

State of UHC Commitment Review:

A summary of key findings

What is the State of UHC Commitment Review?

The State of UHC Commitment Review brings a unique multistakeholder view to a simple question: **What actions are governments taking to fulfil their universal health coverage (UHC) commitments?**

This review is a political, country-focused and action-oriented tool that complements the more technical and global [UHC monitoring report](#) focusing on UHC indicators on service coverage and financial protection. It follows [the 2019 UHC Political Declaration's Key Targets, Commitments and Follow-up](#)

[Actions](#), which outlined eight UHC commitment areas. It supports national accountability and advocacy processes to ensure political leaders are held accountable for their UHC commitments.

These findings and [country profiles](#) will inform the preparation process for the [2023 UN High-level Meeting on UHC](#), at which Heads of State and Government will undertake a comprehensive review of what has been done so far and have the opportunity to make actionable commitments to accelerate progress towards achieving UHC by 2030.

In brief: key findings

Following the 2019 UN High-level Meeting on UHC, country commitments to UHC (per year) almost doubled between 2019 and 2021. In 2022, this positive trend stagnated and even reversed in some countries. Although the majority of countries recognise UHC as a goal, which is reflected in laws and national plans, there is a lack of concrete operational steps and inadequate public financing for health, setting UHC targets for 2030 further off track.

Countries' commitments do not address all three dimensions of UHC: (1) service coverage; (2) population coverage; and (3) financial protection. Most commitments are focused on (1) service coverage (44%) and (2) population coverage (43%), and on average, there was a lack of commitments and clear targets concerning (3) the financial protection dimension (13%). There was systematic under-prioritization and underinvestment in reducing financial barriers to health care.

Countries continue to rely on fragmented disease and service-specific programmes and interventions instead of operationalizing comprehensive UHC commitments.



The 2023 UN High-level Meeting on UHC allows leaders to accelerate progress and get commitments made in 2019 back on track across the eight commitment areas covered in this review. Key findings in the eight commitment areas are:



Ensure political leadership beyond health: The majority of countries recognize UHC as a goal, however there is a lack of concrete operational steps towards achieving UHC.



Leave no one behind: Vulnerable individuals and groups continue to face financial barriers to accessing the health services and commodities they need.



Legislate and regulate: More than half of countries have adopted legislation to guarantee equitable access to quality and affordable healthcare and protect against financial hardship through a UHC law, and about 70% of countries have used UHC as a goal for their health plans.



Uphold quality of care: Discrimination against patients and limited quality and respectful healthcare services remain a widespread challenge to maintaining dignity, privacy and confidentiality.



Invest more, invest better: Despite continued increases in overall health expenditure in 2020 due to COVID-19 response, governments' current investment commitments and public spending for health are inadequate to achieve UHC.



Move together: A limited number of countries have a formal and effective accountability mechanism for UHC, with inadequate engagement of non-state actors.



Gender equality: Despite women being the majority of the health workforce, there is a lack of commitment towards increasing women's representation in health and political leadership.



Emergency preparedness: The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated inequities and disrupted the provision of essential health services.

Country profiles

The new [progress dashboard on the UHC Data Portal](#) provides data sets and data visualization on health systems and the state of UHC commitment. The new 139 country profiles include an overview of 1) UHC commitment progress; 2) global UHC indicators and related data; 3) institutional efforts; 4) priorities in UHC progress and equity across population groups; 5) public perception and social participation; and 6) stakeholder collaboration.

These country profiles are expected to be used by health experts and governments, civil society organizations, academia, parliamentarians, private sector and media. The country profiles can contribute to and complement the formal accountability processes in countries.

