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

Population¹ 2016 270 402
GDP per capita (current US$)² 2016 2860.57
Income level² 2017 Lower middle income
Income Gini coefficient³ N/A 0 (equality) – 100 (inequality)

Health system

Total health expenditure as % of GDP⁴ 2014 5.0%
Total health expenditure per capita (current US$)⁴ 2014 157.51
General government health expenditure as % of total health expenditure⁴ 2014 89.8%
Life expectancy at birth (in years)⁵ 2015 72.0

Key Messages

Overall progress towards universal health coverage (UHC)

• The health sector development is guided by an overarching National Sustainable Development Plan 2016–2030. Its four health policy objectives are: 1) ensure that the population of Vanuatu has equitable access to affordable, quality health care through the fair distribution of facilities that are suitably resourced and equipped; 2) reduce the incidence of communicable and noncommunicable diseases; 3) promote healthy lifestyle choices and health-seeking behaviour to improve population health and well-being; and 4) build health sector management capacity and systems to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of quality services that are aligned with national directives.

• Compared to other countries in the Western Pacific Region, Vanuatu has low coverage of essential services. The UHC index also indicates relatively limited service capacity and access.

• Vanuatu has relatively low out-of-pocket spending, which suggests a low risk of financial hardship.

• Based on the UHC index, major challenges remain in infectious disease and noncommunicable disease (NCD) prevention and control, particularly the prevalence of raised blood pressure and access to improved sanitation.

A few SDG 3 indicators are far from the targets

• Compared to other countries in the Region for SDG 3 indicators Vanuatu is far from the targets in reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health (RMNCH). Immunization coverage and family planning rates are among the lowest in the Region; whereas, the adolescent birth rate is one of the highest.

• Major gaps exist in child health and in health system resources and capacity. Vanuatu has a relatively low density of skilled health professionals, compared to other countries in the Region.

• Moderate inequities in skilled birth attendance and child immunization have been identified.

UHC Overall Progress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UHC index⁶ – coverage of essential health services (SDG 3.8.1)</th>
<th>0–100 scale (Target: 100)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>40 Region (lowest)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanuatu 56</td>
<td>≥ 80 Region (highest)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>0.0% Region (lowest)</th>
<th>5.0% Region (highest)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vanuatu N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Performance scorecard of 13 UHC index – coverage of essential health services indicators, in relation to a target of 100%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 tracer indicator &gt; 80</th>
<th>4 tracer indicators 60–80</th>
<th>6 tracer indicators &lt; 60</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infectious diseases</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noncommunicable diseases</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service capacity and access</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SDG Overall Progress

Performance scorecard of 23 SDG health indicators, in relation to a target of 100% (as relative proximity to SDG targets)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7 indicators &gt; 70%</th>
<th>1 indicator 40–70%</th>
<th>5 indicators &lt; 40%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infectious diseases</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noncommunicable diseases</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban and environmental health</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health system resources and capacity</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Refer to page 2
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) Noncommunicable diseases (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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator category</th>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infectious diseases</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noncommunicable diseases</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service capacity and access</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What tracer indicators are included in the UHC index—coverage of essential health services?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tracer category</th>
<th>Indicator value</th>
<th>Indicator rescaled score, when applicable.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health</td>
<td>Family planning demand satisfied with modern methods (%), 2015</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infectious diseases</td>
<td>Mean fasting plasma glucose (mmol/L), 2008</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noncommunicable diseases</td>
<td>Tobacco non-use (%), 2015</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What does financial protection measure?

Financial protection (SDG 3.8.2) 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 Vanuatu?

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

Legend: AUS = Australia, BTN = Brunei Darussalam, KHM = Cambodia, CHN = China, COX = 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, PAL = 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.
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, Vanuatu has a value of 26%, meaning it has performed at 26% 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

How far is Vanuatu from the SDG targets?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SDG</th>
<th>Indicator value</th>
<th>Indicator rescaled score to 0–100% Target: 100%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maternal mortality ratio (per 100 000 live births)¹² 2015</td>
<td>78.0</td>
<td>94%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under-5 mortality rate (per 1000 live births)¹³ 2016</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>93%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neonatal mortality rate (per 1000 live births)¹³ 2016</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>100%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel (%)¹³ 2013</td>
<td>89.0%</td>
<td>82%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diphtheria, tetanus toxoid and pertussis (DTP3) immunization coverage among 1-year-olds (%)³ 2016</td>
<td>64.0%</td>
<td>20%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of married or in-union women of reproductive age who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods³ 2013</td>
<td>50.7%</td>
<td>23%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolescent birth rate (per 1000 women aged 15–19 years)³ 2013</td>
<td>78.0</td>
<td>26%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New HIV infections among adults 15–49 years old (per 1000 uninfected population)¹⁶ 2016</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>97%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infectious diseases</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TB incidence (per 100 000 population)¹⁴ 2016</td>
<td>56.0</td>
<td>91%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaria incidence (per 1000 population at risk)¹⁴ 2015</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>97%*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Noncommunicable diseases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Probability of dying from any of cardiovascular disease (CVD), cancer, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease (CRD) between age 30 and exact age 70 (%)⁹ 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicide mortality rate (per 100 000 population)¹⁵ 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total alcohol per capita (≥ 15 years of age) consumption (in litres of pure alcohol), projected estimates¹⁶ 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age-standardized prevalence of tobacco smoking among persons 15 years and older (%) – Female¹⁷</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age-standardized prevalence of tobacco smoking among persons 15 years and older (%) – Male¹⁷</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Urban and environmental health

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional Average: 17.3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total smoking-attributable mortality rate attributed to household and ambient air pollution (per 100 000 population)²²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total smoking-attributable mortality rate attributed to exposure to unsafe water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services (per 100 000 population)²³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total smoking-attributable mortality rate attributed to unintentional poisoning (per 100 000 population)²⁴ 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Health system resources and capacity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total net official development assistance to medical research and basic health per capita (constant 2014 US$), by recipient country²⁴ 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled health professionals density (per 10 000 population)²⁵ 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average of 13 International Health Regulations (2005) core capacity scores²³ 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Are population groups in Vanuatu being left behind?²⁶

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poorest 20%</th>
<th>Richest 20%</th>
<th>Diff</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Diff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SDG 3.1.2 Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel (%)</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td></td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDG 3.2.1 Under-5 mortality rate (per 1000 live births)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDG 3.2.2 Neonatal mortality rate (per 1000 live births)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDG 3.7.2 Adolescent birth rate (per 1000 women aged 15–19 years)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDG 3.7.3.1 Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDG 3.7.3.2 Neonatal mortality rate (per 1000 live births)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDG 3.7.3.3 Adolescent birth rate (per 1000 women aged 15–19 years)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Source: MICS, 2007

Vanuatu
Technical notes and sources

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.
17. UNAIDS/WHO estimates; 2016 (http://www.who.int/hiv/epidemic_status/incidence/en/).
22. Public health and environment [online database]. Global Health Observatory (GHO) data. Geneva: World Health Organization (http://www.who.int/gho/en/). WHO Member States with a population of less than 250 000 in 2012 were not included in the analysis.
24. 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.
25. WHO life expectancy (http://www.who.int/gho/mortality_burden_disease/life_tables/en/).
27. 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).
28. 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).
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30. 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.
32. WHO life expectancy (http://www.who.int/gho/mortality_burden_disease/life_tables/en/).
33. Technical notes and sources

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