PERCENT OF POPULATION WITH ACCESS TO PRIMARY HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

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<th>Health</th>
<th>Healthcare Delivery</th>
<th>Core indicator</th>
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1. **INDICATOR**

(a) **Name:** Percentage of Population with Access to Primary Health Care Facilities.

(b) **Brief Definition:** Proportion of population with access to primary health care facilities.

(c) **Unit of Measurement:** %.

(d) **Placement in the CSD Indicator Set:** Health/Healthcare Delivery.

2. **POLICY RELEVANCE**

(a) **Purpose:** To monitor progress in the access of the population to primary health care.

(b) **Relevance to Sustainable/Unsustainable Development (theme/sub-theme):** Accessibility of health services, going beyond just physical access, and including economic, social and cultural accessibility and acceptability, is of fundamental significance to reflect on health system progress, equity and sustainable development. It should, however, be supplemented by indicators of utilization of services, or actual coverage, and quality of care. In addition, accessibility is an instrumental goal, a means to an end, to achieving the final intrinsic goals of the system. The more accessible a system is, the more people should utilize it to improve their health.

(c) **International Conventions and Agreements:** World Health Assembly Resolution WHA34.36, Global Strategy for Health for All by the Year 2000.

(d) **International Targets/Recommended Standards:** International targets have been outlined in the Global Strategy for Health for All and more recently in the Ninth General Programme of Work. In addition, many countries have established national targets.

(e) **Linkage to Other Indicators:** This indicator is associated with other socioeconomic indicators on the proportion of people covered by other essential elements of primary health care. It should also, as indicated above, be linked with indicators of utilization of services and quality of care.

3. **METHODOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION**

(a) **Underlying Definitions and Concepts:**
Primary health care: is essential health care made accessible at a cost the country and community can afford, with methods that are practical, scientifically sound and socially acceptable.

Population covered: All the population living in the service area of the health facility.

Access: Definition of accessibility may vary between countries, for different parts of the country and for different types of services.

Measurement Methods: The numerator - the number of persons living within a convenient distance to primary care facilities; the denominator - the total population.

Limitations of the Indicator: The existence of a facility within reasonable distance is often used as a proxy for availability of health care. If the existing primary care facility, however, is not properly functioning, provides care of inadequate quality, is economically not affordable, and socially or culturally not acceptable, physical access has very little value as this facility is bypassed and not utilized. Therefore, other factors, as mentioned in 3(e) have to be taken into account.

Status of the Methodology: Not Available.

Alternative Definitions/Indicators: In the light of 3(c) the indicator must be supplemented by indicators of availability of services, quality of services, acceptability of services, affordability of services, or utilization of services.

4. ASSESSMENT OF DATA

Data Needed to Compile the Indicator: The number of people with access to primary health care facilities, total population in service areas of health facilities.

National and International Data Availability and Sources: No routinely available data. Information has to be acquired through surveys. Data Sources include Ministries of Health and National Statistical Offices.

Data References: Not Available.

5. AGENCIES INVOLVED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INDICATOR

Lead Agency: The lead agency is the World Health Organization (WHO). The contact point is the Director, Health System Policies and Operations, fax: 41 22 791 4747.

Other Contributing Organizations: None.

6. REFERENCES

Readings:
HIS Development Strategy and Catalogue of Health Indicators, Geneva 2000 (EIP/OSD/00.12)
WHO, Development of Indicators for Monitoring Progress towards Health for All by the Year 2000, Geneva, 1981.

(b) Internet site: World Health Organization: http://www.who.int