

4.6 Coverage, alignment and evidence confidence, the evidence

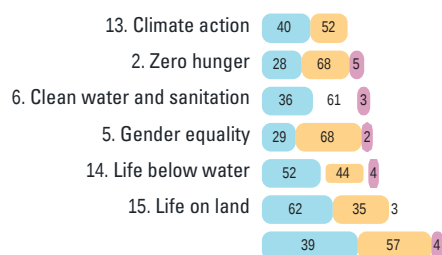
The global stock of evidence synthesis suffers from incomplete coverage of priority topics, a wide spectrum of quality (of the synthesis), and problems with recency (of the search for potential studies to be included in the synthesis). Analyses of two ‘one-stop shops’ for evidence synthesis illustrate the magnitude of the problem. One ‘shop’ focuses on all of the non-health Sustainable Development Goals, or SDGs (Social Systems Evidence), and the other focuses on all potential COVID-19 responses (COVID-END in evidence synthesis and the larger database from which the information is drawn).

SDG evidence, the evidence

Of the 4,131 SDG evidence syntheses defined as overviews of reviews, reviews of effects, and reviews addressing other questions included in Social Systems Evidence as of 12 August 2021:

- coverage as seen, the seven SDGs addressed by a relatively small number of evidence syntheses (263 or fewer) relative to the number of questions that can be asked in relation to each SDG (2 Zero hunger, 5 Gender inequality, 6 Clean water and sanitation, 7 Affordable and clean energy, 13 Climate action, 14 Life below water, and 15 Life on land)
- quality as seen, the seven SDGs addressed by a stock of evidence syntheses in which at least half are of low quality (6 Clean water and sanitation, 7 Affordable and clean energy, 9 Industry, innovation and infrastructure, 12 Responsible consumption and production, 13 Climate action, 14 Life below water, and 15 Life on land)
- all SDGs have a median year of last search that is five or six years ago (2016 or 2017)
- only been one in 10 (12%) and one in five (21%) evidence syntheses about most SDGs included at least one study from a low- and middle-income country, with an even lower percentage (3%) for one SDG (9 Industry, innovation and infrastructure).

The number and quality of evidence syntheses are presented by SDG in the bar chart below.



Keep in mind the following: this bar chart:

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