

Remote Australia to remote Solomon Islands: my adventures with the Australian Volunteer Program

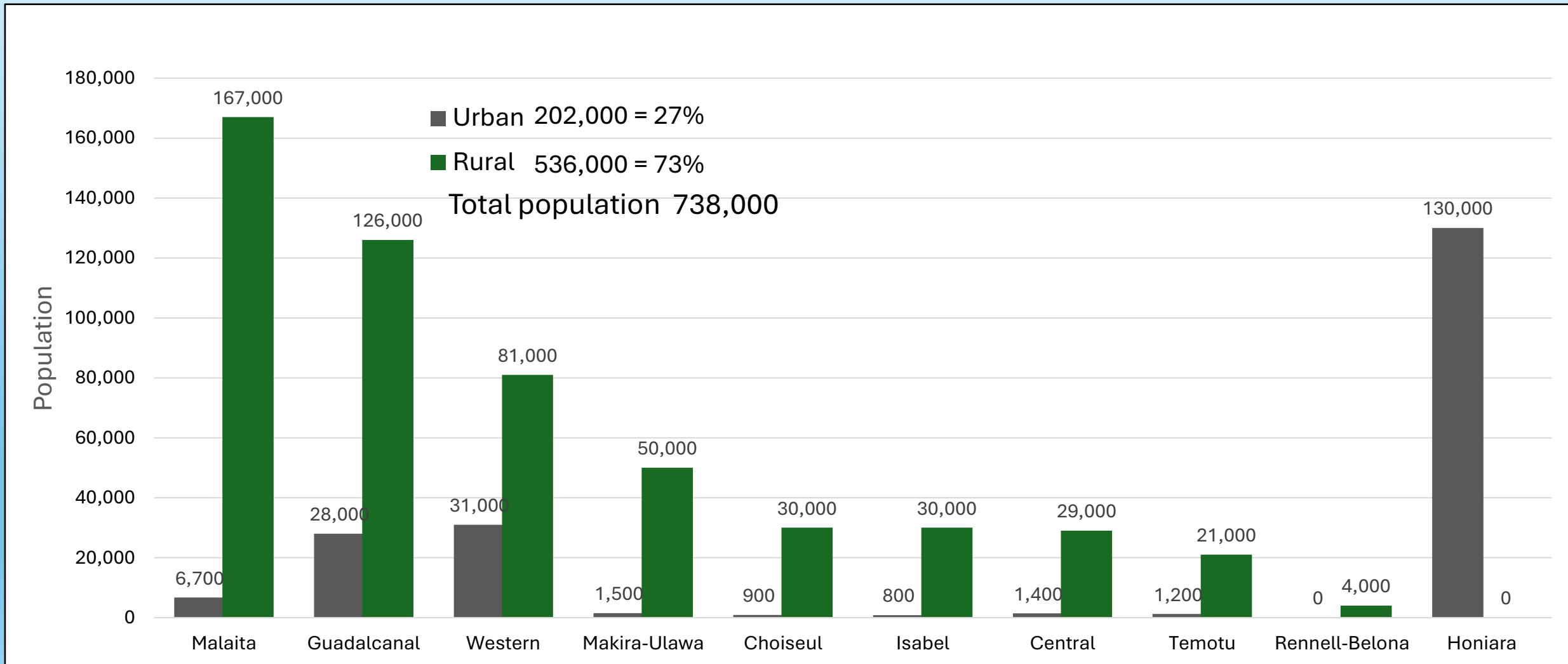


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Australian Volunteer Program, Solomon Islands, May 2026

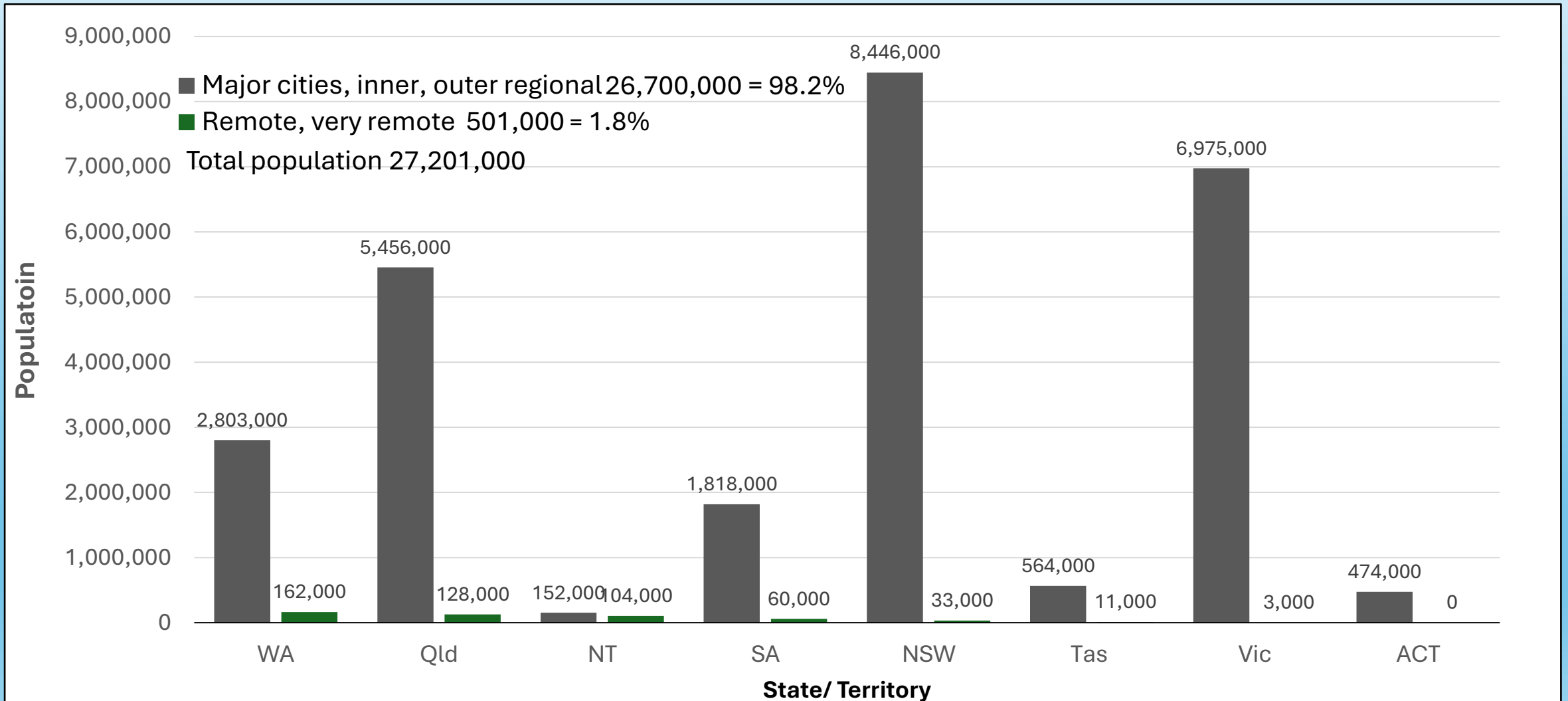




Solomon Islands population by province and urban/rural location, 2019 census



Australian population by state/ territory and urban/ remote, 2021 census

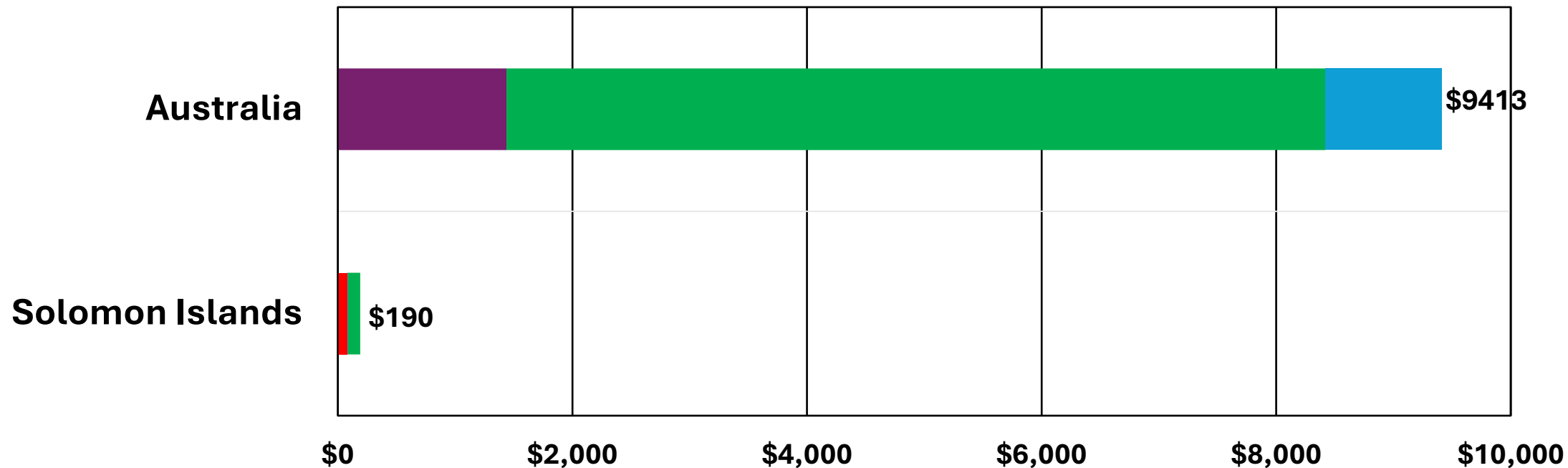




Alice Springs – remote Australia
Administrative centre, Central Australia

Auki – urban Solomon Islands
Administrative centre, Malaita Province

Annual health expenditure per person by source, Solomon Islands and Australia, \$AUD, 2022



	Solomon Islands		Australia	
■ Development assistance	\$79	41.6%	\$0	0%
■ Out of pocket	\$6	3.2%	\$1,438	15.3%
■ Government	\$106	55.8%	\$6,980	74.2%
■ Prepaid private	\$0	0%	\$995	10.6%

Solomon Islands NHSP

National Health Strategic Plan 2022–2031

“A Healthy Future for All”



Ministry of Health & Medical Services

VISION
A HEALTHY FUTURE
FOR ALL

GOAL
Ensure that all Solomon Islanders have access to equitable quality preventive, curative, rehabilitative and promotional health services, irrespective of where they live

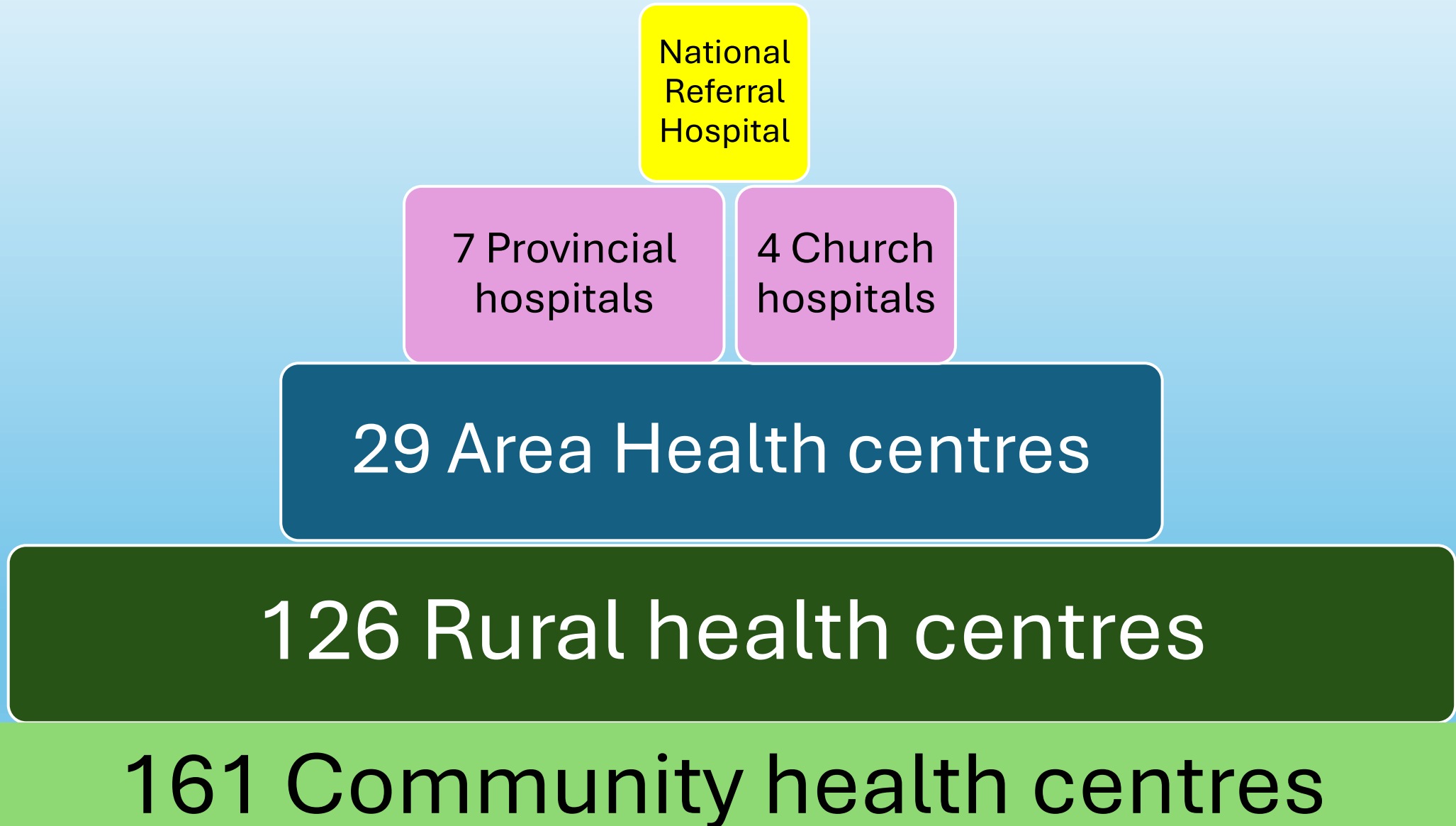
MISSION:
Prevent disease, restore and promote health and well-being

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1
Better governance of the health sector

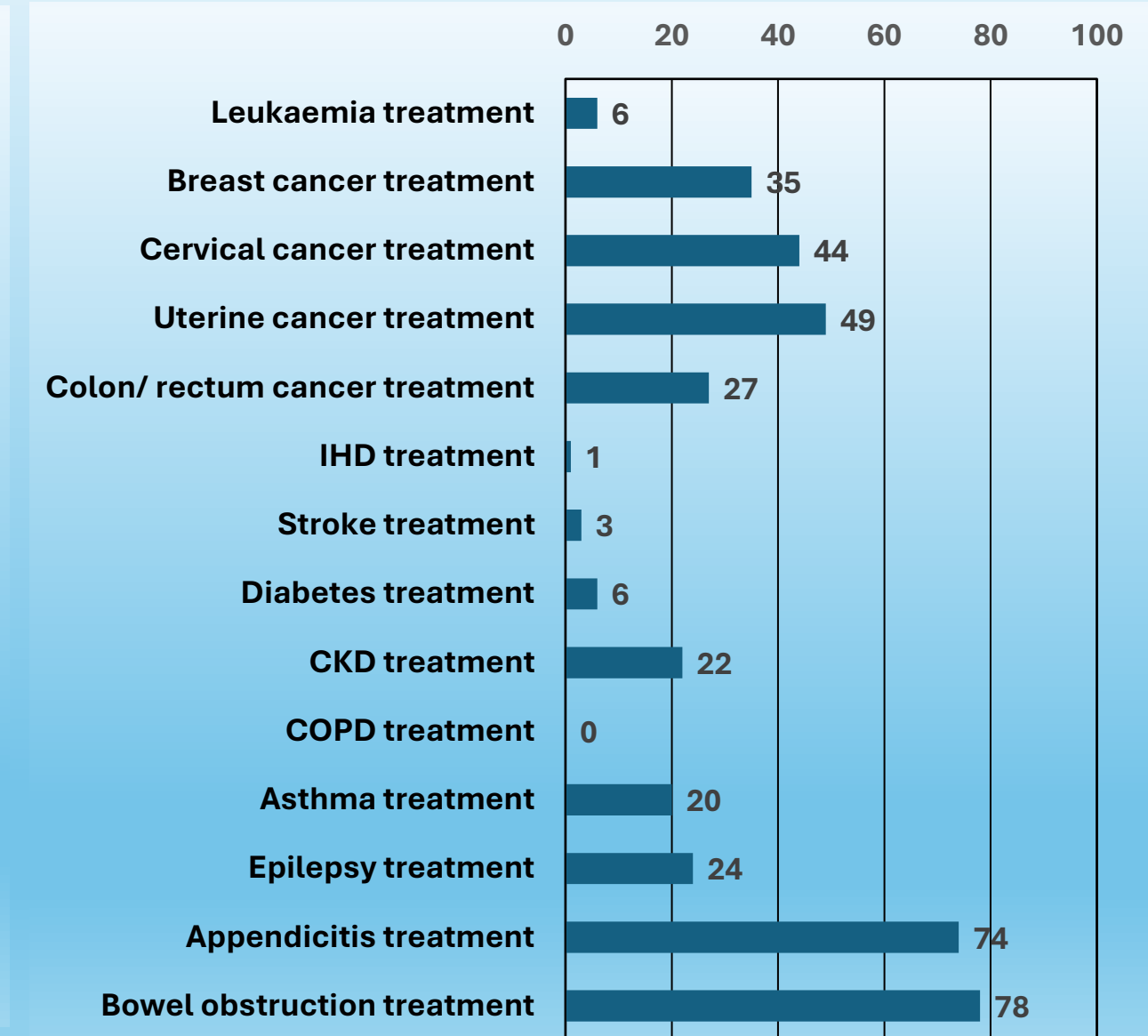
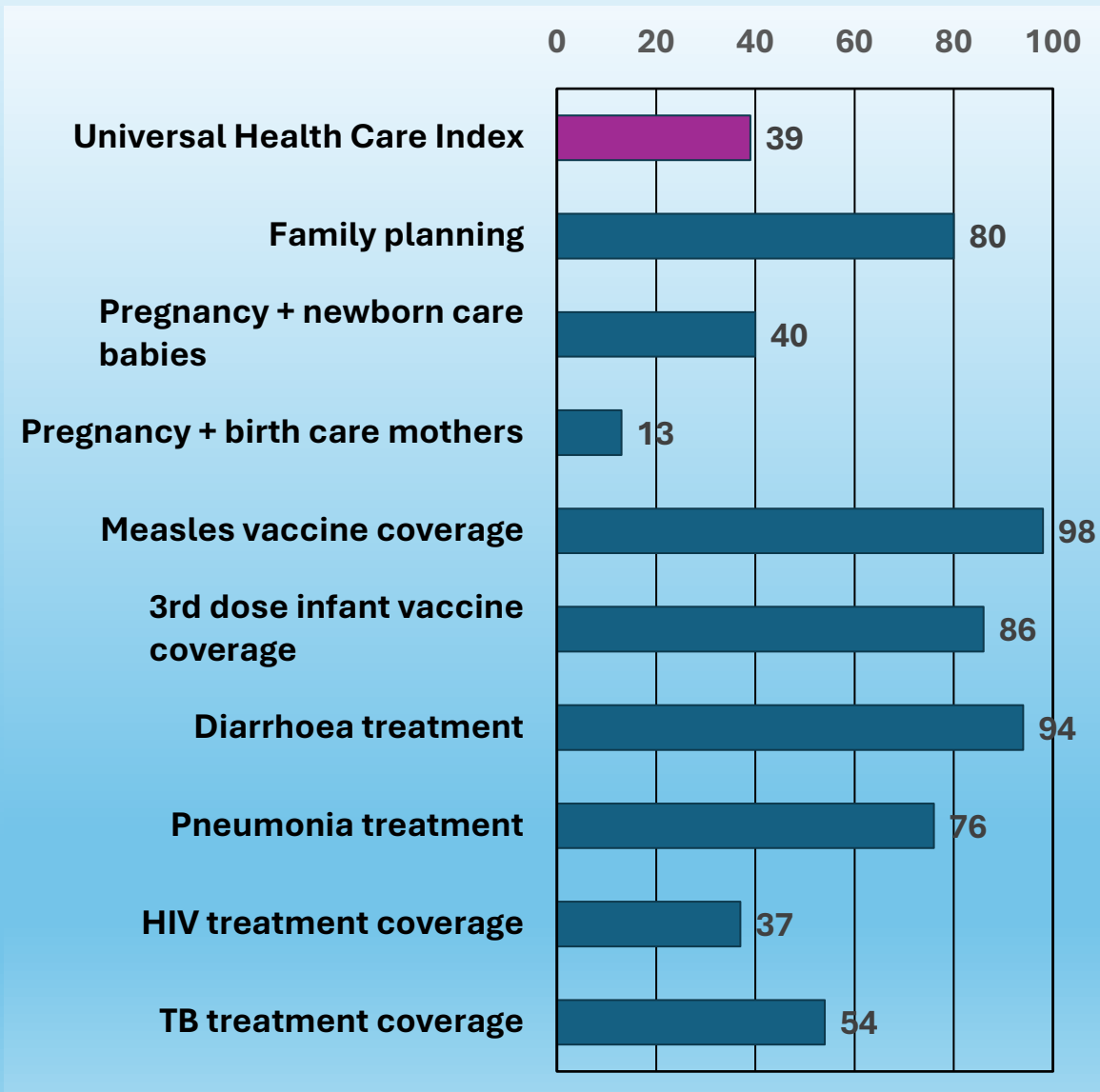
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2
Our systems and resources meet our needs and are responsibly managed

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3
All Solomon Islanders have equitable access to fully implemented, quality health-care programmes

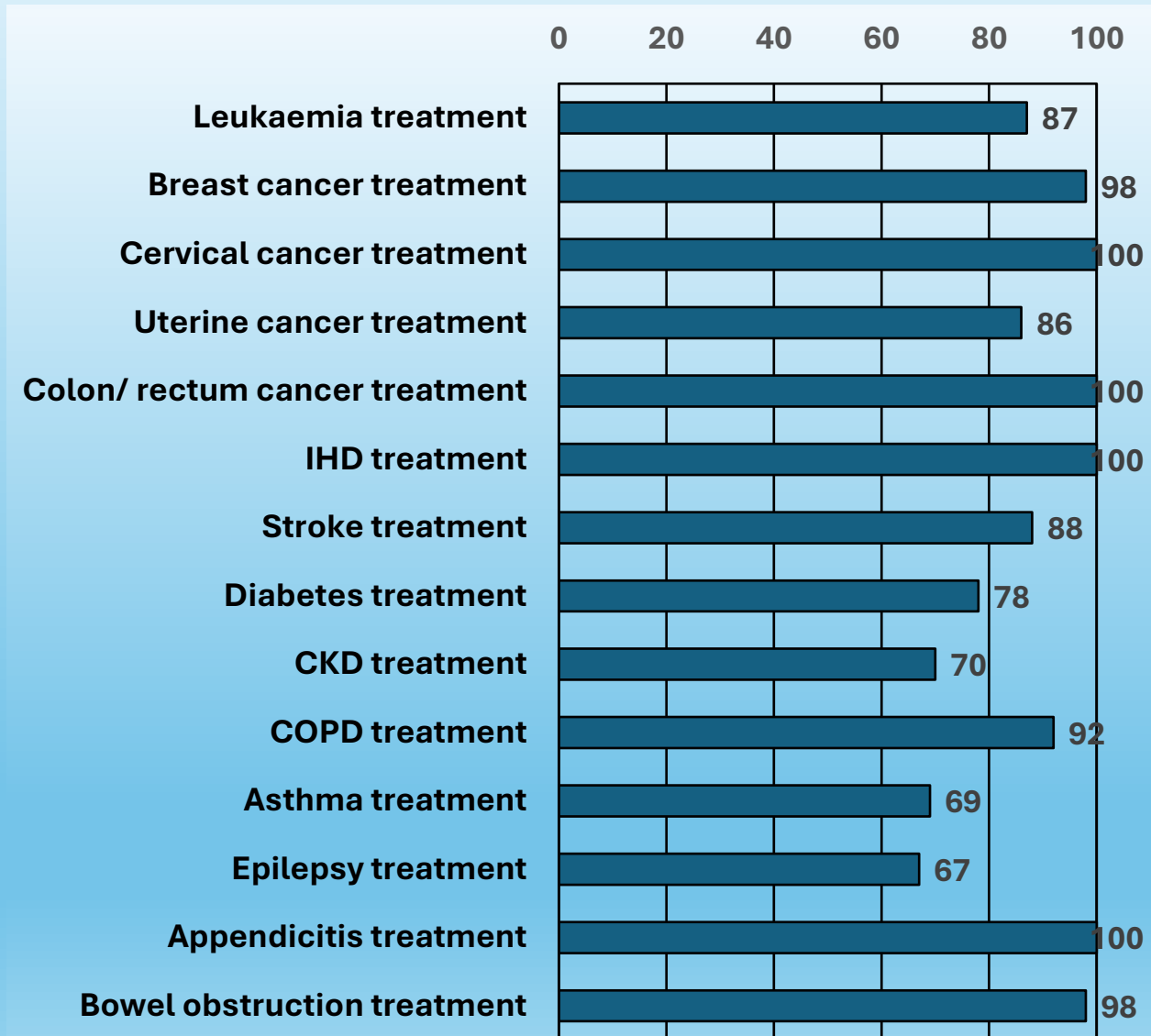
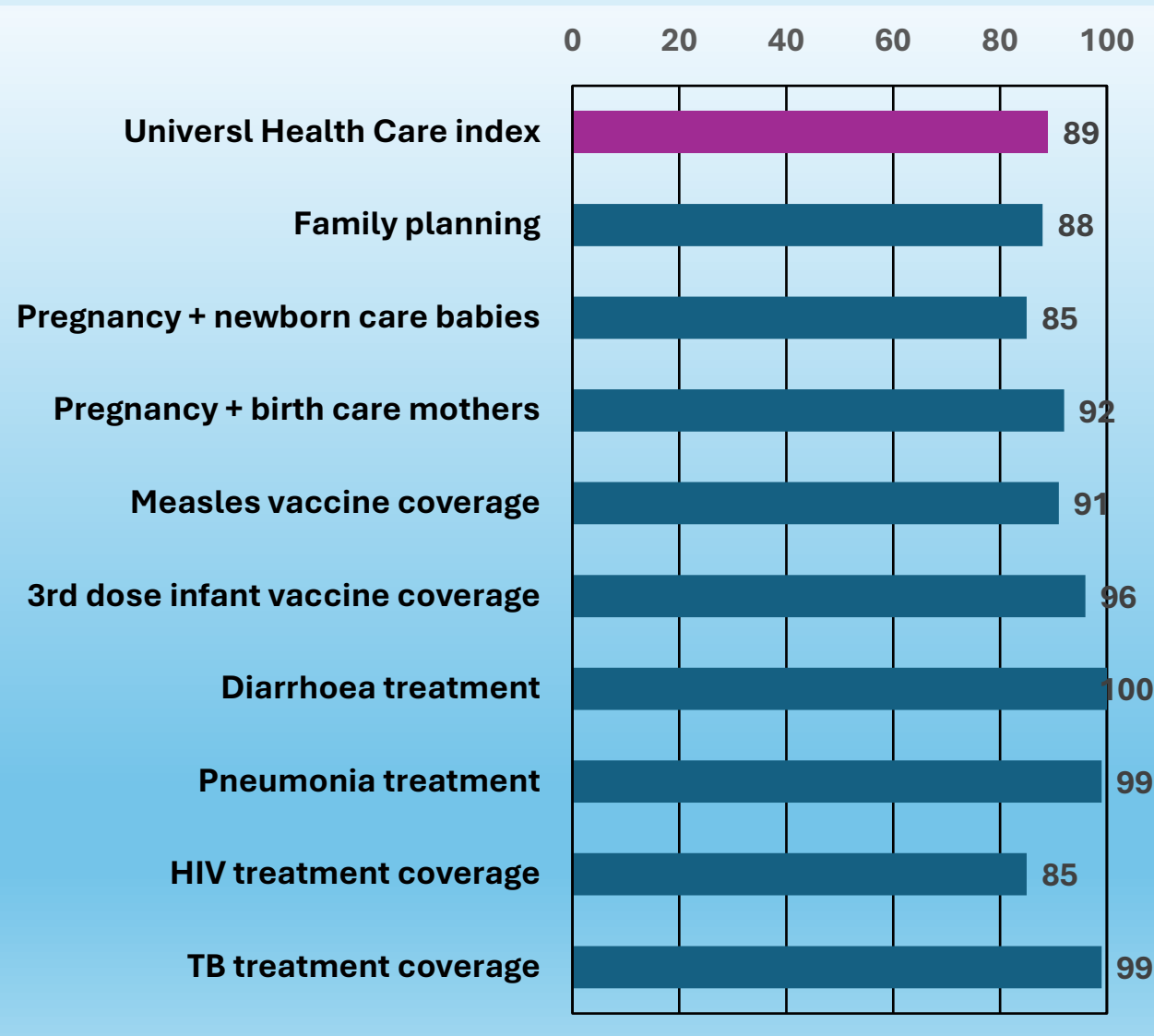
Solomon Islands Health Facility Structure



Universal Health Coverage, Solomon Islands, 2019



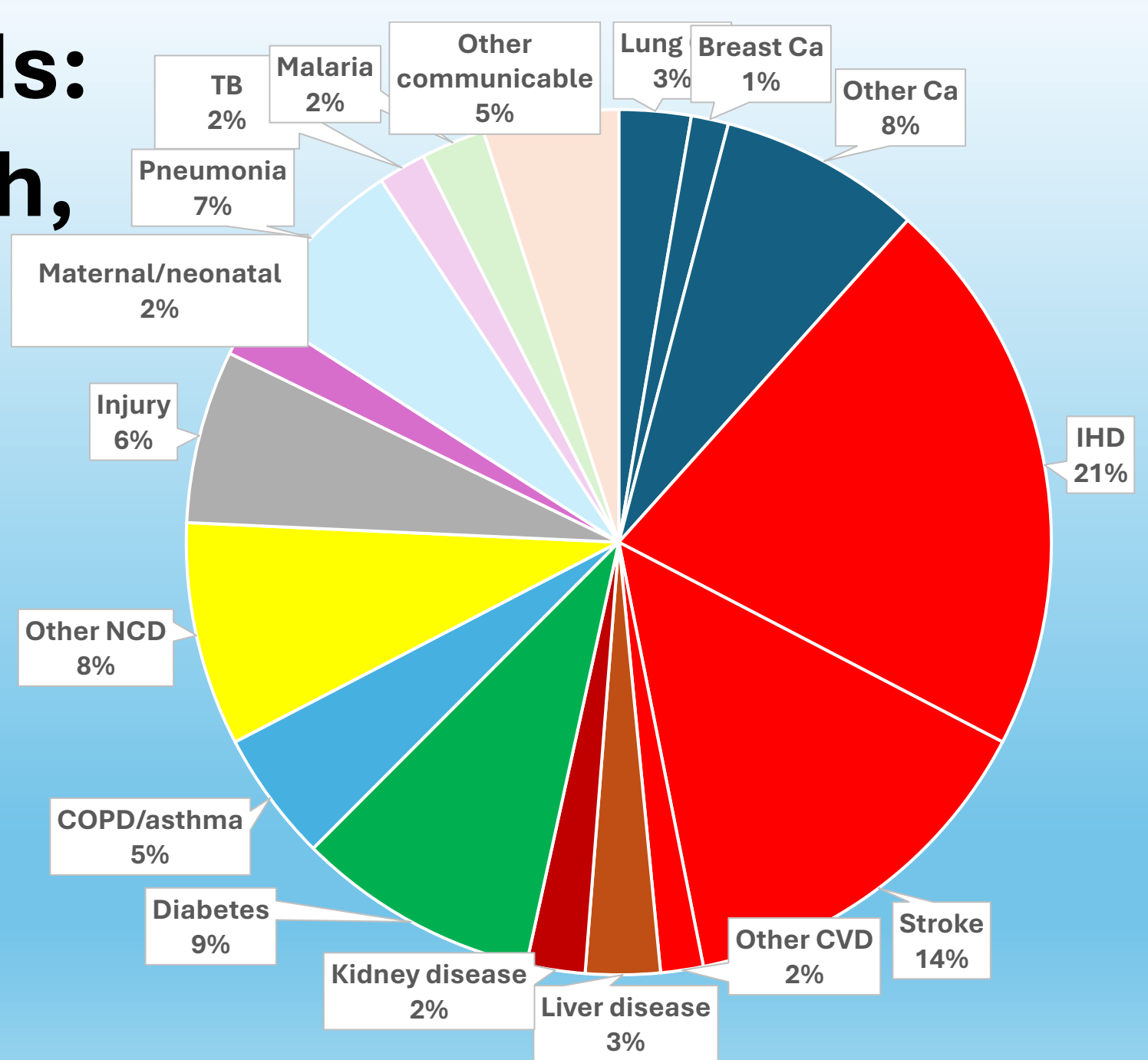
Universal Health Coverage, Australia, 2019



Solomon Islands: Causes of Death, 2023

Total 7000 deaths

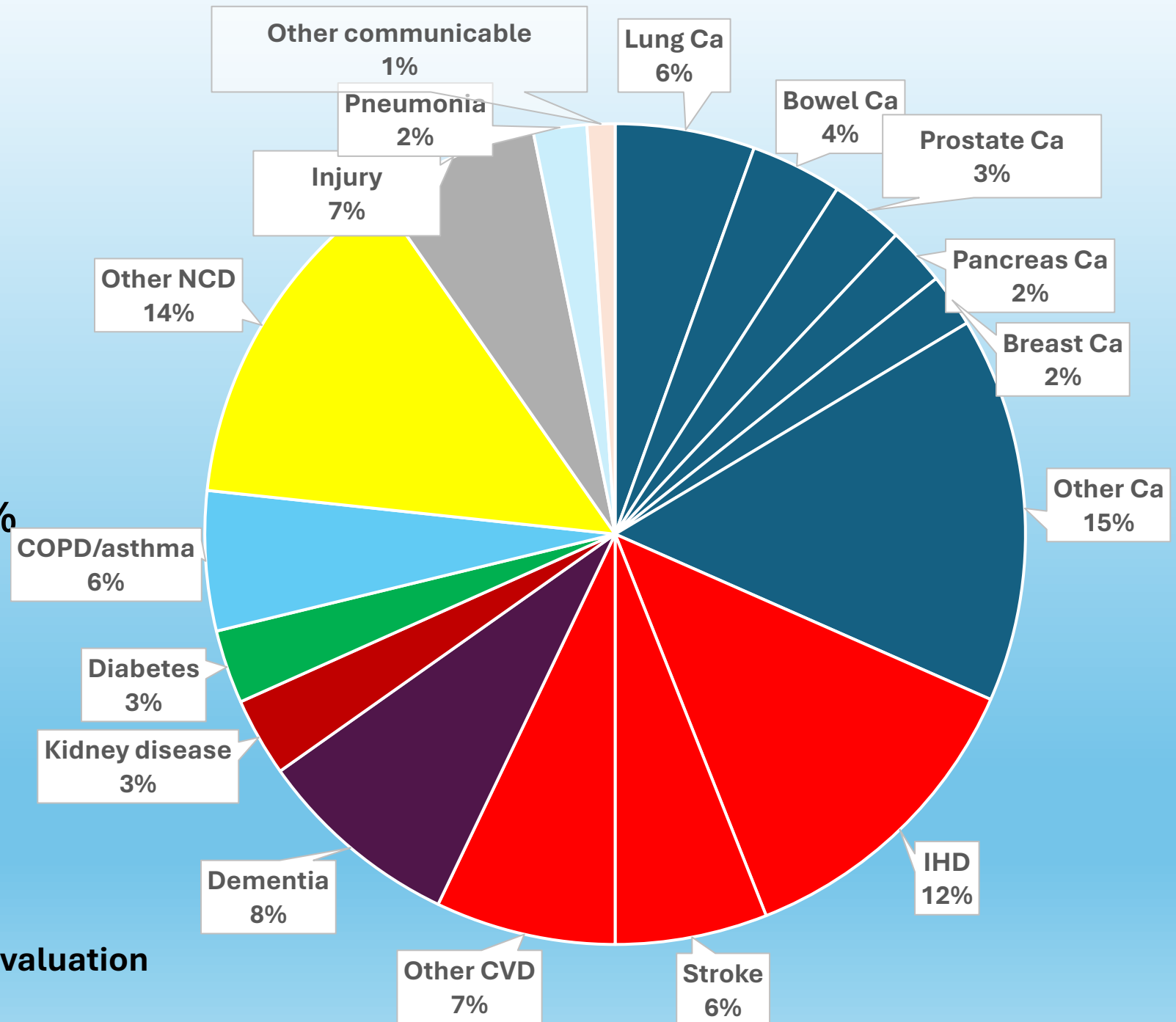
- Total NCDs 71.3%
 - Total cancer 11.7%
 - Total CVD 37%
- Injuries 6.5%
- Maternal 1.3%
- Neonatal 0.6%
- Total communicable 16.0%



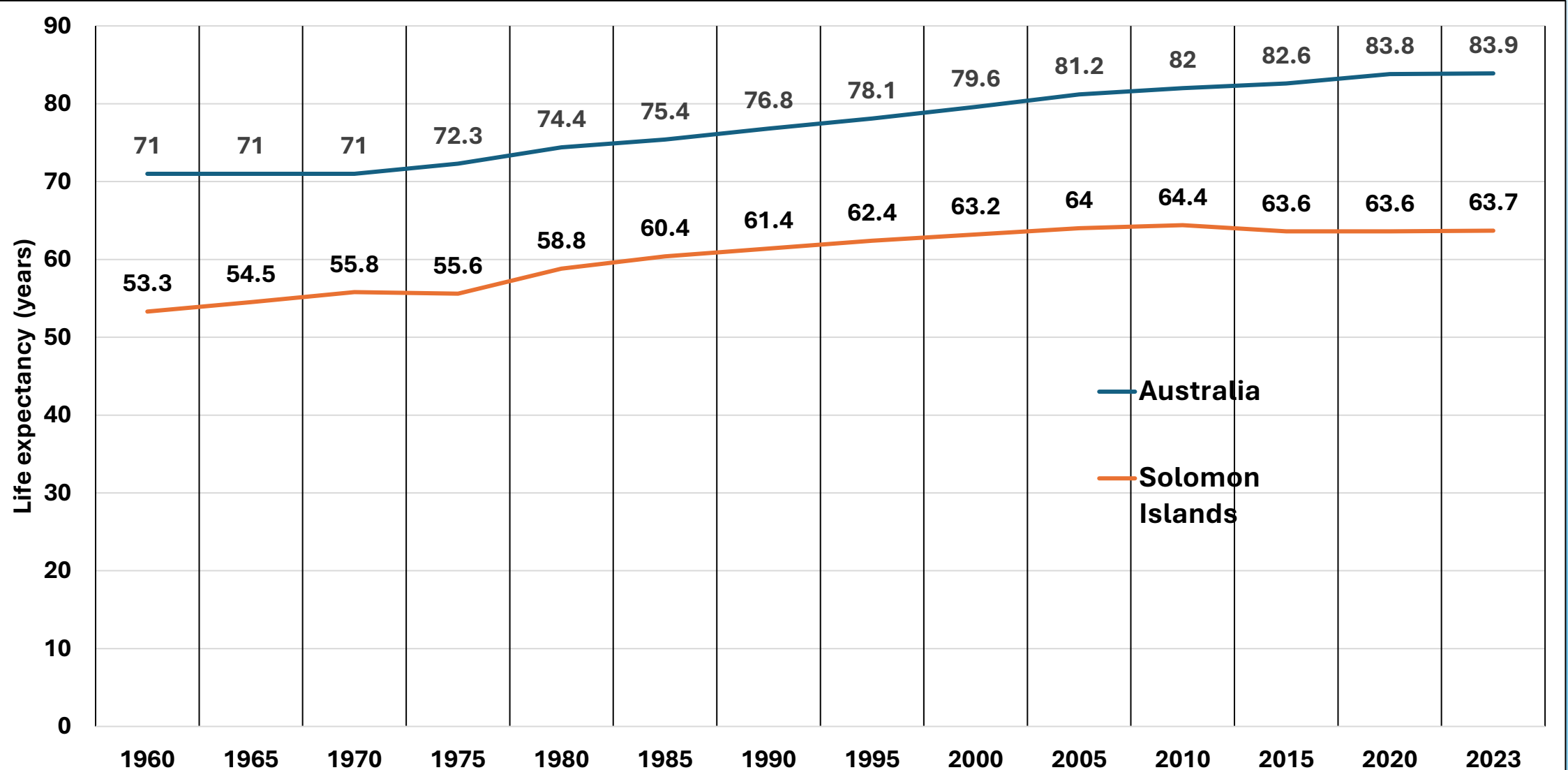
Australia: Causes of death, 2023

Total 182,000 deaths

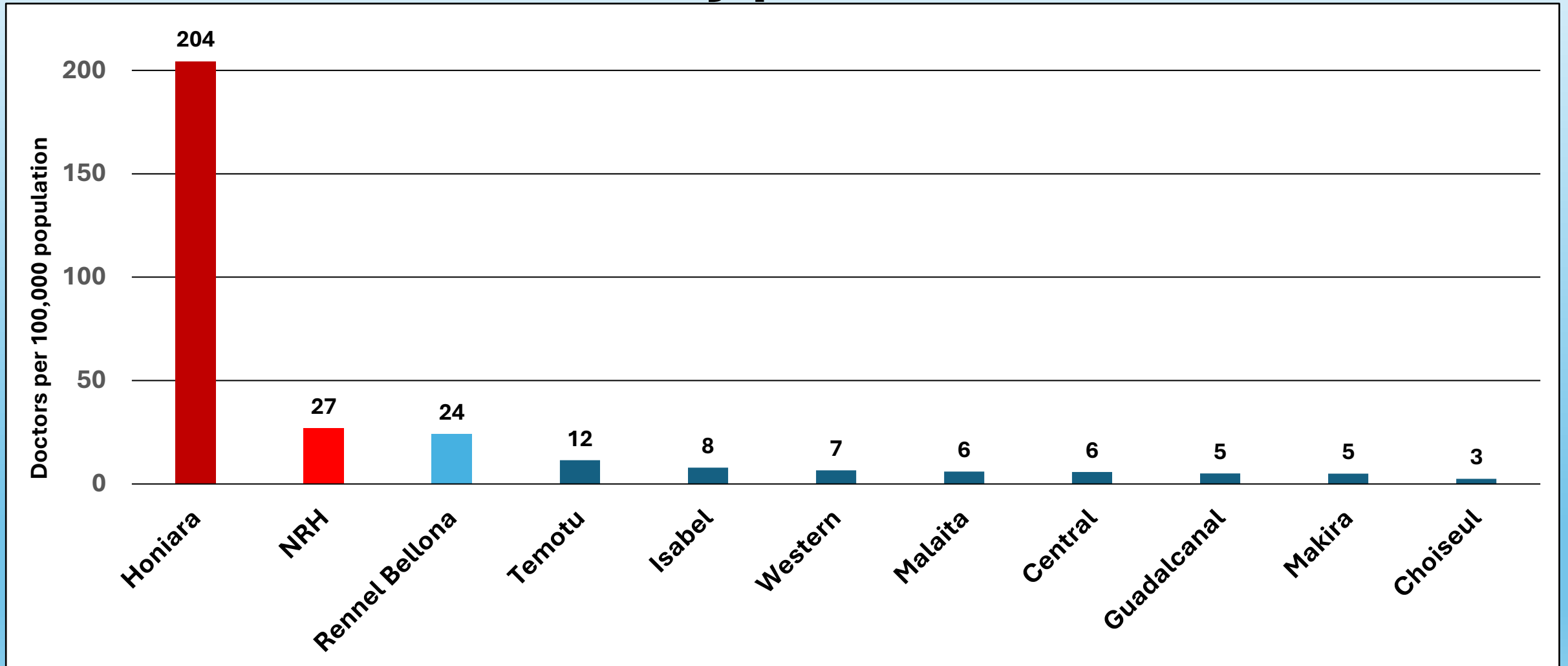
- Total NCDs 90.3%
 - Total cancer 31.6%
 - Total CVD 25.5%
- Injuries 6.5%
- Maternal, neonatal, nutritional, communicable 3.2%



Life expectancy at birth, Australia and Solomon Islands, 1960 to 2023



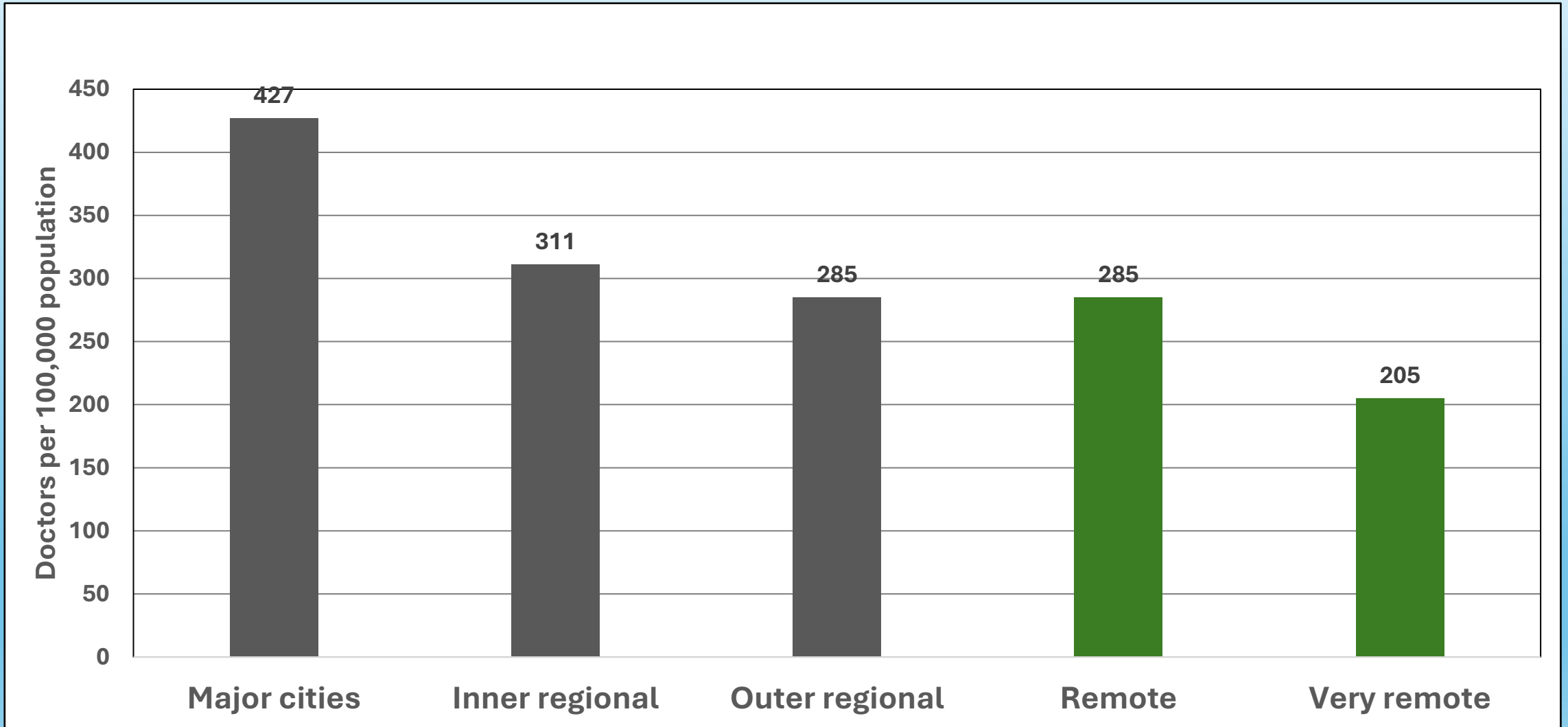
Doctors per 100,000 population in Solomon Islands by province



<https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/indicators>

Solomon Islands Ministry of Health, Provincial Health Profiles

Doctors per 100,000 population in Australia by remoteness





**Atoifi Adventi
Hospital**

Helena Goldie Hospital





Tulagi Hospital





Buala Hospital



Findings at provincial hospitals

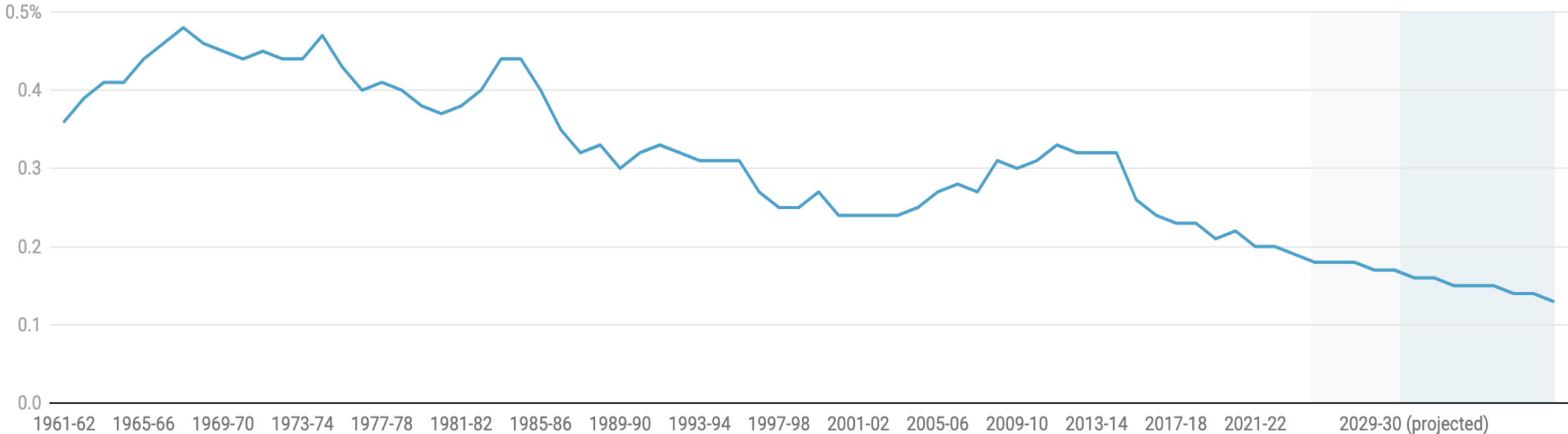
- Trust <> Creativity <> Ingenuity
- Nurse leadership, heavy use of antibiotics
- Diligent documentation
- Under-utilized, less than half beds full
- Long admissions – 2 months not uncommon
- Transfers to NRH: Diabetic foot infections, trauma (fractures, eye injuries), abdominal emergencies, RHD.



Australian international development aid

Generosity: Australian aid as a percentage of GNI

Official development assistance (ODA) in current \$AU as a percentage of gross national income (GNI) Agreed target 0.7%



Source: ODA from DFAT statistical summaries and budget documents, actual GNI from ABS, and forward estimates of GNI based on nominal GDP growth forecasts from Treasury budget documents • [Get the data](#) • Created with [Datawrapper](#)



Supporting locally led change

We match skilled volunteers with international partners to support them to achieve their development goals.



Conclusion

- Solomon Islands 75% rural population.
- Health status static since independence in 1978.
- Aspiration to universal health coverage.
- Non-communicable diseases main causes of death: ischaemic heart disease, stroke, diabetes, chronic lung disease, cancers. Malaria and TB persist.
- Maldistribution of doctors, 79.7% in National Referral Hospital.
- Provincial hospitals need attention.
- Australian Volunteer program opportunity.