Good health and well-being

Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

Low-income countries have younger populations than high-income countries do. As countries become richer, fertility rates fall and life expectancy rises.

Demography is closely related to health outcomes: while life expectancy has generally risen, HIV/AIDS caused sharp declines in many countries in the 1990s.

Life expectancy at birth, by country (years)

Note: Ages 80 and older are combined into a single group.
Source: World Bank and UN Population Division. World Development Indicators (SP.POP.0004.MA.5Y and other five-year bands by sex).

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Life expectancy at birth, by country (years)

SDG 3.3

Goal 3 Good health and well-being
In high-income countries the majority of people who die are old. But in low-income countries children under age 5 account for one in three deaths.

Deaths by sex and age group, 2010–15

SDG 3.2

Children are at greatest risk in the first 28 days of life. Birth attendance by skilled health staff helps reduce maternal and neonatal mortality.

SDG 3.1

Globally, 1 in 11 deaths is due to injury, and traffic accidents account for over a quarter of these. Over 1.25 million people died from road traffic injuries in 2015.

SDG 3.6

Source: WHO. World Development Indicators (SH.STA.TRAF.P5).
Not every country has enough health workers to meet the needs of its population. High-income countries have 15 times as many physicians as low-income countries do.

Physicians, nurses, and midwives, by country, most recent value in 2010–15 (per 1,000 people)

Source: WHO, OECD, and other sources. World Development Indicators (SH.MED.PHYS.ZS; SH.MED.NUMW.P3).

Low-income countries have a severe shortage of specialist surgical workers. All low- and most lower-middle-income countries have fewer than the target number.

Specialist surgical workforce, by country, most recent value in 2011–16 (per 100,000 people)

Source: The Lancet Commission on Global Surgery. World Development Indicators (SH.MED.SAOP.P5).

Better-staffed health systems can lead to improved health outcomes. For example, life expectancies are higher where there are more surgical workers per person.

Life expectancy at birth, by country, 2016 (years)

Source: The Lancet Commission on Global Surgery and UN Population Division. WDI (SH.MED.SAOP.P5; SP.DYN.LE00.IN).
Universal health coverage is about all people having access to the care they need without financial hardship. Service coverage varies widely across countries.

Universal Health Coverage service index, 2015

The index measures a country’s ability to provide essential health services, including reproductive care and treatment of injuries.

Source: Hogan and others. Universal Health Coverage (SH.UHC.SV.COV.IND).

In 2010, 800 million people spent over 10 percent of their household budget on healthcare, and 97 million were pushed into extreme poverty by health spending.

Source: Wagstaff and others. WDI (SH.UHC.NOP1.TO; SH.UHC.NOP2.TO; SH.UHC.OOPC.10.TO; SH.UHC.OOPC.10.ZS).

Countries with a high index value tend to have a longer life expectancy and lower under-five mortality.

At least half the world’s population lacks access to essential health services.

Number of people pushed below $1.90 a day poverty line

Number of people pushed below $3.10 a day poverty line

Source: Wagstaff and others. WDI (SH.UHC.NOP1.TO; SH.UHC.NOP2.TO; SH.UHC.OOPC.10.TO; SH.UHC.OOPC.10.ZS).