Bangladesh
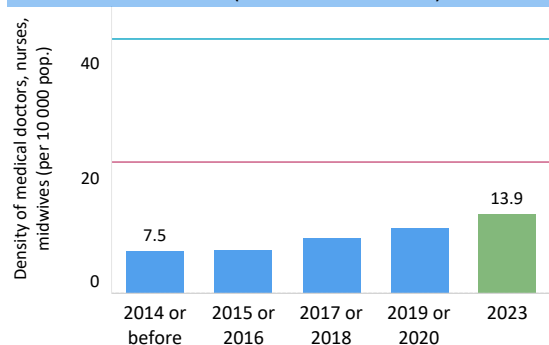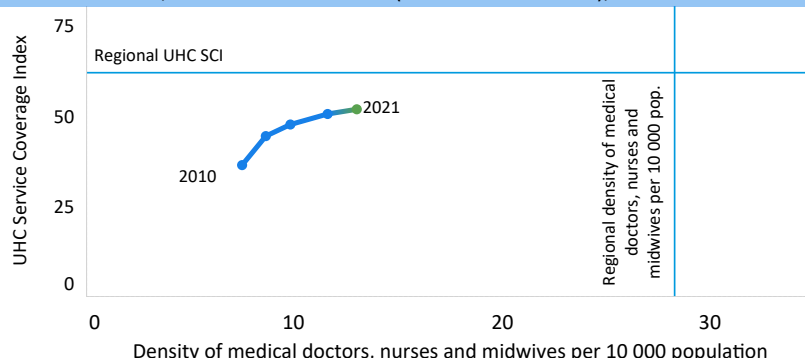
Population[1] (000s) (2024) 173 562	Urban population[2] (%) (2024) 41.2	GDP per capita[3] (current US$) (2023) 2 529	Life expectancy at birth[4] (years) (2021) 73.1	UHC SCI[5] ((2021) 52

Trend in the density of medical doctors, nurses and midwives[6] (SDG indicator 3.c.1)

Density of medical doctors, nurses, midwives (per 10 000 pop.)

- 2014 or before: 7.5
- 2015 or 2016
- 2017 or 2018
- 2019 or 2020
- 2023: 13.9

— 44.5 per 10 000 pop: GSHRH:2030 (2016) — 22.8 per 10 000 pop.: World Health Report (2006)

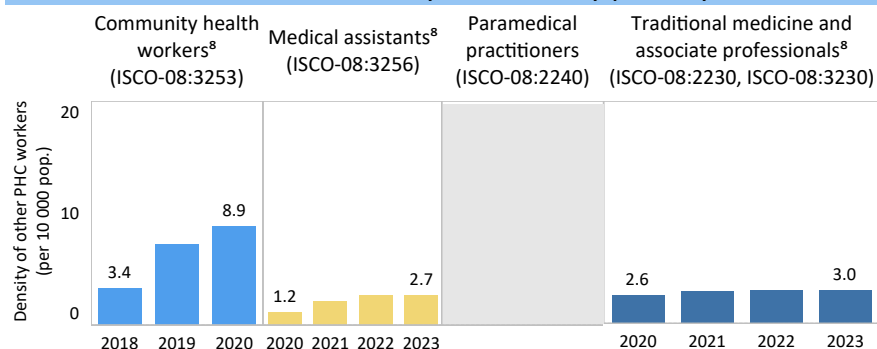## Trends in UHC Service Coverage Index (SDG indicator 3.8.1) and the density of medical doctors, nurses and midwives (SDG indicator 3.c.1), 2010–2021[7]
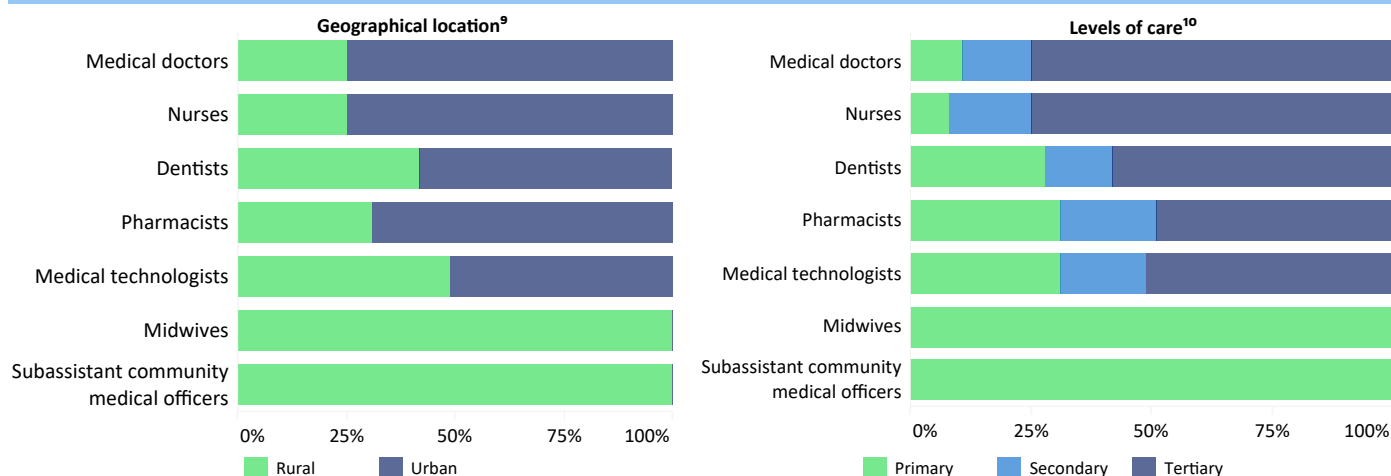

UHC Service Coverage Index

Regional UHC SCI

2010 ... 2021

Regional density of medical doctors, nurses and midwives per 10 000 pop.

Density of medical doctors, nurses and midwives per 10 000 population

Density of other key primary health care (PHC) workers

Density of other PHC workers (per 10 000 pop.)

Community health workers[8] (ISCO-08:3253)
- 2018: 3.4
- 2019
- 2020: 8.9

Medical assistants[8] (ISCO-08:3256)
- 2020: 1.2
- 2021
- 2022
- 2023: 2.7

Paramedical practitioners (ISCO-08:2240)

Traditional medicine and associate professionals[8] (ISCO-08:2230, ISCO-08:3230)
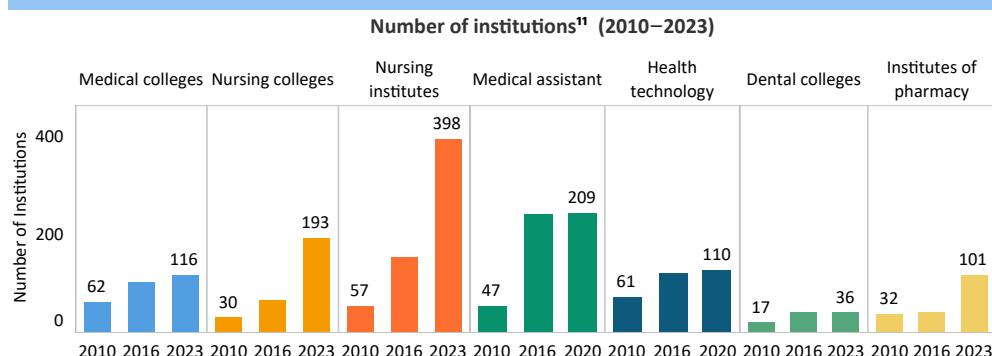- 2020: 2.6
- 2021
- 2022
- 2023: 3.0

Countries in the SE Asia Region benefit from a range of key occupations close to communities. These health workers, central to the effective functioning of primary health care and district health systems, are often the first point of contact for those most vulnerable and for emergency response.

Distribution of public-sector health workforce (geographical location and levels of care) (2021)

Geographical location[9]

- Medical doctors
- Nurses
- Dentists
- Pharmacists
- Medical technologists
- Midwives
- Subassistant community medical officers

Legend: Rural | Urban

Levels of care[10]

- Medical doctors
- Nurses
- Dentists
- Pharmacists
- Medical technologists
- Midwives
- Subassistant community medical officers

Legend: Primary | Secondary | Tertiary

Production of select health workers

Number of institutions[11] (2010−2023)

Number of institutions

- Medical colleges: 62 (2010), 2016, 116 (2023)
- Nursing colleges: 30 (2010), 2016, 193 (2023)
- Nursing institutes: 57 (2010), 2016, 398 (2023)
- Medical assistant: 47 (2010), 209 (2016), 2020
- Health technology: 61 (2010), 2016, 110 (2020)
- Dental colleges: 17 (2010), 2016, 36 (2023)
- Institutes of pharmacy: 32 (2010), 2016, 101 (2023)

The increasing production of health workers across countries of the SE Asia Region speaks of a further increase in the availability of health workers in the near future. It is crucial to align this growth with evolving population and health system needs.

Progress over the decade

Strategic direction & governance	Enactment of the Non-Governmental Medical and Dental College Act, 2022
	Creation of the Directorate General for Nursing and Midwifery in 2016 and Directorate General of Medical Education in 2019
	Bangladesh Health Workforce Strategy 2023, as informed by the first Health Labour Market Analysis conducted in 2021
Transformative education	Bangladesh Medical Education Accreditation Act, 2023
	Mapping of health professional education institutions in Bangladesh, 2019
	Major health professionals' curricula revised between in 2018 to 2022, e.g. MBBS, BSc Nursing, Diploma in Medical Assistantship, Diploma in Medical Technology
Rural retention	The district quota system for health-care education ensures equitable representation of students from across Bangladesh's 64 districts
	Mandatory rural service: newly appointed doctors are required to complete a two-year rural posting under the Transfer and Posting Policy for Health Service Officers
	Support for rural health workers: financial and non-financial incentives, along with training opportunities, are provided to health workers in designated rural areas
Key innovations for strengthening the PHC workforce	National Strategy for Community Health Workers, 2019–2030
	Community health-care providers (CHCPs) trained through a 12-week programme to manage community clinics, with expansion under way
	Muktopaath online platform, as an e-learning platform for health professionals
International migration	Currently present on WHO's Support and Safeguard list but, given increasing production across occupations, significant interest to support international mobility
Identified achievements, challenges and future priorities	**Achievements**: establishment of DG Medical Education and DG Nursing and Midwifery, the Bangladesh Medical Education Accreditation Act 2023, and the Bangladesh Health Workforce Strategy 2023
	Challenges: persistent health workforce shortages, limited technical and management competencies, challenge in collaboration across professions, and regulation of the private sector
	Priorities: development of a national medical education strategy, action plan of the National Health Workforce Strategy, strengthening regulatory processes and outcomes, and creation of a dedicated centre for monitoring and evaluating PHC workforce performance

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4. World Health Organization. *World Health Statistics 2024*. World Health Organization, 2024, https://www.who.int/data/gho/publications/world-health-statistics.
5. *UHC Global Monitoring Report 2023*. World Health Organization, 2023, https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240066060.
6. Latest data is from National Health Workforce Accounts online portal as of 10 September 2024. United Nations World Population Prospects 2024 was used to calculate latest health workforce densities. For prior years' and for consistency, previous progress report-identified health workforce densities are presented.
7. *See for UHC SCI:* WHO Global Health Observatory (GHO), accessed on 17 July 2024; *See for density of medical doctors, nurses and midwives*: latest data is from National Health Workforce Accounts online portal as of 10 September 2024. United Nations World Population Prospects 2024 was used to calculate latest health workforce densities. For prior years' and for consistency, previous progress report-identified health workforce densities are presented.
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10. Bangladesh health workforce strategy 2023
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