

Progress, gaps and challenges in poverty reduction

The case of Asia and the Pacific

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**Inter-agency Expert Group Meeting on Implementation of the Third
United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018-2027)**

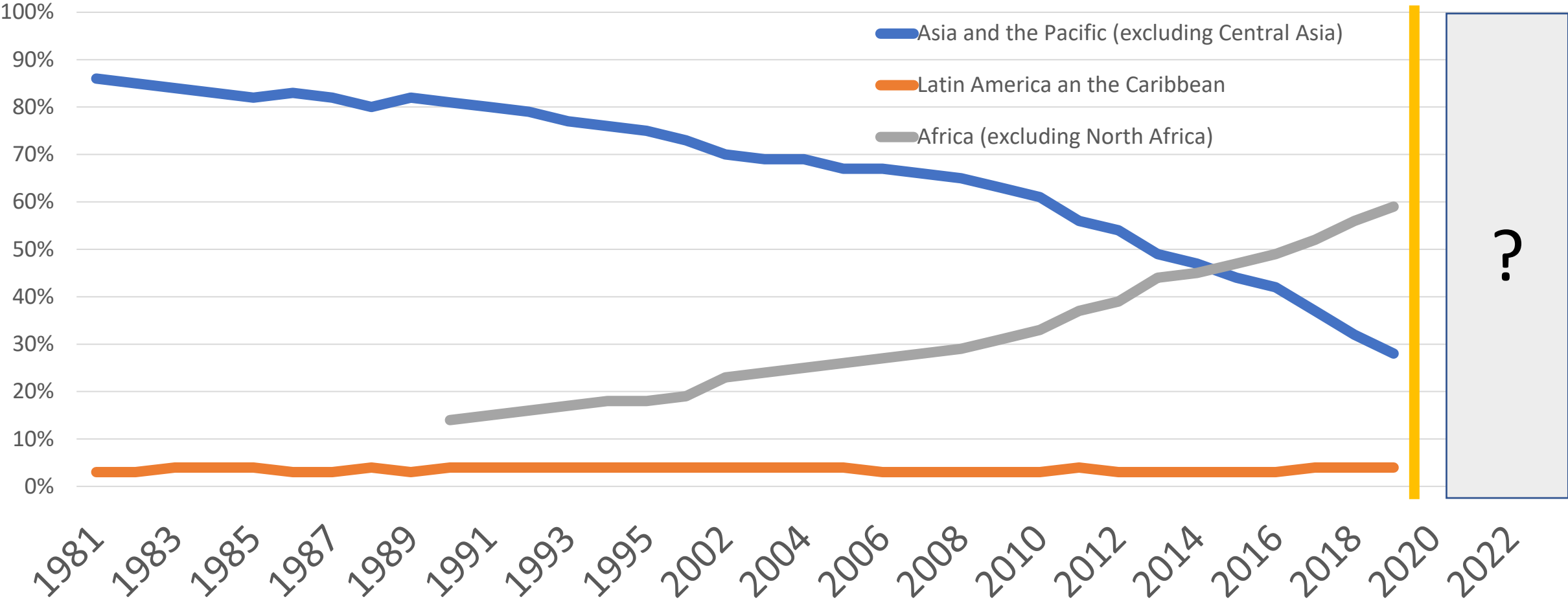
11 May 2023

Poverty

Monetary

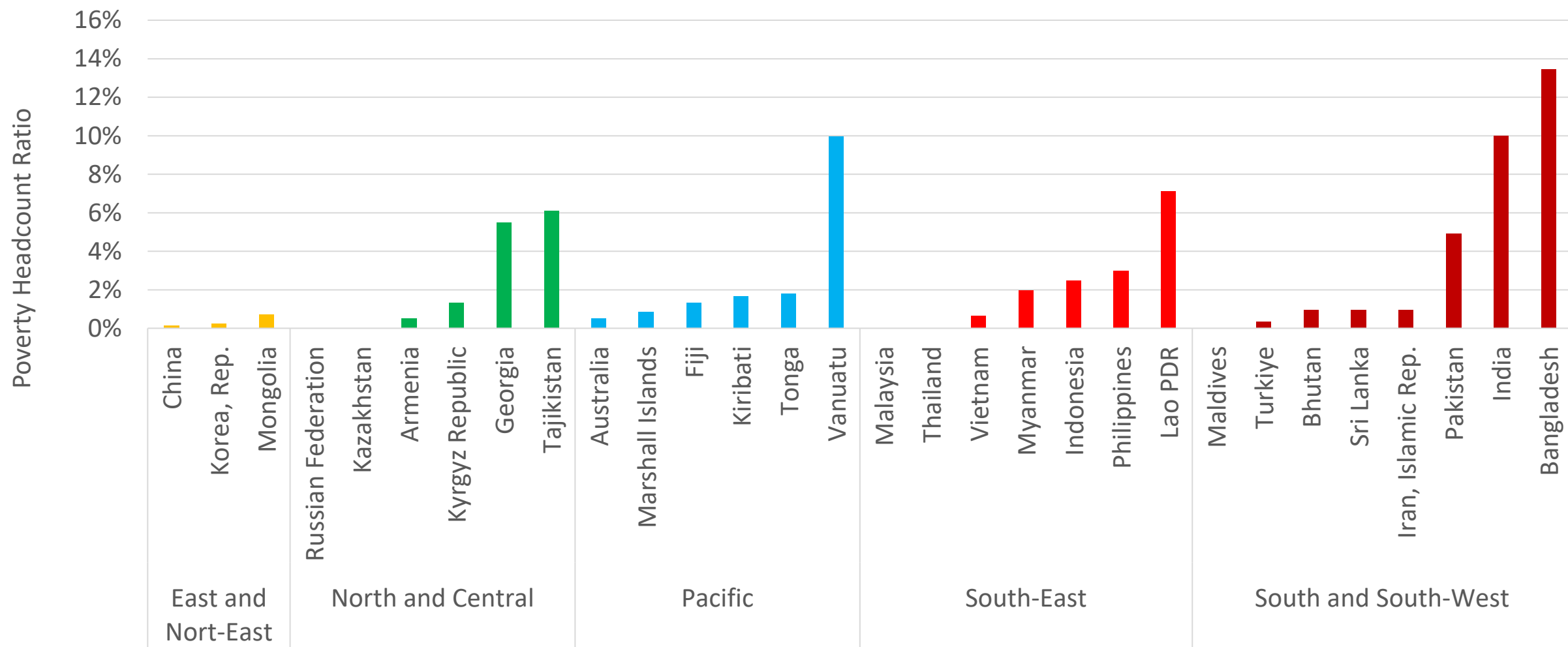
Non-Monetary

Share of world's poor in Asia-Pacific steadily decreased till Covid-19



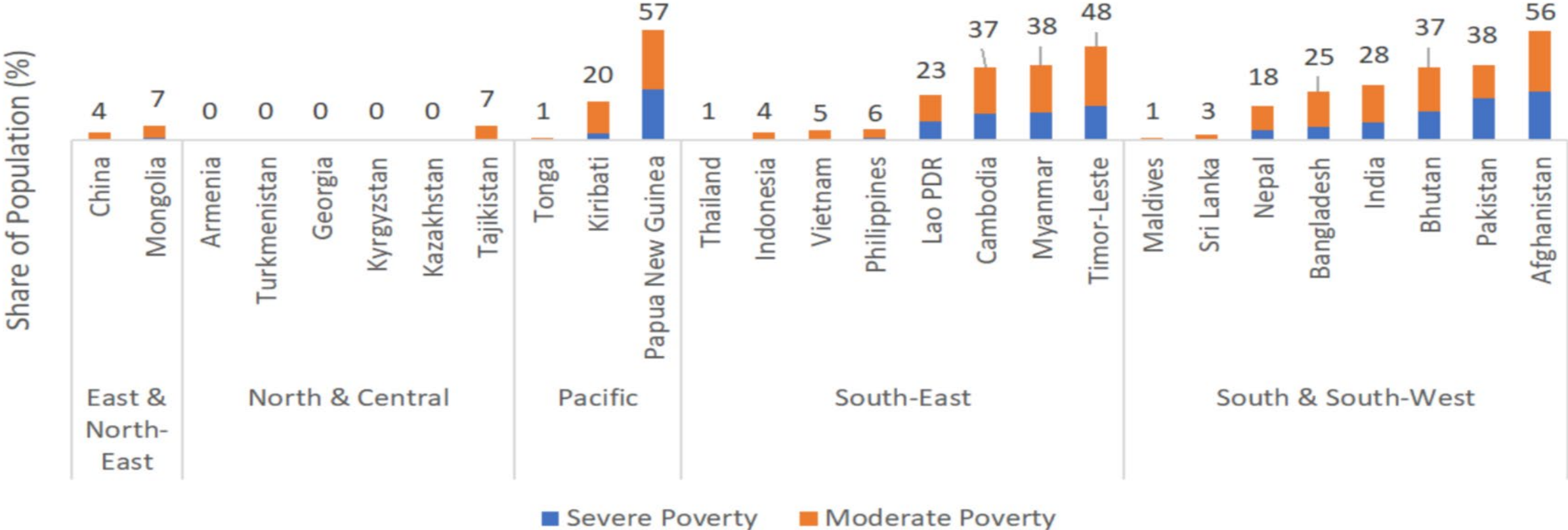
Data Source: World Bank PovCal. Accessed in April 2023.

South Asia is the main subregion where majority of the poor in the region live.



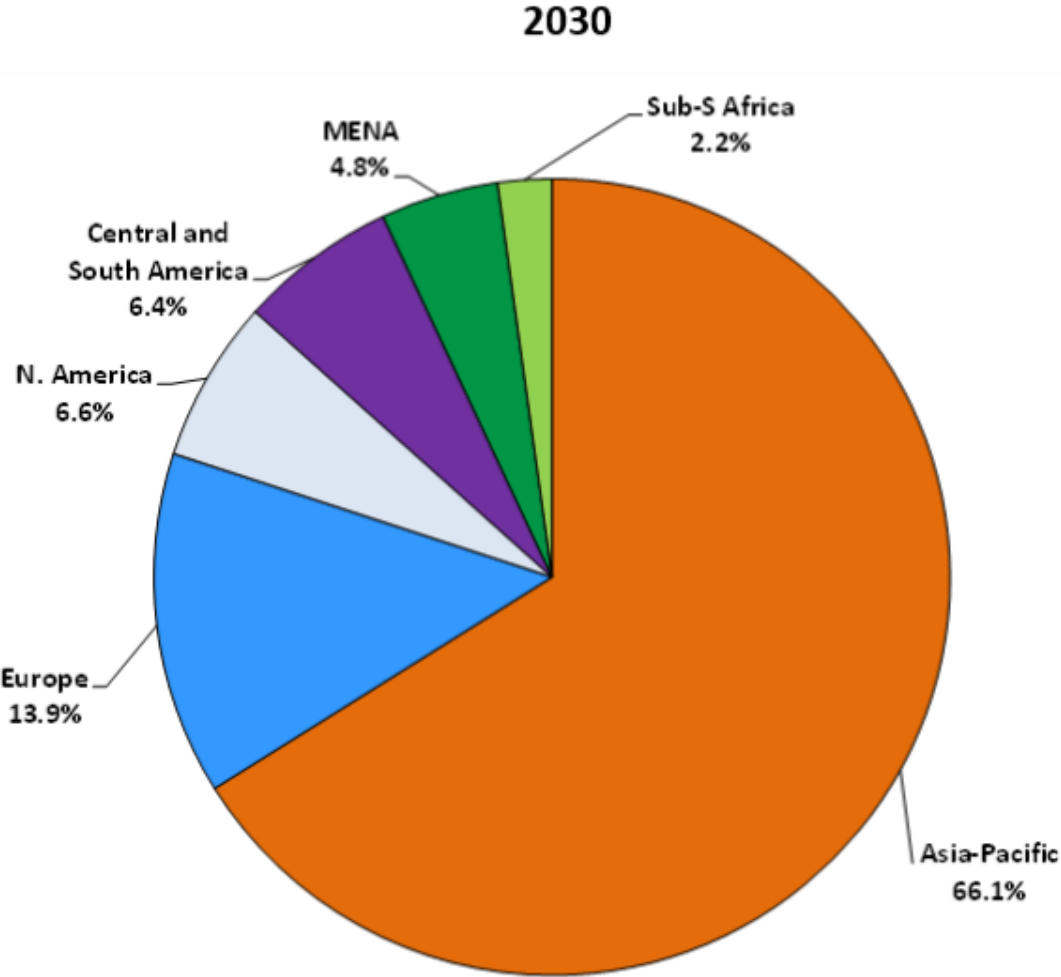
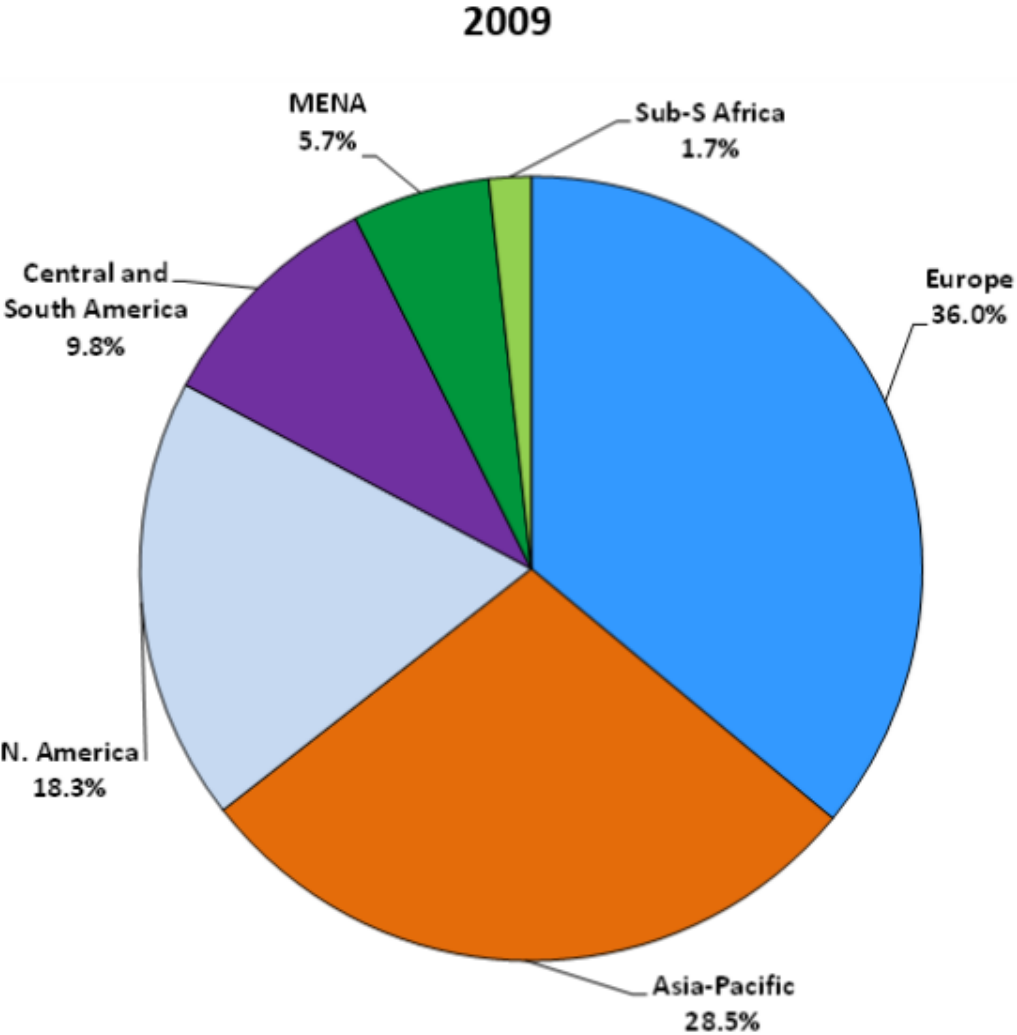
Data Source: World Bank PovCal. Accessed in April 2023.

Non-monetary poverty is significantly higher than monetary poverty in Asia and the Pacific.



Source: Global Multidimensional Poverty Index. Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative

Middle class is set to grow significantly in Asia and the Pacific

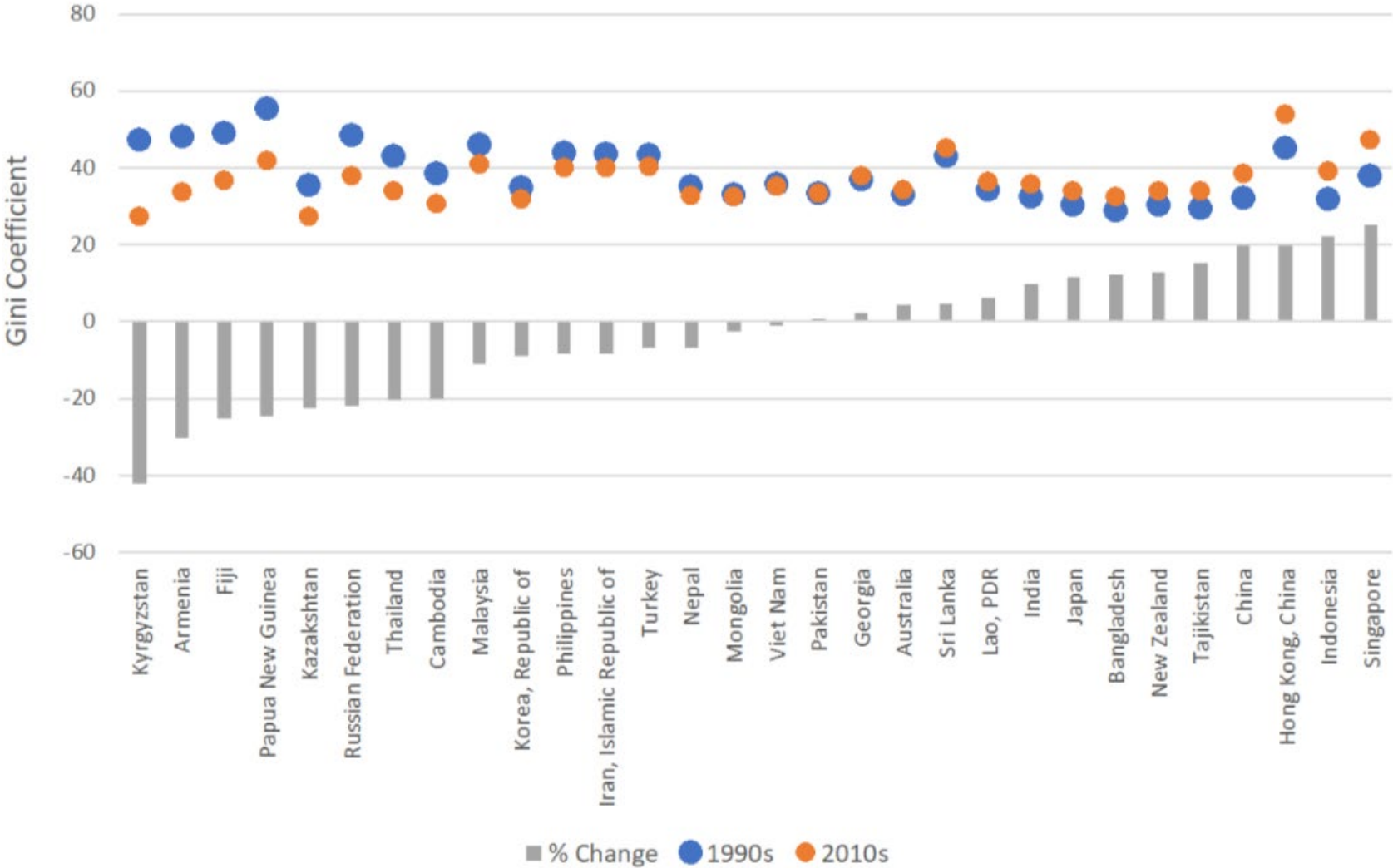


Source: The ASEAN post (2018) Southeast Asia's widening inequalities

Inequality

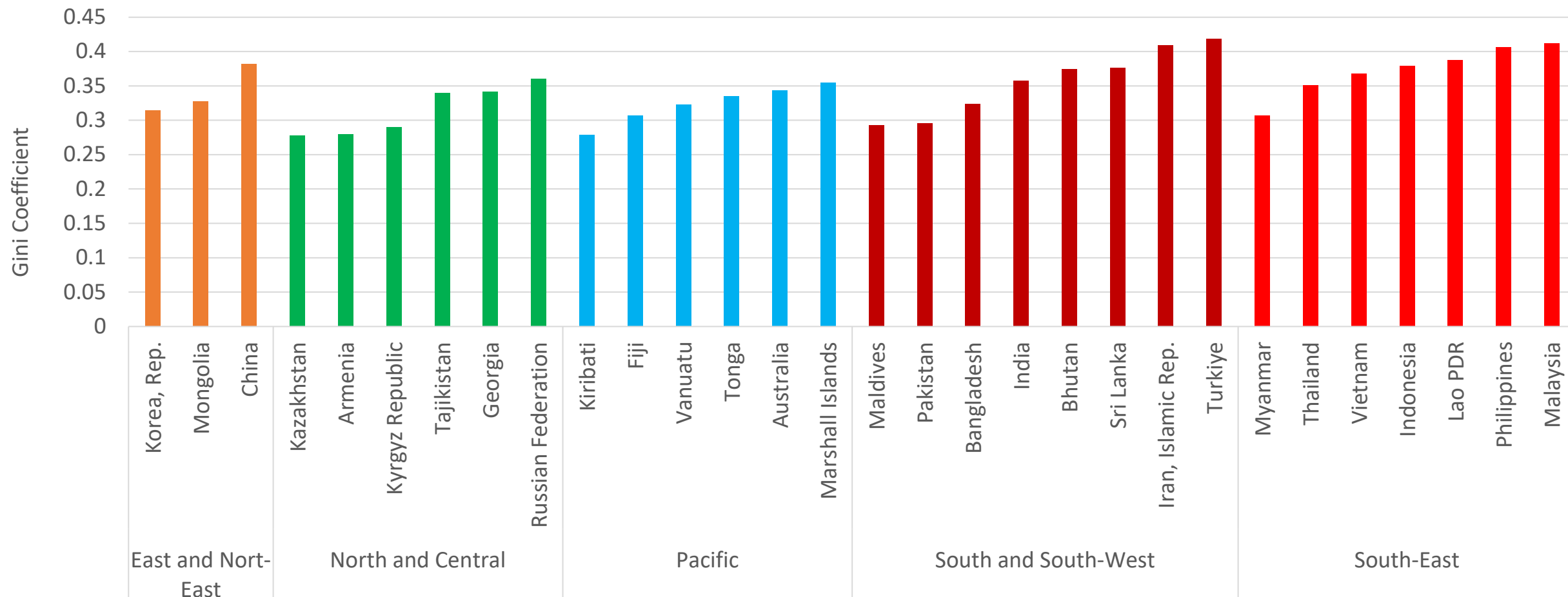
Outcome
Opportunity

A high share of vulnerability indicates a social protection deficit



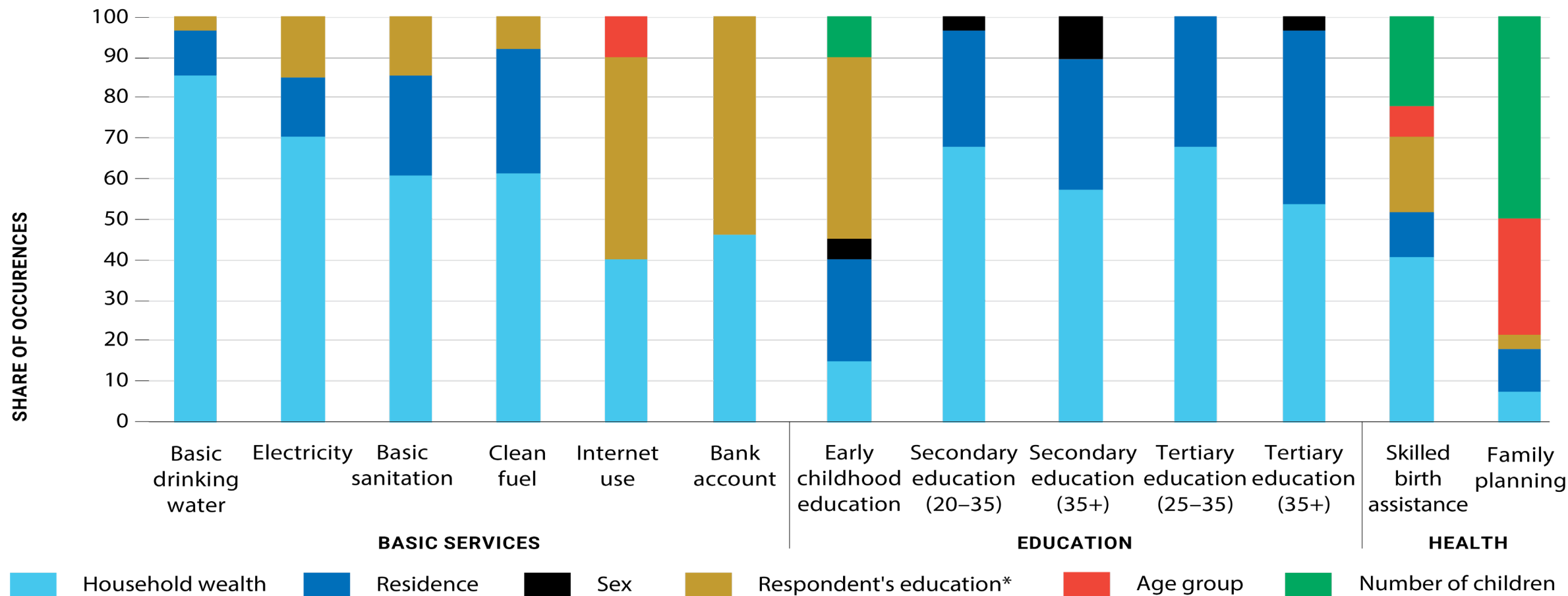
Source: ESCAP elaborations based on Gradín, C. (2020). *Changes in inequality within countries after 1990* (No. 2020/116). WIDER Working Paper.

Income inequality is high especially in middle-income countries in Asia-Pacific



Source: World Inequality Database. (2019). Available at <https://wid.world/>.

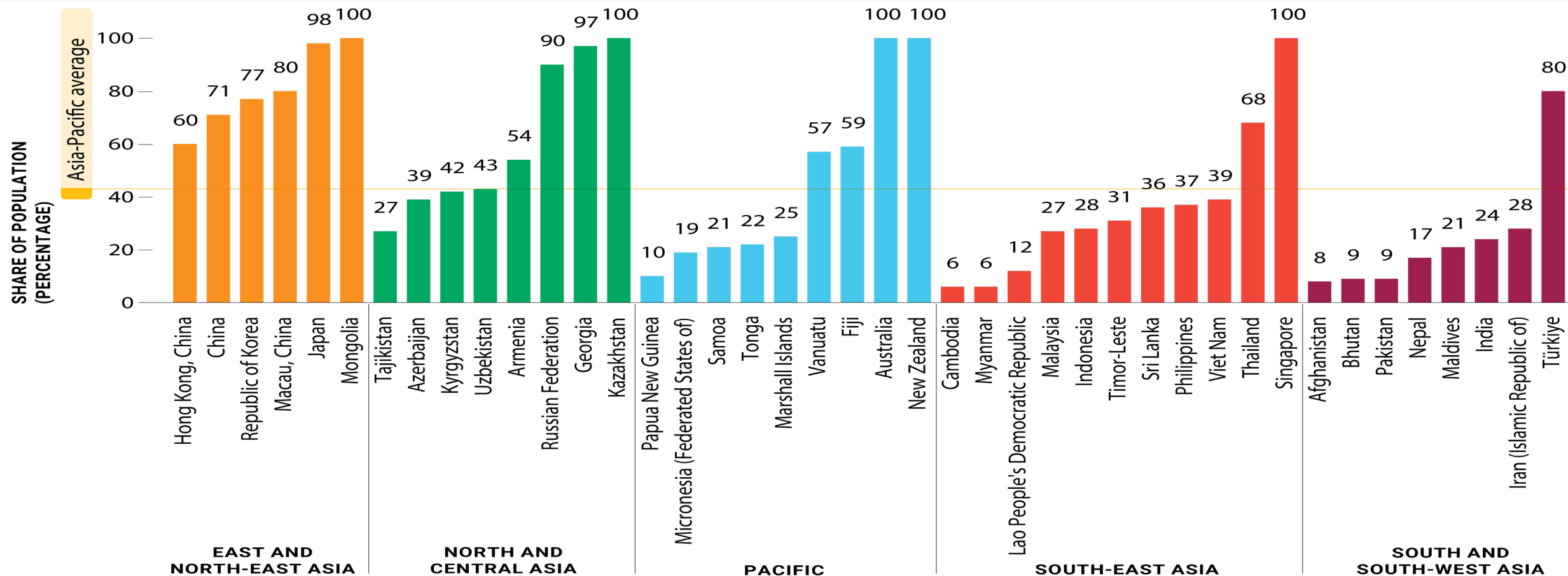
The most importance circumstances that reduce access to basic opportunities



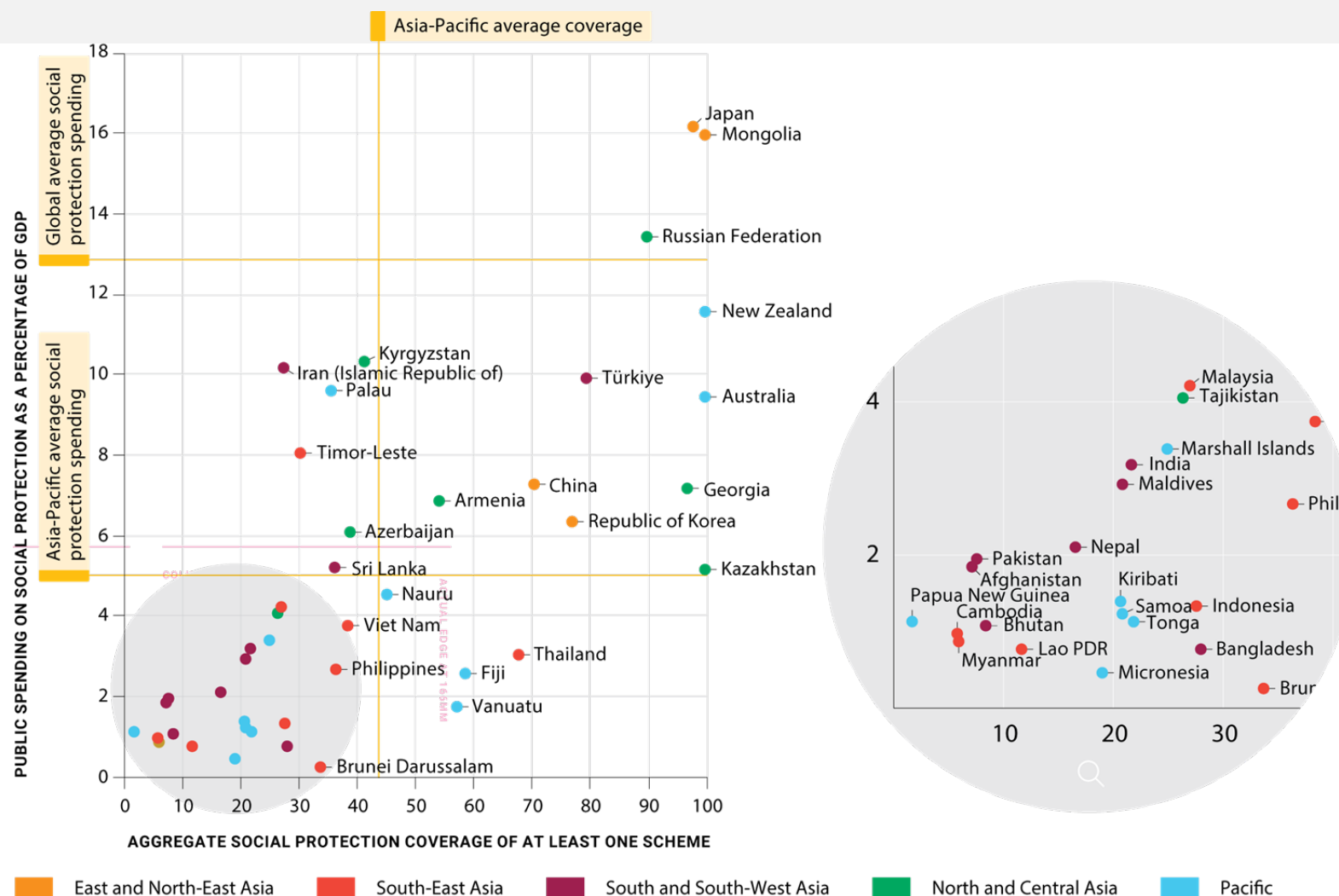
Source: ESCAP calculations based on LNOB analysis and using data from the latest DHS and MICS surveys for 28 countries in the Asia-Pacific region. For more information, visit <https://lnob.unescap.org>.

Social Protection

Less than half of Asia-Pacific's population is covered by at least one social protection scheme

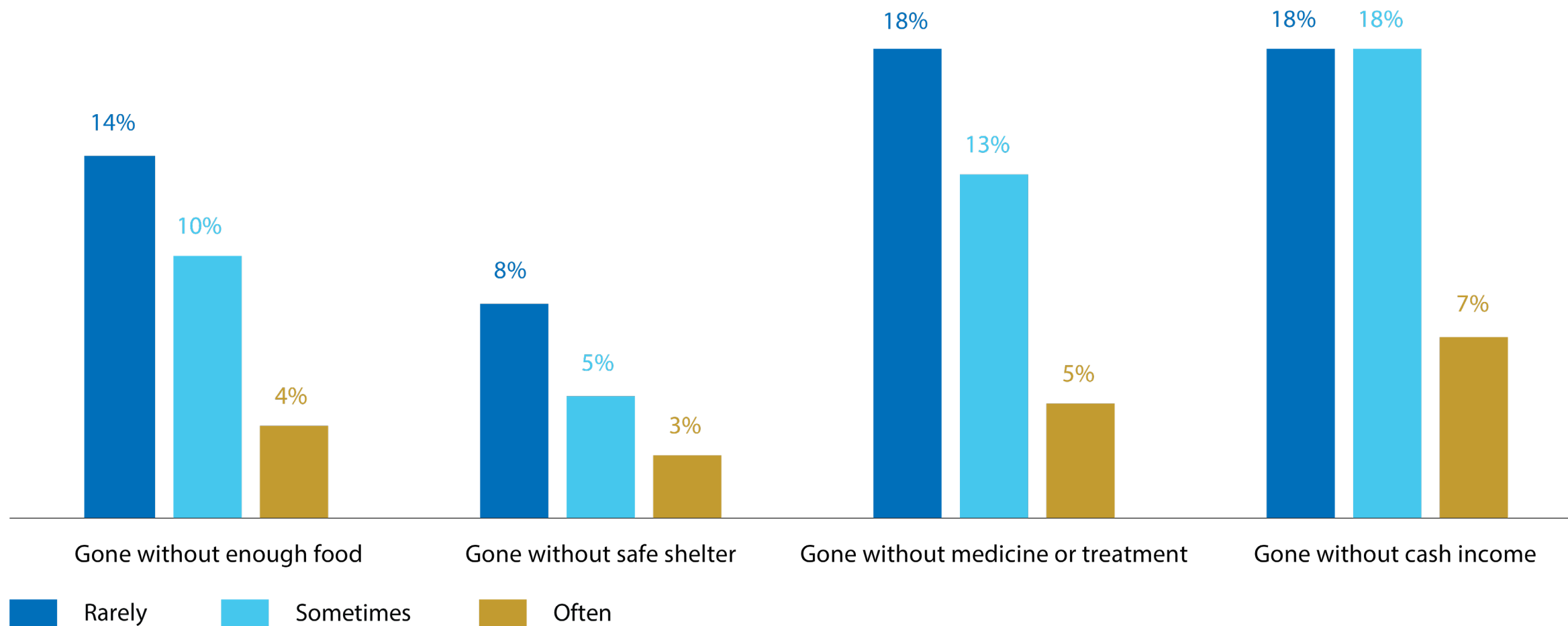


Lower levels of investment often lead to lower levels of coverage

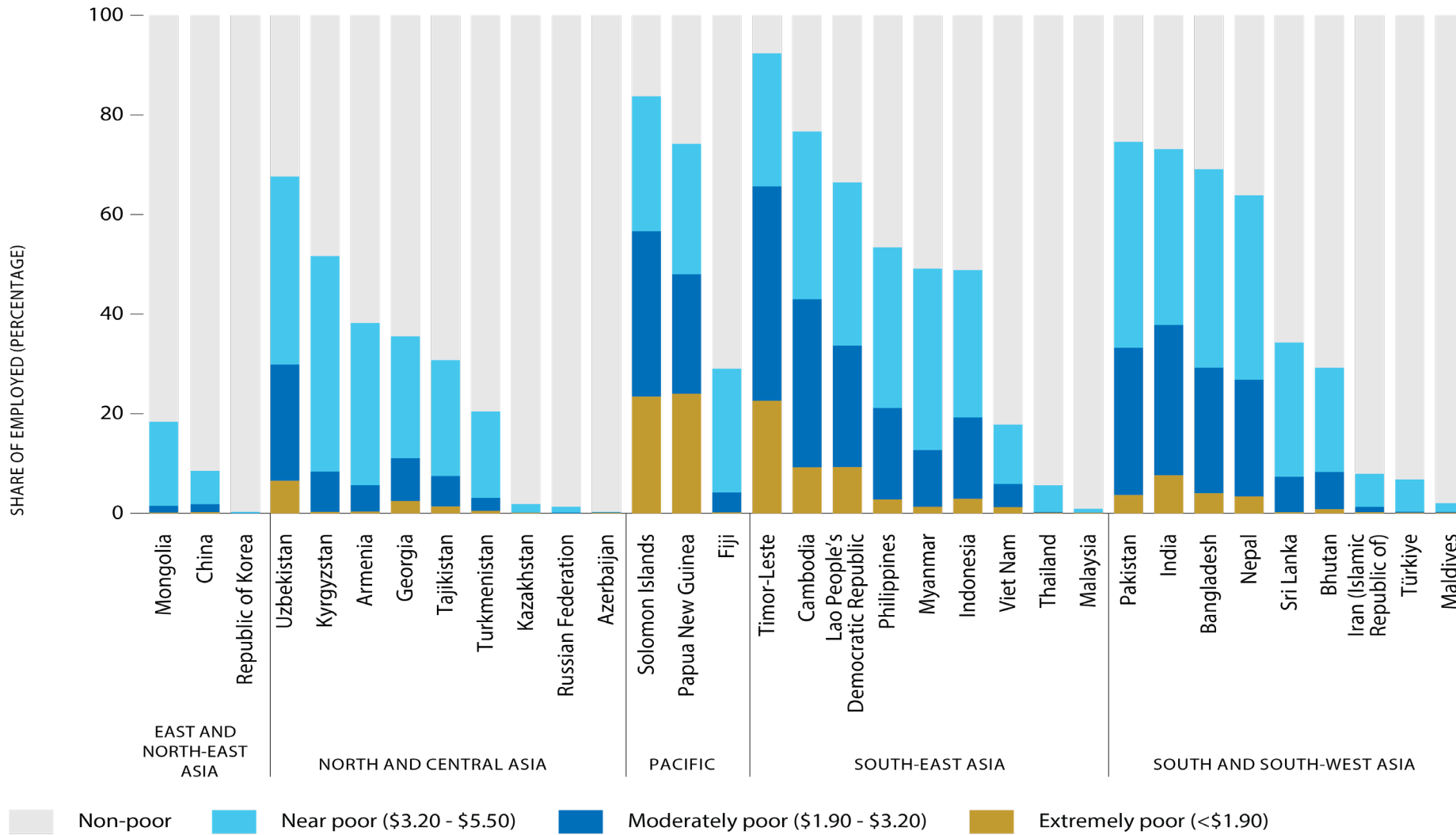


Source: United Nations ESCAP. (2022). *The Workforce We Need: Social Outlook for Asia and the Pacific*. Bangkok

Low social protection coverage can heighten vulnerability

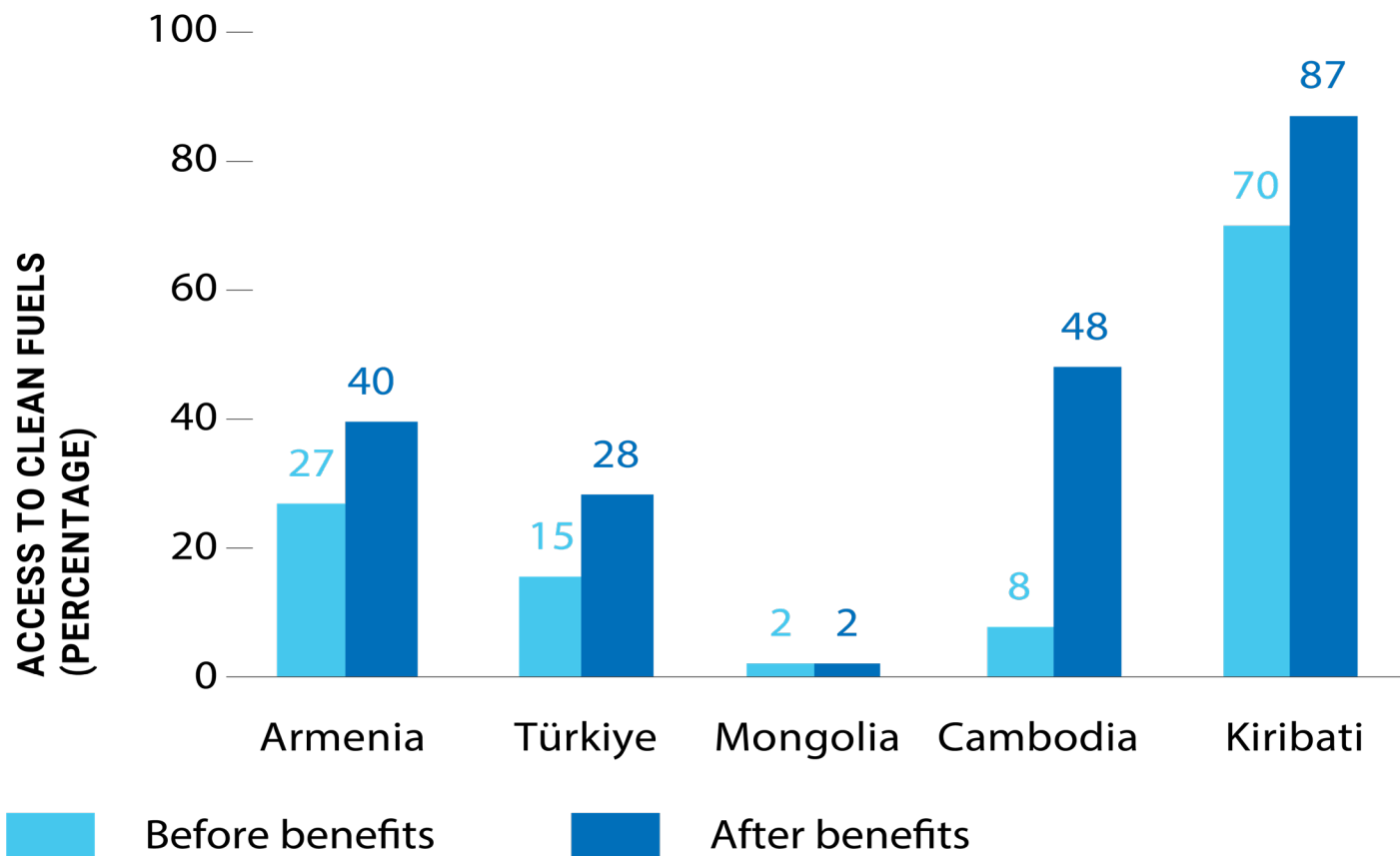


Working poverty is prevalent throughout the Asia-Pacific region



Source: ILO (2022), ILOSTAT. Available at www.ilo.org (accessed on 17 March 2022).

Social protection can help boost access to opportunities

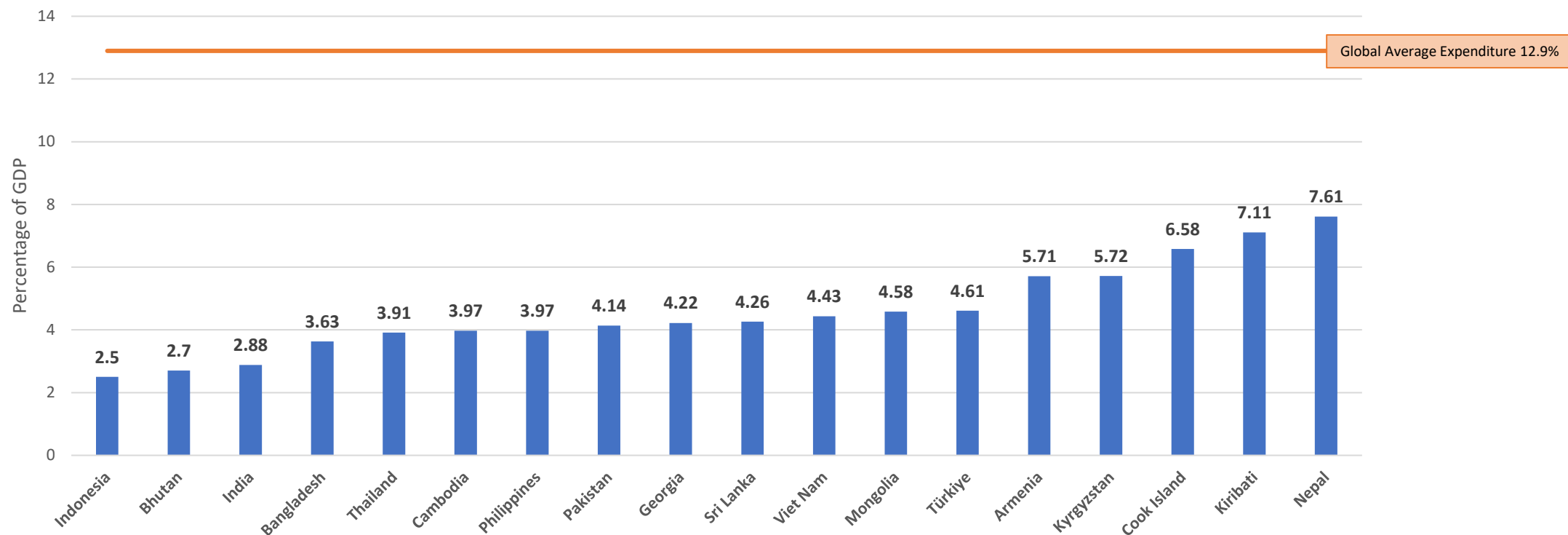


- **Universal Child Benefit** Scheme with a benefit amount of **4% GDP** per capita in monthly frequency
- All households with children receive the benefits
- Access to clean fuels by furthest behind households increase in all countries except for Mongolia where urban-rural divide dictates access.

Source: ESCAP elaborations based on selected HIES (2018-2020).

With a combination of universal schemes, halving national poverty is within reach

Cost (% of GDP) of reducing national poverty by half, as measured by the National Poverty Line, using a combination of universal child, disability and old age benefit schemes in 18 countries in Asia-Pacific



Source: ESCAP elaboration using Social Protection Simulator available online at <https://spot.unescap.org>. Global average public social protection expenditure is from ILO (2022) World Social Protection Database.

Policy Recommendations

■ Embed universal social protection in national agendas and allocate more resources

- Foster shared vision on social protection and embed in national frameworks
- Engage stakeholders to identify solutions
- Generate political will to reprioritise existing public spending

■ Promote inclusive systems that uphold human rights

- Promote universal social protection floor through a blend of contributory and non-contributory schemes across the lifecycle

■ Strengthen social protection systems

- Promote stronger institutional policy coordination, administrative arrangements, data management and financing mechanisms to implement a shared vision to achieve the universal social protection floor

■ Capitalize on regional cooperation

- Asia-Pacific Action Plan to Strengthen Regional Cooperation on Social Protection identifies 12 measures for stronger social protection systems and represents a shared ambition and vision for social protection

Policy Recommendations

■ Formalize jobs and advance the decent work agenda

- Use policy instruments to progressively support the transition of the informal workers into formal and decent jobs

■ Reduce the skill deficits by expanding and improving the quantity and quality of training schemes

- Understand the needs and skill levels of participants
- Match trainings to local labour market situations through collaboration with the private sector

■ Invest in public employment programmes

- Use PEP to seek to smooth consumption and foster investment in human capital

■ Monitor and evaluate ALMPs regularly before scaling up

- Undertake quantitative impact evaluations at regular intervals to understand their impact
- Use impact evaluation results to inform changes to ALMPs as well as the scaling up of pilot programmes

ESCAP Support: Intergovernmental Platform



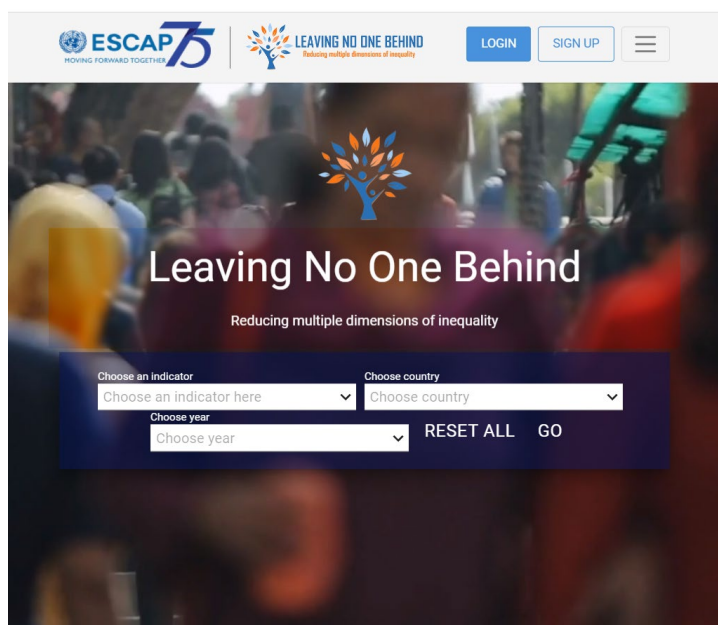
ACTION PLAN TO STRENGTHEN REGIONAL COOPERATION ON SOCIAL PROTECTION IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

»» **THE 12 NATIONAL ACTIONS**

1 Right to social protection	2 Adequate benefits	3 Responsive and inclusive systems
4 Effective implementation	5 Allocation of funds	6 Engagement of stakeholders
7 National coverage targets	8 Strategies to achieve targets	9 Data on social protection
10 Partnerships and peer learning	11 Development cooperation	12 Progress on implementation

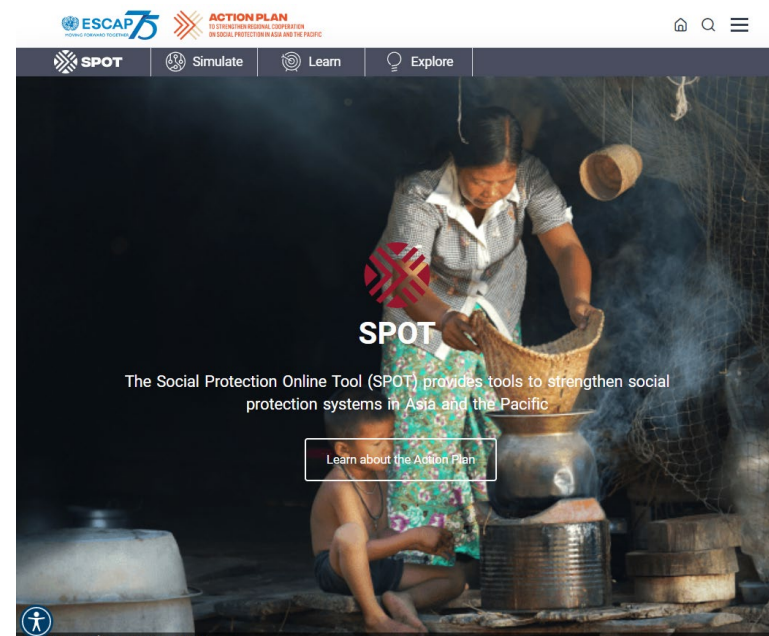
ESCAP Support: Interactive online policy tools and Capacity Development

LNOB Platform



<https://lnob.unescap.org/>

SPOT Platform



<https://spot.unescap.org/>

Social Outlook Platform

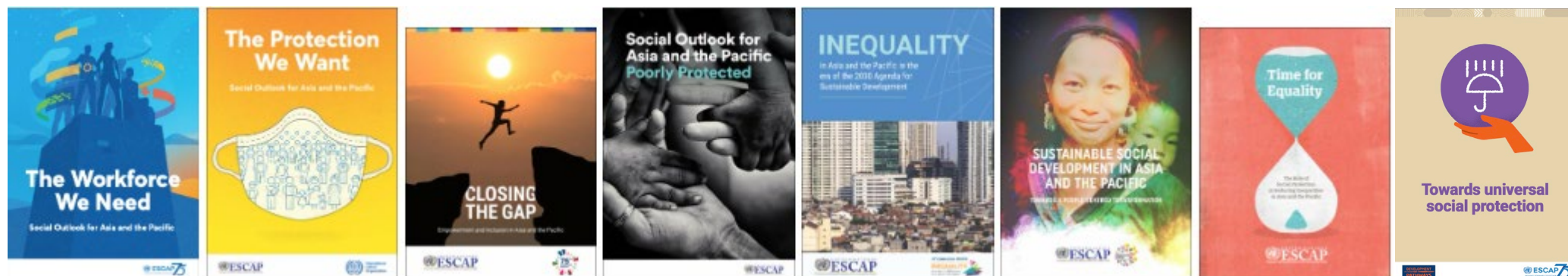


Inclusive sustainable development depends on a productive, healthy and protected workforce. But what is the situation of the 2.1 billion women and men who make up the working age population in Asia and the Pacific? How can they be equipped to face the mega trends of ageing societies, widening inequalities, climate change and digitalization? What can be done to make them resilient to disruptive change and more competitive in a globalized world?

The latest edition of the **Social Outlook 2022: The Workforce We Need** provides a blueprint on how we can better support the region's workforce by improving access to decent jobs, realize universal health coverage and extend social protection to all. It provides concrete recommendations on how to achieve the workforce we need to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific.

<https://socialoutlook.unescap.org/>

ESCAP Support: Knowledge products



THANK YOU

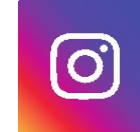
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