

The WHO health system performance assessment applied to child healthcare in Luxembourg, 2011-2022

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Background

The ability of health systems to provide services that prevent and treat ill children is an important contributor to child health.

Health system performance assessments (HSPA) evaluate health systems in terms of their objectives and their overall goals, such as access to quality services and health improvement.

HSPA has proven useful to evaluate the performance in providing care to specific populations, such as children.^{1,2}

In 2022, WHO Europe and the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies have proposed a standard HSPA framework.³

Objectives

To assess the response of the health system to children's particular health needs by use of the WHO HSPA framework.

- Identifying relevant indicators to measure performance of the system.
- Use of representative quality data available at national level.
- Identify important data gaps to fully assess the performance of the health system for children.

Methods

- Review** Comprehensive compilation of child-specific indicators from guidelines, policy documents, scientific literature and international databases.
- Appraisal** Four experts reviewed and scored (from 1 to 9) indicators based on feasibility, validity and actionability.
- Selection** Indicators with an average score of 7 or higher were considered of suitable quality for inclusion.
- Agreement** Final agreement on indicator selection was made through expert group consultation.

Context

In 2023, Luxembourg engaged in a comprehensive evaluation of child health, encompassing children's health status, determinants of health and the health system's response.⁴

Today, Luxembourg lacks a country specific HSPA framework.

The WHO proposed framework was used to structure the assessment, ensuring that child relevant areas of the health system were covered.

NB : Indicators related to financing and efficiency of health service delivery were excluded, as they are not specific to child health.

Data analysis

- Use of nationally representative data
- Assessment period: 10 to 12-year retrospective period
- Equity analysis using stratification by :
 - Sex
 - Household income level
 - Family composition
- International benchmarking with data from Germany, Belgium, France, Netherlands and Switzerland.

References

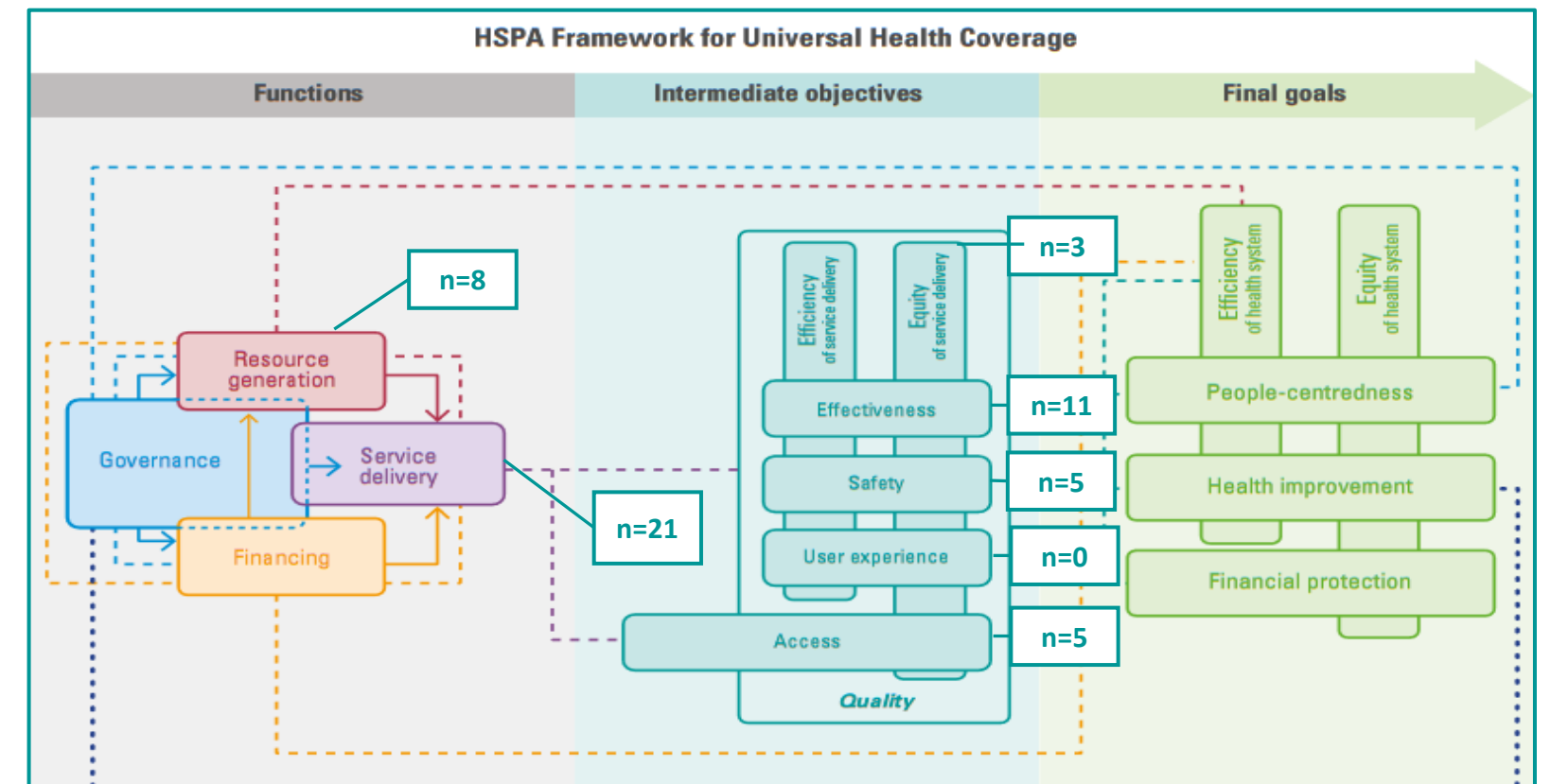
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Results

- 83 indicators were identified from literature and international databases
- 29/83 indicators were selected for HSPA using expert appraisal

Data sources (n indicators)

- Social security database (n=15)
- Health monitoring activities and registers (n=11)
- Surveys (n=2)
- National health map (n=1)



Adapted from : World Health Organization, European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies. Health system performance assessment - A framework for policy assessment, 2022³

- Effectiveness of preventive services was best for children under two years.
- Accessibility to primary care and hospitals is good.
- No inequitable distributions were identified in relation to access to healthcare.
- Safety assessment showed a recent increase in the relative use of broad-spectrum antimicrobials and an overuse of c-sections.
- No data was available to assess user experience for children.
- International comparison was judged as relevant and available for three indicators related to human resources, effectiveness, and access to care.

Conclusion

- Given that today Luxembourg doesn't have a country tailored HSPA framework, the WHO framework proved valuable for evaluating the health system's performance for children.
- The conducted HSPA showed good performance in accessibility and effectiveness for young children, alongside data gaps to assess user-experience.

