



ODA
Study Series
23-02

Assessing Vietnam's Progress towards Sustainable Development Goals: A Comprehensive Review

Nguyen Hong Thu (Project Leader), Phi Vinh Tuong,
Dong Van Chung, Hoang Thi Hong Minh,
Nguyen Thi Hien, and Nguyen Tran Minh Tri



**Assessing Vietnam's Progress
towards Sustainable
Development Goals:
A Comprehensive Review**

ODA Study Series 23-02

**Assessing Vietnam's Progress
towards Sustainable Development Goals:
A Comprehensive Review**

[30147] Building C, Sejong National Research Complex, 370,
Sicheong-daero, Sejong-si, Korea

Tel: 82-44-414-1114 Fax: 82-44-414-1122, 1199

URL: <http://www.kiep.go.kr>

Siwook Lee, *President*

ODA Study Series 23-02

Published December 29, 2023 in Korea by KIEP

ISBN 978-89-322-8047-9 94320

978-89-322-8027-1 (Set)

Price USD 10

© 2023 KIEP

Assessing Vietnam's Progress towards Sustainable Development Goals: A Comprehensive Review

Nguyen Hong Thu, Phi Vinh Tuong,
Dong Van Chung, Hoang Thi Hong Minh,
Nguyen Thi Hien, and Nguyen Tran Minh Tri

Acknowledgement

We extend our heartfelt gratitude for the collaborative efforts that have contributed to the completion of the report titled “Assessing Vietnam’s Progress towards Sustainable Development Goals: A Comprehensive Review.” This report, commissioned and funded by the Korea Institute for International Economic Policy (KIEP), was made possible through the dedicated work of a team of experts from the Institute of World Economics and Politics (IWEP), led by Dr. Nguyen Hong Thu. We also acknowledge the invaluable contributions of Dr. Phi Vinh Tuong, Dr. Dong Van Chung, Ms. Nguyen Thi Hien, Ms. Hoang Thi Hong Minh, and Mr. Nguyen Tran Minh Tri from IWEP.

We are indebted to Prof. Taeyoon Kim from the Graduate School of International Agricultural Technology, Seoul National University, Prof. Han Woo Lee from Sogang University, and Gee Young Oh - Associate Research Fellow in the Development Evaluation Team, Center for International Development Cooperation, KIEP, for their expertise and insightful feedback.

Furthermore, we would like to express our deep appreciation to researchers and experts from various institutions, including the Institute of World Economics and Politics, the Vietnam Institute of Economics, the Institute of Sustainable Development Research under the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences (VASS), the Academy of Policy and Development under the Ministry of Planning and Investment, and the Department of Methodology and Statistical Quality Management under the General Statistics Office. Their valuable input has enriched the quality of our report.

Special appreciation goes to the provincial departments and agencies in Quang Ninh province for their advisory comments, which have contributed to the comprehensiveness of our assessment.

Lastly, we sincerely thank all individuals and organizations involved for their unwavering support, dedication, and collaboration throughout the process.

Assessing Vietnam's Progress towards Sustainable Development Goals: A Comprehensive Review

Nguyen Hong Thu, Phi Vinh Tuong, Dong Van Chung, Hoang Thi Hong Minh, Nguyen Thi Hien, and Nguyen Tran Minh Tri

To provide meaningful policy recommendations to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) according to the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the report "*Assessing Vietnam's Progress towards Sustainable Development Goals: A Comprehensive Review*" provides an overview of Vietnam's progress in implementing the SDGs. Accordingly, the report reviewed and analyzed legal documents, collected reports and statistical data related to the SDGs to review the process of integrating SDGs into socio-economic development strategies and plans of ministries, branches, and localities in Vietnam. The report also identifies factors affecting the effectiveness of SDGs implementation to point out Vietnam's difficulties, challenges and opportunities in the process of implementing SDGs at the provincial level. To have a more comprehensive, multi-dimensional view when evaluating the progress of implementing the SDGs, the report chooses Indonesia, Myanmar and Laos for case studies to compare the progress of national SDGs implementation in the ASEAN region compared to Vietnam. The report uses a flexible approach, including both qualitative research methods and quantitative research methods.

The report clarifies difficulties, challenges and opportunities, as well as draws valuable lessons on implementing the SDGs for Vietnam. The report also provides insights into the nationalization of the SDGs, attracting and allocating financial resources, monitoring and evaluation, international coordination and cooperation, raising awareness about the benefits of sustainable development and encourage stakeholders to participate in implementing the SDGs in Vietnam. Thereby, the report proposes recommendations for Vietnam, as well as offers implications for Korea.

Acknowledgement3

Executive Summary5

Chapter I . Introduction19

1. Purpose of Research20

2. Literature Review24

2.1. Social-Economic Development Plan and the
Strategy for Implementing SDGs in Vietnam24

2.2. The Current Situation of SDGs Implementation in
Vietnam and Its Progress by Province/Region28

2.3. The SDGs Promotion Strategies of Southeast Asia
Countries34

2.4. General Assessment42

3. Research Content44

4. Methodology45

4.1. Qualitative Research Methods46

4.2. Quantitative Research Methods46

5. Limitations49

**Chapter II . Socio-Economic Development and Progress
of SDGs Implementation in Vietnam51**

1. Overview of the Socio-Economic Development
Process in Vietnam52

1.1. Outstanding Achievements in Socio-economic Development in Vietnam	53
1.2. Constraints in Socio-Economic Development in Vietnam	59
2. The Progress of SDGs Implementation in Vietnam	60
2.1. Sustainable Development	60
2.2. Sustainable Development Goals	62
2.3. Implementing the SDGs in Vietnam	64
3. Sub-Conclusion of Chapter 2	82

Chapter III. Assessing the Progress of SDGs Implementation in Vietnam and the Factors Affecting the Progress of SDGs Implementation at the Provincial Level

1. Assessing the Progress of SDGs Implementation in Vietnam	86
1.1. The Progress of SDGs Implementation at National level	86
1.2. Progress in implementing SDGs at Provincial and Regional Levels	106
2. Factors Affecting the Progress of SDGs Implementation at the Provincial Level in Vietnam	111

2.1. Research Methodology	111
2.2. Data Analysis	114
2.3. Empirical Analysis	121
2.4. Empirical Findings	141
3. The Context, Difficulties, and Challenges for Implementing SDGs in Vietnam	144
3.1. The World Context	144
3.2. Difficulties and Challenges in Implementing SDGs in Vietnam	146
4. Sub-Conclusion of Chapter 3	149

Chapter IV. Progress of SDGs Implementation of Some Countries in Southeast Asia 153

1. The Progress of the SDGs Implementation in Southeast Asia	154
1.1. Implementing the SDGs in Southeast Asia	154
1.2. Assessing the Progress in Implementing the SDGs in Southeast Asia	161
2. The Progress of SDGs Implementation in Indonesia	167
2.1. Implementing the SDGs in Indonesia	167
2.2. Assessing the Progress in Implementing the SDGs in Indonesia	184
2.3. Discussion	191

3. The Progress of SDGs Implementation in Lao PDR	196
3.1. Implementing the SDGs in Lao PDR	196
3.2. Assessing the Progress in Implementing the SDGs in Lao PDR	210
3.3. Discussion	214
4. The Progress of SDGs Implementation in Myanmar	217
4.1. Implementing the SDGs in Myanmar	217
4.2. Assessing the Progress in Implementing the SDGs in Myanmar	227
4.3. Discussion	231
5. Sub-Conclusion of Chapter 4	235
 Chapter V . Lessons Learned, Recommendation for Vietnam and Implications for Korea	237
1. Lessons Learned for Vietnam	238
2. Recommendation for Vietnam	241
3. Implications for Korea	244
4. Conclusion	247
 References	249

Table 2.1. Proportion of Contribution of Total Factor Productivity, Capital, and Labor to GDP Growth in Vietnam	55
Table 2.2. Similarities and Differences between VSDGs and SDGs	66
Table 2.3. Focal Areas for Sustainable Development	72
Table 2.4. Social Development Investment Capital Implemented by Economic Sector	77
Table 3.1. SDG Index Score in Vietnam, 2015-2022	88
Table 3.2. Some Indicators of SDG 1 in Vietnam	90
Table 3.3. Some Indicators of SDG 4 in Vietnam	93
Table 3.4. Some Indicators of SDG 6 in Vietnam	94
Table 3.5. Some Indicators of SDG 7 in Vietnam	95
Table 3.6. Some Indicators of SDG 8 in Vietnam	96
Table 3.7. Some Indicators of SDG 9 in Vietnam	97
Table 3.8. Some Indicators of SDG 10 in Vietnam	98
Table 3.9. Some Indicators of SDG 11 in Vietnam	100
Table 3.10. Some Indicators of SDG 12 in Vietnam	101
Table 3.11. Proportion of Enterprises Paying Informal Expenses and the Corruption Perception Index (CPI)	105
Table 3.12. Equivalence between PSDI and SDG in Vietnam	115
Table 3.13. Descriptive Summary	122
Table 3.14. Pearson Correlation Matrix of Aggregate	

Variables	124
Table 3.15. Estimated Results with Aggregate Data	124
Table 3.16. Estimated Results with Aggregate Data with Income Level	127
Table 3.17. Estimated Results with Sub-Components of papi, pobi, and pci	129
Table 3.18. Estimated Results with Sub-Components of papi, pobi, and pci with Income Level	132
Table 3.19. Estimated Results for Sub-Components of psdi	136
Table 3.20. Estimated Results for Sub-Components of psdi with Income Level	137
Table 3.21. Estimated Results for Regions with Aggregate Data	139
Table 3.22. Estimated Results for Regions with Aggregate Data with Income Level	140
Table 4.1. SDG Index 2023: Score and Rank of ASEAN Countries	163
Table 4.2. Alignment of SDGs Global and National Targets in Indonesia	170
Table 4.3. A Comparison between Indonesia and Vietnam by Indicator	192
Table 4.4. Measuring Government SDG Efforts and Commitments, 2023	195
Table 4.5. SDG Data Availability for Lao PDR in 2022	207

Table 4.6. The Comparison between Laos and Vietnam,
by Indicator215

Table 4.7. SDGs vs. MSDP219

Table 4.8. A Comparison between Myanmar and Vietnam,
by Indicator232

Figure 2.1. GDP Growth in Vietnam, 1986-2020 54

Figure 2.2. Development Investment Capital Structure,
2011-2020 57

Figure 2.3. Human Development Index (HDI) in Vietnam
(1990-2021) 59

Figure 2.4. 17 Sustainable Development Goals 63

Figure 2.5. Institutional Arrangement for SDG
Implementation in Vietnam 73

Figure 2.6. Data Availability for SDGs 81

Figure 3.1. SDG Index Score and Ranking of Vietnam,
2016-2023 87

Figure 3.2. Comparison of Vietnam’s SDG Index Scores with
the World and the East and South Asia Region,
2016-2022 88

Figure 3.3. The Forest Coverage and Forest Area in Vietnam,
2015-2022 104

Figure 3.4. PSDI Index Ranking by Province in Vietnam,
2021 109

Figure 3.5. PSDI Index Ranking by Region in Vietnam,
2021 110

Figure 4.1. Progress in Implementing the SDGs in Southeast
Asia, 2022 162

Figure 4.2. Mainstreaming SDGs in Indonesia’s 2020-2024
Medium-Term Development Plan, by Pillar 173

Figure 4.3. SDGs National Coordination Team
in Indonesia 177

Figure 4.4. SDG Index Score and Ranking of Indonesia,
2016-2023 185

Figure 4.5. National Mechanism for SDG Implementation
in Laos 201

Figure 4.6. Structure of Investment Capital for Social
Development, 2016-2020 205

Figure 4.7. Lao PDR’s SDG Index Scores and Rankings,
2016-2023 211

Figure 4.8. The Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan
Summary Framework 218

Figure 4.9. Indicator Availability by Goal, 2022 225

Figure 4.10. Myanmar’s SDG Index Score and Ranking,
2016-2023 228

Figure 4.11. The Myanmar SDG Progress Scores, 2015-2022
..... 229

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ODA Study Series
2 3 - 0 2

2030 Agenda	2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease
DAO	Development Affairs Office
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GSO	General Statistics Office of Vietnam
LDC	Least Developed Countries
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MDGI	Millennium Development Goals Index
MSDP	Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan
NAP 2030	National Action Plan for implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
NSEDP	National Socio-Economic Development Plan
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PDR	People's Democratic Republic
PSDI	Provincial Sustainable Development Index ¹
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SDGI	Sustainable Development Goals Index
SDI	Sustainable Development Index
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program

VCCI	Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry
VNR	Voluntary National Review
VSDG	Vietnam Sustainable Development Goals
WB	World Bank
WEF	World Economic Forum



Chapter I .

Introduction

- 1. Purpose of Research**
- 2. Literature Review**
- 3. Research Content**
- 4. Methodology**
- 5. Limitations**

1. Purpose of Research

Sustainable development is an urgent necessity and an inevitable trend in the societal evolution of humankind. At the United Nations Summit held in September 2015 in New York, USA, world leaders unanimously adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (hereinafter referred to as the 2030 Agenda). Building on the success of the Millennium Development Goals and the Agenda 21 (adopted in 1992), the 2030 Agenda constitutes a comprehensive, overarching policy framework with the aim of completing the unfinished work of the Millennium Development Goals and Agenda 21, leaving no one behind. Simultaneously, it addresses the environmental, social, and economic challenges facing the world. This program encompasses 17 overarching goals and 169 specific targets, spanning various areas such as eradicating hunger, reducing poverty, ensuring food security, and minimizing inequality. It also addresses climate change and environmental protection, enhances, and expands access to healthcare, health services, and education, and strengthens institutional systems and cooperative partnerships. In comparison to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are more comprehensive and applicable on a broader scale, encompassing all 193 member countries of the United Nations, including both developed and developing nations.

In order to track, assess, and monitor the progress of implementing SDGs while actively supporting the construction and enforcement of policies, quantifying the results obtained from the implementation of SDGs based on a source of quality, reliable data that accurately reflects

reality, along with clear index tools, is of utmost importance. In practice, during the pursuit of these ambitious goals, governments often simultaneously review the historical context and current environmental conditions at both the national and local levels to enhance the effective monitoring capacity of global solutions over time. Additionally, comparing different countries on a global scale, especially those with similar socio-economic development conditions, is a crucial step in developing policies. Regarding the effectiveness of SDGs implementation, international comparisons and drawing on global experiences will help governments gain further insights into the best practices and norms that can be applied to achieve the stated policy goals.

As a member of the United Nations, Vietnam has actively participated in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In fulfilment of international commitments, on May 10, 2017, the Prime Minister signed Decision No. 622/QĐ-TTg issuing the National Action Plan for implementing the 2030 Agenda (Action Plan 2030). Drawing upon prevailing development conditions, contextual factors, and existing key strategies, policies, and development programs in Vietnam, the Action Plan delineates 17 SDGs to be achieved by 2030, comprising 115 specific targets. Simultaneously, it allocates specific responsibilities to ministries, sectors, and localities for the execution of the Action Plan.

To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of implementing SDGs, on January 22, 2019, the Ministry of Planning and Investment issued Circular No. 03/2019/TT-BKHĐT. Additionally, on June 4, 2019, the Prime Minister approved Decision No. 681/QĐ-TTg endorsing the *Implementation Roadmap for Vietnam's Sustainable Development Goals until 2030*. In response to significant changes in the domestic and international

context related to sustainable development, recently, on July 14, 2023, the Prime Minister issued Decision No. 841/QĐ-TTg on promulgating the Roadmap for the Implementation of Vietnam's Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, replacing Decision No. 681/QĐ-TTg. At the local level, Vietnam has not yet enacted regulations for a new set of criteria to monitor and evaluate local sustainable development or specified provisions extending the application period of local criteria from the 2013-2020 phase into the post-2021 period. Meanwhile, the achievement of global SDGs more than ever relies on the capacity of local governments.

In recent times, both the international and domestic contexts have undergone significant changes, yet the goals, monitoring indicators, and evaluation criteria for sustainable development at the national and local levels still present many aspects requiring further research and refinement. Therefore, to obtain a comprehensive and holistic understanding of the progress in implementing Vietnam's SDGs, multidimensional research is necessary. This involves assessing the implementation of SDGs at the national level and examining the influencing factors affecting the progress of SDGs at the provincial/regional level. Additionally, it involves comparing the implementation progress of SDGs between Vietnam and several countries in the Southeast Asia region with similar socio-economic development conditions. Based on this foundation, meaningful policy implications can be derived to promote the implementation of SDGs in Vietnam.

To contribute to providing meaningful policy recommendations aimed at further promoting the implementation of SDGs in Vietnam, within the framework of international cooperation, the Institute of World

Economics and Politics has collaborated with the Korea Institute for International Economic Policy (KIEP) on the project: “*Assessing Vietnam’s Progress Towards Sustainable Development Goals: A Comprehensive Review*” The project focuses on three main issues:

(i) Examine the government of Vietnam’s perspectives and policy directions on sustainable development across different phases, along with corresponding development goals, and the indicators and tools used to measure implementation performance. Additionally, we will present how the Vietnamese government has “translated” the SDGs, integrating them into Vietnam’s long-term development plans, and provide an overview of key features of initiatives aimed at advancing the SDGs currently being implemented.

(ii) Evaluate the current implementation status of SDGs in Vietnam, specifically assessing performance and effectiveness at the provincial level using both quantitative and qualitative methods. In the process of assessing the effectiveness of SDGs implementation at both the national and local levels in Vietnam, we will identify factors influencing the efficiency of policy solutions that the government has implemented to promote SDGs. Simultaneously, we will examine the determinants of success in achieving SDGs in Vietnam. Through this evaluation, we aim to derive valuable insights into the existing opportunities, challenges, potential risks, and prospects for fulfilling SDGs in Vietnam, providing a comprehensive understanding of the country’s progress in this regard.

(iii) Review and compare the strategies that have been or are currently being applied to promote SDGs in Vietnam, as well as in several other major countries in Southeast Asia: We will examine the performance in implementing SDGs in selected ASEAN countries, along with their

corresponding policies in this area. Utilizing available international index rankings and criteria, we will attempt to conduct a detailed comparison between Vietnam and the chosen countries based on various factors such as policy characteristics, policy relevance, or policy effectiveness. The goal is to identify pertinent initiatives that can be applied in Vietnam to enhance the implementation of national development goals and contribute to the shared benefits of the entire region.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Social-Economic Development Plan and the Strategy for Implementing SDGs in Vietnam

2.1.1. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Program

Sustainable development is an urgent need and an inevitable trend in the development process of human society. At the United Nations Summit held from September 25 to 27, 2015 in New York (USA), *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development program* (United Nation 2015) (hereinafter referred to as the 2030 Agenda) was adopted by UN members, including Vietnam. The 2030 Agenda includes 17 common goals, 169 specific targets, and 232 indicators for sustainable development. Based on the 17 SDGs, UN members have developed specific programs and action plans to implement the SDGs that are suitable for the conditions and circumstances of each country.

The SDGs are built on the MDGs, which included eight global action-oriented goals to reduce extreme poverty in many aspects between

2000 and 2015. While the SDGs maintain the focus on poverty reduction included in MDGs framework, they reflect a comprehensive perspective on international development and sustaining human life on Earth. By providing a set of integrated progress targets and indicators, the SDGs are the key elements to the success of the 2030 Agenda program. It will also guide the development programs and national policies of UN members and their international cooperation for the next 15 years. In addition to supplementing common goals, specific targets and indicators are more strictly defined. The SDGs are applied uniformly to all countries worldwide, eliminating the division between “developing” and “developed” that has been criticized in the MDGs (ICLEI 2015).

2.1.2. Vietnam’s Socio-Economic Development Plan and Strategy for Implementing the SDGs.

In the *Vietnam’s Voluntary National Review on The Implementation of The Sustainable Development Goals* conducted by the Ministry of Planning and Investment, it is shown that the concept of sustainable development has been integrated throughout the 2011-2020 Socioeconomic Development Strategy and the 2016-2020 Socioeconomic Development Plan (Ministry of Planning and Investment 2018). Recently, the SDGs have continued to be integrated into the 2021-2030 Socioeconomic Development Strategy and the 2021-2025 Socioeconomic Development Plan of Vietnam.

Sustainable development is a consistent policy of the Vietnamese Communist Party and State and is an issue of concern to the entire society. This is evidenced by the fact that sustainable development has been consistently integrated into national, agencies, and province’s

economic and social development strategies and plans over different periods. Therefore, Vietnam has always strived to fulfill global commitments on sustainable development by issuing the Vietnam Agenda 21 (2004), Vietnam's Sustainable Development Strategy for the period 2011-2020 (2012). Since the 2030 Agenda was adopted in September 2015, the National Assembly assigned the Government to develop a specific action plan to implement the SDGs by 2030. Accordingly, the Prime Minister signed Decision 622/QĐ-TTg on May 10, 2017, issuing the National Action Plan to implement the 2030 Agenda with 17 sustainable development goals (Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam 2017a).

In the *National Action Plan for Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Vietnam*, Vietnam has nationalized the 17 global SDGs with 115 specific targets to suit the country's development conditions and priorities. The action plan emphasizes partnership relations and clearly assigns responsibilities of relevant parties from central to local levels. This plan is used to develop Vietnam's sustainable development goals (VSDGs), which also have 17 major goals with content similar to SDGs, including 115 specific targets (reflecting 150/169 of global targets) (Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam 2017a). The similarities and differences between SDGs and VSDGs are clarified in the “*Synthesis Report: Reviewing 17 common goals and 169 specific objectives of the United Nations Sustainable Development Agenda 2030*” by the Ministry of Planning and Investment (2016).

In 2017, the Vietnamese Government and the United Nations developed a One Strategic Plan (OSP) to integrate SDGs into the Socio-Economic Development Strategy 2011-2020 and the Five-Year

Socio-Economic Development Plan 2016-2020 (National Assembly 2016). The OSP focuses on four main areas, reflecting how SDGs are implemented: (1): Investing in human resources; (2): Ensuring adaptive capacity for sustainable climate and environment; (3): Prosperity and cooperation; and (4): Promoting justice, peace, and comprehensive governance (Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam 2017b).

One of the important tasks set out in the *National Action Plan for implement the 2030 Agenda* (Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam 2017a) is to develop the *Implementation Roadmap for Vietnam's Sustainable Development Goals Until 2030*, as a measure to evaluate the implementation of goals at the time milestones of 2020, 2025, and 2030. The roadmap is an important basis for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of SDGs and a basis for ministries, departments and localities to develop annual and five-year socio-economic development plans; building specific indicators and tasks of each agency and locality to implement SDGs in each period until 2030. Nevertheless, the *Implementation Roadmap for Vietnam's Sustainable Development Goals Until 2030* has been approved by the Prime Minister in Decision 681/QĐ-TTg dated June 4, 2019 (Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam 2019). On September 25, 2020, the Government issued *Resolution 136/NQ-CP on sustainable development* to promote the implementation of SDGs in various industries, levels, and localities by 2030.

The roadmap is a basis for ministries and localities to develop specific indicators in annual and five-year socio-economic development plans and is a measure to evaluate the achievement of SDGs at the time milestones of 2020, 2025 and 2030. By 2021, 17/22 ministries, departments and 51/63 provinces and cities directly under the central

government have issued action plans to implement the 2030 Agenda (Ministry of Planning and Investment 2021). However, after a period of implementation, the *Implementation Roadmap for Vietnam's Sustainable Development Goals Until 2030*, as outlined in Decision 681/QĐ-TTg, has encountered some issues that require a review and update of the implementation roadmap for SDGs by 2025 and 2030. This is due to the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 on Vietnam's progress towards achieving its SDGs. In addition, the socio-economic development strategies for the period of 2021-2030 and the socio-economic development plan for the period of 2021-2025, as stated in Resolution 16/2021/QH15, have updated many objectives for the 2021-2030 period. Many strategies, action plans, programs, and agencies have also been adjusted and updated in relation to SDGs that need to be achieved by 2025 and 2030. The fourth industrial revolution and the progress of science and technology have also had significant impacts on the implementation of SDGs.

Most recently, on July 14, 2023, the Prime Minister signed Decision No. 841/QĐ-TTg (replacing Decision No. 681/QĐ-TTg dated June 4 2019) on promulgating the *Implementation Roadmap for Vietnam's Sustainable Development Goals Until 2030*.

2.2. The Current Situation of SDGs Implementation in Vietnam and Its Progress by Province/Region

2.2.1. The Current Situation of SDGs Implementation in Vietnam.

Quantitative research about the progress towards achieving SDGs is necessary to monitor global efforts towards sustainable development

and monitor policy development and implementation (Xu Z. *et al.* 2020). Sustainable Development Indicators (SDIs) have 5 main functions: (1) leading to better decisions and more effective actions; (2) allowing the integration of natural and social scientific knowledge in decision-making; (3) measuring and adjusting progress towards SDGs; (4) providing early warnings about economic, social, and environmental issues; and (5) conveying ideas, thoughts, and values (UNCSD 2007). To fulfill these important functions, the UN has gathered countries and international organizations to develop and use SDIs in the 21s Agenda (1992). In response to this call, many organizations and countries have made efforts to develop SDIs and become effective tools for evaluating progress towards sustainable development (Peterson 1997). To overcome the limitations of the Millennium Development Goals Index (MDGI), the Sustainable Development Goals Index (SDGI) was designed to replace the MDGI in 2015. They include 232 indicators to monitor and evaluate the implementation of 17 overall goals and 169 specific targets by 2030 (UNSC 2017).

To support ministries, departments, and localities in quantifying and monitoring, evaluating SDGs, the Ministry of Planning and Investment has issued *Guidelines for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of SDGs in Vietnam by 2030* (Decision No. 468/QĐ-BKHĐT dated March 26, 2020). Accordingly, SDGs are monitored and evaluated through 158 sustainable development indicators (issued in Circular No. 03/2019/TT-BKHĐT) and evaluated for achievement levels by 2020, 2025, and 2030 based on the roadmap for implementing SDGs in Vietnam by 2030 (issued in Decision No. 681/QĐ-TTg). However, the current difficulty in monitoring and evaluating the progress of implementing

SDGs is the lack of input data according to Circular No. 03/2019/TT-BKHDT (Ministry of Planning and Investment 2021).

Previously, to develop the draft “National Action Plan to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,” *The Synthesis report* of the Ministry of Planning and Investment (2016) researched and reviewed 17 global SDGs and 169 specific targets of the UN’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to analyze the current situation and identify suitable and feasible targets for Vietnam, laying the foundation for nationalizing global SDGs. In 2018, Vietnam was one of 47 countries to voluntarily participate in the *Voluntary National Review* (VNR) report at the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (Ministry of Planning and Investment 2018). This report assessed Vietnam’s progress towards achieving the 17 SDGs, shared the country’s difficulties, challenges, and lessons learned with other countries around the world. The implementation of the VNR report affirmed Vietnam’s commitment to implementing the 2030 Agenda, particularly in monitoring, evaluating, and reporting on the progress of SDGs.

The progress of Vietnam’s implementation of the SDGs during the 5-year period of 2016-2020 and the forecasted possibility of achieving the goals by 2030 were evaluated in the *National Report of 2020* by the Ministry of Planning and Investment (2021). The report analyzed and evaluated based on statistical indicators of sustainable development in Vietnam (under Circular No. 03/2019/TT-BKHDT dated January 22, 2019, by the Ministry of Planning and Investment) and the Roadmap for Sustainable Development Goals of Vietnam until 2030 (according to Decision No. 681/QĐ-TTg dated June 4, 2019 by the Prime Minister). The data used for analysis mainly between 2015-2019, before the global

COVID-19 pandemic. However, the report also analyzed the direct and immediate impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the results of achieving some SDGs. The report shows Vietnam's progress in implementing SDGs over the past 5 years (2016-2020). According to the report's evaluation of Vietnam's ability to achieve the SDGs by 2030, Vietnam can achieve 5 out of 17 SDGs by 2030, namely SDG1 on poverty eradication, SDG2 on hunger eradication, SDG4 on quality education, SDG13 on climate action, and SDG17 on global partnerships. However, in addition, 2 SDGs will be very difficult to achieve by 2030 (including SDG12 on sustainable production and consumption, and SDG14 on the conservation and sustainable use of oceans, seas, and marine resources), and there are up to 10 remaining SDGs that will face challenges and difficulties in achieving by 2030. Out of 115 specific targets, 54 specific targets will be achieved (accounting for nearly 47%), but there are still 48 specific targets (accounting for 41.7%) that will face challenges and difficulties, and 13 specific targets (accounting for 11.3%) that will be very difficult to achieve by 2030 (Ministry of Planning and Investment 2021).

Vietnam's progress in implementing the SDGs is also reflected in the UN's *2020 Sustainable Development Report*. Accordingly, on the global scale, Vietnam's ranking in terms of SDG implementation results has continued to increase in the 2016-2020 period. In 2020, Vietnam scored 73.8 points, ranking 49th out of 166 countries in the SDG index, up 5 places from 2019 and 19 places from 2017 (Sachs *et al.* 2020). However, in the recent 2022 UN Sustainable Development Report, Vietnam still scored 72.8 points, like 2021, but fell to 55th out of 163 countries in the SDG index, down 4 places from the previous year (Sachs *et*

al. 2022). The main reason for the decrease in ranking is due to changes in calculation methods and additional indicators that have reduced Vietnam's score but increased the scores of other countries.

2.2.2. Progress in Implementing SDGs by Province

Along with the development of the SDI, MDGI, and the SDGI, some SDI sets in Vietnam have been designed by adjusting indicators to fit national/local conditions, and the Vietnam Sustainable Development Goals Index (VSDGI) has been constructed. Reviewing the SDIs and MDGI/SDGIs in Vietnam, a study by Tri Ngo Dang *et al.* (2018) showed that SDIs and MDGI/SDGIs are used for two different purposes and do not conflict with each other. They can complement each other if their relationship and national/territorial characteristics are considered in joint development.

In Vietnam, the government has set national SDGs, however, measuring and collecting data at the province level is a significant challenge for organizations and local authorities. The global trend shows that focusing on national sustainable development requires the efforts of all provinces. Therefore, many countries have developed State-level Sustainable Development Index (SSDI) for provinces and territories such as the United States, Italy, Uruguay, and Bolivia. Thus, to quickly improve sustainable development at the local and national level in Vietnam, there is an urgent need to build a Provincial-level Sustainable Development Index (PSDI) to address the challenges mentioned above. Starting in 2021, the PSDI in Vietnam has been developed to assess the level of sustainable development of each province according to component indicators. This is to indicate the level of sustainable development, the

achievements, and the existing limitations of each province in the assessed year.

Continuing the achievements from 2021 (PSDI 2020), in 2022, the research team of the Academy of Policy and Development (Ministry of Planning and Investment) along with the Institute for Social Economic and Sustainable Research (ISESR) built the *Provincial Sustainable Development Index 2021* (PSDI 2021) with changes and improvements in methodology and data; comprehensively assessing the sustainable development process of provinces and cities in Vietnam. Moreover, besides ranking provinces based on the results of implementing SDGs, PSDI 2021 also analyzes the correlation between sustainable development and some dominant economic and social indicators, assesses the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on sustainable development in Vietnam, as well as identifies the advantages, difficulties and challenges in the process of implementing sustainable development in Vietnam in the next period. PSDI 2021 uses statistical data from reliable sources, verified by Government agencies to calculate the Provincial Sustainable Development Index between provinces on a scale of 100. The PSDI 2021 index consists of 14 component indexes equivalent to 14 SDGs of the country (including SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17), equivalent to 96 criteria. The results show that: i) The average score of 63 provinces/cities nationwide in 2021 reached 51.38 points, so provinces need to continue to actively implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Vietnam's Sustainable Development Strategy; ii) The group of provinces/cities that have performed well in SDGs includes 13 provinces, with the participation of many large provinces and cities. At the bottom of the ranking are mainly provinces

in the northern mountainous region, Central Highlands and Mekong River Delta, with common characteristics of limitations in economic development and ensuring social welfare; iii) The results of ranking the PSDI index by region show a clear grouping among the 6 economic-social regions nationwide, in which the Red River Delta region has the highest score (60.59 points) and the Central Highlands region has the lowest score (43.27 points); iv) The correlation between PSDI scores and some economic-social indicators is pointed out (Pham My Hang Phuong and Nguyen Duy Tung (Ed.) 2022).

2.3. The SDGs Promotion Strategies of Southeast Asia Countries

2.3.1. Overview of SDGs in ASEAN

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has made a commitment to achieving the SDGs by 2030. The ASEAN Vision 2025 and the ASEAN Community Blueprints provide a regional framework for the implementation of the SDGs in ASEAN. The Community Blueprints include concrete steps to accomplish the SDGs in areas including poverty reduction, health and well-being, and environmental sustainability. The Vision 2025 recognizes sustainable development as a major pillar of the ASEAN Community. Moreover, ASEAN has formed several collaborations and initiatives to advance the SDGs. These partnerships encourage collaboration between the government, civil society, and private sector in ASEAN to promote sustainable development and attain the SDGs. For instance, the ASEAN Centre for Sustainable Development Research and Debate and the ASEAN

CSR Network provide platforms for sustainable development information sharing and collaboration. The region's strong commitment is one of the strengths of SDGs promotion initiatives in ASEAN.

Despite the progress made, ASEAN still faces obstacles in reaching the SDGs. Inadequate financing for sustainable development, poor implementation capacity at the national and local levels, and a lack of awareness and comprehension of the SDGs among key stakeholders are examples of these obstacles. The COVID-19 epidemic has also emphasized the need for a greater focus on health, education, and social protection in ASEAN, which are crucial to reaching the SDGs.

Mardianti (2020) explores the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on sustainable development in Southeast Asia in her paper titled "The Effect of COVID-19 Pandemic on Sustainable Development in Southeast Asia." The author describes how the pandemic has impeded progress toward the SDGs in the region, specifically in the areas of poverty reduction, education, and healthcare. Additionally, the paper argues that the pandemic has exacerbated economic inequality, with underprivileged populations being disproportionately affected. The author argues that the epidemic has also produced opportunities for good change, such as a greater understanding of the necessity of sustainable development and the need for global cooperation to address global concerns. In its conclusion, the article emphasizes the need for a holistic and inclusive approach to sustainable development in the post-pandemic era.

In 2020, the United Nations Development Program issued a policy brief emphasizing the need for ASEAN member states to prioritize the SDGs in their COVID-19 response and recovery activities (UN

2020). The report recommended that ASEAN member states implement an SDG-centered strategy to pandemic response and recovery, highlighting the significance of health, education, social protection, and economic sustainability.

Elder M. and Ellis G. (2022) in “ASEAN countries’ environmental policies for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)” has studied ASEAN countries submitted their environment-related policies for the SDGs in their VNRs, and a dataset of their environmental policies was compiled. This is a vital first step for examining the causes of insufficient progress on the environmental dimension of the SDGs, as policies are the most important means of implementation. Prior studies of SDG development and VNRs addressed a variety of issues, including performance levels, indicators, statistics, governance, and VNR preparation procedures, but there has been surprisingly little discussion of countries’ actual policy initiatives. The environmental components of the SDGs are commonly regarded as insufficient, notably in Asia. This analysis demonstrated that insufficient progress on the environmental aspect of the SDGs is neither attributable to a lack of environmental policies or a lower prioritization of environmental policies for SDG targets. About 600 tangible environment-related policies were reported by ASEAN nations in their VNRs, dispersed extensively throughout many SDGs and accounting for around 40 percent of their total reported SDG-related policies. There was no correlation between the number of environmental policies and the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), GDP per capita, or VNR date. Not only minor projects or programs, but even national action plans, strategies, legislation, and regulations appeared to be major policies. Nonetheless, certain significant existing environmental policies, such as

those regarding air pollution, were typically omitted from VNRs. This study's dataset on environmental policy provides the required foundation for future research on policy implementation and efficacy, particularly for identifying ASEAN countries' environmental policies in specific sectors such as climate, energy, and water. Also, this will facilitate comparison analysis.

Overall, ASEAN member countries have made progress in promoting the SDGs, but there are still challenges to achieving them. Key proposals for fostering sustainable development and achieving SDGs in ASEAN include strengthening institutional capacity, developing public-private partnerships, and prioritizing the SDGs in pandemic response and recovery efforts.

2.3.2. Strategies and Policy Efforts to Promote the SDGs in Selected Southeast Asian Countries

2.3.2.1 Myanmar

UNDP has released a report: “COVID-19, coup d'état and poverty: compounding negative shocks and their impact on human development in Myanmar” (UNDP 2021a), which represents that millions of people in Myanmar had remained vulnerable and at risk of falling into poverty in the face of negative shocks, which could rollback progress and cause setbacks in achieving the SDGs. Myanmar has achieved significant progress in poverty reduction over the past 10 years. However, UNDP has pointed out that even before the COVID-19 pandemic, millions of people in this country were still vulnerable and at risk of falling into poverty when faced with negative shocks, which could undermine the achievement of SDGs. The coup also has further compounded the

effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, reduced incomes and increasing poverty rates across the country. Without swift action on economic, social, political, and human rights protection policies, these scenarios will put Myanmar's efforts to achieve the SDGs by 2030 out of reach. It is evident that humanitarian, democratization, and human rights crisis always require international support to protect the well-being of the people of Myanmar. The UNDP report "Impact of the twin crises on human welfare in Myanmar" (UNDP 2021b) also strengthen the insight that poverty headcount is likely to return to the levels not seen since 2005, effectively erasing the benefits of the pre-COVID-19 economic growth.

The 2022 UNDP report: "Regressing Gender Equality in Myanmar: Women Living under the Pandemic and Military Rule" (UNDP 2022a) reveals a dire situation for women in Myanmar. Many are experiencing fear of leaving their homes and are struggling to maintain a steady income. The report shows that progress made in areas such as peace, political and economic rights is rapidly being eroded. Based on a survey of 2,200 women conducted in November 2021, this joint report by UNDP and UN Women analyzes the gendered social and economic impacts of the pandemic and the coup and serves as a foundation for designing interventions that are sensitive to gender issues.

2.3.2.2. Lao PDR

It is believed that the Government of Lao PDR is strongly committed to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the achievement of the SDGs. Many agree that the Lao PDR was also among the first countries to localize the SDGs and integrate them

into its national planning framework. To achieve these Goals, the Lao PDR is working closely with the United Nations Development System and other development partners to ensure development cooperation and support is well aligned with national priorities and that partnerships accelerate progress towards the 2030 Agenda. The UN in Lao PDR (2015) analyzed to inform discussion between the Government of Lao PDR and UN on the adaptation of the SDGs to Lao PDR. It reviews the SDGs in the context of UN cooperation with the Lao PDR (i.e., not including national programs or the cooperation programs with other development partners). It maps out the links between the newly adopted international goals and indicative country level outcome and programmatic areas. The outcome and programmatic areas are therefore not prescriptive or definitive but meant to serve as the basis for further discussion. The Government of the Lao PDR (2021) indicated achievements and efforts to eradicate poverty and progress in the implementation of SDGs within the framework of the 8th and 9th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSEDP), as well as updated on recent progress of the SDGs implementation in Laos. Multi-stakeholder participations and engagement is the most critical element for moving the 2030 Agenda and SDGs localization forward.

For 18 specific SDGs of Laos, based on post-socialist approach, Supitcha Punya (2022) provided an insight on the development of Lao People's Democratic Republic under the SDGs since 2015 by analyzing how the SDGs have shaped Lao domestic institutions and developed policies. DESA (2021) has analyzed the stronger capacities of Laos to enhance the linkage Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and SDGs implementation through providing a summary of the Belt and Road

Initiative activities under five priorities in recent years and the progress of 18 SDGs implementation in Lao PDR, which provide insight on the potential connection of the Belt and Road Initiative to SDGs, especially in Goal 8: decent work and economic growth and Goal 9: industry, innovation and infrastructure.

Some policies and enabling environment for SDGs implementation in Lao PDR such as: (i) The highest priority accorded to the implementation of the national development plans and the SDGs; (ii) The SDG Roadmap was finalized and approved by the National Steering Committee in 2019; (iii) Assigning SDG Indicators to relevant line ministries and agencies for implementation (SDGi owners) and reporting (SDGr owners); (iv) SDG Advocacy and Communication Work Plan is developed; (v) Formal adoption of 238 SDG indicators was done in 2019. After the first Voluntary National Review of the SDGs prepared in 2018, the Government of Lao PDR officially adopted the 238 SDG indicators (SDGi) during the national SDG Steering Committee meeting in June 2019 where the SDG roadmap was also endorsed and then disseminated to all partners at all levels in 2020.

2.3.2.3. Indonesia

Using a policy review approach, Nurrochmat, Sumaryanto, and Widyastuti (2018) investigated relevant policy documents and reports related to the SDGs in Indonesia. The study identified various policy initiatives and frameworks developed by the Indonesian government to achieve the SDGs, such as the National Medium-Term Development Plan and the National Action Plan for the SDGs. These policy frameworks provided a holistic approach to achieve the SDGs, covering

areas such as poverty reduction, health, education, and environmental sustainability. However, the study also pointed out several challenges hindering the implementation of the SDGs in Indonesia, including insufficient funding, weak institutional capacity, limited public awareness and participation. The authors suggested the need for increased collaboration among stakeholders and more innovative financing mechanisms to support the implementation of the SDGs in Indonesia.

In “Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Indonesia: A Literature Review,” Azizah and Muharram (2020) highlighted several areas where Indonesia has made progress in accomplishing the SDGs, including poverty reduction, gender equality, environmental sustainability, and good governance. The authors also noted that Indonesia still faces several challenges in achieving the SDGs, such as weak governance, corruption, and limited resources. To address these challenges, the authors emphasized the importance of enhancing collaboration and coordination among stakeholders and increasing public participation. They also mentioned the requirement for better policy integration and more investment in SDG-related initiatives. Meanwhile, the research paper by Subramanian, Azwar, and Yip (2020) carried out a thorough analysis of the SDGs in Indonesia. The study uncovered the interlinkages among the SDGs in Indonesia and highlighted the need for an integrated approach to achieving the goals. The authors claimed that progress in one area often depends on progress in other areas, and that addressing the interlinkages among the SDGs is essential for sustainable development in Indonesia. In conclusion, they stressed the importance of enhancing collaboration among stakeholders and increasing public participation to achieve the SDGs in Indonesia.

Rulandari N. (2021) has identified the factors contributing to the effective execution of inclusive education in Indonesia, as well as examines the barriers hindering its implementation. From both national and international studies, the findings reveal that in Indonesia, while inclusive education has achieved considerable success in major urban centers, there remain numerous smaller cities where it has not been as successful due to inadequate infrastructure and insufficient knowledge regarding the inclusive education system. Therefore, it is essential for the government to concentrate not only on the metropolitan areas but also on resolving the difficulties involved in implementing inclusive education in smaller cities, and to gather information on the number of disabled students annually.

More recently, Fitriyani, Wulandari, and Utomo (2022) explored several policies and programs that have been developed to support the implementation of the SDGs in Indonesia. The authors stressed that these policies and programs have contributed to progress in areas such as poverty reduction, access to education and health services, and environmental sustainability. However, the study also highlighted several challenges that Indonesia faces in achieving the SDGs, such as inadequate funding and weak institutional capacity at the local level.

2.4. General Assessment

From the review of the scientific literature, these following conclusions may be made:

2.4.1. Achievements

Firstly, a fairly large body of research on the SDGs has been produced by numerous national and international academics, as well as domestic and foreign institutes employing a wide variety of methodologies and schools of thought, both in theory and practice. This source of knowledge will play a crucial role in developing a solid theoretical foundation and providing hands-on practical experiences to promote the implementation of the SDGs in some nations of Southeast Asia cited in the study.

Secondly, so far, the studies have reached broad consensus on the fundamental terms and evaluation criteria.

Thirdly, through various research papers, scholars have conducted a comprehensive analysis and evaluation of the current state of the SDGs in Vietnam, with a particular focus on the implementation of the SDGs across provinces based on the PSD index. These works shed light on the challenges and limitations faced in achieving the SDGs at both the national and provincial levels and offer actionable recommendations to advance progress towards the 2030 SDG targets.

2.4.2. Research Gaps

Firstly, research conducted by Vietnamese academics to evaluate the present situation of SDGs in Vietnam rely mostly on data collected between 2016 and 2019, prior to the outbreak of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the implementation of the 17 SDGs have not been adequately explored and underscored.

Secondly, there is a dearth of research investigating and quantifying the factors that impact the implementation of the SDGs at the provincial

level. This knowledge gap makes it challenging to evaluate progress towards achieving the SDGs on the sub-national scale and can lead to the elaboration of ineffective SDG implementation plans and policies.

Thirdly, few studies have attempted to give a thorough comparison of the measures taken by Southeast Asian nations to promote the SDGs. While this type of research would provide significant insights for Vietnam's own efforts to implement the SDGs, there is a paucity of published material on the subject at the moment.

Therefore, this study aims to address the aforementioned concerns and contribute to the broader scientific and practical discourse on promoting the implementation of the SDGs in Vietnam – not only at the national but also the provincial levels. By doing so, it is envisaged that this research will bring greater clarity to the subject and provide actionable recommendations for achieving sustainable development in Vietnam.

3. Research Content

In addition to the introduction, conclusion, appendices and references, the report includes the following contents:

Chapter II. Socio-economic Development Plans and SDGs Implementation Strategy in Vietnam. This chapter conducts a comprehensive review of the legislative documents, strategies, and policies that are relevant to the SDGs. The main purpose is to investigate how Vietnam has integrated global SDG initiatives into its Socio-economic Development Plans.

Chapter III. The Status and Progress of SDGs Implementation by Province

in Vietnam. This chapter analyzes and evaluate the current status of Vietnam's SDGs and the government's efforts to implement these goals in practice, drawing on the findings of previously published reports from Ministries and agencies, as well as statistical data from reliable sources that have been verified by government organizations. Furthermore, we develop a model that can pinpoint and quantify the factors that impact the progress of SDGs implementation at the provincial level.

Chapter IV. A Comparative Analysis of SDGs Promotion Strategies in Select Southeast Asian Countries: This chapter focuses on examining the SDG-related strategies, programs, and policies of select Southeast Asian countries to analyze their SDG performance and to identify and explain the key characteristics of their SDG promotion strategies.

Chapter V. Lessons Learned, Recommendations for Vietnam, and Implications for Korea: This chapter draws some lessons learned on implementing the SDGs for Vietnam, from there, gives some recommendations for Vietnam as well as implications for Korea.

4. Methodology

We use a flexible approach for study that includes both qualitative and quantitative methods. The details are as follows:

4.1. Qualitative Research Methods

Desk research method is applied for the study. This method allows research team members to review theoretical studies, review existing studies to build a theoretical framework and preparing the necessary documents and data for the research.

For content analysis and assesment, the comparative, synthetic and systematic methods are used. These methods will help have a more comparative view, better identify the strategies and the status quos of progress towards SDGs in Vietnam and other ASEAN members.

Besides, the field research and in-depth interview methods are also performed. Field trips to locals on purpose of consulting and discussing with the people and officers will help the research team understand more about situations and problems that local actors have to tackle and face with in implementing and planning SDGs at province level. In addition, these methods also possibly support the research team to access local database and raw materials that may not be collected via formal channels of related statistics agencies.

4.2. Quantitative Research Methods

4.2.1. Model

It is commonly agreed that many factors can affect the performance or progress of gaining the SDGs. Conroy and Berke (2004) stated that there are three main factors affecting sustainable development, that include dimensions of planning process, state planning mandates and organizations of local land-use plans. While many show that the progress

of sustainable development would be driven by three determinants consisting of economic development, social participation and environment protection. Adding another dimension, Rosati and Faria (2019) found that the institutional-related factors also play a significant role in achieving the SDGs. It is rational that the performance of environment index can be incorporated in social engagement. Therefore, based on the existing literature, we categorized the determinants of SDG performance into three group: (1) economic development, (2) social engagement, and (3) institutional factors. And we will figure out how these factors affect the performance of SDGs at province level. The empirical specification takes a form as follows:

$$psdi_{it} = \Phi_0 + \Phi_1 E_{it} + \Phi_2 S_{it} + \Phi_3 I_{it} + \Phi_4 X_{it} + \eta_t + \tau_i + \epsilon_{it}$$

where *psid* denotes a log form of the performance of SDGs at province level; *E*, *S*, and *I* that all are formed in logarithm function are in turn the vectors of economic development factors (*gdp* and *per gdp*), social engagement factors (*papi* and *pobi*), and institutional engagement factors (*pci* and *policy*); *X* is a vector of control variables such as income level (*income*); η is the year time-fixed effect, τ is the specific province-fixed effect; and, ϵ is the disturbance term. While *i* and *t* indicate the targeted province and the interested year, respectively.¹⁾

4.2.2. Data

Data for SDGs, we collect it from official sources, including: Annual

1) Detailed model specification and variables are explained in Chapter 3.

statistical yearbooks, annual reports assessing the implementation of SDGs by ministries, branches, and agencies and other reports of relevant sectors of Vietnam and of some Southeast Asian countries; Data from international organizations such as the UN, UNDP, WEF, WB. In addition, we also use research works related to SDGs from international and Vietnamese researchers to execute this report. Data is collected mainly in the period 2015-2022, with data analysis focused on the period 2015 to 2022.

Data for PSDI, we use database from Report on SDGs at province level, Vietnam for a period of two years of 2020 and 2021, so-called PSDI 2020 and PSDI 2021. This project is employed based on cooperation between Ministry of Planning and Investment of Vietnam and UNDP. PSDI is measured based on the methodology proposed used in the Sustainable Development Report by Sachs *et al.* (2018), which have proposed by Lafortune *et al.* (2018). Therefore, data is creditable, reliable, and applicable. Due to the availability of Vietnamese data, PSDI 2020 and 2021 calculated for 14 SDGs only.

Data for economic development, social engagement, and institutional factors are officially collected from various sources.

For economic development, we use value of GDP at province (GRDP) and GRDP per capita as the proxies. Data are retrieved from General Statistics Office of Vietnam (GSO). Missing data is complemented by data from province statistics offices.

For social engagement, as stated by Healey and Shaw (1997), interaction and engagement among authority, citizen, and organizations strongly supported to the success of sustainable development. PAPI and POBI are incorporated the in the model as the proxies of social

engagement.

For institutional engagement, Provincial Competitiveness Index is one of proxied factor that we insert in the model to examine its effect on the performance of SDG at province level. Besides, we will review all of policies and decisions issued at province level associated to all elements of SDGs as another proxy of institutional engagement. Allegedly, the province with more policy related to SDGs tend to perform better SDGs.

We note that we identify each factor of each dimension based on both the existing literature and data variability. All factors used for estimates will be tested and checked appropriateness and consistency.

5. Limitations

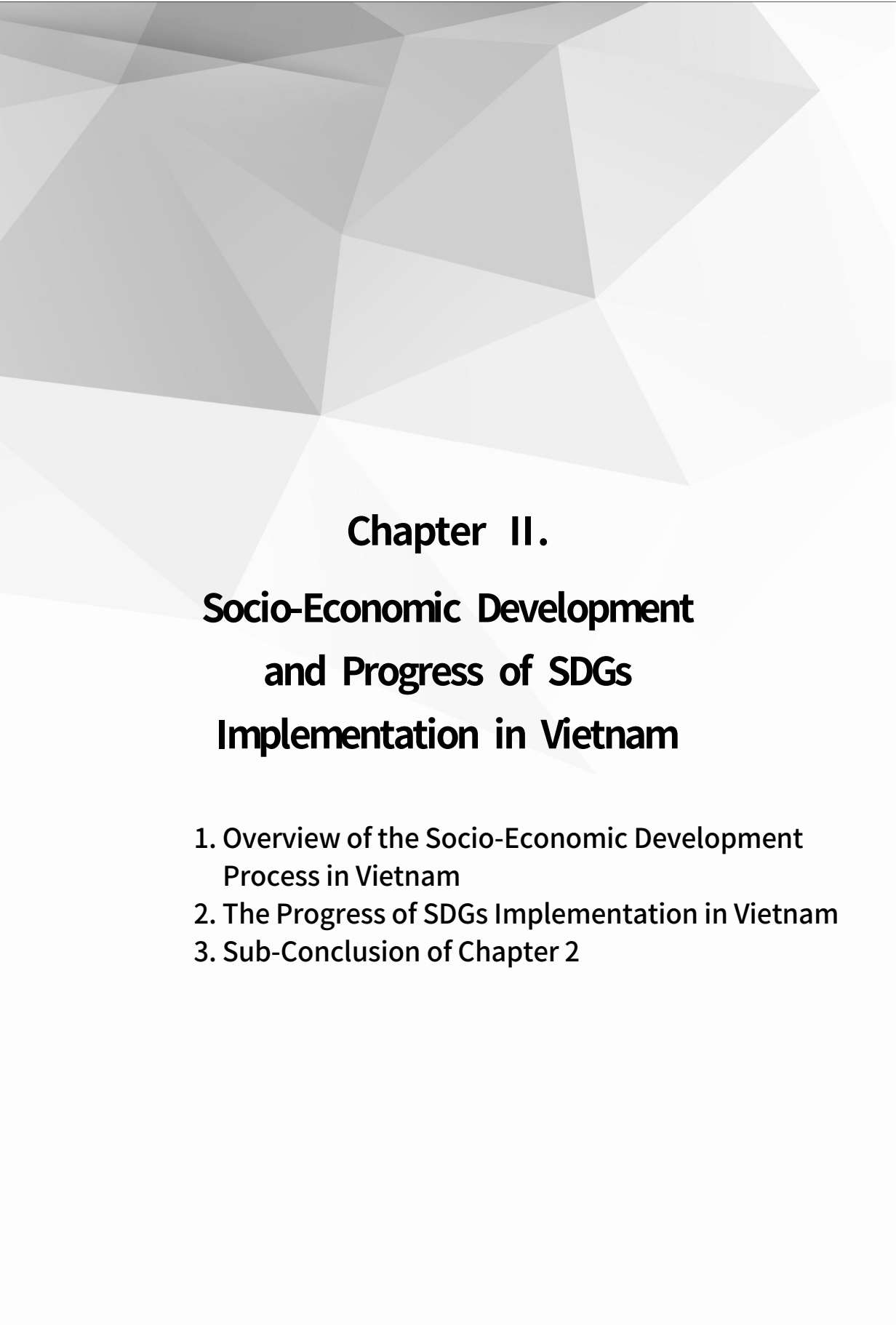
The research has some limitations:

First, due to the validity and possibility of data, the study considers the determinants of provincial SDGs performance for only the two years 2020-2021. As a result, the time-trend effects to some extent are limited. In the future, we may investigate the determinants of provincial SDGs performance in Vietnam for a longer period to purposely have a more all-inclusive presentation.

Second, even though we incorporated the environment index in the social engagement indicator, it is necessary to separate the environment indicator to figure out how the indicator affects the provincial SDGs performance in Vietnam.

Third, we chose Myanmar, Laos, and Indonesia for the case studies

of national SDGs progress in the ASEAN region in comparison with Vietnam. Myanmar was chosen to study as we would like to figure out how a political- and economic-unstable country like Myanmar achieves and implements the SDGs. In the case of Laos, the country is a neighbor of Vietnam and has a close linkage regarding political and economic issues with Vietnam. Somehow, Laos is allegedly a critical example reflecting the image of Vietnam. In comparison, Indonesia and Vietnam have similar development degrees at both economic and societal levels. Besides, Indonesia is one of the successful countries in the ASEAN region in implementing the SDGs, especially the country has a clear and specific SDGs strategy. Thus, studying the cases of Myanmar, Laos, and Indonesia are useful examples for Vietnam. However, it would be better if other countries in ASEAN such as Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, and so on are considered to reap up some lessons for Vietnam. We leave these potential issues for future studies.



Chapter II.

Socio-Economic Development and Progress of SDGs Implementation in Vietnam

- 1. Overview of the Socio-Economic Development Process in Vietnam**
- 2. The Progress of SDGs Implementation in Vietnam**
- 3. Sub-Conclusion of Chapter 2**

1. Overview of the Socio-Economic Development Process in Vietnam

In 1986, facing a severe economic and social crisis, Vietnam initiated a reform process known as “Doi moi.” This marked a significant turning point in the country’s economic and social development. Embracing renewal principles, Vietnam concretized its 5-year economic and social development plans into specific action programs with numerous breakthrough measures. The primary focus was innovating economic thinking, transitioning from a centrally planned economy to a multi-sector commodity economy, operating under market mechanisms, managed by the state, and guided by a socialist orientation.

In the process of renewal, through practical experience, research, and an evolving understanding, Vietnam has progressively refined its perception of the relationship between the economy, society, and the environment. These refinements have been aligned with the country’s developmental stage and international trends, and the policies have been directed towards SDGs. To date, Vietnam has undergone three ten-year Socio-Economic Development Strategies (1991-2000, 2001-2010, 2010-2020) and is currently formulating the Socio-Economic Development Strategy for the 2021-2030 period. While these strategies share common goals, they also reflect specific characteristics and objectives corresponding to the unique context of each period.

After 37 years of implementing the “Doi moi” process (1986-2023) and particularly in the ten years of implementing the Socio-Economic Development Strategy from 2011 to 2020, Vietnam has experienced robust development, achieving significant and comprehensive results.

Economic growth has been coupled with social welfare assurance and a focus on environmental protection. Social welfare policies serve as both objectives and drivers for sustainable development.

The practical development of the economy and society indicates that, alongside the effort to promote rapid economic development to catch up with global counterparts, Vietnam needs to focus on sustainable development to ensure achieving goals encompassing the economic, social, and environmental domains. Therefore, a prominent and consistent perspective in the *Socio-Economic Development Strategy for 2011–2020* is the pursuit of fast and sustainable development. This involves economic growth harmonized with cultural development, the realization of social progress and justice, continuous improvement of people's quality of life, emphasis on environmental protection and enhancement, and proactive responses to climate change. The strategy emphasizes three strategic breakthroughs and critical directions in economic and social development, restructuring the economy linked with innovating the growth model, and enhancing the efficiency of state management across various sectors.

1.1. Outstanding Achievements in Socio-economic Development in Vietnam

High economic growth. After the initial period of Doi Moi reform (1986-1990), the average annual GDP growth rate was only 4.4%, but GDP growth in the period 1991-2000 increased sharply to 7.56%, in the period 2001-2010 was 7.26% (Communist Party of Vietnam 2020). Despite facing challenges such as the global economic recession in

2011-2012 and the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, Vietnam has maintained a relatively rapid economic growth rate (Figure 2.1). In the period 2011-2020, the annual GDP growth rate was 5.9%, helping the GDP scale to increase 2.4 times, from 116 billion USD in 2010 to 268.4 billion USD in 2020, the average GDP per capita also increased correspondingly from 1,331 USD to about 2,750 USD (Nguyen Xuan Phuc 2020).



The quality of economic growth has improved. Extensive growth gradually shifted to depth growth, reflected in the contribution of total factor productivity to economic growth from an average of 33.6% in the period 2011- 2015 to about 41.1% in the period 2016-2020, in the period 2011-2020, 37.5%, exceeding the strategic target of 35% (Table 2.1). The average labor productivity growth rate in 2011 - 2015 was 4.3%/year, and in 2016 - 2020 is 5.8%/year. The efficiency of the incremental

capital output ratio (ICOR) has been increased; the incremental capital output ratio decreased from 6.3 in 2011 - 2015 to about 6.1 in 2016-2019 (Bui 2021). The economic structure has had a positive transformation with the trend of reducing the proportion of agriculture, forestry, and fishery sectors, increasing the proportion of industry, construction, and service sectors. The share of the agricultural sector in GDP decreased from 18.9% in 2010 to 14.8% in 2020, while the industrial, construction, and service sectors increased from 81.1% to 84.8%. The internal structure of the industry has shifted positively; the proportion of the mining industry has decreased from 9.5% of GDP to 5.5% (Nguyen Xuan Phuc 2020).

Table 2.1. Proportion of Contribution of Total Factor Productivity, Capital, and Labor to GDP Growth in Vietnam

(Unit: %)

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Contribution of Total Factor Productivity	21.5	19.1	30.3	39.7	53.3	40.7	45.5	45.2	42.7	41.5
Contribution of Capital	52.9	56.6	52.8	49.4	45.6	50.9	47.9	46.2	49.5	46.5
Contribution of Labor	25.6	24.3	16.9	10.9	1.1	8.5	6.6	8.6	7.8	12.0

Source: Compiled from GSO of Vietnam.

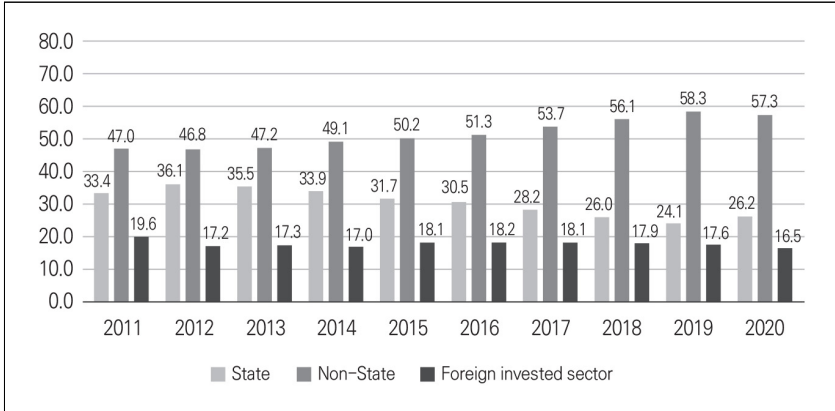
Macroeconomic stability is more solid. The average consumer price index (CPI) in 2016-2020 was 3.15%, lower than 7.56% in 2011-2015. Core inflation decreased significantly from 13.6% in 2011 to about 2.5% in 2020. Development investment capital in the 2011-2020 period reached about 682 billion USD, an average increase of 10.6%/year, of which

state budget capital and government bonds account for 20.8%, foreign direct investment (FDI) accounts for 22.8% (Figure 2.2) (General Statistics Office of Vietnam 2021).

In 2016-2020, export growth averaged 11.7%/year, import growth averaged 9.6% (Do 2021). The structure of export goods continues to shift in a positive direction, increasing exports of processed and manufactured products and reducing raw exports. The proportion of export turnover of processed and manufactured industrial goods rose from 61.2% in 2011 to 89.0% in 2020. Exports of the FDI sector account for an increasingly large proportion of Vietnam's total export turnover. In 2020, this proportion was 72.3% (General Statistics Office of Vietnam 2021). Imports focus mainly on goods for production, export, and domestic investment projects. The trade balance improved significantly, moving from a deficit of 12.6 billion USD in 2010 to a balance and surplus in the final years of 2011-2020. The international balance of payments was in surplus, and foreign exchange reserves increased from 12.4 billion USD in 2010 to 28 billion USD in 2015, reaching over 80 billion USD by the end of 2020. The trade balance has improved significantly, moving from a deficit of 12.6 billion USD in 2010 to a state of balance and surplus in the final years of the strategy. The international balance of payments was in surplus, and foreign exchange reserves increased from 12.4 billion USD in 2010 to 28 billion USD in 2015, reaching over 80 billion USD by the end of 2020 (Communist Party of Vietnam 2020).

Figure 2.2. Development Investment Capital Structure, 2011-2020

(Unit: %)



Source: General Statistics Office of Vietnam.

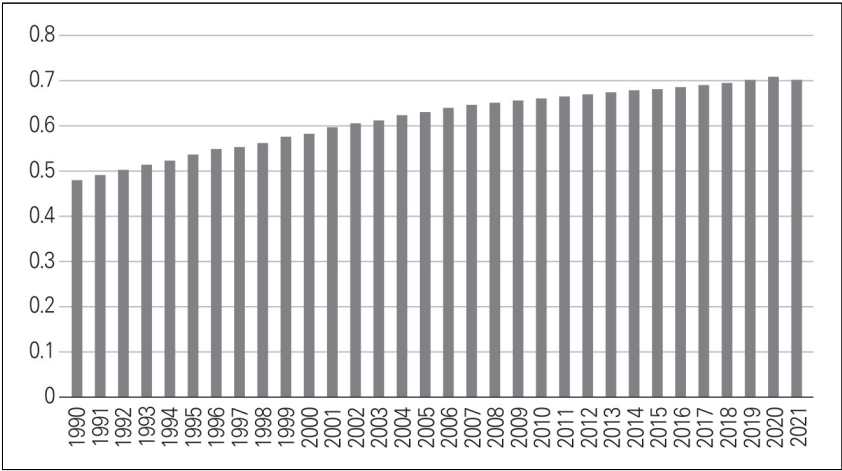
Resource management, environmental protection, climate change adaptation, and natural disaster prevention are increasingly receiving attention. Natural resources are increasingly tightly managed, exploited, and used more effectively, especially land and minerals. The capacity and quality of weather forecasts and natural disaster warnings are increasingly improved. They are demonstrated by prioritizing financial allocation from the state budget, mobilizing social resources, and focusing on implementing many solutions to prevent and respond to natural disasters and climate change. Forest cover increases slightly from 41.65% in 2018 to 42.02% in 2022. The proportion of establishments causing severe environmental pollution that are treated from 48.1% in 2016 to 85.5% in 2021 (Socialist Republic of Vietnam 2023).

Poverty has been reduced, and the human development index has continuously improved. Poverty reduction is one of the most outstanding achievements

in Vietnam's socio-economic development. The national poverty rate decreased rapidly, from 14.2% in 2010 to 4.25% in 2015 (according to the poverty line for 2011-2015) and from 9.2% in 2016 to below 4.3% by 2022 (according to the World Bank's multidimensional poverty standards). The number of people participating and benefiting from social, health, and voluntary insurance is constantly increasing. The new rural construction program was completed nearly two years ahead of schedule compared to the set strategic goal. The number of communes meeting new rural standards has increased from 17.2% in 2015 to 62.2% in 2020 and 73.06% in 2022 (Socialist Republic of Vietnam 2023). Thanks to this program, the economic, cultural, and social life in many rural areas has been significantly and substantially improved (Bui 2021). The urbanization rate increased from 30.5% to nearly 40% in 2020, exceeding the set target (Nguyen 2020).

Workforce development is focused on the fact that the proportion of workers undergoing technical and professional training with degrees and certificates increased from 20.9% in 2016 to 24.1% in 2020 (General Statistics Office of Vietnam 2021). Vietnam's Human Development Index (HDI) has increased from 0.482 in 1990 to 0.663 in 2010 and 0.703 in 2019 (Figure 2.3), and since 2019 Vietnam's Human Development Index has moved from the medium level group to the high-level group.

Figure 2.3. Human Development Index (HDI) in Vietnam (1990-2021)



Source: UNDP (2023), <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/human-development-index#/indicies/HDI> (accessed on December 26, 2023).

1.2. Constraints in Socio-Economic Development in Vietnam

Despite many achievements in socio-economic development, Vietnam’s socio-economic development could be more sustainable. The fundamental factors for rapid and sustainable economic growth have been basically established but still need more stability. Economic growth depends heavily on investment capital and labor-intensive activities, and growth drivers rely heavily on foreign-invested sectors. Competitiveness at the primary level remains at an average level globally, especially in essential criteria for sustainable development in the future. Export, trade, and investment depend largely on enterprises in the FDI sector, accounting for 70% of the country’s total export turnover. FDI accounts for over 50% of industrial output value. Economic restructuring is widely

implemented in all fields and levels but not uniformly. Mobilizing resources to meet demand in the coming years will face many challenges, especially in the context of recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic.

The country's multidimensional poverty rate has decreased sharply, but significant disparities still exist between regions, and poverty reduction results are not truly sustainable. The gap between rich and poor between areas and population groups has not been narrowed. The urbanization process continues to take place rapidly, creating great pressure on the need for infrastructure development and environmental pollution treatment. Managing, exploiting, and using water, natural resources, and land could be more effective. Current technology must meet the requirements for managing and treating waste and environmental pollution. Awareness of environmental management and protection in many places is not high. Meanwhile, natural disasters and climate change are becoming increasingly rapid, fierce, and unpredictable, affecting production and people's lives.

2. The Progress of SDGs Implementation in Vietnam

2.1. Sustainable Development

With massive economic development, rapid industrialization and modernization, and globalization taking place on a large scale around the world, people have been facing many economic, social, environmental, and climate problems. To ensure a safer and more

prosperous future, humanity has only one path: sustainable development. This view has received great public support, and its aspects have been widely discussed at the international level.

The term “sustainable development” first appeared in 1980 in *World Conservation Strategy*, published by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN). This concept was popularized in 1987 in the *Our Common Future Report* of the World Commission on Environment and Development - WCED (now the Brundtland Commission). This report clearly states: “Humanity has the ability to make development sustainable to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (UN-WCED 1987).

Then, in 1992, in Rio de Janeiro, delegates to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development adopted Agenda 21 on Sustainable Development, reaffirmed this concept, and sent a clear message to all member states about the urgency of promoting economic harmony, social development, and environmental protection. Based on summarizing and re-evaluating ten years of implementing Agenda 21 on global sustainable development, in September 2002, the World Summit on Sustainable Development was held in Johannesburg (South Africa). The conference discussed, supplemented, and completed Agenda 21 and introduced a complete and comprehensive concept: Sustainable development is a development process that combines closely, reasonably, and harmoniously between economic development with social development and environmental protection to meet the needs of human life in the present, but without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Thus, sustainable development can be understood as a close, reasonable, and harmonious combination of economic development, social development, and environmental protection. It has become an urgent need and an inevitable trend in the global development process.

Sustainable development is a consistent policy of the Vietnamese Government. It has been integrated and concretized into national, ministerial, sectoral, and local development strategies, plans, and policies. Vietnam's first official document mentioning the theme of sustainable development was *The National Plan on Environment and Sustainable Development*, issued on June 12, 1991. The Plan aims to create an action framework for environmental planning and management at the national, local, and sectoral levels, thereby identifying specific activities for environmental protection and sustainable development in the period 1991-2000. In particular, the viewpoint on sustainable development was first affirmed on June 25, 1998, in the Directive on strengthening environmental protection in the period of industrialization and modernization of the country. Vietnam has also issued policy institutions to promote sustainable development, such as *Vietnam's Agenda 21* (2004), *Vietnam Sustainable Development Strategy for the period 2011-2020* (2012), and the *National Strategy on Green Growth* (2012).

2.2. Sustainable Development Goals

Sustainable development is an urgent requirement for every country in the world. On September 25, 2015, at the 21st United Nations Summit held in New York (USA), all 193 member states of the United Nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda).

The 2030 Agenda includes four parts: i) Vision to 2030 and principles; ii) Results framework; iii) Global partnerships and implementation tools; iv) Monitoring, evaluation, and oversight. In particular, the focus of the 2030 Agenda is the results framework with 17 SDGs determined by 169 specific targets and 232 sustainable development indicators (Figure 2.4).



Sources: UN (2015).

The SDGs are a continuation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). However, unlike the MDGs, which only focus on addressing the challenges of developing countries, the SDGs aim to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that everyone in every country enjoys peace and prosperity by 2030. These SDGs take an integrated approach, cannot be divided, and balance all three aspects of sustainable development, which are economic growth, social development, and environmental protection. The SDGs are based on six themes, including dignity, people, planet, partnership, justice, and prosperity. The SDGs

are more comprehensive than the MDGs. It not only includes social development but also addresses issues such as climate change, economic inequality, innovation, sustainable consumption, peace, justice, etc. These goals are closely connected to each other, and the successful implementation of one can solve problems related to the remaining goals. The SDGs will drive action until 2030 based on the 5“P” factors, including People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnership (UN 2015).

The UN calls on all developed and developing countries and all stakeholders working in collaborative partnerships to jointly implement the 2030 Agenda. Based on the 17 SDGs, UN member countries have all developed specific programs and action plans to realize SDGs suitable to the conditions and circumstances of each country.

2.3. Implementing the SDGs in Vietnam

2.3.1. Nationalizing SDGs in Vietnam

In 2015, at the United Nations Summit, Vietnam committed to focusing all necessary resources, and mobilizing all ministries, sectors, localities, organizations, communities and people to implement the 2030 Agenda. Implementing the international commitment stemming from the country's internal needs, on May 10, 2017, the Government of Vietnam issued Decision 622/QĐ-TTg on *the National Action Plan to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (NAP 2030). Based on successful lessons in implementing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Vietnam has implemented the SDGs through nationalizing the 2030 Agenda into NAP 2030. Vietnam is one of six countries in the world assessed to have completed some of the MDGs

ahead of schedule by the UN, especially in the fields of poverty reduction, health, and education. The goal of NAP 2030 is to maintain sustainable economic growth coupled with implementing progress, social justice and protecting the ecological environment, effectively managing and using resources, proactively responding to climate change; ensuring that all people can develop their full potential, participate and enjoy equality of development achievement; building a Vietnamese society that is peaceful, prosperous, inclusive, democratic, fair, civilized and sustainable. Accordingly, the NAP 2030 sets the task of “Integrating SDGs during the formulation of annual socio-economic development plans of the country, strategies, policies, master plans of ministries, sectors, localities, agencies. By 2020, Viet Nam’s SDGs have been fully mainstreamed into the Socio-Economic Development Strategy for the 2021-2030 period, the Socio-Economic Development Plan for the 2021-2025 period and sectoral, local development master plans for the 2021-2030 period” (Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam 2017a).

In NAP 2030, 17 general goals and 169 specific targets of the 2030 Agenda have been nationalized into 17 general goals and 115 specific targets of Vietnam, appropriate to Vietnam’s conditions and development context. Vietnam’s 115 specific targets reflect 150/169 global particular targets that are consistent with Vietnam’s development conditions and priorities. Most of the Vietnam Sustainable Development Goals (VSDGs) reflect the global SDG goals, however there are differences in some specific targets or indicators (Table 2.2).

Table 2.2. Similarities and Differences between VSDGs and SDGs

Global Goals	VSDGs	Similarities	Differences
SDG 1	End poverty in all its forms everywhere	Vietnam will be likely to meet SDG 1 on time, with some specific targets met ahead of schedule.	<p>Vietnam only targets poverty reduction for poor households while the UN aims to reduce poverty in all households.</p> <p>Vietnam has not integrated specific poverty reduction objectives for gender, vulnerable groups, children and geographical location.</p>
SDG 2	End hunger, ensure food security, improve nutrition and promote sustainable agricultural development	National objectives that have been reflected in national policies are quite similar to the SDG 2 targets.	The Global Goals integrate gender, vulnerable groups, and children into this goal but the VSDG targets are more general.
SDG 3	Ensure a healthy life and promote well-being for all at all ages	National and international targets are quite similar. Since 2015, Vietnam has achieved some specific objectives of SDG 3 set by the UN, ex: goals 3.1 and 3.2.	Vietnam has targets for all SDGs but needs more specific indicators for some of these, such as SDG targets 3.5, 3.9.
SDG 4	Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	National and international targets are quite similar	Vietnam's education plans still need to focus on inclusive access for all clearly.
SDG 5	Achieve gender equality; empower and create enabling opportunities for women and girls	National and international targets are quite similar.	<p>Some indicators have not yet been adapted for the local context.</p> <p>Localized indicators for SDG targets 5.1, 5.2, 5.4, 5.a, 5.b, and 5. c should be considered.</p>

Table 2.2. Continued

Global Goals	VSDGs	Similarities	Differences
SDG 6	Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	National and international targets are quite similar.	The National plan does not integrate inclusive development elements into water related targets.
SDG 7	Ensure access to sustainable, reliable and affordable energy for all	National and international targets are quite similar and capable of achieving the goal	VSDG 7 has not yet collected data on the energy intensity of economic development (VSDG target 7.3). Currently, data is not available for monitoring targets 7.a & 7.b.
SDG 8	Ensure sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all	SDG 8 is expressed in government plans at many levels. However, implementation is currently weak in general, and greater effort will be required to match expected outcomes.	Lack of specific indicators for measuring inclusive development.
SDG 9	Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation	National and international targets are compatible, but will require change locally to be achieved.	Lack of specific targets for inclusive development. Vietnamese policies do not yet address the sustainability of existing infrastructure.
SDG 10	Reduce social inequalities	National and international targets are compatible and achievable.	Vietnam has not yet provided data to evaluate this goal. Data on financial inclusion and the proportion of the population who have experienced discrimination still need to be systematically collected.

Table 2.2. Continued

Global Goals	VSDGs	Similarities	Differences
SDG 11	Promote sustainable, resilient urban and rural development; ensure safe living and working environments; ensure reasonable distribution of population and workforce by region	National and international targets are compatible but will require subnational efforts to achieve them.	Data on some aspects of these goals, such as the size of informal settlements in urban areas and the quality of housing, have not yet been collected. This is also true for indicators related to inclusive public transport and participation in decision-making about urban planning.
SDG 12	Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	Vietnam issued the National Action Plan for Sustainable Production and Consumption until 2020 with a vision to 2030 (2016)	Sustainable production is more of a focus in Vietnam than sustainable consumption. Low social awareness and a lack of technical and financial support for these issues exist.
SDG 13	Respond in a timely and effective manner to climate change and natural disasters	Vietnam is a country significantly affected by climate change and natural disasters. Many national policies and strategies are in place to respond to these challenges.	“Tolerance” to climate change is understood at a basic level in Vietnam but is not sophisticatedly measured to monitor VSDG indicators. A unified process for disaster risk response still needs to be improved, and institutional capacity for this currently needs to be stronger.
SDG 14	Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, the sea, and marine resources for sustainable development	Most of the specific objectives of Goal 14 (14.1, 14.2, 14.4, 14.5, 14.6, 12a, 14b) are included in Vietnam’s national policies.	SDG target 14.3 on ocean acidification is a new focus for Vietnam that needs attention. Marine Protected Areas in the country also required attention.

Table 2.2. Continued

Global Goals	VSDGs	Similarities	Differences
SDG 15	Protect and sustainably develop forests; conserve biodiversity, develop ecosystem services; combat desertification; prevent the degradation of and rehabilitate land resources	Vietnam has paid attention to biodiversity conservation , especially for forest ecosystems. SDG targets 15.1 – 15.9 and 15a – 15c generally align with current Vietnamese policies.	Vietnam's focus on forest ecosystems is inconsistent with efforts to protect aquatic, marine, coastal, or desert environments. Vietnam needs to include some of the data required for effective monitoring.
SDG 16	Promote a peaceful, equitable and equal society for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels	The targets for SDG 16 have been well reflected in Vietnamese policies, especially the constitution.	Some indicators proposed by the UN are not easy to collect in Vietnam, such as the proportion of victims of violence, crime reporting rates, illicit financial flows and corruption, and the distribution of small arms.
SDG 17	Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development	Vietnam has promoted multilateral trading systems; and strengthened global partnerships with the country relatively well. Areas of focus include improved North–South, and South–South cooperation; greater cooperation on international cooperation on science and innovation, increased export market share, and the promotion of public–private partnerships for national infrastructure.	Vietnam has not set a target for increasing exports from Vietnam globally.

Source: Office of Sustainable Development, Ministry of Planning and Investment (2016).

To overcome the shortcomings and limitations of Vietnam's socio-economy and create favorable conditions for the successful implementation of VSDGs by 2030, the Prime Minister has instructed the Ministry of Planning and Investment to preside and coordinate with ministries, sectors, localities, and stakeholders to effectively organize the implementation of tasks assigned in NAP 2030 according to the Directive on Sustainable Development issued on May 20, 2019. Accordingly, on December 31, 2019, the Ministry of Planning and Investment developed and issued Guidelines for integrating SDGs into the 5-year socio-economic development plan for the period 2021-2025, 2026-2030 of ministries, sectors, and localities in Decision 2158/QĐ-BKHĐT.

The Vietnamese Government issued Resolution No. 136/NQ-CP on sustainable development on 25 September 2020 to further promote the implementation of Vietnam's SDGs in ministries, sectors, and localities. In 2020, the Government proposed several tasks and solutions to improve the institutional and policy system, enhance information and communication, mobilize and strengthen financial resources, strengthen international cooperation, strengthen specific management work for ministries and sectors, and assign responsibility for implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting.

Recently, the SDGs have been integrated into the Economic and Social Development Strategy 2021-2030, the Economic and Social Development Plan 2021-2025, and Vietnam's annual Economic and Social Development Plan. This is the most important basis and foundation for the SDGs to be implemented in a substantive and effective manner and closely linked to the goals and targets set out in the Strategy and the Plan. On that basis, the SDGs have been integrated into the

5-year and annual socio-economic development plans of ministries, sectors, and localities. Accordingly, policies of ministries, sectors, and localities have paid attention to and better integrated disadvantaged groups such as the poor, ethnic minorities, children, and women to ensure the spirit of “No one is left behind.” The social assistance policies have covered most of the target groups of all ages. Policies also aim at global goals/commitments to protecting the environment, natural resources, biodiversity, and adapting to climate change during development. Up to now, 17 out of 22 ministries and central organizations and 51 out of 63 provinces and centrally affiliated cities have issued Action Plans to implement the 2030 Agenda (Socialist Republic of Vietnam 2023).

In 2021, the Vietnamese Government issued the National Strategy on Green Growth for the period 2021-2030, vision 2050, with ambitious goals. This strategy aims to help Vietnam catch up, move forward, and surpass towards the aspiration of economic prosperity, environmental sustainability, and social justice, contributing to promoting Vietnam’s implementation of the SDGs.

To support Vietnam in implementing the 2030 Agenda, in 2017, the United Nations and the Government of Vietnam signed the One Strategic Plan 2017-2021 based on three principles: inclusiveness, equity, and sustainability. This Plan was developed to integrate the SDGs with Vietnam’s Socio-Economic Development Strategy 2011-2020 and Socio-Economic Development Plan 2016-2020. This Plan focuses on four key areas, according to the key themes of the SDGs, which can be used in Vietnam to inform the way the SDGs are implemented (Table 2.3).

Table 2.3. Focal Areas for Sustainable Development

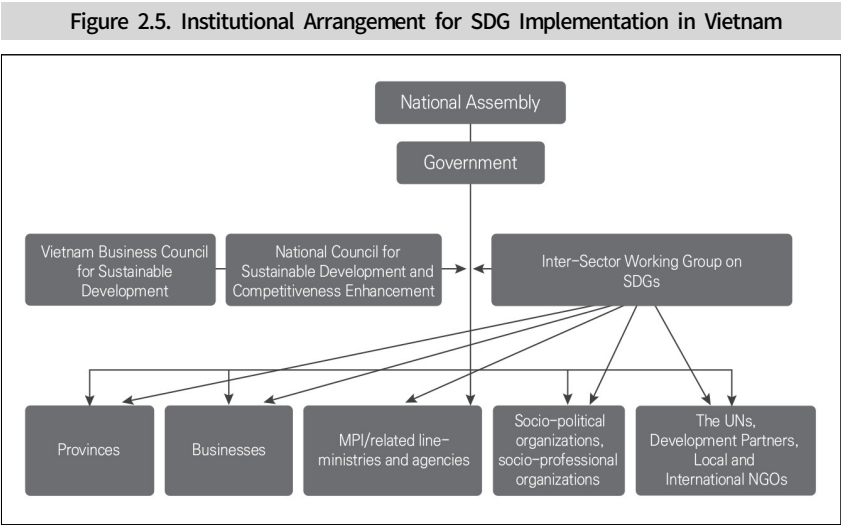
Focal area	SDG	Vision
Focal area 1: Investing in people	SDG1, SDG 2, SDG3, SDG 4, SDG5, SDG6	Providing inclusive and equitable quality social services and social protection systems for people living in Viet Nam to be healthy, educated, free of poverty, and empowered to reach their full potential
Focal area 2: Ensuring climate resilience and environmental sustainability	SDG2, SDG5, SDG6, SDG7, SDG9, SDG11, SDG12, SDG13, SDG14, SDG15	Effectively responding to climate change and natural disasters, as well as sustainable managing natural resources and the environment
Focal area 3: Fostering prosperity and partnership	SDG5, SDG8, SDG10, SDG12, SDG17	Shifting to an inclusive, sustainable, and productivity-led growth model, as well as creating a fairer, more efficient, and inclusive labor market that ensures decent work and opportunities for all.
Focal area 4: Promoting justice, peace, and inclusive governance	SDG5, SDG10, SDG16	Strengthening governance and adherence to the rule of law, ensuring respect for and the protection of human rights and freedom from discrimination, and moving towards a more just and inclusive society

Source: UN Vietnam (2017).

2.3.2. Mechanism to Implement SDGs and Roles, Engagement of Stakeholders in Vietnam

Fully recognizing the close connection of the SDGs, the Vietnamese Government has emphasized the importance of these and several proposed solutions for inter-sectoral coordination and coordination, as well as for resource mobilization and participation. Participation of non-governmental partners, including the private sector, professional organizations, politics, society, and international partners in NAP 2030. NAP 2030 has specifically assigned responsibilities of the parties relevant from central to local levels in implementing Vietnam's SDGs. In

particular, the National Assembly, the Government, the Fatherland Front, and member organizations play a leading role in implementing the SDGs nationwide (Figure 2.5).



Source: Ministry of Planning and Investment of Vietnam (2018).

The Vietnamese National Assembly plays an extremely important role in providing the legal basis, monitoring mechanism, and budget allocation related to Vietnam’s implementation of the SDGs. In addition, the National Assembly’s foreign affairs and international cooperation activities also contribute to promoting participation and implementation of the SDGs, such as verifying, monitoring and ratifying Vietnam’s participation in international conventions and treaties and sharing experiences in fields related to sustainable development. The role of the National Assembly in implementing the SDGs is also demonstrated through its representation of the people, directly reflecting the thoughts

and aspirations of the people. The National Assembly of Viet Nam annually organizes a Conference on the Role of the National Assembly in the implementation of the SDGs and participates in activities within the framework of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) to promote the role of parliaments in implementing the SDGs throughout the globe.

Ministers, heads of ministerial-level agencies, heads of government-attached agencies, presidents of People's Committees of provinces and centrally affiliated cities are held accountable by the Prime Minister for the arrangement of implementation and results of implementation of the NAP 2030 and SDGs.

The Ministry of Planning and Investment shall assume the prime responsibility for, and coordinate with other ministries, sectors, localities, and relevant agencies in, organizing the implementation and monitoring, supervising and evaluating the implementation results of the SDGs and NAP 2030.

The National Council on Sustainable Development and Competitiveness Enhancement provides the Government and Prime Minister with advice on sustainable development in Viet Nam.

Viet Nam Fatherland Front and social organizations play an important role in monitoring the implementation and social criticism during the SDG implementation process. As regulated, MPI shall take the lead and work with ministries, related agencies, provinces and organizations to monitor, supervise, and evaluate results of SDG implementation and NAP; prepare annual reports on SDG implementation and submit them to the Government, and National Assembly. Viet Nam Fatherland Front, socio political organizations, socio-professional organizations, NGOs, and business community actively participate in the implementation of

SDGs and NAP within their authority and assignment specified in the NAP; report their NAP results to MPI for consolidation and submission to the Government and National Assembly.

The Inter-sectoral working group on SDGs in Vietnam has also been formulated to strengthen coordination between ministries, related agencies and organizations in implementing Vietnam's NAP and SDGs.

The Vietnam Business Council for Sustainable Development (VBCSD) is supervised by the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) and plays an important role in engaging the business community in implementing the SDGs. It orients, attracts and links the business community to exchange and scale up good practices and business models for sustainable development. This emphasizes enterprises' active role in realizing the 17 SDGs in Viet Nam and their commitment to building a better world through better business.

The UN SDG Technical Working Group was established to cooperate with Vietnam's Government in implementing the 2030 Agenda. Besides, the networks of local and international NGOs, social organizations like the Women's Union and Youth Union, as well as the Association of Persons with Disabilities have conducted activities to implement SDGs and made direct contributions to the VNR report. In addition, development partners also actively contribute to Vietnam in terms of official development assistance (ODA) capital and concessional loans for socio-economic development, implementation of the SDGs, providing consulting support and sharing experiences on the development and implementation of national socio-economic development strategies and plans, and sectoral strategies and policies and in nationalizing international commitments, including the 2030

Agenda.

The SDGs are highly interdisciplinary in policy formulation and implementation, and the responsibilities of all participating parties, so implementation cannot avoid difficulties and challenges. In fact, inter-sectoral and inter-regional coordination and cooperation in the process of implementing the SDGs in Vietnam has not received adequate attention and therefore the effectiveness of implementing the SDGs in some sectors and fields is still low.

2.3.3. Financial Sources to Implement the SDGs in Vietnam

The main resource for implementing the SDGs in Vietnam and other countries is financial resources. The financial need for implementing the SDGs is huge. While billions of dollars were required to implement the MDGs, trillions of dollars will be required for the SDGs (Truong Quang Hoc 2016). Financing for the implementation of the NAP will be accessed through the state budget, the private sector, and foreign sources, including ODA and FDI.

Most of the capital from the Medium-term Public Investment Plan for 2016-2020 is devoted to implementing the SDGs. The total medium-term investment capital from the state budget in this period is 2,000,000 billion VND (Socialist Republic of Vietnam 2018). The proportion of investment capital from the non-state economic sector increases from 50.2% in 2015 to 59.5% in 2021 and accounts for the main part of investment capital for the development of the entire society (Table 2.4). However, the challenge being posed is that ODA capital into Vietnam has a clear tendency to decrease, especially after Vietnam became a low-middle income country in 2009. ODA non-refundable

aid accounts for a tiny proportion (about 1%) of total ODA but is a significant financial source for technical assistance, capacity building, and policy advice; FDI capital flows into Vietnam are still maintained at a stable level, but the quality is not high, so FDI’s contribution to State budget revenue is not commensurate with the high level of incentives for FDI (especially tax and land incentives).

Table 2.4. Social Development Investment Capital Implemented by Economic Sector

(Unit: %)

	State sector	Non-state sector	Foreign invested sector
2015	31.7	50.2	18.1
2016	30.5	51.3	18.2
2017	28.2	53.7	18.1
2018	26.0	56.1	17.9
2019	24.1	58.3	17.6
2020	16.5	57.3	26.2
Estimated for 2021	24.7	59.5	15.8

Source: GSO of Vietnam.

2.3.4. Monitoring and Evaluation the Implementation of the SDGs in Vietnam

The monitoring and evaluating SDGs are vital to implementing the 2030 Agenda in Vietnam. The Ministry of Planning and Investment is assigned to preside over and coordinate with ministries, branches, localities, and relevant agencies to organize monitoring, supervision, and evaluation of VSDG and NAP 2030 implementation results. Accordingly, the Ministry of Planning and Investment has developed a set of sustainable development statistical indicators of Vietnam in Circular

No.03/2019/TT-BKHDT dated January 22, 2019, which includes: (i) 38 indicators in the National Statistical Indicator System specified in the Law on Statistics 2015; (ii) 112 indicators compatible to 101 global SDGs indicators; (iii) 32 indicators in the Statistical Indicator System of Ministries: Ministry of Education and Training; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Science and Technology; Ministry of Construction; Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment; Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs. Responsibility for collecting and aggregating data for Vietnam's sustainable development statistical indicators is specified in the Circular No. 03/2019/TT-BKHDT, specifically: General Statistics Office of Vietnam (GSO) is responsible for collecting 62 indicators (39.2%); 21 other ministries and agencies are responsible for collecting 96 indicators (60.8%).

To quantify the achievement of SDGs, the Roadmap for the SDGs implementation to 2030 was issued in Decision No.681/QĐ-TTg dated June 4, 2019, by the Prime Minister, which sets out 119 indicators to monitor and evaluate progress in implementing SDGs in 2020 and 2025 and 2030 timelines. For goals that do not have a roadmap, ministries and agencies assigned to preside over them need to have specific plans and programs to implement each goal in accordance with the requirements of NAP 2030 approved by the Prime Minister. However, after a period of implementing The Roadmap for implementing Vietnam's sustainable development goals to 2030 according to Decision 681/QĐ-TTg and in the current context, Vietnam recognizes that progress in implementing SDGs has encountered several problems that require reviewing and updating the VSDG implementation roadmap to 2030. The reasons are: i) The COVID-19 pandemic occurring in the

two years 2020-2021 has had negative impacts on the progress of implementing VSDGs; ii) National Socio-Economic Development Strategy and Plan and recently adjusted strategies, plans and programs of sectors and fields for the period 2021-2030 recently issued have adjusted and updated some goals and targets related to sustainable development to suit the new context; iii) The fourth industrial revolution, innovation and advances in science and technology in the current period with many changes have led to some targets and Roadmaps set out in Decision 681/QĐ-TTg being no longer appropriate; iv) Some indicators do not have information and data to monitor and evaluate, causing ministries and branches to encounter many difficulties in the process of collecting information and developing reports on progress in implementing goals according to the annual roadmap.

Therefore, on 14 July 2023, the Government of Vietnam issued Decision No.841/QĐ-TTg on *The Roadmap for implementing Vietnam's sustainable development goals until 2030*, replacing Decision No. 681/QĐ-TTg was issued previously. Decision No.841/QĐ-TTg was issued based on a review of the implementation of targets in the period 2016-2021; goals and targets in the National Socio-Economic Development Strategy and Plan and strategies, plans, and programs of sectors and fields for the period 2021-2030; and proposals from ministries, branches, agencies, and expert consultations.

To support ministries, sectors, and provinces in monitoring and evaluating SDGs, the Ministry of Planning and Investment has issued guidelines for monitoring and assessing SDGs in Viet Nam until 2030 (Decision No.468/QĐ-BKHD'T dated March 26th, 2020). Accordingly, SDGs are monitored and evaluated through a system of 158 indicators

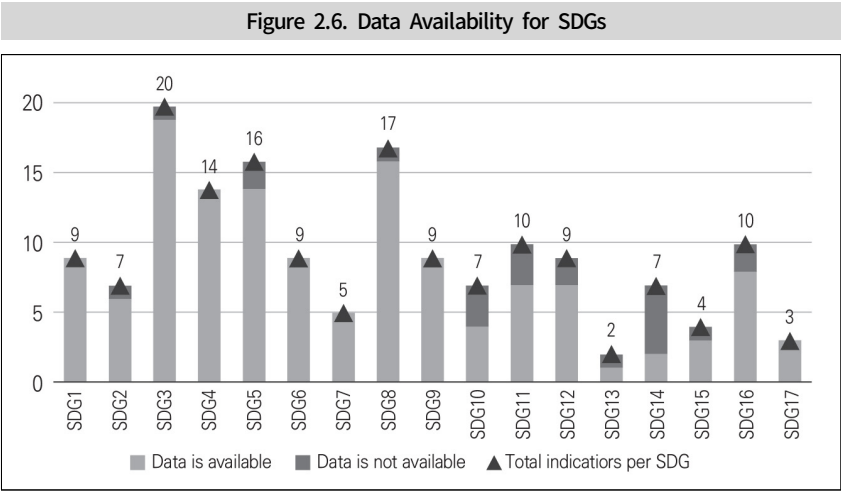
(promulgated in the Circular 03/2019/TT-BKHDT) and assessed the level achieved by 2020, 2025, and 2030 based on the roadmap for the SDGs implementation in Vietnam until 2030 (issued in the Decision No.681/QĐ-TTg) (Socialist Republic of Vietnam 2023).

The VNR of the implementation of the SDGs is seen as a mechanism to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on a global scale. In fact, Vietnam developed and presented its first VNR in 2018. In July 2023, Vietnam continued to register to present its second VNR at the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF).

According to regulations, monitoring and evaluating reports on the SDGs implementation include Annual Reports, National Reports, VNRs, sustainable development reports by topic, and other irregular reports.

The indicators used in monitoring and evaluating are determined based on Circular No.03/2019/TT-BKHDT on 158 statistical indicators for sustainable development in Vietnam. The data for the indicators is collected from official sources, including the statistical Yearbook and annual and periodical surveys of the GSO of Vietnam; the Statistical Yearbook of Health of the Ministry of Health; annual reports on the implementation of the SDGs by ministries, sectors, and agencies and other reports of relevant sectors; data from UN organizations, World Bank; data from surveys conducted by ministries, industries, and organizations such as Provincial Competitiveness Index (PCI), Provincial Governance and Public Administration Performance Index in Viet Nam (PAPI), Satisfaction Index of Public Administration Services (SIPAS). The data is collected for 2010-2022, in which analysis is focused on 2015-2022.

However, the current challenges for monitoring and evaluating the progress of the implementation of the SDGs include the lack of data as stated in the Circular No.03/2019/TT-BKHDT, especially for SDG 14, SDG 11, SDG 16 and SDG 10 (Figure 2.6). Through the review, the Circular stated that only 136 out of 158 indicators had aggregated data at the national total. There is a lack of disaggregated data, especially by criteria and target group, especially disadvantaged groups (such as children, people with disabilities, etc.), to be able to consider the situation in a multi-dimensional manner and thoroughly evaluate the implementation of the principle of “leave no one behind” of the 2030 Agenda.



Source: The Socialist Republic of Vietnam (2023).

SDGs monitoring and evaluating involves the participation of stakeholders which include Viet Nam Fatherland Front and socio-political organizations; ministries, sectors and agencies; People’s Committees of

provinces; social organizations, professional associations; non-governmental organizations; universities, research institutes, professionals, and the business community. The Ministry of Planning and Investment presides and coordinates with ministries, sectors, and agencies to review, supplement, and update the Set of Sustainable Development Statistical Indicators to be consistent with the Roadmap, Law, and Appendix of Lists. National statistical targets of the Law on Statistics. Annually, ministries and provinces send reports on the SDGs implementation to The Ministry of Planning and Investment for synthesis and submission to the Prime Minister.

3. Sub-Conclusion of Chapter 2

Since the implementation of Vietnam's Doi Moi until now (1986-2023), sustainable development has become a consistent orientation of the Vietnamese Government in the process of building and implementing socio-economic development strategies, plans and policies. Therefore, the quality of economic growth has gradually improved, economic development has been in harmony with social development and environmental protection.

Implementing international commitments, the Government of Vietnam has issued NAP 2030 with 17 general and 115 specific goals consistent with the country's development conditions and priorities. Accordingly, Resolutions, Directives, policies, and general guidelines to implement the SDGs, and monitor and evaluate the progress of SDGs implementation in Vietnam have been issued quite synchronously with the principle of "leave no one behind."

To date, 17 SDGs have been fully integrated into the National Socio-Economic Development Strategy 2021-2030 and the Socio-Economic Development Plan 2021-2025. Ministries, sectors, and localities have also issued the Action Plan to implement the 2030 Agenda and integrate the SDGs into their five-year and annual socio-economic development plans. The SDGs have been included in the national development policy framework, including laws, socio-economic development strategies, plans, and action programs of ministries, sectors and localities. Monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the SDGs has also become a regular annual work with the participation of all stakeholders.

After 37 years of implementing Doi Moi (1986-2023), Vietnam has achieved many achievements in sustainable development in all three areas: economy, society and environment. However, these achievements are not commensurate with Vietnam's potential and advantages. Socio-economic development is still mainly rapid, not really sustainable.

From a multi-dimensional perspective associated with the SDGs, it shows that Vietnam is facing the following difficulties and challenges:

- i) Socio-economic development is not really effective and unsustainable;
- ii) The ability to mobilize and effectively use financial resources for implementing the SDGs is limited;
- iii) Inter-sectoral and inter-regional coordination and cooperation in implementing the SDGs is not tight;
- iv) Lack of data according to the Circular 03/2019/TT-BKHĐT to monitor and evaluate the implementation of SDGs at all levels.



Chapter III.

Assessing the Progress of SDGs Implementation in Vietnam and the Factors Affecting the Progress of SDGs Implementation at the Provincial Level

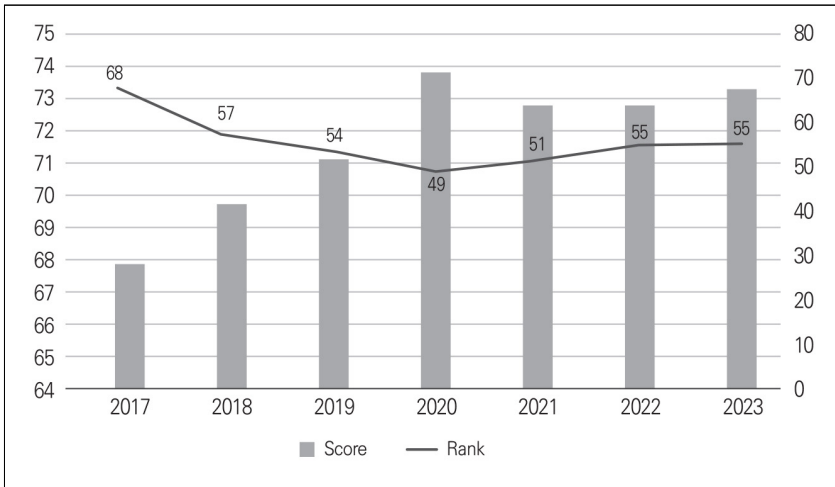
- 1. Assessing the Progress of SDGs Implementation in Vietnam**
- 2. Factors Affecting the Progress of SDGs Implementation at the Provincial level in Vietnam**
- 3. The Context, Difficulties, and Challenges for Implementing SDGs in Vietnam**
- 4. Sub-Conclusion of Chapter 3**

1. Assessing the Progress of SDGs Implementation in Vietnam

1.1. The Progress of SDGs Implementation at National level

Vietnam has achieved many achievements in implementing the SDGs since the issuance of NAP 2030. During 2017-2020, Vietnam has continuously been promoted in the UN's global rankings on SDG implementation. The SDG index score reached 67.9 points, ranked 68th in 2017, and increased to 73.8 points, ranked 49th in 2020. However, in 2021, 2022, and 2023, although Vietnam's SDG score continued to increase, the ranking of Vietnam changed in a downward trend, ranking 51st, 55th, and 55th. The main reason for the decrease in ranking is the changes in the method of calculating the SDG Index (SDI) by adding a few indicators. These newly added indicators decreased Vietnam's score but increased in other countries. For example, SDG 7 has added a target for the proportion of renewable energy in the total primary energy supply. In addition, the fact that data for some indicators have not been updated for Vietnam in data sources of international organizations (such as the UN and OECD) has affected the overall score (Figure 3.1).

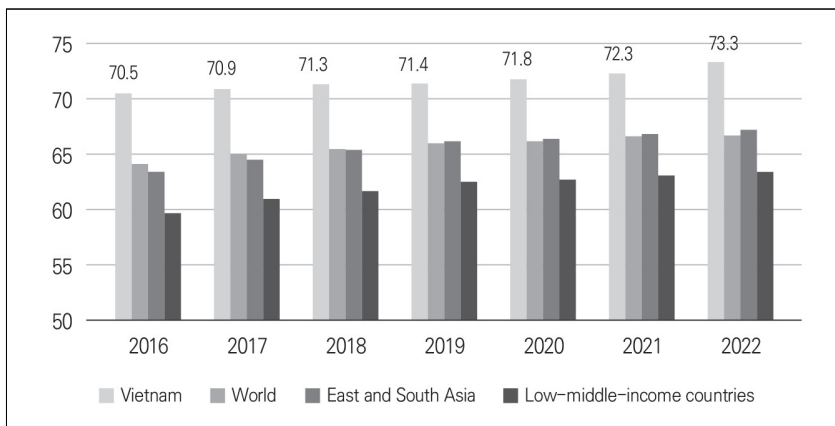
Figure 3.1. SDG Index Score and Ranking of Vietnam, 2016-2023



Source: Data compiled from Sustainable Development Report 2016-2023.

Compared with countries in the same segment, Vietnam ranks the 3rd out of 88 countries in the group ranking of low-middle income countries and the 12th out of 88 middle-income countries (Ministry of Planning and Investment of Vietnam 2023). In the period 2016-2022, Vietnam's SDG Index score is higher than the average SDG index score of the world and of the East and South Asia region, significantly higher than the average SDG index score of the group of low-middle-income countries (Figure 3.2), even higher than the SDG index scores of some high-middle-income countries such as China, Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia (Sachs *et al.* 2023). This shows that the correlation between SDG scores and per capita income is unclear.

Figure 3.2. Comparison of Vietnam's SDG Index Scores with the World and the East and South Asia Region, 2016-2022



Source: Compiled from <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/explorer>.

During 2015-2022, most indicators of each SDG in Vietnam tend to increase. This shows a positive trend in Vietnam's SDG implementation. Among them, the best scores are SDG 1, SDG 4, SDG 12, and SDG 13, while SDG 9, SDG 14, SDG 15, and SDG 17 have the lowest scores (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1. SDG Index Score in Vietnam, 2015-2022

Score	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<i>SDG Index</i>	<i>70.60</i>	<i>70.47</i>	<i>70.87</i>	<i>71.32</i>	<i>71.44</i>	<i>71.84</i>	<i>72.32</i>	<i>73.32</i>
SDG 1	92.12	93.22	93.94	94.55	95.50	95.44	95.61	97.01
SDG 2	69.68	69.66	70.52	71.67	72.24	73.08	73.51	73.63
SDG 3	69.18	68.80	68.93	66.61	68.53	69.64	68.53	69.86
SDG 4	98.39	97.95	98.19	97.50	97.90	97.83	97.38	97.38
SDG 5	69.56	71.08	71.24	71.07	71.31	71.74	74.09	74.38
SDG 6	71.19	71.86	72.48	73.09	73.69	74.26	74.26	74.26
SDG 7	70.05	69.34	71.64	70.31	68.62	69.01	69.01	69.01
SDG 8	75.19	75.19	74.52	76.21	75.61	75.71	75.84	76.20

Table 3.1. Continued

Score	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
SDG 9	41.40	41.22	42.46	49.98	50.37	52.41	53.65	58.11
SDG 10	74.00	72.11	72.11	70.39	70.39	70.39	70.39	70.39
SDG 11	75.38	74.33	74.87	82.60	83.04	83.10	81.08	87.81
SDG 12	89.67	89.56	89.50	89.20	89.06	89.06	90.19	90.19
SDG 13	94.33	94.10	93.87	92.99	91.87	92.13	92.23	92.23
SDG 14	49.36	48.62	47.69	47.58	47.36	47.56	47.66	47.66
SDG 15	48.24	48.04	47.84	41.99	41.79	41.64	44.92	44.57
SDG 16	57.23	57.47	58.54	59.53	60.35	60.42	61.62	64.38
SDG 17	55.20	55.39	56.45	57.18	56.81	57.85	59.39	59.41

Source: Compiled from <https://dashboards.sdgindeks.org/explorer>.

Specifically, progress in implementing the SDGs in Vietnam is as follows:

Goal 1. No poverty in all its forms everywhere. In general, the targets in SDG 1 have progressed well, far exceeding the 2022 targets. If the current rate of progress can be retained, Vietnam is likely to achieve most of the indicators set for measuring SDG 1 by 2030. Among them, Vietnam has achieved an impressive poverty reduction rate. Vietnam's multidimensional poverty rate decreased sharply, from 9.2% in 2016 to 4.3% in 2022. The proportion of households accessing basic living conditions, such as using improved water supply, using improved sanitation facilities and access electricity, tends to increase clearly. There has been a constant growth in a number of contributors and beneficiaries of social insurance, health insurance and unemployment insurance (Table 3.2). However, poverty reduction results are not sustainable. The poverty gap among regions and population groups has not been narrowed. In 2022, the region with the highest multidimensional poverty rate (the Northern midlands and mountainous regions) is 17.3 times higher than the

multidimensional poverty rate of the region with the lowest multidimensional poverty rate (the Southeast region). This is 2.8 times higher than Vietnam’s national average. There are still inadequacies in considering subjects participating in compulsory insurance; the level of support is still low, and in many places the settlement rate of one-time social insurance is high, affecting the ability of workers to receive pensions when old. This will create a burden on the social security system in the future.

Table 3.2. Some Indicators of SDG 1 in Vietnam

Indicators	Unit	2016	2018	2020	2022
Multidimensional poverty rate	%	9.2	6.8	4.8	4.3
Multidimensional poverty rate among children	%	19.1	14.5	11.7	–
Proportion of households with access to electricity	%	98.8	99.0	99.5	99.5
Proportion of households using improved water supply	%	93.4	95.7	97.4	98.3
Proportion of households using improved sanitation facilities	%	83.3	90.3	94.0	96.2
Number of people receiving medical examination and treatment covered by health insurance	Million people	150	176	168	151
Number of beneficiaries of unemployment insurance	Thousand people	1,235	746	1,086	984
Multidimensional poverty rate	%	9.2	6.8	4.8	4.3
Multidimensional poverty rate among children	%	19.1	14.5	11.7	–
Proportion of households with access to electricity	%	98.8	99.0	99.5	99.5
Proportion of households using improved water supply	%	93.4	95.7	97.4	98.3
Proportion of households using improved sanitation facilities	%	83.3	90.3	94.0	96.2

Source: Compiled from GSO and VNR 2023 of Vietnam.

Goal 2: End hunger, ensure food security, improve nutrition, and promote sustainable agricultural development.

The rate of malnutrition among Vietnamese people is controlled at a low level, decreasing from 8.1% in 2015 to only 5.7% in 2020. The proportion of children under five years of age suffering from malnutrition in all forms (stunting, underweight, and wasting) tended to decrease. However, the number of malnourished children with stunting in ethnic minorities is still high with about 32% of ethnic minority children under five years old suffering from stunting. Agricultural labor productivity is improved; Per capita income in rural areas tended to increase gradually over the years but with slow progress at an average annual growth rate of 7.6% from 2016-2022. However, the implementation of agricultural support policies, especially the issue of safe agricultural and food consumption, is still slow. Management of agricultural, forestry, and fishery quality in localities is not synchronized, and resources are limited. There is a shortage of high-quality labor in rural areas. Besides, moderate or severe food insecurity rates tended to increase, from 6.2% in 2017 to 7.6% in 2020. The reasons include the impact of climate change, natural disasters, environmental pollution, epidemics, strong industrialization, and urbanization in recent years. In addition, since 2020, due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, families have generated less income, while food prices have constantly been climbing.

Goal 3: Ensure a healthy life and promote well-being for all at all ages

Vietnam has achieved outstanding results, including the reduction of maternal mortality per 100,000 live births from 54 cases in 2015 to 46 in 2019, the descent of the mortality rate of children under five years old and under 1 year old; the number of people who died or

were injured in traffic accidents decreased continuously; number of new tuberculosis and malaria cases tended to decrease; percentage of under-1-year fully immunized children reached 96.8% by 2020. However, the high rate of poor households, especially in ethnic minority areas, leads to inequality in health and access to medical services. Public spending on health is limited. Especially due to the impact of the COVID-19 epidemic with social distancing measures and medical blockades, the rate of children vaccinated with all types of vaccines is regressing compared to 2015. In 2021, the rate of fully vaccinated children under one year old will decrease to 87.1%. The number of health workers per 10,000 population tended to increase steadily over the years at a slow speed.

Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Vietnam has achieved positive results in the implementation of Goal 4, specifically: net enrolment rate at all levels from pre-school to upper secondary school tended to increase during 2016-2020; the gender equality index gradually reached the ideal level for primary and lower secondary schools; 100% of schools had basic programs on sexual education, prevention of violence and abuse, and on knowledge about HIV in 2022; the rate of trained workers aged 15 years and older increased from 20.4% in 2015 to 26.2% in 2022, but has not yet reached the 2022 target. Meanwhile, the indicators for ensuring facilities at the lower secondary schools and high schools and the share of qualified teachers are backward compared to 2015, especially for disadvantaged groups (Table 3.3).

Table 3.3. Some Indicators of SDG 4 in Vietnam

	2015	2016	2018	2020	2022
Gross Enrolment rate (%)	–	95.8	96.4	95.6	95.0
Literacy rate of population aged 15 and over (%)	94.9	95.0	94.8	95.4	–
Percentage of trained employed workers aged 15 years and over (%)	20.4	20.9	22.0	24.1	26.2

Source: Compiled from GSO and VNR 2023 of Vietnam.

Goal 5: Achieve gender equality; empower and create enabling opportunities for women and girls.

Vietnam has made certain efforts to ensure women's full and equal participation in political and economic life. The percentage of female members of the National Assembly and the timeshare for doing unpaid housework and family care show positive changes, far exceeding the 2022 milestone. The indicator of female directors/owners of businesses and cooperatives indicated progress, but the pace was slow and had not reached the milestone of 2022. However, the indicator of the percentage of women aged 20-24 who got married or lived with their partner for the first time before the age of 15 and 18 is falling back compared to 2015; the imbalanced sex ratio at birth was still remarkably high and tended to increase with 111.5 boys/100 girls born in 2022; the rate of child marriage and early childbearing was relatively high among ethnic minority women; Violence against women and children persisted. The budget for gender equality work is still limited and does not meet the needs. Furthermore, data to monitor and evaluate the implementation of Goal 5 is also restricted.

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

Implementation of SDG 6 continues to achieve significant progress related to access to clean water and sanitation, policies and solutions in resource protection and recovery. Most of the targets have exceeded the 2022 mark, except for the target on the rate of wastewater collected, treated and used effectively, which has progressed slowly, not reaching the 2022 mark. In addition, access to clean water and hygiene is still low in rural areas, mountainous areas, and areas with many ethnic minorities; Water quality control and water pollution control in urban areas, industrial parks, and craft villages are still limited (Table 3.4).

Table 3.4. Some Indicators of SDG 6 in Vietnam				
Indicators	2016	2018	2020	2022
Percentage of households using hygienic water sources (%)	93.4	95.7	97.4	98.3
The proportion of urban population having access to clean water through a centralized water supply system (%)	–	86.7	91.4	94.2
Percentage of households using hygienic toilets	83.3	90.3	94.0	96.2
Proportion of industrial parks and export processing zones with centralized wastewater treatment systems satisfying the environmental requirements (%)	–	80.1	89.5	91.0
The share of area of the nature reserves (%)	6.4	–	7.3	–

Source: Compiled from Ministry of Planning and Investment and GSO of Vietnam.

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

The rate of households’ access to electricity tended to increase and reached 99.5% in 2022, far exceeding the milestone of 2022 (Table

3.5); the access gaps between urban-rural areas are significantly narrowed, from 1.3% to only 0.1% in 2018-2022. However, the targets regarding the share of renewable energy and energy consumption to the gross domestic product are moving backward against expectations, even falling back compared to 2015, while the percentage of households using clean energy has progressed slowly. The reasons include the fact that there has not been synchronous development between renewable energy projects and the power transmission grid, as well as slow technological innovation in some energy-intensive industries.

Table 3.5. Some Indicators of SDG 7 in Vietnam				
Indicators	2016	2018	2020	2022
Rate of households with access to electricity (%)	98.8	99.0	99.5	99.5
The share of renewable energy in total final energy consumption (%)	24.10	24.11	21.78	–
Energy consumption relative to gross domestic product (KoE/1.000 USD GDP)	406.5	402.6	407.8	–

Source: Compiled from GSO of Vietnam.

Goal 8: Ensure sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all.

Vietnam has demonstrated its ability to recover quickly after the COVID-19 epidemic with a GDP growth rate of 8.02% in 2022 and maintaining a low unemployment rate. Indicators on GDP growth, rate of child labor, rate of workers in informal employment, unemployment rate, and contribution of tourism in GDP are being implemented very well and have exceeded the milestone of 2022. The indicators of GDP per capita growth, GDP size, labor productivity, and number of people

having bank accounts witnessed improvements. However, the results still need to meet the expected level for 2022. A number of indicators regressed compared to 2015, such as the contribution of total factor productivity, the proportion of persons aged 15-30 years not in employment, education, or training, mortality and morbidity rates in occupational accidents, and the number of ATMs (Table 3.6). These issues pose significant challenges for Viet Nam in the implementation of SDG 8.

Table 3.6. Some Indicators of SDG 8 in Vietnam				
Indicators	2016	2018	2020	2022
GDP growth rate (%)	6.69	7.47	2.87	8.02
GDP per capita (USD/person)	2,757.3	3,250.5	3,552.0	4,110.0
Labor productivity growth rate (%)	6.2	6.3	4.9	4.8
Total factor productivity growth rate (%)	2.53	3.20	1.19	–
Percentage of workers in informal employment (%)	57.2	56.2	56.2	54.9
Unemployment rate of labor force in working age (%)	2.29	2.19	2.48	2.32
Number of commercial bank branches per hundred thousand population aged 15 years and older (branch)	18.0	–	15.1	

Source: Compiled from WB, GSO of Vietnam.

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

Promoting investment in infrastructure and industrialization with the vital role of exports and creating an environment of fostering innovative businesses has contributed impressively to the implementation of SDG 9. According to the Global Competitiveness Report (2019) of the World Economic Forum (WEF), in 2019, Vietnam’s infrastructure system ranked 77th out of 141 countries with a higher ranking score than the

previous year and was in the top 4 of ASEAN. The proportion of the manufacturing industry in GDP has been continuously increasing and remaining stable. Still, due to the impact of the COVID-19 epidemic, in the period 2016-2022, the growth rate of the manufacturing industry reached at an average level of 9%, lower than the period 2016-2019 was 10%. The proportion of workers in this industry has also shown an increasing trend. Science and technology fields have also received attention for investment and development as both share expenditures on science and technology, and the number of science and technology staff has been increasing over time. However, Vietnam’s total spending on scientific research and technological development to GDP did not show a significant increase, from 0.52% in 2017 to 0.53% in 2019 (Table 3.7). The social distancing measures due to COVID-19 have become an opportunity to accelerate Vietnam’s digital transformation. As of 2022, more than 99.9% of the population was covered by mobile networks, and over 85% used mobile phones.

Table 3.7. Some Indicators of SDG 9 in Vietnam

Indicators	2017	2019	2021	2022
Growth rate of the manufacturing industry (%)	12.13	9.59	6.05	8.10
Proportion of value-added in the processing and manufacturing industry in GDP (%)	22.63	23.79	24.62	24.76
Percentage of workforce employed in the manufacturing industry (%)	17.8	20.7	22.8	–
total expenditures on scientific research and technological development to GDP (%)	0.52	0.53	–	–
Number of scientific research and technological development staff (person)	130.070	150.089	–	–
Number of passenger transport (million people)	4,027.1	4,776.7	2,552.4	3,664.1

Source: Compiled from GSO and Ministry of Science and Technology of Vietnam.

Goal 10: Reduce social inequalities.

Through its policies on job creation, expansion of social security networks, and supporting disadvantaged groups, especially under the impact of the COVID-19 epidemic, Vietnam has achieved positive achievements in reducing social inequality, ensuring equal opportunities for everyone to access resources and enjoy benefits. The income growth rate of the bottom 40% of the population compared to the national average income growth rate has progressed well, far exceeding the milestone of 2022. Notably, the growth in living expenses per capita of households in the lowest 40% income group in 2010 - 2020 was higher than the national average growth rate. However, the risk of increasing inequality in society still exists. In 2022, the income of the richest 20% of the population will be 7.6 times higher than that of the poorest 20%. The annual growth of household consumption per capita declined from 23.7% in 2010 to 6.6% in 2020 and even experienced negative growth of -1.7% in 2022 (Table 3.8).

Table 3.8. Some Indicators of SDG 10 in Vietnam

Indicators	2016	2018	2020	2021	2022
Average growth rate of income per capita of households (%)	8.39	11.83	-1.04	-1.06	11.1
The growth rate of household expenditures per capital of the bottom 40% of the population (%)	7.64	11.42	17.57	0.54	-
Annual growth of household consumption per capita at current price (%)	6.9	8.6	6.6	-	-1.7
Proportion of state budget spending for social-economic development (%)	63.3	64.9	59.3	58.2	

Source: Compiled from GSO data of Vietnam,

Goal 11: Promote sustainable, resilient urban and rural development; ensure safe living and working environments; ensure reasonable distribution of population and workforce by region.

Many important achievements have been recorded in sustainable urban and rural development (Table 3.9). The proportion of households living in poorly built housing; preservation of world cultural and natural heritage; collection and treatment of urban solid waste, and development and implementation of strategies by local authorities to respond to and reduce disaster risks have all made excellent progress, exceeding the 2022 milestone. However, as of 2022, the bottom 20% income quintile (quintile 1) still had 2.7% of the population living in poorly built housing compared to 0.1% in the top 20% income quintile (quintile 5); the main treatment method of urban domestic solid waste is still landfill; Air pollution, especially in big cities, is increasing, exceeding the limit of standards; Areas of green trees and water surfaces that have not been exploited or used properly; Public spaces and entertainment areas are limited; There is still a large gap in building new rural areas among regions; The number of dead, missing and injured people due to natural disasters is increasing. Vietnam is the second country in Southeast Asia regarding the number of world cultural and natural heritage sites recognized by UNESCO. This has contributed to creating jobs, increasing people's income, and socio-economic development of localities through tourism activities. However, many world heritage sites in Vietnam have recently been challenged by economic development pressure.

Table 3.9. Some Indicators of SDG 11 in Vietnam

Indicators	2015	2016	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Proportion of households living in poorly built housing (%)	–	2.6	1.7	–	1.2	–	0.9
Direct economic loss due to natural disasters as a proportion of GDP (%)	0.2	1.3	0.3	–	0.1	0.06	0.2
Number of deaths, missing people, and injuries (person)	356	695	375	316	1,269	203	475
Number of deaths, missing people, and injuries per 100 thousand people	–	–	0.4	0.3	1.3	0.2	0.48
Proportion of urban solid waste collected and treated in accordance with regulations and standards (%)	–	85	86	–	94.71	96.28	96.23
Average CO2 emission per capita (tons)	2.4	2.4	3.0	3.5	–	–	2.7
Proportion of recognized communities achieving new rural standards (%)	17.2	26.4	41.3	52.4	62.2	68.2	73.06

Source: Compiled from GSO of Vietnam, International Energy Agency, and WB.

Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.

Viet Nam continues to promote the implementation of the National Action Program on Sustainable Consumption and Production; make efforts to manage and effectively use natural resources, strengthen measures and sanctions to deal with environmental pollution; initially develop and apply regulations to promote sustainable public procurement; improve policies on taxes and tariffs for fossil fuels with flexible adjustments to protect the poor, vulnerable groups, especially in the context of COVID-19. Dissemination and education activities

aimed to raise awareness on environmental protection continue to be vigorously promoted, with a particular focus on communication and awareness raising to change consumption habits and encourage the use of environmentally friendly alternative products. The indicators related to domestic material consumption and hazardous waste collection and treatment are well-implemented, exceeding the 2022 milestone (Table 3.10). However, sustainable production and consumption activities are still fragmented and have not received much attention from people and communities. The rate of collection and treatment of solid waste in new rural areas is only 66%, and more than 80% of landfills do not meet sanitary standards; resources for promoting sustainable consumption and production are limited; mineral and land resources are not effectively managed and exploited; the participation of enterprises in sustainable production and supply chains is also limited. Meanwhile, fossil fuel subsidies are lagging behind the 2015 target, and the indicators related to renewable energy capacity are progressing slowly and still need to meet the timeline.

Table 3.10. Some Indicators of SDG 12 in Vietnam					
Indicators	2016	2018	2019	2020	2021
Proportion of hazardous waste collected and treated (%)	–	75	–	85	90
Rate of establishments causing serious environmental pollution that have fixed the problems (%)	48.1	66.2	71.7	80.9	85.5

Source: Compiled from Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of Vietnam.

Goal 13: Respond in a timely and effective manner to climate change and natural disasters.

Vietnam has successfully developed and implemented a strategy to respond to and reduce natural disaster risks. As of 2021, 55 out of 63 centrally governed provinces and cities (reaching a rate of 87.3%) have issued Action Plans to implement the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Moreover, Vietnam also actively implements the National Strategy and Action Plan on Green Growth and promotes the integration of climate change adaptation into the national, sectoral, and local socio-economic development plans. Vietnam has also developed and issued 108,874 handbooks and documents guiding the implementation of activities in the community on preparation, response and recovery after natural disasters suitable for each region; Collected and updated information to 1,536 sets of natural disaster risk maps for about 592 communes. Vietnam is also trying to promote SDG 13 through a solid commitment to the net zero emissions target and concretizing this commitment through relevant policies. However, the number of deaths and missing people due to natural disasters in 2022 is on the rise while Vietnam is considered as one of the countries that are most severely affected by climate change. The increasing occurrence of extreme weather and climate changes, and complex and unpredictable natural disasters have significant impacts on the population and various sectors that have made the implementation of SDG 13 difficult in the coming time.

Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, the sea, and marine resources for sustainable development.

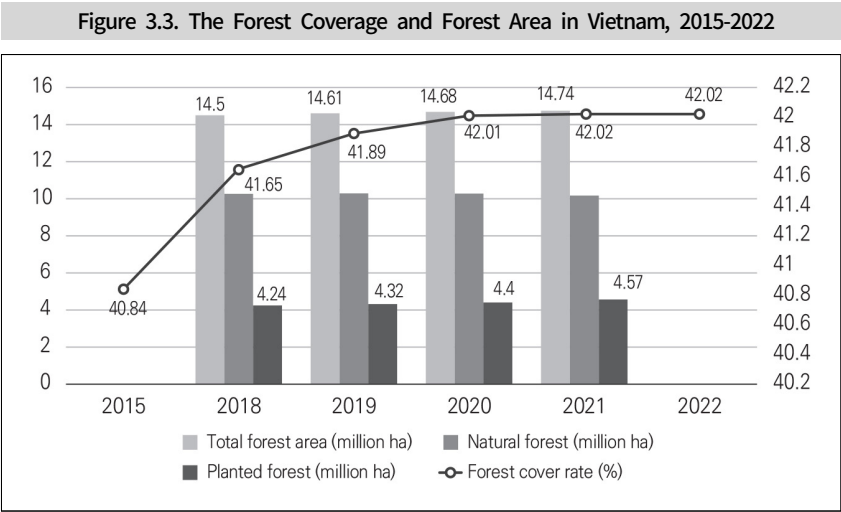
As a country with a long coastline, Vietnam has made significant efforts to conserve and sustainably use its oceans, seas, and marine

resources for sustainable development through strategies and policies regarding resource conservation, marine environmental protection, and management of aquatic resources in a sustainable manner. Vietnam has done well in ensuring coastal water quality and implementing international tools to combat illegal fishing, exceeding the 2022 milestone. The quality of the environment and coastal water is within the allowable limits of Vietnamese Standards. In 2020, the rate of coastal water quality monitoring sites meeting the requirements of the national technical standards reached 99% for organic pollution parameters (N-NH4+) and 92% for total oil and grease parameters. Vietnam's aquaculture production increased from 6.5 million tons in 2015 to 8.4 million tons in 2020, with an average annual growth rate of about 4.6%. But marine conservation has not made progress; Even the proportion of sustainable fisheries in GDP decreased compared to 2015. Moreover, as a developing country with a low average income, the coastal, marine and island ecosystems face significant pressures from socio-economic development and environmental pollution; the volume of aquatic resources and seafood is shrinking due to overexploitation. This is one of the goals with the lowest progress scores in Vietnam. This shows that achieving SDG 14 is a massive challenge for Vietnam.

Goal 15: Protect and sustainably develop forests; conserve biodiversity; develop ecosystem services; combat desertification; prevent the degradation of and rehabilitate land resources.

The forest coverage ratio in Vietnam is being done quite well, exceeding the target of 2022, from 40.84% in 2015 to 42.02% in 2021, but the natural forest area has not increased significantly. In 2021, Vietnam's total forest area was 14.74 million hectares, of which the

natural forest area is 10.1 hectares and the planted forest area is 4.5 hectares (Figure 3.3). The other indicators are improving very slowly, and some even show a regression, such as the proportion of degraded land area and the list of threatened species. Vietnam faces significant difficulties and challenges in the implementation of SDG 15 due to illegal logging and organized deforestation; land degradation; narrowing of natural habitats and the risk of extinction for some endangered species; inadequate control over trade and consumption of endangered wildlife and plants; Financial resources are still extremely limited. In 2022, Vietnam’s SDG 15 score reached the lowest, with only 44.57 points.



Source: Compiled from VNR 2023 of Vietnam.

Goal 16: Promote a peaceful, equitable and equal society for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Basically, SDG 16 in Vietnam is in line with the set Roadmap, reaching

or exceeding the 2022 milestone. The satisfaction rate of people and organizations on administrative services is the most positive, followed by the proportion of children registered at birth (98.1% in 2021). However, the rate of businesses paying informal fees when using public services has slowly improved. With 42/100 points, corruption in the public sector will still be a huge challenge for Vietnam in the coming time (Table 3.11).

Table 3.11. Proportion of Enterprises Paying Informal Expenses and the Corruption Perception Index (CPI)							
Indicators	2015	2016	2017	2018	2020	2021	2022
Proportion of enterprises paying informal expenses (%)	66	66	59	54.8	44.9	41.4	42.6
The corruption perception index (point)	31	33	35	33	36	39	42
Ratio of state budget expenditures to approved state budget estimates (%)	110.3	101.7	97.5	94.2	96.4	110.0	119.4
Percentage of people and organizations satisfied with the service of state administrative agencies (%)	–	–	80.9	–		87.2	–

Source: Compiled from VCCI, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Home Affairs of Vietnam and Transparency International (TI).

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

The implementation of SDG 17 in Vietnam is on track, exceeding or nearing the 2022 mark; only debt service has slow improvement. Currently, Vietnam has established diplomatic relations with 191/193 United Nations member countries. Vietnam has signed 15 Free Trade

Agreements and is implementing its commitment to reduce tariffs in 14 Free Trade Agreements in 2015-2022; the export growth rate increased by an average of 12.1% /year, achieving the set target. Viet Nam actively builds and contributes initiatives in regional and global mechanisms such as ASEAN, WTO, WB, IMF, APEC, ASEM, WEF, OECD, P4G; forums/mechanisms in the UN system, Mekong sub-region, etc.; integrates, takes advantage of support and strengthens cooperation with other countries in issues of Vietnamese interest, serving the implementation of the SDGs, investment, trade, science & technology and responding to climate change. However, the amount of ODA and concessional loans has decreased dramatically since Vietnam became a middle-income country in 2009.

1.2. Progress in implementing SDGs at Provincial and Regional Levels

The UN has not granted any powers to regional and local authorities at the UN to facilitate the implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda (Graute U. 2016). However, the 2030 Agenda mentions cities as key actors in actively developing towards greater sustainability and emphasizes the importance of cities in moving towards sustainable development, clarifying goals and indicators for inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and regions (Guarini *et al.* 2022). The SDGs are not specifically aimed at local and regional governments or city-level actors, but as with the entire 2030 Agenda, these actors are critical to the successful implementation of the SDGs. It is estimated that about two-thirds of the SDG targets will require the participation of urban stakeholders. In fact, all strategies recognize that the Central Government

will not be able to achieve national goals without the participation of regional and local governments (Perry *et al.* 2021). In other words, the successful implementation of the SDGs depends on the localization of the SDGs in the provinces, cities and regions of each country. Therefore, local and regional governments must be at the heart of the 2030 Agenda.

“Localization” is the process of realizing the SDGs that consider the local context to achieve the 2030 Agenda, from setting goals and targets to determining the means of implementation and using indicators to measure and monitor progress. Localization concerns how the SDGs can provide a framework for local development policy, how local and regional governments can support achieving the SDGs through bottom-up action, and how the SDGs can provide a framework for local development policies (Bui 2023).

In Vietnam, through guidance on monitoring and evaluating SDGs, and guidance on integrating SDGs into the 5-year and annual socio-economic development plans of the Ministry of Planning and Investment, the localization of SDGs has been made efforts to implement by ministries, branches and localities. By 2022, 17/22 ministries, branches, and 51/63 provinces and cities in Vietnam have issued Action Plans to implement the 2030 Agenda.

According to the Provincial Sustainable Development Index (PSDI) - an index that evaluates the implementation of the SDGs according to the 2030 Agenda of provinces and cities in Vietnam with a scale of 0-100, the average score index of 63 provinces and cities has improved from 48.15 points in 2020 to 51.38 points in 2021. In particular, the index of ensuring a healthy life and enhancing welfare for people of

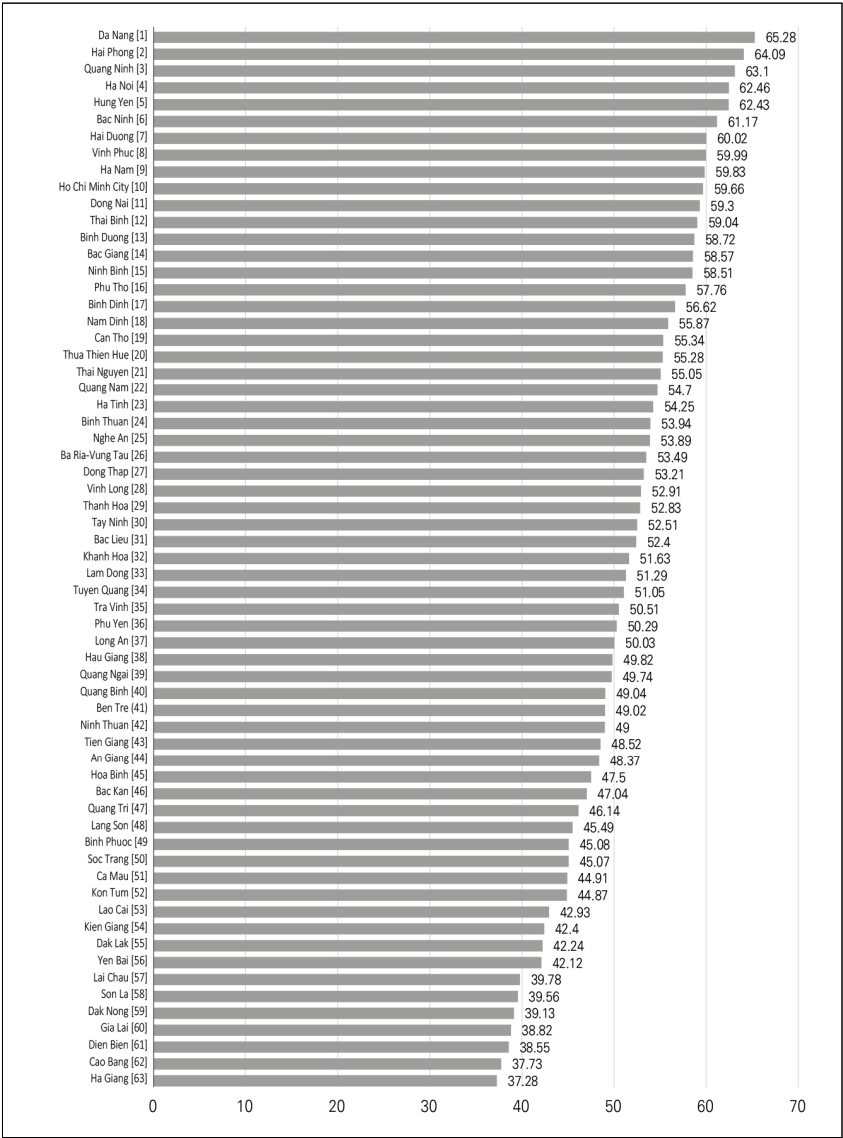
all ages (reflecting SDG 3) achieved the highest average score of 65.60 points. Next is the index of sustainable and resilient urban and rural development; ensuring a safe living and working environment. Reasonable distribution of population and labor by region (reflecting SDG 11) reached an average of 63.97 points. While the index of building highly resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and enhancing innovation (reflecting SDG 9) reached an average of 32.64 points, with 59 provinces and cities (more than 94%) of below-average scores (less than 50 points).

In 2021, although the PSDI index increased, the increase was not much and only exceeded the average score (over 50 points). This issue showed that localities need to continue to be more active in implementing the SDGs. However, depending on the context and conditions of each locality and region, progress in implementing the SDGs in Vietnam also has large differences.

In Figure 2.4, provinces and cities are ranked from high places to low ones. In particular, Da Nang will continue to be the leading locality in the country in 2021 with 65.28 points. Next are Hai Phong, Quang Ninh, Hanoi and Hung Yen. At the bottom of the ranking are mainly localities in the Northern mountainous region, the Central Highlands and the Mekong Delta, with typical characteristics being limitations in economic development and ensuring social security. The last positions are Ha Giang, Cao Bang, and Dien Bien with respective scores of 37.28, 37.73 and 38.55 points.

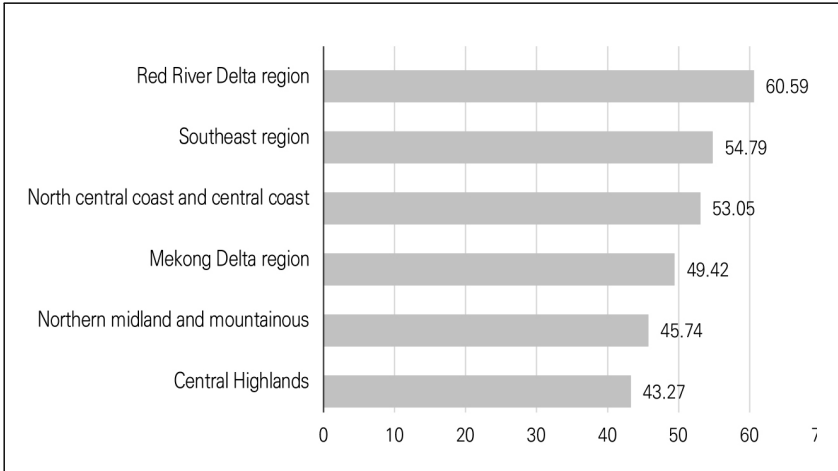
The results of PSDI ranking by region also show that there is a clear grouping among six socio-economic regions in the country (Figure 3.5). Can be divided into three groups as follows.

Figure 3.4. PSDI Index Ranking by Province in Vietnam, 2021



Source: Compiled from VNR 2023 of Vietnam.

Figure 2.5. PSDI Index Ranking by Region in Vietnam, 2021



Source: Pham My Hang Phuong and Nguyen Duy Tung (Ed.) (2022).

The group implementing the SDGs has outstanding scores in Vietnam. That is the Red River Delta region with 60.59 points. The Red River Delta region demonstrates outstanding advantages in implementing the goals of hunger eradication and poverty reduction, ensuring health care, improving education quality, sustainable management of water resources, employment, and economic growth—economy, reducing social inequality, and building sustainable cities and communities. In addition, the Red River Delta region shows equitable development among localities in implementing the goal of promoting industrialization and developing comprehensive and sustainable infrastructure.

The group implementing the SDGs in Vietnam has an average score, including the Southeast region with 54.79 points and the North Central Coast and Central Coast regions with 53.05 points. The common characteristics of these two regions are achieving positive results in

implementing the goals of hunger eradication and poverty reduction, improving education quality, promoting gender equality, reducing social inequality, building sustainable urban and rural areas, and sustainable consumption and production. However, progress in implementing sustainable development goals in these regions is considered to be significantly slower than in the rest of the country, especially the Red River Delta.

The group implementing the SDGs in Vietnam has scored below average, including the Mekong Delta region with 49.42 points, the Northern Midland and Mountainous region with 45.74 points, and the Central Highlands region with 43.27 points. Localities in these regions all have the common characteristic of being limited in economic development and ensuring social security.

2. Factors Affecting the Progress of SDGs Implementation at the Provincial Level in Vietnam

2.1. Research Methodology

2.1.1. Model Specification

It is commonly agreed that many factors can affect the performance or the progress of gaining the SDGs. Many states that there are three main factors affecting sustainable development, which include dimensions of the planning process, state planning mandates, and organizations of local land-use plans (Conroy and Berke 2004; Scott

and Gough 2004; Sayer and Campbell 2004; Mensah 2019; Jeronen 2020). While, others show that the progress of sustainable development would be driven by three determinants consisting of economic development, social participation, and environmental protection (Mohammadi *et al.* 2012; Phimphanthavong 2014; Kaimuri and Kosimbei 2017). Adding another dimension, Rosati and Faria (2019) demonstrate that institutional-related factors also play a significant role in achieving SDGs. It is rational that the performance of the environment index can be incorporated into social engagement (Pimonenko 2018). Therefore, based on the existing literature, we categorize the key determinants of SDG performance into three main groups: (1) economic development, (2) social engagement, and (3) institutional factors. Noted that these factors are also critical determinants of the progress of sustainable development in literature such as the works by Mohammadi *et al.* (2012), Phimphanthavong (2014), Kaimuri and Kosimbei (2017), and among others. In this research, we will incorporate the different dimensions of all these three key factors into the model and figure out how these factors affect the performance of SDGs at the provincial level in the context of Vietnam – a notable emerging country. To examine factors affecting the progress of SDGs implementation at the provincial level in Vietnam, we employ an empirical specification taking the form as follows:

$$psdi_{it} = \Phi_0 + \Phi_1 E_{it} + \Phi_2 S_{it} + \Phi_3 I_{it} + \Phi_4 X_{it} + \eta_t + \tau_i + \epsilon_{it} \quad (1)$$

Where *psdi* denotes a log form of the performance of SDGs at province level; *E*, *S* and *I* that all are formed in logarithm function are in turn the vectors of economic development factors (*gdp* and

pergrdp), social engagement factors (*papi* and *pobi*), and institutional engagement factors (*pci* and *policy*); X is a vector of control variables such as income level (*income*); η is the year time-fixed effect, τ is the specific province-fixed effect; and, ϵ is the disturbance term. While i and t indicate the targeted province and the interested year, respectively.

2.1.2. Estimation Issues

In our sample, all 63 provinces in Vietnam are inserted into the model to examine the main determinants of the performance of provincial SDGs for two years. Therefore, collinearity and endogeneity problems are potentially caused by unobservable variables. Wooldridge (2018) and Baltagi and Baltagi (2008) suggest that to partially remedy the problems of collinearity and endogeneity and to identify individual-specific effects, a panel data approach should be applied for analysis. Wooldridge (2018) and Baltagi and Baltagi (2008) also state that in dealing with a panel model, two technical methods namely the fixed effects model (FEM) and the random effects model (REM) are appropriately suitable for estimation. In general, a random effects method is applicable if unobserved effects of the dependent variable in the model are uncorrelated with all independent variables, while a fixed effects estimator is appropriate if idiosyncratic errors are serially uncorrelated between the unobserved effects of the dependent variable and independent variables. Following a conventional test for the fitness of statistical techniques in the literature, we perform the Hausman test to determine a suitable model for whether FEM or REM estimator is better. Of which, the null hypothesis is the REM estimator, and the alternative is the FEM estimator (Baltagi and Baltagi 2008; Wooldridge 2018).

2.2. Data Analysis

Figures for the provincial sustainable development index and its components subscripted in turn by *psdi* and *psdi1* to *psdi14* in the model, we retrieved from the database Report on Provincial Sustainable Development Index for two years 2020 and 2021, so-called PSDI 2020 and PSDI 2021. This project was undertaken by a research team at the Academy of Policy and Development based on cooperation between the Vietnam Ministry of Planning and Investment and the UNDP. The calculations of PSDI 2020 and PSDI 2021 originated from the methodology proposed in the Sustainable Development Report by Sachs *et al.* (2018), which was developed by Lafortune *et al.* (2018). Given that *psdi* data are credible, reliable, and applicable.

Due to the availability of data at the provincial level, PSDI 2020 and PSDI 2021 performed 14 sub-indicators out of 17 SDGs only (see Table 3.12 for more details). Noted that the aggregate provincial sustainable development index, say *psdi* is calculated by a formula as $psdi_i = \sum_{j=1}^m \frac{1}{m} psdi_{ij}$ where *i* and *j* are individual province *i* and the specific component indicator of the provincial sustainable development index of province *i* respectively, $m = 14$ is the number indicators of possible provincial sustainable development index. It suggests that each component of *psdi* has an equal weight in the aggregate *psdi* at the province level. The equal weight technique is similar to the use by Sachs *et al.* (2018) and Lafortune *et al.* (2018) and has also been applied popularly in the literature related to the calculation method of national SDGs such as Xu *et al.* (2020).

Table 3.12. Equivalence between PSDI and SDG in Vietnam

No.	PSDI	SDG	Meaning
1	psdi	SDG	Sustainable development goals
2	psdi1	SDG1	End poverty in all its forms everywhere
3	psdi2	SDG2	End hunger, ensure food security, improve nutrition and promote sustainable agricultural development
4	psdi3	SDG3	Ensure a healthy life and promote well-being for all at all ages
5	psdi4	SDG4	Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
6	psdi5	SDG5	Achieve gender equality; empower and create enabling opportunities for women and girls
7	psdi6	SDG6	Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
8	psdi7	SDG8	Ensure sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all
9	psdi8	SDG9	Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation
10	psdi9	SDG10	Reduce social inequalities
11	psdi10	SDG11	Promote sustainable, resilient urban and rural development; ensure safe living and working environments; ensure reasonable distribution of population and work force by region
12	psdi11	SDG12	Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
13	psdi12	SDG15	Protect and sustainably develop forest; conserve biodiversity, develop ecosystem services; combat desertification; prevent the degradation of and rehabilitate land resources
14	psdi13	SDG16	Promote a peaceful, equitable and equal society for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels
15	psdi14	SDG17	Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

Source: Pham My Hang Phuong and Nguyen Duy Tung eds. (2022).

Data on economic development, social engagement, and institutional factors are officially collected from various sources. The following are depicted in detail.

2.2.1. Economic Development Factor

In literature, the magnitude and efficiency of economic factors are critically argued as key factors affecting the sustainable development of a regional/national economy (Bojnec and Papler 2011; Méndez-Picazo *et al.* 2021). We use the value of gross regional domestic product and per capita income at the province level as the proxies of economic development factors which are notated as *grap* and *pergrap* respectively in the model. Data are manually retrieved from the Annual Statistical Yearbook of Vietnam, GSO of Vietnam for 2020 and 2021. Missing data is complemented by data from the Annual Provincial Statistical Yearbook of 63-Province Statistics Offices. As a nature, larger *grap* and *pergrap* are better performance of implementing the provincial SDGs.

2.2.2. Social Engagement Factor

As stated by Healey and Shaw (1997), interaction and engagement among authorities, citizens, and organizations strongly support the success of sustainable development. We insert the Vietnam Provincial Governance and Public Administration Performance Index, say *papi* and the Vietnam Provincial Open Budget Index, say *pobi* into the model as the proxies of social engagement.

The *papi* indicator has been conducted since 2009 based on cooperation between the Vietnam Union of Science and Technology Associations and the UNDP in Vietnam. The *papi* index is performed based on three jointly reinforcing processes including policy making, policy implementation and the monitoring of public service delivery. In specific, the overall *papi* index is weighed by eight dimensions that are (1) Participation at local levels (*participationatlocallevels*), (2) Transparency (*transparency*), (3)

Vertical accountability (*verticalaccountability*), (4) Control of corruption (*controlofcorruption*), (5) Public administrative procedures (*publicadministrativeprocedures*), (6) Public service delivery (*public service delivery*), (7) Environmental governance (*environmentalgovernance*), and (8) E-governance (*egovernance*). Noted that 19 sub-dimensions and more than 120 different components are included to evaluate eight dimensions of PAPI. The approach used to assess the performance of *papi* is based on the philosophy of “end-users of public administrative services” capable of monitoring and evaluating governance and public administration in their own setting and environment. The purpose of *papi* project is to provide an objective evaluation of governance and public administration from the perspective of citizens.²⁾ To some extent, the *papi* index provides the participation level of citizens in the social operation of governance and public administration that are directly related to the social activities of both local authorities and people. Therefore, the *papi* index emphasizes the power of the engagement of local citizens in the development of society. Hence, it is strongly believed that the PAPI indicator and its sub-indices have a positive contribution to the progress of implementing the SDGs at the provincial level in Vietnam.

The Provincial Budget Disclosure Index survey is the first survey in Vietnam on the level of provincial budget openness starting in 2017 and continuing to be conducted for consecutive years. Since 2018, the survey has included two pillars (1) the budget transparency (*budgettransparency*) and (2) the participation of factors (*civilparticipation*). The *pobi* indicator is an evidence-based survey of public local budget

2) See more at <https://papi.org.vn/eng/>.

documents of 63 Vietnamese localities. The source of evidence is provincial budget documents published on the Portal of the People's Committee, People's Council, Department of Finance, and Department of Planning and Investment of the province. *pobi* is a tool that helps provinces refer to and measure the level of openness and transparency in state budget management and the level of implementation of the 2015 State Budget Law. *pobi* helps enhance the trust of local people and development partners in local budget management through forms of transparency, accountability, and budget participation. *pobi* is also a tool to help Vietnam better implement administrative reform and fiscal efforts, contributing to implementing commitments to the SDG. With *pobi*, local governments can monitor and evaluate the level of budget transparency to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of local governance.³⁾ In literature at the national level, it is straightforward to show that a country with a larger magnitude of national budget transparency tends to be more proactive and progressive. This is because more national budget transparency would help public authorities and citizens easily access and engage the process of budget and budget activities at all top-down and bottom-up levels (Simon 2014; DFI and Oxfam 2013). Many also state that budget transparency would help promote the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) agenda since more transparency is more public engagement that leads to higher expenditure on MDG outcomes (Allen and Tommasi 2001; Khagram *et al.* 2013; Simon 2014). Given that *pobi* is expected to have a positive sign on PSDI performance at both aggregate and individual indicators.

3) See more at <http://ngansachvietnam.net/gioi-thieu-pobi/>.

2.2.3. Institutional Engagement Factor

Many argue that the quality of the local institutional environment is able to significantly enhance and boost the progress of the implementation of SDGs (Phimphanthavong 2014; Kaimuri and Kosimbei 2017). In Vietnam, many consider the Provincial Competitiveness Index denoted by *pci* as a proxy of the quality of the local business environment that represent the value of institutional engagement as well. The *pci* index has been constructed annually for all 63 localities (provinces and equivalent cities) in Vietnam since 2005. The survey was conducted with the cooperation of the VCCI and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). This index is based on the evaluation and assessment of local-active enterprises across various facets of the local business environment. The composite *pci* index contains ten sub-indices that include (1) Entry costs (*entrycosts*), (2) Land access and security of tenure (*accessstoland*), (3) Transparency and access to information (*pcitransparency*), (4) Time costs and regulatory compliance (*timecosts*), (5) Informal charges (*informalcharges*), (6) Policy bias (*policybias*), (7) Proactivity of provincial leadership (*proactivity*), (8) Business support services (*businesssupportpolicy*), (9) Labour and training (*laborpolicy*), and (10) Legal institutions (*lawandorder*).⁴⁾ Given that the *pci* indicator and its sub-indexes of *pci* are inserted in the model as a proxy for the quality of institutional engagement factors to examine its effects on the implementation of provinces' sustainable development in Vietnam. Generally, the *pci* index and its components allegedly support to the process of implementation of SDGs through improving the quality of

4) See more at <https://pcivietnam.vn/en>.

the local business environment in the provinces of Vietnam. Hence, the *pci* index and its sub-indices are expected to have supportive signs on PSDI implementation in the localities of Vietnam.

We note that in order to implement the 2030 Agenda for the SDGs, the Vietnamese Government officially promulgated a national sustainable development plan by Decision No. 622/QĐ-TTg dated 10/05/2017 with 17 SDGs and 115 national specific SDG indicators. For the purpose of observing and evaluating the implementation of the national SDGs, the Vietnamese Government issued the Roadmap for the implementation of SDGs by Decision No. 681/QĐ-TTg dated 04/06/2019 on the National Action Plan for implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Following this Decision No. 681, the local provinces have legally to propose and execute their own Action Plan including assessing, evaluating, and monitoring the process and the results of the implementation of Vietnamese national SDGs. Facing the drastic changes in the domestic and international context related to sustainable development, recently on July 14, 2023, the Prime Minister issued Decision No. 841/QĐ-TTg on the Roadmap for implementing sustainable development. Present Vietnam's SDGs until 2030, replacing Decision No. 681/QĐ-TTg. Until now, however, some provincial governments have not announced specific action plans yet. Therefore, we will review all the policies and decisions issued at the province level directly associated with the National Action Plan for implementation of the 2030 Agenda as another dummy proxy of institutional engagement (*policy*). In which, the *policy* variable takes a value of 1 if the province *i* promulgates a specific plan at the provincial level to implement the National Action Plan for implementation of 2030 Agenda; otherwise, it takes a value of zero. Allegedly, the province that

officially promulgates an action plan for the implementing the 2030 Agenda is believed to perform better SDGs. Hence, the *policy* variable is expected to have a positive sign on the *psdi* variable and its sub-indices.

We note that we identify each factor of each dimension based on both the existing literature and data variability. All factors used for estimates will be tested and checked for appropriateness and consistency.

2.3. Empirical Analysis

2.3.1. Descriptive Analysis

We summarize descriptive statistics in Table 3.13. The figures show that the highest score of *psdi* is 65.28, the lowest is 28.5, and the mean score is 53.43. To some extent, these numbers indicate that the progress in the implementation of SDGs at the provincial level in Vietnam is very far from the targeted score of 100 points. The difference between the lowest *psdi* score and the highest one is around 36.77 points, suggesting there exists a big gap in the achievement of *psdi* among the provinces in Vietnam. Similar scenarios seemingly occur to the sub-indices of *psdi*. For the economic development factors, the lowest and highest scores of *grdp* are 14,474.12 and 1,586,813 million VND, respectively. The figures for per capita income *pergrdp* are in turn 32.64 and 353.21 million VND. These numbers also visualize facts that the disparities of economic size and economic development among the provinces in Vietnam are quite huge. For the social engagement factors, the *papi* and *pobi* indicators take in turn the highest values of 6.12 and 91.13, while they take the lowest values of 4.65 and 3.07, respectively. These figures show an analogous pattern in performing *papi*, but a huge

disparity in achieving *pobi* between the localities. For the institutional engagement factors, the highest and lowest values of the *pci* indicator are 75.09 and 56.29, respectively. The performance of the *pci* variable shows the relatively small fluctuations among the provinces.

Table 3.13. Descriptive Summary						
Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. dev.	Min	Max	
psdi	126	53.43048	41.91279	28.51	65.28	
psdi1	126	56.14071	17.59895	8.31	93.4	
psdi2	126	41.17103	10.54808	16.72	80.85	
psdi3	126	63.80825	9.004506	41.58	84.28	
psdi4	126	57.01127	14.27731	22.93	97.7	
psdi5	126	60.22206	11.56373	18.23	85.88	
psdi6	126	61.71111	17.15914	13.65	98.14	
psdi7	126	37.94619	11.44056	15.19	69.41	
psdi8	126	28.865	11.70534	10.68	71.61	
psdi9	126	53.3854	15.69419	18.38	93.12	
psdi10	126	62.00532	10.60181	28.74	86.47	
psdi11	126	55.90333	12.86324	21.57	80.65	
psdi12	126	29.85984	16.69908	1	75.46	
psdi13	126	52.97222	13.91133	9.58	84.21	
psdi14	126	34.6927	15.64715	0.82	75.07	
grdp	126	151,971.5	240,034.2	14,474.12	1,586,813	
pergrdp	126	81.57316	48.15088	32.64801	353.211	
papi	126	5.337272	0.2604385	4.65375	6.12	
participation at local levels	126	4.776111	0.6660234	0	6.54	
transparency	126	5.23373	0.657257	0	6.84	
vertical accountability	126	4.59254	0.597342	0	6.47	
control of corruption	126	6.810476	0.7869108	0	8.29	
public administrative procedures	126	7.20119	0.7165066	0	7.84	
public service delivery	126	7.304206	0.8169772	0	8.46	
environmental governance	126	3.545317	0.5546266	0	5.2	

Table 3.13. Continued

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. dev.	Min	Max
e-governance	126	2.812698	0.4400935	0	4.08
pobi	126	50.78738	16.44838	3.075	91.13
budget transparency	126	69.29857	18.1981	3.84	98.59
civil participation	126	32.27619	25.32145	0	90
pci	126	64.5273	3.139555	56.29	75.09
entry costs	126	7.300476	0.7509917	5.17	9.14
access to land	126	6.835159	0.5359011	5.61	7.96
pci-transparency	126	5.905476	0.5411123	4.48	7.28
time costs	126	7.54381	0.7708954	5.22	9.5
informal charges	126	6.788889	0.7018242	4.96	8.39
policy bias	126	6.362302	0.8754575	3.72	8.81
proactivity	126	6.607063	0.6707048	4.57	8.24
business support policy	126	6.394048	0.8161335	4.76	8.54
labor policy	126	6.175159	0.7831196	4.21	8.41
law and order	126	6.931429	0.6152056	5.17	8.32
policy	126	0.6111111	0.4894441	0	1

Source: Authors' calculation.

Next, we exhibit the Pearson correlation matrix of aggregate variables in Table 3.14. Theoretically, the Pearson correlation matrix is a popular technique to evaluate the relationship between interesting variables in a model. Besides, the Pearson correlation matrix also helps determine the multicollinearity problem that could raise the biased results for estimation. Kennedy (2008) and among scholars demonstrated that multicollinearity could strongly affect estimated results if a statistically significant correlation coefficient goes beyond the value of 0.80. Given that the correlation matrix shown in Table 3.14 crucially suggests that multicollinearity should be not problematic in the model. To save space, we do not present the correlation matrix for all variables, it is upon request.

Table 3.14. Pearson Correlation Matrix of Aggregate Variables

Variable	psdi	grdp	pergrdp	papi	pobi	pci	policy
psdi	1						
grdp	0.4429*	1					
pergrdp	0.5503*	0.5458*	1				
papi	0.4045*	0.0495	0.1972*	1			
pobi	-0.0074	-0.0105	0.0549	0.0811	1		
pci	0.4907*	0.1184	0.3074*	0.2787*	-0.0259	1	
policy	-0.0435	-0.0123	-0.0366	-0.0358	-0.0058	0.0590	1

Source: Authors' calculation.

2.3.2. Estimated Results

We first estimate Eq. (1) for aggregate data of *psdi* by both the approaches of FEM and REM. The Hausman tests in the last row of Table 3.15 show that the FEM estimator is more suitable for economic interpretation than the REM one. To save space, we present the estimated results with the FEM estimator in Table 3.15 in main text only, and the estimated results using the REM technique are located in Appendix A1 (model 1).

Table 3.15. Estimated Results with Aggregate Data

Variable	(1) lnpsdi	(2) lnpsdi	(3) lnpsdi	(4) lnpsdi
lngrdp	0.1091*** (0.0158)			0.0936*** (0.0148)
pergrdp	0.0003 (0.0003)			0.0001 (0.0003)
lnpapi		0.2324*** (0.0478)		0.1201*** (0.0354)
lnpobi		0.0148 (0.0314)		0.0293 (0.0223)

Table 3.15. Continued

Variable	(1) lnpsdi	(2) lnpsdi	(3) lnpsdi	(4) lnpsdi
lnpci			1.5346*** (0.2460)	0.6848*** (0.2018)
policy			-0.0212 (0.0241)	-0.0193 (0.0179)
Constant	2.6223*** (0.1658)	2.5983*** (0.2700)	-2.4841** (1.0243)	-0.7814 (0.8032)
Fixed effects	yes	yes	yes	yes
Observations	126	126	126	126
R-squared	0.4907	0.1686	0.2431	0.6016
Hausman test	2.31**	17.55***	3.33**	17.59***

Note: Standard errors in parentheses; *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Source: Authors' calculation.

For the aggregate data, the estimated results show that *grdp*, *papi*, and *pci* have a positive contribution to the progress of implementing the provincial SDGs in Vietnam. In specific, an additional point of *grdp*, *papi*, and *pci* could increase in turn 0.0936, 0.1201, and 1.6848 points of the performance of *psdi*. These results are supporting literature such as works by Phimphanthavong (2014), Koirala and Pradhan (2020), Nguyen *et al.* (2021), Dat and Hung (2023), and among others. Clearly, strong economic development would help a nation have more resources to finance and fund sustainable development programs. Even though some argue that economic growth and sustainable development have U-shaped relationship since a rapid growth rate need an exchange by the extension of using more natural resources, creating more environmentally polluted problems, the risks and uncertainties of social security, and so on. However, the benefits of the economic growth of localities in Vietnam could successfully absorb the negative effects

caused by itself, leading to the dominance of benefits over costs related to sustainable development issues. Finally, the estimated results also show an interesting indicator that there is no empirical evidence to demonstrate the effects of *pergrdp*, *pobi* and *policy* on the performance of *psdi*.

Next, we incorporate income level for estimation. To examine the status of income level of each province, we first calculate the mean of per capita income for 63 provinces in Vietnam in each year of 2020 and 2021 separately, then we take an average of two means for years of 2020 and 2021 as a critical income point, say *ICP*. The critical income point is calculated as the following equation:

$$ICP = \frac{1}{2} \sum_{t=1}^2 \left(\frac{1}{63} \sum_{i=1}^{63} pergrdp_i \right)_t. \quad (2)$$

For the purpose of simplicity, we categorize the income level of provincial localities in Vietnam into two groups only, namely high-income and low-income groups. The province *i* is indexed in the high-income group if the per capita income of the province is larger than or equal to the critical income point ($pergrdp_i \geq ICP$), otherwise, the province *i* is listed in the low-income group ($pergrdp_i < ICP$). The estimated results with indexing the income level are reported in Table 3.16. We perform the Hausman tests to check a suitable estimator, which is shown in the last column of Table 3.16. The Hausman tests indicate the fitness of the FEM method for estimation. Similar to the previous one, we represent the estimated results with the FEM estimator only, ones using the REM technique are shown in Appendix A1 (model 2).

Table 3.16. Estimated Results with Aggregate Data with Income Level

Variable	(1) lnpsdi	(2) lnpsdi	(3) lnpsdi	(4) lnpsdi
lngrdp	0.0991*** (0.0164)			0.0866*** (0.0153)
lnpergrdp	0.0000 (0.0003)			-0.0001 (0.0003)
lnpapi		0.1838*** (0.0405)		0.1222*** (0.0352)
lnpobi		0.0140 (0.0263)		0.0291 (0.0222)
lnpci			1.0337*** (0.2329)	0.6347*** (0.2028)
policy			-0.0108 (0.0214)	-0.0170 (0.0178)
income	0.0011* (0.0006)	0.0030*** (0.0004)	0.0026*** (0.0004)	0.0008** (0.0005)
Constant	2.7422*** (0.1750)	2.8112*** (0.2278)	-0.4471 (0.9668)	-0.5013 (0.8163)
Fixed effects	yes	yes	yes	yes
Observations	126	126	126	126
R-squared	0.5063	0.4228	0.4148	0.6103
Hausman test	1759.64*	14.15***	11.41***	95.06**

Note: Standard errors in parentheses; *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Source: Authors' calculation.

The empirical findings with incorporating the income level show that three variables *grdp*, *papi*, and *pci* are also the key determinants of implementation of the provincial SDGs in Vietnam. And, the coefficients of *pergrdp*, *pobi* and *policy* variables are statistically insignificant, implying that no matter the per capital income of a province is high or low, there are no empirical evidence to be found to support the impacts of these factors on the progress of achieving the provincial SDGs in

Vietnam. However, the estimated coefficient for *income* variable is statistically significant, suggesting that the high-income provinces could empirically perform the SDGs better than the low-income ones do. The findings are similar to some works in literature. Analyzing the progress of sustainable development in China, Xu *et al.* (2020) demonstrate that the richer and more developed regions tend to attain a higher level of sustainable development than the poorer and less developed ones do. The economic intuitions behind the results are as follows. First, the high-income provinces supposedly have more resources to positively support the sustainable development programs, and also have more resources to tolerate or commensurate the negative effects caused by the economic development, natural exploitation, and environmental problems. Second, citizens living in the high-income provinces conventionally receive a better education qualification rather than people living in the low-income ones (Tolley and Olson 1971; Sylwester 2000). Therefore, the high-income citizens would seemingly have better perceptions of the sustainable development issues that are able to significantly underpin the progress of achieving the provincial SDGs in Vietnam.

As mentioned in the previous parts, the explanatory variables *papi*, *pobi* and *pci* are composite indicators, and they are taken from a range of sub-component indices. Thus, we now run estimation with the sub-indices of *papi*, *pobi* and *pci* on purpose of digging more the effects of those sub-indices on the implementation of *psdi* in Vietnam. The empirical results are expressed in Table 3.17. We also incorporate the income level when estimating the effects of the sub-components of *papi*, *pobi*, and *pci* on the implementation of provincial SDGs. The

estimated results with the FEM technique are reported in Table 3.18. We note that the FEM technique is more suitable for estimation of both with and without incorporating income level that is based on the result of the Hausman tests, as shown in the last columns of Table 3.17 and Table 3.18, respectively. For reference, we provide estimations with and without indexing the income level using the REM technique in Appendix A2 and Appendix A3.

Table 3.17. Estimated Results with Sub-Components of papi, pobi, and pci			
Variable	(1) Inpsdi	(2) Inpsdi	(3) Inpsdi
Ingrdp			0.0725*** (0.0197)
Inpergrdp			-0.0000 (0.0003)
Inparticipationatlocallevels	-0.0390 (0.0389)		-0.0008 (0.0312)
Intransparency	-0.0067 (0.0531)		-0.0324 (0.0430)
Inverticalaccountability	-0.0467 (0.0480)		-0.0105 (0.0379)
Incontrolofcorruption	0.1079*** (0.0361)		0.0409** (0.0309)
Inpublicadministrativeprocedures	-0.1478*** (0.0382)		-0.0481 (0.0318)
Inpublicservicedelivery	0.0493 (0.0358)		0.0287 (0.0289)
Inenvironmentalgovernance	-0.0722** (0.0317)		-0.0260 (0.0275)
Inegovernance	0.2088*** (0.0450)		0.0551 (0.0387)
Inbudgettransparency	0.0283 (0.0253)		-0.0057 (0.0201)

Table 3.17. Continued

Variable	(1) Inpsdi	(2) Inpsdi	(3) Inpsdi
Incivilparticipation	0.0053 (0.0087)		0.0072 (0.0067)
lnentrycosts		-0.0063 (0.0165)	0.0038 (0.0165)
lnaccesstoland		0.0213 (0.0229)	0.0071 (0.0218)
lnpcitransparency		0.0153 (0.0198)	0.0203 (0.0187)
lnimecosts		0.0619*** (0.0192)	0.0235** (0.0190)
lninformalcharges		0.0251 (0.0210)	0.0261 (0.0205)
lnpolicybias		-0.0143 (0.0144)	-0.0091 (0.0137)
lnproactivity		0.0038 (0.0212)	0.0040 (0.0202)
lnbusinesssupportpolicy		0.0062 (0.0141)	-0.0221 (0.0157)
lnlaborpolicy		0.1144*** (0.0142)	0.0706*** (0.0172)
lnlawandorder		-0.0397* (0.0220)	-0.0149 (0.0212)
policy		0.0017 (0.0205)	-0.0069 (0.0193)
Constant	3.8373*** (0.1674)	2.6623*** (0.2484)	2.3855*** (0.3154)
Fixed effects	yes	yes	yes
Observations	126	126	126
R-squared	0.3298	0.5436	0.6670
Hausman test	13.16***	14.47***	12.92***

Note: Standard errors in parentheses; *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Source: Authors' calculation.

Given the empirical findings from Table 3.17 and Table 3.18, we arrive at some notable statements as follows. First, the estimated results with the sub-components of *papi*, *pobi*, and *pci* with and without indexing income level are almost consistent with the findings of the aggregate *papi*, *pobi*, and *pci* variables. In which, the main determinants of achieving the provincial SDGs in Vietnam are *grdp*, some sub-indexes of *papi* and *pci*; while the estimated coefficients of *pergrdp*, sub-indexes of *pobi*, and *policy* in turn come out with the statistically insignificant signs. And the income level plays some role in attaining the SDGs of localities in Vietnam. Second, there exists the heterogenous effects between the sub-components of *papi*, *pobi*, and *pci* variables. With respect to the sub-components of *papi*, the capacity, and ability of local authorities in controlling the corruption (*controlofcorruption*), the effectiveness of public administrative procedures (*publicadministrativeprocedures*), and a good provincial e-governance (*egovernance*) are the main sub-factors affecting the progress of attaining the provincial SDGs, and their magnitudes of the estimated coefficients are much different from each other. For the sub-indexes of *pci*, they are time costs and regulatory compliance (*timecosts*) and labor and training (*laborpolicy*).

Table 3.18. Estimated Results with Sub-Components of *papi*, *pobi*, and *pci* with Income Level

Variable	(1) Inpsdi	(2) Inpsdi	(3) Inpsdi
lngrdp			0.0676*** (0.0203)
lnpergrdp			-0.0002 (0.0003)
lnparticipationatlocallevels	-0.0200 (0.0350)		-0.0000 (0.0313)
lntransparency	-0.0237 (0.0476)		-0.0316 (0.0430)
lnverticalaccountability	-0.0325 (0.0430)		-0.0089 (0.0379)
lncontrolofcorruption	0.0946*** (0.0324)		0.0418** (0.0309)
lnpublicadministrativeprocedures	-0.1432*** (0.0342)		-0.0562* (0.0329)
lnpublicservicedelivery	0.0646** (0.0321)		0.0346 (0.0295)
lnenvironmentalgovernance	-0.0456 (0.0288)		-0.0247 (0.0275)
lnegovernance	0.1256*** (0.0430)		0.0504** (0.0390)
lnbudgettransparency	0.0114 (0.0228)		-0.0057 (0.0201)
lncivilparticipation	0.0037 (0.0077)		0.0064 (0.0067)
lnentrycosts		-0.0018 (0.0159)	0.0025 (0.0165)
lnaccesstoland		0.0100 (0.0223)	0.0037 (0.0221)
lnpcitransparency		0.0074 (0.0192)	0.0172 (0.0190)

Table 3.18. Continued

Variable	(1) lnpsdi	(2) lnpsdi	(3) lnpsdi
Intimecosts		0.0574*** (0.0185)	0.0263** (0.0193)
lninformalcharges		0.0290 (0.0202)	0.0272 (0.0205)
lnpolicybias		-0.0192 (0.0140)	-0.0102 (0.0137)
lnproactivity		-0.0007 (0.0204)	0.0027 (0.0203)
lnbusinesssupportpolicy		-0.0008 (0.0137)	-0.0218 (0.0157)
lnlaborpolicy		0.0892*** (0.0158)	0.0667*** (0.0176)
lnlawandorder		-0.0370* (0.0212)	-0.0173 (0.0213)
policy		0.0087 (0.0198)	-0.0044 (0.0195)
income	0.0025*** (0.0005)	0.0014*** (0.0004)	0.0006*** (0.0006)
Constant	3.8880*** (0.1499)	2.9748*** (0.2580)	2.5230*** (0.3460)
Fixed effects	yes	yes	yes
Observations	126	126	126
R-squared	0.4696	0.5818	0.6701
Hausman test	13.40***	12.29***	12.91***

Note: Standard errors in parentheses; *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Source: Authors' calculation.

The aggregate provincial sustainable development index is calculated based on the equal-weight method or the proportional measuring method that all components of *psdi* contribute equal proportions in the composite *psdi* index. However, the descriptive summary of fourteen sub-indexes

of *psdi* index as shown in Table 3.13 indicates that there are huge differences between the sub-index scores of *psdi*, and these are clearly visualized by the critical disparities in the mean, min, max values of the sub-indexes. As nature, it is believed that there are certain variances among the 14 sub-indexes of *psdi*. Given that we perform estimation for all the 14 sub-indexes of *psdi* separate to check whether the explanatory variables have varying effects on the 14 sub-indexes of *psdi*. We consider both cases of with and without integrating the income level. The estimated results using the FEM estimator are reported in Table 3.19 and Table 3.20.

With regard to the estimation technique, we note that the FEM method is more fitted than the REM one based on the Hausman tests located in the last columns of Table 3.19 and 3.20. For the purposes of reference, we also provide estimations for the sub-components of *psdi* and the sub-components of *papi*, *pobi*, *pci* with and without indexing the income level in Appendix A4 and A5, respectively.

Again, the empirical findings in Table 3.19 and 3.20 are relatively consistent with the previous estimations. There are some noteworthy interests as follows. First, the effects of independent factors on the fourteen sub-indexes of *psdi* are significantly varying, suggesting that there are natural-different characteristics of those sub-indicators. The results also indicate that applying the equal-weight method to gauge the aggregate *psdi* index may be sensitive since the explanatory variables do not have the same proportional effects on the sub-indexes of *psdi*. Second, there is no evidence to support a hypothesis that the economic size of provincial localities, say *gdp* positively contributes to the progress of implementing *psdi11*, *psdi13* and *psdi14* as the estimated coefficients

of those variables are statistically insignificant. While the factor even has a negative effect on that of *psdi12*. Note that the *psdi12* index represents indicators related to “Protect and sustainably develop forest; conserve biodiversity, develop ecosystem services; combat desertification; prevent the degradation of and rehabilitate land resources.” Until now, many strongly criticize that Vietnam has achieved the miracle economic growth based on exploiting natural resources and resulting in unsustainably degrading the environment (Vo and Ho 2021). Therefore, the economic growth might deter the fulfillments of *psdi12*. Third, the per capita income of localities is predicted to have negative signs on *psdi9* that represents “Reduce social inequalities”; while there is no evidence to confirm the positive contributions of the per capita income on the other sub-indexes of *psdi*. Reality also shows that provinces with world heritage sites often have advantages in tourism development, thereby increasing people’s income, but recently this is pushing many world heritage sites in the provinces of Vietnam faces many challenges due to economic development pressure. Intuitively, the higher level of the per capita income could often cause negative consequences to reducing inequality as it could expand the gaps and disparities within a country, especially in developing countries such as Vietnam (Nguyen and Pham 2018). Fourth, being different from the findings with the aggregate *psdi*, the coefficients of the *policy* factor on *psdi6* and *psdi8* are both statistically significant, but turn out with negative signs, suggesting that the provincial governances’ specific action plan promulgated according to the National Action Plan for implementation of 2030 Agenda is predicted to relatively put off the pursuing the *psdi6* and *psdi8* indicators. It is not very clear to explain the findings, but

a fact that many sub-policies and sub-procedures in Vietnam have been considered as the barriers of doing business for both enterprises (including domestic and foreign investors) and citizens (Tran *et al.* 2009; Van Bon 2019). To some extent these practices may partially explain the empirical findings.

Table 3.19. Estimated Results for Sub-Components of *psdi*

Variable	(1) Inpsdi1	(2) Inpsdi2	(3) Inpsdi3	(4) Inpsdi4	(5) Inpsdi5	(6) Inpsdi6	(7) Inpsdi7	(8) Inpsdi8	(9) Inpsdi9	(10) Inpsdi10	(11) Inpsdi11	(12) Inpsdi12	(13) Inpsdi13	(14) Inpsdi14
Ingrdp	0.23*** (0.05)	0.17*** (0.03)	0.04** (0.02)	0.09** (0.03)	0.04 (0.03)	0.16*** (0.04)	0.17*** (0.03)	0.26*** (0.04)	0.17*** (0.04)	0.10*** (0.02)	-0.03 (0.04)	-0.33*** (0.12)	0.06 (0.04)	0.06 (0.09)
Inpergrdp	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	-0.00*** (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)
Inpapi	0.20* (0.12)	-0.09 (0.08)	0.15*** (0.05)	0.26*** (0.08)	0.05 (0.07)	0.17* (0.09)	0.15* (0.08)	0.20** (0.09)	0.28*** (0.10)	0.08 (0.05)	0.15* (0.08)	0.38 (0.30)	-0.04 (0.11)	0.23 (0.21)
Inpobi	0.04 (0.07)	0.06 (0.05)	0.03 (0.03)	0.04 (0.05)	0.02 (0.05)	0.02 (0.05)	-0.07 (0.05)	0.05 (0.06)	-0.03 (0.06)	-0.04 (0.03)	0.04 (0.05)	-0.17 (0.19)	0.23*** (0.07)	0.22* (0.13)
Inpci	1.19* (0.66)	1.20*** (0.45)	0.83*** (0.27)	0.77 (0.47)	1.12*** (0.41)	1.73*** (0.49)	-0.44 (0.46)	0.52 (0.50)	0.86 (0.58)	0.68** (0.30)	0.62 (0.48)	-1.30 (1.69)	1.21* (0.61)	-1.48 (1.18)
policy	-0.04 (0.06)	0.02 (0.04)	0.02 (0.02)	-0.03 (0.04)	-0.05 (0.04)	-0.10** (0.04)	-0.04 (0.04)	-0.08* (0.04)	-0.01 (0.05)	-0.01 (0.03)	0.00 (0.04)	0.07 (0.15)	0.02 (0.05)	-0.15 (0.10)
Constant	-4.86* (2.63)	-2.97* (1.79)	-0.62 (1.06)	-1.75 (1.89)	-1.31 (1.65)	-5.92*** (1.96)	2.95 (1.84)	-3.10 (2.00)	-2.77 (2.31)	-0.19 (1.17)	0.88 (1.91)	10.85 (6.74)	-2.55 (2.44)	6.73 (4.68)
Fixed effects	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Observations	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126
R-squared	0.39	0.38	0.25	0.31	0.14	0.47	0.41	0.59	0.24	0.40	0.06	0.12	0.21	0.12
Hausman test	10.94***	0.73***	12.00***	0.38**	43.23**	4.17***	22.50***	20.98*	5.48***	5.31***	28.78***	0.68**	9.48***	42.13***

Note: Standard errors in parentheses; *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Source: Authors' calculation.

Table 3.20. Estimated Results for Sub-Components of *psdi* with Income Level

Variable	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)
	lnpsdi1	lnpsdi2	lnpsdi3	lnpsdi4	lnpsdi5	lnpsdi6	lnpsdi7	lnpsdi8	lnpsdi9	lnpsdi10	lnpsdi11	lnpsdi12	lnpsdi13	lnpsdi14
lngrdp	0.23*** (0.05)	0.14*** (0.03)	0.03 (0.02)	0.06* (0.04)	0.03 (0.03)	0.15*** (0.04)	0.11*** (0.03)	0.21*** (0.04)	0.14*** (0.04)	0.10*** (0.02)	-0.05 (0.04)	-0.33*** (0.12)	0.04 (0.05)	0.02 (0.09)
lnpergrdp	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00*** (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)
lnpapi	0.21* (0.12)	-0.08 (0.08)	0.15*** (0.05)	0.27*** (0.08)	0.05 (0.07)	0.17* (0.09)	0.16** (0.08)	0.21** (0.09)	0.29*** (0.10)	0.08 (0.05)	0.15* (0.08)	0.37 (0.29)	-0.04 (0.11)	0.23 (0.20)
lnpobi	0.03 (0.07)	0.05 (0.05)	0.03 (0.03)	0.03 (0.05)	0.02 (0.05)	0.01 (0.05)	-0.06 (0.05)	0.05 (0.05)	-0.03 (0.06)	-0.04 (0.03)	0.05 (0.05)	-0.11 (0.18)	0.22*** (0.07)	0.22* (0.13)
lnpci	1.13* (0.67)	1.05** (0.45)	0.72*** (0.27)	0.61 (0.47)	1.07** (0.42)	1.64*** (0.50)	-0.64 (0.44)	0.39 (0.49)	0.77 (0.58)	0.68** (0.30)	0.42 (0.48)	-2.31 (1.65)	1.07* (0.62)	-1.53 (1.15)
policy	-0.04 (0.06)	0.02 (0.04)	0.02 (0.02)	-0.02 (0.04)	-0.05 (0.04)	-0.09** (0.04)	-0.02 (0.04)	-0.07* (0.04)	-0.00 (0.05)	-0.01 (0.03)	0.01 (0.04)	0.05 (0.14)	0.02 (0.05)	-0.13 (0.10)
income	0.00 (0.00)	0.00** (0.00)	0.00** (0.00)	0.00** (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.01*** (0.00)	0.01*** (0.00)	0.00* (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00* (0.00)	0.02*** (0.01)	0.00 (0.00)	0.01*** (0.00)
Constant	-4.55* (2.70)	-2.11 (1.79)	-0.08 (1.08)	-0.82 (1.92)	-1.06 (1.69)	-5.43*** (2.02)	4.28** (1.77)	-2.00 (1.97)	-2.12 (2.32)	-0.19 (1.21)	1.78 (1.94)	14.98** (6.59)	-1.71 (2.48)	7.48 (4.57)
Fixed effects	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Observations	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126
R-squared	0.39	0.40	0.28	0.33	0.14	0.47	0.48	0.62	0.26	0.40	0.09	0.20	0.22	0.17
Hausman test	10.78***	0.33***	9.63***	0.22***	42.96**	4.40**	23.40**	31.98**	3.70***	5.05***	4.57***	0.32**	8.15**	44.18***

Note: Standard errors in parentheses; *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Source: Authors' calculation.

2.3.3. Heterogeneity

As we mentioned in the previous section there are huge disparities in terms of the indicators of economic development, social engagement, and institutional engagement between the provinces in Vietnam. Therefore, it is reasonable to believe that heterogeneous problems exist in estimation. According to the Vietnam Law on Planning 2017, the Government of Vietnam classifies the provincial and municipal localities

into six economic regions including Red River Delta (region 1), Northern Midland and Mountain (region 2), North-Central Coast and South-Central Coast (region 3), Central Highlands (region 4), Southeast (region 5), and Mekong River Delta (region 6). This classification is mostly grounded given by the economic and geographic similarities among the provinces. Noted that concerning national geography, all 63 provinces and municipalities in Vietnam are grouped into three geographic regions that are then subdivided into eight geographic sub-regions. In this study, we refer to the classification of the six economic sub-regions rather than that of the eight geographic sub-regions. Because the region-economic classification not only has partially embedded the characteristics of geographic regions but also has represented the similarities of economic regions. Thus, the region-economic classification would allegedly identify the heterogeneous problems between the regions of Vietnam.

Given that we perform estimation for six economic regions to figure out the differences in implementing the SDGs between the localities in Vietnam. The estimated results for the six economic regions in Vietnam with the aggregated data with and without indexing the income level using the FEM estimator are reported in Table 3.21 and Table 3.22, respectively. Similarly, the Hausman tests shown in the last columns of those two tables demonstrate that the FEM estimator is more suitable. For reference, the estimation incorporating with and without income level using the REM estimator is provided in Appendix A6 and Appendix A7, respectively.

Table 3.21. Estimated Results for Regions with Aggregate Data

Variable	Region 1 Inpsdi	Region 2 Inpsdi	Region 3 Inpsdi	Region 4 Inpsdi	Region 5 Inpsdi	Region 6 Inpsdi
Ingrdp	0.0166 (0.0101)	0.0710 (0.0632)	0.0319 (0.0254)	-0.1040 (0.0502)	0.0859*** (0.0136)	-0.0349 (0.0347)
pergrdp	0.0005** (0.0002)	0.0016 (0.0018)	0.0018* (0.0010)	0.0124** (0.0020)	-0.0004** (0.0001)	0.0020* (0.0010)
papi	-0.0142 (0.0316)	0.2356** (0.1073)	0.0402 (0.0488)	0.0091 (0.1185)	0.0787 (0.0519)	0.0866 (0.0524)
Inpobi	-0.0246 (0.0258)	-0.0597 (0.0877)	-0.0033 (0.0403)	0.0175 (0.0577)	0.0656** (0.0189)	0.0129 (0.0293)
Inpci	-0.0045 (0.1669)	-0.2588 (0.8605)	1.0062*** (0.3423)	-0.2391 (0.9336)	1.3143 (0.8554)	0.7457*** (0.2261)
policy	-0.0003 (0.0116)	0.0566 (0.0766)	-0.0055 (0.0253)	0.1711** (0.0389)	-0.0310 (0.0329)	-0.0109 (0.0187)
Constant	3.9976*** (0.6518)	2.9094 (3.6288)	-0.9652 (1.3198)	4.9109 (3.2627)	-3.1352 (3.8206)	0.5228 (0.9516)
Fixed effect	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Observations	22	28	28	10	12	26
R-squared	0.7601	0.6436	0.6231	0.9755	0.9657	0.6773
Hausman test	3.48***	2.85***	5.30***	0.22***	10.70***	11.58***

Note: 1) Region 1, Region 2, Region 3, Region 4, Region 5, and Region 6 stand for Red River Delta, Northern Midlands and Mountainous Areas, Northern Central and Central Coast, Central Highlands, Southeast, and Mekong River Delta, respectively.

2) Standard errors in parentheses; *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Source: Authors' calculation.

Remarkably, the findings from Table 3.21 and 3.22 strongly confirm a statement that the achievement towards the sustainable development and its key determinants are heterogeneous between the six-economic regions due to their inherent characteristics in nature. For the economic development factors, being different from the national level, the *pergrdp* variable is more likely to affect the implementation of *psdi* since its estimated coefficient for all regions, excepting for Northern Midland

and Mountain (region 2), is statistically significant. While the *grdp* variable only contributes positively to the sustainable development of Southeast (region 5), and it does not have empirical evidence to confirm the effect of *grdp* on the sustainable development of other regions. For the social engagement factors, the *papi* and *pobi* variables empirically support the sustainable development of only region 2 and region 5 respectively, while no evidence is empirically found for other regions. For the institutional factors, the *pci* variable is predicted to have positive impacts on the *psdi* performance of region 3 and region 6, while it does not impact on that of other regions. The estimated results for the *policy* variable show that the variable has positive impacts on the achievement of *psdi* in Central Highlands only (Region 4).

Table 3.22. Estimated Results for Regions with Aggregate Data with Income Level						
Variable	Region 1 Inpsdi	Region 2 Inpsdi	Region 3 Inpsdi	Region 4 Inpsdi	Region 5 Inpsdi	Region 6 Inpsdi
lngrdp	0.0176 (0.0099)	0.0688 (0.0636)	0.0283 (0.0258)	-0.1040 (0.0502)	0.0669* (0.0227)	-0.0497 (0.0344)
pergrdp	0.0004** (0.0003)	0.0037 (0.0030)	0.0010* (0.0013)	0.0124** (0.0020)	-0.0003* (0.0001)	0.0004** (0.0013)
papi	-0.0017 (0.0326)	0.2112* (0.1113)	0.0397 (0.0490)	0.0091 (0.1185)	0.0430 (0.0618)	0.0892* (0.0502)
lnpobi	-0.0220 (0.0254)	-0.0267 (0.0958)	-0.0191 (0.0441)	0.0175 (0.0577)	0.0669** (0.0188)	0.0224 (0.0287)
lnpci	-0.0722 (0.1725)	0.0878 (0.9502)	1.0653*** (0.3501)	-0.2391 (0.9336)	0.2895 (1.2980)	0.7333*** (0.2165)
policy	0.0093 (0.0137)	0.0229 (0.0860)	-0.0120 (0.0264)	0.1711** (0.0389)	-0.0609 (0.0434)	-0.0068 (0.0181)
income	0.0005 (0.0004)	-0.0023 (0.0026)	0.0009 (0.0010)	0.0000 (0.0040)	0.0012 (0.0012)	0.0014 (0.0009)

Table 3.22. Continued

Variable	Region 1 Inpsdi	Region 2 Inpsdi	Region 3 Inpsdi	Region 4 Inpsdi	Region 5 Inpsdi	Region 6 Inpsdi
Constant	4.1896*** (0.6576)	1.4253 (4.0174)	-1.0517 (1.3293)	4.9109 (3.2627)	1.4979 (5.8383)	0.7815 (0.9248)
Fixed effect	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Observations	22	28	28	10	12	26
R-squared	0.7857	0.6576	0.6386	0.9755	0.9748	0.7207
Hausman test	6.47***	3.66***	5.04**	0.22*	29.29***	21.02***

Note: 1) Region 1, Region 2, Region 3, Region 4, Region 5, and Region 6 stand for Red River Delta, Northern Midlands and Mountainous Areas, Northern Central and Central Coast, Central Highlands, Southeast, and Mekong River Delta, respectively.

2) Standard errors in parentheses; *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$.

Source: Authors' calculation.

The estimated results with incorporating the income level come out with consistent findings for those without incorporating the income level. But interestingly, the estimated coefficients of the income level variable are statistically insignificant, indicating that there is no empirical evidence to confirm that the difference in income between the regional provinces plays a role in implementing the SDGs. This can be intuitively explained due to the minor differences between the income level and the *psdi* index among the provinces in the same region in Vietnam as we use the economic-regional classification consisting of both economic and geographic characteristics.

2.4. Empirical Findings

Considering 12 Asian countries, Koirala and Pradhan (2020) show that per capita income and financial development have positive impacts on sustainable development, while inflation rate, and natural resource

rents have negative impacts. Similarly, Phimphanthavong (2014) indicates that social improvement contributed passively to sustainable development in Laos. The study also indicates that economic growth went in a parallel direction with the degree of sustainable development, suggesting that economic development significantly affected the achievement of sustainable development in Laos. For the case of Vietnam, a work by Dat and Hung (2023) finds that economic development, social development, and environmental development are three key determinants of sustainable development. Similar findings are found in a work by Nguyen *et al.* (2021). Hence, at both regional and national levels, the main factors affecting sustainable development are the vectors of economic development, social engagement, and institutional engagement. Our empirical findings, to some extent, confirm the literature statements.

Empirical analysis shows, at the national level, towards the SDGs, the Vietnamese Government should simultaneously enhance all three key factors consisting of economic development (*gndp*), social engagement (*papi*), and institutional engagement (*pci*). However, some interesting findings are necessary to note when promulgating the policies and strategies related to sustainable development in Vietnam.

First, the provincial per capita income is predicted to not have impacts on the implementation of *psdi*. Allegedly, the provincial per capita income in Vietnam did not go along with the pattern of the provincial economic growth; or economic development and sustainable development were correlated at the national level rather than at the individual level.

Second, the provincial budget disclosure index did not empirically support the provincial sustainable development, it shows that the policies associated to improving the trust of local people and development

partners for local budget management through forms of transparency, accountability, and budget participation should be revised and amended, or at least re-assessed.

Third, the specifications of the provincial action plans based on the National Action Plan for implementation of 2030 Agenda could not make sense to the provincial sustainable development. This gives rise of the suspicious efficiency of policies on sustainable development at the provincial level. Therefore, the Government, on the one side, should take action to push up the provincial authorities to circulate action plans toward the 2030 Agenda; on the other side, the Government should guide and assess thoroughly the provincial action plans for the 2030 Agenda to ensure that these provincial action plans are going into a right direction.

Fourth, the rich provinces were empirically estimated to do sustainable development better than the poor ones. So, the Government might pay more attention to the poor provinces through the supporting programs of finance, policy, and human resources.

Last, there is no evidence about the effects of per capita income, *pobi*, on the province SDGs in Vietnam. To some extent, it implies that the implementation of SDGs in general and *psdi* in particular in Vietnam is likely to be effective by the involvement of governing administration rather than the participations of individuals. To enhance the progress towards sustainable development, the Government of Vietnam might put more effort into their people or pay more attention to creating more chances, proliferating, and propagating profound benefits of sustainable development that can help the people get involved in this progress.

With respect to the regional heterogeneity, the study quantitatively finds that sustainable development and its key determinants are much heterogeneous between the regions of Vietnam. The findings are consistent with some previous works and contribute to the lack of existing literature on sustainable development and its determinants. Assessing sustainable development progress in China, Xu *et al.* (2020) indicate that there are featured differences in achieving sustainable development goals among regions over time. Evaluating the implementation of the people pillar of sustainable development goals in 25 provinces in Northern region of Vietnam, Nguyen *et al.* (2021) show that the progress towards sustainable development between Northern localities in Vietnam is unbalanced. These findings strongly suggest that the Vietnamese Government, in pursuing the sustainable development goals, should take into account the economic, social, and institutional gaps between regions in implementing/promulgating the policies and strategies related to sustainable development.

3. The Context, Difficulties, and Challenges for Implementing SDGs in Vietnam

3.1. The World Context

In 2023, the world economy faced many shocks, such as high inflation, banking crisis, global trade, and international investment, causing world economic growth to continue to decline. In contrast to the world economic deceleration is the continuous development of the of the 4th scientific and industrial revolution, notably the explosion of

artificial intelligence (AI). To date, strategic competition between major countries and conflicts in Ukraine and the Gaza Strip are still complicated and show no signs of ending. Meanwhile, other regions also appear to have many signs of political instability, with a series of coups in Western and Central Africa, conflicts in Europe, and tensions in East Asia. The year 2023 also caused many global extreme weather events, from floods and earthquakes to forest fires and severe droughts. This is the hottest year in recorded history.

The combined impacts of natural disasters and climate change, geopolitical conflicts, weak economic recovery, along with the lingering impact of the COVID-19 epidemic are taking vulnerable groups in difficulties, causing the world to face the risk of famine outbreaks, increasing inequality, and rising poverty rate. At the same time, the fourth industrial revolution is also becoming a challenge for countries with cheap labor and slow development of science and technology and creative innovation. All of this has clearly revealed the systematic difficulties and challenges that hindered the progress in implementing the SDGs by 2030.

Assessing the halfway mark of implementing the SDGs, the UN's recent report in July 2023 showed that, out of the 140 specific goals that can be assessed, up to 50% of the goals are behind schedule, and more than 30% of the goals have no progress, or even regress compared to 2015 (Sachs *et al.* 2023). In the coming time, it is predicted that the world will continue to face many complex and rapid developments, along with a lot of new, unexpected, and highly uncertain factors, presenting risks in both the short and long term. This makes the already difficult implementation of the SDGs in global scope even more difficult.

3.2. Difficulties and Challenges in Implementing SDGs in Vietnam

In 2023, Vietnam's economy continued its recovery trend, with economic growth reaching 5.05% (General Statistics Office of Vietnam 2024). Although it has not yet reached the set target, it is still nearly the highest growth rate in Asia-Pacific region. However, Vietnam's economy remains shortcomings and limitations in the quality of economic growth, management of resource exploitation and use, pollution control and environment protection. Besides, Vietnam cannot avoid impacts from the world context, unfavorably affecting the progress of implementing the SDGs.

There are still many SDGs in Vietnam that face difficulties and challenges and are difficult to achieve on schedule by 2030. Before the COVID-19 epidemic occurred, according to the 2020 National Report: Five -year progress in implementing the SDGs, Viet Nam is expected to achieve 5 out of 17 SDGs by 2030 (SDG1, SDG 2, SDG 4, SDG 13, and SDG 17); There are 2 SDGs where it will be very challenging to complete by 2030 and the remaining 10 SDGs will still face difficulties and challenges to be completed. Out of 115 targets, 54 targets are expected to be completed (accounting for approximately 47%), but 48 targets (accounting for 41.7%) will still face difficulties and challenges, and 13 targets (11.3%) will be very challenging to realize by 2030 (Ministry of Planning and Investment of Vietnam 2021). The prolonged impact of the COVID-19 epidemic and the complex fluctuations in the world situation, along with climate change, have caused many indexes to regress compared to 2015. With the world context and domestic

situation as analyzed above, Vietnam's ability to achieve the SDGs by 2030 faces even more difficulties and challenges. To date, Vietnam has passed the halfway mark of implementing the SDGs. However, according to the global SDG Index, Vietnam's progress in implementing the SDGs has only increased slightly from 70.6 points in 2015 to 73.32 points in 2022 - too slow to achieve the SDGs by 2030.

Currently, progress in implementing the SDGs in Vietnam is facing the following difficulties and challenges:

Firstly, socio-economic development is not truly effective and unsustainable. Economic restructuring associated with new growth models is still slow; Science and technology development is still limited and has not created a driving force for growth; Growth is highly dependent on investment capital, growth motivation is highly reliant on the foreign investment sector; Productivity and competitiveness of the economy are not high; The gap between rich and poor tends to increase; The development gap between provinces and regions is still relatively large; The urbanization process continues to take place rapidly, creating great pressure on the need for infrastructure development and environmental pollution treatment. The management, exploitation, and use of water, natural resources, and land are ineffective.

Secondly, the goal of NAP 2030 is that by 2020, Vietnam's SDGs will be fully integrated into the 10-year, 5-year, and annual socio-economic development strategies and plans of sectors and localities. However, due to socio-economic conditions, up to now, some provincial governments and several sectors have not announced specific action plans.

Thirdly, progress in implementing the SDGs between provinces/regions has large differences. According to Vietnam's provincial sustainable development index (PSDI), the average score of 63 provinces and cities in Vietnam in 2021 increased to 51.38 points. The province with the highest PSDI score is Da Nang, with 65.28 points; the lowest is Ha Giang, with 37.28 points. The economic region with the highest PSDI score is the Red River Delta, with 60.59 points, and the lowest is the Central Highlands, with 43.27 points. These data show that progress in implementing the SDGs among provinces, cities, and regions in Vietnam has a large difference and is still very far from the target of 100 points. The reason is that social policies have not yet covered all target groups and have not been implemented synchronously; Inter-sectoral and inter-regional coordination is not tight. Because the SDGs have highly interdisciplinary in policy formulation and implementation as well as the responsibilities of all participating parties, the implementation cannot avoid difficulties and challenges. In fact, inter-sectoral and inter-regional coordination, and cooperation in the process of implementing the SDGs in Vietnam have not been given due attention, and therefore, the effectiveness of SDGs implementation in some localities is still low.

Fourthly, mobilizing resources to promote the implementation of the SDGs faces many difficulties and challenges, especially in the context of economic recovery after the COVID-19 epidemic. Due to the impact of the COVID-19 epidemic, Vietnam's budget revenue/GDP tends to decrease; ODA sources decreased significantly, especially after Vietnam became a lower middle-income country in 2010; Capital mobilized from FDI, and remittances continue to remain at a high level but depends

on many external factors and the domestic business environment.

Fifthly, the lack of data to monitor and evaluate progress in implementing the SDGs is a major challenge in Vietnam. Currently, only 136/158 indicators have aggregate data nationwide, which also leads to inevitable limitations in the process of monitoring and evaluating Vietnam's progress in implementing the SDGs. In addition, the lack of updated data for Vietnam in data sources of international organizations (such as UN organizations and OECD) has also affected Vietnam's overall SDG score in recent times.

4. Sub-Conclusion of Chapter 3

Vietnam has passed the halfway mark of implementing the SDGs according to the 2030 Agenda. Vietnam has endured a difficult period due to the prolonged impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, and complicated and unpredictable developments in the world economy. However, with the efforts of the entire political system and society to implement the SDGs with the core motto “No one is left behind,” Vietnam has made impressive developments since the issuance of the NAP 2030. During 2016-2022, Vietnam's SDG index scores, in general, and most index scores for each SDG in Vietnam, in particular, showed an increased trend. Vietnam's SDG index scores were higher than the average SDG index score of the world and of the East and South Asia region, significantly higher than the average SDG index score of the group of lower middle-income countries, even higher than the SDG index scores of some upper middle-income countries such as China,

Singapore, Indonesia, and Malaysia. In 2022, according to the UN's global ranking of SDGs implementation, Vietnam ranked the 55th in the world, the 3rd out of 88 countries in the group of low-middle income countries, and the 12th out of 88 middle-income countries (both low and high rankings). This shows that the correlation between SDI scores and per capita income is unclear.

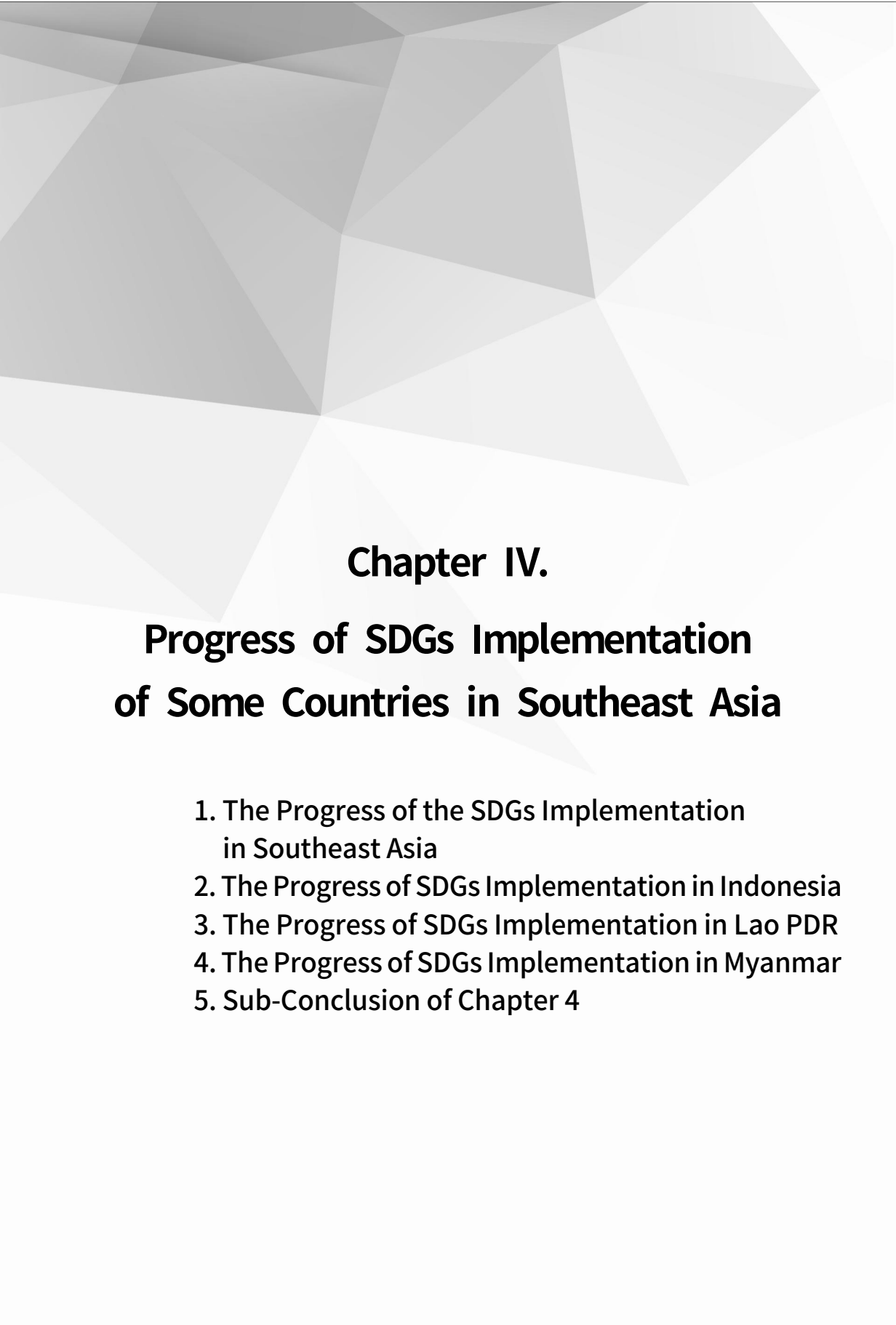
Since making its commitment to implement the SDGs in the 2030 Agenda, Vietnam has achieved many outstanding progress, such as poverty reduction (SDG 1); achieving national health insurance (SDG 3); providing clean water for 98.1% of the population and hygienic toilets for 95.6% of the population (SDG 6); improving access to quality education (SDG 4); impressive improvement in industrial development, increased innovation and infrastructure building (SDG 9); Reducing social inequality (SDG 10). However, most of Vietnam's SDG are still facing many difficulties and challenges, such as accelerating the progress of hunger eradication, especially addressing malnutrition among ethnic minority children (SDG 2); ensuring healthy lives, focusing on strengthening basic health services for people (SDG 3); ensuring quality, equitable, and comprehensive education (SDG 4); promoting gender equality, addressing gender-based violence and the burden of unpaid care work (SDG 5); promoting sustainable employment, maintaining inclusive economic growth, and increasing labor productivity (SDG 8); treating urban and rural environmental pollution (SDG 11); accelerating in promoting sustainable production and consumption (SDG 12).

According to Vietnam's provincial sustainable development index (PSDI), in 2021, the average score of 63 provinces and cities in Vietnam increased to 51.38 points, with the province with the highest PSDI

score of 65.28, the lowest one of 37.28 points. The economic region with the highest PSDI score is the Red River Delta with 60.59 points and the lowest one is the Central Highlands with 43.27 points. These data show that progress in implementing SDGs at provincial and regional levels in Vietnam is still very far from the target of 100 points and the gap in SDG implementation in Vietnam between provinces and regions is quite large.

According to Vietnam's PSDI, the average PSDI score of 63 provinces and cities in Vietnam in 2021 increased to 51.38 points, the difference in PSDI between provinces is 28 points, similarly the gap between regions is 17.32 points. These data show that progress in implementing SDGs at provincial and regional levels in Vietnam is still very far from the target of 100 points. The difference in implementing SDGs in Vietnam between provinces and regions is quite large.

Regarding the factors affecting the progress of SDG implementation at the provincial level, according to empirical results, the Vietnam Government needs to simultaneously strengthen all three main factors: economic development (*grdp*), social cohesion (*papt*) and institutional cohesion (*pa*). Several issues need to be kept in mind when promulgating policies and strategies related to sustainable development in Vietnam: Average per capita income; provincial budgets and action plans have no impact or support the implementation of SDGs and sustainable development of the province; There is a large gap in SDG implementation between rich and poor provinces. Therefore, the Government should have policies to support poor provinces with more resources.



Chapter IV.

Progress of SDGs Implementation of Some Countries in Southeast Asia

- 1. The Progress of the SDGs Implementation
in Southeast Asia**
- 2. The Progress of SDGs Implementation in Indonesia**
- 3. The Progress of SDGs Implementation in Lao PDR**
- 4. The Progress of SDGs Implementation in Myanmar**
- 5. Sub-Conclusion of Chapter 4**

In today's ever-evolving landscape, it is of utmost importance for ASEAN countries to embrace a more prominent and proactive role in driving the worldwide implementation of the SDGs, emphasizing taking the lead within the dynamic Asia Pacific Region. Collective SDG implementation within ASEAN will contribute to the shared aspiration of fostering lasting peace, security, and stability, promoting sustainable economic growth, equitable prosperity, and societal progress in the region. Therefore, it becomes imperative to draw valuable lessons from each other's triumphs and setbacks within the region. Given the dynamic and forward-thinking engagement of all member states in the global pursuit of SDGs, the ASEAN communities themselves serve as invaluable repositories of knowledge and insights that can further bolster collaborative efforts towards SDGs achievement. Indeed, the experiences of Indonesia, Laos, and Myanmar are compelling cases for other ASEAN countries to learn from, and they have also demonstrated an openness to receiving insights and lessons from fellow ASEAN countries.

1. The Progress of the SDGs Implementation in Southeast Asia

1.1. Implementing the SDGs in Southeast Asia

Rapid economic growth, accompanied by social inequality, has put pressure on resources for Southeast Asian countries. Many transboundary environmental problems, such as air, water, and soil pollution, along with the decline of natural resources and biodiversity, are becoming

increasingly serious. The Southeast Asia region is one of the places most affected by climate change. Recognizing the importance of sustainable development, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has committed and made efforts to promote the implementation of the SDGs.

1.1.1. ASEAN's Commitment to the SDGs

1.1.1.1. ASEAN Community Vision 2025

ASEAN has made a commitment to achieving the SDGs by 2030. In 2017, ASEAN took a significant step towards promoting the SDGs by adopting the “ASEAN Community Vision 2025.” This vision serves as a guiding framework that aligns with the SDGs and reflects ASEAN's commitment to regional integration and sustainable development. The vision's primary purpose is to provide a roadmap for ASEAN's efforts to achieve the SDGs while addressing regional priorities and challenges. It emphasizes the importance of cooperation among member states to ensure that development in the region is inclusive, equitable, and sustainable.

1.1.1.2. SDGs Integration into National Agendas

ASEAN member states have demonstrated their commitment to the SDGs by integrating them into their respective national development agendas and strategies. This integration signifies a shared commitment to aligning domestic policies and initiatives with global goals. In recent years, ASEAN member states have adopted national-level policies and initiatives to promote the SDGs. Multiple ASEAN nations have developed national SDG promotion strategies and programs. Malaysia,

for instance, has produced an SDG Roadmap outlining major action priorities and identifying precise targets and indicators for each SDG. Thailand has also made a 20-year National Strategy that emphasizes sustainable development and the SDGs.

1.1.2. Key Strategies and Initiatives of ASEAN

1.1.2.1. Regional Coordination and Collaboration

ASEAN places a strong emphasis on regional coordination and collaboration as a fundamental strategy for promoting the SDGs. Several key initiatives and mechanisms facilitate cooperation among member states in addressing shared challenges:

(1) ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC): The ASCC pillar of ASEAN focuses on social development and aims to promote social justice and human rights. It serves as a platform for member states to work together on issues related to health, education, gender equality, and poverty reduction, which are central to the SDGs. Through the ASCC, ASEAN fosters collaboration on critical areas of social development that contribute to achieving the SDGs.

(2) ASEAN Plus Three (APT): APT includes ASEAN member states and key regional partners, including China, Japan, and Korea. This platform promotes regional cooperation in various fields, including sustainable development, education, and healthcare, which align with the SDGs. Collaborative efforts within the APT framework contribute to the achievement of SDGs in the region.

(3) ASEAN+1 and ASEAN+6 Dialogues: These dialogues involve ASEAN and its dialogue partners, fostering collaboration on various regional issues, including sustainable development. Dialogues with

entities such as the United Nations and the World Bank also play a role in advancing the SDGs regionally. By engaging in these dialogues, ASEAN enhances its partnerships and promotes shared efforts towards sustainable development.

Recently, the 17th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Environment (AMME17), held on August 23, 2023, in Vientiane Capital, Laos, signifies a crucial step forward. The conference, chaired by Ms. Bounkham Vorachit, Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of Laos, and Mr. Kao Kim Hourn, Secretary-General of ASEAN, provides an opportunity for ASEAN member countries to devise solutions and directions for enhancing the practicality and effectiveness of ASOEN's activities. These efforts align with achieving environmental sustainability goals within the framework of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Master Plan and ASEAN Community Vision 2025 while also contributing to the United Nations' SDGs for 2030.

1.1.2.2. Global Partnerships

ASEAN can strengthen its partnerships with international organizations, donor countries, and civil society to access resources, technical expertise, and knowledge sharing. Collaborative efforts can facilitate capacity building, technology transfer, and sustainable development initiatives. These global partnerships are crucial for addressing regional and global challenges collectively.

On September 6, 2023, the 26th ASEAN+3 Summit, which includes ASEAN plus China, Japan, and Korea, reaffirmed the significance of ASEAN+3 cooperation for peace, stability, cooperation, and development. Leaders from ASEAN+3 countries agreed to implement

the ASEAN+3 Cooperation Plan during 2023-2027 effectively. This plan includes a focus on leveraging cooperation in digital transformation, digital economy, e-commerce, fintech, AI, green finance, and green technology. These efforts aim to drive inclusive growth and sustainable development, ultimately benefiting the people of the region. Additionally, the leaders emphasized the need to coordinate efforts to ensure food security for each country and the entire region, even in challenging situations. This reflects the commitment to regional cooperation and sustainable development in ASEAN+3.

1.1.2.3. Capacity Building and Technical Assistance

Capacity building and technical assistance are pivotal in ASEAN's strategy to promote the SDGs. They have established various initiatives, including ASEAN Training Centers, offering training and knowledge-sharing for member state officials in sustainable development, governance, and environmental management to bolster their skills for more effective policymaking. Additionally, the ASEAN Cooperation on Education, Science, and Technology (ASCOBIST) focuses on enhancing innovation and human capital development among member states, strengthening their ability to drive sustainable development. The ASEAN-Japan Collaborative Education Program (AJEEP) concentrates on science and technology education, aiming to elevate educational quality and outcomes in alignment with SDG 4 (Quality Education), furthering the SDGs' achievement in ASEAN.

1.1.2.4. Data, Monitoring, and Evaluation

Reliable data and effective monitoring mechanisms are essential for

tracking progress toward the SDGs. ASEAN has undertaken efforts to improve data collection, reporting, and analysis:

(1) ASEAN Community Statistical System (ACSS): ACSS is designed to enhance the availability and quality of statistical data in ASEAN member states. It supports evidence-based policymaking and SDGs monitoring by providing accurate and up-to-date information. ACSS contributes to informed decision-making and progress assessment related to the SDGs.

(2) ASEAN Statistical Yearbook: This annual publication provides comprehensive statistics on various socio-economic indicators in ASEAN member states. It serves as a valuable resource for assessing progress toward the SDGs and facilitates benchmarking among member states. The yearbook supports data-driven approaches to achieving SDGs.

The environmental components of the SDGs are commonly regarded as insufficient, notably in Asia. This analysis demonstrated that insufficient progress on the environmental aspect of the SDGs is neither attributable to a lack of environmental policies or a lower prioritization of environmental policies for SDG targets. About 600 tangible environment-related policies were reported by ASEAN nations in their VNRs, dispersed extensively throughout many SDGs and accounting for around 40 percent of their total reported SDG-related policies. There was no correlation between the number of environmental policies and the GDP, GDP per capita, or VNR date (Ellis 2022). Not only minor projects or programs, but even national action plans, strategies, legislation, and regulations appeared to be major policies. Nonetheless, certain significant existing environmental policies, such as those regarding air pollution, were typically omitted from VNRs.

1.1.2.5. Public Awareness and Stakeholder Engagement

ASEAN recognizes the importance of engaging the public and stakeholders in promoting the SDGs. Initiatives in this area include:

(1) ASEAN Youth Forum: This platform engages young people in discussions on sustainable development and encourages their active participation in SDG-related activities. By involving the youth, ASEAN fosters a sense of ownership and commitment to the SDGs among future leaders.

(2) ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN People's Forum: These forums provide a space for civil society organizations to contribute to the ASEAN agenda, including discussions on sustainable development. By engaging with civil society, ASEAN ensures that a wide range of voices and perspectives are considered in SDG-related initiatives.

1.1.2.6. Green bonds promotion

In 2017, ASEAN introduced the Green Bond Standards (ASEAN GBS), issued by the ASEAN Capital Markets Forum (ACMF). The ASEAN GBS is a significant step towards implementing commitments under the Paris Agreement and the SDGs. It aims to standardize rules for green bonds across ASEAN member countries, promoting investments in environmentally sustainable projects. Green investments in ASEAN hold enormous potential, driven by factors such as economic growth, population increase, and environmental consciousness. The demand for green investment in ASEAN until 2030 is estimated to be around 3 trillion USD. By promoting green bonds and sustainable investments, ASEAN contributes to environmental sustainability while aligning with the SDGs (Arshad 2018).

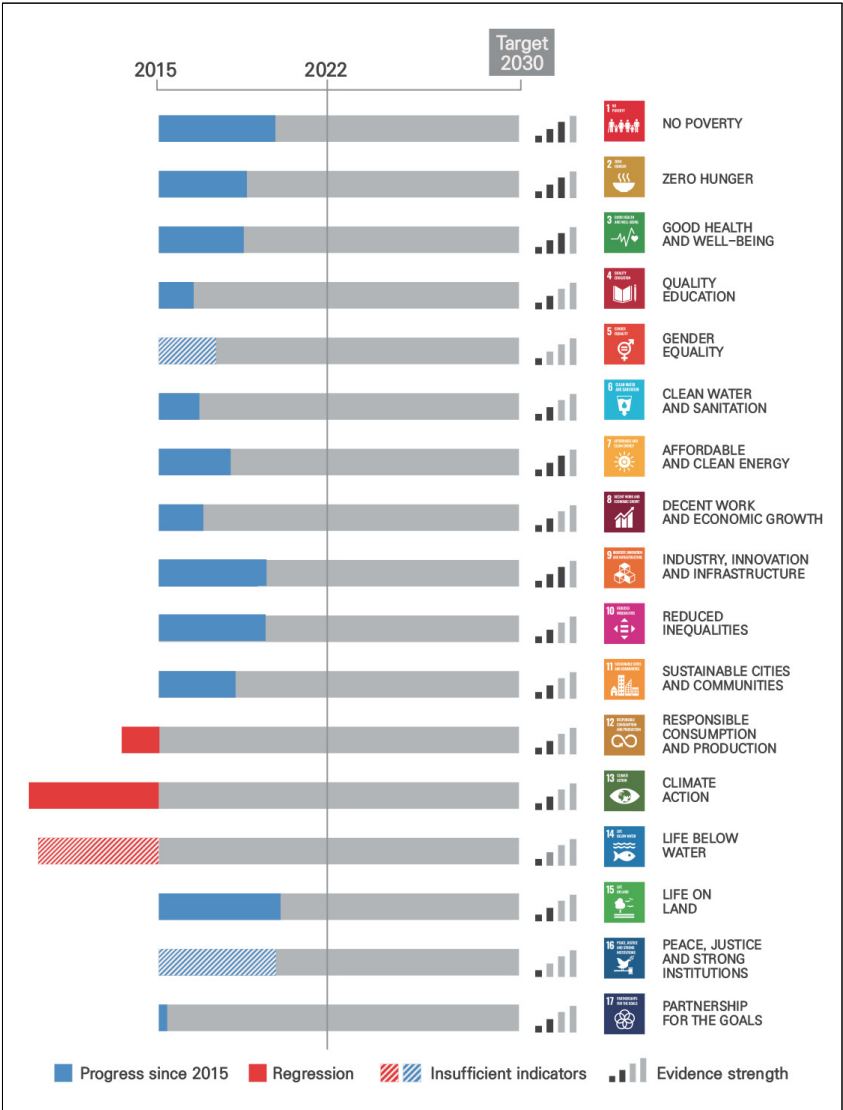
Overall, ASEAN member countries have made progress in promoting the SDGs, but achieving them still presents challenges. Key proposals for fostering sustainable development and achieving the SDGs in ASEAN include strengthening institutional capacity, developing public-private partnerships, and prioritizing the SDGs in pandemic response and recovery efforts.

1.2. Assessing the Progress in Implementing the SDGs in Southeast Asia

1.2.1. Performance of SDGs Implementation in Southeast Asia

In 2023, the Asia-Pacific region has passed the halfway point of implementing the SDGs, but has only achieved 14.4% of the progress needed to realize 17 SDGs by 2030. Unless substantial efforts are undertaken, the region is poised to fall short of 90% of the 118 measurable SDG targets by 2030. Notably, the region has made significant headway in the areas of affordable and clean energy (Goal 7) and industry, innovation, and infrastructure (Goal 9). However, progress toward climate action (Goal 13) is deteriorating (ESCAP 2023a). The region faces a dual role as both a victim of the impacts of climate change and a contributor to climate change through greenhouse gas emissions. In the case of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the overall regional progress on SDGs can be visualized through the graph below (Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1. Progress in Implementing the SDGs in Southeast Asia, 2022



Source: ESCAP (2023a).

As evident from the data, by 2022, the progress in implementing the SDGs in Southeast Asia has not reached the targets. Among the goals, the ones exhibiting the highest growth are No Poverty (Goal 1), Life on Land (Goal 15), Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure (Goal 9), and Reduced Inequalities (Goal 10). Meanwhile, Zero Hunger (Goal 2), Good Health (Goal 3), Affordable and Clean Energy (Goal 7), and Sustainable Cities (Goal 11) are making moderate progress. Additionally, Responsible Consumption and Production (Goal 12) and Climate Action (Goal 13) have regressed since 2015, moving away from the desired direction.

Among the 10 member countries of ASEAN, Thailand currently has the highest SDG Index score of 74.7, followed by Vietnam with 73.3, and at the bottom of the ASEAN group are Laos and Myanmar with 63.0 and 60.4 (Table 4.1). With the current SDI score, if ASEAN countries do not accelerate progress, it will be very difficult to achieve the SDGs by 2030.

Table 4.1. SDG Index 2023: Score and Rank of ASEAN Countries			
Global Rank	ASEAN Rank	Country	Score
		Regional average of East and South Asia	67.2
43	1	Thailand	74.7
55	2	Vietnam	73.3
64	3	Singapore	71.8
75	4	Indonesia	70.2
78	5	Malaysia	69.9
98	6	Philippines	67.1
102	7	Brunei Darussalam	65.7
103	8	Cambodia	64.8
115	9	Lao PDR	63.0
125	10	Myanmar	60.4

Source: Sustainable Development Report 2023.

1.2.2. Difficulties and Challenges in Implementing the SDGs in Southeast Asia

Despite the progress made, ASEAN still faces obstacles to reaching its SDGs. Inadequate financing for sustainable development, poor implementation capacity at the national and local levels, and a lack of awareness and comprehension of the SDGs among key stakeholders are examples of these obstacles. The COVID-19 epidemic has also emphasized the need for a greater focus on health, education, and social protection in ASEAN, which are crucial to reaching the SDGs.

1.2.2.1. COVID-19

The ASEAN region faced significant challenges in achieving its SDGs before the COVID-19 pandemic, but the pandemic has had a profoundly negative impact on SDGs progress over the past two years. COVID-19 particularly affected goals related to poverty reduction, hunger eradication, healthcare access, and mortality prevention, while also causing severe economic disruptions and exacerbating inequalities among nations. Lockdowns disrupted healthcare and education access, and governments had to allocate resources for relief programs to aid those affected. However, the pandemic has also highlighted the importance of sustainable development and global cooperation in addressing global issues, offering opportunities for positive change (Mardianti 2020).

1.2.2.2. Socioeconomic Disparities

ASEAN member states exhibit significant disparities in income, development, and resource access. These disparities can hinder regional coordination and the equitable implementation of the SDGs. Addressing

these disparities and ensuring that no one is left behind remains a complex challenge for the region.

1.2.2.3. Environmental Sustainability

Rapid urbanization and industrialization in some ASEAN countries have led to environmental degradation, including deforestation, air and water pollution, and habitat loss. Achieving environmental sustainability, as emphasized by the SDGs, remains a significant challenge. Balancing economic growth with environmental conservation is a delicate task that requires careful planning and sustainable practices.

1.2.2.4. Governance and Corruption

The achievement of many of the targets of the SDGs relies on the successful delivery of public services such as education and healthcare, which in turn enhances a government's credibility. Effective governance and transparency are crucial for SDG implementation, but governance and corruption challenges persist in some member states. Corruption can undermine the efficient use of resources and hinder progress towards the SDGs. Strengthening anti-corruption measures and promoting good governance are essential for ensuring sustainable development in the region.

1.2.2.5. Geopolitical Tensions

Geopolitical tensions in the South China Sea and other areas can impede regional cooperation on SDGs. The SDGs is being an ASEAN's commitment to unity and dialogue is pivotal in overcoming these challenges and advancing regional development. Major power

competition constrains ASEAN's ambitions, and ASEAN's primary principle of non-interference in any regime will be at odds with the US and its major Indo-Pacific allies such as Australia and Japan. ASEAN's desire to prioritize economic interests over the United States' core interests of security and liberal values means that there will likely continue to be a limit to how comprehensive a US-ASEAN partnership can be. If the major powers find ASEAN neutral and independent, ASEAN can continue to drive the region.

1.2.2.6. Data Quality and Availability

Data collection and reporting capacities vary among ASEAN countries, affecting the accuracy and completeness of SDGs monitoring. Goals 5, 14 and 16 need to include sufficient data; hence, the progress of these Goals is untraceable. Efforts to improve data quality and availability must continue. The unavailability of data arises due to the inability of countries to collect data regularly. For example, ASEAN's recent report can examine only 29 SDGs out of 231 indicators due to a paucity of data, resulting in insufficient documentation of progress for many targets, causing them to veer off track. In some cases, data is unreported or cannot be measured due to various reasons. Some countries may experience political instability and control data they consider sensitive and potentially damaging. Additionally, some countries may use distinctive methods of calculation, making it challenging to compare progress. This can result in a disproportionate imbalance among SDGs, where certain goals receive less attention than others. For instance, Goal 5 (gender equality) may receive less attention in ASEAN than Goal 7 (affordable and clean energy), resulting in underreporting of its progress

and veering off course in the region (Muyasyaroh 2023).

1.2.2.7. Climate Change

Addressing these climate-related challenges is crucial for achieving the SDGs in ASEAN. Climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts are integral to sustainable development. These efforts include implementing measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improving disaster preparedness and response, and promoting sustainable agriculture and land management practices.

2. The Progress of SDGs Implementation in Indonesia

2.1. Implementing the SDGs in Indonesia

Indonesia is an active participant in international agreements implementing the SDGs of the 2030 Agenda. Fulfilling international commitments, Indonesia has integrated the SDGs into its overarching development strategies and policies. Furthermore, Indonesia's commitment extends to the practical implementation of these goals at the grassroots level, a pivotal step toward effectively realizing the SDGs. So far, the government has steadfastly upheld the principles of universal development, integration, and inclusivity, ensuring that no one is left behind in the pursuit of the SDGs.

2.1.1. Nationalizing SDGs in Indonesia

To strengthen its commitment to implementing the SDGs, Indonesia first introduced Presidential Decree No. 59 of 2017, a landmark document issued on July 4th. This Decree stands as a cornerstone, providing comprehensive guidelines for the execution of sustainable development initiatives, especially the National Action Plan of Sustainable Development. Its reach extends to both medium- and long-term development programs, encompassing not only the central and local governments but also a diverse array of organizations, including businesses and non-government entities. According to this Decree, the Ministry of National Development Planning is tasked with designing the Roadmap for implementing the SDGs, and this Roadmap was issued in 2019.

Since the inception of the ambitious 2030 Agenda in 2015, the Indonesian government has been actively engaged in translating the SDGs targets into actionable plans within its domestic policy framework. Indonesia's strong determination to realize the 2030 Agenda is first exemplified through the radical integration of the SDGs into its National Medium-Term Development Plan for the period spanning 2015-2019. The incorporation of these global goals transcends mere rhetoric; it becomes ingrained in the governance framework at both the national and subnational levels, thereby seamlessly integrated into the planning processes of national and subnational development.

Indonesia's proactive role in shaping the discourse surrounding the Post-2015 Agenda empowers the nation to infuse a plethora of global targets articulated across the 17 SDGs into its overarching development strategy. To streamline the management and monitoring of these

multifaceted goals, Indonesia has thoughtfully organized the 17 SDG goals, as well as the accompanying 169 targets and 241 indicators, into four distinct pillars (Table 4.2). These four pillars serve as a pragmatic approach to the administration of the SDGs, effectively streamlining their implementation and oversight. Each of the first three pillars corresponds to one of the three foundational dimensions of Sustainable Development – social, economic, and environmental progress. The fourth pillar is added afterward, embracing Goal 16, which highlights the significance of justice and governance. This deliberate inclusion resonates with the broader goal of nurturing peace, bolstering justice, and fortifying robust institutional frameworks within the nation. While these pillars were initially conceived to facilitate the management of the SDGs, their interconnectivity has become increasingly evident during the implementation phase. This emphasizes the intricate interplay between various dimensions of sustainable development, highlighting the need for a holistic and integrated approach to achieving these global aspirations.

Table 4.2. Alignment of SDGs Global and National Targets in Indonesia

Pillar/Goal	Global Target	National Target		National Priorities
		2015–2019	2020–2024	
Social (Goal 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)	47	25	38	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Poverty Eradication• Improve Welfare• Enhanced Food Security• Implementation of Smart and Health Indonesia Program• Protection of Children, Women & Marginalized groups
Economy (Goal 7, 8, 9, 10, 17)	54	30	37	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Energy Security• Acceleration of Manufacturing Industry• Improve Labour Competitiveness• Building National Connectivity• Well-Balanced Development• Implementation of Free and Active Foreign Policy
Environment (Goal 6, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15)	56	31	38	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Water Security• Housing and Residential Development• Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation• Development of Marine-Based Economy• Protection of Natural Resources, Environment and Disaster Management• Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity
Law and Governance (Goal 16)	12	8	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve Quality Protection• Enhance Law Enforcement• Foster Transparent and Accountable Government
Total	169	94	124	

Source: Data collected from Minister of National Development Planning of Indonesia, UN, Country Profile: Indonesia, <https://hlpfun.org/countries/indonesia>.

Pursuant to Indonesia's Presidential Decree No. 59 of 2017, 85 out of the nation's 319 indicators were found to match the corresponding SDG indicators from 2015 to 2017. On the other hand, 94 out of the 169 SDG targets were aligned with the 2015–2019 Medium-Term Development Plan's targets, while the remaining targets were planned to be aligned over the next planning period.

The 2017 Presidential Decree mandates the inclusion of the SDGs in all national and subnational medium-term development plans to ensure their effective integration across all government levels. It also requires the creation of SDG roadmaps and action plans with clear deadlines and objectives at the national, provincial, and long-term development plan district and city levels.

At the national level, Indonesia executes three distinct sets of development plans, each playing a unique role in shaping the nation's path toward sustainable progress: The Long-Term Development Plan (RPJPN) (2005–2025), which has been broken down into four consecutive cycles, each consisting of five-year Medium-Term Development Plans, Medium-Term Development Plans, and Annual Government Work Plans (RKPs).

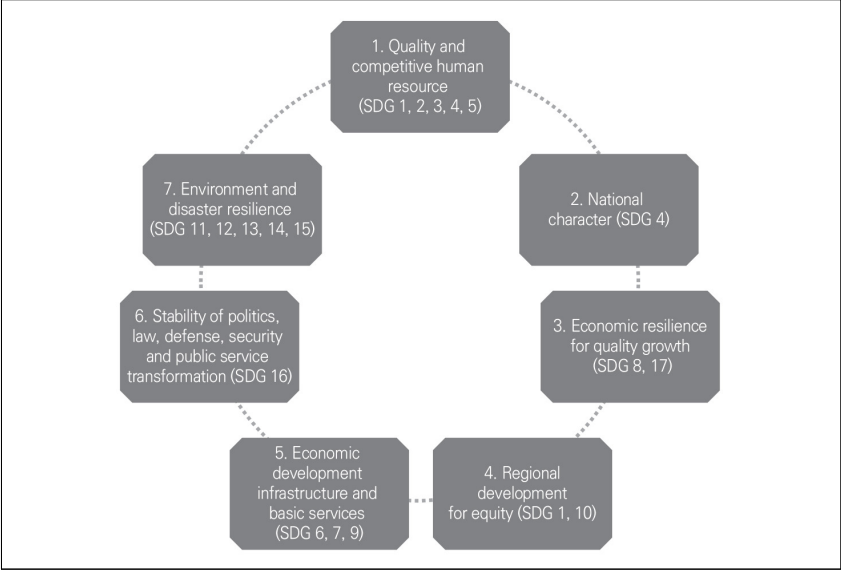
At the subnational level, SDGs integration is achieved through the Regional Medium-Term Development Plans (RPJMDs) and Regional Work Plans. Local and regional governments need to align their Regional Medium-Term Development Plans with the National Medium-Term Development Plan, which incorporates the SDGs. They are also required to establish SDG Regional Action Plans (RADs) in sync with the SDG National Action Plan (RAN) and provide annual reports to the central government.

At the provincial level, the Regional Development Planning Agency (BAPPEDA) - the subnational planning agency under the Ministry of Home Affairs, spearheads the development of the SDG Regional Action Plans. Unlike the Minister of National Development Planning (BAPPENAS), the Ministry of Home Affairs lacks a specific SDG secretariat. Local governments are encouraged to collaborate with universities on SDG integration, and some universities have established SDG Centres with support from development partners. Furthermore, to assist national and local governments in the elaboration of their SDG Action Plans, the Minister of National Development Planning has already crafted the National Guidelines for SDG Action Plans (RAN TPB). These guidelines aim to enhance government bodies' overall understanding of the SDG planning process and foster a greater sense of ownership in the execution of SDG-related programs and initiatives. Additionally, the establishment of subnational SDG coordination teams, referred to as Regional Coordination Teams (TKD), also plays a pivotal role in strengthening stakeholder involvement and their contributions at the regional level.

In 2019, Indonesia embarked upon an exhaustive preparatory process, culminating in the formulation of a meticulously detailed five-year development plan for the period spanning 2020 to 2024. Noteworthy in this plan is the deliberate and substantive integration of additional SDG targets, resulting in a notable expansion to 124 targets within the 2020-2024 Medium-Term Development Plan. Remarkably, all 17 SDG Goals have been judiciously mainstreamed into the sevenfold Development Agenda for the same period (Figure 4.2). This conscientious effort, again, reflects the robust commitment of the

Indonesian government to the integration of SDGs into its developmental planning framework.

Figure 4.2. Mainstreaming SDGs in Indonesia’s 2020-2024 Medium-Term Development Plan, by Pillar



Source: Republic of Indonesia, VNR 2021.

The integration of SDG targets into Indonesia’s Medium-Term Development Plan not only aligns these objectives with the overarching national development plan but also delineates the annual programs and associated budget allocations in both the Annual Government Work Plan and the State Budget Draft. This strategic alignment ensures a systematic and coordinated approach to the realization of SDGs, with the expectation that, notwithstanding the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the specified targets can be successfully attained by the year 2030.

To establish a robust policy framework for the seamless integration of sustainable development into Indonesia's national development planning processes, the nation draws inspiration from "*Nawacita*". This visionary document encapsulates the aspirations and objectives of the President and Vice President of the Republic of Indonesia, encompassing nine key development priorities. It outlines Indonesia's path towards becoming a "politically sovereign, economically independent, and culturally strong" nation. Within this comprehensive framework, sustainable development takes center stage, harmoniously woven into the fabric of the government's diverse range of development planning initiatives.

In terms of the robust legal foundation underpinning the SDGs in Indonesia, the government has taken decisive measures to establish an official regulatory framework that underscores the paramount importance of sustainable development within the nation's agenda. This framework represents a resolute commitment to the effective implementation of the SDGs, reflecting Indonesia's unwavering dedication to this global endeavor.

Moreover, to support the SDGs' attainments, the Indonesian government has developed an additional suite of documents to serve as the bedrock of SDG implementation within the nation. These documents form the scaffolding upon which Indonesia's sustainable development aspirations are built, offering guidance and direction for action at various levels of governance. Notably, in October 2019, Indonesia launched a high-level strategy, the Roadmap of SDGs Indonesia Towards 2030, which provides a strategic blueprint for charting the course towards SDG realization. Stressing that Indonesia's

development vision is inherently intertwined with the SDGs agenda, with its aspirations closely aligned with global sustainability goals, the roadmap is a direct response to the previous Presidential Decree No. 59 of 2017, which mandated the creation of SDG architecture and the formulation of National and Regional SDG Action Plans.

In addition to these SDG-specific documents, the Indonesian government has made considerable effort to mainstream the SDGs into its national development planning process. To complement the roadmap, the SDG National Action Plan and SDG Regional Action Plans at the provincial level have also been established. These documents have been providing inputs for medium-term development plans at both national and provincial levels, thereby further cementing Indonesia's commitment to localized sustainable development. Moreover, they are set for renewal to align their timeframe with the new medium-term development plans at both national and provincial levels. The SDG National Action Plan contains programs and activities of five annual work plans, which directly and indirectly support the achievement of the SDGs in accordance with national targets. Indonesia's first SDG National Action Plan was formally launched in July 2018 and covers 2017–2019. The second one covers the period 2020–2024.

In 2020, concurrently with the development of the 2021 VNR, Indonesia was drafting the 2020–2024 National Action Plan, formalizing the integration of the SDGs into the 2020–2024 National Medium Term Development Plan, mainstreaming 124 targets in the SDG National Action Plan and SDG Regional Action Plans, which are in charge of localizing sustainable development at the subnational level. The government is now entering the final stage of its long-term development

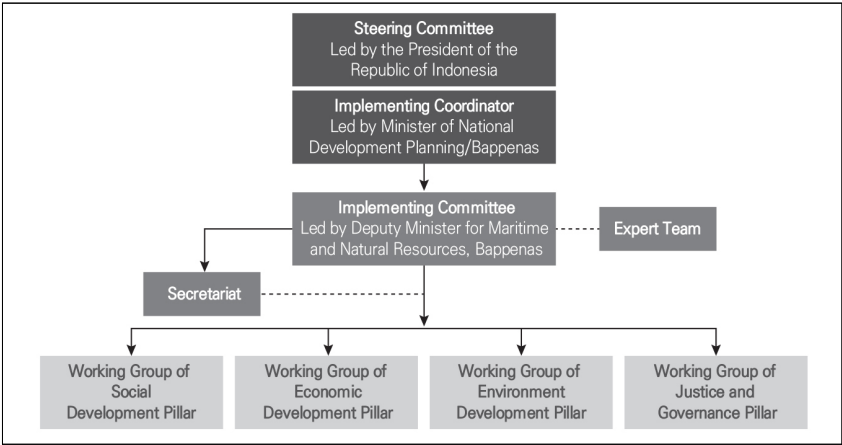
plan with the National Medium-Term Development Plan 2020–2024, which was launched in January 2020 with 105 SDG targets mainstreamed into the annual Government Work Plans and associated budgets.

2.1.2. Mechanisms to Implement SDGs and Roles, Engagement of Stakeholders in Indonesia

In 2017, Indonesia took a significant stride in the direction of SDGs implementation by establishing the SDGs National Coordination Team, operating under the supervision of the President of the Republic of Indonesia (Figure 4.3). This team was formed to ensure that all facets of Indonesian society were comprehensively represented in the pursuit of SDG objectives.

At the heart of this coordinated effort is the Minister of National Development Planning, who also holds the position of the Head of the National Development Planning Agency. Appointed by the President, the Minister assumes the critical role of the National Coordinator for SDG implementation, exemplifying the highest level of commitment to this transformative agenda. As the main orchestrator of SDG endeavors, the Ministry also undertook the key yet complex task of categorizing the 17 SDGs into the four development pillars mentioned earlier, aligning national efforts with these critical dimensions of sustainable development.

Figure 4.3. SDGs National Coordination Team in Indonesia



Source: Republic of Indonesia, VNR 2021.

Within the framework of the SDGs National Coordination Team, inclusivity reigns supreme. The team is composed of various components, each playing a distinctive yet interdependent role in advancing SDG initiatives. This organizational structure comprises a Steering Committee, an Implementing Team, multiple Working Groups, Sub-Working Groups, and Expert Teams. These components are designed with the overarching goal of embracing the SDGs’ inclusive principle, ensuring that the entire spectrum of stakeholders is actively engaged. All the stakeholders are classified into four participation platforms, each contributing its unique perspective and expertise to the overall SDG agenda. These platforms encompass Government and Parliament, Academia and Expertise, Philanthropy and Business, Civil Society Organizations, and the Media. Each platform operates with a clear mandate and set of responsibilities, fostering a dynamic ecosystem of collaboration.

Thus, the spirit of multi-stakeholder cooperation is fully incorporated in the operation of the national team, aligning with the directives outlined in the Presidential Decree No.59 of 2017 on SDGs. Both the implementation team and the four technical working groups feature representatives from the government, as well as non-state actors, predominantly drawn from philanthropic and business sectors, civil society organizations, media entities, and academic institutions. In order to fulfill the representation of non-state actors' platforms, the Minister of National Development Planning as the coordinator consulted with each platform to obtain the appropriate representative from them. This comprehensive representation ensures that diverse perspectives are reflected in the decision-making process. Meanwhile, at the sub-national level, the principle of coordination and inclusivity extends to 29 Subnational Coordination Teams. These teams operate as extensions of the overarching national effort, ensuring that SDGs are integrated into the regional fabric of Indonesia.

Within the government system, most ministries have set up dedicated SDG secretariats or focal points, albeit with varying levels of expertise. For instance, the Ministry of Home Affairs, which holds authority over specific subnational agencies like Regional Development Planning Agency and oversees local planning, execution, and monitoring, lacks capacity and expertise when it comes to implementing the SDGs and related thematic areas. Furthermore, most Ministries have also crafted sector-specific strategies or plans that are intentionally harmonized with the SDGs. To illustrate, the Ministry of Health has devised a comprehensive nationwide initiative aimed at reducing the prevalence of stunting, a condition directly linked to Goal 2. Similarly, the Ministry

of Public Works has rolled out a nationwide program called “100-0-100” (100% access to water – 0 slum – 100% access to improved sanitation), primarily focused on achieving universal access to clean water, eradicating slum areas completely, and facilitating universal access to improved sanitation. This initiative aligns with the overarching goal of attaining SDG 6. These sectoral plans frequently draw influence from the Roadmap of SDGs, the National SDG Action Plan, and the National Medium-Term Development Plan, in which SDG targets have been mainstreamed.

2.1.3. Financial Sources to Implement the SDGs in Indonesia

In Indonesia, there is no mandatory incorporation of the SDGs into the crafting of the National Budget or Regional Budgets. In addition, there is no budget execution report specific to the SDGs, and the government’s evaluations of budget performance do not encompass SDG-related criteria. Nonetheless, Indonesia has committed to incorporating SDG targets into its National Medium-Term Development Plan 2020–2024 and the associated budget. Therefore, there is still a degree of government budget allocation dedicated to SDG implementation. Subnational expenditure is largely channeled through Regional Budgets sponsored by line ministries. The funding is executed under the oversight of regional departments and in accordance with Regional Medium-Term Development Plans.

Legally, the government is obligated to allocate a portion of the budget to education (Goal 4) and healthcare (Goal 3). Recent amendments to the National Constitution mandate that 20 percent of central and local government budgets must be directed toward education. The Law on Healthcare (No. 36/2009) also stipulates that 5 percent of national and

local budgets should be allocated to healthcare. The challenge lies in ensuring that these funding allocations effectively contribute to inclusive and sustainable development.

Although formal budgeting for the SDGs, involving their complete integration into budget planning, allocation, expenditures, monitoring, and reporting, is yet to occur in Indonesia, the Indonesian government has taken significant steps to further align the allocation of National Budget with sustainable development priorities. To illustrate, in 2015, it phased out numerous fossil fuel subsidies, yielding savings of IDR 211 trillion (15.3 billion USD), equivalent to over 10 percent of government spending. These savings were redirected toward more targeted pro-poor social spending and infrastructure investment. Furthermore, since 2016, the government has established a climate change budget tagging system across 16-line ministries to monitor and manage public spending on this critical issue, including pilot projects at the subnational level. This tagging system played a pivotal role in building creditors' confidence in the government's capability to effectively handle green finance, thus supporting the issuance of green sukuk. This is one of the eight priority themes that the government tags budgets to, which all contribute to SDG implementation: health, infrastructure, gender, South-South cooperation, education, climate adaption, climate mitigation and stunting. Moreover, in 2017, the government harmonized the national planning system managed by the Minister of National Development Planning with the national budgeting system managed by the Ministry of Finance to create a unified online platform for planning and budgeting called *KRISNA*. This integration has enhanced the alignment of national planning priorities with actual budgets and

expenditures, with potential benefits for SDG reporting. Following the rollout of the Roadmap for implementation of the SDGs in 2019 and the improved synergy between planning and financing systems, the integration of SDGs into National Budget process may witness further developments in the years ahead. This progress can unlock more opportunities for development partners to make a substantial impact on Indonesia's SDGs implementation.

Notably, the Indonesian government also employs a well-established consultation practice called “Musrenbang” for program and budget planning at both local and national levels. Musrenbang serves as a multi-stakeholder forum aimed at building consensus on development priorities and budgeting. The outcomes of Musrenbang discussions form the basis for government programs and budget proposals, which are further consolidated at higher government levels and deliberated upon at the national Musrenbang. This process provides an opportunity for discussions related to SDG-oriented programs and budgets and, to some extent, even acts as a platform for raising public awareness about the significance of the goals. The government is drastically promoting the utilization of electronic budgeting and planning, including the execution of e-Musrenbang, which centralizes decision-making on funding proposals from regional and provincial governments under the Minister of National Development Planning.

The Indonesian government is actively seeking diverse financing sources for SDGs implementation, including both traditional and innovative financing schemes. Potential sources may come from the optimization of State revenues, non-government financing sources, and other financial avenues. For example, in 2020, the Ministry of Villages

introduced the “SDGs for Villages” initiative, comprising 18 goals and a specialized Village Fund allocated toward SDG implementation, accompanied by a digital portal.

2.1.4. Monitoring and Evaluating the implementation of the SDGs in Indonesia

To date, Indonesia has established both legal and institutional frameworks for SDGs measurement, accompanied by a set of context-relevant indicators outlined in the Indonesian SDGs Metadata. This database was developed with an inclusive approach and “no one left behind” principle, incorporating input from all four participation platforms.

Remarkably, following the introduction of Indonesia’s 2030 Agenda Roadmap in 2019, a centralized OneData portal, overseen by the National Development Planning Agency and the National Statistics Bureau, was created to serve as a data hub. Data analyses are disaggregated by various factors, including household expenditure, gender, age groups, rural and urban areas, disability status, and provinces. This ensures that districts, municipalities, and provinces can accurately collect, compile, and report data in alignment with the SDGs and national development indicators. To facilitate this process, a national Local Governments Information System (SIPD) was established to gather municipal data on performance indicators. Monitoring occurs semi-annually, with evaluations conducted annually. Local governors, representing the national government, coordinate the monitoring and evaluating of SDG implementation in districts within their provinces before reporting on SDG progress to the Minister of National Development Planning/Head of the Minister

of National Development Planning and the Minister of Home Affairs.

To further support the implementation of the SDGs at the sub-national level, in 2018, the Ministry of Home Affairs, responsible for decentralization policies, which supervises the engagement of local and regional governments in localizing the SDGs across Indonesia, introduced a significant regulatory measure named Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs or KLHS). With regard to the elaboration of the SDG Regional Action Plans, this is one key tool for SDGs integration in the subnational planning process in Indonesia, which identifies priorities, programs, and budget requirements managed by provinces. In other words, this tool helps determine which SDGs should be integrated into the Regional Medium-Term Development Plans for municipalities and localities. Strategic Environmental Assessments serves as a direct input for the development of the Regional Medium-Term Development Plans and provides the foundation for creating the SDG Regional Action Plans. From 2018 to 2021, approximately 29 provinces adopted SDG Regional Action Plans aligned with the SDGs (Indonesia VNR 2021). It is noteworthy that while these plans are obligatory for provinces, municipalities are not mandated to follow suit. Therefore, it seems reasonable to conclude that local and regional governments in Indonesia tend to participate in the national SDG coordination mechanisms at the regional level. Also, while the SDG Regional Action Plans inform the Regional Medium-Term Development Plans as a whole, they are not separately funded. Development partners, such as JICA and UNDP, support the development of these SDG Regional Action Plans in multiple provinces.

It is noteworthy that, in addition to conducting the VNRs to assess

the general progress of all local and regional governments in implementing the SDGs, the Indonesian government also carries out voluntary subnational and local reviews (VSRs/VLRs). For instance, the 2021 Voluntary Subnational Review analysis encompassed 13 provinces, 9 cities, and 3 regencies, involving key entities such as the Indonesian District Government Association, Indonesian Provincial Government Association, and Indonesian District Parliament Association. The evaluation method employed consists of interviews with subnational governments on their SDG implementation efforts, questionnaires to measure their capacity, priority-setting alignment with SDGs, and understanding of SDGs, along with focus group discussions for sharing experiences.

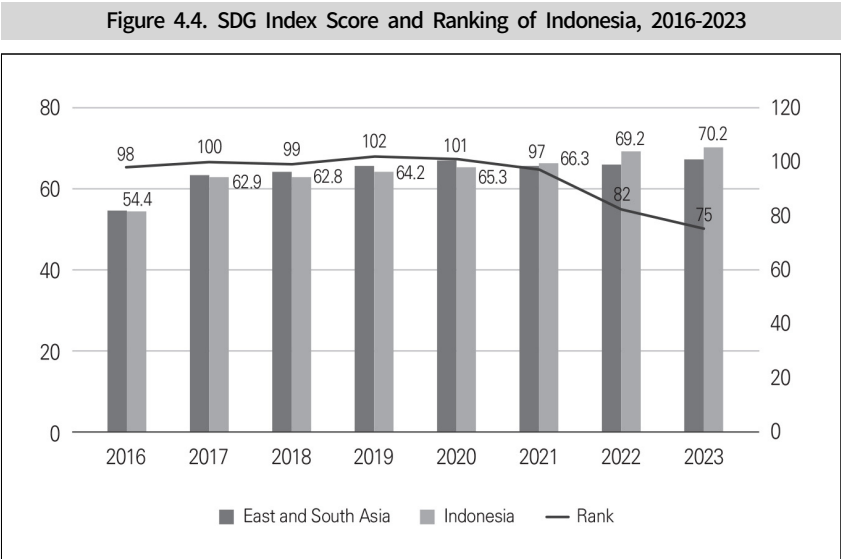
2.2. Assessing the Progress in Implementing the SDGs in Indonesia

2.2.1. Performance of SDGs Implementation in Indonesia

Indonesia, a middle-income country characterized by a substantial and multicultural populace, has demonstrated remarkable achievements on various SDG targets pertaining to the attainment of economic growth, the generation of good employment opportunities, and the mitigation of poverty. However, it is worth noting that a significant proportion of the population continues to grapple with poverty, living at or below the poverty line. On the bright side, the nation has exhibited exemplary leadership in addressing the pressing need for climate action.

Implementing international commitments, Indonesia has made efforts to implement the SDGs, so Indonesia's SDG index score has improved

significantly, increasing from 54.4 in 2016 to 70.2 in 2023. Especially, in the years recently, Indonesia’s SDG index score has made outstanding progress, always being higher than the average SDG index score of the East and South Asia region. During the period 2019-2023, Indonesia’s SDG index score has had an impressive increase in the global rankings, from ranking 102/162 countries in 2019 to 75/166 countries in 2023 (Figure 4.4). These remarkable advances highlight Indonesia’s continued efforts to implement the SDGs and its growing global influence in shaping a more sustainable future.



Source: Data compiled from Sustainable Development Report 2016-2023.

When delving into Indonesia’s progress and setbacks in the implementation of the SDGs, it is essential to acknowledge that Indonesia’s efforts in implementing the SDGs have built upon the

MDGs. Therefore, it is recommended to incorporate the insights gained from the experiences with the MDGs. Prior to formally adopting the SDGs in July 2017, Indonesia had effectively attained 49 out of the 67 indicators outlined in the MDGs by the conclusion of 2015. These achievements encompassed critical objectives such as eradicating extreme poverty, ensuring universal primary education, promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, reducing child mortality rates, combating Tuberculosis and malaria, and guaranteeing environmental sustainability, particularly in terms of improving access to clean water and sanitation in urban areas, and harnessing mobile phone technology for development. However, there are specific goals that still remain unmet, including reducing poverty according to national standards (US \$1.25 per capita per day), lowering maternal mortality rates, curbing HIV and AIDS prevalence, diminishing malnutrition among children under five, and enhancing access to water and basic sanitation in rural households. The uncompleted objectives faced hurdles in their realization, especially in reducing disparities among provinces, districts/municipalities, and various socio-economic conditions. Moreover, limited resources from non-governmental entities, the absence of a comprehensive database of MDG indicators at the district and city levels, a predominantly top-down governmental approach, and insufficient communication strategies and advocacy efforts at both national and sub-national levels have presented formidable challenges.

In fact, the global experiences and lessons derived from the MDGs have influenced the formulation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, which was announced in September 2015. In line with this, Indonesia has undertaken several significant measures to ensure

the efficient and prompt execution of the SDGs thereafter. So far, the country has marked remarkable triumphs spanning diverse sectors, showcasing notable advancements in the realms of the economy, society, and the environment. In the face of the tumultuous global economic landscape from 2020 to 2022, Indonesia has not only weathered the challenges but has also sustained commendable progress in achieving the SDGs. Despite certain indicators displaying a deceleration or stagnation during this period, the overall outcomes of SDG implementation in Indonesia remain praiseworthy. This achievement is noteworthy not just among G20 nations but also when juxtaposed with countries in the broader East and Southeast Asian region.

Particularly, amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, an unprecedented crisis with far-reaching consequences for the global economy in 2020-2021, Indonesia had managed to maintain its resilience, successfully navigating the adverse consequences of the crisis and facilitating economic recuperation through the implementation of structured reforms in four key domains. These sectors encompass the social protection system, national healthcare system, disaster resilience system, and the revitalization of industry, tourism, and investment, with a special focus on fostering a green economy and promoting low-carbon development. Building on this foundation, Indonesia has not only upheld its accomplishments in implementing the goals but also established a solid basis for future enhancements.

Sustainable Development Reports, as well as Indonesia's VNRs for the year 2017, 2019, and 2021 show, some SDGs are on track and moderately improving such as SDG 1, 4, 6 and SDG 3, 5, 8, 9, 10, 12, while other SDGs are posing major challenges and showing a stagnant

progress pattern such as SDG 2, 3, 7, 14, 15, 16 and SDG 2, 7, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17. The context of the COVID-19 pandemic strongly intensified these challenges, making the 2030 SDG targets more elusive for Indonesia. The temporary economic downturn triggered by the pandemic has reverberated through households, micro, small and medium enterprises, large corporations, and the financial sector, calling for the Indonesian government's execution of a fiscal stimulus package to cushion the pandemic's multifaceted impact. The pandemic also disrupted progress within the social and economic development pillars of the SDGs in Indonesia. As the poverty rate started to show signs of rising amid the crisis, concerns about food insecurity escalated, casting a shadow on the path to gender equality. Meanwhile, the advancement of clean and affordable energy has slipped down the priority list, though environmental conservation and management have seen some transient improvements. Particularly, the pandemic's impact on law and governance development remains underexplored. Generally, the COVID-19 pandemic has left no facet of Indonesian society and its economy untouched, necessitating comprehensive efforts to address its repercussions.

In response to the extensive challenges posed by the pandemic, the Indonesian government has taken proactive steps, implementing various initiatives and fiscal policies under the National Economic Recovery program. Thanks to these attempts, after grappling with the challenges posed by the pandemic for several months, Indonesia has made a remarkable recovery. The nation's resilience and determination have brought positive results. By 2023, Indonesia has achieved consistent advancements in key areas pivotal for its sustained growth, with a sharp

focus on macroeconomic stability, the enhancement of public sector governance, and the strengthening of its infrastructure. These substantial advancements have not only fuelled Indonesia's resurgence after the pandemic but also played an instrumental role in realizing the ambitious goal of eradicating extreme poverty within its borders. Furthermore, these remarkable strides have provided the necessary foundation for Indonesia's pursuit of the SDGs, as exemplified by the country's encouraging SDG indicators recorded in recent years.

As of 2023, Indonesia is among the few countries that are performing much better on the SDG government effort measure than would be predicted from their baseline SDG Index levels and 2015 per-capita GDP. The report also found that part of this progress might be due to investments in data capacities and statistics made during the MDG period (Sachs *et al.* 2023).

2.2.2. Difficulties and Challenges for SDG Implementation in Indonesia

Indonesia's journey towards SDGs implementation has undeniably been marked by significant progress, yet it has not been without its share of notable challenges.

First, perhaps the most prominent is the need to ensure the full realization of the inclusion and "leave no one behind" principle. This translates into the seamless integration of diverse stakeholders' initiatives into the overarching SDGs action plans and the harmonization of government priorities with the multifaceted efforts of non-state actors. While strides have been made in this direction, there remain opportunities to further synchronize these plans, especially when bridging the gap

between national and regional levels. The intricate challenge lies in achieving comprehensive coverage across all provinces and effectively weaving these plans into the fabric of SDG financing mechanisms.

Second, decentralization empowers local levels. In fact, to promote stronger partnerships between stakeholders in the implementation of the SDGs, Indonesia's governance structure has gradually leaned towards decentralization, granting significant authority to regions for policy oversight. While decentralization empowers sub-national levels to tailor policies according to local nuances, it also introduces challenges in SDG implementation, as regional priorities may differ from national objectives. Indonesia's transition from centralization to decentralization was rapid and less prepared than ideal. Furthermore, centralization's legacy still influences the country's administration system, and the full benefits of decentralization in policy implementation will require time to materialize. One additional point to highlight is that while institutional governance at the local level is indispensable in the implementation of the SDGs in Indonesia, it requires unwavering support from local governments, predominantly through the establishment of SDG centers across all localities. These centers serve as enablers, catalysts, and think tanks, both in terms of research and practical implementation. While progress has been made in this regard, the establishment of SDG centers in provinces lacking them remains an ongoing priority for the Indonesian government.

Third, collect data. Data serves as the foundation for informed decision-making and policy formulation, making the development of a robust data infrastructure imperative for effective SDG implementation. To deal with the issue, Indonesia has taken a significant step by

establishing a Unified Database for Social Protection Programs, overseen by the Ministry of Social Affairs and the National Team for the Acceleration of Poverty Reduction. This database not only assists ministries and institutions but is also accessible to the public through a website, albeit in a more limited version. Nevertheless, while the quality of SDG indicator data collected by the National Statistics Office of Indonesia has generally been commendable, particularly at the national and provincial levels, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 introduced a slew of challenges to data collection efforts, as highlighted in the VNR 2021. Fortunately, as the COVID-19 restrictions eased and the country returned to a semblance of normalcy, many of the challenges related to data collection were successfully addressed.

Last but not least, financing the implementation of the SDGs poses an additional profound challenge. Even before the pandemic in 2020, Indonesia had calculated a significant gap in high-scenario financing needs, estimated at IDR 14.108 trillion through the SDGs Roadmap. However, the outbreak of the pandemic exacerbated this financial gap. The nation faced a double bind as funds from tax revenue and various income sources dwindled.

2.3. Discussion

When compared to Vietnam, despite ranking lower on the 2023 SDG Index, Indonesia's overall economic superiority to Vietnam in terms of scale, value, and competitive advantages is evident upon closer examination (Table 4.3). When these two nations are juxtaposed, a nuanced exploration reveals not only shared characteristics but also

distinctive differences regarding their approaches to achieving the SDGs.

Table 4.3. A Comparison between Indonesia and Vietnam by Indicator

Indicator	Indonesia	Vietnam
SDG Index score	70.2 (2023)	73.3 (2023)
GDP (current US\$)	\$1,319,100.22 (2022)	\$408,802.38 (2022)
GNI per capita	\$4,580 (2022)	\$4,010 (2022)
Gini Index	37.6 (2020)	36.8 (2020)
HDI (Human Development Index)	0.705 (2021)	0.703 (2021)
EPI (Environmental Performance Index)	28.2 (2022)	20.1 (2022)
GGI (Global Gender Gap Index)	0.7 (2023)	0.711 (2023)
GII (Global Innovation Index)	30.3 (2023)	36.0 (2023)

Source: Data collected from World Bank, UNDP, UN, Yale University, WEF and WIPO.

Much like Vietnam, Indonesia boasts a dense population and abundant natural resources, yet grapples with substantial environmental hurdles while pursuing the crucial goal of sustainable economic development. Home to a population nearing 279 million, Indonesia not only commands a sizable consumer market but also possesses a prolific workforce. The nation’s sprawling coastline, dispersed population scattered across islands and archipelagos, coupled with an expansive Exclusive Economic Zone at sea teeming with diverse maritime biodiversity and resources, accentuate its considerable economic potential.

However, nestled within the volatile Pacific Ring of Fire, Indonesia finds itself ranked among the top three countries most exposed to global natural disasters, exacerbated by the impacts of a changing climate. Confronting challenges ranging from floods, volcanic eruptions, and landslides, to an increasingly frequent barrage of earthquakes, Indonesia faces heightened susceptibility to an array of natural calamities that lie

beyond its control. Speaking at the 2023 National Coordination Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction,⁵⁾ President Joko Widodo underscored the escalating influence of climate change, resulting in a surge in the frequency of natural disasters on a global scale, surpassing concerns associated with pandemics or wars. President Joko Widodo pointed out that the number of natural disasters in Indonesia surged by 81% over the past decade, soaring from 1,945 incidents in 2010 to a staggering 3,544 incidents in 2022. Indonesia routinely encounters the dual challenges of earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and floods, inflicting severe consequences in terms of both human and material losses. These catastrophic events leave an enduring imprint, causing substantial damage and enduring losses.

On the other hand, Indonesia's economic trajectory and development endeavors vividly showcase its robust ambitions. Effectively navigating its post-pandemic economic recovery, Indonesia once again achieved the status of an upper-middle-income country in July 2023. The Gross National Income (GNI) per capita soared to 4,580 USD in 2022, marking an impressive 9.8% increase from the preceding year. While sustained economic growth has led to substantial strides in poverty reduction and enhanced accessibility to public services, it is essential to note that income inequality has experienced an upward trend, with the Gini Index on a continuous rise since 1999. Meanwhile, Indonesia, though no longer among the top ten greenhouse gas-emitting nations, is among the world's top five coal-exporting countries and still heavily relies on coal for 60% of its electricity production. Despite the ongoing diversification of its

5) Accessed at: <https://jakartaglobe.id/news/disasterprone-indonesia-calls-for-quakeproof-buildings-jokowi>.

economy, Indonesia predominantly exports abundant natural resources, including fossil fuels, minerals, crude palm oil, and rubber products. It is also noteworthy that Indonesia, positioned as one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change, paradoxically offers pivotal solutions to address global challenges. The impacts of global warming are unmistakably manifesting in Indonesia, influencing rainfall patterns, affecting agriculture, fisheries, and aquaculture, and contributing to extreme weather events. Simultaneously, the country's vast forests, mangroves, and seagrasses emerge as potentially crucial carbon sinks. Indonesia also boasts the world's largest supply of nickel ore, a critical component for renewable energy technologies, further positioning itself at the forefront of initiatives aimed at combating climate change.

As a nation nestled within the same geographical region as Indonesia and a valued member of the ASEAN bloc, Vietnam finds itself on a parallel journey with Indonesia in the pursuit of the SDGs. While Vietnam may not stride in tandem with Indonesia on the economic front, it has carved a path marked by laudable social progress and noteworthy technological advancements. Nevertheless, the nation remains to struggle with formidable challenges in the realms of environmental conservation, the establishment of a resilient institutional framework, and the cultivation of an economy distinguished by responsible and conscientious production and consumption practices.

Despite clinching a superior overall ranking than Indonesia in the SDG Index, Vietnam discernibly trails behind in the assessment of governmental efforts in SDGs implementation (Table 4.4). This shows that the Indonesian Government's efforts to implement the commitment to the 2030 Agenda play a key role in promoting the implementation of the SDGs. The Indonesian

Government’s efforts have promoted the integration of the SDGs into all national, provincial, and local medium-term development plans in a deliberate, substantive, and prudent manner. Thanks to this, the SDGs are not only linked to the overall national development plan but also promote greater participation of ministries, subnational and local governments, and relevant stakeholders, giving them strong ownership in the localization and implementation of the SDGs. At the same time, it also promotes decentralization to provide more power to local levels. This ensures a systematic and coordinated approach to realizing the SDGs, with the expectation that, despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, specific targets can still be achieved success by 2030. Thanks to the government’s high efforts, Indonesia’s progress in implementing the SDGs has improved markedly. Comparing the SDG rankings shows that Indonesia has increased 25 places from 100th with 62.9 points in 2017 to 75th with 70.2 points in 2023, while Vietnam only increased 13 places from 68th with 67. 9 points to rank 55 with 73.3 points.

Table 4.4. Measuring Government SDG Efforts and Commitments, 2023						
Country	Countr y rank	SDG Effort Score	SDG Effort Rating	SDG Coordination Rating	SDG Pathways Rating	Multilateralism Rating
Indonesia	7	77.3	High Effort	Very High Effort	Moderate Effort	High Effort
Vietnam	61	51.1	Moderate Effort	Moderate Effort	Low Effort	High Effort

Source: Data collected from Sustainable Development Report 2023.

This underscores the significance of a meticulous examination of Indonesia’s SDGs implementation process, delving into the intricacies of its policy framework and the nuanced factors influencing the pragmatic

execution of these policies. Such an exploration promises to yield invaluable insights for policymakers in Vietnam and their counterparts in other developing nations, facilitating a more informed and effective approach to the shared pursuit of sustainable development goals.

3. The Progress of SDGs Implementation in Lao PDR

3.1. Implementing the SDGs in Lao PDR

3.1.1. Nationalizing the SDGs in Lao PDR

Although Lao PDR (also known as Laos) faced limitations due to its small domestic market and difficult geography, the country still has had a high and stable economic growth rate of about 7% since 2000 thanks to rich natural resources, mainly mining and hydropower and agroforestry. As a result, the country's per capita income increased from 290 USD in 2000 to 2,460 USD in 2018, surpassing neighboring countries such as Cambodia, Myanmar, and Vietnam. More importantly, this helped Laos move from a low-income country to a lower-middle income country in 2011 according to the WB classification. However, because economic growth is largely based on natural resource exploitation, income distribution in Laos is uneven and unsustainable. For example, employment in the resources sector was less than 1% of total employment in 2015 while labor productivity (equivalent to real wages) in this sector was 12 times higher than in the non-resources sector (Sayavong 2020). This growth has led to rapid loss of forest cover and biodiversity. Impacts

from climate-related events, such as floods, droughts and even severe frosts, are much greater in Laos than in other countries because of the large number of people living in rural areas who depend on agriculture for a living. Livestock deaths, crop failures, disease outbreaks and isolation when roads are damaged led some people vulnerable in economic and social aspects (UN in Lao PDR 2017).

Implementing international commitments, Laos has nationalized the SDGs through integrating the SDGs into the national planning framework. To achieve this goal, the 8th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSEDP) has integrated the SDGs into three outcomes, each related to one of the three dimensions of the 2030 Agenda: economy, society, and environment. To achieve the SDGs, the Government emphasizes the importance of applying science, technology, and innovation (National SDG Secretariat of Lao PDR 2020).

From the experience of implementing the 7th NSEDP (2011-2015), primarily related to the unfinished MDGs, the Lao Government has paid great attention to nationalizing the SDGs to suit the Lao's context more effectively, with the principle of leaving no one behind. Laos was one of the first countries to nationalize and integrate the SDGs into the national planning framework. After introducing the SDGs in early 2016, the Lao government integrated the SDGs into the 8th NSEDP (2016-2020) and the Sector Development Plan of line ministries to 2030. Not all SDG indicators are included in the NSEDP; as of June 2019, about 60% of the 160 indicators in the 8th NSEDP are linked to 71 SDG indicators, the remaining SDG indicators will be integrated into the 9th and 10th NSEDP (Lao PDR 2018).

In addition to the 17 Global SDGs, in September 2016 Laos adopted

its own additional SDG 18: “Live safe from unexploded ordnance (UXO),” as Laos is one of the most heavily bombed countries in terms of the number of bombs per capita during the Indochina War (1964-1973) and 25% of all villages in the country are still contaminated by unexploded bombs.

The national policy and strategy structure in Laos is designed to reflect the updated Lao economic development situation according to changes in the international environment. Up to now, Vision 2030 and the 10-year Socio-Economic Development Strategy 2016-2025 announced in early 2016 are considered the leading policy framework for the Lao Government to orient and integrate the SDGs into national, sectoral, or other short-term policies such as the annual and the 5-year National Socio-Economic Development Plan, the sectoral development plan until 2030. It can be seen that the Lao Government has given the highest priority to the implementation of the SDGs through integrating into national development plans.

Clearly, Laos’ vision is to raise income levels from a lower middle-income country (status quo) to an upper middle-income country according to a green and sustainable socio-economic orientation based on knowledge by 2030. To achieve Vision 2030, seven priorities of the socio-economic development strategy (2016-2025) have been identified:

- Strategy for continued economic development in a high quality, balanced, sustainable, and green direction
- Strategy for meeting the criteria for graduation from the Least Developed Countries by 2020 and implementation of the SDGs
- Strategy for human resource development

- Strategy for sustainable, efficient, and green-directed protection and use of natural resources
- Strategy for improving the enforcement of the rule of law
- Strategy for regional and international integration and connectivity
- Strategy for industrialization and modernization

Following the 2018 VNR, the Lao Government realized a need to significantly increase knowledge and awareness of the SDGs among many stakeholders, especially at the local level. Therefore, the National SDG Secretariat of Laos has developed the 2030 Agenda Communication and Advocacy Work Plan to lead the implementation of various activities in cooperation with development partners, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs), the private sector, universities, a several of government offices at central and local levels... to realize vision 2030. The work plan provides the basis for the National SDG Secretariat to promote the SDG Communication and Advocacy Development Plan and its activities with the following four main strategic goals:

- To integrate SDGs into the national education curriculum as well as educational materials and notes tailored for relevant stakeholders.
- To raise public awareness of the SDGs to stakeholders to be in line with the principle of “leaving no one behind”.
- To create platforms for public participation in the process of implementing SDGs towards 2030 Agenda; and
- To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the communication strategies.

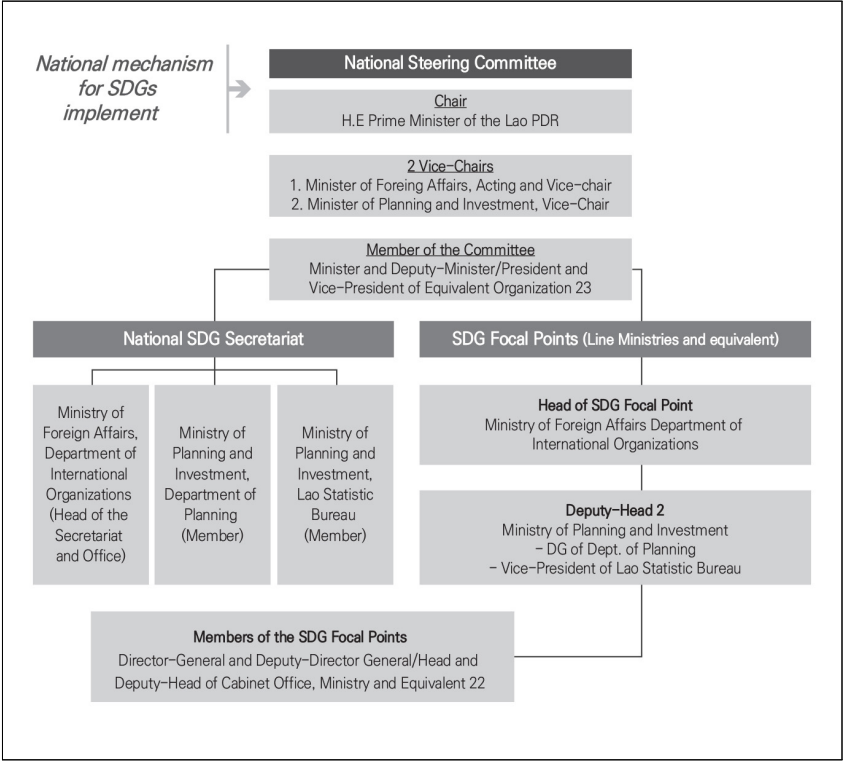
3.1.2. Mechanism to Implement SDGs and Roles, Engagement of Stakeholders in Lao PDR

To implement international commitments, on September 20, 2017, the President issued a Decree establishing the National Steering Committee (NSC) to implement the SDGs and appointed the Prime Minister as Chairman of the National Steering Committee to implement the SDGs, with members of the Committee including all concerned ministries, ministry-equivalent agencies, and mass organizations. The Decree requires all ministries, branches, and different levels in the country to implement the SDGs. Members of the National Steering Committee all hold the position of Minister or Deputy Minister. The National Steering Committee has been established to develop national plans to implement the SDGs as quickly as possible. This includes the 8th NSEDP (2016-2020), the 10-year development strategy (2016-2025), and Vision 2030. All these plans are designed to meet the SDG targets and Indicators.

The National Steering Committee appointed a National SDG Secretariat headed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Planning and Investment, as well as SDG focal points in each relevant ministry for leadership and responsibility on each SDG, ensuring smooth coordination and cooperation across Government.

The National SDG Secretariat works with ministries to monitor progress in implementing the SDGs. The National SDG Secretariat also works closely with UN agencies and other development partners to ensure the support needed to accelerate progress towards the 2030 Agenda (Figure 4.5).

Figure 4.5. National Mechanism for SDG Implementation in Laos



Source: National SDG Secretariat of Lao PDR (2020).

Recently, under the close supervision of the National Steering Committee, some key milestones have been produced by the National SDG Secretariat in collaboration with line ministries and stakeholders concerned (Lao PDR 2021).

The SDG Roadmap was finalized and approved by the National Steering Committee in 2019. It is a roadmap for implementing the SDGs of Laos with a timeframe to 2030, prepared based on a series of consultations with both national and international partners. It focuses

on strengthening institutions and partnerships. The Roadmap includes awareness-raising strategies, multi-stakeholder consultations and dialogue, mechanisms to create horizontal and vertical policy coherence, budgeting for the future, and plans for monitoring, reporting, and accountability.

Assigning SDG Indicators to relevant line ministries and agencies for implementation (SDGi owners) and reporting (SDGr owners). Throughout 2016 and the first half of 2017, the Government organized many consultation workshops, including with the participation of development partners, to discuss and debate each of the SDG targets and indicators, as well as identify and adjust indicators for being used by ministries. Currently, around 60% of SDG indicators have been integrated into the 8th NSEDP (2016-2020), and on-going discussions have been made on how the rest of SDG indicators will be fed into the 9th NSEDP (2021-2025) and 10th NSEDP (2026-2030). All SDG indicators have been assigned as relevant to nineteen different ministries and ministry-equivalent through a consultation process. Each ministry/agency owns certain SDG indicators which line within its portfolio. This setup is called “SDGi owner”. In addition, the SDGs coordination/reporting matrix (each SDG has been assigned to ministries/agencies – this setup is called “SDGr owner”) has been prepared by the national SDG secretariat to encourage better coordination work across national stakeholders, and this will also contribute to better advocacy work in the long run.

Lao PDR plans to strengthen the implementation of the 2030 Agenda through greater stakeholder engagement at national, sector, and provincial levels (or SDG Stakeholder Engagement, SSE). At the national level, the Round Table Process is a platform for the engagement of all national,

sectoral, provincial, and international stakeholders, including the private sector, Civil Society Organizations, academia, and others, to engage in policy dialogues that have implications for the SDGs implementation in the country. At the sectoral level, 10 Sector Working Groups (SWGs) have been formulated to ensure the participation of all stakeholders in sectoral consultations to take the national development agenda forward. Through these arrangements, the National SDG Secretariat has been able to seek contribution, inputs, and feedback from various types of partners at different levels for the preparation of the VNR and the SDGs implementation.

The main focus of stakeholder engagement in SDGs to form an overall framework for SDGs nationalization in Laos during the decade of action will be: Institutionalize and legitimize the role of SDG stakeholder engagement consistent with the development of Lao PDR; Provide support to national, sectoral, provincial and local levels in capacity building related to SDG Stakeholder Engagement in the spirit of SDGs: Inclusive; Participatory and Transparent; Ensure smooth horizontal and vertical coordination and integration between central and local governments; and Provide a platform for cooperation and coordination between government and non-government sectors.

In development programs, Lao PDR has made good progress in promoting and expanding space for stakeholders. There are many different channels and forums for participation, from indirect channels through representative organizations such as the National Assembly to mass organizations and formal business associations. Participation also occurs through other interest groups, including civil society organizations, the media and other forms of communication.

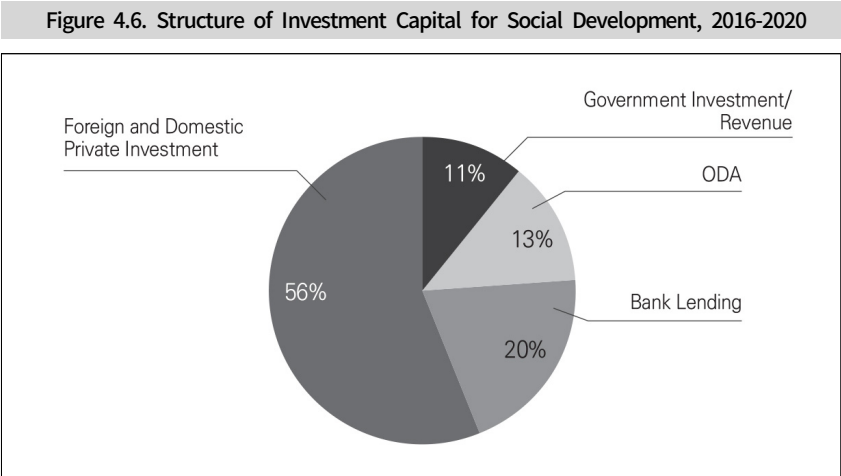
3.1.3. Financial Sources to Implement the SDGs in Lao PDR

To achieve national development goals, the SDGs, and least developed countries (LDC) graduation, Laos needs to maximize strategic allocations of development finance from different sources. NSEDP (2016–2020) aims for Laos to graduate from ‘least developed’ status as it will enable the country to show it can manage types of development finance that are currently more difficult to access. It has outlined these plans in the Vientiane Declaration on Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (2016–2025). The Government of Laos has also completed a Development Finance and Aid Assessment (DFAA) to better understand, which financial resources are best to use to meet the SDG targets, such as grants, soft loans, or beneficial trade relationships. This is an issue common to many countries and the Addis Ababa Action is used internationally to show developing countries how to be more strategic when accessing public and private finance to achieve the SDGs while reducing public debt.

An agreement between the UN and the Government of Laos prioritizes that for the ten years after 2015, ODA will focus on four main areas, including the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as food and nutrition security, green growth, and climate change and disaster preparedness. These priorities are outlined in a country analysis, which was used to develop the agreement. This framework for ODA intends to distribute the benefits of development more equitably. Donor countries, including Australia, the European Union, France, Germany, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Luxembourg, Switzerland, and the United States, will coordinate their support to the Lao Government through the UN. Much of this funding is devoted to improving food security

and nutrition, equitable health and social welfare services, and equitable and sustainable growth (UN in Lao PDR 2015).

It is estimated that the Lao PDR needed USD 27.6 billion USD to implement the 8th NSEDP (2016-2020) over five years, and over half of this will need to come from private investment. If bank lending is included, this rises to more than 75%. Government revenue and ODA are expected to contribute less than a quarter of these funds (Figure 4.6). Furthermore, ODA cannot meet the needs of poverty reduction and achieving national development aspirations, especially escaping LDC status and achieving the SDGs, so Laos is focusing on attracting investment capital both domestically and internationally to promote continued sustainable economic growth, achieving the SDGs by 2030, especially for social outcomes in the education and health sectors, which still rely heavily on ODA.



Source: Ministry of Planning and Investment of Laos (2016).

3.1.4. Monitoring and Evaluating the Implementation of the SDGs in Lao PDR

After the first VNR in 2018, in the National SDG Steering Committee meeting in June 2019, the Lao Government officially approved 238 SDG indicators (SDGi). At this meeting, the Roadmap for implementation of the SDGs was also adopted and disseminated to partners at all levels by 2020. These adopted indicators are classified into three categories: 1) Similar to Global SDGi (consisting of 104 SDGi): Addresses the application of precise global SDG indicators, although there are some differences in data disaggregation requirements; 2) Adjusted SDGi (consisting of 61 SDGi): Refers to a proxy indicator with similar requirements to the global SDG indicator that can still meet the SDG target requirements; 3) Additional SDGi (including 73 SDGi): Refers to a new index that is not the same as the global SDG index. However, they remain relevant in meeting the requirements of the SDG targets (Lao PDR 2021).

For the 8th NSEDP (2016-2020), the Ministry of Planning and Investment and Statistics Bureau of Laos have developed a results-based Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, with 60% of its indicators aligned to tracking progress toward the SDGs. However, the national capacity to implement this framework is limited, and the data required is often unavailable or can be unreliable. Currently, the Government of Laos collects three types of data to develop its indicators, including government administrative data, calculations based on publicly available data, as well as data taken from international agencies.

To improve data availability, one approach the Government of Laos is taking is to upgrade the Lao Social Indicator Survey (LSIS). This

is a nationwide household survey, which will now generate data across all 18 provinces, disaggregated by age, residence, gender, wealth, and ethnicity. It will provide baseline data for the 8th NSEDP and the SDGs. It will be used to influence how the Government of Laos sets policies and prioritizes resources for meeting the SDGs in a way that benefits all citizens.

To fit the government budget, the monitoring and evaluation framework is needed to balance the affordability of different types of data collection methods with the government budget, and it will be focused on meeting localized goals rather than global goals. In many cases, it was required to be pragmatic and choose indicators based on how easy they were to measure rather than their outcomes. These decisions were made to ensure that support to collect data was sustainable and appropriate for Lao’s institutional capacity.

Lao PDR’s data and statistics have improved significantly. The number of indicators with complete data in Laos’ global SDG database has increased from 96 in 2019 to 127 indicators by the end of 2022, but there are still more than a hundred indicators with insufficient or no data (Table 4.5). Notably, Goal 5, 11, 12, 13 and 16 have the least available data, with less than half of the indicators having sufficient data (ESCAP 2023b).

Table 4.5. SDG Data Availability for Lao PDR in 2022				
	Sufficient (2 or more data points)	Missing data (one data point)	No data	Total
Number of indicators	127	32	72	231
Percentage	55%	14%	31%	100%

Source: ESCAP (2023b).

The Lao Government has encouraged local governments to participate in implementing and monitoring the implementation of the SDGs through governance work (improvement in public services, participation, rule of law, and appropriate financial management) and strengthen institutions in local governments such as Get their input for the mid-term review and conclusion of the 8th NSEDP and establishment of the 9th NSEDP with a focus on SDGs implementation; Develop a monitoring and evaluation framework for the 9th NSEDP with data disaggregated not only by population groups but also by sectors, provinces, and other regions; The potential use of the SDGs open platform will highlight a variety of data for SDGs monitoring at the national, sectoral and provincial levels. All of these governance frameworks and initiatives cut across all sectors. Accordingly, the Government has committed to ensuring that issues of service delivery, planning, and financial management in health, education, and other sectors will be addressed from a governance perspective.

Laos has implemented VNR twice in 2018 and 2021. To ensure an inclusive, participatory, and transparent VNR 2021 process, the National SDG Secretariat has held several consultations since mid-2020 with stakeholders from Government, Parliament, private sector, academia, civil society, international NGOs, UN agencies, and development partners. Stakeholders' participation in VNR has contributed to improving their understanding of the SDGs and implementing strategies and plans related to them. While inputs from various partners have mostly been integrated into this VNR, all recommendations, inputs, and proposals will be summarized and presented to the National SDG Steering Committee for further guidance for the next actions.

Monitoring and evaluation of SDG implementation in Laos, which is conducted continuously based on the goals, timeliness, and outputs identified in the work plan, will be implemented in accordance with the VNR process. In addition, mid-year and annual reviews will be conducted as deemed appropriate through:

- Review annual reports including Steering Committee, Secretariat, and sector levels.
- Number of meetings, conferences, activities, and events related to the SDGs.
- Number of participants and level of participation, considering gender equality.
- Number of lists of SDG advocacy documents, output, and dissemination areas.
- SDG-related activities, including meetings, conferences, seminars, media production, etc., consider the sustainability and minimize the impact on the environment.

The National SDG Secretariat will ensure that monitoring is carried out. Planned activities are implemented on time and according to established criteria. This will enhance the effectiveness of communication programs to directly contribute to the realization of the SDGs. Monitoring tools include the Communication Matrix and Work Plan. The evaluation will measure the effectiveness and efficiency of communication activities as described in the Matrix.

Some important consultation meetings that provided direct input to VNR are:

- Consultation between ministries and branches
- Consult provincial authorities and local communities

- Consultation with the private sector
- Consultation with civil society
- Consulting with youth and volunteers
- Consultation with UN agencies and Development Partners

Collecting data on the SDGs is currently challenging due to COVID-19 disruptions, so based on available baseline and updated data on SDG indicators, VNR 2021 of Laos discussion focused on nine selected SDGs (SDG 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 13, 17 and 18).

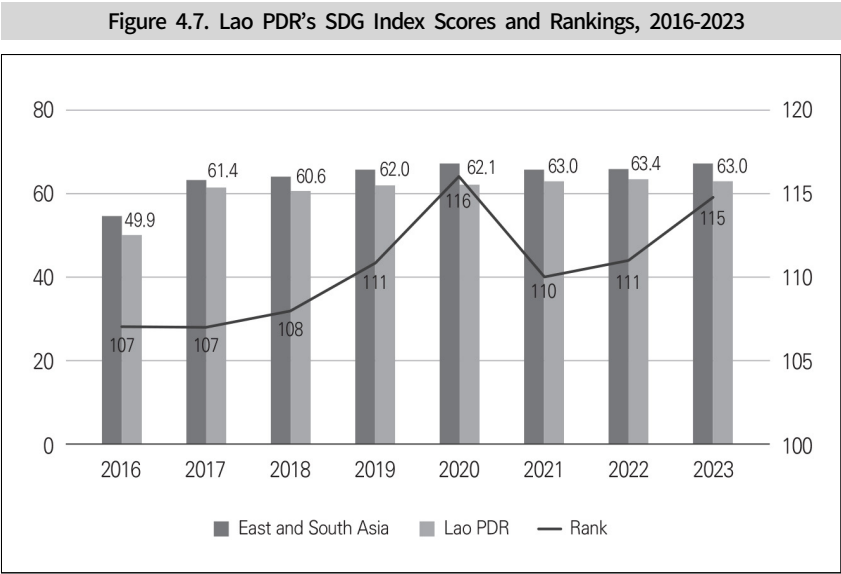
3.2. Assessing the Progress in Implementing the SDGs in Lao PDR

3.2.1. Performance of SDGs Implementation in Lao PDR

High economic growth rates in recent years have helped Lao PDR twice pass the UN assessment criteria in 2018 and 2021 to escape LDC status, which does not mean the mission of hunger eradication poverty will end, and everyone in the country will get rich instantly, but this reflects success, resulting in a historic milestone in Laos' development. Laos' progress towards the SDGs will meet the criteria for LDC graduation by 2026.

Since the first VNR was published in 2018, efforts by affiliated Ministries and Provinces have been accelerated to ensure SDGs localization effectively. Through the implementation of the 8th NSEDP (2016-2020) as well as the SDGs, Lao PDR has achieved many significant achievements. The country continues to have political stability, social order, and continuous economic growth, contributing significantly to poverty reduction and improving the living standards of all ethnic groups. The poverty rate has more than halved from 46% in 1993 to 18% in 2019 – reflecting rapid GDP growth with an average annual rate of 7.3% over the same period. Lao PDR has made

certain efforts to achieve the SDGs towards sustainable development in all fields. Laos' SDG index score has increased from 49.9 in 2016 to 63.0 in 2023. However, the rate of increase in Laos' SDG index score is slower than the average SDG index score of the world and the region, so Laos' ranking has regressed in the period 2016-2020 from 107th to 116th. In 2021, Laos's ranking improved by six places, but due to the impact of natural disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic, Laos's economic growth rate decreased, affecting the implementation of the SDGs. In 2022 and 2023, the SDG ranking has dropped four places from 111th to 115th (Figure 4.7). In ASEAN, Laos' SDG ranking is currently the 9th one- just above Myanmar.



Source: Data compiled from Sustainable Development Report 2021- 2023.

In 2023, according to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) assessment, Lao PDR is making significant progress

in the indicators of clean water and sanitation (Goal 6), clean and affordable energy (Goal 7), and live on land (Goal 15). However, half of the indicators in Goal 7 show a negative trend (ESCAP 2023b). Laos's goals 6 and 15 are leading the Asia-Pacific region and are among the top countries progressing faster than the regional average (ESCAP 2023a). Goal 1, 2, 3, 9, 10 and 17 have all made progress, but most of these goals show signs of stagnation or regression. ESCAP also indicates that most of the trends are stagnant or regressive in Goal 4, 8, and 12. Due to Laos' geographical location, most indicators in Goal 14 cannot be measured for evaluation. In addition to the 17 global goals, Goal 18 is Laos' national goal, which has made slow progress and is facing many major challenges. Besides, except for Goal 7, most of the goals need more data to assess Laos' progress in implementing SDGs more accurately.

3.2.2. Difficulties and Challenges in Implementing the SDG in Lao PDR

Laos is making progress in the SDGs, but there is still a long way to go with many difficulties and challenges ahead.

Firstly, although certain achievements have been achieved in some SDG goals, Laos' progress in implementing the SDGs has not yet had many breakthroughs. The rate of increase in Laos's SDG index score is slower than the average SDG index score of the world and the region, so Laos' ranking has regressed in the period 2016-2020. Particularly, in the context of COVID -19, the implementation of Laos' SDGs is also greatly affected, requiring greater efforts not only from the state but also from people and businesses.

Secondly, Lao PDR has met the LDC graduation requirements in

2021, and with the approval of the United Nations General Assembly, Laos will be officially recognized as a developing country after the transition period of 5 years (2021- 2026), longer than the standard period of 3 years due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, once it exits the LDC list, Laos will lose some of the resources reserved for countries on the LDC list (after the transition period) - grant aid gradually shifts to preferential loans or with higher interest rates from some development partners. Laos also no longer has access to technical and financial support mechanisms specifically for LDCs, including the LDC Fund to adapt to climate change, the Global Environment Fund (GEF). This makes Laos lack of financial capital to implement the SDGs more difficultly and challengingly.

Thirdly, the lack of data availability is a major barrier to assessing and monitoring the implementation of the SDGs in Laos. Filling data gaps also requires greater coordination between national data providers and cooperation with global supervisory authorities.

Fourthly, raising public awareness of the SDGs plays an important role in supporting and promoting the partnerships to achieve the SDGs. However, knowledge and awareness of the SDGs in Laos is not high, especially among stakeholders at the local level, which makes community awareness of the SDGs still limited. While the capacity of communications and policy advocacy staff is still weak, financial and human resources are limited, difficult to reach people, especially ethnic people living in remote areas.

Fifthly, not all SDG indicators are included in the NSEDP. As of June 2019, about 60% of the 160 indicators of the 8th NSEDP are linked to SDG indicators. This not only causes ministries, branches,

and localities to lack a coherent framework for mutually supportive actions of all stakeholders but also makes the assessment and monitoring of the implementation of the SDGs difficult.

3.3. Discussion

Like Vietnam, Laos is located within the Indochina peninsula, having a strategic position in Southeast Asia. Laos is located on the western slope of the Truong Son range, deep into the mainland of the peninsula with about 80% of its territory being mountainous. Laos is a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual country. Laos is the only landlocked country in ASEAN. In 2018, Laos had about 6.9 million people, much smaller than countries in the region such as Cambodia (16.3 million), Thailand (69.2 million), and Vietnam (96.7 million) (Lao PDR 2018).

Since Laos' first VNR was published in 2018, efforts by affiliated ministries and provinces have been accelerated to ensure effective nationalization of the SDGs. In recent years, although the Lao Government has actively implemented the SDGs and achieved many achievements, especially in poverty reduction, but Laos is currently facing many difficulties due to the impact of the COVID-19 epidemic and achieving the SDGs by 2030 will be a challenging task.

It can be seen that the Lao Government and the Vietnamese Government are both making efforts to implement international commitments on the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and achieving the SDGs. However, comparing the progress of implementing the SDGs between Laos and Vietnam shows many interesting findings, it provides valuable insights that can draw many valuable lessons from Vietnam's experience in following pursue the UN SDGs.

However, comparing the progress of implementing the SDGs between Laos and Vietnam shows many interesting findings, it brings valuable insights that can draw many valuable lessons from Vietnam’s experience in implementing SDGs.

Laos and Vietnam have many similarities in geographical location, culture, multilingualism, and multiethnicity, and they have the advantage of a young population. However, due to the small domestic market and geographical difficulties, growth Laos’s economic growth still depends heavily on natural resources. Vietnam graduated from LDC status in 2009, while Laos is moving towards escaping LDC status in 2026. Therefore, in terms of the overall economy, Vietnam has a lot of advantages over Laos in terms of scale, value and competitive advantage (Table 4.6).

Table 4.6. The Comparison between Laos and Vietnam, by Indicator		
Indicator	Vietnam	Lao PDR
SDG Index score	73.3 (2023)	63.0 (2023)
SDG Ranking (2023)	55/166 (2023)	115/166 (2023)
GDP (USD)	408,802.38 (2022)	15,724.38 (2022)
GNI per capita (USD)	4,010 (2022)	2,360 (2022)
Gini Index	36.8 (2020)	38.8 (2018)

Source: Data collected from World Bank, UNDP, UN.

The implementation of the SDGs in Laos and Vietnam has achieved significant progress in many areas, such as the establishment of the National Steering Committee for SDG Implementation chaired by the Prime Minister and with the participation of members from relevant sectors to collectively coordinate the integration SDGs into the national socio-economic development planning and sectoral and local

development planning orientations. Vietnam and Laos have participated in the global evaluation and monitoring mechanism for SDG implementation, such as VNR. The VNR development process has created opportunities to raise awareness and promote the participation of stakeholders in implementing the SDGs in Vietnam and Laos. VNR also creates opportunities to promote coordination between ministries, branches, agencies and enhance policy coherence, strengthen partnerships between Government and stakeholders as well as opportunities to enhance collection and analyze statistical data on SDG indicators. This is also considered a solid basis for monitoring, evaluating and mobilizing resources to implement the SDGs in Laos and Vietnam.

Vietnam has implemented the MDGs very well and completed most of the MDGs committed to the international community. This is an essential step in creating momentum for Vietnam to implement the SDGs towards the 2030 Agenda. Based on successful lessons in implementing the MDGs, the Vietnamese Government has made efforts to promote full integration of the SDGs into its development strategies and plans at all levels. By 2022, 17/22 ministries, branches, and 51/63 provinces and centrally-run cities in Vietnam have issued Action Plans to implement the 2030 Agenda. While as of June 2019, about 60% of the 160 indicators in the 8th NSEDP are linked to 71 SDG indicators. This has contributed to Vietnam's SDG scores and rankings, which consistently achieved superior results compared to Laos. Therefore, Laos needs to continue promoting the nationalization of the SDGs, strengthening cooperation with development partners and stakeholders, especially multilateral cooperation, to ensure steady progress towards the SDGs, achieve LDC graduation, and improve the well-being of all citizens.

Vietnam graduated from LDC status in 2009, while Laos is moving towards exiting LDC status in 2026. Therefore, to implement the SDGs according to the 2030 Agenda, Laos's priority is to focus its efforts on human resource development, economic regulation, and poverty reduction. Meanwhile, Vietnam's overall goal will be sustaining economic growth alongside with ensuring social progress and justice and environmental and ecological protection, effective management and utilization of natural resources, a proactive response to climate change, ensuring that all citizens are promoted their full potential, participate in development and benefit equitably from the results of development; and build a Vietnamese society that is peaceful, prosperous, inclusive, democratic, just, civilized and sustainable. At least until 2026, although ODA capital flows into Laos tend to decrease gradually, but Laos can still increase the attraction of ODA for socio-economic development projects in general and special SDG implementation. Therefore, the Lao Government needs to increase the use of ODA capital to create a favorable environment for the domestic and foreign private sectors to develop, and promote private sector investment in areas related to the SDGs.

4. The Progress of SDGs Implementation in Myanmar

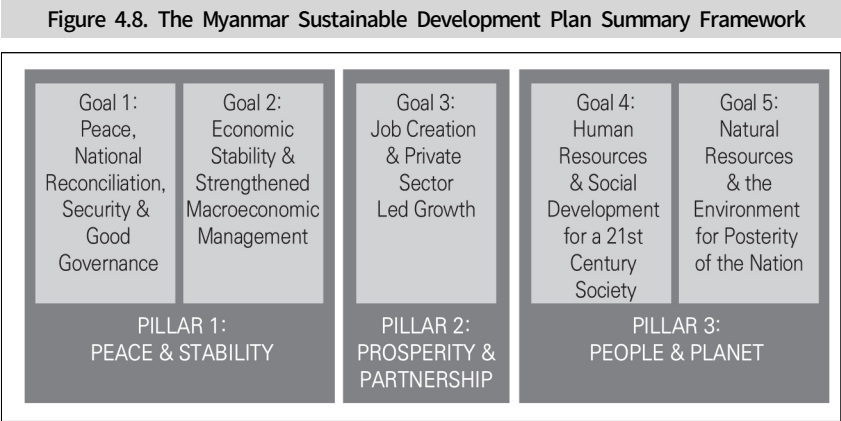
4.1. Implementing the SDGs in Myanmar

4.1.1. Nationalizing the SDGs in Myanmar

In August 2018, the Myanmar government issued the Myanmar

Sustainable Development Plan (2018-2030) (MSDP). While the MSDP is only Myanmar’s National Development Plan that aims to provide a long-term vision of a peaceful, prosperous, and democratic country and transformational economic growth for the country, the SDGs have been identified to ensure consistency and alignment between the MSDP and the SDGs. The MSDP provided a master plan for long-term sustainable development, which is considered a national strategy (2018-2030) (Taidong 2019).

MSDP is structured based on 3 Pillars, 5 Goals, 28 Strategies, and 251 Action Plans (Figure 4.8). All are aligned with the SDGs, the 12-Point Economic Policy of the Union of Myanmar and various regional commitments that Myanmar has made as part of the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) Strategic Framework), ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and many other stakeholders.



Sources: Ministry of Planning and Finance of Myanmar (2018).

For each of the 5 Goals, clear strategies were developed. For each

strategy, Action Plans were identified. The Action Plans were envisioned as multi-dimensional, requiring successful implementation through the participation of multiple stakeholders, including various ministries and state agencies. The MSDP has taken maximum advantage of existing sector and thematic-level plans and policies, as well as those currently being drafted. The MSDP is intended to provide a whole-of-government development framework that offers coherence to these existing strategic documents, ensuring that they are executed in ways that are consistent with macro-level national development priorities. Therefore, the MSDP is the integration and distillation of existing plans and priorities. Furthermore, the MSDP mediates between local developmental needs and the 2030 Agenda by aligning MSDP action plans with global SDG targets (Ministry of Planning and Finance of Myanmar 2018). In which MSDP pillars are similar to the SDGs pillars: Pillar 1 of MSDP: Peace & Stability is related to Pillar 1 of SDGs: Social Development. Pillar 2 of MSDP: Prosperity & Partners related to Pillar 2 of SDGs: Economic Development. Pillar 3 of MSDP: People & Planet related to Pillar 3 of SDGs: Environmental protection (Table 4.7).

Table 4.7. SDGs vs. MSDP	
SDGs	MSDP
3 pillars	3 pillars
17 goals	5 goals
169 targets	251 action plans

Source: UN (2015) and Ministry of Planning and Finance of Myanmar (2018).

Notably, the Government of Myanmar is committed to achieving the SDGs with the goal of ensuring a balance between development

in the economic, social, and environmental sectors. It is for these reasons that sustainability in all its forms must be considered cross-cutting and integrated into all aspects of MSDP implementation. The 2030 Agenda will be used to guide Myanmar in achieving the SDGs within the same timeline. Furthermore, and unlike previous strategies, the MSDP is designed to achieve its goals through coordinated efforts between public entities, the nonprofit sector as well as the private sector (Ministry of Planning and Finance of Myanmar 2018).

4.1.2. Mechanism to Implement SDGs and Roles, Engagement of Stakeholders in Myanmar

To coordinate the MSDP's implementation, the Myanmar Government established dedicated high-level structures. Accordingly, the Ministry of Planning and Finance of the Union of Myanmar (MOPF) was designated as the focal agency for MSDP implementation and housed the MSDP Implementation Unit (MSDP-IU). The MSDP-IU was responsible for providing overall guidance, approving strategic decisions, and addressing strategic issues that may arise during MSDP implementation.

The MSDP-IU, comprising the National Economic Coordination Committee (NECC), the Development Assistance Coordination Unit (DACU), the Planning Department and Policy Appraisal and Progress Reporting Department of Ministry of Planning and Finance, functioned as an integrated coordinating unit, with each entity operating within its specific mandate and technical domain.

The MSDP-IU reported to the Chair of the Planning Commission through the Union Minister of Planning and Finance. The MSDP-IU actively supported MSDP implementation by providing the Planning

Commission with monitoring update reports, including clear analyses and technical recommendations to address any emerging issues or challenges. The MSDP-IU worked through existing structures where possible and monitored the creation of new implementation structures, coordination frameworks, and monitoring mechanisms as needed.

Although Myanmar had initiated local governance institutional reforms in 2011, SDGs implementation remained under highly centralized control. The Union-level ministries still wielded considerable influence over political appointments and revenue sources for goal implementation. Decision-making by the national government as well as regional offices often overlooked the needs of local Development Affairs Offices (DAOs). The lack of decision-making authority at the DAO level impacted accountability and led to misallocation of resources. In many cases, township-level DAOs lacked the autonomy to manage personnel, provide incentives, or independently plan budgets (Matthew 2015).

Awareness and understanding of the SDGs, particularly among township-level DAOs in Myanmar, remained limited. DAOs frequently grappled with complex situations that hindered their effective functioning, let alone meeting SDG requirements. Furthermore, they received directives from multiple local offices of government ministries. To achieve SDG outcomes, local officials needed to be actively engaged in decision-making processes and have adequate resources (International Management Group 2014). However, at the township level, many newly elected political representatives had limited managerial experience. Building their capacity would require considerable time and effort (Barker 2017).

4.1.3. Financial Sources to Implement the SDGs in Myanmar

Effective implementation of the MSDP will also necessitate a comprehensive financing strategy. The Government has identified several development financing sources to be mobilized to fund MSDP implementation: domestic public finance, domestic private finance, international public finance, and international private finance. Accordingly, in mobilizing and allocating finance, the MSDP-IU assesses the strengths, weaknesses, risks, and opportunities associated with linking different financing sources to different strategies and Action Plans.

As a less developed country, Myanmar still receives the highest level of ODA in the region, but the proportion of ODA included in government income is decreasing. Non-ODA flows such as remittances and FDI are growing at a faster rate and are becoming more important in achieving the SDGs. The increasing amount of FDI motivates the Myanmar Government to increase transparency to create confidence for the private sector to invest in the country's sustainable development (UNDP 2016).

The largest source of finance for Myanmar's SDG implementation is government tax revenue and income from state economic enterprises (SEEs). However, challenges remain in increasing government revenue from these sources. Although tax revenue increased to 10% of GDP in 2018, this figure is still lower than the ASEAN average of 14% of GDP. Myanmar faces considerable hurdles in increasing revenue from state economic enterprises, primarily due to corrupt practices. Profit shifting from these enterprises away from government revenue is higher than in most other developing countries. Implementing reforms to curb such practices is crucial for Myanmar to ensure adequate resources for SDG implementation. The complex structures and low transparency of

many state-owned economic enterprises, particularly in the extractive and forestry sectors, highlight the importance of governance changes.

Development partners play an important role in supporting Myanmar to implement the SDGs. The European Union is one of Myanmar's largest development partners, providing 804 million euros of support to Myanmar, including bilateral support during 2014–2020. This funding covers rural development, agriculture and food security, education, governance, rule of law, and institutional capacity building, and support peacebuilding. European Union aid to Myanmar is allocated to a variety of activities, such as budget support, projects, and financing of multilateral funds. In addition to these large programs, the European Union also implements smaller projects that contribute to the SDGs in various ways. Besides, the European Union also supports Myanmar through regional programs, such as the Responsible Supply Chain in Asia program implemented by the United Nations International Labor Organization, which aims to integrate responsible business practices into the operations of multinational companies and their supply chains in six Asian countries (Calabrese 2021).

After the 2021 coup, funding to promote the SDGs in Myanmar declined, mainly due to sanctions from Western countries. Myanmar is heavily reliant on international aid and funding, especially to address the refugee crisis.

In 2023, UNICEF Myanmar appealed for \$217.9 million to address the needs of 3.7 million people, including 2.3 million children. Despite securing some support, the 85% funding gap severely impacted UNICEF's response capacity. The organization continues to provide essential services related to nutrition, health, HIV/AIDS, water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), education, child protection,

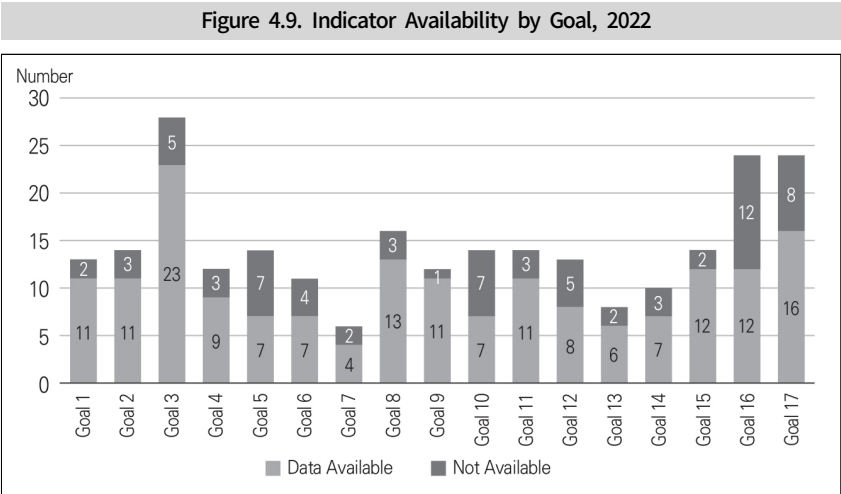
gender-based violence, etc. Resource constraints hinder UNICEF's ability to support target groups, especially children, in accessing basic social services (Myanmar Country Office, 2023). For the UN, the total funding appeal for Myanmar in 2023 was 391,078,682 USD, but as of August 15, 2023, only 178,987,491 USD had been received, constituting 46% of the total appeal (UNHCR 2023).

4.1.4. Monitoring and Evaluating the Implementation of the SDGs in Myanmar

The Central Statistical Organization (CSO) under the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry (MOPFI). Central Statistical Organization is also the National Statistical Authority in Myanmar. Central Statistical Organization has been monitoring and evaluation SDGs since 2016. Building on the experience and expertise the Central Statistical Organization developed through the SDG process, the Government of Myanmar tasked Central Statistical Organization for monitoring and evaluation MSDP (2018-2030). Central Statistical Organization has been working together with UNDP, related Ministries and Departments, NGOs, and INGOs to prepare a National Indicator Framework (NIF) for monitoring and evaluation of the MSDP since July 2018. The National Indicator Framework identifies the required statistical indicators and responsible data producing agencies to support monitoring and evaluation of the MSDP. There are 286 indicators in National Indicators Framework, according to the final round task teams' consultation result in June 2019. These total indicators numbers of National Indicator Framework represent in average 10.2 indicators per MSDP strategy. The share of SDG indicators is 41% in this National Indicator Framework. A large majority (74%) of National Indicator Framework indicators are readily

measurable. Furthermore, a large majority (72%) of National Indicator Framework indicators are at the strategic level (outcome or impact indicators) (Htet 2020).

According to the 2022 Sustainable Development Goals Progress Report, currently, 175 SDG indicators (71%) are available, while 72 indicators (29%) remain inaccessible out of a total of 247 indicators (Figure 4.9). Of these, 161 indicators originate from Myanmar’s Central Statistical Organization, and 14 indicators come from international organizations. Data availability is highest for Goals 3, 8, 11, 15, and 17. Meanwhile, data for many goals remain significantly lacking, and comprehensive information to monitor SDG progress in Myanmar is missing for Goals 5, 10, 16, and 17. This poses considerable challenges in tracking their progression. Notably, only 50% of data is available for SDGs 5, 10, and 16, which are critical data points in demonstrating the necessary enabling conditions for SDG advancement (Ministry of Planning and Finance of Myanmar 2022).



Source: Ministry of Planning and Finance of Myanmar (2022).

To support effective SDGs monitoring, the Central Statistical Organization has spearheaded the development of the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) with support from the WB. The two main objectives of Myanmar's National Strategy for Development of Statistics are to undertake a detailed assessment to improve the national statistical system coherently and develop an implementable plan with budgetary provisions within a medium-term timeframe. The National Strategy for Development of Statistics process comprises Part I: Core Strategy and Part II: Implementation Action Plan. The National Strategy for Development of Statistics assessment focuses on the institutional and legal framework, national data production framework, the role and functions of the Central Statistical Organization as the national statistics coordinator, as well as data dissemination and user relationships.

The National Strategy for Development of Statistics Implementation Action Plan aims to strengthen the entire Myanmar National Statistical System, emphasizing the development of all statistical units within line ministries. The development of the implementation plan, currently underway, focuses on the actions and activities to be undertaken over five years, updating the assessment provided in Part I. The National Strategy for Development of Statistics implementation action plan outlines key actions supporting appropriate SDG monitoring. It includes an updated assessment of the status of Myanmar's National Statistical System (NSS), focusing on system-wide improvements in the institutional and legal framework, user-provider relationships, statistical and information & communications technologies (ICT) infrastructure, human resources, and improvements to subject-matter programs and

methodologies. The plan also assesses economic, demographic, social, and environmental statistics while enhancing capacity for monitoring National and Global Development Plans.

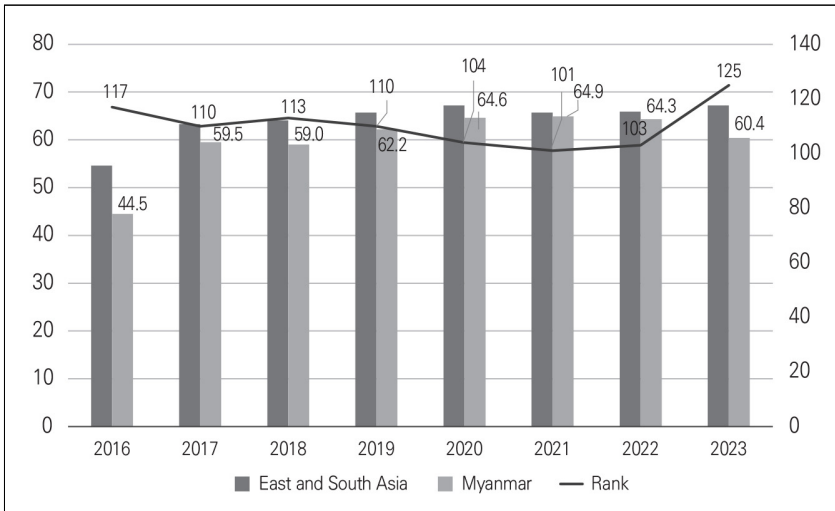
Up to now, Myanmar has not published any VNR to track progress in implementing the SDGs, and data for many SDGs remains very limited. However, through collaborative efforts between the Mekong-Korea Cooperation Fund (MKCF) and Myanmar's Ministry of Planning and Finance in December 2022, the Sustainable Development Goals: 2022 Progress Report was released, providing the latest comprehensive analysis of SDGs implementation progress in Myanmar.

4.2. Assessing the Progress in Implementing the SDGs in Myanmar

4.2.1. Performance of SDGs Implementation in Myanmar

Developing plans aligned with implementing the SDGs appropriate to the country's context, while creating a framework for ministries, states agencies, and localities to formulate specific plans, has enabled Myanmar to make some progress towards SDGs in the 2030 Agenda. According to the 2017-2021 Sustainable Development Reports, Myanmar's SDG index score only increased moderately from 59.5 in 2017 to 64.9 in 2021, accordingly Myanmar's ranking also improved from 117th to 101st. This shows that Myanmar's SDGs index score has improved but is always lower than the average SDG index score of the world and the region, so Myanmar's ranking has not improved much. Even in 2023, Myanmar's SDG index score dropped to 60.4, and its ranking dropped to 125th (Figure 4.10).

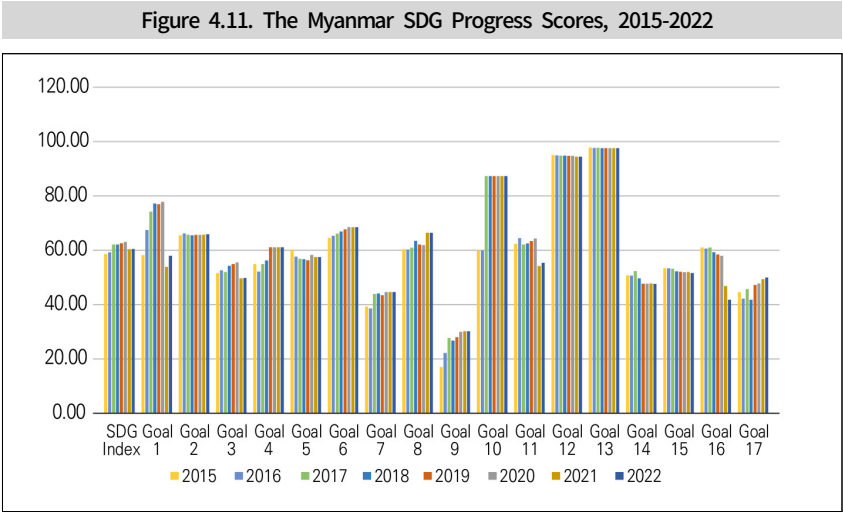
Figure 4.10. Myanmar's SDG Index Score and Ranking, 2016-2023



Source: Data compiled from the Sustainable Development Reports 2016-2023.

During the period 2015-2022, most SDGs exhibited limited progress while some were stagnant or decreasing. Specifically, the highest scores were for Goals 10, 12, and 13 (Figure 4.11) but remained unchanged, suggesting inherent limitations in the data or methodologies used to measure progress rather than necessarily reflecting outstanding achievements in reducing inequalities, ensuring responsible production and consumption, and taking climate action. Similarly, the consistent scores for Goals 2, 4, and 6 may reflect data constraints in accurately tracking progress on hunger, education, water, and sanitation over time. Among the 17 SDGs, Goal 9 had the lowest score but exhibited an upward trend, indicating gradual improvement in infrastructure development and innovation capabilities, albeit still at a very low level. Meanwhile, Goals 11, 14, and 16 showed sharp declines, signifying severe setbacks in sustainable city development, ocean conservation, as well

as peace, justice, and strong institutions – rather than just data issues. This highlighted major reversals in these domains amidst the pandemic and political instability. For Goal 16, focusing on governance, justice, and peace, Myanmar demonstrated a decline from 61.01 in 2015 to 57.93 in 2020, indicating the gradual erosion of democratic freedoms, judicial independence, fairness in public administration, and conflicts even before the 2021 coup and instability. The sharp drop below 50 from 2021 attested to the state’s collapse, violence, and repression while underscoring the extreme fragility and deterioration in security, justice, and governance aspects, necessitating robust international support and advocacy to aid restoration. The notable changes in Goals 1 and 3 could also reflect real-world setbacks in poverty reduction and healthcare provision due to COVID-19 and instability rather than data limitations (Sachs *et al.* 2023).



Source: Sustainable Development Report, 2023.

4.2.2. Difficulties and Challenges in Implementing the SDGs in Myanmar

First, Myanmar's economy has been greatly affected by political instability, which has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 epidemic, especially in poverty reduction and job creation. The economic downturn puts low-income countries like Myanmar not only at risk of losing the limited progress made to date but also at risk of falling further behind their partners in implement the SDGs and pursue sustainable development.

Second, conflicts and political instability not only affect Myanmar's international image but also greatly affect Myanmar's relationships with international partners. After the 2021 coup, funding to promote the SDGs in Myanmar declined, mainly due to sanctions from Western countries. While revenue from Myanmar's state-owned economic enterprises - the largest source of finance to implement the SDGs - is lower than the average of other ASEAN countries, and is facing significant obstacles due to corruption. The profits diverted from these enterprises out of government revenue are higher than in most other developing countries.

Third, the integration of SDGs at all levels is not high. Implementation of the SDGs remains under the highly centralized control of the Myanmar government. Decision-making by national Government and State and Regional offices often ignores the needs of local Development Affairs Offices (DAOs). The lack of decision-making authority at the DAO level affected accountability and led to improper allocation of resources. In many cases, DAOs at the town level do not have the authority to independently manage personnel, rewards, or plan budgets. While

awareness and understanding of the SDGs at the local level is not high, the management capacity and experience of local officials is still limited.

Fourth, collecting and sharing data is not high quality and complete. Lack of data makes monitoring and evaluating the implementation of Myanmar's SDGs also encounter many difficulties and challenges. To date, Myanmar has not announced any VNR to track progress on the SDGs. Myanmar needs to expand and enhance the capacity of the Central Statistical Organization and other ministries/departments to collect more reliable information on its progress.

Fifth, the development gap between regions in Myanmar is quite large. Myanmar is a large country, with many border areas beyond government control, so it is difficult for Myanmar to implement the principle of "leaving no one behind" of the 2030 Agenda, especially in light of ongoing unrest in the border region, the recent coup, and ongoing tensions between military and civilian authorities.

4.3. Discussion

Myanmar is an LDC country, so in terms of the overall economy, Myanmar and Vietnam have a large gap (Table 4.8). However, Myanmar is in a position to benefit from the experience of Vietnam - a country that has made much progress in implementing the SDGs, as well as sharing its own experiences in implementing the SDGs.

Table 4.8. A Comparison between Myanmar and Vietnam, by Indicator

Indicator	Vietnam	Myanmar
SDG Index score	73.3 (2023)	60.4 (2023)
SDG Ranking	55/166 (2023)	125/166 (2023)
GDP (USD)	408,802.38 (2022)	59,364.36 (2022)
GNI per capita (USD)	4,010 (2022)	1,210 (2022)
Gini Index	36.8 (2020)	30.7 (2017)

Source: Data collected from World Bank, UNDP, UN.

4.3.1. Implication for Myanmar

Myanmar faces significant hurdles due to ongoing conflicts, political instability, and resource constraints, which have hindered its ability to effectively implement sustainable development strategies. By leveraging insights from Vietnam's successes and challenges, Myanmar can draw several valuable lessons from Vietnam's experience in pursuing the SDGs.

Firstly, Vietnam's economic reforms and integration into global markets have been pivotal in driving poverty reduction and economic progress. Myanmar could benefit from further embracing market-oriented reforms, attracting foreign investment, and fostering an enabling environment for private sector development. However, it is crucial to ensure that economic growth is inclusive and benefits all segments of society, particularly marginalized groups, and ethnic minorities.

Secondly, Vietnam's targeted poverty reduction programs, such as the National Target Program for Sustainable Poverty Reduction, have played a significant role in improving access to healthcare, education, and infrastructure in poor communities. Myanmar could adapt and implement similar targeted interventions, tailored to the specific needs of its rural and disadvantaged populations. Addressing regional disparities

and ensuring equitable access to basic services should be a priority.

Thirdly, Vietnam has made notable strides in developing its infrastructure, particularly in transportation, energy, and telecommunications. Myanmar could learn from Vietnam's experience in mobilizing resources, leveraging public-private partnerships, and implementing effective policies to attract investment in infrastructure development. Developing resilient and sustainable infrastructure is crucial for facilitating economic growth and improving access to services.

Fourthly, Vietnam's emphasis on data collection, monitoring, and evaluation systems could provide valuable lessons for Myanmar. Robust data and effective monitoring mechanisms are essential for tracking progress, identifying gaps, and informing evidence-based policymaking.

However, it is essential to note that while Vietnam's experiences offer valuable insights, Myanmar must tailor its development strategies to its unique socio-political and cultural context. Addressing ongoing conflicts, promoting inclusive governance, and fostering social cohesion are crucial prerequisites for sustainable development in Myanmar.

4.3.2. Implication for Vietnam

As Vietnam strives to achieve SDGs by 2030, it can draw valuable lessons from the experiences of its neighboring country, Myanmar.

Firstly, leveraging Regional Partnerships and Cooperation. Similar to Myanmar's relationship with China, Vietnam should actively seek to strengthen ties with neighboring countries and regional partners to foster sustainable development.

Secondly, exploring Innovative Financing Mechanisms. Recognizing the limitations of public budgets, Vietnam can learn from Myanmar's

efforts to explore alternative funding mechanisms.

Thirdly, addressing Conflicts and Security Concerns. Like Myanmar, Vietnam should prioritize resolving internal conflicts and addressing security concerns, as these can hinder sustainable development efforts. Conflicts not only disrupt regional connectivity and cross-border initiatives but also discourage foreign investment. By promoting peace, stability, and inclusive governance, Vietnam can create a conducive environment for sustainable development.

Fourthly, prioritizing Environmental Sustainability. As a country rich in natural resources, Vietnam should learn from Myanmar's experience and prioritize the sustainable management of its environment. For example, large-scale infrastructure projects, while necessary for economic growth, should be carefully planned and executed to minimize negative impacts on ecosystems, biodiversity, and local communities. Striking a balance between development and environmental preservation is crucial for long-term sustainability.

Fifthly, enhancing Financial System Resilience. The Myanmar's financial system fails to meet international standards (Taidong 2019). Vietnam should prioritize enhancing the resilience and compliance of its financial sector. Aligning with international standards and best practices will facilitate access to sustainable financing options and attract responsible investment.

In conclusion, Myanmar's experiences offer valuable lessons for Vietnam are fostering regional partnerships, exploring innovative financing mechanisms, addressing conflicts and security concerns, enhancing research and knowledge sharing, prioritizing environmental sustainability, addressing land rights and minority interests, strengthening

governance and regulatory frameworks, enhancing financial system resilience, and mainstreaming sustainable development in regional cooperation models, Vietnam can pave the way for a more sustainable and prosperous future.

5. Sub-Conclusion of Chapter 4

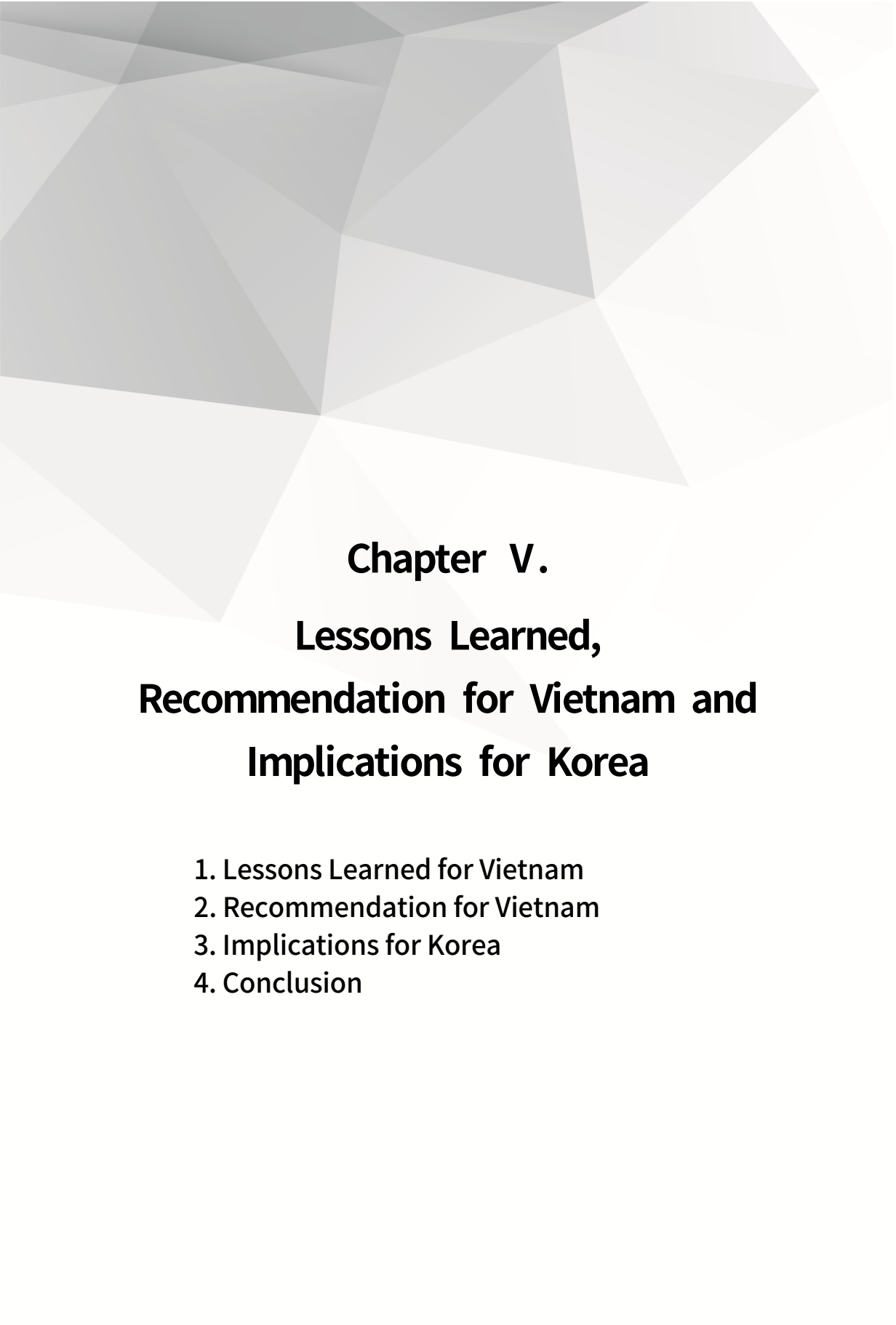
This chapter focuses on assessing progress in implementing the SDGs of three countries, Indonesia, Laos and Myanmar. These three countries are interesting cases where other countries can learn and draw valuable lessons from each other's successes and limitations in the region. Through research analyzing the progress of implementing the SDGs of three countries and comparing them with Vietnam, we have found extremely useful findings for policymakers in Vietnam and other countries in the region, creating a more effective approach to jointly pursuing the SDGs.

First, although Indonesia has a lower SDG index score and SDG ranking than Vietnam, the Indonesian Government's efforts and SDG commitment, with an SDG effort score of 77.3 and ranked 7th, are also evaluated as much higher than Vietnam with only 51.1 points, ranked 61st. Besides, if considering the overall economy, Indonesia also has an advantage over Vietnam in terms of scale, value and competitive advantage.

Second, Vietnam and Laos have many similarities in geographical location, culture, multilingualism, and rich natural resources. But thanks to the Government's efforts, most of Vietnam's development strategies and plans at all levels are fully integrated with the SDGs. By 2022,

17/22 ministries, branches, and 51/63 provinces and centrally-run cities in Vietnam have issued Action Plans to implement the 2030 agenda. While as of June 2019, about 60% of the 160 indicators of the 8th NSEDP are linked to SDG indicators. Therefore, Laos needs to continue promoting the nationalization of the SDGs, strengthening close cooperation with development partners and stakeholders, especially multilateral cooperation, to ensure steady progress towards the SDGs, achieve LDC graduation, and improve the well-being of all citizens.

Third, Myanmar is the country with the lowest index score and SDG ranking in ASEAN. Because Myanmar is facing huge development challenges because the conflict within the country remains intense, there is a lack of national consensus on implementing the SDGs. This is not only a barrier to promoting the implementation of the SDGs, but it also emphasizes the importance of the relationship between peace and sustainable development for the implementation of the SDGs.



Chapter V.

Lessons Learned, Recommendation for Vietnam and Implications for Korea

1. Lessons Learned for Vietnam
2. Recommendation for Vietnam
3. Implications for Korea
4. Conclusion

The implementation of the SDGs by ASEAN countries has contributed to the common aspiration of promoting lasting peace, security, and stability, driving sustainable economic growth, equitable prosperity, and social progress in the region. With efforts from the entire political system and society, Vietnam has consistently achieved outstanding SDG achievements within ASEAN. It can be considered a model case for advancing SDG implementation in the Southeast Asia region. To date, the global SDGs implementation process has reached the half-way mark. Through an assessment of Vietnam's SDG implementation progress and a few interesting cases from ASEAN countries, it is evident that despite the achievements made in promoting the SDGs, these countries are still facing numerous difficulties and challenges, particularly in the context of a volatile world marked by climate change, conflicts, pandemics, trade disruptions, and other complex crises. Based on the analysis of Vietnam's progress in implementing the SDGs and some notable cases from ASEAN countries, this study has identified difficulties and challenges, and drawn lessons on implementation SDGs for Vietnam. From there, the report proposes recommendations for Vietnam as well as implications for Korea as follows.

1. Lessons Learned for Vietnam

First, achieving the SDGs requires strong determination and efforts from the government. The most important lesson in implementing the SDGs is the political determination of the government and consensus

between the National Assembly and government in their thinking and actions. The strong commitment of the government, from central to local levels, in the SDG nationalization and integration in national strategies, plans, projections and development programs.

Second, localizing SDGs plays a crucial role in practically applying these goals. Applying SDGs to local planning and policies is a popular approach, which includes signing international commitments and implementing specific projects. However, some of SDGs are only suitable for some communities, therefore the SDGs need to be flexible and correspond to the specific circumstances and needs of each area, each community. One point to note is that to localize the SDGs effectively, it requires strong support from local governments, mainly through the establishment of SDG centers in all localities. These centers serve as enablers, catalysts, and think tanks, both in terms of research and practical implementation.

Third, the involvement of all stakeholders in implementing SDGs. The participation of stakeholders in implementing the SDGs will have a significant bearing on sustainable development. These entities often involve high-ranking officials, including ministers and prime ministers, and draw upon expertise from diverse sectors such as academia, businesses, and civil society organizations. Among them, the system of diversified social organizations and the business community will play important roles in the sustainable development process. The combination of “bottom-up” and “top-down” approaches has motivated communities to participate in designing and formulating development programs, policies, and projects. Such combinations, at the same time, have oriented development programs towards global sustainable development trends.

Fourth, build a sustainable financial foundation to implement the SDGs. The financial need for implementing the SDGs is enormous, so it is necessary to continue to synchronously implement solutions to mobilize and effectively use financial resources to implement the SDGs, especially from the private sector.

Fifth, develop a quality and complete statistical system and database. Importantly, high-quality and disaggregated data is essential to ensure equitable progress against SDG goals and targets. This necessitates the collective efforts of both state and non-state actors to construct a data ecosystem that not only captures diverse metrics but also ensures inclusivity across various demographics and geographies. While examining the case of Indonesia, it becomes evident that efficiency in policy and program implementation hinges on precise targeting to avoid inadvertent exclusions or inclusions of individuals or groups. Such inaccuracies often arise due to limited data access or erroneous data within government agencies.

Sixth, combined promotion of domestic resources and international cooperation. It is necessary to maximize the potential of domestic and external assets and momentum through international integration and cooperation to develop the country. Taking advantage of opportunities and overcoming difficulties and challenges to sustain and strengthen a peaceful environment, achieve stability, and create more enabling conditions for further sustainable development.

2. Recommendation for Vietnam

In the current world context, and facing the country's internal needs, for sustainable development, the Vietnamese government needs to: i) Focus on restructuring the economy, and innovating the economic growth model, promoting rapid and sustainable development on the basis of maintaining macroeconomic stability; ii) Strongly develop science, technology and innovation, and promote the application of new science and technology to create breakthroughs to improve productivity and competitiveness of the economy; iii) Improve mechanisms and policies to promote private economic development, attract private investment, and consider the private economy as one of the important driving forces of the economy; iv) Focus on developing high-quality human resources to meet the requirements of socio-economic development in the current context; v) Focus on cultural and social development, implement progress and social justice, constantly improve people's lives; vi) Continue to improve and effectively implement mechanisms, policies, and legal regulations on resource management and environmental protection. Harmoniously resolve the relationship between socio-economic development and environmental protection.

Besides, to achieve SDGs in the next half-way, the Vietnamese government needs to focus on the following groups of solutions:

Firstly, continue to intensify the nationalization of the SDGs. To pursue the SDGs, the engagement of the entire political system and society is required. Therefore, Vietnam needs to: i) Continue to improve relevant policies to address policy gaps and create favorable conditions, as well as promote the comprehensive integration of the SDGs into

the 10-year, 5-year, and annual socio-economic development strategies and plans of ministries, state agencies, and localities in alignment with their specific socio-economic conditions; ii) Provide guidance and carefully evaluate the action plans of provinces and regions in the 2030 Agenda to ensure that these local action plans are on the right track; iii) When implementing the SDGs, it is necessary to pay attention to issues such as the disparities in economics, society, and institutions between provinces and regions in promulgating policies and strategies related to sustainable development. The government may pay more attention to poor provinces and regions through support programs and financial and human resource policies; iv) Promote cooperation and coordination among ministries, state agencies, localities, and between central and local levels with various stakeholders to ensure a coherent and effective implementation of the SDGs.

Secondly, mobilize and utilize financial resources effectively for sustainable development. Since Vietnam became a middle-income country in 2009, the ODA and concessional loans from foreign donors have decreased. Mobilizing funds to promote the implementation of the SDGs faces numerous difficulties and challenges, especially in the context of post-COVID-19 economic recovery. Therefore, FDI and private capital are becoming increasingly important for realizing the SDGs and achieving the goals of the national short, medium, and long-term socio-economic development plans and strategies. To secure financial resources for SDG implementation, Vietnam needs to: i) Create a favorable environment for the private sector to develop and promote private investment while strengthening the attraction of domestic and foreign private capital through public-private partnerships (PPPs); ii)

Shift the focus of FDI attraction to be more selective, transitioning from quantity to quality; iii) Restructure public investment with a focus on specific priorities; iv) Strengthen international cooperation to mobilize funds from multilateral development banks and aid from development partners to support sustainable development initiatives and promote the implementation of the SDGs; v) Review and reassess the mobilization and use of provincial budget to improve transparency and accountability to relevant stakeholders, thereby improving the efficiency of provincial budget use.

Thirdly, enhance awareness raising and encourage stakeholders to participate to create a spillover in the implementation of the SDGs. Therefore, Vietnam needs to: i) Strengthen propaganda and education to raise community awareness of the benefits of sustainable development at both national and local levels to encourage stakeholders to participate in implementing the SDGs; ii) Empower local communities and provide a robust framework to strengthen mutual support among all stakeholders. This approach will improve access to sustainable development opportunities for various target groups; iii) Promote the role of businesses and social organizations in implementing the SDGs.

Fourthly, the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluating the progress of SDG implementation should be increased. Monitoring and evaluating the SDGs play a crucial role in identifying gaps and quickly finding solutions to accelerate SDG implementation. The lack of data for tracking and assessing SDG progress is a significant challenge in Vietnam. Therefore, the government needs to: i) Continue to invest in strengthening the capacity of national and local statistical systems on sustainable development to improve data availability in both quantity

and quality; ii) Develop a local monitoring system by engaging local authorities in implementation and monitoring the SDGs; iii) Enhance the provision of data updates from Vietnam to international organizations.

Fifthly, promote international partnership and cooperation. As a member of ASEAN, Vietnam can take advantage of these regional frameworks to strengthen cooperation and mobilize resources for common benefits. International cooperation on infrastructure projects, trade facilitation, political security stability, and knowledge sharing can accelerate SDG progress. At the same time, take advantage of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) to integrate Sustainable Development in regional cooperation models. Accordingly, Vietnam should proactively incorporate sustainable development principles into different regional cooperation models, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF), and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). By aligning these initiatives with the SDGs, Vietnam can leverage its potential for sustainable growth and development.

3. Implications for Korea

Korea is a major economy with significant influence in ASEAN and Asia, while Vietnam is a rapidly developing and dynamic economy playing an important role in ASEAN and East Asia. ASEAN and Korea are also striving towards a comprehensive strategic partnership. Korea is currently one of the most dynamic and fastest-growing partners of

Vietnam since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1992. Notably, in 2022, the two countries elevated their relationship to a “Comprehensive Strategic Partnership,” marking a new milestone in the development of Vietnam-Korea relations. This has ushered in a new era of development for Korea’s relations with ASEAN in general and Vietnam in particular. In this context, Korea can strengthen cooperative relations by supporting Vietnam and ASEAN in achieving the SDGs by 2030 through the following avenues:

Firstly, Vietnam is not only a country that implements the SDGs quite well but also a country that soon has a specific strategy and plan to implement the SDGs. Therefore, to strengthen cooperation with Vietnam, Korea can increase cooperation and support, especially financial and technical support, so that Vietnam can soon achieve the proposed SDGs. Cooperation and support programs related to implementing SDGs in Vietnam will be highly appreciated because this is Vietnam’s strategic goal. Simultaneously, participating in and supporting Vietnam in achieving these goals also easily receives consensus and support from the Vietnamese people. Therefore, strengthening bilateral relationships is convenient in promoting and expanding the image of Korea to the Vietnamese people.

Secondly, in the programs in which Korea cooperates and supports Vietnam to promote progress in implementing SDGs, Korea should focus on collaborating and supporting goals that Korea has many advantages. At the same time, Korea can emphasize the goals that Vietnam is still quite far away from the set SDGs (especially those that Vietnam is still behind, such as SDGs 9, 14, 15, and 17). Promoting cooperation in these goals has two dual meanings: (1) helping Vietnam

promote the implementation of SDGs towards achieving the goals set by the United Nations, (2) Shortening the gap in implementing SDGs in Vietnam towards sustainability and balance in Vietnam's SDGs implementation process.

Thirdly, in the context of strengthening cooperation between Korea and Vietnam, the localization of the SDGs offers broad scope for collaborative activities. The scope of cooperation should include researching the SDGs at the provincial level in Vietnam, collecting evidence and empirical statistics, and then identifying opportunities for development and bilateral cooperation between two countries.

Fourthly, at the regional level, Korea should also strengthen cooperation with other countries in implementing SDGs, taking Vietnam as a model or typical case for cooperation between Korea and other ASEAN countries. Trilateral cooperation between Korea-Vietnam-and ASEAN members should be considered in policies to support the implementation of sustainable goals in ASEAN.

Fifthly, for the ASEAN region, due to differences in governance mechanisms, labor capacity and economic capacity among member countries, the Korean government can apply a strategic approach focusing on raising public awareness and concern for the SDGs. At the same time, supporting the development of laws and regulatory frameworks and establishing standardized SDG indicators is crucial to ensure coherent and measurable progress. Effective regional and international cooperation must be ensured through close coordination with UN agencies, ASEAN, and other partners. This coordination should prioritize aligning SDG initiatives with national development projects and facilitating the transfer of needed technology and expertise to compile, monitor, and evaluate

SDG-related data and disseminate SDG indicators.

4. Conclusion

In recent years, Vietnam has strived to implement the SDGs with the core principle of “leaving no one behind”. It has achieved certain accomplishments in realizing the SDGs, particularly SDG 1, 6, 9, 10, 16 and 17. Currently, all 17 SDGs have been integrated into the 10-year and 5-year Socio-Economic Development Strategies and Plans, the National Plan for the 2021-2030 period with a vision to 2050, and the development policies for various sectors. Notably, the system of planning from the national, sectoral, regional, and local levels is being constructed in a coherent and consistent manner to promote inclusive and sustainable growth, eliminate unnecessary business barriers and conditions, strengthen investment attraction, and ensure the implementation of Vietnam’s international commitments.

Amidst the unpredictable global situation, intense geopolitical conflicts, the severe aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the substantial risks of climate change and environmental pollution, Vietnam’s socio-economic development still faces several inadequacies and limitations, posing challenges to achieving the SDGs by 2030. However, the accomplishments achieved in the previous period, coupled with Vietnam’s political and social stability and an increasingly improved legal and institutional framework for socio-economic development, will continue to lay the groundwork for the implementation of the SDGs in the upcoming stage.

In addition, lessons learned from some ASEAN countries and strengthening international cooperation between Korea, ASEAN, and Vietnam in general create many opportunities for Vietnam to implement the SDGs.

References

- ADB. 2019. *Asian Development Outlook 2019: Strengthening Disaster Resilience*. Manila: Asian Development Bank.
- Allen, R., and D. Tommasi. 2001. *Managing Government Expenditure: A Reference Book for Transition Countries*. Paris: OECD & SIGMA.
- Arshad, A. 2018. "The New ASEAN Green Bonds Standards." *World Bank Blogs*. <https://blogs.worldbank.org/eastasiapacific/new-asean-green-bonds-standards>.
- ASEAN Ministers. 2023. "ASEAN Leaders' Review and Decision on The Implementation of The Five-Point Consensus." *ASEAN*. <https://asean.org/asean-leaders-review-and-decision-on-the-implementation-of-the-five-point-consensus-2/>.
- Azizah, N., and H. Muharram. 2020. Analysis of sustainable development goals (SDGs) in Indonesia: A literature review. *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*, 478(1), 012073.
- Baltagi, B. H. and B. H. Baltagi. 2008. *Econometric Analysis of Panel Data*. Chichester: Wiley.
- Barker, K. 2017. *Myanmar's State and Region MPs Learning on the Job, and Online*. <http://www.mm.undp.org/content/myanmar/en/home/ourperspective/ourperspectivearticles/2017/07/25/myanmar-s-state-and-region-mps-learning-on-the-job-and-online.html>.
- "Myanmar Rohingya: What you need to know about the crisis." 2020. *BBC News Asia*. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-41566561>.
- Bojnec, Š. and D. Papler. 2011. "Economic efficiency, energy consumption and sustainable development." *Journal of Business Economics and Management*,

12(2), pp. 353-374.

- Bui, Q. B. 2023. “Localizing the SDGs: Global thinking – Local Acting” at International Conference: “Localisation of SDGs”. Hanoi, 14 November 2023.
- Bui, T. T. 2021. “Major breakthroughs and directions of the Socio- Economic Development Strategy for the period 2021 - 2030: The Problems for the Financial Strategy until 2030.” *Vietnam Financial Economics Review*, No. 1. (February)
- Calabrese, L. 2021. *Conflict and Renewed Sanctions Threaten Myanmar’s Pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals*. IAI Commentaries 21. Istituto Affari Internazionali. 14 March 2021.
- Capienė, A., A. Rūtalionė, and M. Tvaronavičienė. 2021. “Pro-environmental and pro-social engagement in sustainable consumption: Exploratory study.” *Sustainability*, 13(4), 1601.
- Christophersen M. and E. S. Stave. 2018. *Advancing Sustainable Development between Conflict and Peace in Myanmar*. New York: International Peace Institute. (April)
- Communist Party of Vietnam. 2020. Draft Report on the Summary of Implementing the 10-year Socio-Economic Development Strategy 2011-2020, building the 10-year Socio-Economic Development Strategy 2021-2030.
- Conroy, M. M., and Berke, P. R. 2004. What Makes a Good Sustainable Development Plan? An Analysis of Factors That Influence Principles of Sustainable Development. *Environment and Planning A*: 36(8), pp. 1381-1396.
- Dang, N. T., V. Y. Tran, T. C. Tran, and T. T. Nguyen. 2018. “Sets of Sustainable Development Indicators in Vietnam: Status and Solutions.” *Economies*, Vol. 6(1). DOI:10.3390/economies6010001.
- Dat, P. T. and H. T. Hung. 2023. “Determinants of Sustainable Development: A Case Study in Vietnam.” *Montenegrin Journal of Economics*, 19(2), pp.

97-107.

- DESA. 2021. *Lao PDR: Strengthening national policy capacities for jointly building the Belt and Road towards the Sustainable Development Goals*. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (February).
- Do T. B. T. 2021. "Assessment of Vietnam's import and export activities in 2020 and the 5 years 2016-2020." Vietnam Institute of Strategy and Policy for Industry and Trade. <https://vioit.org.vn/>.
- Sari, D. W., C. Margules, H. S. Lim, J. A. Sayer, A. K. Boedhihartono, C. J. Macgregor, A. P. Dale, and E. Poon. 2022. *Performance Auditing to Assess the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Indonesia*. Sustainability 14(19): 12772. doi: 10.3390/su141912772.
- Elder, M. and G. Ellis. 2022. ASEAN countries' environmental policies for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). *Environment, Development and Sustainability*, pp. 1-19.
- Ellis, M. E. 2022. "ASEAN countries' environmental policies for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)." <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10668-022-02514-0#Sec11>.
- ESCAP. 2023a. *Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report 2023: Championing sustainability despite adversities*. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. United Nations Publication.
- _____. 2023b. "SDG Status Analysis - Lao PDR - 2023." (August)
- Fitriyani S., A. S. Wulandari, and A. S. Utomo. 2022. Towards Sustainable Development Goals Implementation in Indonesia: An Analysis of Policies and Programs. *Journal of Sustainability Research*, 4(1), e202202.
- General Statistics Office of Vietnam. 2021. *Statistical Yearbook of Vietnam*. Statistical Publishing house.
- Gilroy, T. 2023. "US, UK, and Canada Impose Further Coordinated Sanctions Against Myanmar." *Baker McKenzie*. <https://sanctionsnews.bakermckenzie.com/us-uk-and-canada-impose-further-coordinated-sanctions-against-m>

yanmar/.

- Government of the Lao PDR. 2021. *Lao PDR Voluntary National Review on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.
- Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. 2017a. *National Action Plan for Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Vietnam*. (Decision 622/QĐ-TTg on May 10, 2017 of the Prime Minister).
- _____. 2017b. *One Strategic Plan 2017-2021: between The Government of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam And The United Nations in Viet Nam*.
- Graute, U. 2016. Local authorities acting globally for sustainable development. *Reg. Studs.* 50, pp. 1931–1942. doi: 10.1080/00343404.2016.1161740.
- Guarini E., E. Mori, and E. Zuffada. 2022. “Localizing the Sustainable Development Goals: a managerial perspective,” *Journal of Public Budgeting, Accounting & Financial Management*, Vol. 34, No. 5, pp. 583–601. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JPBAFM-02-2021-0031>.
- Healey P. and T. Shaw. 1997. Planners, plans and sustainable development. *Regional Studies*, 27, pp. 769–776.
- Htet, Y. N. 2020. *National Indicator Framework For Monitoring and Evaluation Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan (2018-2030). A decade of action for the 2030 Agenda: Statistics that leaves no one and nowhere behind*. 2020 Asia – Pacific Statistics Week. 15-19 June, Bangkok, Thailand.
- ICLEI. 2015. “From MDGs to SDGs: What are the Sustainable Development Goals?” ICLEI Briefing Sheet. Urban Issue, No.01. November.
- IMF. 2016. *World Economic Outlook*. Washington DC: International Monetary Fund.
- International Management Group. 2014. *Myanmar’s Experience with the Millenium Development Goals and Perspective on the Post-2015 Agenda*. <https://mdricesd.files.wordpress.com/2014/02/publication-experiences-with-mdgs-2014-en-sm.pdf>.
- Jeronen, E. 2020. “Sustainable development.” *Encyclopedia of Sustainable*

- Management*, pp. 1-7. Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Kaimuri, B. and G. Kosimbei. 2017. "Determinants of sustainable development in Kenya." *Journal of Economics and Sustainable Development*, 8(24), pp. 17-36.
- Kennedy, P. 2008. *A Guide to Econometrics*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Koirala, B. S. and G. Pradhan. 2020. "Determinants of sustainable development: Evidence from 12 Asian countries." *Sustainable Development*, 28(1), pp. 39-45.
- Kristof, N. 2017. "A Nobel Peace Prize Winner's Shame." *The New York Times*.
<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/09/09/opinion/kristof-nobel-prize-aung-san-su-kyi-shame.html?mcubz=0>.
- Kuswantoro, H., M. Sholihin, and H. G. Djajadikerta. 2023. "Exploring the implementation of sustainable development goals: a comparison between private and state-owned enterprises in Indonesia." *Environ Dev Sustain* 25, pp. 10799-10819. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10668-022-02505-1>
- Lafortune, G., G. Fuller, J. Monreno, G. Schmidt-Traub, and C. Kroll. 2018. SDG Index and Dashboards – Detailed Methodological paper.
- Lao PDR. 2018. "Voluntary National Review on The Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development." (July)
- _____. 2021. "Voluntary National Review on The Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development." (July)
- Mardianti, N. I. 2020. "The Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Sustainable Development in Southeast Asia." *Journal of Management and Sustainability*, 10(6), pp. 133-148. doi: 10.5539/jms.v10n6p133.
- Matthew, A. A. 2015. *Municipal Governance in Myanmar: An Overview of Development Affairs Organizations*. https://asiafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Municipal-Governance-in-Myanmar_Policy-Series_ENG.pdf.
- Mensah, J. 2019. "Sustainable development: Meaning, history, principles, pillars, and implications for human action: Literature review." *Cogent Social*

- Sciences*, 5(1), 1653531.
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Singapore. 2018. *Singapore Voluntary National Review Report*.
- Ministry of Planning and Investment of Laos. 2016. *Development Finance for the 8th National Socio-Economic Development Plan and the Sustainable Development Goals in Lao PDR: A Development Finance and Aid Assessment*.
- Ministry of Planning and Finance of Myanmar. 2018. *Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan (2018 – 2030)*. The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.
- _____. 2022. *Sustainable Development Goals: Progress Report 2022*. Ministry of Planning and Finance & Mekong-Korea Cooperation Fund.
- Ministry of Planning and Investment of Vietnam. 2016. *Synthesis Report: Reviewing 17 common goals and 169 specific objectives of the United Nations Sustainable Development Agenda 2030*.
- _____. 2018. “Vietnam’s Voluntary National Review on The Implementation of The Sustainable Development Goals.” At the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.
- _____. 2021. *National Report 2020: Progress of Five year- implementation of Sustainable Development Goals*.
- _____. 2023. *Report on Assessment of the implementation of sustainable development goals in 2022*.
- Mohammadi, F., M. Emadzadeh, and A. Ansari. 2012. “The major determinants of sustainable development in selected Pacific, East and West Asian Countries.” *International Economics Studies*, 39(2), pp. 55-62.
- Muyasyaroh, A. P. 2023. “ASEAN at the Crossroads: ‘Progress Towards SDG Targets by 2030’.” *ERLA Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia*. <https://www.eria.org/news-and-views/asean-at-the-crossroads-progress-towards-sdg-targets-by-2030/>.
- Myanmar Country Office. 2023. *Humanitarian Situation Report*, No. 8. UNICEF.

- National Assembly of Vietnam. 2016. *The Five-year Socio-Economic Development Plan 2016-2020*.
- National SDG Secretariat of Lao PDR. 2020. *National Roadmap for The Implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the Lao PDR*.
- Nguyen, Q. T. 2023. "Theory on the path of innovation and market economic development - Core values and contents that need to continue to be supplemented and improved." *Communist Review*. (July 31)
- Nguyen, X. P. 2020. "Reviewing 10 years implementing the Socio- Economic Development Strategy 2011-2020: Results, lessons learned and future orientations." *Communist Review*, No. 953. (November).
- Nguyen, C. V. and N. M. Pham. 2018. "Economic growth, inequality, and poverty in Vietnam." *Asian-Pacific Economic Literature*, 32(1), pp. 45-58.
- Nguyen, T. M. L., T. H. Ngo, and M. N. Le. 2021. "Progress towards sustainable development goals at provincial level in Vietnam." *E3S Web of Conferences*, 258, 06033.
- Perry B., K. Diprose, N. Taylor Buck, and D. Simon. 2021. "Localizing the SDGs in England: Challenges and Value Propositions for Local Government." *Frontiers in Sustainable Cities*, 29 October, Vol. 3, Article 746337. doi: 10.3389/frsc.2021.746337.
- Pham, M. H. P. and D. T. Nguyen eds. 2022. *Provincial Sustainable Development Index - PSDI 2021*. National Economics University Publishing House, Hanoi.
- Phimphanthavong, H. 2014. "The determinants of sustainable development in Laos." *International Journal of Academic Research in Management*, 3(1), pp. 51-75.
- Pimonenko, T., O. Lyulyov, O. Chygryn, and M. Palienko. 2018. "Environmental Performance Index: Relation between social and economic welfare of the countries." *Environmental Economics*, 9(3), pp. 7-16.
- Republic of Indonesia. 2019. *Indonesia's Voluntary National Review 2019*:

- Empowering People and Ensuring Inclusiveness and Equality*. Ministry of National Development Planning/ National Development Planning Agency.
- _____. 2021. *Indonesia's Voluntary National Review 2021: Sustainable and Resilient Recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic for the Achievement of the 2030 Agenda*. Ministry of National Development Planning/ National Development Planning.
- Rosati, F. and L. G. Faria. 2019. "Addressing the SDGs in sustainability reports: The relationship with institutional factors." *Journal of cleaner production*, 215, pp. 1312-1326.
- Rulandari, N. 2021. *Study of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Quality Education in Indonesia in the First Three Years*. <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/eb52/d6366d89a453a58c7261eb350ed1909ee312.pdf>.
- Sachs, J., G. Schmidt-Traub, C. Kroll, D. Durand-Delacre, and K. Teksoz. 2016. *SDG Index and Dashboards 2016*. New York: Bertelsmann Stiftung and Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN).
- _____. 2017. *SDG Index and Dashboards Report 2017*. New York: Bertelsmann Stiftung and Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN).
- Sachs, J., G. Schmidt-Traub, C. Kroll, G. Lafortune, and G. Fuller. 2018. *SDG Index and Dashboards Report 2018*. New York: Bertelsmann Stiftung and Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN).
- _____. 2019. *Sustainable Development Report 2019*. New York: Bertelsmann Stiftung and Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN).
- Sachs, J., G. Schmidt-Traub, C. Kroll, G. Lafortune, G. Fuller, and F. Woelm. 2020. *Sustainable Development Report 2020: The Sustainable Development Goals and COVID-19*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sachs, J. D., C. Kroll, G. Lafortune, G. Fuller, and F. Woelm. 2021. *Sustainable Development Report 2021: The Decade of Action for the Sustainable Development Goals*. Cambridge University Press.

- Sachs, J., G. Lafortune, C. Kroll, G. Fuller, and F. Woelm. 2022. *Sustainable Development Report 2022: From Crisis to Sustainable Development: the SDGs as Roadmap to 2030 and Beyond*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sachs, J. D., G. Lafortune, G. Fuller, and E. Drumm. 2023. *Sustainable Development Report 2023: Implementing the SDG Stimulus*. *Sustainable Development Report 2023*. Paris: SDSN, Dublin: Dublin University Press. 10.25546/102924.
- Sayavong, V. 2020. "Productivity Analysis of Manufacturing Industry: Lessons Learn from Japan." *Journal of Asian Economics, Accounting and Finance*, Vol. 1, No. 1. pp. 45-60.
- Sayer, J. and B. Campbell. 2004. *The Science of Sustainable Development*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK.
- Scott, W. and S. Gough. 2004. *Key Issues in Sustainable Development and Learning: A Critical Review*. Routledge.
- Socialist Republic of Vietnam. 2015. *Country Report: 15 Years Achieving the Vietnam Millennium Development Goals*. Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN).
- _____. 2018. *Voluntary National Review 2018 on the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals*.
- _____. 2023. *Voluntary National Review 2023 on the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals*.
- Subramanian, S. V., M. K. Azwar, and W. Yip. 2020. "Mapping and measuring sustainable development goals in Indonesia: A systematic analysis." *The Lancet Global Health*, 8(11), pp. e1431-e1442.
- Supitcha, P. 2022. *Sustainable Development Goals in Laos*, Galda Verlag Publishing House, 18th August 2022.
- Sylwester, K. 2000. "Income inequality, education expenditures, and growth." *Journal of Development Economics*, 63(2), pp. 379-398.
- Taidong Z. 2019. "Aligning the Belt and Road Initiative with Myanmar's

- Sustainable Development Plan: Opportunities and Challenges.” *IDS Bulletin*. Vol. 50, No. 4, December, pp. 69-88.
- Tolley, G. S. and E. Olson. 1971. “The interdependence between income and education.” *Journal of Political Economy*, 79(3), pp. 460-480.
- Tran, T. B., R. Q. Grafton, and T. Kompas. 2009. “Institutions matter: The case of Vietnam.” *The Journal of Socio-Economics*, 38(1), pp. 1-12.
- Truong Quang Hoc. 2016. “Emerging Issues for the Sustainable Development of Vietnam in the Context of Global Change.” *Journal of Science*, Vol. 32, No. 1S, pp. 264-274.
- UN. 2015. *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>.
- _____. 2019. “Myanmar.” *SDGs data modeling and SDMX workshop*. UNSTATS: <https://unstats.un.org/capacity-development/UNSD-FCDO/myanmar/>.
- _____. 2020. “Policy Brief: The impact of COVID-19 on South-East Asia.” <https://unsdg.un.org/resources/policy-brief-impact-covid-19-south-east-asia>.
- UNCT. 2021. 2020 UN country annual results report Myanmar. UN. <https://myanmar.un.org/en/142650-2020-un-country-annual-results-report-myanmar>.
- UNDP. 2016. *Overview Report of Development Finance in Myanmar*.
- _____. 2018. *Financing Sustainable Development in Vietnam: A Development Finance Assessment*.
- _____. 2021a. *COVID-19, Coup D'Etat and Poverty*. <https://www.undp.org/myanmar/publications/COVID-19-coup-detat-and-poverty-compounding-negative-shocks-and-their-impact-human-development-myanmar>.
- _____. 2021b. *Impact of the twin crises on human welfare in Myanmar*. <https://www.undp.org/myanmar/publications/impact-twin-crises-human-welfare-myanmar>.
- _____. 2021c. *People's Pulse: Socioeconomic impact of the events since 1 February*

- 2021 on households in Myanmar - September 2021. <https://www.undp.org/myanmar/publications/peoples-pulse-socioeconomic-impact-events-1-february-2021-households-myanmar-september-2021>.
- _____. 2023. *Myanmar at a crossroads: Past trends of human well-being and a future outlook*.
- _____. 2023. <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/human-development-index#/indicies/HDI>(<https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/human-development-index#/indicies/HDI> (accessed on December 26, 2023)).
- UNDP and UN Women. 2022. *Regressing gender equality in Myanmar: Women living under the pandemic and military rule*.
- _____. 2023. *Helping communities weather the socio-economic downturn: Building urban resilience*.
- UNHCR. 2023. *Myanmar situation*. <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/myanmar>.
- UNICEF. 2023. *Myanmar Humanitarian Situation Report No.2-2023*. <https://www.unicef.org/myanmar/reports/unicef-myanmar-humanitarian-situation-report-no2-2023>
- UN in Lao PDR. 2015. *Country Analysis Report: Lao PDR – Analysis to inform the Lao People Democratic Republic United Nations Partnership Framework (2017-2021)*.
- _____. 2017. *2016 Progress Report: United Nations Development Assistance Framework in Lao PDR*. https://laopdr.un.org/sites/default/files/2019-08/2016%20UNDAF_Progress%20Report_English_1.pdf.
- UN-WCED. 1987. *Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future*. United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- UN-WCED – United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development. 1987. *Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- UNCT. 2021. *2020 UN country annual results report Myanmar*. UN. <https://myanm>

- ar.un.org/en/142650-2020-un-country-annual-results-report-myanmar.
- UNDP. 2018. "Financing Sustainable Development in Vietnam: A Development Finance Assessment."
- _____. 2021. "COVID-19, COUP D'ETAT AND POVERTY." UNDP. <https://www.undp.org/myanmar/publications/covid-19-coup-detat-and-poverty-compounding-negative-shocks-and-their-impact-human-development-myanmar>.
- _____. 2021. *Impact of the twin crises on human welfare in Myanmar*. UNDP. <https://www.undp.org/myanmar/publications/impact-twin-crises-human-welfare-myanmar>.
- _____. 2021. *People's Pulse: Socioeconomic impact of the events since 1 February 2021 on households in Myanmar - September 2021*. UNDP. <https://www.undp.org/myanmar/publications/peoples-pulse-socioeconomic-impact-events-1-february-2021-households-myanmar-september-2021>.
- _____. 2022. *Regressing gender equality in Myanmar: Women living under the pandemic and military rule*. UNDP. <https://www.undp.org/myanmar/publications/regressing-gender-equality-myanmar-women-living-under-pandemic-and-military-rule>.
- _____. 2022. *Regressing gender equality in Myanmar: Women living under the pandemic and military rule*. UN WOMEN. <https://www.undp.org/myanmar/publications/regressing-gender-equality-myanmar-women-living-under-pandemic-and-military-rule>.
- _____. 2023. *Helping communities weather the socio-economic downturn: Building urban resilience*. UNDP WOMEN. <https://www.undp.org/myanmar/publications/helping-communities-weather-socio-economic-downturn-building-urban-resilience>.
- _____. 2023. *MYANMAR AT A CROSSROADS: Past trends of human well-being and a future outlook*. <https://reliefweb.int/report/myanmar/myanmar-crossroads-past-trends-human-well-being-and-future-outlook-april-202>

3.

- UNHCR. 2023. "MYANMAR EMERGENCY UPDATE as of 2 October 2023." <https://reporting.unhcr.org/myanmar-emergency-regional-update-6330>.
- _____. 2023. "Myanmar situation." <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/myanmar>.
- UNICEF Vietnam. 2022. "Achieving sustainable development goals in Vietnam: assessing progress and estimating required efforts – an average annual rate of reduction (AARR) analysis across social sectors."
- UNICEF. 2023. *Myanmar Humanitarian Situation Report No.2-2023*. <https://www.unicef.org/myanmar/reports/unicef-myanmar-humanitarian-situation-report-no2-2023>.
- Van Bon, N. 2019. "The role of institutional quality in the relationship between FDI and economic growth in Vietnam: Empirical evidence from provincial data." *The Singapore Economic Review*, 64(03), pp. 601-623.
- Vietnamplus. 2023. "Indonesia pushes for implementation of Five-Point Consensus on Myanmar." *Vietnam Plus*. <https://en.vietnamplus.vn/indonesia-pushes-for-implementation-of-fivepoint-consensus-on-myanmar/251071.vnp>.
- Vo, D. H. and C. M. Ho. 2021. "Foreign investment, economic growth, and environmental degradation since the 1986 "Economic Renovation" in Vietnam." *Environmental Science and Pollution Research*, 28, 29795-29805.
- Wooldridge, J. M. 2018. *Introductory Econometrics: A Modern Approach*. South-Western College Publishers.
- World Bank. 2017. "Poverty Declined Between 2004-05 and 2015 in Myanmar: New Joint Myanmar - World Bank Report."
- _____. 2022. "Myanmar economy remains fragile, with reform reversals weakening the outlook."
- Xu, Z., S. N. Chau, X. Chen *et al.* 2020. "Assessing progress towards sustainable development over space and time." *Nature*, 577, pp. 74-78.

Zhou Taidong. 2019. "Aligning the Belt and Road Initiative with Myanmar's Sustainable Development Plan: Opportunities and Challenges." *IDS Bulletin*, Vol. 50, No. 4, pp. 69-88. (December)

Nguyen Hong Thu

Ph.D in Economics, Graduate Academy of Social Sciences, Hanoi, Vietnam
Institute of World Economics and Politics, Senior research fellow, Head of
Department of International Investment and Trade
(E-mail: nguyenhongthu@gmail.com)

Publication

Improving the capacity to join the global value chain for Vietnamese exports (2019)
*The Fourth Industrial Revolution: Policy Responses of Some Countries and
Implications for Vietnam* (2020)

Phi Vinh Tuong

Ph.D in Economics, Ryukoku University, Japan
Institute of World Economics and Politics, Senior research fellow, Acting General
Director
(E-mail: phivinhthuong@gmail.com)

Publication

“Impact of transport infrastructure on firm performance: case study of Cuu long
delta area, Vietnam” (Co-author, 2019)
“The impact of firm size on the performance of Vietnamese private enterprises:
A case study” (Co-author, 2021)

Dong Van Chung

Ph.D. in Economics, National Dong Hwa University
Institute of World Economics and Politics, Research Fellow
International School, Vietnam National University, Hanoi, Visiting Lecturer
(E-mail: chung51ktct@gmail.com)

Publication

“The determinants of creative goods exports: evidence from Vietnam”
(Co-author, 2020)
“Determinants of product sophistication in Vietnam: Findings from
the firm-multi-product level microdata approach” (Co-author, 2024)

Hoang Thi Hong Minh

MSc. Development Economics – University of Sussex, the United Kingdom
Institute of World Economics and Politics, Department of Global Development
Issues, Researcher
(E-mail: hongminhhoang90@gmail.com)

Publication

“Singapore’s experience in nurturing and managing the pool of domestic talents
and intellectuals and policy implications for Vietnam” (Co-author, 2022)
“The UK government’s response to an aging population” (2023)

Nguyen Thi Hien

M.A in Political Economy, College of Economics, Vietnam National University,
Hanoi
Institute of World Economics and Politics, Senior research fellow
(E-mail: hiennguyen785@gmail.com)

Publication

“Development of night-time economy in Thailand and some policy implications
for Vietnam” (2023)
“Trends in international economic integration in the period 2021–2030” (2023)

Nguyen Tran Minh Tri

MSc. Finance and Investment, University of Greenwich
Institute of World Economics and Politics, Researcher
(E-mail: ntminhtri92@gmail.com)

Publication

“Cryptocurrency Management in Vietnam” (Co-author, 2022)
“Attracting FDI in Vietnam between 2016 and 2023” (Co-author, 2023)



ODA Study Series 23-02

Assessing Vietnam's Progress towards Sustainable Development Goals: A Comprehensive Review

Nguyen Hong Thu (Project Leader), Phi Vinh Tuong,
Dong Van Chung, Hoang Thi Hong Minh, Nguyen Thi Hien,
and Nguyen Tran Minh Tri

To provide meaningful policy recommendations to achieve the SDGs according to the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the study provides an overview of Vietnam's progress in implementing the SDGs at the national and provincial level. Through a blend of quantitative and qualitative analyses, the study delineates the key factors influencing the effectiveness of SDGs implementation, thereby elucidating the hurdles, challenges, and prospects encountered by Vietnam in its pursuit of SDGs achievements. Moreover, the study encompasses policy recommendations directed towards Korea for future cooperation aimed at bolstering Vietnam's SDG achievements.



ISBN 978-89-322-8047-9
978-89-322-8027-1 (set)

Price USD 10

KIEP Korea Institute for
International Economic Policy

Building C, Sejong National Research Complex, 370, Sicheong-daero, Sejong-si, Korea
Tel. 82-44-414-1114 Fax. 82-44-414-1001 www.kiep.go.kr