

World lags badly on targets to slash TB, HIV, obesity: study

13 September 2017



Credit: CC0 Public Domain

Not a single country, out of nearly 200 reviewed, was on track to meet the UN target of eliminating new tuberculosis infections by 2030, according to a global health review published Wednesday.

At the same time, less than five percent of [countries](#) were likely to reach the UN goal of reducing suicides, road deaths and child obesity by that date, and only seven percent would likely eliminate new HIV infections.

Overall, only a fifth of 37 health-related targets set under the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted in 2015, are likely to be met, said the review carried by *The Lancet* medical journal.

"A number of targets remained out of reach for most countries," the authors wrote.

Under the review, funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, more than 2,500 researchers from around the world scored the health progress of 188 countries, and projected their trajectory to 2030.

The projections "underscore the need for dramatic, if not unprecedented, acceleration of progress to

improve health outcomes, reduce risk exposure, and expand essential health services for all countries," the authors said.

They team found "considerable inequality" between projections for rich and [poor countries](#).

High-income countries were forecast to meet 38 percent of the UN's health-related targets, compared to three percent for low-income states.

They also were not dealing with the same problems.

Poor countries fared poorly on maternal mortality, child stunting, malaria and environmental risks that affected rich nations less.

But when it comes to lifestyle problems, many [high-income countries](#), including the United States, fared poorly on measures for suicide, alcohol abuse and homicide.

China improving, US not

Looking to the future, the review said efforts to eradicate malaria and reduce deaths of infants and pregnant women were among the most promising, with more than 60 percent of countries projected to meet UN goals for all three.

"On the basis of current trends, Kazakhstan, Timor-Leste, Angola, Nigeria and Swaziland were projected to have the largest overall improvements," the team said in a statement.

This was driven by cuts in child mortality and better access to health care, family planning and birth assistance.

Countries expected to lose ground—considering trends for [child obesity](#) and alcohol abuse—included Sri Lanka, Venezuela, Serbia and Ukraine.

The report named China and Cambodia among middle- and low-income countries deserving of "recognition for improving their citizens' lives".

The same countries—along with Rwanda, Equatorial Guinea, Laos and Turkey—recorded the biggest improvements in universal health care between 2000 and 2016, which translated into better vaccine coverage, as well as fewer child deaths and malaria infections.

The United States, on the other hand, joined Lesotho and the Central African Republic among countries showing "minimal improvement" in universal health care, said the team.

This is a controversial topic in the United States, where Donald Trump's administration is seeking to undo Barack Obama's expansion of [health care](#) coverage.

Singapore, Iceland and Sweden were the best-performing countries in terms of [health](#)-related Sustainable Development Goals, according to the review.

Somalia, the Central African Republic and Afghanistan ranked lowest.

The United States was rated 24th overall with poor marks for suicide, child sex abuse, alcohol abuse and homicide, while China ranked 74th with low scores for air pollution, road injuries, poisoning, and smoking.

India was at number 127 with poor performance on air pollution, sanitation and acute childhood malnutrition.

The review was published ahead of the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly opening in New York Tuesday.

© 2017 AFP

APA citation: World lags badly on targets to slash TB, HIV, obesity: study (2017, September 13) retrieved 18 February 2018 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2017-09-world-lags-badly-slash-tb.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.