While technological innovations, in particular advances in artificial intelligence and robotics, have labour-saving potential, they can also increase inequality. Without a combination of productive development policies and social policies that create a virtuous process of “creative destruction”, the vulnerable strata of the population are at risk of falling into poverty owing to shocks of this or other types originating outside the region.

The region suffers from insufficient distributive policies and its social protection systems are segmented and restricted. Large gaps still exist between the native and migrant populations in terms of access to formal employment, social protection and decent work. These are linked to the difficulties of regularization and a lack of facilitation of labour market inclusion.

During the 2000s and 2010s, central government social spending in Latin America grew at a relatively stable rate relative to GDP, but it rose sharply after the 2008 global financial crisis and the onset of the pandemic in 2020. This highlights the countries’ capacity to react, but also reveals the restrictions on preventive and comprehensive measures.

Unpaid care work enables the economic system to exist, but does so through uneven sexual division of labour, whereby women have historically been associated with domestic and care work. When the State provides little support, organization or regulation for caregiving, maintenance of society and the reproduction of the labour force are disproportionately underpinned by women’s unpaid work. Moreover, the sexual division of labour widens the gap between women who can pay for care services and those who cannot. Persistent racial, ethnic and territorial inequalities in the region are also factors.

Growing social demands and the need to address climate change in a context of low economic growth are reasons to reformulate macroeconomic and productive development policies, to prevent the economy from moving solely according to factor endowments and instead put it on a path with a long-term vision. Given the major investment demands that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development entails, it is essential to strengthen the fiscal capacity of the State, by giving it the resources to make greater public expenditure viable. It is also vital to design an integrated financing framework and prioritize investments in projects with high returns in terms of sustainable development.

Completing this unfinished institutional framework is crucial to return to and maintain good progress towards all the SDG targets. In this regard, chapter V proposes a set of strategic transformative initiatives with high potential for driving the pursuit of the SDGs and multiplier effects among them.

II. Institutional progress on means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

At different levels and in a range of capacities, States, international organizations, civil society and the productive sector have updated policies, measurement of outcomes and working partnerships to fulfil the SDGs. This has left a positive institutional footprint that is reflected in public, private and civil society institutions, which are striving to realize the SDGs at all levels and in all sectors. It is a good sign for the future, as success in implementation of the 2030 Agenda depends on changes and institutional strength to sustain the effort for many years to come.

Latin America and the Caribbean has created an important institutional framework and coordination to achieve the Goals of the 2030 Agenda. In the region, 15 countries have established ad hoc coordination mechanisms to follow up on implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The remaining 18 countries, primarily in the Caribbean, have made a public institution responsible for monitoring, reporting either to the office of the president, a ministry or another public office. The coordination mechanisms have enabled collaborative, multisectoral initiatives to be pursued, to comprehensively address development problems using shared language.

Responsibility for monitoring and reporting progress on SDG indicators generally lies with the respective line ministries and statistical offices. This poses a challenge in terms of strengthening the technical and human capacity for data collection and the interlinking of comprehensive solutions. In most cases, civil society, academia,

the private sector and the general public participate through spaces for dialogue, consultation, dissemination and training. Only in some countries is participation by non-State actors a formal part of institutional arrangements for monitoring implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The challenge is to broaden and strengthen the effective participation of social stakeholders in monitoring and assessing progress towards the SDGs.

Voluntary national reviews (VNRs) identify specific challenges and innovative solutions for implementing and monitoring the 2030 Agenda and foster multi-stakeholder dialogue and inter-agency coordination. VNRs offer an opportunity to present a clear and comprehensive update on countries' progress with implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its Goals. By early 2023, 31 of the 33 countries in the region had presented at least one VNR to the high-level political forum on sustainable development. The reviews have evolved from static reporting on the Goals and targets to building a vision for the country in which each successive report examines progress made in an ongoing exercise.

The Community of Practice on the voluntary national reviews of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, established by ECLAC in December 2019, has become a recognized regional platform for peer-to-peer learning on implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its Goals. It is an informal mechanism for exchanging best practices among the technical teams tasked with monitoring and coordinating implementation of the 2030 Agenda in general, and the process of preparing VNRs in particular, in each country. It includes government officials, professionals, researchers and technical experts, as well as representatives of the United Nations. The Community of Practice has 188 members from the 33 countries of the region and has held 48 meetings since its creation. On occasion, representatives of civil society, young people, the private sector and academia, along with local authorities and other key stakeholders are invited.

In most countries, the bodies responsible for planning participate in monitoring of the 2030 Agenda. In some countries, priority has been given to aligning the 2030 Agenda with long-term visions and strategies, which helps to eliminate duplicated efforts and improve monitoring of the Goals and targets. Of the 18 known long-term planning instruments in place in the region, 7 include an exercise to align sector objectives and strategies for national development with the SDGs. Likewise, of

the 14 medium-term planning instruments, 5 include alignment of their sector objectives and strategies with the SDGs (see table 1). Countries are also increasingly recognizing the importance of aligning public investment with the SDGs, as reflected in different instruments and criteria applied during the investment management cycle.

Table 1
Latin America and the Caribbean: medium- and long-term planning instruments in place that contain exercises for aligning national development objectives with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals

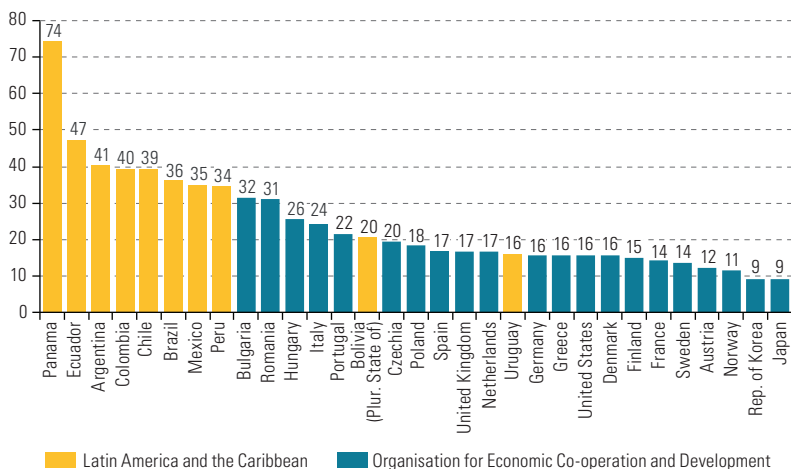
Subregion	Country	Instrument	Time frame
Central America	Guatemala	K'atun National Development Plan: Our Guatemala 2032	Long-term
	Panama	"Panama 2030" National Strategic State Vision Plan	Long-term
The Caribbean	Cuba	2030 National Economic and Social Development Plan	Long-term
	Dominica	National Resilience Development Strategy: Dominica 2030	Long-term
	Dominican Republic	National Multi-year Public Sector Plan 2021–2024	Medium-term
	Grenada	National Sustainable Development Plan 2020–2035	Long-term
	Jamaica	Medium-Term Socio-Economic Policy Framework 2021–2024	Medium-term
	Saint Lucia	Medium-Term Development Strategy 2020–2023	Medium-term
	Trinidad and Tobago	Vision 2030: National Development Strategy 2016–2030	Long-term
South America	Ecuador	Opportunity Creation Plan 2021–2025	Medium-term
	Paraguay	Paraguay National Development Plan 2030	Long-term
	Suriname	Multi-Annual Development Plan 2022–2026	Medium-term

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of data from the Regional Observatory on Planning for Development [online] <https://observatorioplanificacion.cepal.org/en>.

Within the institutional framework for implementation of the 2030 Agenda, territorial development policies aim to close development gaps within and among the territories of the countries of the region.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, sociospatial inequalities are severe, and populations and production are highly concentrated. In several countries, the main territorial entity accounts for no more than 10% of the total land area, but over 40% of the population or 50% of GDP (Genta and others, 2022) (see figure 3), and in some cases has per capita GDP and well-being levels similar to those of developed countries.

Figure 3
Latin America (10 countries) and Organisation
for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (21 countries):
territorial disparities in per capita GDP, 2019
(Average deviations of per capita GDP)



Source: N. Genta and others, "Panorama del desarrollo territorial de América Latina y el Caribe 2022," *Project Documents* (LC/TS.2022/132), Santiago, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), 2022.

ECLAC has identified 225 national policies in place in the region that aim to close territorial gaps; work has been done on legal frameworks, institutional frameworks and policy design, and the requirements of the 169 targets established by the 2030 Agenda have been adapted.

To design public policies, ECLAC has established four fundamental approaches that enhance their impact in territories: the intersectoral approach, establishing ongoing interactions with sectoral policies, to encourage convergence and avoid strategies that may hinder achievement of the main goal; the multiscale approach, which relates to the need for the target territories themselves to be involved in policy design; the intertemporal approach, attaching urgency to some actions while also promoting longer-term strategies to bring about structural changes; and the multi-stakeholder approach to policy, recognizing social stakeholders in the territories as key in identifying the problems they face and possible solutions. Lastly, a cross-cutting element to support these approaches is strengthening of information, monitoring and evaluation systems at the territorial level.

The growing interest of subnational and local stakeholders in supporting implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda is reflected in the preparation of voluntary local reviews (VLRs), 49 of which had been drafted in the region by 2022 (40% of the global total). These VLRs favour alignment of subnational development plans with the 2030 Agenda and complement the monitoring efforts of VNRs. They can also help to put progress towards the SDGs by 2030 back on course, given that there are clear gaps with regard to some spaces for public action on the targets. Such reviews also promote greater commitment from different stakeholders; amplify the voices of marginalized population groups and support efforts to ensure no one is left behind; facilitate dialogue between levels of government; contribute to preparation of VNRs; and enable sharing of good practices and repeatable innovative solutions.

The United Nations system is attaching increasing importance to participatory approaches to decision-making, as well as to multi-stakeholder dialogue and discussions to forge political agreements. The report of the Secretary-General, *Our Common Agenda* (United Nations, 2021), recognizes the importance of civil society participation in strengthening multilateralism and renewing the United Nations system. Since the first meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development (2017), the United Nations system in the region has intensified efforts to foster and strengthen participation by civil society in all intergovernmental forums.

The Mechanism for civil society participation in the sustainable development agenda and in the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development was created independently by civil society in the region.¹ The main objective of the Mechanism is to contribute to organized civil society participation in a meaningful, democratic, systematic, broad, diverse and sustained manner, with regard to the implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of the sustainable development agenda in the region and related platforms within a framework of human rights, gender equality and environmental sustainability criteria.²

¹ See [online] <https://agenda2030lac.org/en/civil-society>.

² See [online] <https://foroalc2030.cepal.org/2018/en/documents/mechanism-civil-society-participation-sustainable-development-agenda-and-forum-countries>.

Under the institutional arrangements of the Mechanism, the meetings of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development have provided civil society organizations and networks in the region with a valuable space for coordination and dialogue, which has guaranteed contact between different groups and representatives of government and the United Nations system.

Civil society and governments have recognized that only through integrated cooperation among multiple stakeholders will it be possible to address the challenges faced by the region as it works to achieve the SDGs. Solutions must emerge from a participatory, multilevel governance structure (global, regional, national and local), based on multi-stakeholder dialogue, in which organized civil society plays a key role. In light of the complex challenges posed by participatory governance, the Forum, together with the Mechanism for the participation of civil society, coordinates efforts, facilitates dialogue and encourages the building of partnerships between governments and civil society organizations and networks. The space for civil society participation should not be limited to the annual meeting of the Forum, as its activities through the working groups that are in place under the Mechanism for civil society participation could speed up materialization of its input to fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda.

ECLAC also fosters and supports various actions for implementation of the 2030 Agenda through the work of its subsidiary bodies. These intergovernmental bodies examine public policy issues in the countries of the region, facilitate cooperation and peer-to-peer learning, adopt regional consensus in their respective areas of responsibility and issue mandates for the ECLAC secretariat.

At the regional level, the subsidiary bodies of ECLAC report on their significant contributions to implementation of the 2030 Agenda to the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development. In turn, the chairs of the subsidiary bodies report to the high-level political forum on sustainable development on those same contributions.

In the past year, meetings or conferences were held for most of the subsidiary bodies and intergovernmental and treaty meetings of ECLAC, at which commitments were made and actions were agreed

in the areas of the information society; women's rights; enhancing statistics; population and development; ageing and the rights of older persons; access to information, public participation and access to justice in environmental matters; development and cooperation in the Caribbean; and housing and urban planning. The first session of the Regional Conference on South-South Cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean will be held in May 2023.

Progress on the issues addressed by the subsidiary bodies of ECLAC—and the related progress reports— requires momentum from the countries and leadership from their governments. Experience shows that technical support from ECLAC and from other United Nations agencies, funds and programmes that provide assistance fosters progress on the 2030 Agenda and on formulation, from a multilateral perspective, of narrative and political content for the region's development agendas.

III. Measuring progress towards the 2030 targets of the Sustainable Development Goals

In 2015, the Statistical Commission of the United Nations proposed an architecture to follow up on the SDGs and monitor them using a set of indicators identified by the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators. This global framework, together with the complementary regional indicators prioritized by the Statistical Coordination Group for the 2030 Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC (ECLAC, 2019), provides a suitable mechanism for assessing progress towards the 2030 SDG targets.

To obtain an adequate quantity of robust data to put together the global indicators and the complementary regional indicators to monitor progress towards the SDGs, global and regional work agendas designed to strengthen countries' statistical capabilities have been pursued. This has been done through actions such as investments in data and information infrastructure, institutional capacity-building and strengthened statistical legislation. There are still challenges to overcome in constructing a dashboard based on comprehensive and robust information that can provide a basis for policy designs to bring about the changes required if the SDGs are to be met. The availability of figures varies considerably within the region, but efforts by the international, regional and national statistical communities are resulting in improved availability and quality of information, to strengthen analysis and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda as a whole.

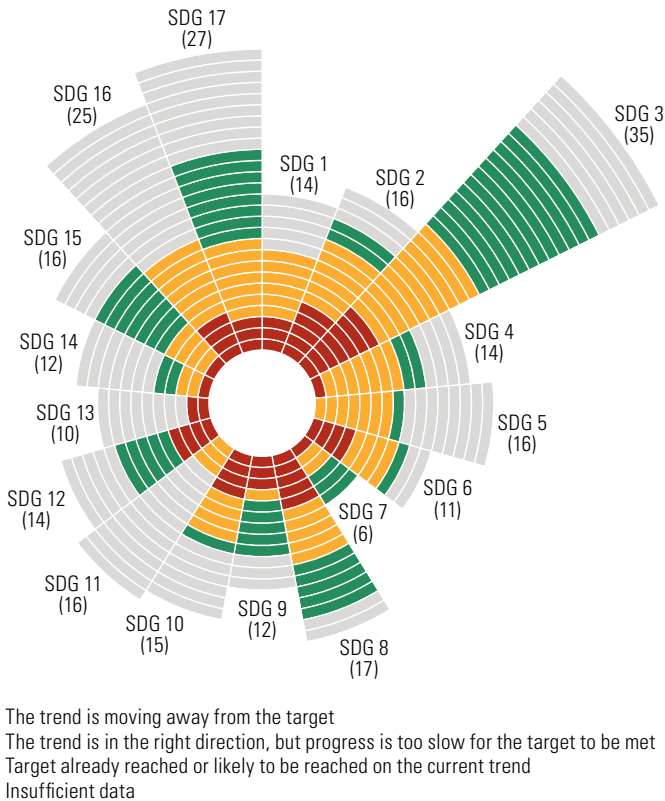
Available data for Latin America and the Caribbean allow for analysis of 172 indicators, 66% of all those identified in the universe of analysis (26% of the total in 2020, 42% in 2021 and 56% in 2022). The indicators allow trends to be evaluated for 126 targets (85% of the total), 79 of them covered by the indicators that have been prioritized in the region.

This report, by modelling historical patterns from a set of explanatory variables, takes into account the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on a considerable number of SDG indicators. Using regional forecasts and comparing them with the thresholds set in the 2030 Agenda, the indicator series analysed have been classified by the likelihood that the targets will be met on current trends, with and without policy interventions. The information is from the United Nations Global SDG Indicators Database, complemented by some of the indicators that the countries of the region prioritized for regional monitoring of the Agenda; specifically, those for which sufficient data were available to project the series up to 2030.

To make the results easier to read, a “traffic light” system with green, yellow and red lights is proposed, indicating different situations: (i) the green group of the targets that have already been achieved or will be by 2030 if the current trend and pace are maintained; and (ii) the yellow and red groups of the targets that will not be achieved by 2030 on current trends unless public policies are implemented to accelerate the pace of progress (yellow) or reverse the observed trend away from the target (red).

Figure 4 shows the trends in the 17 SDGs and their respective indicators for the entire region of Latin American and the Caribbean. For example, for Goal 1, the 14 indicators are included, using the traffic light system described above. Indicators for which there are insufficient data are shown in grey. Most of the region’s indicators show that, according to the forecast for 2030, the trend is in the right direction, but progress is too slow for the target to be met (yellow). This is particularly true of Goal 1 (end poverty), Goal 4 (quality education), Goal 5 (gender equality), Goal 11 (sustainable cities and communities) and Goal 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions), with more than 50% of their indicators showing this trend.

Figure IV
Latin America and the Caribbean: number of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicators by possibility of achieving the defined threshold by 2030
(Numbers)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

Note: Includes 30 indicators prioritized for the region. Repeated indicators are included in all the relevant SDGs.

Analysis shows that in Latin America and the Caribbean, 24.6% of the targets have been reached or will be reached if the current trend continues; that for 48.4% of the targets, the trend is positive, but not sufficiently so for them to be met; and that for 27.0% of the targets, the trend is regressing. These findings confirm the heterogeneity of situations in previous years and show a slight downward trend in the number of targets with a good outlook. The greatest risk of

non-achievement is with Goal 1 (end poverty), Goal 10 (reduce inequalities), Goal 11 (sustainable cities and communities), Goal 13 (climate action) and Goal 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions).

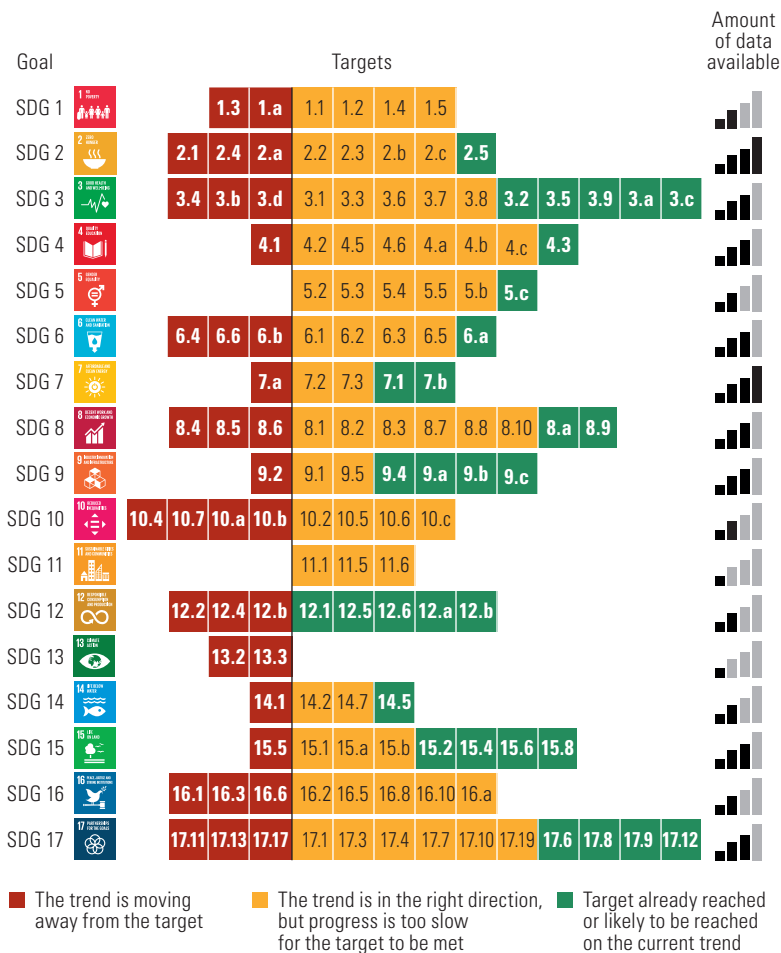
As seen in figure 5, the SDGs for which the targets are most likely to be met (meaning those with the greatest number of targets that can be met, compared with targets for which progress is slow or regressing) are Goal 3 (health and well-being), Goal 7 (affordable and clean energy), Goal 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure), Goal 12 (responsible production and consumption), Goal 15 (life on land) and Goal 17 (partnerships for the goals).

The mixed trends among countries in advancing towards the achievement of the SDGs, and the targets for which progress, although positive, is inadequate, reveal the need to take a cross-cutting, holistic view of the 2030 Agenda and take measures that address the SDGs as a whole and resolve shared challenges in differentiated contexts.

To advance towards the achievement of the targets set for 2030, prospective analysis can be a valuable ally: in addition to providing tools for agreeing on new measures or strengthening existing ones, it can help countries to create collective visions that are aligned with the SDGs and that are more likely to materialize than in the absence of such concerted agreements between disparate social forces. The study of possible futures could become a dimension of regional cooperation, for which the relevant capabilities in Latin America and the Caribbean can be a resource.

Monitoring implementation of the 2030 Agenda requires statistics and indicators that cover all aspects set out in the SDGs, fit the underlying time period, cover the entire geographical territory and include all relevant disaggregation, for both territories and selected groups. While there has been a steady increase in the availability of statistical series as countries have invested in traditional and non-traditional statistical data collection operations, there are still targets and indicators that cannot be monitored owing to a lack of information and a paucity of observations over time.

Figure 5
Latin America and the Caribbean: Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets by likelihood of accomplishment by 2030 and proportion of targets analysed per Goal



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

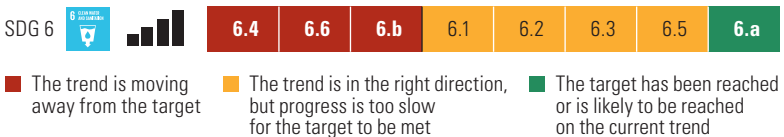
IV. Progress in the achievement of Goals 6, 7, 9, 11 and 17 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

This report places particular emphasis on examining progress in relation to five Sustainable Development Goals: Goal 6, clean water and sanitation; Goal 7, affordable and clean energy; Goal 9, industry, innovation and infrastructure; Goal 11, sustainable cities and communities; and Goal 17, partnerships for the Goals.

A. Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

The region is not on course with the trajectory required to achieve Goal 6 (see diagram 1). While progress has been made on some targets, it has been very slow.

Diagram 1
Latin America and the Caribbean: Goal 6 targets, by likelihood of achieving the defined threshold by 2030



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

While significant advances have been made in providing access to basic drinking water services (target 6.1) and adequate sanitation and hygiene (target 6.2) and in improving water quality (target 6.3),

progress remains insufficient. Achieving Goal 6 by 2030 will require investment and the improvement of water resource institutions and governance. In addition, shared efforts and commitments are needed to improve implementation, including social compacts for water that organize the contributions and investments of multiple stakeholders, and arrangements that strengthen the institutional framework for water, which remains very scattered, with multiple responsible entities throughout the water cycle and across territories.

A change of course is needed with regard to target 6.4, on the efficient use of water resources, and target 6.6, on the protection and restoration of water-related ecosystems. Political commitment and substantial advances in regulation, citizen participation, creative nature-based solutions and appropriate incentives will be required.

In February 2023, in preparation for the United Nations Water Conference, ECLAC held the Regional Water Dialogues in Latin America and the Caribbean 2023, which culminated in the adoption by the countries of the Regional Water Action Agenda, an international cooperation instrument relating to targets 6.a (expand international cooperation and capacity-building support, the only target of Goal 6 that is on track to be met) and 6.b (strengthen the participation of local communities in improving water management). The Agenda is an urgent call to action for the mobilization of all political, technical and financial resources available in and for Latin America and the Caribbean.

B. Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

Energy is emerging as a new transformative industry, based on innovation and efficiency, using renewable and cleaner sources and contributing to the generation of quality jobs and the development of new value chains for the recovery of the regional economy.

Considerable progress has been made in the region with regard to target 7.1 (universal access to energy services), although multidimensional energy poverty persists, and to target 7.b (expand infrastructure and upgrade technology for supplying modern and sustainable energy services) (see diagram 2).

Diagram 2
Latin America and the Caribbean: Goal 7 targets, by likelihood of achieving the defined threshold by 2030



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

Although progress has been made with target 7.2 (increasing the proportion of renewable energy), the regional energy mix remains largely based on fossil fuels and vulnerable to external geopolitical shocks, in particular for countries that are hydrocarbon importers; in addition, there are still instrumental, regulatory (subsidies) and energy security and integration challenges, which, if overcome, would make it possible to move forward at the speed required to achieve this target.

While target 7.3 (increasing energy efficiency) requires considerable attention, it also represents a major opportunity for transformation. The region is lagging as regards target 7.a (enhance international cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technology, including renewable energy, energy efficiency and advanced and cleaner fossil-fuel technology, and promote investment in energy infrastructure in that area), a situation that must be reversed, as that target is precisely the enabling factor for achieving the other targets mentioned above.

Recent external shocks have made clear the need to increase energy resilience and significantly bolster the energy security of all countries in the region. The conflict in Ukraine has resulted in steep increases in oil, gas and coal prices, bringing to light the fragility of safe and affordable access to energy, in particular in countries that are net importers of hydrocarbons, but also in countries with an undiversified energy mix and a low proportion of renewable energy.

ECLAC is proposing policies for an investment drive to universalize renewable electricity coverage, create new green jobs and reduce GHG emissions by increasing renewable energies and improving infrastructure. The new renewable energy industry—with distributed and networked

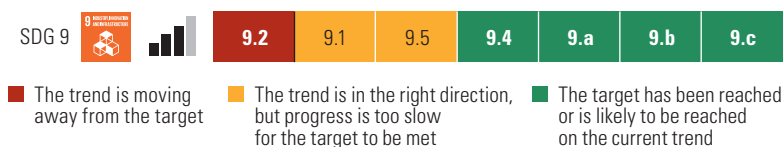
generation, e-mobility and green hydrogen— can become an additional driver of economic transformation in the region, thus contributing significantly to sustainable development.

C. Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

Four of the seven targets for which information is available have been met or will be met by 2030. These four targets are as follows: upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable (target 9.4), which is measured by emissions reductions per unit of value added; facilitate sustainable and resilient infrastructure development in developing countries through enhanced financial, technological and technical support (target 9.a), which is measured by official international support for infrastructure; support domestic technology development, research and innovation in developing countries (target 9.b), which is measured by the proportion of medium- and high-tech industry value added in total value added; and significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable Internet access in least developed countries (target 9.c), which is measured by the proportion of the population with mobile network coverage.

Target 9.1 (develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure), which is key for advancing in the achievement of other SDGs, was among the targets that suffered the worst setbacks from the COVID-19 pandemic, as several infrastructure projects (transport, communications, bridges, ports and airports) were halted so that funding could be reallocated to addressing the health emergency and its impacts (see diagram 3). Regarding target 9.5 (enhance scientific research and upgrade the technological capabilities of industrial sectors), spending on research and development as a share of GDP has increased, but not at the pace that would be required for the target to be reached without additional policy interventions.

Diagram 3
Latin America and the Caribbean: Goal 9 targets, by likelihood of achieving the defined threshold by 2030



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

Getting back on track towards meeting the infrastructure targets under Goal 9 demands State intervention owing to the significant investments required, long planning and execution cycles for works, and multiplier effects for other sectors.

Regarding target 9.2 (inclusive and sustainable industrialization), the industrialization index has stalled over the past two decades. The relative GDP share of manufacturing in the region has declined, reaching 13% in 2021 (the lowest level in the last two decades). However, strong growth in industries in the services sector is notable and will require closer monitoring.

Regarding target 9.4 (upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable), carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions per unit of manufacturing value added maintained a slight downtrend from 2000–2019. Energy efficiency has remained practically constant over the past two decades, although it is lagging in relation to other regions of the world because of the slow progress in or absence of the incorporation of new technologies and productive diversification towards less energy-intensive activities and less knowledge-intensive services.

Although the manufacturing industry will continue to play an important role in productive development policies, it is vital to formulate strategies that encompass all production sectors. Modern industrial policies must cover the important opportunities in the Internet-enabled services sectors, whose global growth is dramatic but whose expansion depends on a range of conditions related to connectivity, digital skills and regulatory frameworks. Policies must also include sustainable agriculture based on the bioeconomy, genetic resources and bioindustrialization. Productive policies must therefore be adopted that target transformation

and diversification, sustain them over time and build the capacities of the State to design and implement effective policies (ECLAC, 2022).

There are opportunities to foster productive synergies and complementarities through the development of new regional production chains. The investments needed to build a modern and sustainable industry require partnerships between stakeholders from all sectors of society (government, academia, business and civil society) and at different levels (local, national and international). Only thus can the region align efforts to build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.

D. Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

More than half of the SDGs have urban components (UN-Habitat, 2018). In Latin America and the Caribbean, where 8 of 10 people live in cities, this reality implies both challenges and significant opportunities. While scant information on Goal 11 is available at the regional level, progress has been observed in aggregate terms, although it remains insufficient. Regarding the three targets for which data are available, the trend is positive, but progress is too slow for the defined thresholds to be achieved by 2030 (see diagram 4).

Diagram 4
Latin America and the Caribbean: Goal 11 targets, by likelihood of achieving the defined threshold by 2030



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

In terms of target 11.1 (ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums), policy action is needed for it to be achieved by 2030. The number of people living in precarious settlements has fallen in relative terms, but progress has stalled and the future scenario is worrisome. Factors such as rising construction costs, reduced access to credit and difficulties in

accessing long-term credit, as well as the loss of budgetary space, conspire against access to housing for lower-income households. To this complex scenario must be added the impact of lower economic activity, higher unemployment and migration.

Access to sustainable, quality public transportation (target 11.2) is one of the major challenges facing the region. Although data are still lacking to enable an estimation of the degree to which the target has been met, it is clear that wasted time and the resulting negative impact on quality of life and productivity disproportionately affect lower-income households in the region. This also includes the expansion of urban sprawl, which forces people to travel ever-greater distances, and which, although encouraging in relation to population growth, remains inconsistent with the efficient patterns that could lessen urban segregation.

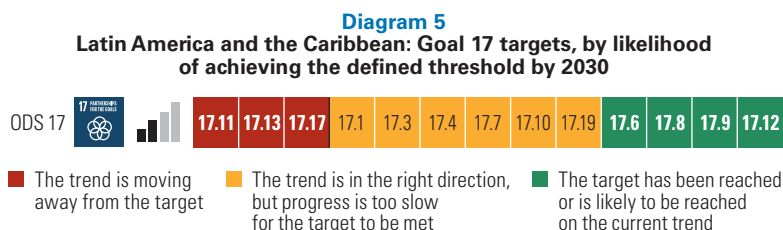
With regard to target 11.5 (significantly reduce the number of deaths caused by disasters), there is a risk that climate-related weather events could become more frequent. This is why the region must step up efforts to reduce the human and economic losses caused by disasters. Despite the rise in the number of disasters in the region, the number of disaster-related deaths has fallen. However, climate change mitigation and adaptation measures must still be increased.

Air quality in cities (target 11.6) has improved: a gradual reduction of the average annual concentrations of particulate matter was achieved in the region over the period 2010–2019, both in urban and rural areas. However, the advances are not sufficient to achieve adequate air quality.

Progress towards implementation of the 2030 Agenda in cities inescapably entails addressing urban gaps in the social, economic and environmental dimensions. In Latin America and the Caribbean, overcoming this challenge involves collaborating with local authorities, especially in cities with more than 1 million inhabitants, since they account for 46.1% of the total urban population.

E. Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

To achieve Goal 17, multiple collaborative actions and progress through multilateral agreements will be required, which is reflected in its various targets and indicators. The progress in achieving the targets for which data are available is shown in diagram 5.



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

Regarding the targets on financing for development, it is important for the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean to step up efforts and coordinate policies to mobilize domestic resources to finance the 2030 Agenda, maximizing tax revenues, as indicated in target 17.1. State capacities must be strengthened, both in fiscal matters and spending planning. At the same time, in a context of limited public resources, it is crucial to adopt a strategic vision of public spending that favours investments that generate higher economic, social and environmental returns.

With regard to targets 17.2 (increase official development assistance) and 17.3 (mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries), the financing made available by international financial institutions is not sufficient to contribute to accelerating progress towards the SDGs. In addition, in most cases, the countries of the region face limitations in external resource mobilization and accessing other preferential loans owing to their classification as middle- and upper-middle-income countries. Resource mobilization would increase if development banks enhanced coordination on topics such as guarantees and the identification of environmentally sustainable projects or those oriented towards addressing the costs of climate-related disasters.

Renewed international cooperation is recommended on the basis of a classification system that goes beyond per capita GDP to properly capture a country's level of development, especially for middle-income countries. Along those lines, ECLAC has proposed a new type of cooperation that addresses the long-term difficulties of middle-income countries on the basis of three pillars: (i) cooperation mechanisms must be equitably applied to countries at all levels of development; (ii) cooperation instruments should take into account the significant economic, productive and social differences between the countries of the region, while at the same time responding to the development priorities of each country; and (iii) countries must have a variety of instruments to improve international cooperation.

Support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building (target 17.9) has advanced significantly in terms of public capacities, including in the interest and participation of the private sector and civil society in implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The path travelled and the journey have been altogether positive. Even though adjustments, imagination and bold action are needed to achieve the targets, institutions are now stronger and better equipped to take on that task.

There have been advances in partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge to support the achievement of the Goals (target 17.16) through cooperation activities and sharing of good practices between countries, although there are not yet enough data to formulate projections.

Since 2017,³ a database has been consolidated and the statistical capacity to analyse the series of SDG indicators has been enhanced in the region. Although significant efforts and progress have been made in the generation of statistics (target 17.18), there are still insufficient data to draw conclusions on this topic. Regarding timely census-taking (target 17.19), censuses planned for 2020 had to be postponed because of the pandemic (some were conducted in 2022 and others have been scheduled for 2023). This was because of both continued health restrictions and budget cuts or difficulties in complying with all the processes related to the pre-census stage. Greater efforts are therefore needed to increase the resources allocated to statistical capacity and timely census-taking.

³ The year of the first *Annual report on regional progress and challenges in relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean* (ECLAC, 2017).

Despite statistical efforts, not all regional progress can be captured by using quantifiable indicators. In the area of “systemic issues” (targets 17.13, 17.14 and 17.15, on institutional and policy coherence for sustainable development), ECLAC has proposed that the countries of the region continue with efforts to reactivate the economy and transform the development model, “centring these efforts around policies for productive transformation and diversification along with a big, public and private investment push, which would allow for accelerating structural change and technological and digital transformation to achieve high, sustained growth and sustainable and inclusive development” (Salazar-Xirinachs, 2022).

In the context of strengthening institutional frameworks in the countries of the region for implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda, its territorialization and the increasingly important role of civil society, one important development is the establishment of the Regional Conference on South-South Cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean, a subsidiary body of ECLAC that, beginning in 2023, will have the following objectives, which are aligned with the targets of Goal 17: (i) promote the strengthening of national South-South and triangular cooperation mechanisms, as well as their possible interaction with North-South and multilateral cooperation; (ii) further South-South and triangular cooperation among regional and extraregional stakeholders, including donor countries and international organizations, to facilitate technology and knowledge transfer and joint activities in the field of cooperation; and (iii) examine the experiences of South-South and triangular cooperation in the countries of the region and advance in evaluating them, in conjunction with the relevant subsidiary bodies of ECLAC that conduct studies in this field.⁴

Through Goal 17, the 2030 Agenda acknowledges the importance of consolidating support from a network of partnerships, including with governments, the private sector, civil society and international agencies, enabling them to collaborate and work together in the understanding that the SDGs can only be properly achieved if inclusive partnerships are established on the basis of a shared vision, principles and values, focused on ending poverty, protecting the planet and improving people’s lives and futures.

⁴ See [online] <https://www.cepal.org/en/subsidiary-bodies/regional-conference-south-south-cooperation-latin-america-and-caribbean>.

To regain the momentum lost as countries responded to the emergencies of the most critical phases of the pandemic, the gains in institutional capacity-building need to be strengthened and maintained, driven by countries' commitment to the 2030 Agenda. Against this backdrop, the main challenge is to adopt a long-term perspective to address the complexity of the current situation, crafting State strategies that extend beyond specific terms of government.

V. Final reflections: looking towards the future

A. Proposals for a push to attain Goals 6, 7, 9, 11 and 17

The COVID-19 pandemic required extra efforts from the countries to deal with its immediate aftermath, and today, while its effects are still being felt, it is being compounded by other challenges arising from the global context. Although these adverse events have affected progress towards many of the SDGs, the path already embarked upon by the countries in their effort to achieve them has left a positive institutional footprint that is reflected in public, private and civil society institutions, which are striving to attain the SDGs at all levels and in all sectors.

This institutional footprint is evident in the building of capacities—both in the public sphere and in civil society, and at the central level and territorial levels—to adapt and guide institutional work towards the achievement of the SDGs. For this institutional footprint and the capacities developed to endure and be consolidated, a forward-looking perspective must be included in public initiatives aimed at setting the trajectory for achieving the SDGs and continuing to strengthen sustainable development beyond 2030.

To effectively shift the trend of indicators so that the SDG targets are met, it is also necessary to change the way public policy is managed. In addition to implementing actions to solve short-term problems and challenges, public policy needs to consider its effect over longer time horizons. The aim of the conclusions and the policy measures and

actions suggested in this chapter is to get back on track for Goals 6, 7, 9, 11 and 17, and to accelerate the pace of the changes needed to attain them.

The first proposal, encompassing all five SDGs under review, is to take measures to enhance the quality and quantity of statistical information of importance for monitoring the SDG target indicators. There is a need to expand data and information infrastructure and develop institutional, technological and human capacities to be able to offer early responses, anticipate future needs and design the urgent actions required, thereby contributing to the acceleration of the 2030 Agenda. Collaboration between the institutions responsible for statistics in the countries of the region must be maintained and expanded on some issues and for some countries.

1. Goal 6: Clean water and sanitation

Although significant progress has been made over recent years in improving access to basic drinking water and sanitation services in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, the targets of Goal 6 are more ambitious, since, in addition to the availability of water and sanitation, they incorporate the safe and sustainable management of these services, making it unlikely that the region will achieve this Goal by 2030.

Joint efforts and commitments are required, with the participation of the public and private sectors and civil society, to organize the contributions and investments of multiple actors, as well as arrangements to strengthen the institutional framework of the water sector.

Achieving a sustainable and inclusive water transition in Latin America and the Caribbean will require progress on the five cross-cutting accelerators of the SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework⁵ (UN-Water, 2020), namely:

- (i) Increasing investment and financing.
- (ii) Strengthening governance and institutions relating to water.
- (iii) Capacity-building for public servants, especially local government officials.

⁵ See [online] <https://www.unwater.org/our-work/sdg-6-global-acceleration-framework>.

- (iv) Strengthening the production of information to improve decision-making and action.
- (v) Encouraging innovation to improve water management.

2. Goal 7: Affordable and clean energy

There is need of a combination of new energy policies, instruments, incentives and long-term plans, developed in collaboration with private enterprise and through the adoption of technological innovations, along with the progressive reduction in the costs of energy generated from renewable sources, which has become increasingly competitive.

Effective governance of the energy transition in the region requires the establishment and redesign of regulatory frameworks and their policy instruments to better enable renewable resources to contribute to inclusive and sustainable energy development, and the redesign of tax regimes to facilitate efficient and sustainable investment. Such instruments can be coordinated in a fiscal covenant between the central government and subnational governments, with clear allocation and implementation criteria, as has been done successfully in some countries.

To achieve the energy transition, cheaper technologies for renewable energy generation and storage must go together with the development of a new institutional, regulatory, and investment and financing ecosystem. ECLAC recommends eight transformative policies that should be implemented at the national level to accelerate an inclusive and sustainable energy transition:

- (i) Boost investment in renewable energy and energy services infrastructure.
- (ii) Universalize electrification based on renewable energies.
- (iii) Boost demand for renewable energies through long-term national policies and plans.
- (iv) Develop all renewable energy value chains.
- (v) Promote productive policy for renewable technologies.
- (vi) Increase financing for renewable energy projects, including research and development (R&D) activities.
- (vii) Encourage participatory governance and public-private cooperation.
- (viii) Long-term planning and regional energy integration.

3. Goal 9: Industry, innovation and infrastructure

Accelerating progress towards achieving the targets of Goal 9 requires the adoption of more ambitious and larger-scale policies for productive transformation and diversification, and the strengthening of the capacity of the State to design and implement effective policies with a long-term perspective, especially as regards productive and technological development and infrastructure. To build resilient and sustainable industry, bring production sectors into line with the principles of sustainability and increase the capacity for innovation, the following actions are proposed:

- (i) Boost the regional market through the development of production chains.
- (ii) Foster innovation and technological development, aiming for R&D expenditure to reach 0.7% of GDP (ECLAC, 2022).
- (iii) Close the physical infrastructure gap, which implies investments equivalent to 6% of the region's GDP between 2016 and 2030 (Sánchez and others, 2017).
- (iv) Strengthen the role of the State in the provision of basic infrastructure services and encourage participation by other actors who can bear some of the economic costs.
- (v) Improve infrastructure resilience, which would represent considerable savings in maintenance costs and less likelihood of disruption.
- (vi) Boost green infrastructure, by creating a network of natural and semi-natural areas with other environmental features planned, designed and managed to deliver ecosystem services.
- (vii) Carry out a foresight exercise to anticipate the type of productive specialization that the region wishes to promote, and align energy infrastructure, transport and the urban model with this.
- (viii) Promote cluster initiatives as tools for production development policies.
- (ix) Incorporate information and communications technologies (ICTs) to a greater extent in the productive sphere and enhance their impact by supporting disruptive technological trends such as artificial intelligence, the Internet of things, blockchain and next-generation mobile networks.

- (x) Drive digital transformation by creating enabling conditions in the areas of connectivity and skills development; developing meaningful digital solutions for the population; promoting the digital transformation of production; establishing digital governance with policies, strategies and institutions; and strengthening cooperation and integration through a regional digital market.

4. Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities

The high proportion of the population living in cities and the expected upward tendency in the future (it is estimated that 86.5% of the Latin American and Caribbean population will live in cities by 2030) justifies giving high priority to the harmonious development of cities with policies that combine economic, social and environmental elements to improve the quality of life of the population and effectively harness agglomeration economies. Below are some transformative policy proposals to turbocharge the effort to meet Goal 11:

- (i) Optimize mobility in cities by lowering the costs of freight transport and reducing travel times.
- (ii) Outline housing strategies, mainly in terms of anticipating the possible growth of informal settlements, diversify the housing supply and expand the supply of urban land in well-located and safe areas.
- (iii) Innovate in urban financing, with greater coordination of public policy in terms of integrating climate action, mobility and land management plans.
- (iv) Improve strategies to reduce pollution in cities and promote circular and resilient cities.

5. Goal 17: Partnerships for the goals

In the aftermath of the pandemic, financial and non-financial resource allocations need to be restored to mitigate the setbacks observed in the trajectory of many indicators. This effort is the responsibility of governments, the private sector, civil society and international cooperation institutions, which need to coordinate their collaboration under State leadership.

With regard to the creation of partnerships for the SDGs, redoubled efforts are needed to facilitate attainment of all the targets, particularly those which are unlikely to be met or for which the trend is in the wrong direction.

The following are recommendations for cooperative actions and partnerships to facilitate rapid progress towards achieving the SDGs:

- (i) Establish a new basis for cooperation that looks beyond per capita GDP and properly captures the sustainable development levels of countries, especially middle-income countries. This cooperation is based on three pillars: cooperation mechanisms should apply to countries at all levels of development; cooperation instruments should take into account the economic, productive and social heterogeneity that characterizes the countries of the region, while responding to their development priorities; and countries must have a variety of instruments to improve international cooperation.
- (ii) Strengthen cooperation between national and regional development banks to increase access to development funds, improve management efficiency and share best practices in the financing of SDG-related activities.
- (iii) Improve domestic resource mobilization through progressive tax reforms that significantly and durably raise the tax burden in most countries.

B. Strategy, foresight and planning to get back on track to achieve the SDGs

Policies to advance the achievement of the SDGs must be imbued with a long-term strategic vision of the kind the discipline of foresight provides. The development of future scenarios and their coordination with policies, plans and programmes contribute significantly to the design of development strategies on a sustainable and lasting basis (Bitar, Máttar and Medina, 2021).

The exploration and analysis of alternative future scenarios provide the opportunity for a participatory process to collectively choose a possible and desirable future like the one proposed by the SDGs, which can be realized through democratic and inclusive dialogue and action

and State leadership, with the support of public policy and planning. The development of long-term scenarios entails greater uncertainty and risks than prioritizing the short term, but provides ample scope for reflection, discussion and agreement so that far-reaching and transformative decisions can be made.

In the region, the culture of reflection and action for the future is weak. Facing challenges and crises with a long-term strategy anchored in the SDGs must be a priority for governments, the private sector and civil society, which requires strengthening State institutions and developing new capacities for analysis, foresight and anticipation to enrich the public policy process. The transformations that the region needs will not occur in a single term of government; there is need of forward-looking State policies that are shielded from the vagaries in the exercise of government power that are common in Latin America and the Caribbean.

A renewed State is needed to advance in the transformation of the development model and on the road to sustainable development. There is also need of a proactive State that exercises leadership and acts quickly, knowledgeably and effectively when unexpected phenomena appear on the path to development, and carries out course corrections in accordance with the demands of society and the market.

The transition from government policies to State policies implies a transformation or reprioritization of goals, in which the temporal dimension and strategy become the pillars of public policy. The transition involves moving from consideration of the immediate situation to foresight analysis, from economic growth to sustainable development, from crisis management to development planning, from a focused approach to a strategic vision, from dealing with the present to managing structural change. This does not mean ignoring the crisis or neglecting immediate needs; it means managing the intertemporal dilemmas that may arise in order to harmonize public policy objectives in space and time in accordance with circumstances, the economic situation and the vision of the future that social actors have collectively arrived at with the coordination of the State.

Institutionalizing foresight in public policy requires strategies that extend over about a decade, with cross-cutting, multisectoral,

multiscale and inter-agency actions that are the product of consensus between government, the private sector and civil society, as key actors in development (Bitar, Máttar and Medina, 2021).

The incorporation of foresight into public policy is vital to progress in implementing the 2030 Agenda, and to the pursuit of more distant and challenging targets. Each country will need to decide on the institutional arrangements and tasks it wishes to prioritize.

The vision of a more productive, inclusive and sustainable future requires considerable adjustments to the Latin American and Caribbean development model. This implies a cultural change in the region, which would make it feasible to successfully implement the organizational and governance changes necessary to undertake transformative initiatives to accelerate the pace towards achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

C. Transformative initiatives

With a view to focusing the efforts of countries more decisively on accelerating the attainment of the SDGs, the region has a significant asset in the form of institutional capabilities forged over the past eight years by implementing processes and setting up organizations responsible for monitoring and reviewing progress towards the SDGs.

Revitalizing the implementation tools and efforts of all actors involved in achieving sustainable development requires a combination of commitments that translate into transformative strategies and high-impact initiatives that accelerate progress towards the achievement of the SDGs. It is imperative to promote initiatives with the capacity to generate multiplier effects in as many SDGs as possible.

ECLAC has identified seven transformative initiatives that have the synergistic capacity to simultaneously drive the achievement of a number of SDGs, in particular those analysed in the document *Halfway to 2030 in Latin America and the Caribbean: progress and recommendations for acceleration*. The first six initiatives elaborate on the narrative and policy proposals that ECLAC put forward to member countries in the document presented at its thirty-ninth session (ECLAC, 2022). The seven strategies are described below:

1. The energy transition and related industries

Modernization of the energy mix and reduction in the energy intensity of the economy, which are at the core of Goal 7, have positive impacts in the development of new industrial sectors and their productive linkages, with foreseeable effects on innovation and services, associated with the achievement of Goal 9, and in the creation of jobs and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, related to the achievement of Goal 13. The energy transition, underpinned by green hydrogen, lithium and e-mobility, requires lasting partnerships between actors committed to a vision of a sustainable future.

2. The bioeconomy: sustainable agriculture and bioindustrialization

The bioeconomy could become a driver of sustainable and inclusive growth. It includes the production, use, conservation and regeneration of biological resources, as well as science, technology, innovation and related knowledge, to provide information, products, processes and services across all economic sectors with a view to creating a sustainable and inclusive economy (IACGB, 2018). The bioeconomy is developing rapidly and can have a positive impact on the achievement of Goals 9, 13, 14 and 15, as well as on food and nutrition security and the fight to eradicate hunger, and thus on the achievement of Goal 2.

3. The digital transformation

Digital technologies, which relate directly to Goal 9, are transforming production and consumption models in all sectors and extending the potential for using big data, knowledge and information to increase productivity, which relates to the achievement of Goal 12. This includes the growing use of advanced digital technologies, fifth-generation (5G) mobile networks, the Internet of things, cloud computing, artificial intelligence, big data analytics and robotics, among other things.

4. Promoting exports of Internet-enabled modern services

Modern services have been the most dynamic category of world trade in recent decades, and account for almost two thirds of the world services trade. These services are activities in which exports are mainly conducted through the Internet and other digital means, such as business, professional, financial, engineering, design, educational and medical services.

Modern services exports harbour great potential in the region for progress on several SDGs simultaneously: (i) they foster knowledge flows between economies and enable firms to benefit from local knowledge spillovers (Goal 9), which in turn boosts growth and productivity; (ii) they are a source of employment for medium- and high-skilled workers, thereby contributing to the creation of quality jobs (Goal 8); (iii) they have a high potential to impact the quality of education (Goal 4) and health (Goal 3) services; (iv) they can be a new driver of regional integration, since physical barriers do not limit trade in these services as much as in goods; (v) they have the potential to reduce gender gaps (Goal 5) through the use of the Internet; (vi) they contribute to the achievement of the climate-related Goals (6, 7 and 11 to 15), owing to their intangible nature and their contribution to the dissemination and application of the best environmental solutions at the lowest cost in the countries of the region.

5. The care society and gender equality

In the context of the demographic and epidemiological transition that the region is undergoing, a marked increase in the demand for care is expected, and the care sectors accordingly have great potential to boost economies and create jobs. The right to care is a human right recognized in international covenants and treaties, and everyone is entitled to it, regardless of vulnerability or dependency. Fulfilment of this right requires work on a number of SDGs, such as those relating to gender equality (Goal 5), decent work and economic growth (Goal 8), good health and well-being (Goal 3), reduced inequalities (Goal 10), sustainable cities and communities (Goal 11), peace, justice and strong institutions (Goal 16) and partnerships for the goals (Goal 17).

6. Sustainable tourism

The transformation of tourism has global implications and great potential for synergy with a number of drivers of progress and several SDGs. Tourism accounts for 10% of global GDP and 30% of services exports, while creating 1 in 10 jobs worldwide.⁶ The 2030 Agenda contains specific targets for the creation and follow-up of policies to foster sustainable tourism which creates jobs and promotes local culture and products (Goals 8 and 12), as well as for the sustainable use of marine resources (Goal 14).

The creation of sustainable tourism enterprises and quality jobs would be particularly effective in promoting women's equality and empowerment (Goal 5), improving their participation in industry (Goal 9) and increasing their access to health services (Goal 3), since women own half the region's tourism businesses and represent around 60% of the labour force, but tend to occupy the lowest-paid and lowest-ranking positions and have less access to financing, while just 25.9% are affiliated or contribute to a social security system (ECLAC, 2020 and 2021b).

Sustainable tourism also has the potential to contribute to rural poverty reduction (Goals 1 and 10), especially considering that 80% of people living in extreme poverty are in rural areas (WTO, 2020), where many of the region's tourist attractions are. Tourism can help close some of the most persistent gaps facing rural areas by providing resilient and inclusive infrastructure (Goals 6, 7, 9 and 11), professionalizing tourism jobs (Goal 4) and fostering business innovation (Goals 9 and 12).

7. Regional economic integration

The countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, with few exceptions, exhibit only limited production and trade integration among themselves. Intraregional trade accounted for just 15% of total shipments in 2021 (ECLAC, 2021a), which is hampering progress towards an inclusive and transformative recovery consistent with the 2030 Agenda. For the majority of the region's countries, intraregional trade is most intensive in manufacturing, where it involves the widest range of products and the largest proportion of companies, especially small and medium-sized

⁶ See [online] <https://tourism4sdgs.org/tourism-for-sdgs/tourism-and-sdgs/>.

enterprises (SMEs) (ECLAC, 2021a). This gives the sector a crucial role in meeting the SDGs concerned with economic diversification, decent employment and industrialization (Goals 8 and 9). Furthermore, intraregional trade is characterized by a lower raw material content and shorter transport distances than extraregional shipments. Both elements contribute to the environmental sustainability aspirations embodied in Goals 12, 13 and 15, among others.

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