



for **Health Data**  
Technical Package

# Global report on health data systems and capacity, 2020



World Health  
Organization





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**World Health  
Organization**

SCORE for health data technical package: global report on health data systems and capacity, 2020

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# Foreword | WHO

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of strong data and health information systems that provide timely, reliable and actionable data. The grounding principle of WHO's transformation is to make a measurable impact in countries. WHO's Triple Billion targets – one billion more people benefitting from universal health coverage, one billion more people better protected from health emergencies, and one billion more people enjoying better health and well-being – is a pathway to achieve this vision.

Even before the pandemic, health systems were already over-stretched, and the world was not on track to meet the health-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). COVID-19 has shown that even the most advanced and resilient systems have faced significant disruption across multiple sectors. We can only build back better with robust data and health information systems in every country and every community.

Despite progress in recent years, high-quality data are not routinely collected in all settings, major health challenges are not adequately monitored, and effective interventions are not directed to the right people, at the right time and at the right place. This impacts policies and programmes and consequently, the health of entire populations. Similarly, in order to meet the shared SDG commitment to “leave no-one behind”, we need disaggregated data to ensure equitable health outcomes.

This means we must strengthen comprehensive data systems, collaborate with other sectors, and apply innovative digital technologies to collect, analyse and use data to make informed decisions and deliver impact.

The publication of the SCORE *Global report on health data systems and capacity, 2020* therefore comes at a particularly relevant time. As the first global assessment of the status and capacity of health information systems in 133 countries, covering 87% of the global population, it identifies gaps and provides guidance to precisely and rapidly improve the quality, availability, analysis, accessibility and use of data.

Using the innovative SCORE (Survey, Count, Optimize, Review, Enable) *Assessment instrument* to measure the status of data and health information

systems, the report highlights some important findings. It shows for example, that while 68% of countries have well-developed and sustainable capacity to detect public health threats, this varies between regions. Although there is good coverage of basic national level data, this is not the case in all countries. Similarly, there is high availability of data on immunization, tuberculosis and HIV; however, coverage of other critical health issues such as noncommunicable diseases, including mental health and cancer, is very limited.

The SCORE for Health Data Technical Package includes this report and its accompanying *Assessment methodology*, *Assessment instrument* and Online Data Portal along with the recently launched *Essential interventions* and *Tools and standards*. This is a unique, one-stop-shop of essential interventions, recommended actions, tools and resources. We encourage all countries and partners to use this global report and the SCORE *Assessment instrument* to urgently identify gaps, prioritize investments, and accelerate progress towards achieving the SDGs and the Triple Billion targets to promote health, keep the world safe and serve the vulnerable.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to Member States for their engagement, to Bloomberg Philanthropies for funding this truly collaborative work, and to all Data for Health Initiative partners who played a role in bringing the SCORE global report and technical package to fruition.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus'.

**Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus**

Director-General, World Health Organization

# Foreword | Bloomberg Philanthropies

Good data is essential to good decision-making. Fortunately, for a growing number of governments around the world, “Follow the Data” is the motto driving their work to strengthen public health. With more timely and accurate data in hand – ranging from basic birth and death records, to detailed evidence on risk behaviours like tobacco use – policymakers can then make smart, targeted investments in improving public health and saving lives.

To help more countries do just that, Bloomberg Philanthropies teamed up with our longtime partner the World Health Organization and developed the SCORE package. SCORE is a set of essential, standardized tools, which boil down to: Survey, Count, Optimize, Review, and Enable. While there is still much work to be done, our results so far are encouraging.

Most significantly, this SCORE report is the first to gauge countries’ progress in producing sustainable health data. The report’s findings come from over 130 countries, representing nearly 90 percent of the global population. While no country has achieved perfect marks in each of SCORE’s five categories, one important fact is clear now. All countries, across income levels, have the capacity to fill gaps in their health data. By pinpointing those gaps, we hope this report leads countries not just to produce more data, but to take policy action.

At Bloomberg Philanthropies, that kind of data-driven approach informs all our work to help protect and advance global public health. Whether we are responding to the urgent needs of the COVID-19 pandemic, or expanding our longstanding efforts to reduce preventable deaths

from noncommunicable diseases around the world, we search out the best data and use it to help our partners develop the most effective strategies for success. To cite one example: Since 2015, through our Data for Health programme, we have helped countries around the world strengthen their health data systems – and we look forward to enhancing our impact.

Together with the World Health Organization, we encourage our partners in government to continue following the data – and putting it to immediate use, in crafting policies that save and improve their residents’ everyday lives.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael R. Bloomberg". The signature is fluid and stylized, with the first and last names being more prominent.

**Michael R. Bloomberg**

WHO Global Ambassador for  
Noncommunicable Diseases and Injuries  
Founder, Bloomberg LP  
and Bloomberg Philanthropies

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