

WHO ~ Urban Health: Major Opportunities For Improving Global Health Outcomes, Despite Persistent Health Inequities



New data on the health of city-dwellers in almost 100 countries show that as the world's urban population continues to grow, health inequities - especially between the richest and poorest urban populations - are a persistent challenge, according to a report by WHO and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat).

For example, only half of households in urban areas of 91 countries with comparable data have access to piped water, with the richest 20% of households being 2.7 times more likely to have access to piped water than the poorest 20%. In Africa, this ratio is closer to 17 times.

About 3.7 billion people live in cities today. A further 1 billion people will be added by 2030, with 90% of the growth being in low- and middle-income countries. This intensifies the need to realize the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target of ensuring universal health coverage (UHC): that all people obtain the health services they need without suffering financial hardship when paying for them, by 2030.

Health inequalities undermine progress

The report finds that in 79 low- and middle-income countries, children in the poorest one fifth of urban households are twice as likely on average to die before their fifth birthday compared with children in the richest fifth. In nearly 9 of 10 countries for which comparable data was available, the urban poor did not achieve the Millennium Development Goal target for reducing under-five mortality.

Read more: <http://who.int/urban-health-report/en/>