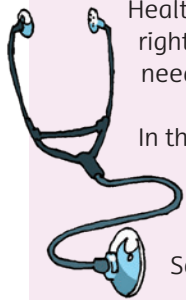


# Health

## What is health?

According to the World Health Organisation, "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing". In other words, many factors influence how healthy we are.

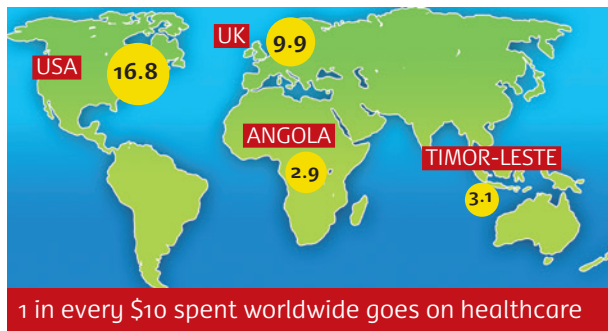
## Health and development



Health is crucial for humans to thrive. We need access to the right food, clean water, sanitation, education and shelter. We need health care that prevents sickness, as well as curing it.

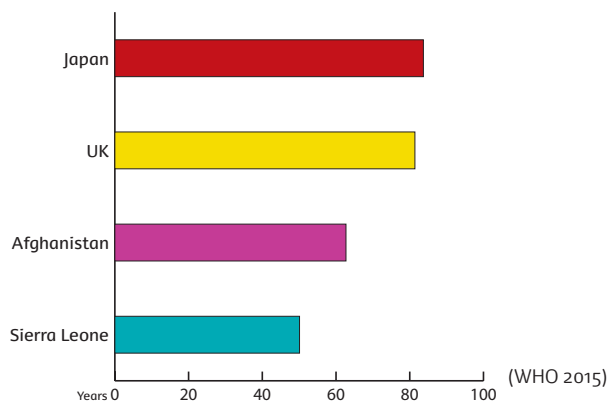
In the UK, we have a free health service. But lots of developing countries cannot afford to invest in hospitals, training or health education. Health care comes at a cost, which poorer people can't pay. So they get sick more often and die younger.

## Spending on health as a % of GDP (country's income):



## Life expectancy

Health affects how long you live, which can depend on where you live. Even in the UK, average life expectancy is up to eight years more in richer areas. Globally, the gap is much greater.



## Danger factor: lack of sanitation

One third of people in our world lack access to a toilet. More people have a mobile phone than a toilet. Over 1 in 10 people drink contaminated water. This leads to outbreaks of serious illnesses like diarrhoea that kill millions of people each year.



This mother is having a health check at a mobile clinic in northern Kenya, in an area of widespread hunger.

## Women's health

There is a clear connection between women's health and development goals such as eradicating extreme poverty, reducing child deaths, and fighting disease.

Women's health affects their children in many ways – if mothers are sick they can't care for their family. Their health is also linked to their status in society; discrimination can begin before girls are born and continue throughout their lives. For example, a family with little money may spend more on healthcare for sons than daughters.

- ▶ Every 4 mins, 3 young women become infected with HIV. In sub-Saharan Africa, 3 in 4 new HIV infections are among girls aged 15-19 years.
- ▶ 830 women die every day due to complications in pregnancy and childbirth. Most of these deaths are preventable.

### FACT

99% OF ALL MATERNAL DEATHS HAPPEN IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

## Progress

Good progress has been made, however, especially since 1990. Maternal mortality, for example, has fallen by 44 per cent, mostly because more women are getting care when they are pregnant.

### TRY THIS

It is common in some countries for boys to be favoured over girls when it comes to spending on education, healthcare and even food – boys may get more, or better food than girls. Discuss why parents with little money might make these decisions, and how you feel about this.

## Children's health

Young children are the most vulnerable to poor health. Children born into poverty are almost twice as likely to die before the age of five as those from richer families.

- Pneumonia, prematurity, birth asphyxia and diarrhoea are the main causes of death during the first five years.
- Around one in four children under five are underweight, mostly through lack of quality food, water, sanitation or health services. Malnutrition is linked to half of all deaths of children under five.



### Progress

Global targets agreed by world leaders have focused on making things better for children:

- The global under-five mortality rate is down by more than half since 1990. That means 19,000 fewer children die each day.
- 6.2 million malaria deaths were prevented between 2000-2015, mostly of children. (UNDP 2018)

Under-five mortality rate, per 1000 babies born	
Somalia	132
UK	4.3
Global average	39

(UNDP 2018)

“Care for mothers, newborns and children is at the heart of human progress and a country's well-being.”

Dr. Gertrude Mongella, former President of the Pan-African Parliament

## HIV and AIDS

Although fewer people are dying because of AIDS, around half as many as at the peak in 2004, the number of people living with HIV has gone up (37 million in 2017.) (UNAIDS) So while there has been great progress, there is still a long way to go. (See *HIV and AIDS factsheet*.)

## Tackling global health

Global health is improving but there are still many problems and some countries are being left behind, especially in southern Africa. In 2015, world leaders signed up to 17 global goals to end poverty and tackle climate change by 2030. (See *SDGs factsheet*.)

Sustainable Development Goal 3 is all about health and well-being. Its targets include ending preventable deaths of children under 5, ending the epidemics of AIDS, malaria and TB by 2030, developing new vaccines and medicines, and preparing in case of epidemics.

### FACT

MEASLES VACCINES SAVED 20 MILLION YOUNG LIVES IN 2000-2015. (WHO)

Sources: WHO; UNDP; water.org. Illustration: Dylan Gibson. Charity no 1160384 and a company limited by guarantee no 09387398. All facts current as of October 2018.

## What is CAFOD doing?

CAFOD's partners work with local communities to meet basic health needs as well as helping with more complex conditions like trauma following conflict. Primary health care projects are especially important, using simple methods to focus on prevention as well as cure, by tackling causes of ill health like dirty water or poor nutrition.

- In Bolivia, CAFOD funds a project in the remote Altiplano region. Local people are working together with experts to grow better quality food to improve their health.

Mother and baby clinics across many countries are helping thousands of children make it through their vulnerable early years, and bringing mothers through the dangerous stages of pregnancy unharmed.

- In crowded refugee camps in Darfur, Sudan, CAFOD is training birth attendants to care for pregnant women and help deliver healthy babies in safe facilities.

CAFOD works with partners to give all-round support to people living with HIV and AIDS. As well as helping with prevention and access to treatment, it is critical to reduce the stigma often associated with the virus.

CAFOD also responds to disease outbreaks following earthquakes or floods, and epidemics like cholera and Ebola. CAFOD's partners played a key role in helping to stop the spread of Ebola across West Africa in 2015-16, showing great courage.

“Health is not a consumer good but a universal right, so access to health services cannot be a privilege.” Pope Francis, May 2016

TRY THIS

Look up Sustainable Development Goal 3 on health. In groups, choose two targets you find interesting and present to the class.

### Useful websites



[sustainabledevelopment.un.org](http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org)

About the SDGs

[who.int](http://who.int)

World Health Organisation

[undp.org](http://undp.org)

United Nations Development Programme

[unaids.org](http://unaids.org)

United Nations AIDS Programme

CAFOD is not responsible for the content of external websites.