

The *Countdown* country profile: a tool for action



The *Countdown* country profiles present the latest evidence to assess country progress in improving women's, children's and adolescents' health. The profiles, including an interactive version of them and all associated data, can also be found on the *Countdown* website at www.countdown2030.org.

Reviewing the information

The first step in using the country profiles is to explore the range of data presented: demographics, mortality, coverage of evidence-based interventions, nutritional status and socioeconomic equity in coverage, and information on health policies, systems and financing. Key questions in reviewing the data include:

- Are trends in mortality and nutrition status moving in the right direction? Thinking of this tool as a starting point, how much progress is necessary to reach the targets for Sustainable Development Goals 2 and 3?
- How high is coverage for each intervention? Are trends moving in the right direction towards universal coverage? Are there gaps in coverage for specific interventions?
- How equitable is coverage? Are certain interventions particularly inaccessible for the poorest segment of the population?
- Are key policies and systems measures and adequate funding in place to bring coverage of key interventions to scale?

Identifying areas to accelerate progress

The second step in using the country profiles is to identify opportunities to address coverage gaps and accelerate progress in improving coverage and health outcomes across the continuum of care. Questions to ask include:

- Are the coverage data consistent with the epidemiological situation? For example:
 - If pneumonia deaths among children under age 5 are high, are coverage levels low for careseeking for symptoms of pneumonia, and what can be done to reach universal coverage? Is the percentage of child deaths due to diarrhoea consistent with the coverage levels and trends of treatment with oral rehydration salts and zinc and improved water sources and sanitation facilities?
 - Does lagging progress on reducing maternal mortality or high newborn mortality reflect low coverage of family planning, antenatal care and skilled birth attendant, and are the necessary service delivery systems and policy frameworks in place to facilitate the scale-up of these interventions?
- Do any patterns in the coverage data suggest clear action steps? For example, coverage for interventions involving treatment of an acute need (such as treatment of childhood diseases and childbirth services) is often lower than coverage for interventions delivered routinely through outreach or that can be scheduled in advance (such as vaccinations). This gap suggests that health systems need to be strengthened, for example by training and deploying adequate numbers of skilled health workers to increase access to care.
- Do the gaps and inequities in coverage along the continuum of care suggest the need to prioritize specific interventions and increasing funding for them? For example, are countries developing programmes that target poor people where disparities in coverage between the richest and poorest quintiles are wide? Is universal access to labour, childbirth and immediate postnatal care being prioritized in countries with large coverage gaps in interventions delivered around the time of birth?

Sample profile

Continuum of Care Coverage

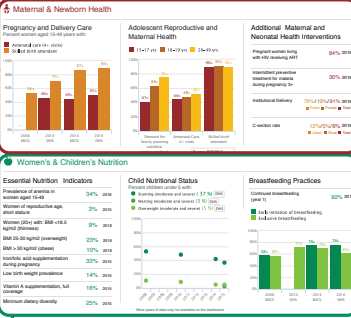
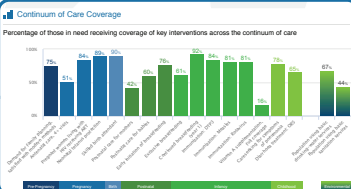
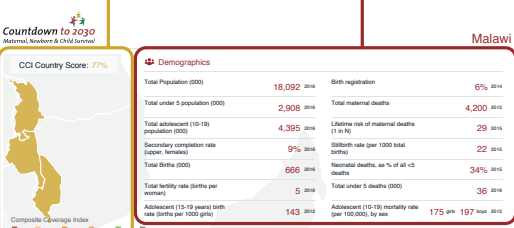
Gaps in coverage of key interventions along the continuum of care from pregnancy planning and prevention through childhood up to age 5 should serve as a call to action for a country to prioritize these interventions.

Composite Coverage Index (CCI) Country Score

Since 2008, Countdown has used the composite coverage index, a weighted average of the coverage of eight interventions along four stages of the continuum of care.

Demographics

These indicators capture information on key population characteristics, including births, birth registration, population size, fertility, mortality and stillbirths, and school completion.



Women's & Children's Nutrition
While addressing persistent undernutrition among women, children and adolescents is critical for achieving Sustainable Development Goals 2 and 3, preventing a rise in child and adolescent overweight and obesity is also essential for reducing the risk of noncommunicable diseases and promoting optimal short- and long-term health and productivity.



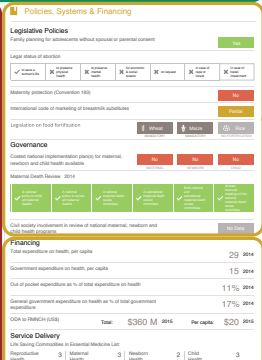
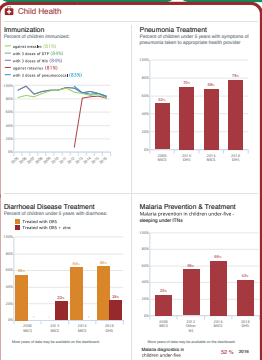
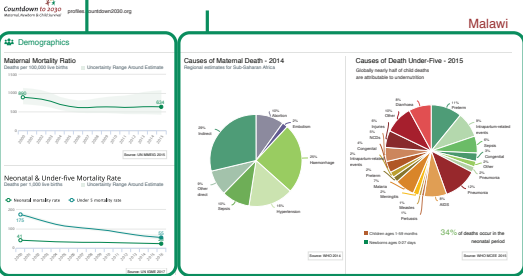
Maternal & Newborn Health
These charts show the most recent coverage levels and trends for selected reproductive, maternal, and newborn health interventions.

Equity
Socioeconomic inequities in coverage highlight the need for concerted efforts to improve coverage among the poorest.

Impact: Maternal Mortality Ratio and Under-Five Mortality Rate
These charts display trends over time, reflecting progress towards the Sustainable Development Goal 3 targets.

Legislative Policies and Governance
These indicators show whether needed policies and plans are in place to support the introduction and scale-up of proven interventions across the continuum of care.

Causes of Maternal and Child Deaths
These charts provide information useful for interpreting the intervention coverage measures and identifying programmatic priorities.



Water, Sanitation & Hygiene
Water and sanitation from improved sources are essential for reducing transmission of infectious disease.

Financing and Service Delivery
These indicators provide information on health system strength and available financing for women's, children's and adolescents' health.

Child Health
These charts show the most recent coverage levels and trends for selected child health interventions.