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The Global Health Impact Index: A Human Development Index for Health

© March 6, 2015 [Access to medicines, Global health](#)

By Nicole Hassoun (special guest contributor to CDHR)



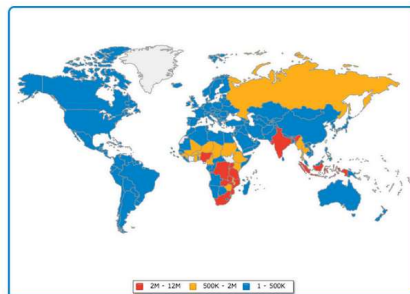
The world is not on track to meet the sixth Millennium Development Goal to combat malaria, HIV/AIDS, and tuberculosis (TB) — some of the world's worst diseases. Millions of people with these diseases cannot access the essential medicines they need. A new Global Health Impact Index can help us address this problem. It evaluates the impact of key drugs on malaria, tuberculosis, and HIV/AIDS in every country in the world and provides something akin to a Human Development Index for health (global-health-impact.org).

On the Global Health Impact index, drugs are having the second greatest impact in India primarily because there is a great deal of successfully treated TB in India and also some successfully treated HIV/AIDS. In Nigeria, drugs for malaria are making a larger difference and, in South Africa, we are having more success in alleviating the burden of HIV/AIDS but having a much smaller impact on TB and malaria.

The index estimates drugs' impact in each country based on assessments of the need for the drug (in disability adjusted life years lost to the disease states it treats), access to the drug (treatment coverage), and drug efficacy estimates (from, e.g., clinical trial data) in that country. You can learn more about the index by checking out our [methodology](#) and [resources](#).

Because the index is focused on evaluating the global health impacts of key malaria, TB, and HIV/AIDS medicines available in each country in a rigorous way, and not on countries' efforts or policies, countries' scores depend on many other factors besides the nature of country-level health systems. They depend, for instance, on international aid efforts, and what other drugs are already around. That makes the Global Health Impact index a promising basis for incentivizing many organizations (governmental and non-governmental) to address the access to medicines problem and increase our collective global health impact. One can also see the overall impact we are having on the diseases and drug impact scores aggregated by [originator-company](#).

Moreover, it is possible to partner with the Global Health Impact organization — a collaboration of scholars from universities and civil society organizations from around the world — to look at the determinants and consequences of global health impact. Researchers might consider, for instance, how countries' levels of development affect, or are affected by, health impact.



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