

WORLD HEALTH STATISTICS

2019

MONITORING HEALTH FOR THE SDGs

S U S T A I N A B L E
D E V E L O P M E N T G O A L S



World Health
Organization

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World health statistics 2019: monitoring health for the SDGs, sustainable development goals

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FOREWORD



For 71 years, the World Health Organization (WHO) has had one vision: the highest attainable standard of health for all people in all countries. Reliable data are vital for assessing whether we are making progress towards that vision, for highlighting areas of progress and for exposing where we need to change course.

Health trends are constantly evolving, and so are health systems. No health system is perfect, and all countries have people who are left behind. It is therefore important to accurately document the state of global health and how it is changing.

The *World health statistics*, published annually since 2005, is WHO's annual snapshot of the state of the world's health. Since 2016, the World Health Statistics series has focused on monitoring progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the 2019 edition contains the latest available data for the health-related SDG indicators.

The SDGs address inequality wherever it exists. The 2019 edition reports on trends over time and disaggregates data by WHO region, World Bank income group, and sex to identify key inequalities. The report reveals that in low-income countries, health is frequently compromised by diseases and conditions that are preventable or treatable. Many premature deaths are associated with environmental factors or the leading underlying causes of death, such as tobacco use, unhealthy diet, physical inactivity and unhealthy consumption of alcohol.

Although the *World health statistics 2019* tells its story with numbers, the consequences are human. In low-income countries, one woman in 41 dies from maternal causes, and each maternal death greatly affects the health of surviving family members and the resilience of the community. Not only are the risks of maternal deaths elevated by poverty, but their occurrence perpetuates the cycle of poverty in poor communities from one generation to the next.

We must be relentless in our pursuit of solutions to such human tragedies, and our responses must be informed by robust, reliable data on health risks, access to services and health outcomes. At present, many countries lack the health information systems they need to accurately monitor health trends and inform decision-making. That is why WHO is creating an entirely new process for strategic policy dialogue with countries, using evidence and information strategically to drive change.

We will continue to work with countries to strengthen their information systems for health and generate better data. We will also build a modern data backbone that allows sharing and analysis of data among the three levels of WHO and countries. And we will make investments to strengthen analytical capacity at all levels, to identify trends, make projections and support acceleration of progress toward achieving health targets.

Behind every number in these pages is a person, a family, a community and a nation. My hope is that governments, health providers, academics, civil society organizations, the media and others use these numbers to promote health, keep the world safe and serve the vulnerable.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus

Director-General
World Health Organization

ABBREVIATIONS

AFR	WHO African Region
AIDS	acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
AMR	WHO Region of the Americas
COPD	chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
COSI	Childhood Obesity Surveillance Initiative
CRD	chronic respiratory disease
CRVS	civil registration and vital statistics
CVD	cardiovascular disease
DHS	demographic and health surveys
DTP3	diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis third dose
EMR	WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region
EUR	WHO European Region
FGM	female genital mutilation
GGE	general government expenditure
GHO	Global Health Observatory
HALE	healthy life expectancy
HBV	hepatitis B virus
HES	health examination survey
HI	high income
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus
IHR	International Health Regulations
ITN	insecticide-treated mosquito net
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
LI	low income
LMI	lower-middle income
LMIC	low- and middle-income countries
M/F	male to female (ratio)
MCV2	measles-containing vaccine second dose
MIS	malaria indicator surveys
MMR	maternal mortality ratios
NCD	noncommunicable disease
NTD	neglected tropical disease
ODA	official development assistance
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization

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