



**ACTION FOR SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT**

People's Scorecard Summary Report 2021

Introduction

The People's Scorecard approach has been developed collaboratively in order to provide a framework for comparative analysis of the engagement mechanisms and progress of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the national level based on civil society organisation's (CSOs) own shared assessment. The Scorecard provides a common template to allow comparison and identification of patterns and trends within and between countries from a civil society point of view.

It draws from a steady process of mutual learning since 2016 and is rooted in wide experience of national CSO coalitions, including particular expertise from those in Brazil, Colombia, India, Sri Lanka, Kenya, South Africa and many others.

In 2021, for the second year, Action for Sustainable Development has worked with a wide range of national partners to set out a comparative report, based on the same process of scoring in each country. This report provides an accessible approach to understanding progress of SDG implementation with a focus on many of the countries delivering a Voluntary National Review (VNR) this year.

In each case, the national coalitions have themselves organised extensive dialogues across a wide range of different civil society organisations, community groups and local networks, to gather a broad range of views from those who are active on key thematic areas within the SDGs. In a number of cases, they have also produced their own parallel or Spotlight Reports alongside the official Voluntary National Reviews.

1. Summary and Methodology

- In 2021, A4SD has provided support for national CSO coalitions to conduct independent scorecard-based assessments of progress + spotlight reports in 31 countries (primarily in Africa, Asia, LAC and MENA regions) - and we are also including contributions from 3 European countries.
- The methodology is based on a qualitative assessment of the implementation process for each SDG centred around 10 key areas that together constitute **an inclusive conception of the engagement and implementation process**. The Scorecard thus intends to measure the collective, aggregated perception of the SDG implementation process by national civil society coalitions centred around SDG follow-up, review and advocacy.
- Regarding the process- National civil society coalitions are asked to distribute a Scorecard-based survey widely among their CSO members, grassroots organizations and key constituencies in their country that are known to be involved -to different degrees and in a wide array of areas- on SDG implementation and advocacy.
- The Scorecard survey participants are asked to provide a score from 1 to 5 for each of the Goal's key areas, as well as to answer a series of open questions addressing a broad overview of the SDG implementation process in their respective countries, as well as of the nature and extent of citizen participation within the process.
- The sequence for the scorecard-based assessment thus includes:
 - A. A survey distributed to a wide range of CSOs and community groups based on the Scorecard template;
 - B. Data processing and development of a draft aggregated scorecard;
 - C. A virtual and/or in-person workshop for validation of results.
- The scorecards either provide a structure to; or are complemented by; Spotlight Reports.
- Every coalition acts independently and engages in its own advocacy activities but they agree to adopt a similar methodology based on previous experience and shared learning.

Geographical coverage and Scope of the Report

A4SD has partnered in 2021 with national coalitions of CSOs in 31 countries, spanning five regions (Africa, Latin-America and the Caribbean, Middle East and Near Asia, Asia and Europe) and a wide array of national contexts: political regimes, political cultures, civic spaces, socio-economic and environmental challenges, institutional and fiscal capacities - all of which amounts to different baselines and systemic conditions for each country. That said, by promoting a standardized sequence for a collective review to take place in, as well as a shared template for evaluation, the People's Scorecard contributes to build a common ground for an independent assessment on the quality of the implementation process and hence, provides a platform for comparison.

This preliminary report focuses on the 17 countries (highlighted in green) that completed the Scorecard-based assessment for HLPF 2021 and are presenting their VNR in this current forum. It aims to provide a first assessment of the results, based on the aggregated total scores for each country, the aggregated average scores for each country within each SDG, as well as the aggregated averages by key area.

Countries covered in 2021 (VNR countries in green):

Asia:

Afghanistan: Hagar International

Bhutan: Centre for Research on Bhutanese Society/Tarayana Foundation

Indonesia: International NGO Forum on Indonesian Development (INFID)

Lao PDR: Lao CSO Coordination Office (LCCO)

Malaysia: Malaysian CSO SDG Alliance

Thailand: Thailand HLPF Alliance

DPRK: Database Center for North Korean Human Rights (NKDB)

India: Wada Na Todo Abhiyan

Pakistan: Awaz PCDS

Sri Lanka: Center for Environment & Development (CED)

Nepal: NGO Federation of Nepal + SDG National Network

Africa:

Cabo Verde: Plataforma de ONG's (PLATONG)

Chad: House of Africa

Madagascar: Plateforme Nationale des OSC de Madagascar (PFNOSCM)

Sierra Leone: Volunteers Involving Organisations Network (VioNet)

Zimbabwe: Zimbabwe CSO Reference Group on SDGs + National Association of NGOs (NANGO)

Tanzania: Tanzania Sustainable Development Platform

Malawi: Council for NGOs in Malawi (CONGOMA)

Kenya: SDG Kenya Forum

Uganda: Uganda NGO Forum

Nigeria: Civil Society Coalition for Sustainable Development

Latin-America and Caribbean:

Bolivia: UNITAS

Colombia: Confederación Colombiana de ONG (CCONG)

Mexico: Espacio de Seguimiento a la Agenda 2030

Paraguay: POJOAJU

Brazil: Agenda 2030 Working Group (GT A2030)

MENA:

Tunisia: Arab NGO Network for Development with local partners

Iraq : Arab NGO Network for Development with local partners

Egypt : Arab NGO Network for Development with local partners

Europe:

Spain: Futuro en Común

Germany: German NGO Forum on Environment And Development

Norway: Norwegian Forum for Development And Environment

2. Key Areas for Evaluation

The Scorecard survey is based on 10 key areas, which together outline the concept of *inclusive implementation* and thus structure the evaluation of the implementation process for each of the 17 SDGs -mainly from a qualitative perspective. These key areas can be organized around three broader areas:

Policy parameters:

These elements seek to gauge the existence and scope of overarching and specific policy tools that provide a normative basis and support to the implementation of each SDG.

- **National Action Plans, Strategies and Budgets**
- **Legal and Policy framework**

Institutional Capacity:

These elements seek to measure the extent of government capacities for SDG implementation, from the perspective of specific institutional arrangements, support, follow-up and review processes, as well as actual results. In the key areas of national and local level implementation, participants in the survey can delve into quantitative assessments, by looking at specific indicators of progress.

- **Institutional Support** – Scope of the institutional arrangements and capacities made available for each goal
- **Implementation at National Level** – Perception of policy implementation efforts at the national level + assessment of progress indicators
- **Implementation at Local Level** - Perception of policy implementation at the local level + assessment of progress indicators if available
- **Monitoring, evaluation and reporting**

Inclusive Governance:

Variables related to the concept of inclusive governance, all of which are a category of their own, but also act as cross-cutting enabling elements for inclusive implementation in each of the other key areas.

- **Public Awareness and capacity-building**
- **Transparency and accountability mechanisms**
- **Inclusive Partnerships** – Perceived extent and quality of specific or all-encompassing multi stakeholder partnerships
- **Citizen Participation and Civil Society Engagement** – Extent of formal and informal participation mechanisms across the board

3. Analysis of the Scorecard Results by Goal

Scoring Scale:

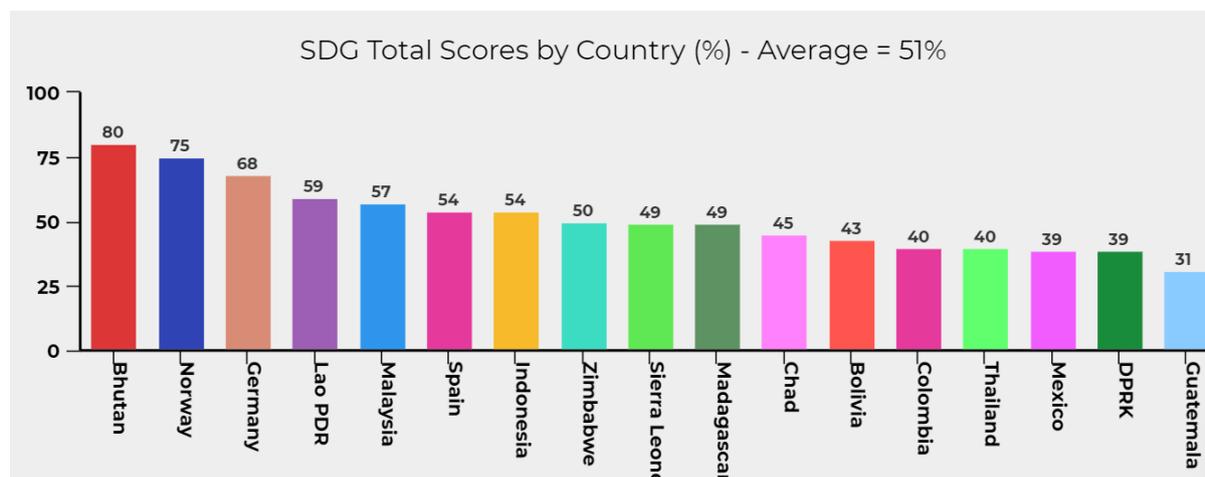
0 to 30% - Very Low (Between 1 and 2 points based in the Scorecard survey's scale)

31% to 50% - Low (Between 2 and 3 points based in the Scorecard survey's scale)

51% to 70% - Medium (Between 3 to 4 points based in the Scorecard survey's scale)

71% to 100% - High (Between 4 to 5 points based in the Scorecard survey's scale)

SDG Totals



Based on the results for the batch of countries presenting their VNRs at this year's HLPF, it is possible to observe that one country rates its national conditions for inclusive implementation of the SDG framework as very low (Guatemala), 9 countries rate it as low (DPRK, Thailand, Chad, Mexico, Colombia, Bolivia, Sierra Leone, Madagascar and Zimbabwe), 5 countries as medium (Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Spain and Germany), and 2 countries rate their internal conditions for inclusive implementation as high (Bhutan and Norway).

Overall, the key areas most highly rated are Legal Frameworks (63%), Institutional Support (61%) and National Action Plans, Strategies and Budgets (57%), which would point to the fact that a reasonably good number of national plans and policies based on sustainable development principles and aligned with the SDG Goals and Targets are in place -in most countries and to different extents-, and that the general perception is that institutional support is also moderately good. Evidently though, this general perception varies depending on the country and specific SDG - as it will be possible to observe in the disaggregated results per SDG that are detailed below.

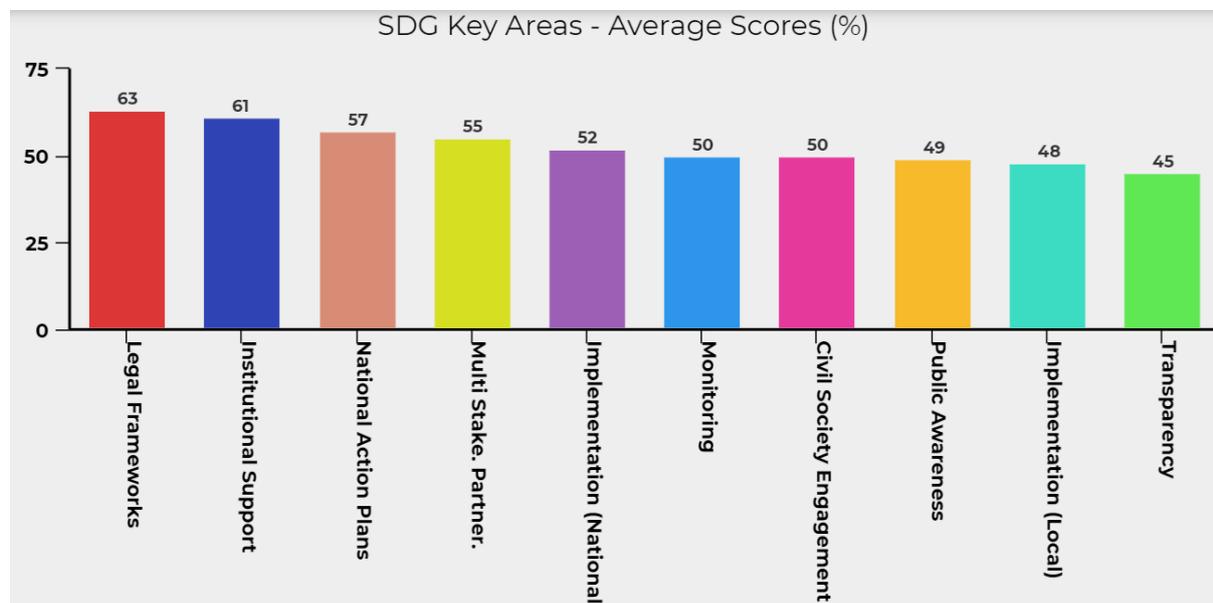
The disaggregated results also show a key global trend, which suggests **a fundamental gap between the existence of frameworks and policies, and their actual implementation** - given that the areas devoted to National-level and Local-level Implementation obtain lower scores, at 52% and 48% respectively. It has to be noted that Local Implementation (48%) is the key area that obtains the second to last position amongst all 10 key areas, which seems to point to a clear lack of development in the realm of SDG localization - a fact that is shared by most countries, although in different degrees.

In the case of Guatemala -as the country with the lowest average score-, policy parameters (national plans, policies), institutional capacity parameters (institutional support, level of implementation at national and local levels, monitoring), and particularly, areas linked to inclusive governance (the extent of Civil Society engagement, multi stakeholder partnerships, transparency and public awareness) all rank in the low or very low level of the scoring scale.

In the case of low ranked countries (DPRK, Thailand, Chad, Mexico, Colombia, Bolivia, Sierra Leone, Madagascar and Zimbabwe), these tend to achieve low or medium scores regarding policy parameters, whereas variables related to institutional capacity and inclusive governance tend to have low to very low scores.

For medium countries (Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Spain and Germany), policy-related parameters tend to obtain high or medium scores, while institutional capacity and inclusive governance variables tend to score in the medium or high range.

Regarding the countries achieving the highest average scores (Bhutan, Norway), they both obtain medium or high scores in a consistent manner across key areas - whether it is on policy parameters, institutional capacity or implementation.



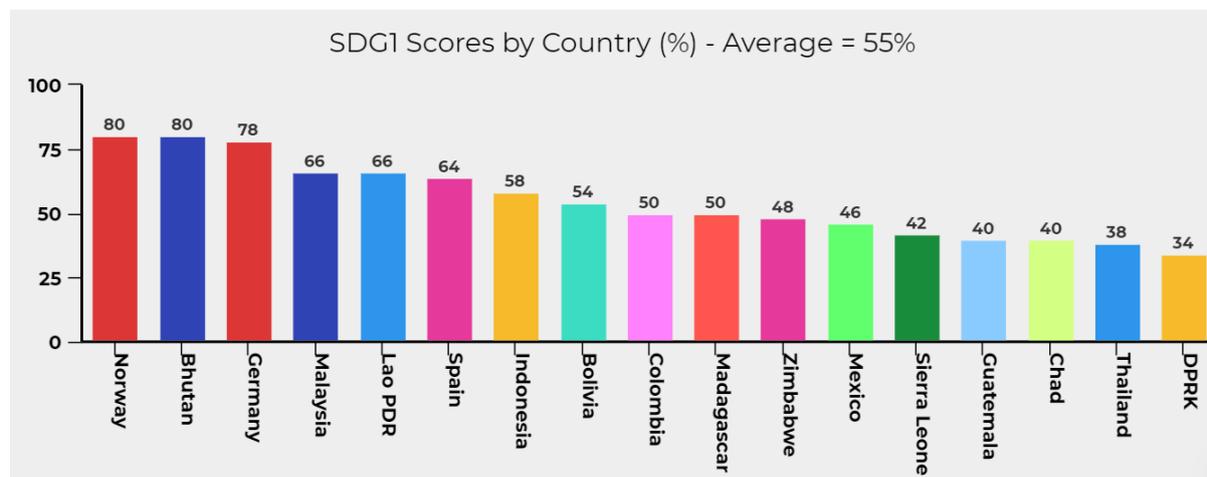
On a global average, the areas that achieve the highest scores are -as mentioned- related to policy (Legal Frameworks at 63%; National Action Plans at 57%), and Institutional Support (61%), whereas the areas that have the lowest attainment level are the inclusive governance-related variables Transparency (45%) and Public Awareness (49%) and, as already mentioned, the institutional capacity-related area of Local Implementation (48%).

It has to be noted that the areas of Multistakeholder Partnerships and Civil Society Engagement achieve medium scores, with 55% and 50% respectively. These results could point to the fact that, although Multistakeholder Partnerships are seemingly starting to be recognized as an essential venue for a whole-of-society approach to implementation, the extent of civil society participation within these still seems insufficient. Hence, it could be drawn from these preliminary results that the power asymmetries that are usually present within multi stakeholder partnerships haven't really been addressed or solved in the context of SDG implementation.

More broadly, the fact that the intensity and scope of civil society engagement is rated at such a mid-range level six years into the SDG implementation process is not particularly encouraging for the enhancement of participation in sustainable development and the possibility for comprehensive SDG implementation. The spotlight reports will allow us to delve deeper on the factors and systemic determinants at play for this trend.

Results by SDG - HLPF 2021 VNR Countries

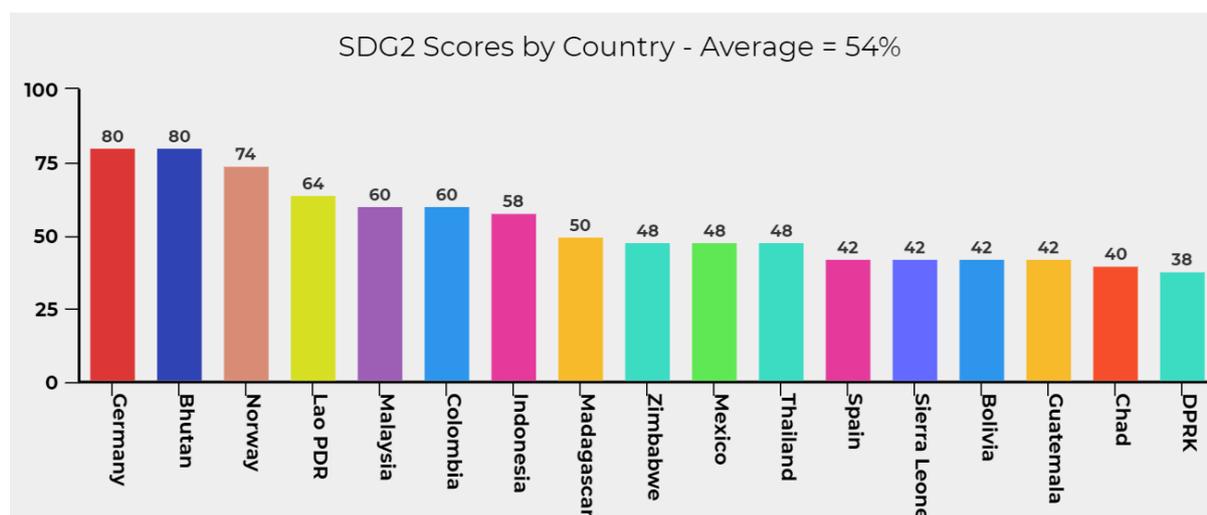
SDG 1 No Poverty



Regarding the results for SDG 1, it can be noted that low and medium scoring countries tend to have a slightly above-average performance (compared to each of their own total scores), but still have significant room for improvement. The spotlight reports will provide further context and concrete elements regarding the effects of the pandemic and the nature and scope of solutions provided by governments in this realm.

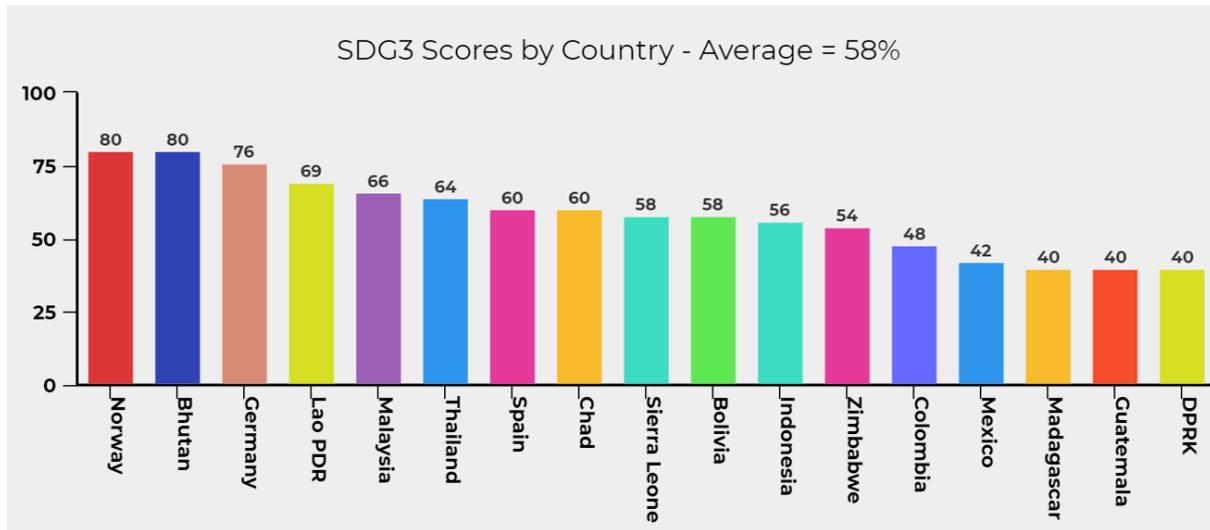
It is also noticeable that 9 out of 17 countries are rated low in this area (50% or lower), including 4 in Africa, 3 in Latin America and 2 in Asia, with DPRK, perceived to be the lowest. In the context of this goal, the lowest scoring areas overall are Civil Society Engagement (46%) and Transparency (41%), while the highest scoring areas are Institutional Support and Legal Frameworks, both with (64%).

SDG 2 Zero Hunger



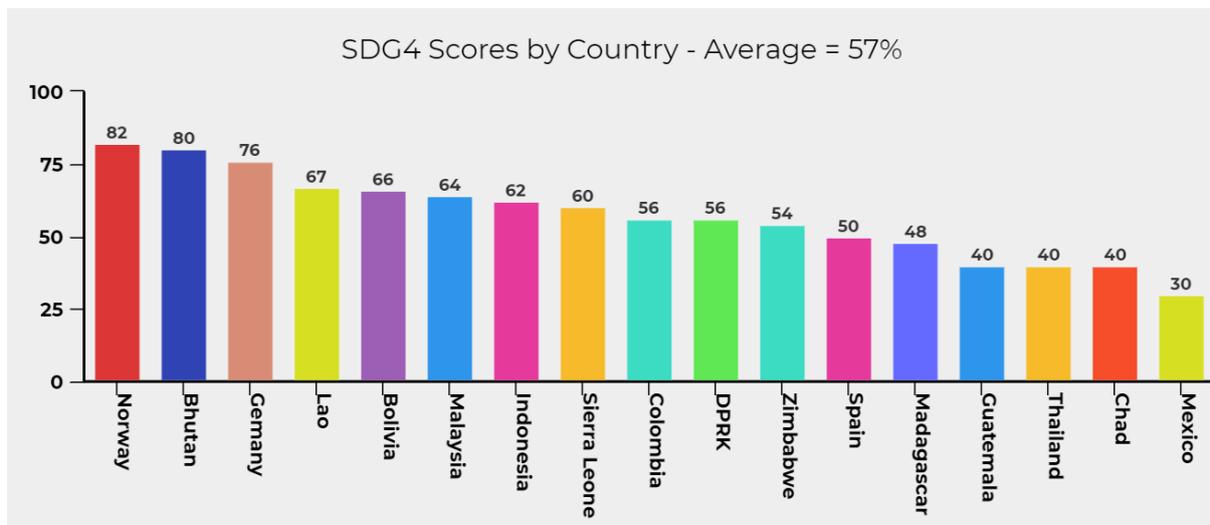
In Goal 2, the key areas of Legal Frameworks (64%), National Action Plans (60%) and Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships (60%) are the highest scoring categories, while Public Awareness (48%) and Transparency (48%) are the lowest scoring categories.

SDG 3 Good Health & Well-being



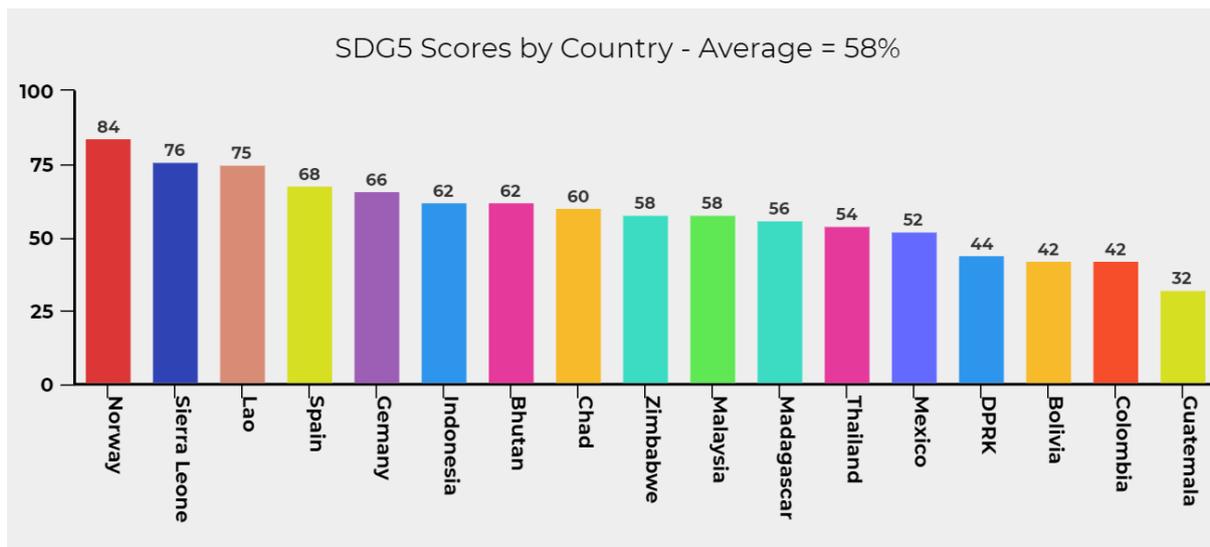
In the context of this goal, Legal Frameworks (66%) and Institutional Support (66%) are the key areas that achieve the highest scores, while Local Implementation (53%) and Civil Society Engagement (52%) are the ones that get the lowest scores on average.

SDG 4 Quality Education



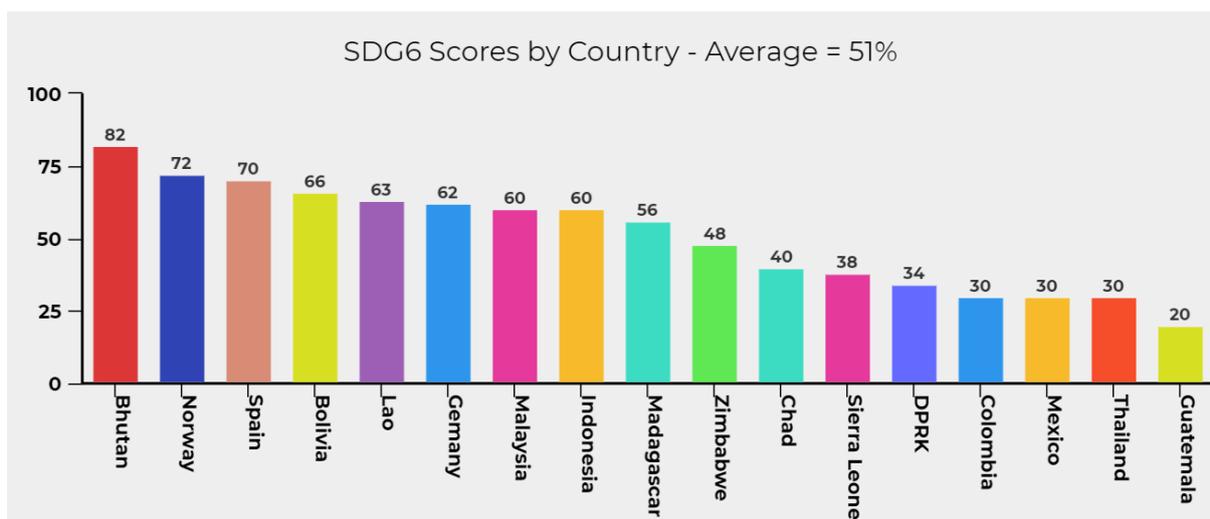
For Goal 4, the highest scoring categories are Legal Frameworks (70%) and Institutional Support (68%), whereas the areas of Transparency (50%), Monitoring (52%), National Implementation (53%) and Civil Society Engagement (53%) are the lowest scoring ones. In this Goal, Mexico is perceived to be further behind, although this may also be due to the fact that it starts from a higher original baseline than some other countries.

SDG 5 Gender Equality



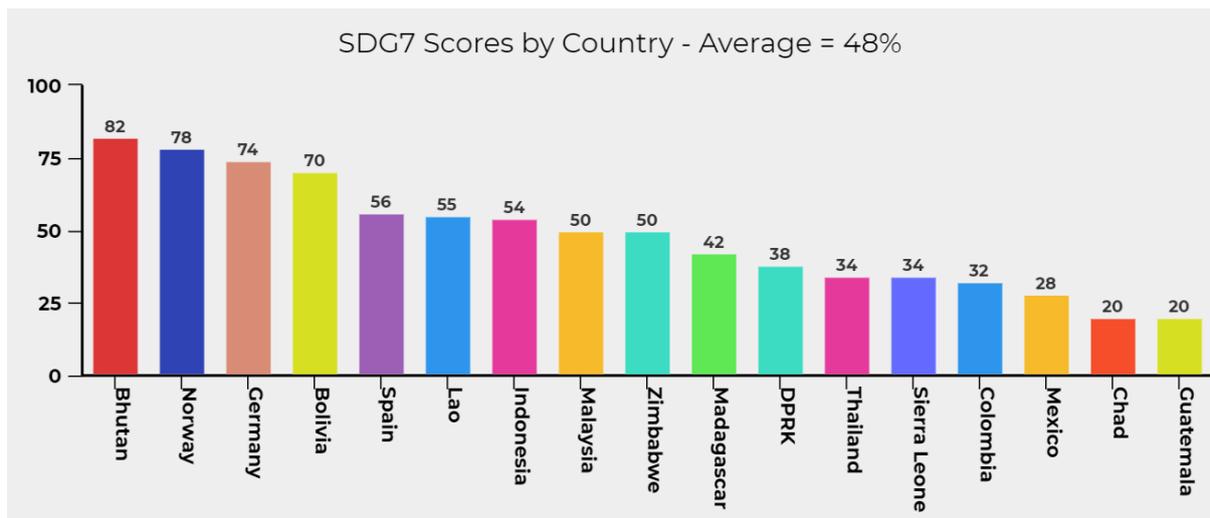
In the context of this goal, the key areas of Legal Frameworks (70%) and Institutional Support are the ones that get the highest scores, while Transparency (50%) and Local Implementation (55%) are the ones with the lowest scores. For this Goal, it is particularly noticeable that 3 countries in Latin America have the lowest scores, including Guatemala, Colombia and Bolivia, perhaps highlighting a worrying trend for women’s rights in the Latin American context. Meanwhile at the top end, Norway scores higher than the usual average on this Goal, perhaps showing that this is an area of strength.

SDG 6 Clean Water & Sanitation



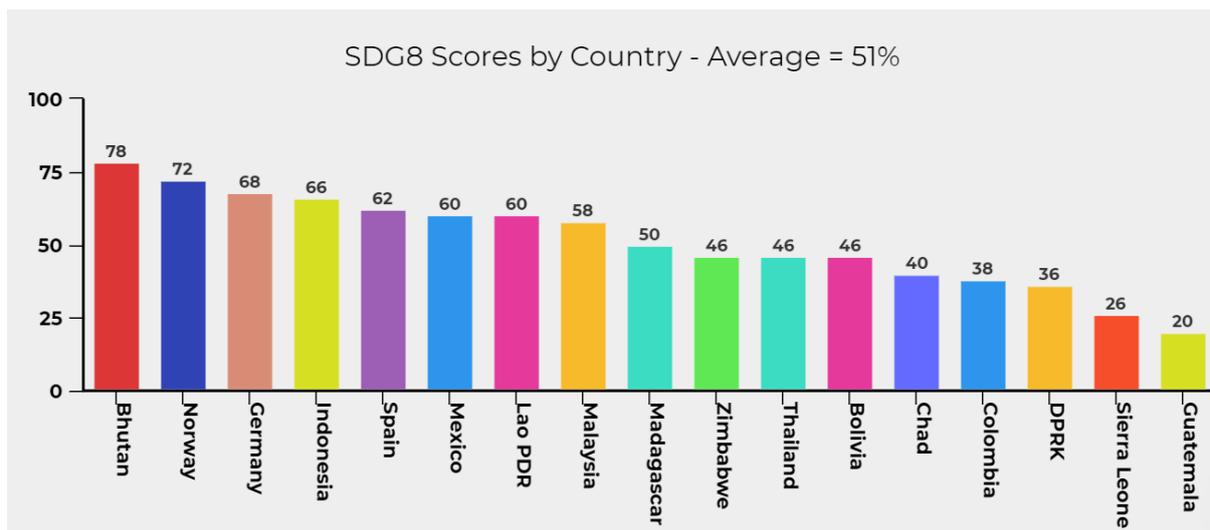
On Goal 6, the key areas with the highest scores are Legal Frameworks (63%) and Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships (58%), whereas Transparency (41%) and Local Implementation (45%) are the lowest scoring categories.

SDG 7 Clean Energy



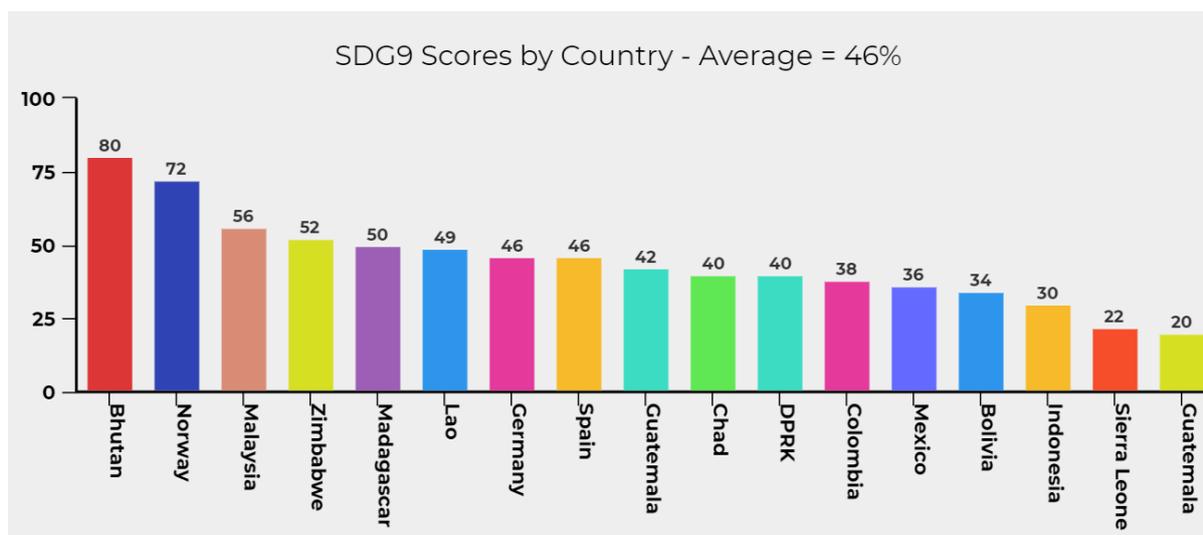
In this goal, Institutional Support (60%) and Legal Frameworks (58%) are the highest scoring key areas, whereas Civil Society Engagement (42%) and Transparency (39%) are the lowest scoring categories. Once again on this Goal, Guatemala received a very low score, alongside Chad. At the same time many of the average scores were lower than for other Goals, suggesting that there is still a long way to go to ensure clean energy around the world.

SDG 8 Decent Work & Economic Growth



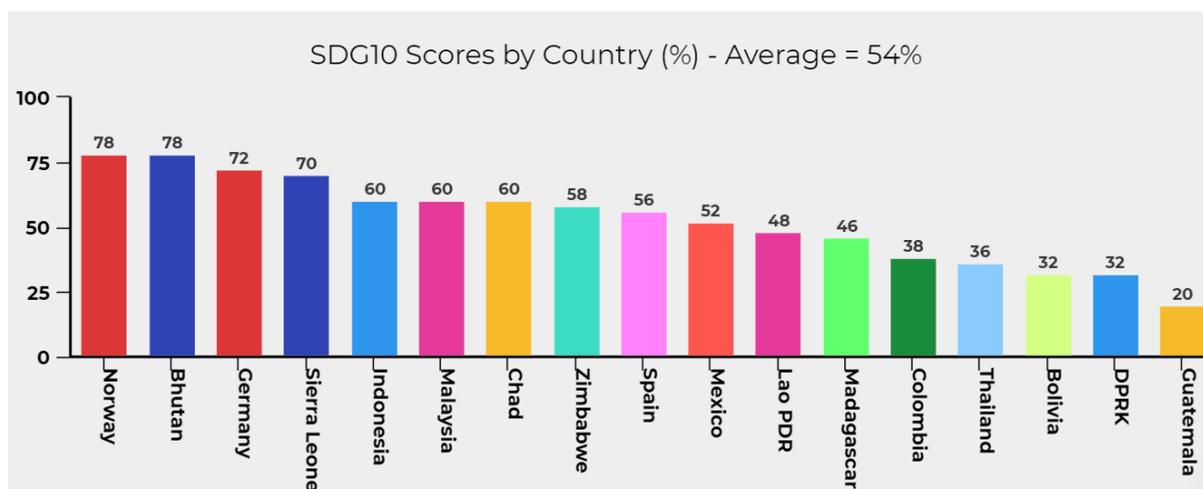
The highest scoring areas for this goal are Legal Frameworks and Institutional Support (64% for both), whereas the lowest scoring areas are Local Implementation (49%), Monitoring (48%) and Public Awareness (50%). Many countries have been hit by the recent economic slowdown and it will be interesting to see in the full Spotlight reports, how this impacts on decent work and opportunities for livelihoods.

SDG 9 Infrastructure & Industrialisation



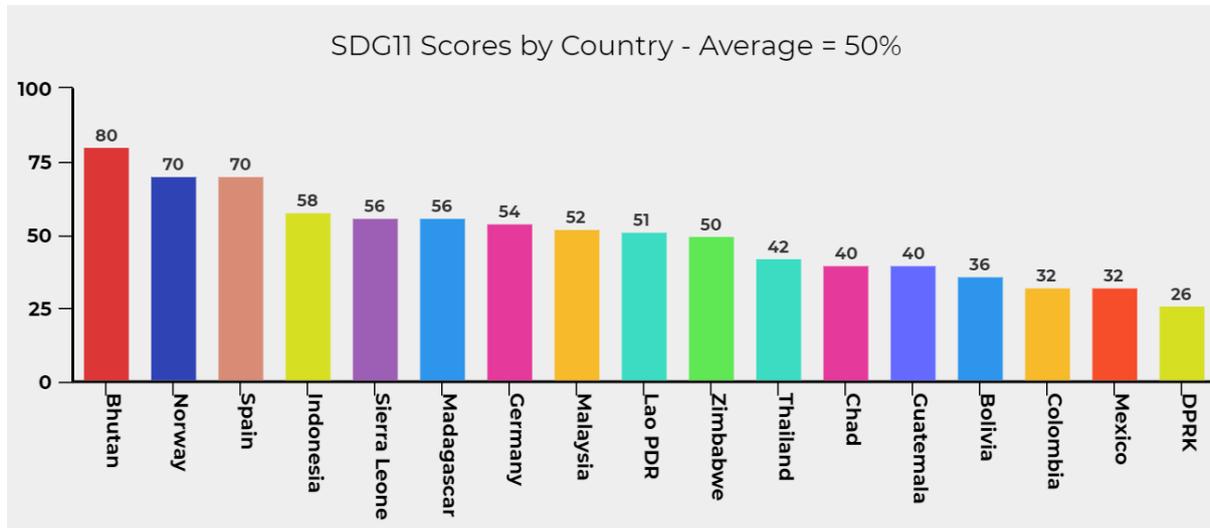
The highest scoring areas for this goal are Legal Frameworks (53%), National Action Plans (53%) and Institutional Support (52%), whereas the lowest scoring areas are Public Awareness (41%), Transparency (40%) and Civil Society Engagement with (40%).

SDG 10 Reducing Inequality



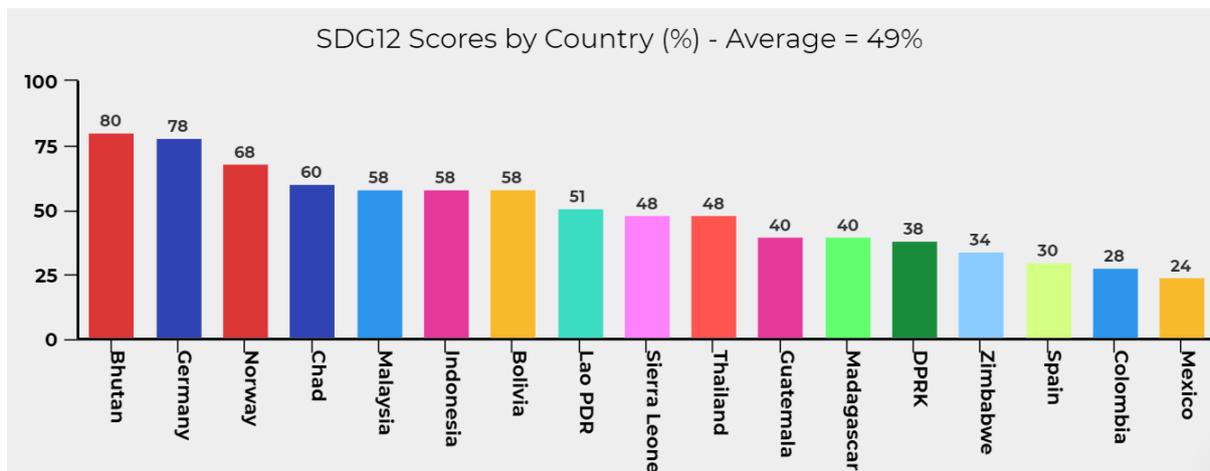
On Goal 10, the highest scoring areas for this goal are Institutional Support (59%) and Legal Frameworks (57%), whereas the lowest scoring areas are Transparency (47%) and Civil Society Engagement (49%). The averages here are similar to Goal 1, 7 countries scored 50% or less, 3 in Latin America, 3 in Asia and 1 in Africa. In comparison to Goal 1, it is noticeable that only Madagascar remained in the low score from Africa, which suggests that there is a perception from the CSO coalitions that some progress was being made to reduce inequality in other African countries such as Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe.

SDG 11 Safe & Resilient Cities



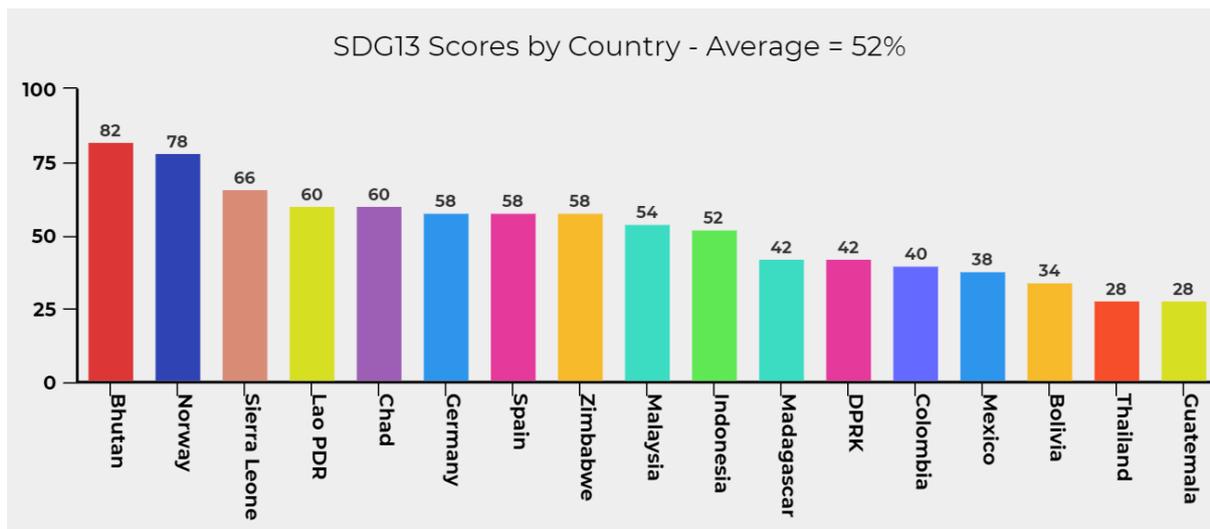
The highest scoring areas for this goal are Legal Frameworks (55%) and Institutional Support (54%), in addition to Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships and Civil Society Engagement (54%), whereas the lowest scoring areas are National Implementation (43%) and Local Implementation (42%).

SDG 12 Sustainable Consumption & Production



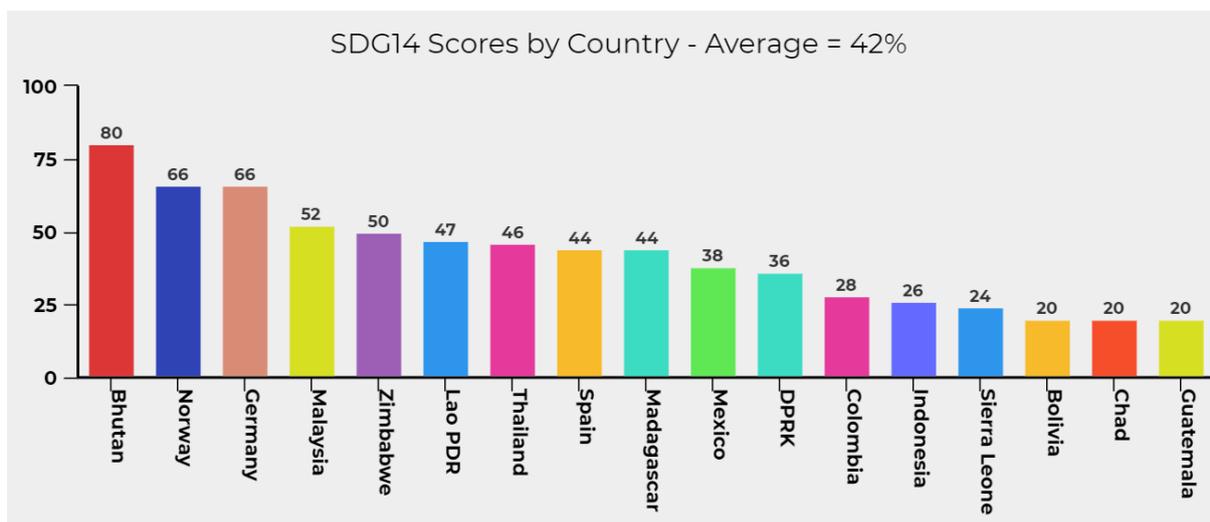
For Goal 12, the highest scoring area is Legal Frameworks (61%), while the lowest scoring areas are Transparency (43%), Monitoring (43%) and Local Implementation (43%). This is an area where Germany scored more highly than average, suggesting that this is an area where Germany has good examples to share.

SDG 13 Tackle Climate Change



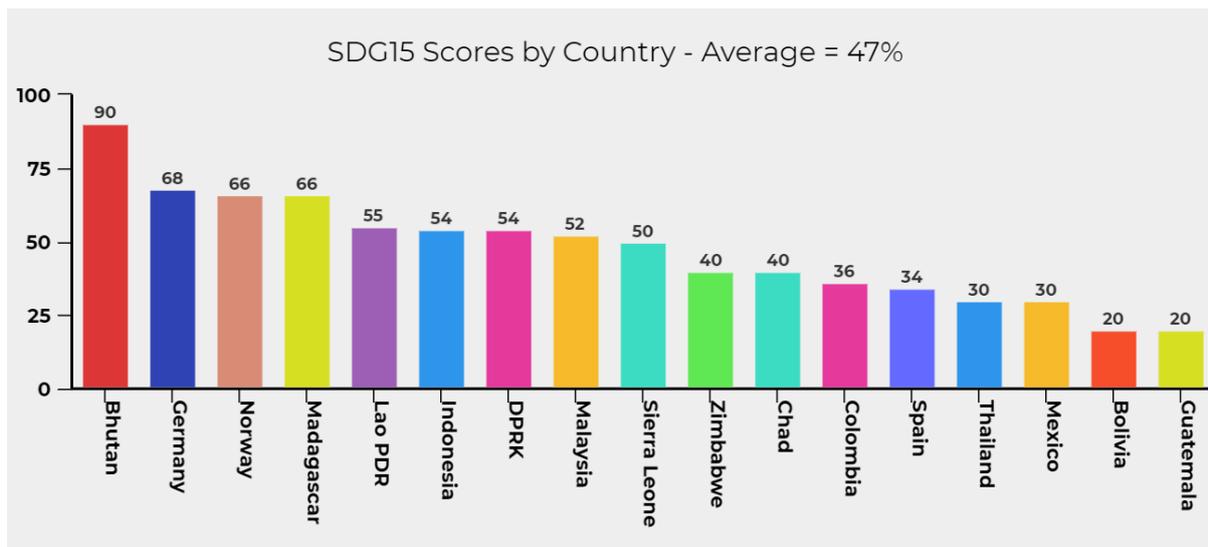
On Goal 13, the highest scoring category is Legal Frameworks (68%), whereas the lowest scoring area is Local Implementation (41%). It is interesting to note that Chad scores higher than average on this goal, perhaps due to additional steps taken to reduce climate change impacts and identify some innovative steps.

SDG 14 Life Under Water



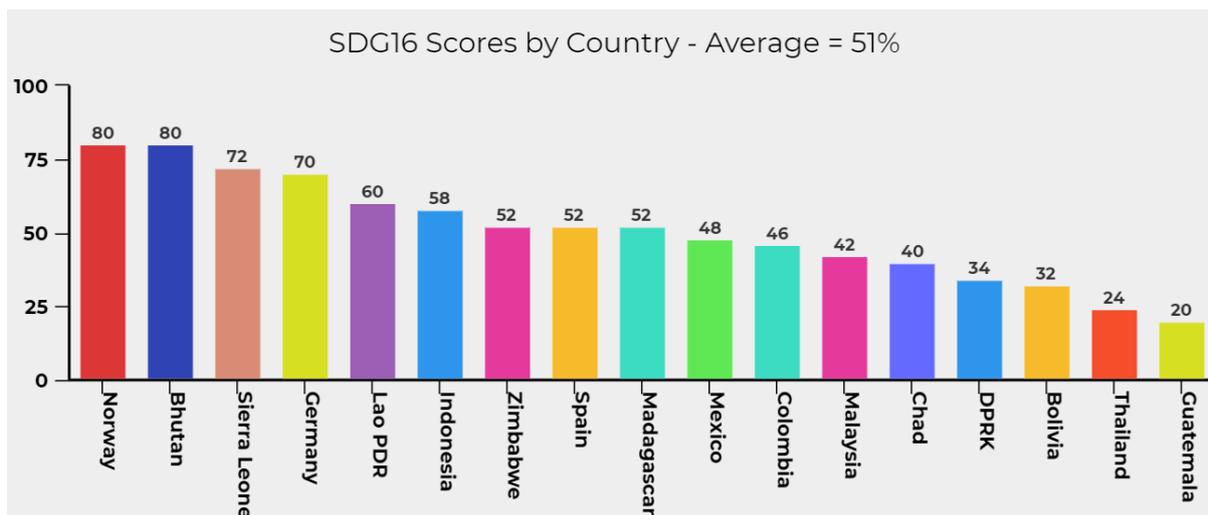
The highest scoring category for this goal is again Legal Frameworks (52%), whereas the lowest scoring area is Transparency (35%). It is particularly noticeable that 6 countries all score very low for this area, including 3 in Latin America, 2 in Africa and 1 in Asia. When taken together with Goal 6, this suggests that water pollution is a major cause for concern in a number of countries.

SDG 15 Life on Land



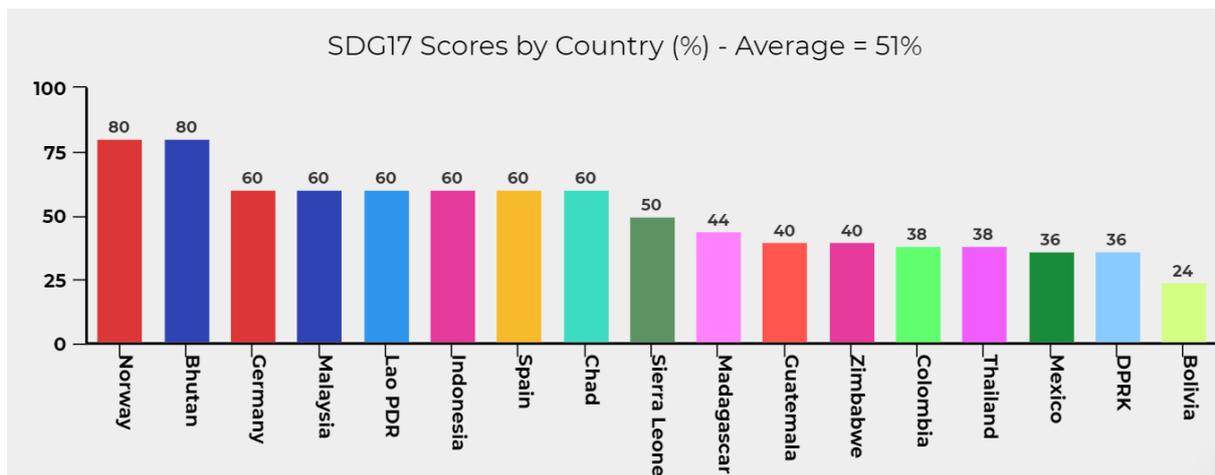
The highest scoring category for this goal is Legal Frameworks (61%), whereas the lowest scoring category are Transparency (41%) and Local Implementation (41%). The overall average in this area remains low, but slightly higher than life in the water. At the same time it is particularly noticeable that Bhutan scores very highly in this area, which suggests that the civil society coalition recognises some good approaches to biodiversity here.

SDG 16 Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions



The highest scoring category for this goal is Legal Frameworks (64%), whereas the lowest scoring area is Transparency (43%) and Local Implementation (45%). In this key area, both Guatemala and Thailand scored very low, while most countries scored low or medium, and only 4 countries received a high score: Norway, Germany, Bhutan and Sierra Leone. All countries are starting from very different baselines, so the specific conditions of each country will be understood in more detail in the Spotlight reports.

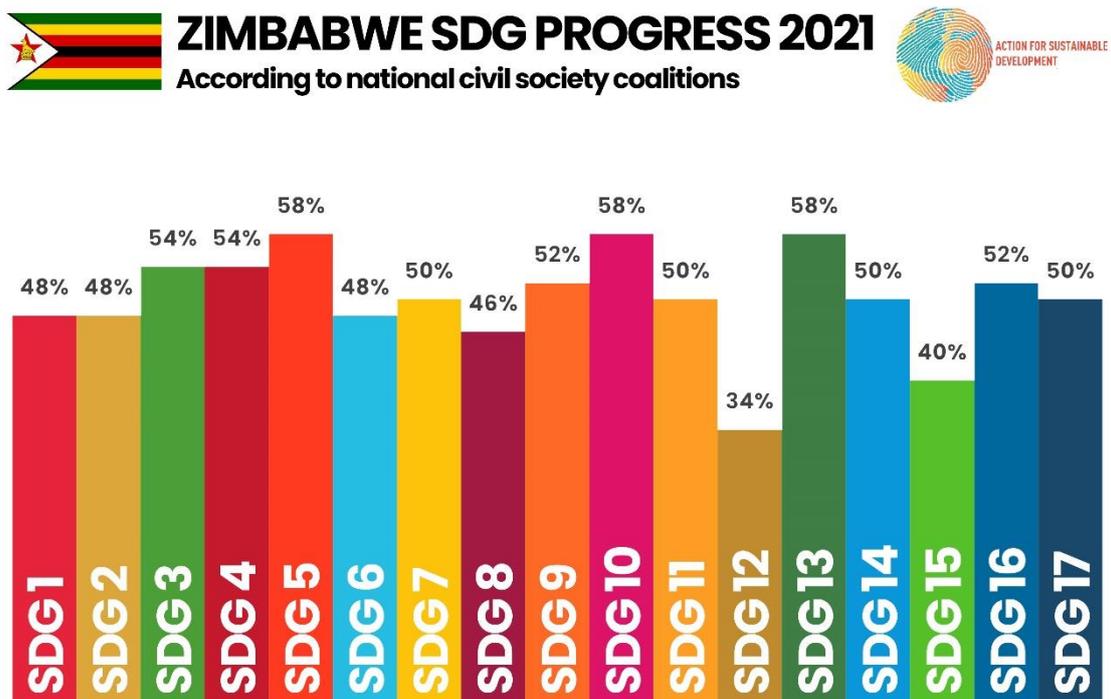
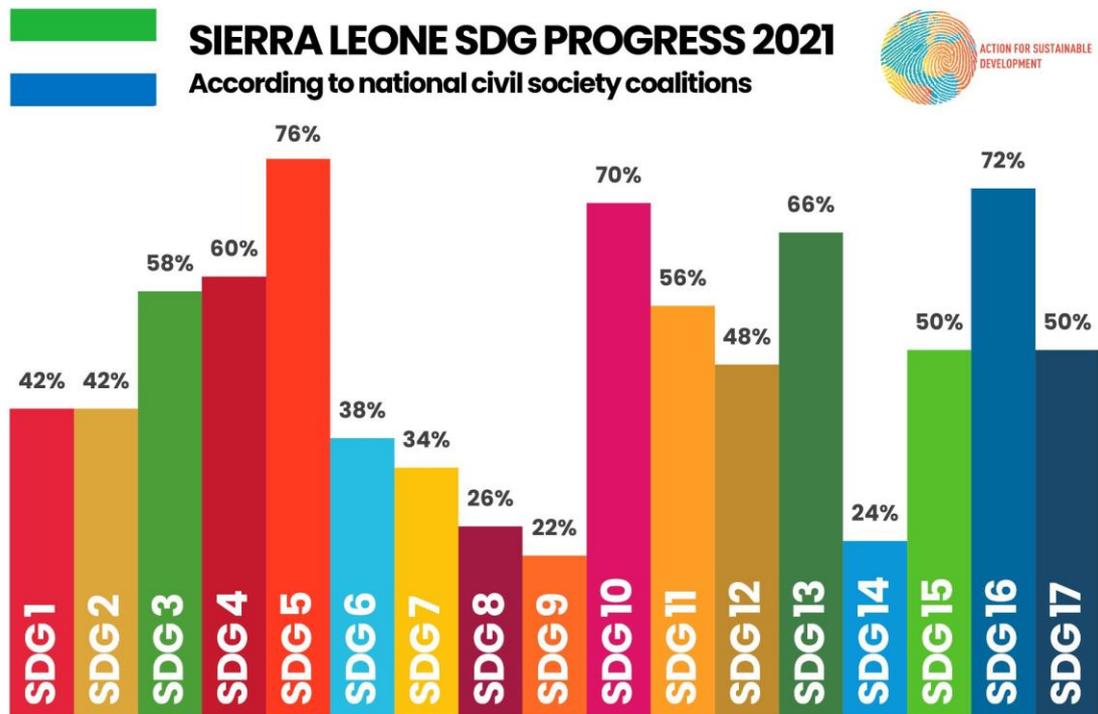
SDG 17 Partnerships



The highest scoring categories for this goal are Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships (59%), Legal frameworks (58%) and Institutional Support (57%), whereas the lowest scoring areas are Transparency (44%) and Public Awareness (41%). For this Goal, Guatemala was perceived to be somewhat more successful, but this time Bolivia was seen to be in the very low category.

4. Analysis of Scores by VNR Country

The results can also be presented to highlight the state of progress per Goal in a country, which enables a visual understanding of the position in diverse countries. You can find and share them below:



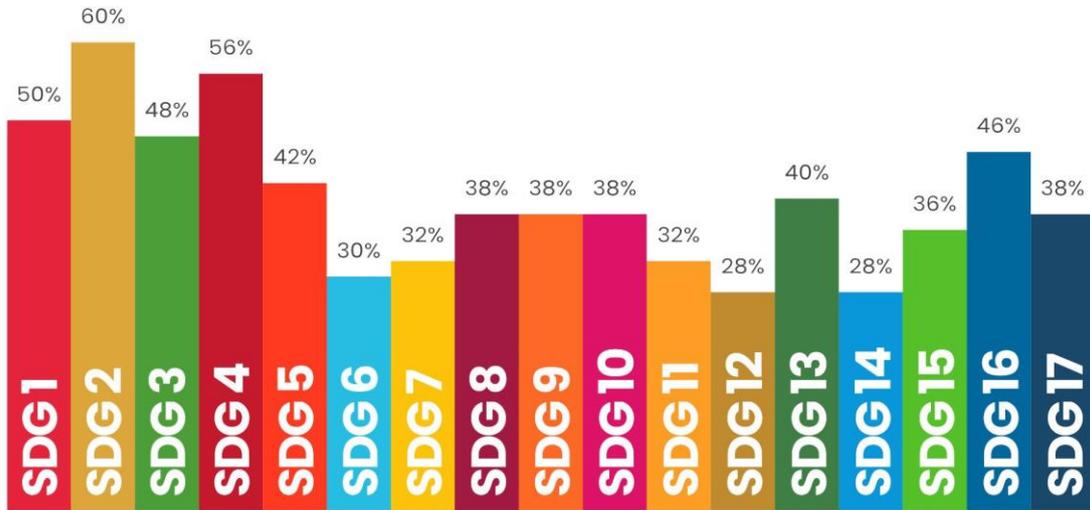


COLOMBIA SDG PROGRESS 2021

According to national civil society coalitions



ACTION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



MEXICO SDG PROGRESS 2021

According to national civil society coalitions



ACTION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



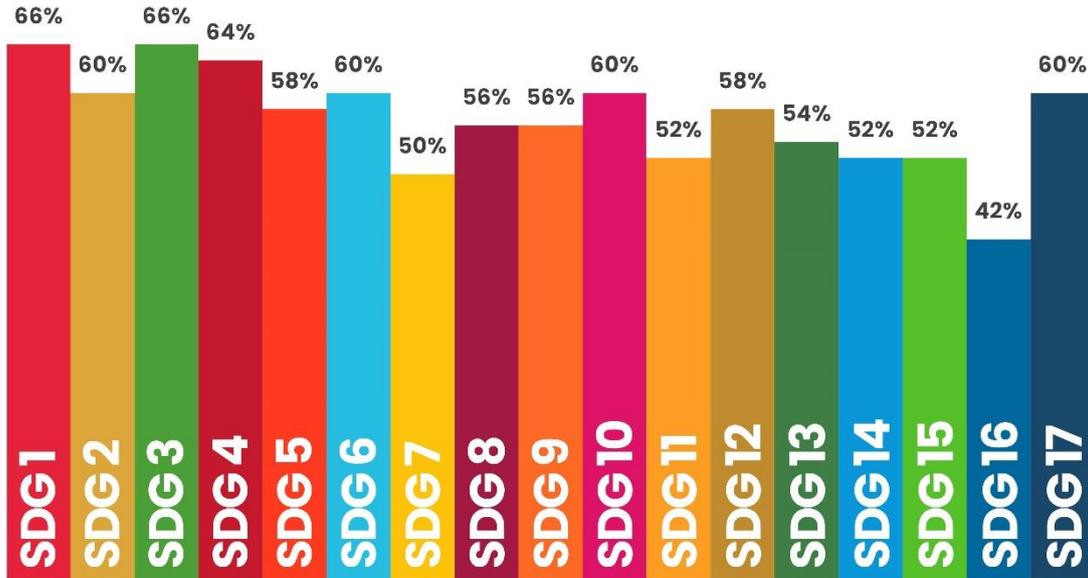


MALAYSIA SDG PROGRESS 2021

According to national civil society coalitions



ACTION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

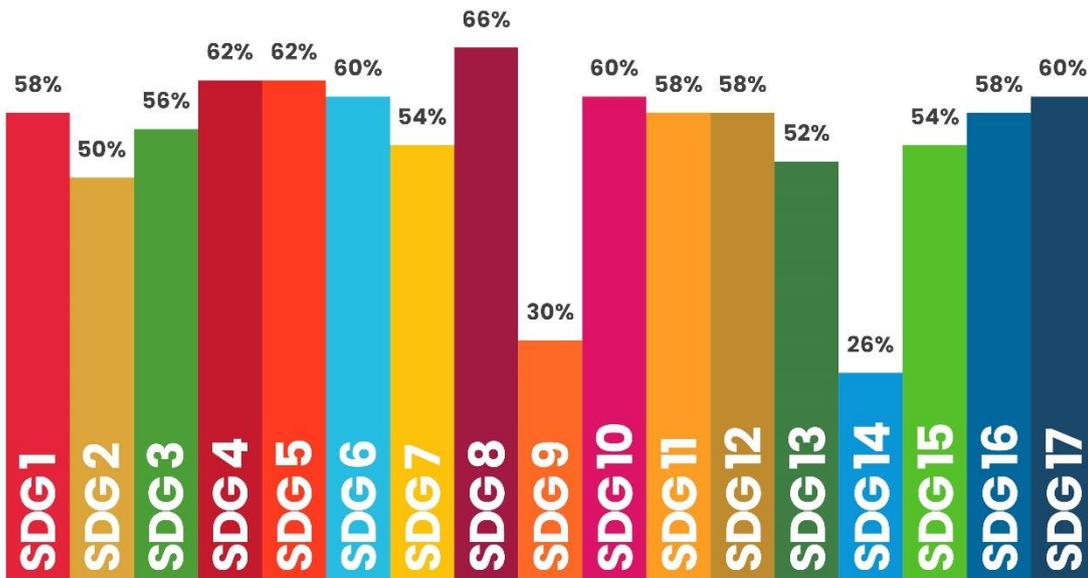


INDONESIA SDG PROGRESS 2021

According to national civil society coalitions



ACTION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



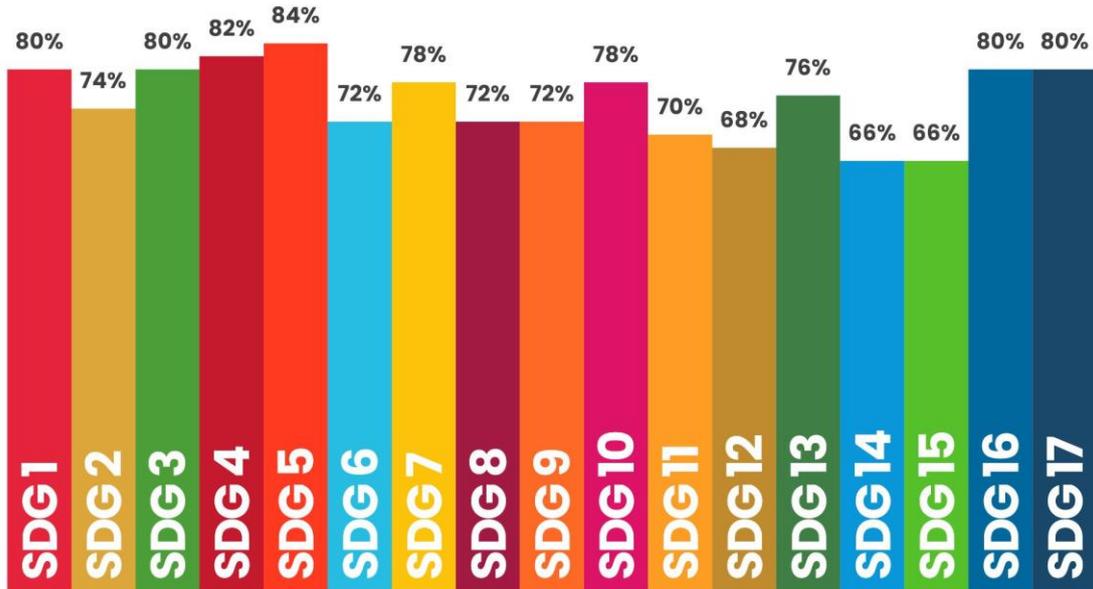


NORWAY SDG PROGRESS 2021

According to national civil society coalitions



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SPAIN SDG PROGRESS 2021

According to national civil society coalitions



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