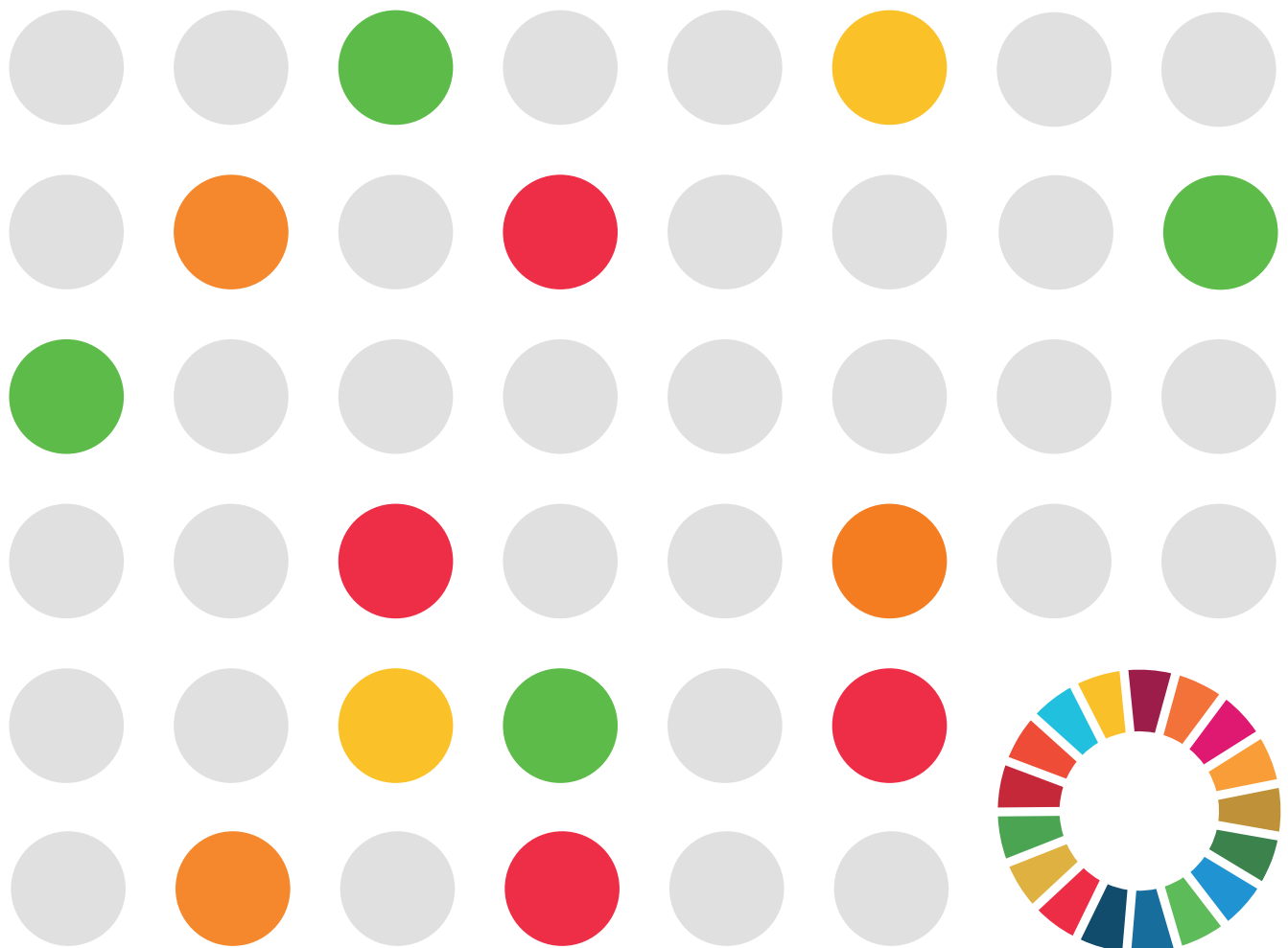




TOWARDS AN AUSNZPAC YOUTH SDG INDEX

A youth-led pilot to measure progress towards the SDGs



About SDSN Youth AusNZPac

The UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) aims to mobilise scientific and technical expertise to support practical problem solving for sustainable development at local, national, and global scales. Launched in 2015, SDSN Youth started as an initiative of the SDSN Australia, New Zealand & Pacific Regional Network initiative and was launched as a global initiative of SDSN in June 2015. SDSN Youth's mission is to empower youth globally to create sustainable solutions. Through education and cooperation, it aims to amplify the tremendous energy and capabilities of youth in generating broader buy-in for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDSN AusNZPac is hosted by the Monash Sustainable Development Institute at Monash University.

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Websites

ap-unsdsn.org

www.sdsnyouth.org

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July 2023

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Table of contents

Acknowledgements	3
Foreword	5
Executive Summary	6
Results Dashboard	8
Introduction	10
Methodology	11
Results of data analysis	17
1.5.YOUTH. By 2030, reduce youth poverty rates to less than 5% living below the poverty line.	18
2.1.YOUTH. By 2030, eliminate the number of youth experiencing food insecurity.	20
3.4.YOUTH1. By 2030, youth psychological distress should equalise with the general population's 2030 target, which is to reduce psychological distress by one-third.	23
3.4.YOUTH2. By 2030, youth suicide mortality rate to be reduced by one-third.	26
3.4.YOUTH3. By 2030, Indigenous youth's life expectancy is to be the same as the rest of the youth population's life expectancy.	29
3.7.YOUTH. By 2030, ensure all youth have access to sexual and reproductive health care services.	33
7.2.YOUTH. All young people should have full access to affordable and clean renewable energy.	35
8.5.YOUTH. By 2030, youth unemployment to be less than 5% of the population by 2030.	37
10.4.YOUTH. By 2030, ensure all youth have access to social protection programs.	42
11.1.YOUTH1. By 2030, youth renters should be paying less than 30% of their incomes on housing costs.	44
11.1.YOUTH2. By 2030, youth homelessness to be less than 0.5% of the youth population.	46
13.2.YOUTH. By 2030, genuine and effective inclusion of young people and their needs should be mentioned in all countries' NDCs.	49
16.6.YOUTH. By 2030, ensure there is genuine and effective youth representation in all forms of governance.	51
Non-Youth Disaggregated Indicators	53
Conclusion	54
References	55

Foreword

Youth in Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific face a variety of sustainable development challenges. The impacts of climate change and economic crisis are acutely and disproportionately felt by young people. At the same time, youth are powerful agents of change. Their willingness to work for sustainable development in our region should be valued as an asset. That is why the work that SDSN Youth AusNZPac does is so valuable, connecting the energy and enthusiasm of young people to the platforms and resources that can help them effectively tackle the big issues that they are facing.

At the core of what SDSN does is the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The large array of issues that they cover are all challenges that are faced by our youth. But given that young people today were not involved in the creation of these global goals, the work done in this report is vital to understand if these goals currently work for the incoming generations. It is important that reports such as this measure youth progress towards the global goals to ensure that they are not being left behind in the local, national, and global endeavours towards sustainable development.



Professor John Thwaites AM

Chair, SDSN Australia, New Zealand & Pacific

Chair, SDSN Association

Chair, Monash Sustainable Development Institute and Climateworks Centre at Monash University

Executive Summary

‘Towards an AusNZPac Youth SDG Index’ is a youth-led project created by SDSN Youth AusNZPac that aims to use the SDG framework to measure youth progress towards sustainable development.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), launched by the United Nations in 2015, were designed to be a tool for measuring sustainable development progress and to ensure that no one is left behind. The SDGs have been used extensively to measure national and sub-national progress on sustainable development, for example in reports such as Transforming Australia¹ and the Sustainable Development Report². These reports clearly outline where sustainable challenges remain and therefore are great tools for policymakers and advocates. However, very little mention of youth is made. One of our primary objectives was to use the SDGs to create a replicable method for sustainability progress measurement – not only for youth but for other sub-populations who are disproportionately impacted by these challenges.

Summary of method

We started this process by consulting with youth from the AusNZPac region. We used the current SDG targets to structure our discussions and created a short-list of 20 targets that were particularly important to youth. These targets were then adapted into indicators that specifically measured youth concerns.

We then gathered and analysed appropriate data from national statistics offices and trusted NGOs. Our analysis aimed to compare how youth were progressing towards the indicator compared to the general populations. This report contains the results of this data analysis as well as information and testimonials provided to us from young people across the Australia, New Zealand and Pacific region.

This report and its methodology make three important contributions:

Disproportionate impact on youth

Young people are clearly differently affected by sustainable development challenges. Hence, it is important to undertake such a youth-disaggregated analysis on more indicators and all countries.

Our data analysis found that young people were disproportionately impacted by the following:

- Poverty
- Psychological distress
- Suicide mortality
- Unemployment
- Rent overburden
- Homelessness

¹<https://www.sdgtransformingaustralia.com/>

²<https://www.sustainabledevelopment.report/>



Limited data available

There were many indicators for which we were not able to find disaggregated data for youth. With such limited disaggregated data, policymakers and researchers have a significant 'blind spot' in the ways that age impacts people's experiences of sustainable development. Hence, increased age disaggregation during data collection should be considered.

We also found data from Pacific Islands nations was extremely limited. More efforts need to be undertaken to collect data from the region.



Youth priorities and the SDGs

The youth that we consulted told us that the current SDG framework does not fully encapsulate their sustainable development goals. For example, they wanted more urgent action on many issues, more gender inclusive language and consistently wanted more youth engagement. Youth should be involved with any future iteration of the 'global goals'.






Since we found merit in undertaking youth-specific data analyses, we hope others can use our work to create a robust measurement tool that can be used internationally and regularly.

Results dashboard

This dashboard summarises our data analysis of youth progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, based on indicators that we designed to match AusNZPac youth concerns.

The colour of each circle represents how much effort is required to achieve each of the indicators by 2030, based on **Compound Annual Growth Rates** (CAGR) (more detail in the 'Methodology' section). We analysed data for both youth (most frequently 15-24) and the general population. This allows for comparison between populations within the same country to determine where youth are disproportionately impacted by sustainable development challenges.

Traffic Light Legend

	Major challenges remain: Major changes need to be made if the referenced population is to reach the target by 2030.
	Significant challenges remain: Significant changes need to be made if the referenced population is to reach the target by 2030.
	Challenges remain: Changes need to be made if the referenced population is to reach the target by 2030.
	SDG almost or have been achieved: Little or no changes need to be made if the referenced population is to reach the target by 2030.
	No appropriate youth data could be found.

Note: Data may not be comparable across countries.

The best way to view this data is comparing populations within countries.

Youth-related indicator	Australia		New Zealand		Fiji		Samoa	
	Youth	General population	Youth	General population	Youth	General population	Youth	General population
1.5.YOUTH. By 2030, reduce youth poverty rates to less than 5% living below the poverty line.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
2.1.YOUTH. By 2030, eliminate the number of youth experiencing food insecurity.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
3.4.YOUTH1. By 2030, youth psychological distress should equalise with the general population's 2030 target.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
3.4.YOUTH2. By 2030, youth suicide mortality rate to be reduced by one-third.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
3.4.YOUTH3. By 2030, Indigenous youth's life expectancy is to be the same as the rest of the youth population's life expectancy.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
3.7.YOUTH. By 2030, ensure all youth have access to sexual and reproductive health care services.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
7.2.YOUTH. By 2030, all young people should have full access to affordable and clean renewable energy.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
8.5.YOUTH. By 2030, youth unemployment to be less than 5% of the population by 2030.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
10.4.YOUTH. By 2030, ensure all youth have access to social protection programs.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
11.1.YOUTH1. By 2030, youth renters should be paying less than 30% of their incomes on housing costs.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
11.1.YOUTH2. By 2030, Youth homelessness to be less than 0.5% of the youth population.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
13.2.YOUTH. By 2030, genuine and effective inclusion of young people and their needs should be mentioned in all countries' NDCs.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
16.6.YOUTH. By 2030, ensure there is genuine and effective youth representation in all forms of governance.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

Introduction

This report was created by youth for youth.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were built to be a 'blueprint' for global sustainable development. They were designed to give organisations, countries and activists a framework to guide sustainability and ensure that no one is left behind. Given the vastness of many of the global challenges we face, the SDG framework was designed to be measurable. This project aims to use the SDG framework's targets and indicators to measure how *youth* are progressing towards the SDGs. We ask: is the current SDG framework able to measure progress towards the issues young people care about? And are young people being left behind and experiencing sustainable development challenges more acutely?

We acknowledge that there are organisations that have already used the SDGs to measure progress towards sustainability. The Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), releases the 'Sustainable Development Report'³ each year (formerly known as the SDG Index). This report uses national-level data to measure international progress towards the SDGs. These reports have become very important to sustainable development advocates around the world who are able to use the findings to push for greater progress.

We were particularly inspired by the efforts undertaken for the Transforming Australia⁴ reports. These reports were created at the Monash Sustainable Development Institute and measured how Australia was progressing towards achieving the SDGs. The researchers behind the project adapted SDG indicators to better reflect the sustainable development challenges that impact Australia.

However, both the Sustainable Development Report and Transforming Australia only mention youth in relation to one indicator – youth not in employment, education, or training. This is despite young people advocating on the belief that they are disproportionately impacted by many sustainable development challenges. Hence, this report attempts to utilise the current SDG structure to measure youth progress towards sustainable development compared to the general population. We hoped that this could reveal where youth are disproportionately impacted by these challenges and where the current SDG framework falls short in taking this into account.

We started this project by consulting with young people from Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific to identify which SDG targets they think they are being disproportionately impacted by. We then used the selected SDG targets from the consultations to create youth-specific indicators to measure youth progress towards the SDGs compared with the general population. This exercise proved useful as, wherever data could be found, we were able to show that youth are differently impacted by sustainable development challenges.

Finally we also wish to acknowledge the many reports that have been produced by other youth organisations around the world. Your efforts to show the world the power of youth are inspiring. This report builds on your work and attempts to use SDG framework to measure sustainable development for youth. We hope others will be inspired to do the same, replicate (and fine-tune) our methodology, and help us advocate for sustainable development that leaves no one behind.

³<https://www.sustainabledevelopment.report/>

⁴<https://www.sdgtransformingaustralia.com/>

Methodology

Preparing this report involved four stages. These are summarised in Figure 1 and explained in more detail in the remainder of this section. It was inspired by Transforming Australia but adapted to incorporate youth perspectives.

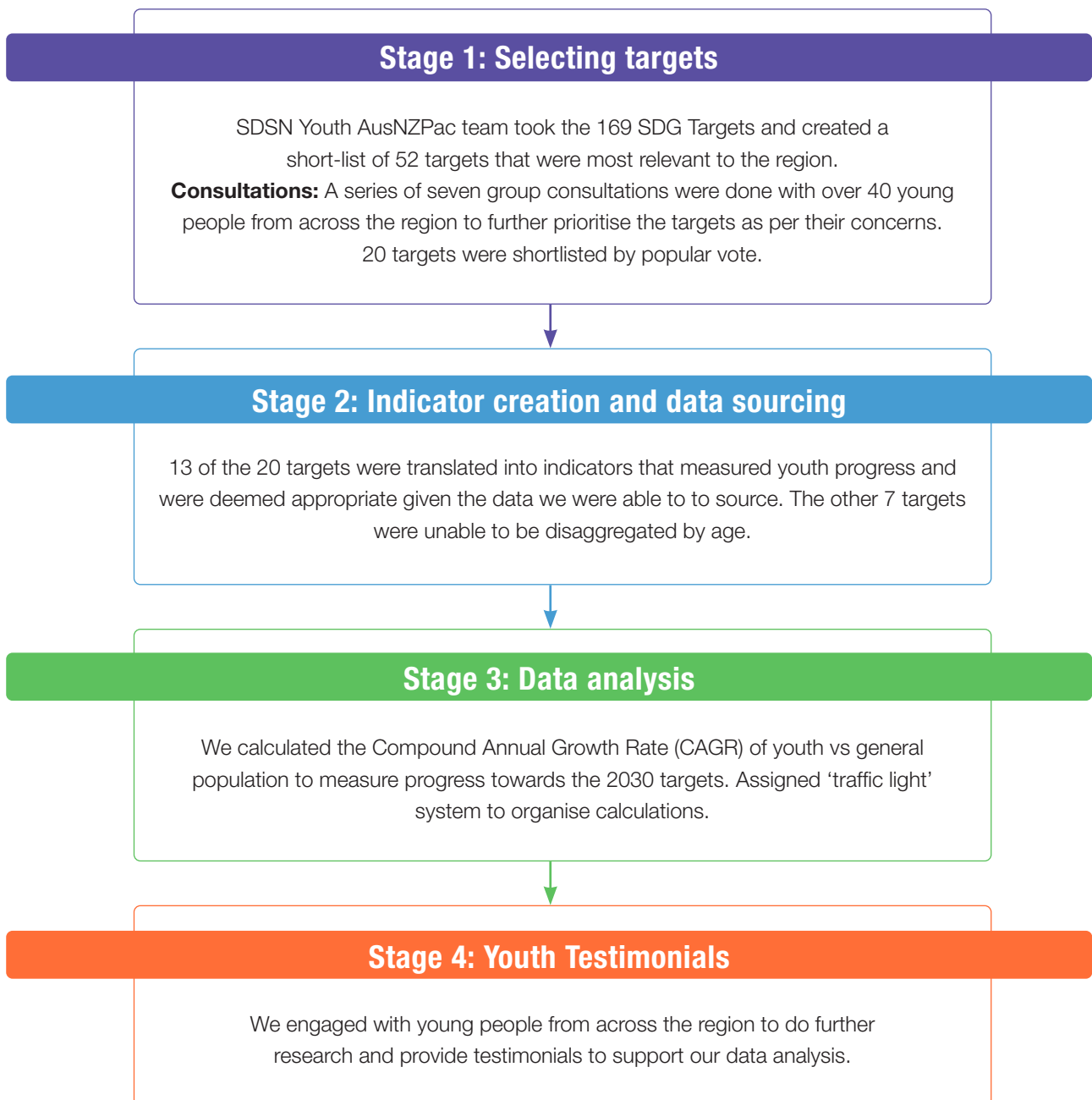


Figure 1: Summary of the methodology used in this report.

Stage 1: Selecting targets

Pre-selection

Given the broad scope of the SDGs, we decided to use the SDG framework's 169 targets to guide our initial prioritisation of challenges we were going to measure. Initially, the SDSN Youth AusNZPac team short-listed the targets to 52 targets we thought were most applicable to young people across the region.

Consultations

We organised a series of seven consultations to further short-list the 52 selected targets. Young people from Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Samoa, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands participated in the sessions. These consultations involved participants choosing SDG targets that they believed young people and their local context were disproportionately impacted by (organised into people, planet, and prosperity indicators; see Figure 2).

The most commonly selected targets in aggregate (i.e. across every consultation) were then used in the data analysis. This left us with 20 targets.

PEOPLE

Mark the issues you are concerned that our generation will be **significantly disproportionately affected** by if the target is not achieved.

Choose five.

Marks	Target
	1.4 By 2030, ensure that <u>all men and women</u> , in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources , as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance
	1.5 By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters
	2.1 By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round
	3.4 By 2030, reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being
	3.5 Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse , including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol
	3.7 By 2030, ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services , including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes
	3.9 By 2030, substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination

Note: be specific to your local context

Marks	Target
	4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all <u>women and men</u> to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education , including university
	4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations
	4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development , including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development
	5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere
	5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life
	8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment
	11.1 By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums
	11.2 By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons
	16.1 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere
	16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels

Figure 2: Example of one of the consultation 'Jamboards' where participants selected the five targets that they think youth are disproportionately impacted by in their local context.

Stage 2: Indicator creation and data sourcing

After the consultations, we attempted to identify indicators that have been previously used to measure the 20 selected targets. These were found in reports such as Transforming Australia and the Sustainable Development Report.

We then did a preliminary search for data based on these indicators. Informed by this preliminary search, feedback from youth during the consultations and the indicators used by other reports, we designed youth specific indicators that we used in this report to measure youth progress (see Figure 3 for a schematic of our indicator design process).

Creating targets for the indicators

The calculation we used for our data analysis, (the Compound Annual Growth Rate, CAGR), requires a target value that the data series should ideally reach by 2030. Our 2030 target values were either based on Transforming Australia or based on feedback from youth. For example, the consultation process made it evident that young people wanted some of these issues to be eliminated by 2030. Hence, we set more ambitious goals for such indicators.

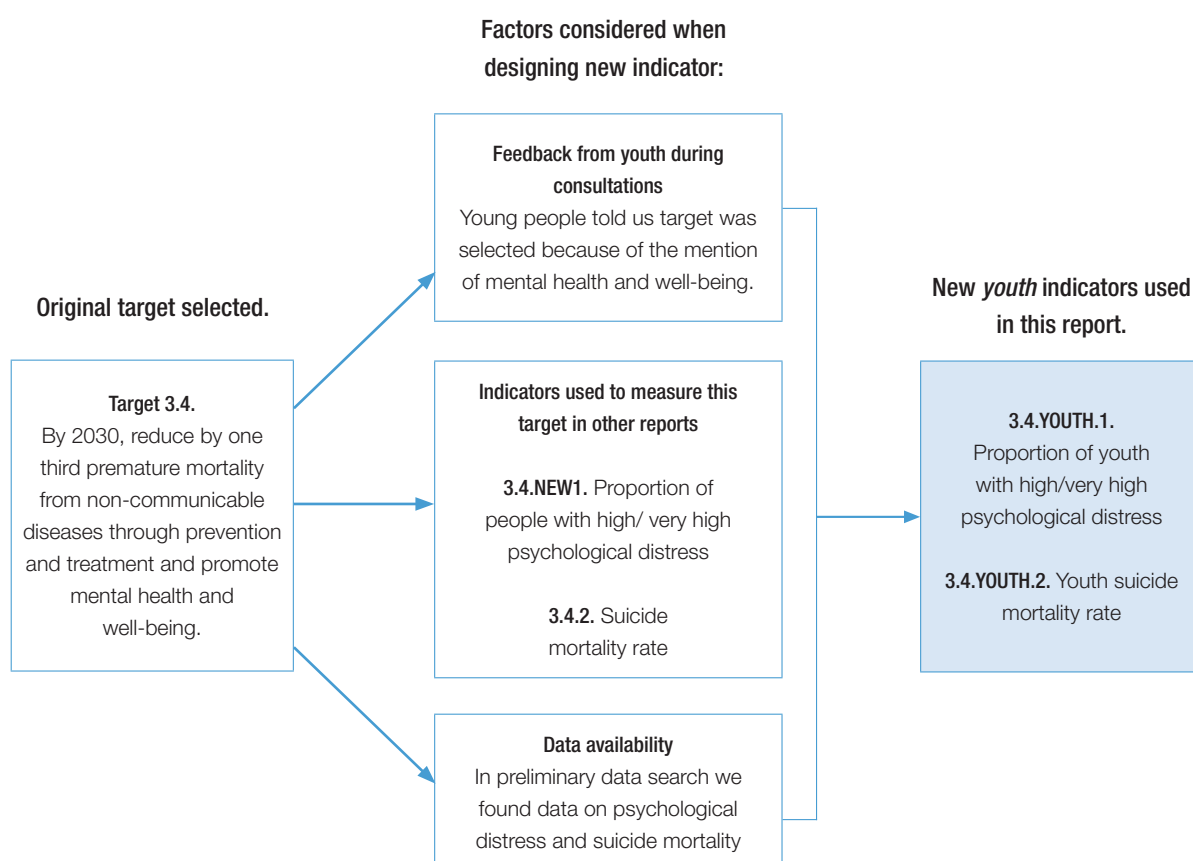


Figure 3: Example of the evolution of the targets to youth-specific indicators.

Stage 3: Data analysis

The method we used for analysing the data was predominantly drawn from the Transforming Australia reports. However, we had to modify it to consider the limited availability of youth-related data.

Data sourcing

We obtained data through desktop research. If available, we used data from national statistics offices. When government-sourced data was not available, data from NGO publications were the next preference. These were cross-referenced for use in similar reports such as Transforming Australia.

We initially searched for data from Australia, New Zealand, and each of the Pacific countries. However, given the scarcity of data from the Pacific, we chose only to measure youth progress in Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, and Samoa as they had the most age-disaggregated data available.

Data analysis

To measure how far each population is from reaching the 2030 target value of each indicator, we calculated and plotted the Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) (see highlight box) from the most recent data point (no earlier than 2015) to the target value. If the most recent data point has already reached the target value, it is automatically assigned a desired CAGR of 0. Figure 4 demonstrates how the CAGR calculation has been applied to an indicator.

The Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR)

The CAGR represents the annual rate of improvement that would be needed for an indicator to reach a target value in 2030 – or a theoretical ‘target path’. The larger the CAGR value, the more effort would be needed to reach the target. It is calculated with the following formula:

$$\text{CAGR} = \left(\frac{V_{\text{final}}}{V_{\text{begin}}} \right)^{1/t} - 1$$

Where V_{begin} is the most recent data point of the dataset, V_{final} is the 2030 target value of the indicator, and t is the difference in years between 2030 and the year which V_{begin} is taken.

Whilst a relatively basic calculation, we decided to use this method because limited availability of data meant that we often did not have consistent time series data, both in the length of the time series or the year of the most recently available data point. This calculation allowed us to ‘track progress’ despite not having access to comparable time series.

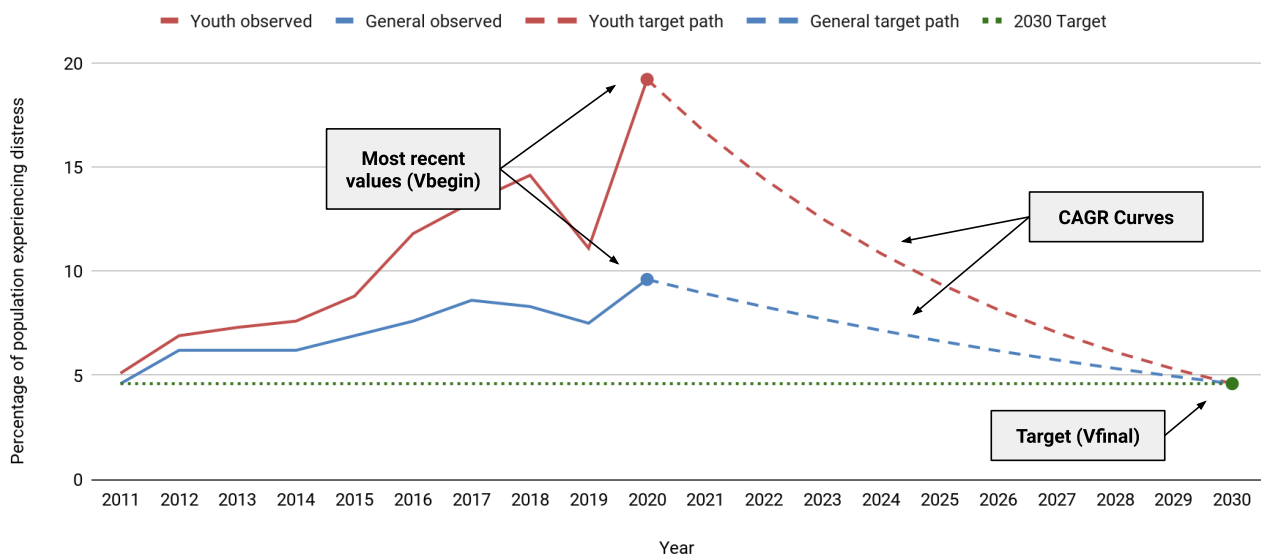


Figure 4: The data analysis process using CAGR, using as an example the indicator “Percentage of New Zealand Youth (15-24) and general population (all age groups) experiencing psychological distress”.

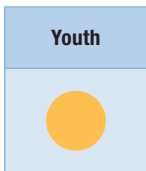
Traffic light system

The calculated CAGR values were graded via a traffic light system. We determined these values based on the set of CAGRs we had calculated and were inspired by the traffic light system used in Transforming Australia. However, for this study, the CAGR reflects the annual rate of improvement that would be needed for an indicator reach a target value by 2030 (see traffic light legend below).

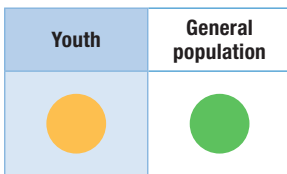
	<p>Major challenges remain: Major changes need to be made if the referenced population is to reach the target by 2030. CAGR = [10-15]</p>
	<p>Significant challenges remain: Significant changes need to be made if the referenced population is to reach the target by 2030. CAGR = [6-10]</p>
	<p>Challenges remain: Changes need to be made if the referenced population is to reach the target by 2030. CAGR = [3-6]</p>
	<p>SDG almost or have been achieved: Little or no changes need to be made if the referenced population is to reach the target by 2030. CAGR= [0-3]</p>
	<p>No appropriate youth data could be found. Often there was data for the general population but not specifically for youth. We decided that since this is an exercise to measure youth progress, when youth data could not be found, we did not calculate the CAGR for the general population.</p>

Comparing youth with the whole population

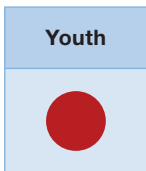
We decided to compare the youth CAGR with the general population CAGR to depict whether youth are being disproportionately impacted by sustainable development challenges (i.e. whether they are further away from reaching their 2030 target compared to the rest of the population).



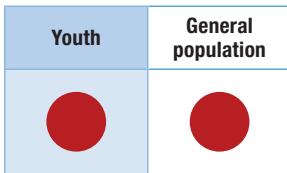
For example: if we only presented the youth CAGR of 'unemployment in Fiji', you may come to a false conclusion that the whole population is also not on track to reach the 2030 goal.



However, if we include the general population, you can see that the general Fijian population is actually on track to reach the 2030 goal. This clearly shows that youth are disproportionately impacted by this sustainable development challenge in comparison to the whole population.



Alternatively: If we just presented the youth CAGR of '*Indigenous life expectancy in Australia*', it may give you the impression that it is just youth who are far off track from the 2030 goal.



However, if we include the general population, you can see that the entire population is off track and that the data is showing that youth are not disproportionately impacted by this challenge.

Stage 4: Youth Testimonials

Even though there was limited youth data available, we still wanted to ensure that youth had an opportunity to voice their perspectives. Hence, we invited young people from across the region to write about their experiences with these identified issues. Most of the written work throughout this report is from these AusNZPac youth. They kindly (and voluntarily) shared their real-life experiences and their expertise on the topics.



Results of data analysis



1.5.YOUTH. By 2030, reduce youth poverty rates to less than 5% of youth living below the poverty line



Original target: Target 1.5. 'By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations, and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social, and environmental shocks and disasters.'

Progress summary

Australia		New Zealand		Fiji		Samoa	
Youth	General population	Youth	General population	Youth	General population	Youth	General population
●	●	No youth data		No youth data		No youth data	

● Major challenges remain ● Significant challenges remain ● Challenges remain ● SDG almost or has been achieved

Key takeaways

- Australian youth are slightly more impacted by poverty compared to the general Australian population.
- No youth disaggregated data was found for New Zealand, Fiji or Samoa.

Commentary from AusNZPac Youth

Why this target was chosen

This target was chosen as the consulted youth told us that they believe young people are disproportionately impacted by poverty and economic, social, and environmental shocks. Especially after the pandemic, young people told us that they have increasingly unstable incomes and are having difficulties saving money. For this reason, young people expressed their fear of the next economic, social, and environmental shocks.

Indicator data and 2030 target paths

We were able to find youth-related data for this indicator for Australia. This is shown in Figure 5.

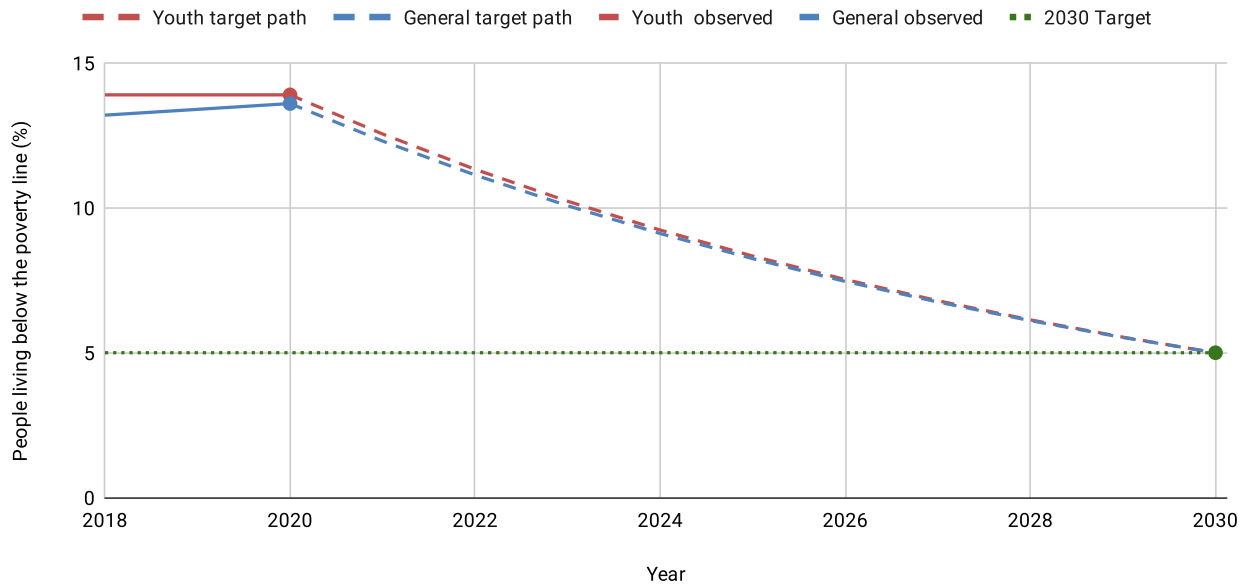


Figure 5: Youth (15-24) in Australia living below the poverty line⁵ compared to the general population (all age groups)

Data from: ACOSS Poverty in Australia 2018 Figure 5, ACOSS Poverty In Australia 2020 Table 2

⁵**Note:** In Australia, the poverty line is calculated by using half the median equivalised disposable income provided in the 'Household Income and Wealth' surveys.

2.1.YOUTH. By 2030, eliminate the number of youth experiencing food insecurity



Original target: Target 2.1. ‘By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular, the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round.’

Progress summary

Australia		New Zealand		Fiji		Samoa	
Youth	General population	Youth	General population	Youth	General population	Youth	General population
No youth data		No youth data		No youth data		No youth data	

● Major challenges remain
 ● Significant challenges remain
 ● Challenges remain
 ● SDG almost or has been achieved

Key takeaways

- No age-disaggregated data was found.
- This is an issue that youth care about given the cost of living crisis post-pandemic has exacerbated their experiences of food insecurity.

Commentary from AusNZPac Youth

Why this target was chosen

Youth during the consultations were concerned about the cost of living crisis caused by the global pandemic. Some of the youth consulted live away from their parents and told us they have experienced food insecurity for the first time recently.

Information about food insecurity in the AusNZPac region

Berit Thomalla (aged 24), University of Auckland

The 2021 regional overview of food security and nutrition in Asia and the Pacific by FAO and UNICEF EAPRO revealed that the average food price in the region went up by over 2% between 2019 and 2020, with Australia being among the countries in the region with the largest increases (6-12%). In the same short period, the number of people being undernourished in this region increased by an average of 17%. When excluding New Zealand and Australia, Oceania has the highest increase in undernourishment with almost 20%. It is therefore not surprising that over 1 in 10 people living in Oceania reported experiencing moderate to severe food insecurity in 2020 (FAO & UNICEF EAPRO, 2021).

“I spoke with my friend and he mentioned that, like many other students, he really is only able to live on student subsidy payments and the earnings he makes from part-time work outside of attending classes. As such, there is very little spare cash to use on things such as food. For him, a 10-pack of noodles will feed him for three to four days, whereas for the same price, he could buy one sweet potato.”

—Testimonial from Joshua Wharton (aged 23) Massey University

Youth perspectives on food insecurity

Joshua Wharton (aged 23), Massey University

As someone who studies nutrition related subjects at university, I believe that young people are developing health conditions at a rate not seen in previous generations. Through my research I suspect that it is caused by the over-treatment of crops, for the purposes of pest control or standardisation.

Furthermore, younger generations are more disconnected from the source and growth of their food than ever before, which only furthers food insecurity by increasing the sensation of a personal external locus of control.

“It’s really saddening to see how much food is wasted by large companies and by individual households as food prices are generally rising due to inflation, not to mention the fact that many young people do not have access to proper meals. I also think it’s quite hard for people to make a switch from meats and ‘cheaper bulk foods’ to environmentally friendly food sources when a lot of sustainable options are equally or even more expensive than buying products obtained from caged animals, especially when many of the brands and companies we see today sell products based on monetary values rather than for the sustainable usage of food.”

—Testimonial from Dan (aged 19)

Youth experiences of food insecurity

During the initial consultation process, there were a few students who told us that due to the recent rising costs of living, many of them experienced hunger for the first time in their lives. This was mostly among university students living away from their parents.

“I would like to start by saying that I would see myself as fairly privileged, as while I’m a full-time student on a low wage, my partner works full time at a ‘proper’ wage. Despite this, we even resort to canned beans and frozen vegetables towards the end of the month on a regular basis. Rent is expensive, tuition is expensive, gas is expensive, food prices have gone through the roof in the last few years.”

—Testimonial from Berit Thomalla (aged 24), University of Auckland

“As a student living off a strict weekly \$60 grocery allowance, it is laughable how expensive kitchen staples and essential foods are. \$5 for one stalk of broccoli? A block of cheese is at least \$10, and for 1kg of fresh tomatoes, it’s a whopping \$20 at countdown! It almost feels like a luxury to be eating healthily.”

—Testimonial from Alliyah (aged 19), Auckland

3.4.YOUTH1. By 2030, youth psychological distress should equalise with the general population’s 2030 target, which is to reduce psychological distress by one-third



Original target: Target 3.4, ‘By 2030, reduce by one-third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment, and promote mental health and wellbeing.’

Progress summary

Australia		New Zealand		Fiji		Samoa	
Youth	General population	Youth	General population	Youth	General population	Youth	General population
				No youth data		No youth data	

Major challenges remain
 Significant challenges remain
 Challenges remain
 SDG almost or has been achieved

Key takeaways

- Australian and New Zealand youth are more likely to experience psychological distress compared to the general population.
- Australian data was only found up until 2017, hence, the impacts of COVID-19 are not considered in this data set.
- AusNZPac Youth are very concerned about this issue and want more recognition of mental health within the SDG framework.

Indicator data and 2030 target paths

We were able to find youth-related data for this indicator for Australia and New Zealand, and this is shown in Figures 6 & 7.

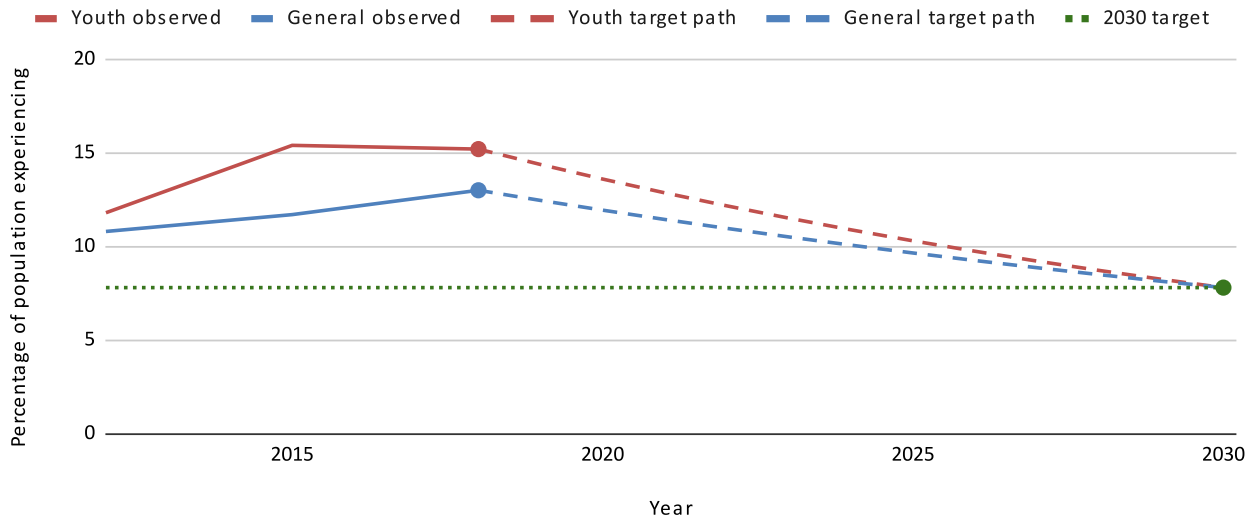


Figure 6: Percentage of Australian youth (18-24 year old) and general population (18+) experiencing high to very high psychological distress.

Data from: ABS National Health Survey Table 7.3 for 2017-2018, 2014-2015 , Table 4.3 for 2011-2012.

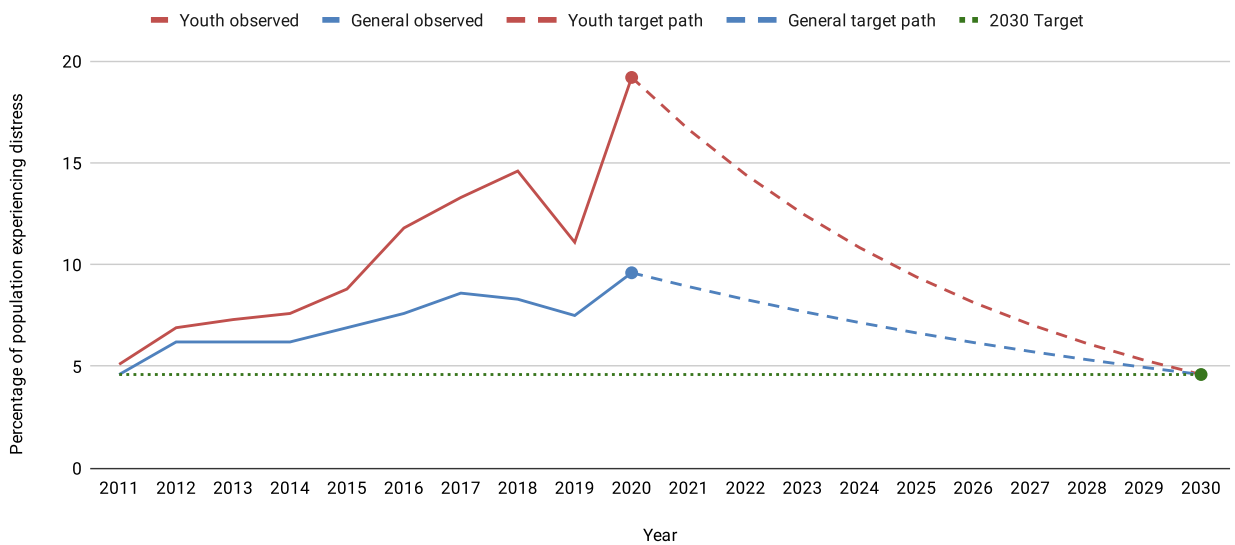


Figure 7: Percentage of New Zealand youth (15-24) and general population (all age groups) experiencing psychological distress.

Data from: Stats. NZ Wellbeing - Mental Health Status (Psychological Distress Indicator).

Commentary from AusNZPac Youth

Why this target was chosen

Young people see mental health to be a challenge they are significantly impacted by. In particular, youth highlighted their disproportionate access to social media, the COVID-19 pandemic (and subsequent economic crisis) and the climate crisis as all reasons why their mental health is worse than the general population. Youth participating in the consultations unanimously chose Target 3.4 because of the mention of mental health. All were disappointed that mental health did not get its own target.

Mental health in young people is an issue across the region

Louis Walmsley (aged 22), Monash University

The prevalence of medium to high levels of psychological distress is high among Pacific youth (38%) (Health Promotion Agency, 2018). 30% of Australians aged 18-34 experienced high or very high levels of psychological distress in June 2021 (ABS, 2021). In New Zealand, increased levels of suicide and psychological distress among Indigenous peoples has been associated with racial discrimination.

Increased provision of services is necessary to address the high levels of psychological distress among youth. However, service provision needs to be targeted and comprehensive if it is to be successful, as recent data has shown psychological distress and suicide increasing in recent times, despite an increase in services provided.

Mental health in Samoa

Elizabeth Smith (Aged 18), The University of the South Pacific

Samoa is a country founded on respect and strong moral values – you must stand accordingly, no more and no less. Generally, mental health is considered a low priority because parents and elders do not understand the importance of it. Overall, Samoan citizens have limited knowledge of mental health and therefore do not attend to it, all the while we victims suffer the consequences. I believe this indicator is really important for young people in the Pacific. Fixing this issue is the path to saving lives and families from devastation and hopelessness. This is a particular concern for young people because we are the most affected group.

“We need a countless number of initiatives directly for parents and elders to understand the loss and gain mentally affected members go through. We must carry out these initiatives everywhere to get parents to understand what a handful of mental problems are, we need the government as a whole as well as its leaders to make this an overall must for each and all. We need the government to guarantee our safety as victims of a deadly kind.”

—Anonymous testimonial from a Samoan young person

3.4.YOUTH2. By 2030, youth suicide mortality rate should be reduced by one-third



Original target: Target 3.4, ‘By 2030, reduce by one-third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment, and promote mental health and wellbeing’.

Progress summary

Australia		New Zealand		Fiji		Samoa	
Youth	General population	Youth	General population	Youth	General population	Youth	General population
●	●	●	●	●	●	No youth data	

● Major challenges remain ● Significant challenges remain ● Challenges remain ● SDG almost or has been achieved

Key takeaways

- In Australia, New Zealand and Fiji, young people are more likely to die by suicide, compared to the general population.
- Youth told us that they were concerned about mental health worsening amongst their peers, particularly during and after the pandemic.
- Youth from the Pacific and culturally diverse backgrounds told us that they struggle with getting help due to cultural stigmas.
- Youth were disappointed that there was not more emphasis on mental health within the current SDG framework.

Note:

The target values are two-thirds of the youth suicide mortality rate at 2015 or the start of the time series.

Indicator data and 2030 target paths

We were able to find youth-related data for this indicator for Australia, New Zealand, and Fiji. This is shown in Figures 8, 9 & 10 below.

Commentary from AusNZPac Youth

Why this target was chosen

Many of the young people who attended our consultation sessions explained their concern for the rising significant mental health issues they are seeing in their local context. Youth told us that after COVID-19, they have known an increased amount of young people having suicidal thoughts and abusing alcohol or illicit substances. Youth also told us stories about younger teenagers similarly experiencing devastating mental health. This was consistent across Australia, New Zealand, and Pacific youth.

Youth from the Pacific and from culturally diverse backgrounds told us that they face significant pushback from older family members when it comes to mental health. They told us this exacerbates mental health issues.

Suicide mortality in Samoa

Elizabeth Smith (Aged 18), The University of the South Pacific

This issue is a particular concern for young people in Samoa as we are the most affected group. We have to deal with the hardships of life after the pandemic alongside school, work, family, friends and social media. We are facing a future that is not going to be easy and that impacts our mental health. On top of all this, many young people in Samoa who face mental health crises do not have supportive parents. This makes the situation much more hopeless for young people who are questioning suicide.

Young people are facing a very difficult stage in their lives. We have tough decisions to make about our lives that could carry successes or failures for the rest of our lives. How are we supposed to get the support we need if our guardians are unsupportive or don't understand the mental health issues we are facing?

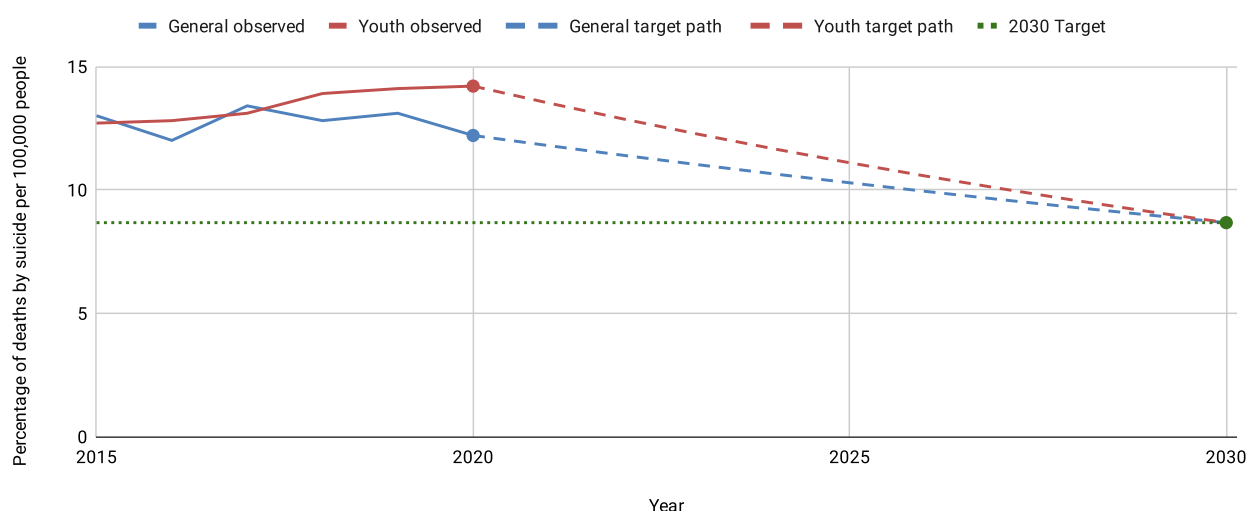


Figure 8: Deaths by suicide per 100,000 youth (15-24) compared to the general population (all age groups) in Australia. **Data from:** ABS 3303.0 – Causes of Death, Australia Table 11, 2020 release and 2010 release.

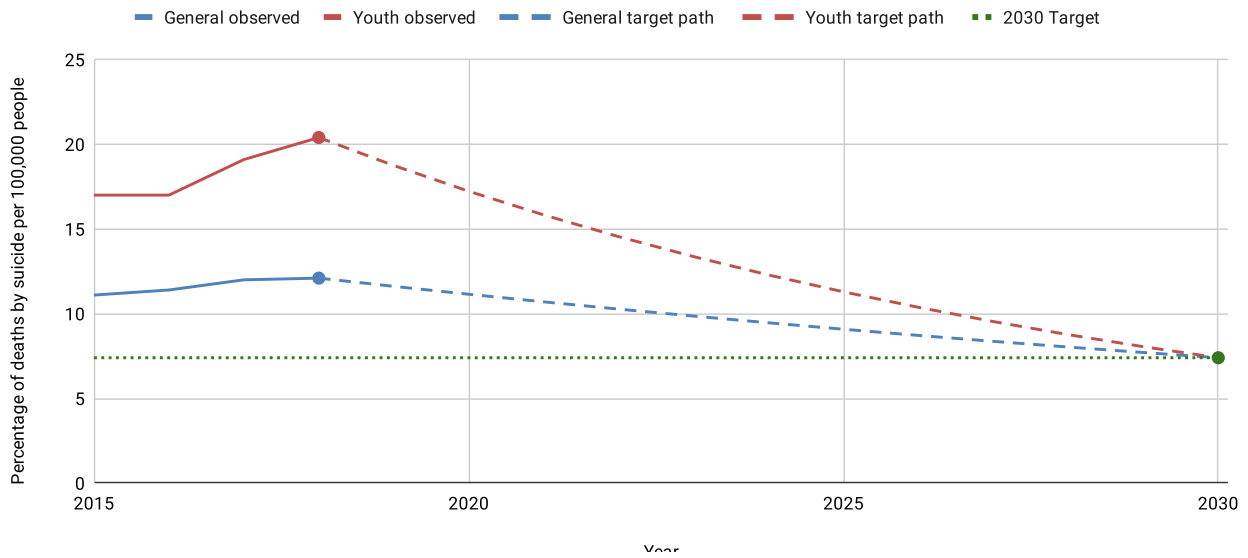


Figure 9: Deaths by suicide per 100,000 youth (15-24) compared to the general population (all age groups) in New Zealand.

Data from: Stats NZ Deaths – Suicide rate

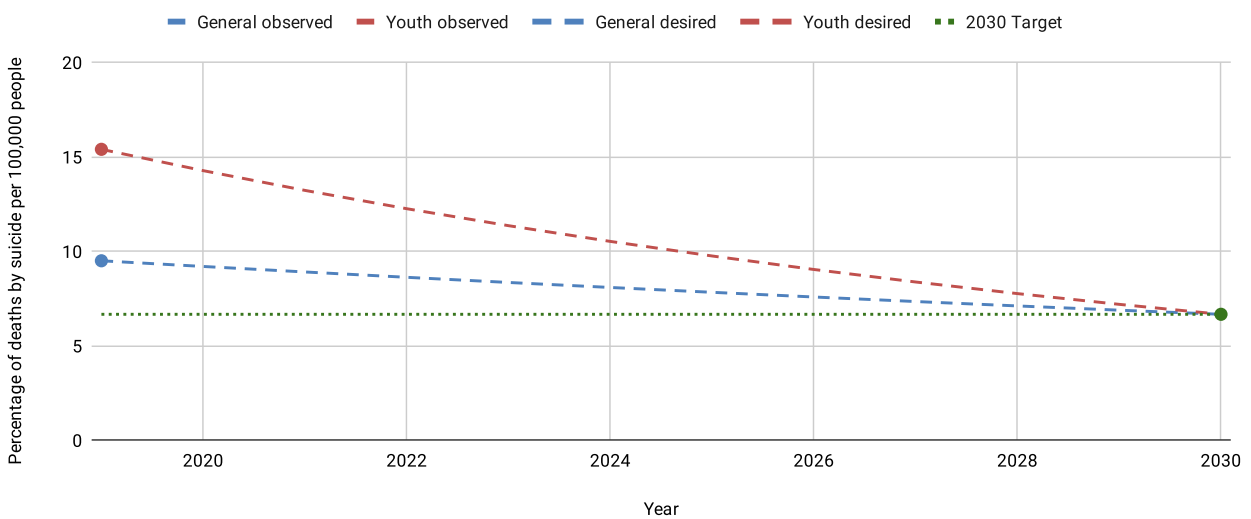


Figure 10: Deaths by suicide per 100,000 youth (15-24) compared to the general population (all age groups) in Fiji.

Data from: World Health Organisation – Mental Health – Suicide Rates

3.4.YOUTH3. By 2030, Indigenous youth life expectancy is to be less than 1 year different to the rest of the youth population’s life expectancy



Original target: Target 3.4, ‘By 2030, reduce by one-third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment, and promote mental health and wellbeing’.

Progress summary

Australia		New Zealand		Fiji		Samoa	
Youth	General population	Youth	General population	Youth	General population	Youth	General population
●	●	●	●	No youth data		No youth data	

● Major challenges remain ● Significant challenges remain ● Challenges remain ● SDG almost or has been achieved

Key takeaways

- In Australia and New Zealand, both young Indigenous people and the general population of Indigenous people face major challenges.
- Youth are slightly less disadvantaged compared to the general population of Indigenous people.
- Youth told us they want more recognition of Indigenous issues and Indigenous knowledge in the SDG framework.

Indicator data and 2030 target paths

We were able to find youth-related data for this indicator for Australia and New Zealand. This is shown in Figures 12, 13, 14, and 15.

Explanation of the data

The data we found on Indigenous life expectancy is the life expectancy an Indigenous person had when they were born compared to the life expectancy of a non-Indigenous person from the same country born in the same year (see Figure 11 for a schematic explanation of the data). Hence, there is a lag in our data as we are not presenting the life expectancy of newborns today. Despite this, we still see that Indigenous youth in Australia and New Zealand have better life expectancies compared to the general Indigenous population.

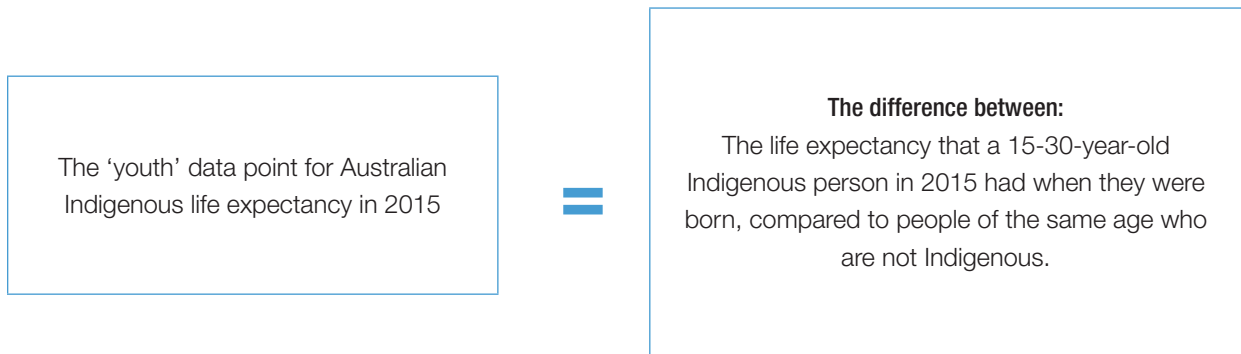


Figure 11: Schematic explanation of the Indigenous life expectancy data collected.

Commentary from AusNZPac Youth

Why this target was chosen

The youth we consulted wanted greater recognition of Indigenous challenges and knowledge throughout the SDG framework. Youth expressed concerns that Indigenous young people are further disproportionately impacted by many of the challenges that they are worried about.

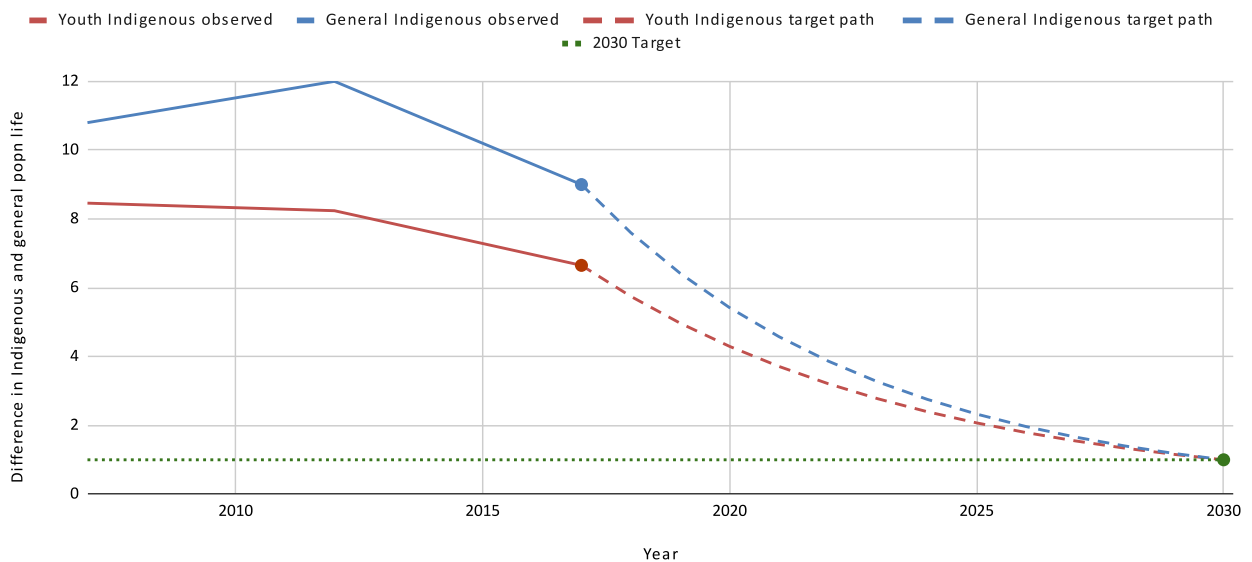


Figure 12: Absolute difference in Indigenous and non-Indigenous life expectancy at birth for Australian females (youth (15-24) vs general (all ages) Indigenous population)

Data from: ABS Life Tables for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians Table 1.1 2015-2017, Table 1.1 2010-2012, Table 1.5 2005-2007



Figure 13: Absolute difference in Indigenous and non-Indigenous life expectancy at birth for Australian males (youth (15-24) vs general (all ages) Indigenous population)

Data from: ABS Life Tables for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians Table 1.1 2015-2017, Table 1.1 2010-2012, Table 1.5 2005-2007

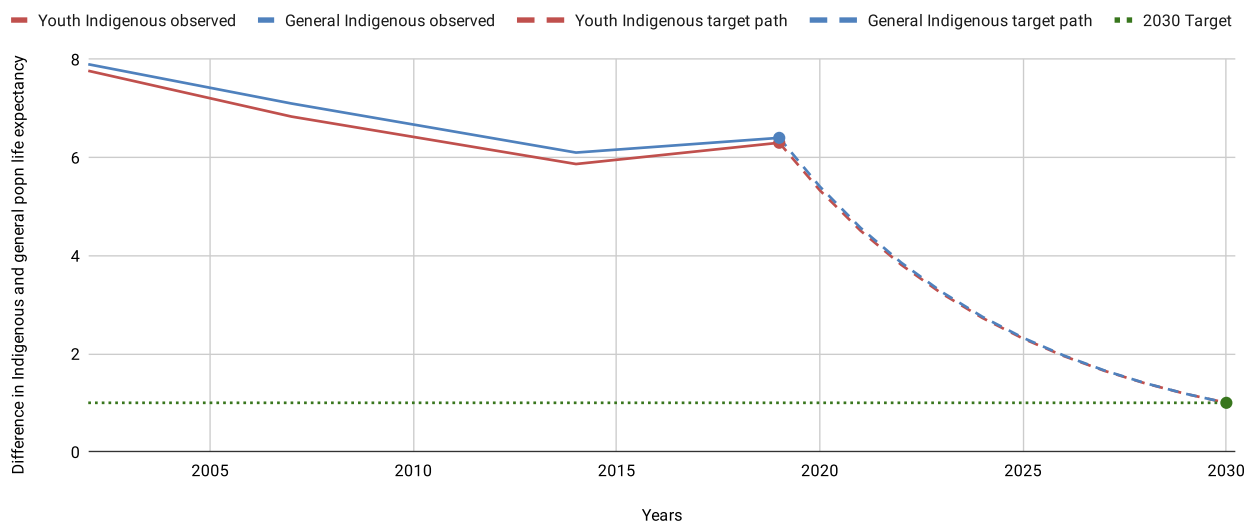


Figure 14: Absolute difference in Indigenous and non-Indigenous life expectancy at birth for New Zealand females (youth (15-24) vs general (all ages) Indigenous population)

Data from: New Zealand Period life tables, Table 1

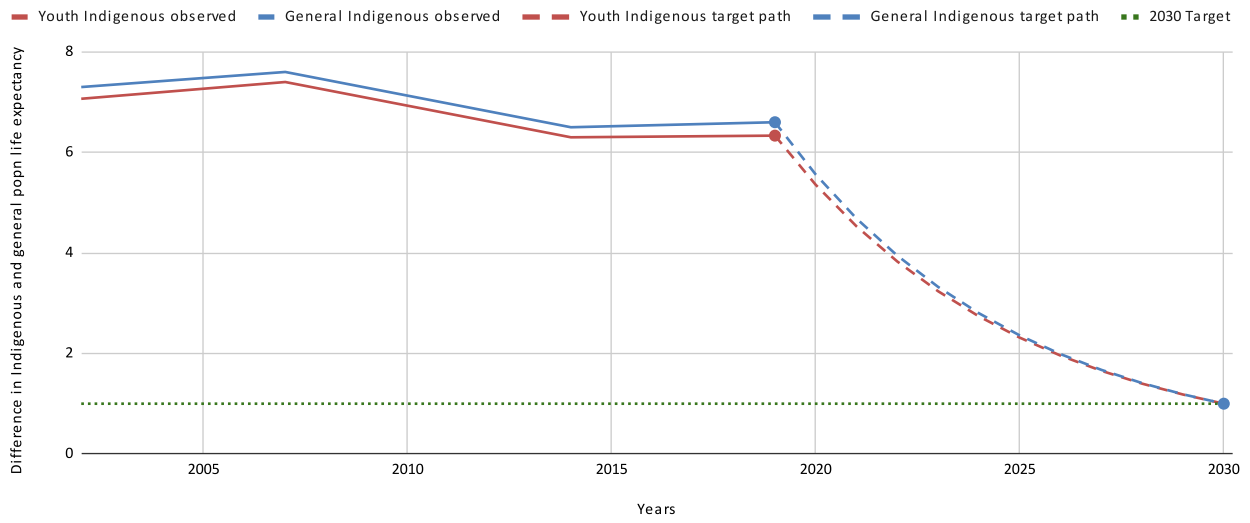


Figure 15: Absolute difference in Indigenous and non-Indigenous life expectancy at birth for New Zealand males (youth (15-24) vs general (all ages) Indigenous population)

Data from: ABS Life Tables for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians Table 1.1 2015-2017, Table 1.1 2010-2012, Table 1.5 2005-2007

3.7.YOUTH. By 2030, ensure all youth have access to sexual and reproductive health care services



Original target: Target 3.7, ‘By 2030, ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes’

Progress summary

Australia		New Zealand		Fiji		Samoa	
Youth	General population	Youth	General population	Youth	General population	Youth	General population
No youth data		No youth data		No youth data		No youth data	

● Major challenges remain
 ● Significant challenges remain
 ● Challenges remain
 ● SDG almost or has been achieved

Key takeaways

- We were unable to find youth data.
- Young people (regardless of gender) being concerned about future access to reproductive health care services.

Commentary from AusNZPac Youth

Why this target was chosen

Youth from Australia and New Zealand were concerned that the overturning of Roe v Wade in the United States would impact abortion rights in their countries. Many of them told us that they have never worried about their access to reproductive health care until recently and that given that they are entering adulthood, they need these services now and into the future. Hence, if these services are disrupted, youth today will be disproportionately impacted.

Reproductive health care in New Zealand and the Pacific

Nodoka Nakamichi (aged 27), University of Technology Sydney

In many parts of New Zealand, young people face stigma and barriers to accessing comprehensive, confidential sexual and reproductive health care due to their age (New Zealand Family Planning, 2017). Also concerning is that more than 60% of women in the Pacific Island countries who want to delay or avoid their pregnancies are unable to do so due to barriers to accessing family planning services (Harrington et al., 2021).

“Access to reproductive health care is a basic and fundamental human right and I believe every person should be allowed to make their own decisions about their body through weighing their personal, economic, and social circumstances.”

—Anonymous testimonial from an Australian young person

7.2.YOUTH. By 2030, all young people should have full access to affordable and clean renewable energy



Original target: Target 7.2, 'By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.'

Progress summary

Australia		New Zealand		Fiji		Samoa	
Youth	General population	Youth	General population	Youth	General population	Youth	General population
No youth data		No youth data		No youth data		No youth data	

● Major challenges remain
 ● Significant challenges remain
 ● Challenges remain
 ● SDG almost or has been achieved

Key takeaways

- No youth disaggregated data was found.
- Young people are concerned about their countries' consumption of energy but are also concerned about the rising cost of electricity.

Commentary from AusNZPac Youth

Why this target was chosen

The youth we consulted had considerable climate anxiety and were deeply passionate about ensuring a transition away from fossil fuels. Youth were also passionate about ensuring cheap and universal access to energy. This was of particular concern given the rising cost of energy.

Different renewable energy concerns

Young people from Australia and New Zealand expressed concerns that their countries were disproportionately exacerbating the climate crisis because their countries rely on fossil fuels. On the other hand, youth from Pacific Islands expressed that they were concerned that importing fossil fuels was not sustainable. Rather, it would be more long-term cost effective to get funding for renewable energy.

"While the share of renewable energy in total energy consumption is increasing, I am concerned by its relatively small share in Australia's primary energy consumption and electricity generation. According to the Australian Government Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, fossil fuels accounted for 92% of Australia's primary energy mix in 2020–21. Research shows that Australia's heavy reliance upon coal to generate electricity has made the country the highest emitter of greenhouse gases per capita globally! As the world moves towards embracing clean energy, I believe that Australia is at a crucial stage of building a pathway to fulfil its environmental obligations."

—Testimonial from Jayana (aged 21), The University of Queensland

8.5.YOUTH. By 2030, youth unemployment to be less than 5% of the population by 2030



Original target: Target 8.5 'By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.'

Progress summary

Australia		New Zealand		Fiji		Samoa	
Youth	General population	Youth	General population	Youth	General population	Youth	General population
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

● Major challenges remain ● Significant challenges remain ● Challenges remain ● SDG almost or has been achieved

Key takeaways

- In Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, and Samoa we found that youth are disproportionately impacted by unemployment.
- Youth told us that they are concerned that despite many of them being university qualified, they will be unable to find stable work in the field they are interested in.

Indicator data and 2030 target paths

We were able to find youth-related data for this indicator for Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and Samoa. This is shown in Figures 16, 17, 18, and 19.

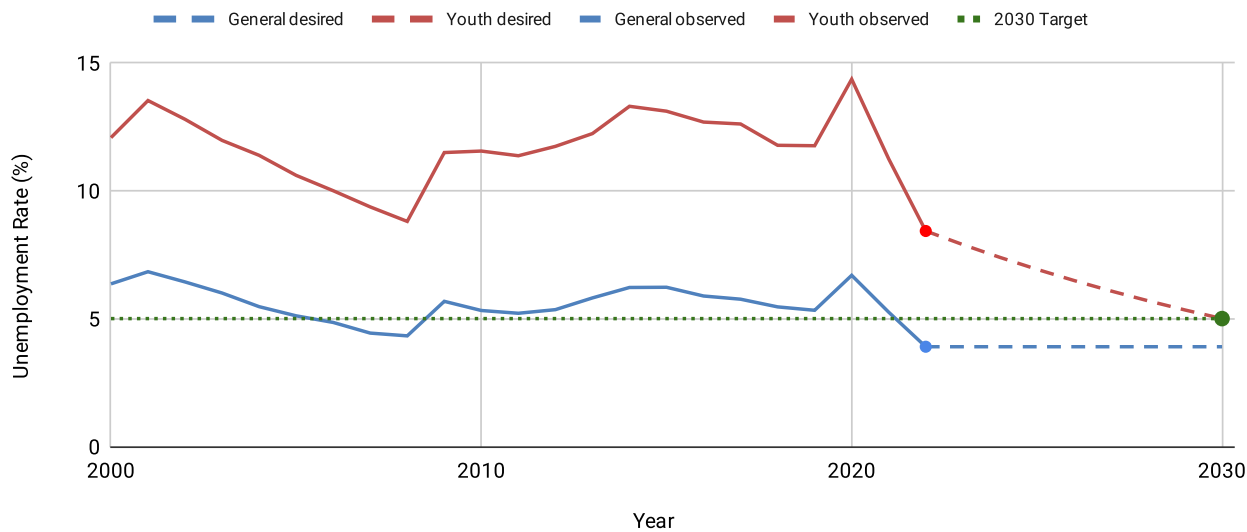


Figure 16: Youth (15-24) unemployment rate in Australia compared to the general (all age groups) population unemployment rate.

Data from: ABS Labour Force Table 1 & 13: Unemployment rate total (seasonally adjusted)

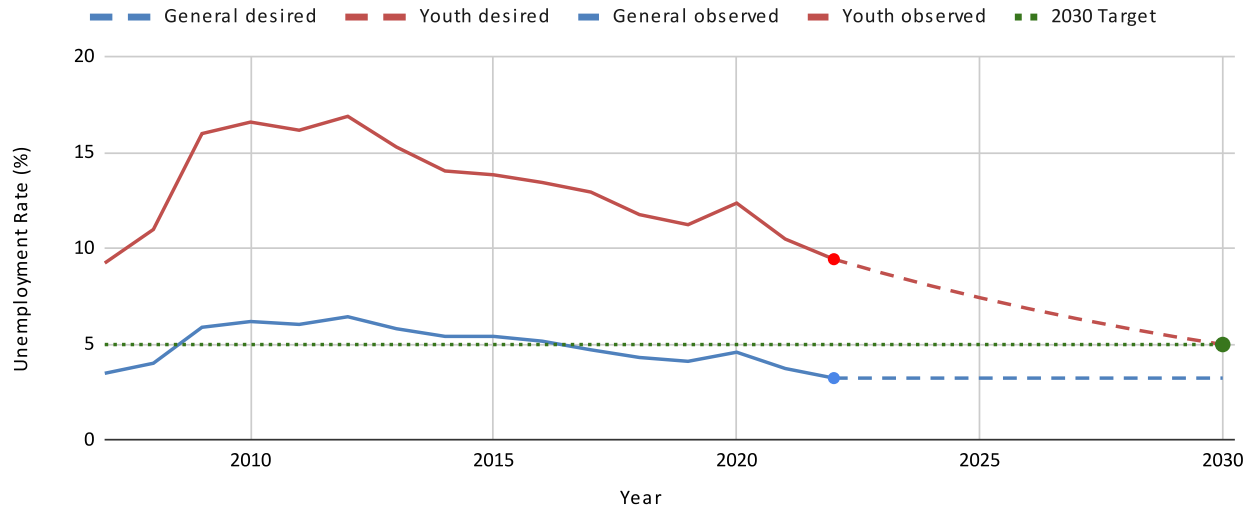


Figure 17: Youth (15-24) unemployment rate in New Zealand compared to the general (all age groups) population unemployment rate.

Data from: Wellbeing data for New Zealanders: Work – Employment

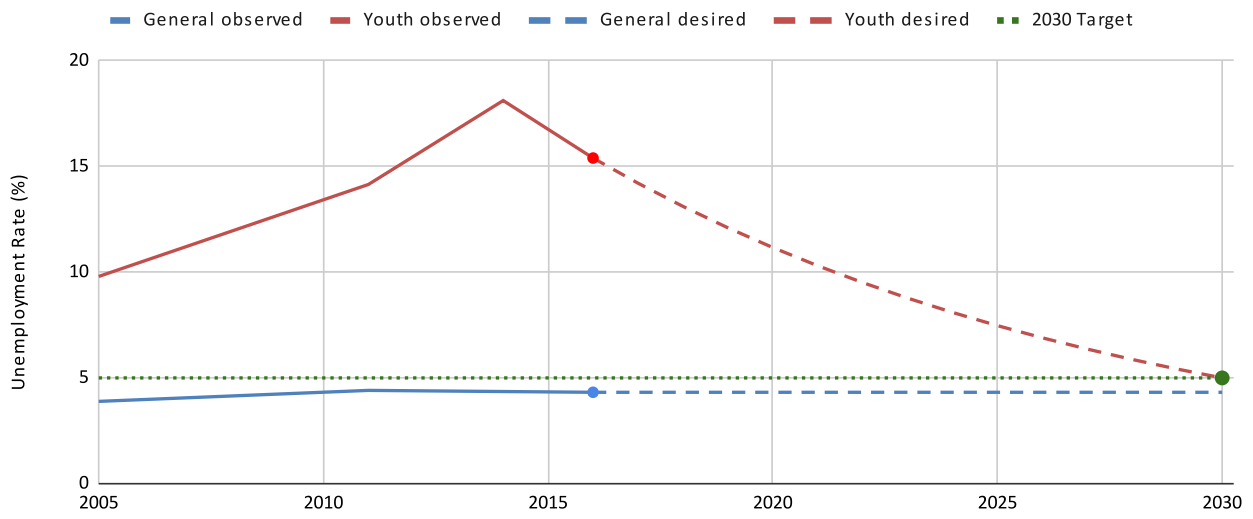


Figure 18: Youth (15-24) unemployment rate in Fiji compared to the general (all age groups) population unemployment rate.

Data from: Pacific Data Hub: Unemployment rate

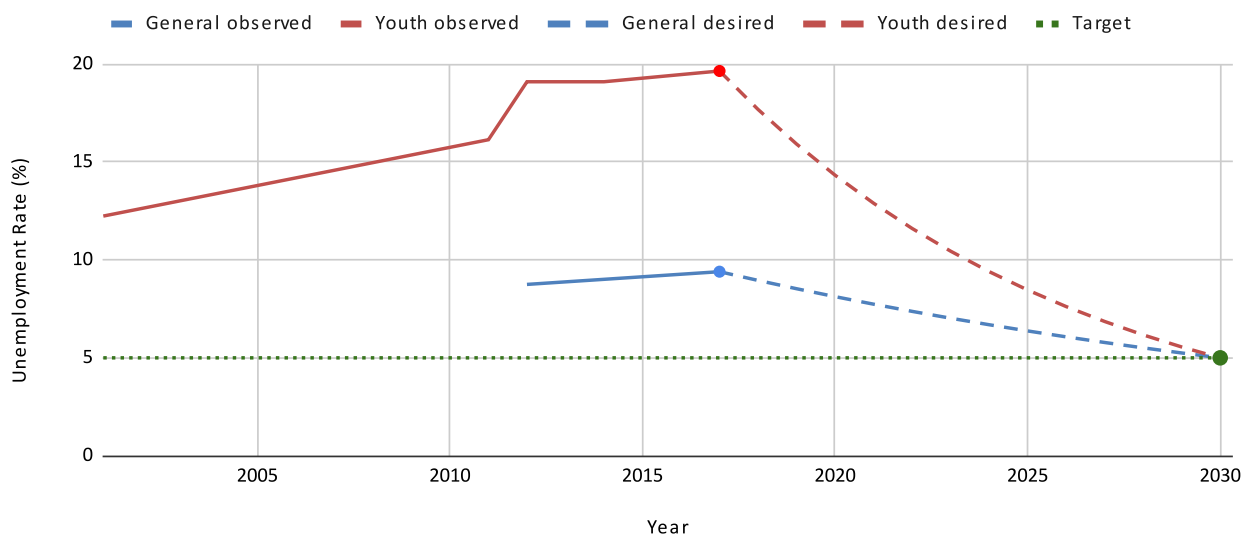


Figure 19: Youth (15-24) unemployment rate in Samoa compared to the general (all age groups) population unemployment rate.

Data from: Pacific Data Hub: Unemployment rate

Commentary from AusNZPac Youth

Why this target was chosen

The young people we consulted were mostly university students or graduates. Despite their pursuits for qualifications, these young people were concerned that they would not be able to find work that is stable and fulfilling. Some young people also mentioned that they currently experience under-employment with their work being casual and not being enough to keep up with their living costs.

This issue was more severely felt by young people from the Pacific. Some told us stories about their peers who pursue higher education abroad but then go back to their home country and are unable to find work. They told us this is leading to other challenges such as drug use and crime.

Additionally, young people thought the language of ‘women and men’ used in this target was not gender inclusive and should be changed to ‘adults’ or ‘people’.

“The unemployment rate among young people is high, especially among university students. My friends who came straight from high school have difficulties getting jobs, and their parents cannot support them much. Some of them get casual service roles to earn little money, but it only helped a little. Because the work is not reliable and the shifts are pretty uncertain.”

—Testimonial from Gee (aged 21), Australia

“One of the challenges I encountered when I started looking for a job here in Australia was the specific “years of experience” that some employers usually require on the selection criteria for employment. It is very disempowering when one is just popping out of school and has little or no experience in that field. This ‘experience’ expectation automatically screens one out. Denying one the opportunity to gain employment, learn and grow on the job.”

—Testimonial from an anonymous young person from Australia

Why unemployment is an important issue to young people

Perpetual Nneka Onuigbo, University of Tasmania

Young people are the bedrock and the future of every nation. It becomes a grave challenge for the broader society when they are not in education, employment or training, and they risk being socially excluded, homeless and falling into poverty. Therefore, it is critical to ensure that young people smoothly transition from school to employment or further studies. Government and policymakers must establish platforms, programs, initiatives and measures to aid smooth transitioning.

“From personal experience, I was in this situation after finishing high school and even after completing some certificate programs in my home country (Vanuatu). This qualification means nothing in the real world because it is not fully recognised by employers, so I must continue my education. I was given the opportunity to continue my studies at the University of the South Pacific, but these opportunities do not come easily. I’ll have to work extra hard to get good grades and be considered for the Vanuatu government scholarship program”

—Testimonial from Sylvie Aru (aged 26), The University of the South Pacific (USP)

“In my opinion, a large number of young people drop out of secondary school in the Pacific each year, adding to the existing population of young people who are unemployed. Even students who have completed university programs face the same situation of being unemployed, and if they are employed, they are considered underemployed. The main challenge I’ve seen in the country, particularly in Vanuatu where I’m from, is a lack of job opportunities in both the private and public sectors.”

—Testimonial from an anonymous young person from the Pacific

10.4.YOUTH. By 2023, ensure all youth have access to social protection programs



Original target: Target 10.4 ‘Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality.’

Progress summary

Australia		New Zealand		Fiji		Samoa	
Youth	General population	Youth	General population	Youth	General population	Youth	General population
No youth data		No youth data		No youth data		No youth data	

● Major challenges remain
 ● Significant challenges remain
 ● Challenges remain
 ● SDG almost or has been achieved

Key takeaways

- No youth disaggregated data was found.
- Consulted youth told us that they have found their government’s social protection programs not enough or difficult to navigate.

Commentary from AusNZPac Youth

Why this target was chosen

This was a target largely chosen by young people from Australia and New Zealand. Many of them told us they appreciated the increased assistance they received during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, they told us that post-pandemic, social protection programs have not been able to keep up with the increased costs of living. Others also told us they found their government’s social protection programs to be difficult to understand and navigate. Similarly, some told us they didn’t understand a few of the rules keeping them from accessing social projection (such as study and relationship status).

“I believe that young people are so much more aware of inclusivity and have a far better understanding because of our education today expanding to account for all members of society. The array of people we surround ourselves with, the transition, although by no means perfect, to be surrounded by peers from all different backgrounds with different sexual orientations and identities. In this sense, the LGBT+ community is one we are aware of and strive to protect more passionately. Social protection programs need to protect our most vulnerable and disproportionately affected youth groups. This kind of information must influence all future decisions on how to approach youth by understanding them as an intersectional diverse range of people with different needs for stability and protection.”

—Testimonial from an anonymous young person from Australia

Social protection needs for Australian youth

Ruby Burnes (aged 21), Monash University

In a post-pandemic world, social protection must evolve to meet the needs of youth today. In Australia, the economic impact has seen vulnerable youth turn to social protection to survive and has therefore demonstrated the essential nature of a reliable and enduring social protection program.

However, many young people believe that current social protection programs are not enough to support youth. This concern is founded on distrust towards the government's ability to listen to contemporary needs that conflict with party interests. For social protection to become truly all-inclusive it must meet the needs of younger people. Social protection must be dealt with from a collaborative approach, governments must attempt to respect and answer to the anxieties of today's youth, plagued by new economic threats coupled with the plight of climate change.

“I believe it is absolutely vital for the government to have initiatives in place to support our most vulnerable young people. It seems almost like we forget that it is not the middle and upper classes we have to protect and those young people who lost their small casual jobs during lockdown, although this is sad. It is the vulnerable lower socioeconomic youth that programmes must protect. Without these kinds of programmes, without this kind of protection, there seems to me to be little hope and assurance that this group of people can survive in that state of uncertainty. If this state were to worsen, this group of people suffer the most. It is far harder to become more socially and economically independent. I would say this would be a large goal for a majority of these people, however, due to circumstances out of many peoples' control, that is not everyone's reality. As someone who was supported by the Jobkeeper payments during COVID-19, I am eternally grateful for the support I was able to receive. Economic support is needed to relieve the anxieties of our too expensive world today.”

—Testimonial from Grace (aged 21), Australia

11.1.YOUTH1. By 2030, youth renters paying more than 30% of income on housing costs should be reduced by two-thirds



Original target: Target 11.1, ‘By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe, and affordable housing and basic services, and upgrade slums.’

Progress summary

Australia		New Zealand		Fiji		Samoa	
Youth	General population	Youth	General population	Youth	General population	Youth	General population
		No youth data		No youth data		No youth data	

Major challenges remain
 Significant challenges remain
 Challenges remain
 SDG almost or has been achieved

Key takeaways

- Australian youth are disproportionately impacted by rent overburden compared to the general population.
- No youth disaggregated data found for New Zealand, Fiji, or Samoa.
- The youth we consulted who rent were all concerned about their rent being an increased share of their expenditure.

Indicator data and 2030 target paths

We were able to find youth-related data for this indicator for Australia. This is shown in Figure 20.

Explanation of the data

The data points represent the percentage of people from the population that are experiencing ‘rent overburden’. If a person is experiencing rent overburden, it means that over 30% of that person’s income is being spent on their rent.⁶

⁶Indicator used in Transforming Australia

Commentary from AusNZPac Youth

Why this target was chosen

Just like other indicators related to the 'cost of living', this was a key concern of young people that we consulted with. Young people told us that their rent is becoming an increasingly large share of their expenditure. A few young people in New Zealand and Australia discussed that they experienced housing insecurity for the first time during or after the pandemic. Others told us it has been very difficult to secure leases. One student told us that they had to move back in with their parents as they could not afford to live in the shared house they lived in.

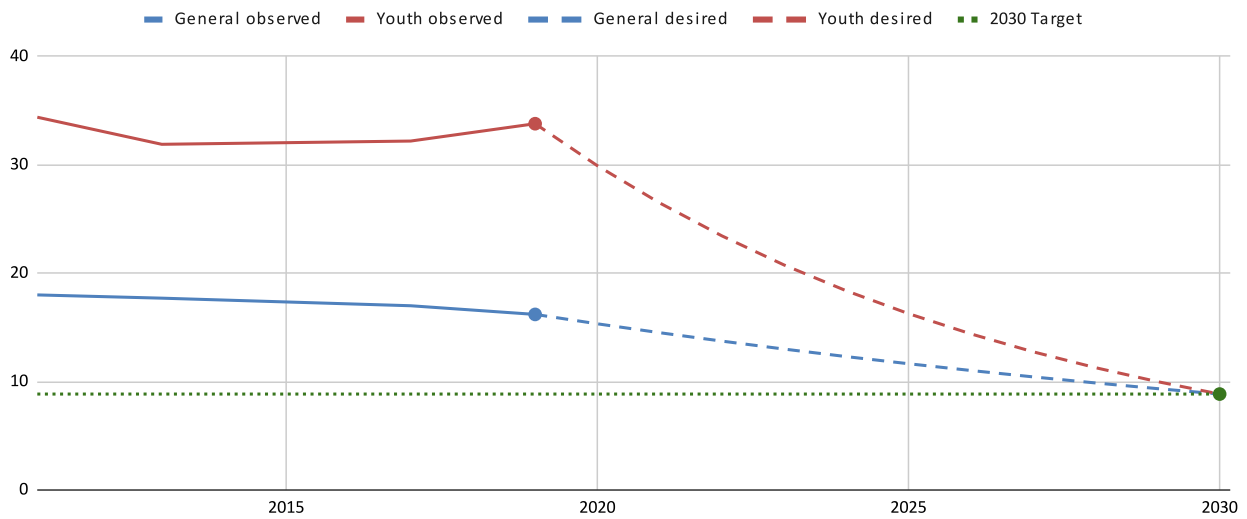


Figure 20: Australian youth (15-24) experiencing rent overburden compared to the general population (all age groups)
Data from: ABS Housing Occupancy and Costs Table 6 Age of Reference Person for 2019-2020, Table 5 for 2017-2018, Table 10 2013-2015

11.1.YOUTH2. By 2030, youth homelessness to be less than 0.5% of the youth population



Original target: Target 11.1, ‘By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe, and affordable housing and basic services, and upgrade slums.’

Progress summary

Australia		New Zealand		Fiji		Samoa	
Youth	General population	Youth	General population	Youth	General population	Youth	General population
●	●	●	●	No youth data		No youth data	

● Major challenges remain ● Significant challenges remain ● Challenges remain ● SDG almost or has been achieved

Key takeaways

- In Australia and New Zealand, the general population have achieved the target, but young people are still facing significant challenges.
- Young people told us that they are concerned that youth homelessness is increasing.

Indicator data and 2030 target paths

We were able to find youth-related data for this indicator for Australia and New Zealand. This is shown in Figures 21 and 22.

Commentary from AusNZPac Youth

Why this target was chosen

The young people we consulted were concerned that they had been seeing more homeless people in their localities. Youth were also concerned that the rising costs of living they were experiencing would also exacerbate this issue.

Notably, young people acknowledged the intersectional nature of this issue. Young people told us that they were concerned about homelessness impacting young LGBT+ and Indigenous people more intensely.

Youth homelessness in the region

Kasha Colgan (aged 19), University of Adelaide

Youth homelessness is a prevalent issue of growing concern, especially in the Australian, New Zealand, and Pacific regions (Davies & Wood, 2018; Fraser, 2016). Youth homelessness however is more than merely a housing issue and is also a human rights issue (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2016). This is particularly attributable to the disruptive impact youth homelessness has on education, transitions into employment, and creating a supportive and stable social network (Heerde & Patton, 2020). Being homeless also puts young people at risk of food insecurity (Crawford et al., 2015) and being exposed to violence, social isolation, and sexual exploitation. It can limit their access to medicine, basic hygiene, and receiving treatment (Davies & Wood, 2018). Homeless youth consequently face higher risk of mortality from multi-morbidities brought about by mental health issues, physical injury, infectious and non-infectious diseases, substance abuse, and violence (Heerde & Patton, 2020).

“I can confidently say that I was not a bad child, I was just put in situations where I had to protect myself, that my family did not like. I experienced sexual abuse as a child for seven years by a family member whom I lived with, and when I opened up about that, I found myself being threatened to stay and be hurt and worse or leave. It seemed as though my only option was to leave, so that is what I did. I was only 16 years old when I found myself on the streets of Adelaide. I had some money saved up when I decided to leave, but that was soon drained from my account by my mother. I was on the streets with no food, little belongings, and no money. I slept on park benches and showered at my co-workers’ or friends’ homes every so often. I would walk to and from school and to work, which was over a three-hour walk... I wasn’t really friends with many people that I felt I could ask to open their homes for me, as well as my dad, he was incredibly poor and I knew he couldn’t afford to have me living there, no matter how hard he would hide it. So, I just stayed, I lived like this, homeless and hopeless, no one really knew because I was too embarrassed and scared to ask for help.”

—Testimonial from Jess (aged 17), from Adelaide, South Australia

“I believe there is yet much to be done to address youth homelessness. Adequate resources, including financial, practical, and emotional support should be provided to those experiencing youth homelessness, not only to address the immediate housing needs, but the many other complex interconnected factors that may be present – such as legal, health, relationship, education, and employment issues. Harmful myths and stigma among youth homelessness also exist, which is why education of the public of the causes and effects of youth homelessness is especially important for the support and outcomes of youth experiencing homelessness.

Arguably, if the young people today are considered the future of tomorrow, what kind of future will we have if we cannot even meet a basic need and necessity such as adequate and affordable accommodation, or even access to affordable food? Young people should be supported and empowered to reach their highest level of self-determination and potential.”

—Testimonial from Kasha Colgan (aged 19), University of Adelaide

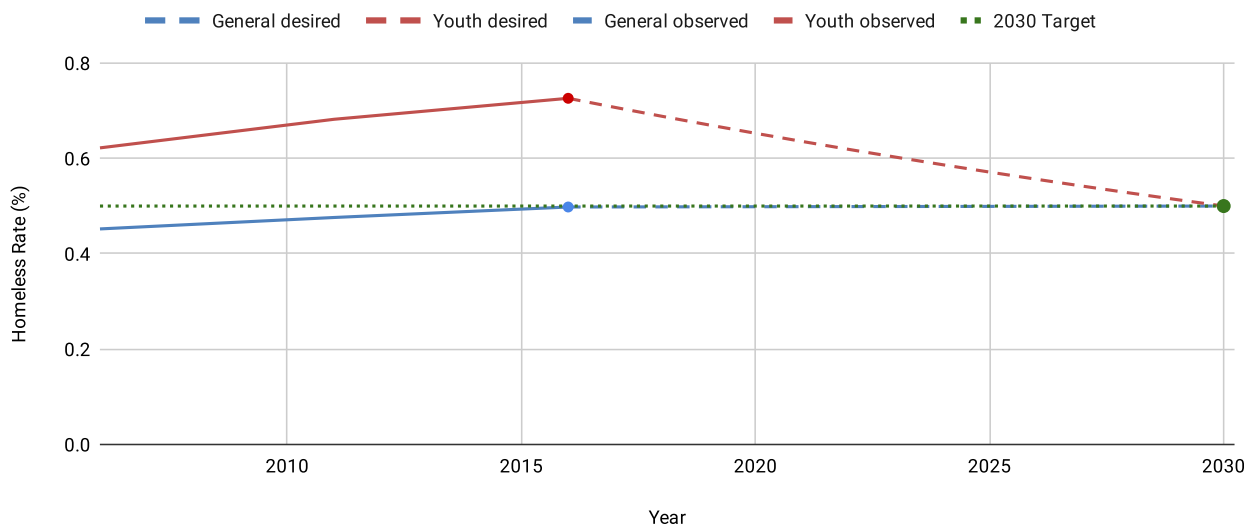


Figure 21: Australian youth (15-24) homelessness rate compared to the general population (all age groups)
Data from: 'ABS Census of Population and Housing: Estimating Homelessness, Homeless persons'

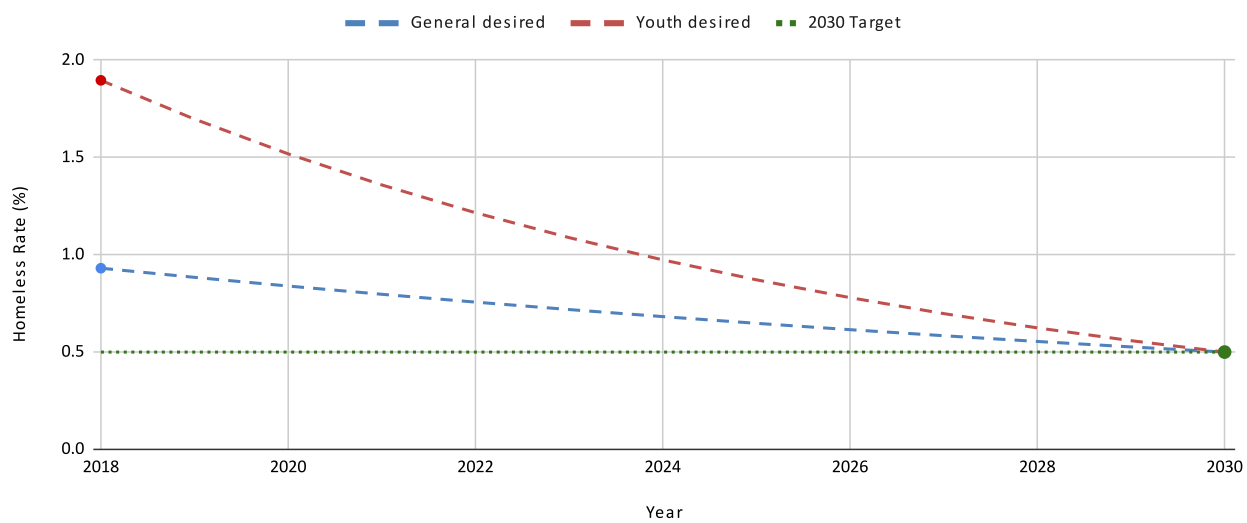


Figure 22: New Zealand youth (15-24) homelessness rate compared to the general population (all age groups)
Data from: 'Wellbeing data for New Zealanders: Cities and settlements – Homelessness'

13.2.YOUTH. By 2023, genuine and effective inclusion of young people and their needs in all countries' NDCS⁷



Original target: Target 13.2. 'Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning.'

Progress summary

Australia		New Zealand		Fiji		Samoa	
Youth	General population	Youth	General population	Youth	General population	Youth	General population
No youth data		No youth data		No youth data		No youth data	

● Major challenges remain
 ● Significant challenges remain
 ● Challenges remain
 ● SDG almost or has been achieved

Key takeaways

- No youth disaggregated data was found.
- Young people are concerned that their governments are not integrating the needs of youth in their approach to climate change

Commentary from AusNZPac Youth

Why this target was chosen

The youth we consulted told us of their acute fears for the future. Many told us that they feel disproportionately impacted by climate change because they are the ones who will live through increasingly severe climate changes. Youth also told us that since young people are less likely to be financially stable and they have different needs when it comes to climate adaptation compared to older generations.

⁷Nationally determined contributions (NDCs) are the post-2020 climate action plans countries submit as part of the Paris Agreement.

Climate change is one of the most important issues to youth in the region

Jayana (aged 21), University of Queensland

Climate change is a defining issue of the current times; it represents a significant challenge to everyone. The global changes that come with climate change will affect different regions of the world in different ways and at different rates. Our region is one of the most vulnerable. Over the recent decades, Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands have already experienced increases in average temperatures, shifting rainfall patterns, rising sea levels, and more frequent extreme weather events (CSIRO & Bureau of Meteorology 2015; Ministry for the Environment & stats NZ 2020). Pacific island nations are among the most vulnerable to the changing climate (RCCAP 2021). Research has shown that most of the changes observed over recent years will continue.

16.6.YOUTH. By 2023, ensure there is genuine and effective youth representation in all forms of governance



Original target: Target 16.5 'Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms' and Target 16.6 "Develop effective, accountable, and transparent institutions at all levels.'

Progress summary

Australia		New Zealand		Fiji		Samoa	
Youth	General population	Youth	General population	Youth	General population	Youth	General population
No youth data		No youth data		No youth data		No youth data	

● Major challenges remain
 ● Significant challenges remain
 ● Challenges remain
 ● SDG almost or has been achieved

Key takeaways

- No youth disaggregated data was found.

Commentary from AusNZPac Youth

Why this target was chosen

Young people that we consulted told us that they have doubts that their governments are including the needs and perspectives of young people within decision and policy making. Given the specific challenges young people face today (and into the future), youth told us that they want increased youth consultation in government processes.

An overview of this issue

Karen Ishikawa (aged 30), Auckland University of Technology (AUT)

The 2021 OECD report on governance for youth, trust, and intergenerational justice illustrates youths' trust in institutions has, on average, decreased over the years in Australia and New Zealand (OECD 2020, pp. 65-66). Young people's concerns about corruption in governments are also increasing in the Pacific Island Nations and this has major implications for the level of trust in public institutions and curbing inequalities (Rothstein, 2011).

“As someone who is heavily engaged in community work, the growing disassociation and sense of hopelessness for the future is apparent among youth. The increasing costs of living and the rise in youth offending in New Zealand, for instance, is no coincidence. If anything, I believe trust is lower than what the indicators show, specifically, among minority groups, who are less likely to be represented in these indicators and are also experiencing institutional racism that is rooted in the past. Furthermore, the lack of data on youth from many of the Pacific Island nations illustrates an even bigger problem of inequality. After all, if youth progress is not measured, then how can it be improved? Is it fair for a nation to miss out on the SDGs because they do not have the resources to make it happen?”

—Testimonial from Karen Ishikawa (aged 30), Auckland University of Technology (AUT)

“Dating back to the initial rush of Pacific Islanders’ into New Zealand, we have been taken advantage of. From when the New Zealand government offered us residency in exchange for labour-intensive minimum wage jobs New Zealanders didn’t want to take themselves. From when the police shot a Samoan chief in a peaceful protest for independence... From when Heather du Plessis called us leeches on live radio. There are one too many times when Pacific people in New Zealand have been let down. This is only the foundation of what a young Pacific person builds themselves on within New Zealand – this is our legacy as a people on this land.”

—Testimonial from Na’akakala ‘E Moala Aholelei (aged 19)

Governance and youth under-representation in the South Pacific

Karen Ishikawa (aged 30), Auckland University of Technology (AUT)

Under-representation of youth parliamentarians in the South Pacific is prevalent. While several nations within the South Pacific have well-established Youth Parliament programmes to encourage youth participation in parliament, the number of young parliamentarians has not increased over the years. In some cases, the absence of data on the age of the parliamentarians alludes to the lack of attention to the importance of incorporating youth and their voice in councils. Meanwhile, in Fiji, youth are advocating for partnership and more youth representation in parliament to create a channel of communication to make their voices heard and boost morale towards their future.

“Imagine you are a passenger on a bus that is heading towards certain death at high speed. There are no seat belts, airbags, or emergency brakes, no way to escape. You try to get to the front of the bus to stop the driver, but you are separated by a glass wall... No one hears you. No one sees you.

That is what it feels like to be a youth amidst the political and economic unrest... the pandemic and the climate crisis... To be a youth, told that you are too young, that you do not understand. Yet, we the youth will be the ones who stand to inherit the decisions of today.”

—Testimonial from Karen Ishikawa (aged 30), Auckland University of Technology (AUT)

Non-Youth-Disaggregated indicators

As was mentioned, there were several indicators that youth thought they were being disproportionately impacted by, but that we could not come up with a way to measure the ways that they were being impacted in line with our method of data analysis. Despite this, we thought it would be important for us to include these indicators given that young people care about these issues.

If you have ideas about how you could use these SDG targets to create youth-specific indicators, let us know.

8.9 By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote **sustainable tourism** that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products.

9.4 By 2030, **upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries** to make them sustainable, with increased resource-use efficiency and greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes, with all countries taking action in accordance with their respective capabilities.

11.4 Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's **cultural and natural heritage**.

12.3 By 2030, halve per capita **global food waste** at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses.

12.6 Encourage **companies**, especially large and transnational companies, to **adopt sustainable practices** and to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle.

13.3 Improve **education**, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning.

15.5 Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of **biodiversity** and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species.

Conclusion

This report attempts to use the SDGs for two of their designed purposes: to measure progress towards sustainable development and to ensure that no one is left behind. Using the SDGs as a framework, we consulted with young people to find out which sustainable development issues concern them the most. We then attempted to measure youth progress towards the selected targets. The following are the key conclusions that we identified from this project.

An important exercise to undertake

With little exception, when there was youth data, we were able to show that youth were further away from achieving the 2030 target. Hence, we were able to illustrate that young people are disproportionately impacted by several sustainable development challenges across the region. This therefore proves to be an important exercise to be done consistently and internationally to better understand how we can minimise the number of youth being left behind on the road towards sustainable development.

Greater age-disaggregated data collection

The greatest issue we faced during this process was how little data there is that considers 'youth'. Statistics offices and global organisations need to be collecting data that is disaggregated into ages. Without this age of disaggregated data, there are limited evidence-based ways that youth can advocate for greater consideration and there is a 'blind spot' in policymaking and research.

Genuine inclusion of youth in decision-making processes

Throughout our consultation process and in the written contributions from youth, it was evident that youth across the region are frustrated. They see that they are facing big challenges but they feel that their voices are not considered during decision-making processes. This was epitomised during the consultation process, where we asked the youth in attendance if they thought the SDG framework represented their concerns. We found that after the session (where young people got to closely examine the SDG targets) they thought that the framework was *not* representing them accurately (see Figure 23). Hence, we assert that diverse young people need to be considered in all sustainable development decisions and practices.

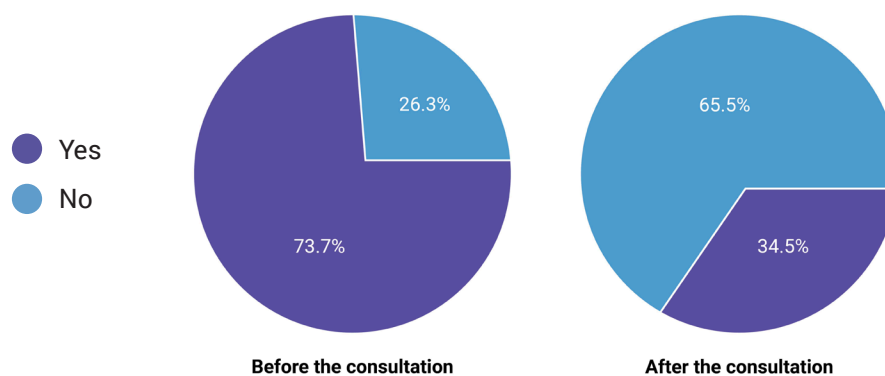


Figure 23: Opinion of consulted youth on whether they thought the SDG framework accurately represents their sustainable development concerns.

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