



# **Supporting the Graduation and Smooth Transition of Least Developed Countries in Asia and the Pacific**

Expert Group Meeting

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# Diversity of LDCs in Asia and the Pacific

**2 Graduates:** Maldives (2011), Samoa (2014)

**4 LLDCs:** Afghanistan, Bhutan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Nepal

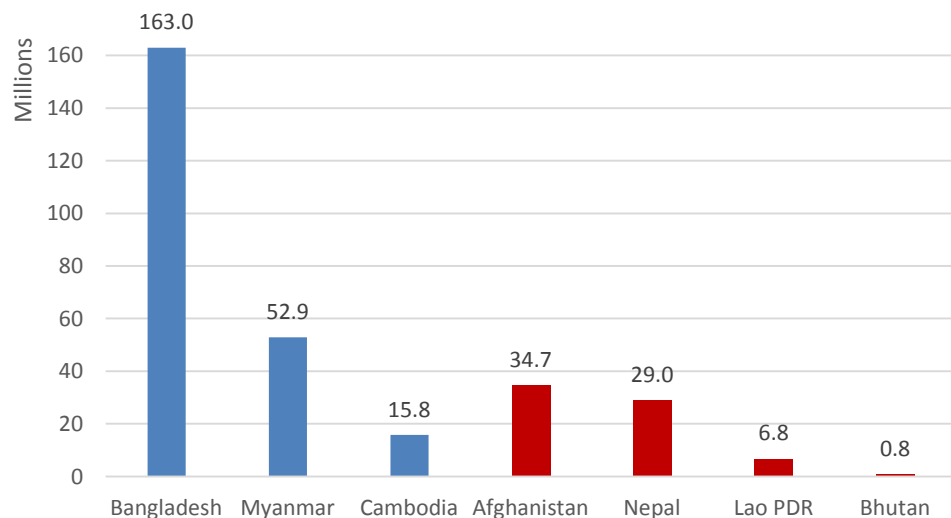
(Vienna Programme of Action)

**5 SIDS:** Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tuvalu, Vanuatu

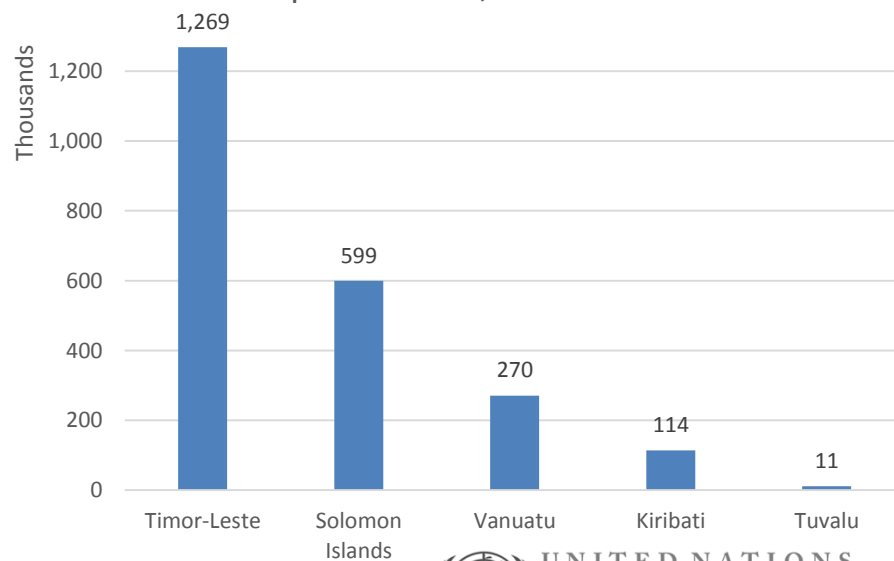
(SAMOA Pathway)

**3 Littoral:** Bangladesh, Cambodia, Myanmar

Population size, million



Population size, thousands



# Various indicators

	GDP growth (%)	Manufacturing, VA (% GDP)	Agriculture, VA (% GDP)	Gross capital form. (% GDP)	Doing business Index (Rank of 190)	Net enroll. primary edu	Revenue, excluding grants (% GDP)	External debt stocks (% GNI)	Personal remittances, (\$millions)
Country	2017	2015	2015	2015	2017	2015	Average 2011-2015	latest	2015
Afghanistan	3.0	12.0	21.7	19.8	183	85.1	10.3	12.6	301.2
Bangladesh	7.2	17.6	15.5	28.9	176	96.3	10.9	18.6	15,387.9
Bhutan	6.6	8.3	17.4	54.0	73	88.9	20.2	105.8	19.7
Cambodia	6.9	17.0	28.2	22.5	131	88.9	13.6	54.6	397.4
Kiribati	2.0	4.8	23.0	40.0	152	96.9	77.1	..	16.0
Lao PDR	6.9	9.4	27.4	32.8	139	92.7	16.9	99.6	93.0
Myanmar	7.5	20.7	26.7	..	170	94.5	5.5	..	386.8
Nepal	7.5	6.3	33.0	38.7	107	97.1	17.1	19.6	6,729.9
Solomon Is.	3.0	4.8	35.6	14.6	104	..	34.5	18.0	18.6
Timor-Leste	4.0	0.9	19.8	37.1	175	97.9	294.7	..	61.6
Tuvalu	3.0	1.1	21.7	..	..	98.9	..	..	4.1
Vanuatu	4.3	3.7	28.2	26.4	83	..	18.5	21.1	24.1
Average for AP LDCs	6.9	13.0	24.0	33.5	-	94.2	-	47.0	-

# Graduation: 7 LDCs met the criteria in 2015

Country	GNI per capita (average: 2011-13)	Human assets index	Economic vulnerability index	Have the criteria been met?	Year in which the Committee recommended country for graduation
Afghanistan	\$ 672	43	35		
Bangladesh	\$ 926	64	25		
Bhutan	\$ 2 277	68	40	✓	
Cambodia	\$ 852	67	38		
Kiribati	\$ 2 489	86	72	✓	
Lao PDR	\$ 1 232	61	36		
Myanmar	\$ 1 063	73	34		
Nepal	\$ 659	69	27	✓	
Solomon Islands	\$ 1 402	72	51	✓	
Timor-Leste	\$ 3 767	57	55	✓	
Tuvalu	\$ 5 788	89	54	✓	2012
Vanuatu	\$ 2 997	81	48	✓	2015
<b>Graduation thresholds</b>	≥ \$ 1 242	≥ 66	≤ 32		

Source: UN DESA

Percentages give distance to graduation for the Asia-Pacific LDC

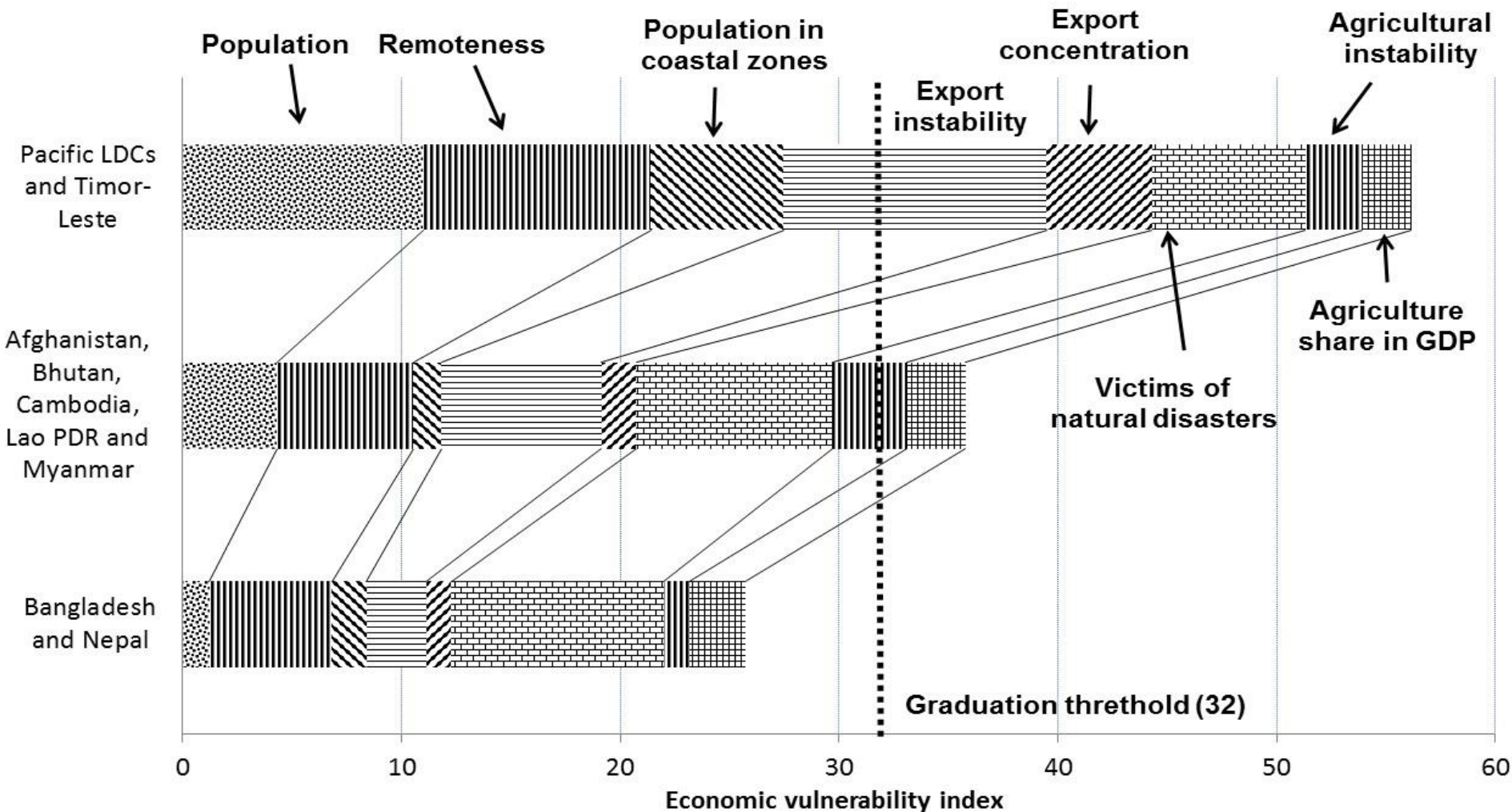
# Three more are expected to meet the criteria in 2018

Country	GNI per capita (estimated)	Human assets index	Economic vulnerability index	Have the criteria been met?	Year in which the Committee recommended country for graduation
Afghanistan	47%	34%	10%		
Bangladesh	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Bhutan	✓	✓	6%	✓	
Cambodia	13%	✓	7%		
Kiribati	✓	✓	52%	✓	
Lao PDR	✓	✓	5%	✓	
Myanmar	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Nepal	42%	✓	✓	✓	
Solomon Islands	✓	✓	25%	✓	
Timor-Leste	✓	✓	41%	✓	
Tuvalu	✓	✓	46%	✓	2012
Vanuatu	✓	✓	24%	✓	2015
<b>Graduation thresholds</b>	≥ \$ 1 242	≥ 66	≤ 32		

Source: UN ESCAP

Percentages give distance to graduation for the Asia-Pacific LDC

# High EVI: suggests the need for a framework that goes beyond current graduation transition arrangements



Source: UN ESCAP



# Key observations

- LDC graduation is “A Milestone, Not the Winning-Post”
- Asia-Pacific LDCs are advancing towards graduation
- Yet, they remain vulnerable to major natural disasters and global economic shocks
  - Only Nepal and Bangladesh among AP LDCs have met the EVI threshold
  - Graduation has already been delayed by natural disasters – Maldives, Samoa, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. Some LLDCs are also quite vulnerable.
- AP LDCs must graduate from current dependence on resource-based production and low-wage labour intensive exports



# ESCAP's work on IPoA and LDCs

- Technical support to LDCs to mainstream the 2030 Agenda in plans and budgets
- Technical assistance and capacity building workshops on means of implementation: data, financing, development, modelling, trade, statistics etc
- Support for regional follow up and review (e.g. Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development)
- Studies on key issues such as the challenging and consequences of LDC graduation (e.g. Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report)





# ESCAP's work on IPoA and LDCs

## Strengthening capacities in LDCs

### **National workshops:**

- Adaptation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (in 5 LDCs, 2016)
- Investing in infrastructure for an inclusive and sustainable future (in 4 LDCs, 2017)
- Trade-related issues on SDGs and LDC Graduation (2 LDCs in 2017)

### **Regional workshops:**

- Adaptation of the 2030 Agenda and the IPoA at the national level for LDCs (2016)
- SDGs modelling for LDCs (2016, 2017)
- Strengthening development of the LDCs to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda (2017)
- Formulating national policies & strategies in preparation for graduation (2017)
- Medium-Term Expenditure Planning for National Sustainable Development in PSIDS (2017)
- Trade-related issues on SDGs and LDC Graduation (Bangkok) 2 workshops in Bangkok
- Building Innovation and technological capacities of LDCs (2017 with WIPO)



# ESCAP's work on IPoA and LDCs

## Servicing intergovernmental and expert bodies / regional consensus building

- Regional Implementation of the IPoA (Thailand, December 2017)
- Special Body on LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS (Thailand, May 2016 and May 2017)
- High-level exchanges on implementation of the SDGs in LDCs, LLDCs & SIDS (2016) and Infrastructure & sustainable development in LDCs, LLDCs & SIDS (2017)
- Capacity development workshop for the Government officials of Lao PDR in preparation for the Chairmanship of ASEAN (2016)
- Capacity Needs Assessment and Consultation Missions (e.g. Bhutan, Cambodia, Kiribati, Myanmar, Timor Leste and Vanuatu in 2017)
- Direct request from LDCs (Bhutan, Vanuatu) to assist in graduation process.



# ESCAP's work on IPoA and LDCs

## Publications and other technical material

- Countries with Special Needs Development Reports
- Working papers
- Other publications

## Current and future focus

- Sustaining peace and preventing conflict in Least Developed Countries
- DA on resource mobilization for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Focus: Bhutan, Cambodia and Vanuatu)
- SDG Modelling in Least Developed Countries
- Capacity building on challenges and opportunities of graduation, including designing appropriate transition strategies (PSIDS).
- Learning from the experience of Graduates
- Trade and Development regional workshop (Q1/18 with WTO)
- Regional workshop on multi-hazard early warning systems (Q1/2018) in PSIDS.



# Thank you

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