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- Primary health care workforce: there are limited data on the availability and performance of health workers, including physicians, nurses, midwives, auxiliaries and community workers, who are critical to achieving improvements in essential health service coverage.

- Medicines: better understanding is needed of policies that reduce OOP spending on medicines including in PHC facilities.

- Changing health needs means that fresh thinking on service delivery models is needed.

THE WAY FORWARD

SUSTAIN

- Track progress towards UHC, with a focus on reaching the poorest and most vulnerable people.
- Build up trend data, conduct more equity analysis, publish an annual report to maintain progress.

ACCELERATE

- Strengthen the health workforce and improve access to essential medicines.
- HRH: conduct a mid-term review of the Decade in 2020; disseminate new evidence on retention of health workers; intensify work on education quality; improve data on HRH.
- Medicines: products from SEARN Working Groups; better data on availability of medicines; analysis of OOP reduction policy options.

INNOVATE

- Support innovations to improve access to quality primary care services without financial hardship; find ways to stimulate more real-time documentation of results.

IMPACT BY 2023

- Increase access to essential health services (including promotive, preventive, curative, rehabilitative and palliative care) measured with a UHC index to a regional average of 70%.
- Stabilized the rise in the percentage of people suffering financial hardship (defined as OOP spending exceeding ability to pay) in accessing health services.
- Increased availability of essential medicines for primary health care, including those free of charge to 80%.
- Improved health workforce density and distribution.
Universal health coverage (UHC) is about all people getting the health care they need without suffering financial hardship. The Sustainable Development Agenda emphasizes that UHC is central to the Sustainable Development Goals for health (SDG 3). One of the three targets for WHO’s 13th General Programme of Work is to provide UHC for 1 billion more people by 2024. UHC has been a Regional Flagship Priority since 2014, with a focus on the health workforce and access to essential medicines.

**TARGETS**

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There are two SDG indicators for UHC: 3.8.1 (service coverage is measured using an essential services index) and 3.8.2 (to measure financial protection). There are also SDG indicators for HRH and access to medicines.

**Selected GPW 13 global targets for UHC, relevant to the Flagship Programme on UHC**

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- Increase health workforce density and improve its distribution.
- Improve access to essential medical products.

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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a) Level 1 (MDGs + OOP)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) Level 2 (MDGs + financial protection)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>c) Level 3 (MDGs + NCDs + financial protection)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Health workforce density</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a) No. of countries with an up-to-date HR strategy</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) No. of countries monitoring progress to halving inequalities in access to health services</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Essential medicines</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>a) No. of countries with updated essential medicines lists in the past three years</td>
<td>NA</td>
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<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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Universal health coverage (UHC) is about all people getting the health care they need without suffering financial hardship. The Sustainable Development Agenda emphasizes that UHC is central to the Sustainable Development Goals for health (SDG 3). One of the three targets for WHO’s 13th General Programme of Work is to provide UHC for 1 billion more people by 2024. UHC has been a Regional Flagship Priority since 2014, with a focus on the health workforce and access to essential medicines.

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**PROGRESS**

Comparison of health service coverage and financial protection in the SEA Region

Sources: Progress on UHC and the health-related Sustainable Development Goals in the South-East Asia Region 2014; Assessment of mid-term implementation of the Decade for health workforce strengthening in the South-East Asia Region 2015–2018; Status of implementation of the Decade for health workforce strengthening in the South-East Asia Region 2019; Progress on UHC and the health-related Sustainable Development Goals in the South-East Asia Region 2019; Essential health services coverage: past trends and future projections (SDG 3.8.1)
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<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>HIV: No. of countries with an up-to-date HR strategy</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
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<td>No. of countries monitoring progress to halving inequalities in access to health services</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Medicines: No. of countries with updated essential medicines lists in the past three years</td>
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<tr>
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HRH: human resources for health; MDG: Millennium Development Goal; NCD: noncommunicable disease; OOP: out of pocket expenditure.

**PROGRESS**

**Comparison of health service coverage and financial protection in the SEA Region**

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In the above figure, looking ahead, projections based on the rates of progress in coverage since 2010 suggest that only five countries may reach more than 80% coverage by 2030.

% of population with catastrophic household expenditure on health >10% of total household income: loss is bigger↑

Global median for UHC: No. of countries monitoring progress on universal health services coverage: past trends and future projections (SDG 3.8.1)
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**CONTRIBUTE PROGRESSING TOWARDS UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE WITH A FOCUS ON HUMAN RESOURCES FOR HEALTH AND ESSENTIAL MEDICINES**

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[https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/274313/9789290226628-eng.pdf?sequence=6&isAllowed=y, accessed on 1 August 2019].