

Universal Health Coverage as a Sustainable Development Goal: An Analytical Study of Economic and Health Indicators in Algeria

Bessadat Saci ^{*1}, Dr Didouh Choukria ²

¹ Abu Bakr Belkaid University, Faculty of Economics, Laboratory of Public Governance and Social Economy GPES, Tlemcen, Algeria, E-mail: saci.bessadat@univ-tlemcen.dz

² Abu Bakr Belkaid University, Faculty of Economics, Laboratory of Public Governance and Social Economy GPES, Tlemcen, Algeria, E-mail: dchoukria@yahoo.fr

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Abstract:

This study examines the state of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Universal Health Coverage (UHC) in Algeria through a descriptive analysis of key economic and health indicators. The findings reveal significant progress in multiple dimensions of sustainable development, including the implementation of economic reform programs, higher levels of basic education, and a decline in poverty rates. However, an increase in greenhouse gas emissions (CO₂) was also observed. Regarding universal health coverage, WHO measurement indicators show notable improvements in health service quality, higher government health expenditures, and an expansion of social protection coverage, as reported by the National Social Security Fund. The study concludes with several key recommendations, including promoting economic diversification to mitigate financial crises, investing in renewable energy, enhancing community-based healthcare services in remote areas, and raising awareness of health insurance as a fundamental pillar of social protection.

Key Words: Sustainable Development, Universal Health Coverage, Indicators (UHC), Algeria.
JEL Classification: O10, I15, I13

* - Corresponding author: Bessadat Saci, e-mail: saci.bessadat@univ-tlemcen.dz.

1. Introduction

Achieving sustainable development is a top priority for nations worldwide, encompassing economic, social, and environmental dimensions. Economic growth is often linked to sustainable development, which incorporates multiple goals outlined by the United Nations through a comprehensive global agenda. As a developing country, Algeria has implemented economic and social reform programs aimed at stabilizing the economy and fostering development across various sectors. However, its heavy reliance on oil makes it vulnerable to both domestic and global financial crises. To ensure long-term stability, Algeria must accelerate efforts to diversify its economy, leveraging its abundant natural resources and strategic geographic position to create sustainable economic alternatives. Universal Health Coverage (UHC) is a key pillar of sustainable development, ensuring access to essential healthcare services without financial hardship. The Algerian government has actively worked to improve the healthcare system by training and employing medical personnel, establishing specialized healthcare facilities, and modernizing healthcare services to meet current demands. Additionally, Algeria has focused on strengthening social protection systems by continuously improving the National Social Security Fund, expanding its coverage to include the majority of the population. Based on these considerations, this study explores the interrelationship between sustainable development and universal health coverage by analyzing Algeria's economic and health indicators.

❖ Research Objectives

This research aims to:

- Analyze the concept and dimensions of sustainable development, with a focus on Algeria's progress.
- Examine universal health coverage and assess its key measurement indicators, based on WHO standards.

❖ Research Methodology

This study employs a descriptive and analytical approach to assess sustainable development indicators and universal health coverage in Algeria, particularly over the past two decades, which have seen major economic and social reforms. Notably, these reforms have included enhancements to the healthcare system and the implementation of forward-looking strategies (Vision 2030).

❖ Research Structure

This study is divided into two main sections:

✚ Sustainable Development

- Definition and key dimensions of sustainable development
- Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- The current state of sustainable development in Algeria, with a focus on economic, social, and environmental aspects

✚ Universal Health Coverage

- Concept and significance of universal health coverage
- Indicators of essential healthcare service coverage in Algeria
- National social security policies for enhancing social protection in Algeria

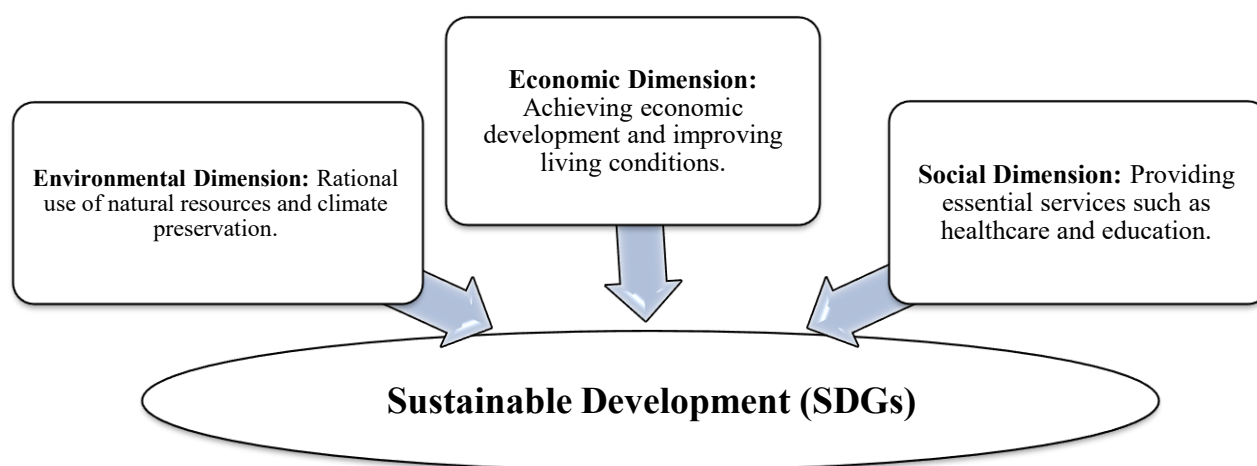
2. Sustainable Development (SDGs)

2.1 Definition of Sustainable Development

The United Nations defines sustainable development as a process that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (United Nations, 2025). Another definition describes it as fulfilling current human needs while ensuring that future generations can achieve their objectives. Sustainable development emphasizes integrated economic growth, environmental stewardship, and social responsibility (Baizid, 2022, p. 275). From this perspective, sustainable development seeks to balance economic and social progress while ensuring environmental protection, aiming to meet the needs of both present and future generations. It is built upon three core dimensions:

- **Economic Dimension:** Focuses on achieving economic prosperity through reforms, development initiatives in marginalized areas, and raising individual income levels.
- **Environmental Dimension:** Emphasizes the rational use of natural resources to prevent depletion, minimizing environmental pollution, and preserving the climate for future generations.
- **Social Dimension:** Addresses social justice, poverty alleviation, and access to essential services such as education, healthcare, governance transparency, and social protection (Al-Arabi & Samiha, 2020, pp. 127-131).

Fig.1. Dimensions of Sustainable Development



Source: Compiled by the researchers based on sustainable development dimensions.

2.2 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

In 2015, United Nations member states adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals. These goals represent a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and promote peace and prosperity by 2030 (United Nations Development Programme, 2025).

Table 1. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Goal	Description	Goal	Description	Goal	Description
01	Eradicate Poverty	07	Promote Clean Energy	13	Climate Action
02	End Hunger	08	Achieve Economic Growth	14	Preserve Marine Life
03	Good Health & Well-Being	09	Industry & Innovation	15	Protect Terrestrial Ecosystems
04	Ensure Quality Education	10	Reduce Inequality	16	Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions
05	Gender Equality	11	Sustainable Cities & Communities	17	Partnerships for the Goals
06	Clean Water & Sanitation	12	Responsible Consumption & Production	<i>United Nations Development programme</i>	

Source: Sustainable Development Goals, United Nations <https://www.undp.org/ar/arab-state>

2.3 The State of Sustainable Development in Algeria

Algeria has implemented development programs targeting economic, social, and environmental sectors. However, challenges remain, particularly due to its resource-dependent economy, which makes it vulnerable to financial and economic crises. On the social front, certain rural and interior regions still experience high poverty rates, limited access to education, and inadequate healthcare facilities for primary healthcare services.

Environmentally, Algeria's strategic location provides significant reserves of natural resources, particularly energy resources (Moumen & El-Wafi, 2021, pp. 469-471). However, ensuring sustainable development across economic, social, and environmental dimensions requires continued efforts and strategic policies.

2.4 The State of Sustainable Development in Algeria – Economic Aspect

Algeria has undertaken multiple economic reform programs in an effort to improve its economic conditions. The country has gone through two key phases in its pursuit of economic development:

- **The Independent Decision-Making Phase (1962-1993):** This period was marked by high and stable oil prices until 1981, allowing the Algerian government to adopt a socialist approach in managing public enterprises and implementing comprehensive social support and protection policies.
- **The Dependent Decision-Making Phase (1993-Present):** Following economic instability, declining oil prices, and political challenges, Algeria was compelled to adopt economic restructuring measures, including external debt rescheduling as recommended by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.

Among the most significant economic reform tools implemented during this phase are:

- **Monetary policy:** Aimed at influencing money supply through expansionary or contractionary measures to regulate purchasing power, demand, and investment. This, in turn, contributes to higher production, reduced unemployment, and controlled inflation. The IMF-

recommended measures included raising interest rates, capping local credit limits, and controlling currency issuance.

- **Fiscal policy:** Focused on balancing revenues and expenditures within Algeria's financial laws to reduce budget deficits. Key measures included enhancing and diversifying the tax system and revising social subsidy policies.
- **Foreign trade and debt management:** Encompasses export promotion, import reduction, and securing foreign currency reserves. Major steps taken include trade liberalization, tariff reductions, and external debt restructuring (Bouqassa, 2018, pp. 84-87).

Table 2. Evolution of Algeria's Medium- and Long-Term External Debt

Year	Debt	Year	Debt	Year	Debt	Year	Debt
1984	15,962	1994	29,908	2004	21,898	2014	1,821
1985	19,771	1995	32,680	2005	16,778	2015	1,180
1986	23,818	1996	33,520	2006	5,438	2016	1,832
1987	27,733	1997	31,801	2007	5,166	2017	1,858
1988	25,168	1998	31,495	2008	4,724	2018	1,674
1989	26,397	1999	28,505	2009	4,221	2019	1,566
1990	27,391	2000	25,304	2010	3,784	2020	1,665
1991	27,290	2001	22,587	2011	3,301	2021*	1,473
1992	26,558	2002	22,878	2012	2,537	<i>Unit in million US dollars</i>	
1993	25,443	2003	23,544	2013	2,130	<i>(*): Expected</i>	

Source: Bank of Algeria, External Debt Statistics <https://www.bank-of-algeria.dz>

Data from (the Bank of Algeria 2022) indicates that Algeria's external debt for the medium and long term increased significantly in the late 1980s, reaching \$15.96 billion in 1984 and rising further to \$33.52 billion in 1996 due to economic crises. This prompted the government to adopt debt rescheduling programs as a key reform measure. However, following a surge in oil prices and political stabilization, Algeria's external debt declined sharply, reaching \$1.665 billion by 2020-a testament to the government's efforts to achieve economic sustainability.

2.5 The State of Sustainable Development in Algeria – Environmental Aspect

Sustainable development in the environmental sector is centered around preserving a clean environment, reducing pollution, and transitioning to sustainable energy sources. Algeria has taken steps toward energy transition as part of its National Plan for Environment and Sustainable Development 2030 (Amouri & Traka, 2021, p. 181), with a key focus on reducing fossil fuel consumption.

Table 3. Selected Environmental Indicators for Sustainable Development in Algeria

Year	Fossil Fuel Energy Consumption (%)	Alternative & Nuclear Energy (%)	CO ₂ Emissions (Kilotons)
1995	99.90	0.10	76,440
1998	99.70	0.10	74,649
2001	99.80	0.00	78,646
2004	99.70	0.10	89,493
2007	99.80	0.00	102,750

2010	99.80	0.00	114,179
2014	100.00	0.00	147,735
2017	-	-	157,704
2019	-	-	170,582

Source: World Bank Data <https://data.worldbank.org>

Statistics from (the World Bank 2025) reveal that Algeria's energy sector remains highly dependent on fossil fuels. Between 1995 and 2014, fossil fuel consumption accounted for 99% of total energy use, while alternative energy sources remained at a negligible 0.1%.(the World Bank 2025) This reliance on fossil fuels has resulted in a significant increase in CO₂ emissions. In 1995, Algeria's CO₂ emissions were 76,440 kilotons, but by 2019, this figure had risen sharply to 170,582 kilotons. (The World Bank 2025).The increasing carbon footprint has direct implications for climate change and contributes to air pollution, highlighting the need for urgent environmental policy interventions.

2.6 The State of Sustainable Development in Algeria – Social Aspect

The social dimension of sustainable development relates to population well-being, focusing on human development, social stability, and access to quality healthcare and education. It aims to achieve decent living conditions, material and mental well-being, and a higher standard of living for the population (Larabi, 2022, p. 149). Algeria has made significant progress in achieving sustainable social development through improving education, expanding healthcare services, reducing poverty and unemployment, and enhancing national security.

Table 4. Gross Enrollment Rate in Primary Education in Algeria

Year	Enrollment Rate (%)	Year	Enrollment Rate (%)	Year	Enrollment Rate (%)	Year	Enrollment Rate (%)
1990	93.76	1998	104.05	2006	111.93	2014	111.68
1991	94.50	1999	106.72	2007	112.47	2015	110.84
1992	95.68	2000	109.77	2008	111.07	2016	116.68
1993	95.73	2001	108.81	2009	112.94	2017	109.83
1994	96.46	2002	110.43	2010	113.37	2018	108.70
1995	96.89	2003	111.20	2011	112.38	2019	107.77
1996	98.60	2004	111.67	2012	112.38	World Bank Open Data	
1997	101.33	2005	112.20	2013	112.24		

Source: World Bank Open Data <https://data.worldbank.org>

Data from Table 4 (World Bank, 2025) shows a consistent increase in primary school enrollment rates. The average enrollment rate between 1990 and 1999 was 98.37%, and it continued to rise, reaching an average of 111.08% between 2000 and 2019. This improvement is attributed to significant investments in educational infrastructure, human resource development, and the enforcement of compulsory education laws (Official Gazette of the Algerian Republic, 2010, pp. 05-06).

Table 5. Poverty Rate, Number of Poor People, and Their Distribution in Algeria

Poverty Rate	Measurement Type	1988	1995	2000	2004	2005	2006	2008
Food Poverty Line	(%)	3.6	5.7	3.10	1.60	-	-	-
General Poverty Line	(%)	8.1	14.1	12.10	6.80	5.7	5.6	5.0
Poor Population (Thousands)	Food Poverty Line	21	1,611	951	518	-	-	-
Poor Population (Thousands)	General Poverty Line	532	3,986	2,200	1,875	-	-	-

***Food Poverty Line:** The average caloric intake required per individual based on national consumption data.

***General Poverty Line:** The minimum income or expenditure level necessary for an individual or family to afford both food and essential non-food needs.

Source: Statistical data from the study Determinants of Poverty in Algeria Using VAR Regression (1980-2014), by Khaled Ben Jeloul, 2015.

According to Table 5 (Ben Jeloul, 2015, pp. 48-49), Algeria's general poverty rate was relatively low in the 1980s, recorded at 8.1% (532,000 people). However, during the early 1990s, it rose sharply to 14.1% (3.99 million people) due to economic and political instability.

By the early 2000s, the poverty rate started declining, reaching 12.1% in 2000 and dropping further to 5% in 2008 (1.87 million people). This reduction was driven by higher oil prices, political stability, and improved security conditions.

Table 6. Unemployment Rate Trends in Algeria

Year	Unemployment (%)	Year	Unemployment (%)	Year	Unemployment (%)	Year	Unemployment (%)
1991	20.60	1999	28.54	2007	13.79	2015	11.20
1992	24.38	2000	29.77	2008	11.33	2016	10.20
1993	26.23	2001	27.30	2009	10.16	2017	12.00
1994	27.74	2002	25.90	2010	9.96	2018	12.15
1995	31.84	2003	23.72	2011	9.96	2019	12.28
1996	28.31	2004	17.65	2012	10.97	2020	14.04
1997	25.43	2005	15.27	2013	9.82	World Bank	
1998	26.85	2006	12.27	2014	10.20		

Source: World Bank Open Data <https://data.worldbank.org>

According to Table 6 (World Bank, 2025), Algeria's unemployment rate in the 1990s was consistently high, averaging 26.66% between 1991 and 2003. This was mainly due to the collapse in oil prices and the political turmoil of that period, which led the Algerian government to adopt extensive economic reforms, including privatization and workforce downsizing. In contrast, from the early 2000s onwards, unemployment rates declined significantly. Between 2004 and 2020, the average unemployment rate dropped to 12.06%, driven by government-led economic reforms and development programs, particularly in rural areas. One of the key initiatives contributing to lower unemployment in recent years is the unemployment benefit

system, which provides financial assistance to job-seeking youth and disadvantaged groups. According to (the Algerian Ministry of Labor, Employment, and Social Security 2025), this program has helped mitigate unemployment and support vulnerable populations.

3. Universal Health Coverage (UHC)

3.1 Concept of Universal Health Coverage

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines universal health coverage (UHC) as ensuring that all individuals have access to quality healthcare services when and where they need them, without suffering financial hardship. UHC encompasses a full spectrum of essential health services, ranging from health promotion and disease prevention to treatment, rehabilitation, and palliative care for individuals of all age groups (WHO, 2023). According to the World Bank, accessible and affordable healthcare is a fundamental pillar for ensuring a decent quality of life and enhancing individual productivity, which in turn drives economic development. UHC focuses on delivering healthcare services to those in need while preventing financial distress, reducing poverty, and promoting equity (World Bank, 2024). Similarly, the United Nations emphasizes that UHC is a fundamental right, ensuring that all individuals receive the healthcare they require, regardless of financial barriers. It is recognized as a core objective of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), covering health promotion, disease prevention, and treatment services (United Nations, 2025). From these definitions, it is evident that universal health coverage guarantees the right to healthcare for all individuals at the right time and place, without leading to financial hardship that could push them into poverty. UHC is built on the principles of equality, justice, and fairness, ensuring that all members of society, regardless of their social status, have access to healthcare.

3.2 Importance of Universal Health Coverage

Investing in healthcare brings significant economic and social returns, with direct effects on gross domestic product (GDP) by improving productivity and creating investment opportunities. UHC serves as an effective mechanism for delivering health, environmental, economic, and political benefits, including:

- **Health Benefits:** UHC enhances public health by providing free or affordable essential healthcare to all population groups, particularly the poor and marginalized communities.
- **Economic Benefits:** UHC contributes to economic development, poverty reduction, and greater social equality. By offering financial protection, it prevents low-income households from overspending on healthcare, thereby reducing excessive savings for medical emergencies and stimulating economic activity. Additionally, UHC creates employment opportunities in the healthcare sector.
- **Political Benefits:** Supporting vulnerable populations and assisting the middle class fosters social protection and public support, serving as an indicator of effective political decision-making that prioritizes citizen welfare (Nicholson, Yates, Warburton & Fontana, 2015, pp. 6-7).

3.3 Indicators for Measuring Universal Health Coverage

Progress in achieving UHC is assessed using two key indicators:

- **Coverage of essential health services**
- **Financial protection and health expenditure**

Despite global efforts to expand UHC, there remains a gap between expectations and actual progress in achieving comprehensive healthcare coverage worldwide (World Health Organization, 2024, pp. 61-62).

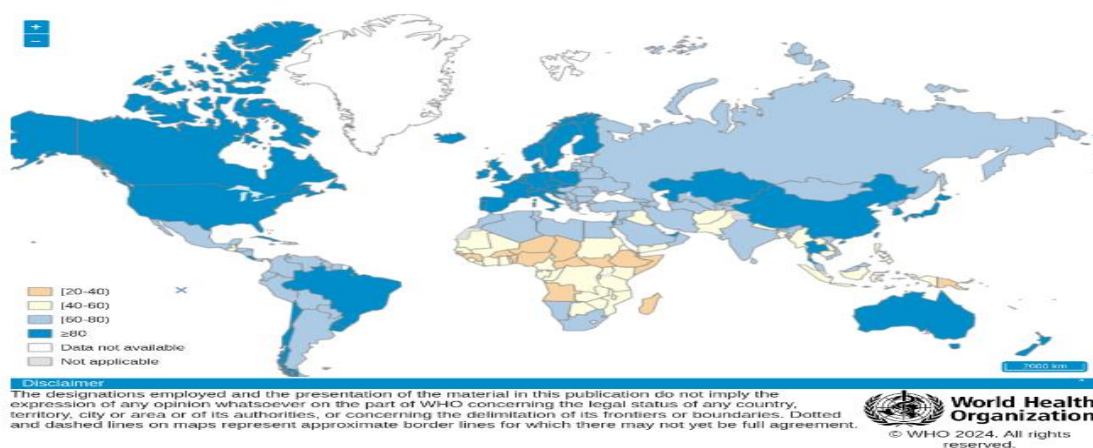
3.4 Indicator of Essential Health Services Coverage

The UHC service coverage index measures the average coverage of essential health services, including:

- Reproductive, maternal, and child health
- Communicable diseases
- Non-communicable diseases
- Access to healthcare services, particularly for disadvantaged populations

This indicator is expressed as a percentage and is based on over 14 sub-indicators that track the delivery of healthcare services. The following figure illustrates the percentage of essential health service coverage across different regions of the world (World Health Organization, 2025).

Fig.2. Essential Health Service Coverage across Different Countries



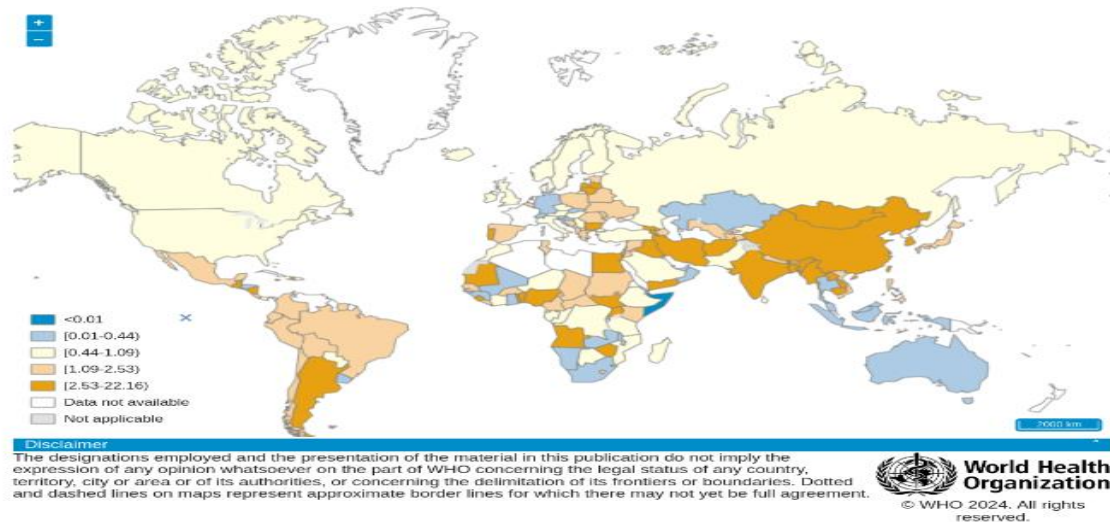
Source: World Health Organization <https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/themes/topics/service-coverage>

According to Figure 2, essential health service coverage varies by geographic region and economic status.

- Developed countries (such as European nations, North America, Australia, and northern Russia) have high UHC coverage, exceeding 80%.
- Developing countries (such as those in North Africa, South America, and the Middle East) have moderate UHC coverage, ranging between 60% and 80%.
- Sub-Saharan Africa, particularly Central African nations, struggles with low UHC coverage (20% to 60%), primarily due to economic instability and inadequate healthcare infrastructure.

3.5 Financial Protection and Health Expenditure on Healthcare Services

Financial protection is a fundamental pillar of universal health coverage (UHC). Inadequate financial protection mechanisms can lead to economic hardship due to out-of-pocket health expenditures. This indicator assesses the extent to which direct health spending contributes to poverty levels (World Health Organization, 2025).

Fig.3. Population Spending More Than 25% of Household Income on Health

Source: World Health Organization [https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/indicators/indicator-details/GHO/population-with-household-expenditures-on-health-greater-than-25-of-total-household-expenditure-or-income-\(-sdg-indicator-3-8-2\)-\(-\)](https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/indicators/indicator-details/GHO/population-with-household-expenditures-on-health-greater-than-25-of-total-household-expenditure-or-income-(-sdg-indicator-3-8-2)-(-))

According to Figure 3, the percentage of the population spending more than 25% of total household income on health expenses varies across different regions:

- Developed countries (e.g., European nations, Russia, and the United States) have relatively low figures, ranging between 0.44% and 1.09%.
- South American countries report a moderate range, between 1.09% and 2.53%.
- China and India exhibit higher rates, ranging between 2.53% and 22.16%, indicating greater financial burden on households.
- Australia, South Africa, and Germany show the lowest figures, ranging between 0.01% and 0.44%. These variations reflect differences in healthcare policies, social protection systems, and economic conditions across countries.

3.6 Universal Health Coverage Indicators in Algeria

Algeria is working toward achieving higher UHC rates by implementing healthcare reforms that ensure comprehensive health coverage without causing financial hardship. According to WHO data, Algeria has seen significant progress in UHC, reaching a coverage rate of 74% in recent years (World Health Organization, 2024).

Table 7. Universal Health Coverage Index in Algeria

Year	2000	2005	2010	2015	2017	2019
UHC Index (%)	56	61	67	74	74	74

Source: World Health Organization <http://apps.who.int/nha/database>

Table 8. Medical and Paramedical Workforce in Algeria

Category	2016	2017	2018
Total Medical Workforce	100,572	105,438	109,589
General Practitioners, Specialists & Residents	74,937	78,838	81,751
Dentists	13,747	14,263	15,008
Pharmacists	11,888	12,337	12,890
Total Paramedical Workforce	127,365	127,624	139,232
Senior Technicians	87,575	86,695	91,152
Technicians	4,070	3,267	3,260

Health Assistants	35,720	37,662	44,820
Healthcare Coverage			
Ratio of Population per Medical Staff Member	2016	2017	2018
Per Doctor	545	529	521
Per Dentist	2,971	2,925	2,837
Per Pharmacist	3,435	3,382	3,303
Per Senior Technician	466	481	467
Per Technician	10,033	12,770	13,061
Per Health Assistant	1,143	1,108	950

Public Sector Medical Staff				Private Sector Medical Staff			
Category	2016	2017	2018	Category	2016	2017	2018
Doctors	55,158	57,227	58,384	Doctors	19,779	21,611	23,367
Dentists	7,014	6,928	7,072	Dentists	6,733	7,335	7,936
Pharmacists	1,695	1,796	2,159	Pharmacists	10,193	10,541	10,731
Total	63,867	65,951	67,615	Total	36,705	39,487	42,034

Source: Algeria in Figures, National Office of Statistics, Bulletin No. 49, 2021

<https://www.ons.dz/spip.php?rubrique327>

The data highlights notable improvements in both human and physical healthcare resources. Algeria has expanded its medical and paramedical workforce, contributing to better healthcare accessibility and quality.

Table 9. Healthcare Facilities in Algeria

Basic Healthcare Facilities in Algeria						
Facility Type	2016	Beds 2016	2017	Beds 2017	2018	Beds 2018
General Hospitals	200	38,407	205	40,322	206	40,442
Hospital Institutions	9	1,324	9	1,354	9	1,533
University Hospitals	15	12,910	15	12,799	15	12,671
University Healthcare Centers	1	818	1	869	1	1,087
Specialized Hospitals	75	11,725	77	11,818	79	12,426
Private Maternity Clinics	123	-	127	-	135	-

Source: Algeria in Figures, National Office of Statistics, Bulletin No. 49, 2021

<https://www.ons.dz/spip.php?rubrique327>

The significant expansion of healthcare facilities over recent years reflects Algeria's commitment to improving healthcare services. The increase in medical infrastructure, hospital beds, and specialized healthcare institutions plays a vital role in enhancing universal health coverage. (National Office of Statistics, 2021, pp. 22-23)

3.7 Indicators of Essential Health Services Coverage in Algeria

Table 10. Key Indicators of Essential Health Services in Algeria

Indicator	Rate (%)	Year
Neonatal mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	15.65	2021
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	19.16	2021
Under-five mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	22.34	2021
Tetanus immunization coverage (children)	98.00	2020
Estimated antiretroviral therapy (HIV/AIDS) coverage	82.00	2021
Tuberculosis vaccination coverage	72.80	2017
Prenatal care (at least 4 check-ups)	69.80	2016-2019

Average response capacity to International Health Regulations	75.29	2017
Measles second-dose vaccination coverage	77.00	2021
Sanitation services coverage	85.97	2020
Pneumococcal vaccination coverage (children aged one year)	91.00	2021
Safe sanitation access	17.61	2020
Meningitis vaccination coverage (children aged one year)	91.00	2021

Source: World Health Organization <https://data.who.int/countries/012>

According to Table 10, Algeria has made notable progress in essential health services coverage (WHO, 2024).

- Sanitation services coverage reached 85.97% in 2020.
- Prenatal healthcare coverage improved, reaching 69.80% during 2016-2019.
- Infant and under-five mortality rates remained below 22.50% in 2020 and 2021.
- Immunization rates against tuberculosis, tetanus, HIV/AIDS, measles, pneumococcal infections, and meningitis have significantly improved, averaging 85.16% between 2020 and 2021.

These improvements are attributed to comprehensive health sector reforms over the past two decades.

3.8 Evolution of Healthcare Expenditure in Algeria

Table 11. Total National Expenditure, Public Health Spending, and Operating Budgets

Year	Total National Expenditure (DZD)	Government Health Expenditure (DZD)	General Operating Budget (DZD)
2000	3,245,984,900,000.00	33,900,742,000.00	965,328,164,000.00
2001	3,958,517,000,000.00	38,324,796,000.00	836,294,176,000.00
2002	4,427,002,000,000.00	49,117,107,000.00	1,050,166,167,000.00
2003	4,915,468,000,000.00	55,430,565,000.00	1,097,385,900,000.00
2004	5,601,509,000,000.00	63,770,452,000.00	1,200,000,000,000.00
2005	6,125,984,000,000.00	62,460,953,000.00	1,200,000,000,000.00
2006	6,651,431,000,000.00	70,315,276,000.00	1,283,446,977,000.00
2007	7,711,300,000,000.00	93,552,966,000.00	1,574,943,361,000.00
2008	9,288,782,000,000.00	129,201,251,000.00	2,017,969,196,000.00
2009	10,823,273,000,000.00	178,322,829,000.00	2,593,741,485,000.00
2010	12,367,061,000,000.00	195,011,838,000.00	2,837,999,823,000.00
2011	14,371,046,000,000.00	227,859,541,000.00	3,434,306,634,000.00
2012	16,201,466,000,000.00	404,945,348,000.00	4,608,250,475,000.00
2013	17,784,790,000,000.00	306,925,642,000.00	4,335,614,484,000.00
2014	19,578,108,000,000.00	365,946,753,000.00	4,714,452,366,000.00
2015	21,172,513,000,000.00	381,972,062,000.00	4,972,278,494,000.00
2016	22,313,156,000,000.00	379,407,269,000.00	4,807,332,000,000.00
2017	23,000,441,000,000.00	389,073,747,000.00	4,591,841,961,000.00
2018	23,951,862,000,000.00	392,163,373,000.00	4,584,462,233,000.00
2019	24,404,147,000,000.00	398,970,409,000.00	4,954,476,536,000.00
2020	22,850,067,000,000.00	408,282,838,000.00	4,893,439,095,000.00
2021	25,033,519,000,000.00	410,672,176,000.00	5,314,506,529,000.00

Source: World Bank Open Data <https://data.albankaldawli.org> and Algerian Ministry of Finance <https://www.mf.gov.dz/index.php/ar/>

According to Table 11 (World Bank, 2025)., total national expenditure has been steadily increasing over the past two decades. This growth is linked to:

- Economic recovery
- Implementation of development programs, particularly in rural areas
- Infrastructure improvements

Annual budget allocations for the health sector have also seen significant increases : (Ministry of Finance, 2025)

- 2000: DZD 33.9 billion
- 2021: DZD 410.67 billion

These substantial investments have been crucial in expanding healthcare coverage and implementing health development programs.

3.9 National Social Security Policy for Achieving Social Protection

Social security in Algeria is an integral part of the labor environment, aiming to expand social protection coverage to a broader population while simplifying procedures to ensure universal access to social security benefits. Coverage is categorized into:

- Salaried workers
- Self-employed workers
- Special categories (vulnerable groups, retirees, etc.)

Currently, over 80% of Algeria's population is covered under social security, including free healthcare services for the uninsured and low-income individuals, funded by the state. The system encompasses all disease and accident-related coverage, aligned with modern social security frameworks established by the International Labour Organization (ILO) (Ministry of Labor, Employment, and Social Security, 2024).

Table 12. Development of Algeria's National Social Protection System

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017
National Social Security Fund				
Total insured individuals	11,342,779	11,957,202	12,316,569	12,050,005
Salaried workers	6,126,302	6,140,078	5,874,042	6,347,433
Percentage (%)	54.01%	51.35%	74.69%	52.68%
National Pension Fund				
Total retirees	2,773, 615	2, 978,557	3,166,903	3,216,648
Social Security Fund for Self-Employed Workers				
Active contributors	1,493,629	1, 721,756	1, 806,124	1, 697,463
Registered subscribers	643,997	893,935	842,483	827,960
Total retirees	243,241	158,559	266,338	277,222
National Fund for Paid Leave, Unemployment, and Weather-Related Work Interruptions in Construction & Public Works				
Registered employers	64,112	64,505	59,322	58,641
Declared workers	1, 102,401	1, 162,144	1, 063,957	1, 025,716
Total benefits provided	1, 256,930	1, 247,994	1, 153,508	1, 155,766

Source: Algeria in Figures, National Office of Statistics, Bulletin No. 49, 2021

<https://www.ons.dz/spip.php?rubrique327>

Table 12 illustrates a notable increase in the number of insured individuals across various social security schemes in Algeria (National Office of Statistics, 2021, p. 20).

4. Analysis of Results

Universal health coverage (UHC) is a fundamental pillar of sustainable development, creating a mutually beneficial relationship between public health and economic growth. Investing in human capital thrives under favorable health conditions, while the healthcare sector itself generates economic value through job creation and the development of medical services.

From the analysis of sustainable development indicators and UHC data in Algeria, it is evident that the country is making considerable progress in line with WHO recommendations. The government is actively working to ensure equitable access to essential health services by:

- Expanding medical and paramedical staff
- Increasing the number of healthcare facilities
- Encouraging private-sector participation in healthcare
- Enhancing social protection programs to minimize financial barriers to healthcare access

These ongoing reforms highlight the critical role of the healthcare sector in medium- and long-term national development strategies and reflect Algeria's commitment to improving public health and social security systems.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

As discussed, sustainable development is the primary goal for economies worldwide, encompassing economic, social, and environmental dimensions as outlined by the United Nations. As a developing country, Algeria has implemented economic and social reform programs aimed at achieving growth and improving the well-being of its citizens.

One of the key objectives of sustainable development is universal health coverage (UHC), ensuring that individuals have access to essential healthcare services without facing financial hardship that could lead to poverty. The Algerian government has actively worked to enhance its healthcare system by training and employing medical and paramedical personnel, establishing modern healthcare facilities, and improving social protection programs.

However, challenges remain, particularly in rural and desert regions, where barriers to healthcare access and development persist. To address these gaps and accelerate sustainable development and UHC implementation, the following recommendations are proposed:

- Diversifying income sources to build a balanced and resilient economy.
- Protecting environmental resources by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- Ensuring universal access to primary education, particularly for children in remote and marginalized areas.
- Enhancing healthcare services by continuously training medical professionals and equipping hospitals with advanced medical technology.
- Strengthening social protection programs, particularly for vulnerable populations.
- Adapting social security laws and regulations to ensure comprehensive coverage for all individuals.

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