

Objectives	Monitoring progress in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and universal health coverage (UHC) is a priority in the Western Pacific Region. This country profile aims to assist the country-led SDG and UHC monitoring process. Specifically, it will explore the current SDG/UHC situation, guide and direct discussion on possible areas (and population groups) where performance may be low, and foster policy dialogues.
Country statistics	<p>Population¹ 2016 21 503</p> <p>GDP per capita (current US\$)² 2016 13 626.01</p> <p>Income level² 2017 High income</p> <p>Income Gini coefficient³ N/A</p> <p>0 (equality) – 100 (inequality)</p>
Health system	<p>Total health expenditure as % of GDP⁴ 2014 9.0%</p> <p>Total health expenditure per capita (current US\$)⁴ 2014 1150.30</p> <p>General government health expenditure as % of total health expenditure⁴ 2014 72.4%</p> <p>Life expectancy at birth (in years)⁵ N/A</p>

Key Messages

Overall progress towards universal health coverage (UHC)

- The *Ministry of Health Strategic Plan 2014–2018* outlines the strategic priorities; to provide accessible and high quality patient-centred hospital services; provide accessible and high quality primary and preventive services; ensure effective partnerships are developed and maintained; value the people and support their growth and development; and ensure that the administrative and support services are accountable and sustainable.
- Compared to other countries in the Western Pacific Region, Palau has high coverage of essential services.
- Palau has relatively low out-of-pocket spending, which suggests a low risk of financial hardship.
- Based on the UHC index, challenges remain in the prevention and control of infectious and noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), specifically tuberculosis (TB) detection and treatment and the prevalence of raised blood pressure.

Several SDG 3 indicators are close to target

- Compared to other countries in the Region for SDG 3 indicators, Palau fared relatively well in reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health (RMNCH).
- Several SDG indicators are not reported.
- The equity dimension is not known either because the country may not have disaggregated data or because data have not been reported to WHO.

UHC Overall Progress		
UHC index⁶ – coverage of essential health services (SDG 3.8.1) 0–100 scale (Target: 100)		
69 <i>Palau</i>	40 <i>Region (lowest)</i>	≥ 80 <i>Region (highest)</i>
Financial risk protection:⁷ proportion of population with out-of-pocket health spending exceeding 25% of household's budget or income (SDG 3.8.2)		
N/A <i>Palau</i>	0.0% <i>Region (lowest)</i>	5.0% <i>Region (highest)</i>
Performance scorecard of 13 UHC index – coverage of essential health services indicators, in relation to a target of 100%		
4 tracer indicators > 80	2 tracer indicators 60–80	5 tracer indicators < 60
<i>Reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health</i>		
2	1	1
<i>Infectious diseases</i>		
1	0	2
<i>Noncommunicable diseases</i>		
0	1	2
<i>Service capacity and access</i>		
1	0	0

Note: Refer to page 2

SDG Overall Progress		
Performance scorecard of 23 SDG health indicators , in relation to a target of 100% (as relative proximity to SDG targets)		
7 indicators > 70%	0 indicators 40–70%	1 indicator < 40%
<i>Reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health</i>		
6	0	0
<i>Infectious diseases</i>		
1	0	0
<i>Noncommunicable diseases</i>		
0	0	0
<i>Urban and environmental health</i>		
0	0	1
<i>Health system resources and capacity</i>		
0	0	0

Note: Refer to page 3

Universal Health Coverage

UHC, which is a specific target under SDG 3, is the platform that brings health and development efforts together. UHC ensures that all people and communities receive the quality services they need, and are protected from health threats, without suffering financial hardship. It is measured by a country's **health service coverage and financial protection**.

Health service coverage is measured by the UHC index that is a summary measure that combines 16 tracer categories. It has four main categories, namely: (1) RMNCH; (2) infectious diseases; (3) NCDs; and (4) service capacity and access.

How is country performance on UHC indicators assessed?

Country performance on UHC was assessed based on the distribution of indicator values across Western Pacific Region countries. The overall UHC index coverage of essential health services available for 27 Western Pacific Region countries was used to determine the threshold values. The main threshold was set at the mean (close to 60 points). The other thresholds were set at equal intervals to 20 points (mean value minus lowest value).

The **UHC performance scorecard** colour code for the Western Pacific Region:

> 80% Average of 27 Western Pacific Region countries	60–80% Average of 27 Western Pacific Region countries	< 60% Average of 27 Western Pacific Region countries
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Reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health

77



Infectious diseases

59



Noncommunicable diseases

53



Service capacity and access

96



What tracer indicators are included in the UHC index⁶ – coverage of essential health services?

Tracer category	Indicator value	Indicator rescaled score, when applicable. Target: 100%
Reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health ⁸	Family planning demand satisfied with modern methods (%), 2015	59 ^c [Progress bar] 59
	Antenatal care, 4+ visits (%), 2010	81 [Progress bar] 81
	Child immunization 3 doses of diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis (DTP3) vaccine (%), 2015	90 [Progress bar] 90
	Care-seeking behaviour for child pneumonia (%), 2015	79 ^c [Progress bar] 79
Infectious diseases ⁹	Tuberculosis detection and treatment (%), 2015	50 [Progress bar] 50
	HIV antiretroviral treatment (%), 2015	41 ^c [Progress bar] 41
	Access to improved sanitation (%), 2015	100 [Progress bar] 100
Noncommunicable diseases ¹⁰	Prevalence of non-raised blood pressure (%), 2015	77 [Progress bar] 54
	Mean fasting plasma glucose (mmol/L), 2008	6.3 [Progress bar] 40
	Tobacco non-use (%), 2015	84 [Progress bar] 68

Service capacity and access ¹¹	Value	Reference point
Hospital beds per 1000 population, 2015	18.6 ^c	Reference point: 18 ^a
Health worker density (per 1000 population), 2010–2015	15.9 ^b	Reference point: 10.5 ^a
International Health Regulations compliance (%), 2015	91	

a Minimum rates observed in countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

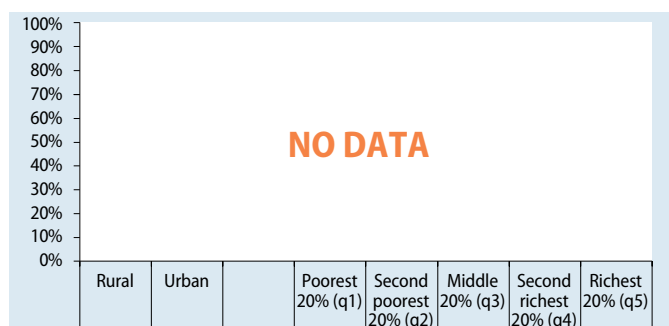
b 1.4 physicians per 1000 pop (2010); 4.9 psychiatrists per 100 000 pop (2011); 12.5 surgeons per 100 000 pop (2015)

c No estimate; regional or imputed value used as placeholder

What does financial protection measure?

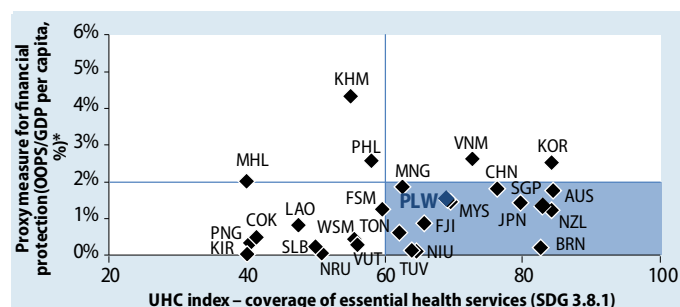
Financial protection (SDG 3.8.2)⁷ measures direct health payments families incur, typically in the last month, in relation to a household's budget or income. In general, a higher value means increased financial hardship. The indicator summarizes the percentage of the population in a country for which health spending exceeds 25% of their household's budget.

How does financial risk protection vary across population groups in Palau?



How does Palau compare to other countries in the Region?

Relationship between UHC coverage of essential health services and financial risk protection in Western Pacific Region countries



Legend: AUS = Australia, BRN = Brunei Darussalam, KHM = Cambodia, CHN = China, COK = Cook Islands, FJI = Fiji, JPN = Japan, KIR = Kiribati, LAO = Lao People's Democratic Republic, MYS = Malaysia, MHL = Marshall Islands, FSM = Micronesia, (Federated States of), MNG = Mongolia, NRU = Nauru, NZL = New Zealand, NIU = Niue, PLW = Palau, PNG = Papua New Guinea, PHL = Philippines, KOR = Republic of Korea, WSM = Samoa, SGP = Singapore, SLB = Solomon Islands, TON = Tonga, TUV = Tuvalu, VUT = Vanuatu, VNM = Viet Nam

* OOPS: out-of-pocket expenditure per capita in US\$, 2013; GDP: gross domestic product in current US\$ per capita, 2013. This indicator does not necessarily measure financial risk protection and is not a replacement for the UHC financial risk protection indicator (3.8.2). The 2% threshold is not a target. It was arbitrarily selected to map countries in a way that allows cross-country comparison and a baseline position for future trend analysis.

Quadrant	Interpretation
North-west	Limited coverage of essential health services, and relatively high risk of financial hardship
South-west	Limited coverage of essential health services, and relatively low risk of financial hardship; although this may indicate limited access to health services
North-east	Relatively high coverage of essential health services, and relatively high risk of financial hardship
South-east	Relatively high coverage of essential health services, and relatively low risk of financial hardship

Sustainable Development Goals

World leaders committed to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 in an effort to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all. SDG 3 covers the unfinished Millennium Development Goal (MDG) agenda and newer challenges such as noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), health security, tobacco and injuries.

How is country performance on the SDG indicators assessed?

There are two values displayed in each country profile: the indicator value and the rescaled value. The first corresponds to the actual value for a country at the baseline year, whereas the rescaled value shows the relative position of a country with respect to other countries in the Western Pacific Region.

The rescaled value measures the relative proximity to a target, i.e. explicit SDG targets or a best-performing country. Specific SDG targets (indicators shaded in grey) were used for the maternal mortality rate (70 per 100 000 live births), the neonatal mortality rate (12 per 1000 live births) and the under-5 mortality rate (25 per 1000 live births). A value of 100% means the indicator value is at the exact target value. The closer to the target the indicator value is, the higher the percentage.

The rescaled data should be interpreted in the following way: using the adolescent birth rate as an example, Palau has a value of 76%, meaning it has performed at 76% of the best-performing country.

For all SDG indicators, rescaled values range from 0 to 100, therefore three equal bands have been used.

The **SDG performance scorecard** colour code for the Western Pacific Region:

> 70% Proximity from the target	40–70% Proximity from the target	< 40% Proximity from the target
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How far is Palau from the SDG targets?

SDG	Indicator value	Indicator rescaled score to 0–100% Target: 100%
Reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health		
3.1.1	Maternal mortality ratio (per 100 000 live births) ¹²	
3.1.2	Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel (%) ¹³ 2015	100% ^e
3.2.1	Under-5 mortality rate (per 1000 live births) ¹⁴ 2016	100% ^d
3.2.2	Neonatal mortality rate (per 1000 live births) ¹⁴ 2016	100% ^d
3.3.4	Infants receiving three doses of hepatitis B vaccine (%) (proxy) ¹⁴ 2016	96% ^e
3.7.1	Proportion of married or in-union women of reproductive age who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods ¹⁵	
3.7.2	Adolescent birth rate (per 1000 women aged 15–19 years) ¹⁶ 2010	76% ^e
3.b.1	Diphtheria, tetanus toxoid and pertussis (DTP3) immunization coverage among 1-year-olds (%) ¹⁴ 2016	95% ^e
Infectious diseases		
3.3.1	New HIV infections among adults 15–49 years old (per 1000 uninfected population) ¹⁷	
3.3.2	TB incidence (per 100 000 population) ¹⁴ 2016	79% ^e
3.3.3	Malaria incidence (per 1000 population at risk) ¹⁴	

Noncommunicable diseases

3.4.1	Probability of dying from any of cardiovascular disease (CVD), cancer, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease (CRD) between age 30 and exact age 70 (%) ¹⁸	Regional Average: 17.1
3.4.2	Suicide mortality rate (per 100 000 population) ¹⁴	Regional Average: 10.8
3.5.2	Total alcohol per capita (≥ 15 years of age) consumption (in litres of pure alcohol), projected estimates ¹⁹	
3.a.1	Age-standardized prevalence of tobacco smoking among persons 15 years and older (%) – Female ²⁰	
3.a.1	Age-standardized prevalence of tobacco smoking among persons 15 years and older (%) – Male ²⁰	

Urban and environmental health

3.6.1	Road traffic mortality rate (per 100 000 population) ²¹ 2013	4.8	Regional Average: 17.3
3.9.1	Mortality rate attributed to household and ambient air pollution (per 100 000 population) ²²		
3.9.2	Mortality rate attributed to exposure to unsafe water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services (per 100 000 population) ²³		
3.9.3	Mortality rate attributed to unintentional poisoning (per 100 000 population) ¹⁸		

Health system resources and capacity

3.b.2	Total net official development assistance to medical research and basic health per capita (constant 2014 US\$), by recipient country ²⁴ 2014	1.42	
3.c.1	Skilled health professionals density (per 10 000 population) ²⁵ 2010	72.8	Regional Average: 42.0
3.d.1	Average of 13 International Health Regulations (2005) core capacity scores ¹⁴ 2016	92.0	86% ^e

^d Rescaled based on existing SDG targets.

^e Rescaled based on targets identified in the Region.

Are population groups in Palau being left behind?²⁶

NO DATA

Poorest 20%	Richest 20%	Diff	Rural	Urban	Diff
SDG 3.1.2 Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel (%)					
SDG 3.2.1 Under-5 mortality rate (per 1000 live births)					
SDG 3.2.2 Neonatal mortality rate (per 1000 live births)					
SDG 3.7.1 Proportion of married or in-union women of reproductive age who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods					
SDG 3.7.2 Adolescent birth rate (per 1000 women aged 15–19 years)					
SDG 3.b.1 Diphtheria, tetanus toxoid and pertussis (DTP3) immunization coverage among 1-year-olds (%)					

- Minor inequalities (< 10%)
- Moderate inequalities (10–50%)
- Major inequalities (> 50%)

- 1 World population prospects: the 2017 revision, DVD edition. New York (NY): United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division; 2017.
- 2 World Development Indicators. Washington (DC): World Bank (<http://wdi.worldbank.org>, accessed 26 September 2017).
- 3 World Development Indicators 2013. Washington (DC): World Bank (<http://data.worldbank.org>, accessed October 2013).
- 4 Global health expenditure database [online database]. Geneva: World Health Organization (<http://apps.who.int/nha/database/Select/Indicators/en>, accessed 26 September 2017).
- 5 WHO life expectancy (http://www.who.int/gho/mortality_burden_disease/life_tables/en/).
- 6 SDG indicator 3.8.1 and its components have been computed by WHO using publically available data, including existing WHO/UN agency estimates, country data reported to WHO, and published results from household surveys available in UHC Data Portal (<http://apps.who.int/gho/cabinet/uhc.jsp>) and in the 2017 Global Monitoring Report on Tracking Universal Health Coverage (http://www.who.int/healthinfo/universal_health_coverage/report/2017_global_monitoring_report.pdf?ua=1).
- 7 Given the limited number of countries for which SDG indicator 3.8.2 on financial risk protection is available, an alternative proxy measure was used in some analyses to be able to assess financial hardship in a greater number of countries. The proposed measure was out-of-pocket health expenditure per capita as a percentage of GDP per capita. This measure showed a moderate correlation with SDG indicator 3.8.2. In addition, this proxy indicator does not necessarily measure financial risk protection and is not a replacement for the UHC financial risk protection indicator (3.8.2).
- 8 Reproductive maternal, newborn and child health measures the extent to which those in need for family planning, pregnancy and delivery care, child immunization and treatment receive the care they need.
- 9 Infectious diseases measures: (i) the extent to which those in need for TB and HIV treatment and malaria prevention receive the care and services they need; and (ii) access to improved sanitation.
- 10 Noncommunicable diseases measures the current status of NCD risk factors in the population, including blood pressure, glucose level and tobacco consumption, as a proxy indicator of success of both prevention efforts and screening and treatment programmes.
- 11 Service capacity and access measures general features of service capacity and access to care within a health system. Measures include hospital beds and health professionals per capita, and a measure of health security for responding to epidemics and other health threats.
- 12 WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank Group and the United Nations Population Division. Trends in maternal mortality: 1990 to 2015. Estimates by WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank Group and the United Nations Population Division. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2015 (<http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/monitoring/maternal-mortality-2015/en/>, accessed 17 March 2017). WHO Member States with a population of less than 100 000 in 2015 were not included in the analysis.
- 13 WHO/UNICEF joint global database 2017 (http://www.who.int/gho/maternal_health/en/ and <https://data.unicef.org/topic/maternal-health/delivery-care>). The data are extracted from public available sources and have not undergone country consultation. WHO regional and global figures are for the period 2010–2016.
- 14 World health statistics [online database]. Global Health Observatory (GHO) data. Geneva: World Health Organization (<http://www.who.int/gho/en/>, accessed 3 November 2017).
- 15 World contraceptive use 2016 [online database]. New York (NY): United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division; 2016. Regional aggregates are estimates for the year 2016. Model-based estimates and projections of family planning indicators 2016. New York (NY): United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division; 2016 (http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/theme/family-planning/cp_model.shtml).
- 16 World fertility data 2015. New York (NY): United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division; 2015 (<http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/dataset/fertility/wfd2015.shtml>). Regional aggregates are the average of two five-year periods, 2010–2015 and 2015–2020, taken from: World population prospects: the 2015 revision, DVD edition. New York (NY): United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division; 2015 (<http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/Download/Standard/Fertility/>, accessed 13 April 2016).
- 17 UNAIDS/WHO estimates; 2016 (http://www.who.int/gho/hiv/epidemic_status/incidence/en/).
- 18 Global health estimates 2015: deaths by cause, age, sex, by country and by region, 2000–2015. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2015 (http://www.who.int/healthinfo/global_burden_disease/estimates/en/index1).
- 19 WHO global information system on alcohol and health [online database]. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2017 (<http://apps.who.int/gho/data/node.main.GISAH?showonly=GISAH>).
- 20 WHO global report on trends in prevalence of tobacco smoking 2015. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2015 (http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/156262/1/9789241564922_eng.pdf, accessed 22 March 2017).
- 21 Global status report on road safety 2015. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2015 (http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/road_safety_status/2015/en/, accessed 22 March 2017). WHO Member States with a population of less than 90 000 in 2015 who did not participate in the survey for the report were not included in the analysis.
- 22 Public health and environment [online database]. Global Health Observatory (GHO) data. Geneva: World Health Organization (<http://www.who.int/gho/phe/en/>). WHO Member States with a population of less than 250 000 population in 2012 were not included in the analysis.
- 23 Preventing disease through healthy environments. A global assessment of the burden of disease from environmental risks. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2016 (http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/204585/1/9789241565196_eng.pdf?ua=1, accessed 23 March 2017); and Preventing diarrhoea through better water, sanitation and hygiene. Exposures and impacts in low- and middle-income countries. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2014 (http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/150112/1/9789241564823_eng.pdf?ua=1&ua=1, accessed 23 March 2017). WHO Member States with a population of less than 250 000 in 2012 were not included in the analysis.
- 24 United Nations SDG indicators global database (<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database/?indicator=3.b.2>, accessed 6 April 2017). Based on the Creditor Reporting System database of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2016.
- 25 Skilled health professionals refer to the latest available values (2005–2015) in the WHO Global Health Workforce Statistics database (<http://who.int/hrh/statistics/hwfstats/en/>) aggregated across physicians and nurses/midwives. Refer to the source for the latest values, disaggregation and metadata descriptors.
- 26 Disaggregated data for SDG indicators on page 3 come from the WHO Health Equity Assessment Toolkit (HEAT), software for exploring and comparing health inequalities in countries. The tool includes reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health indicators, disaggregated by five dimensions of inequality, including economic status, education, place of residence, subnational region and sex (where applicable). Currently, Palau does not report data to this tool.