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WHO releases largest global collection of health inequality data

April 24, 2023 | News

The repository reveals inequalities in national COVID-19 responses



The World Health Organisation (WHO) has launched the Health Inequality Data Repository, the most comprehensive global collection of publicly available disaggregated data and evidence on population health and its determinants. The repository allows for tracking health inequalities across population groups and over time, by breaking down data according to group characteristics, ranging from education level to ethnicity.

The data from the repository show that, in just a decade, the rich-poor gap in health service coverage among women, newborns and children in low- and middle-income countries has nearly halved. They also reveal that, in these countries, eliminating wealth-related inequality in under-five mortality could help save the lives of 1.8 million children.

The Health Inequality Data Repository (HIDR) includes nearly 11 million data points and consists of 59 datasets from over 15 sources. The data include measurements of over 2000 indicators broken down by 22 dimensions of inequality, including demographic, socioeconomic and geographical factors. Topics covered include: the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); COVID-19; reproductive, maternal and child health; immunization; HIV; tuberculosis; malaria; nutrition; health care; non-communicable diseases and environmental health.

The repository also reveals inequalities in national COVID-19 responses. In 2021, in more than a third of the 90 countries with data, COVID-19 vaccination coverage among the most educated was at least 15 percentage points higher than among the least educated.