Decomposing global disparities in life expectancy

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Improvements in life expectancy are associated with a declining share of deaths due to infectious causes.

Infectious causes continue to account for more than half of all deaths in Africa.
“Survival gaps” describe the shortfall in life expectancy relative to the longest-lived populations.

Avg life expectancy in the “longest-lived” populations = 81.4 years

Life expectancy at birth > 80 years in 2005-2010

- Australia
- Austria
- Canada
- France
- Hong Kong
- Iceland
- Israel
- Italy
- Japan
- Macao
- Martinique
- Netherlands
- New Zealand
- Norway
- Republic of Korea
- Singapore
- Spain
- Sweden
- Switzerland
Two sources of mortality estimates were united to decompose survival gaps.

Method:
Infectious causes of death contribute to survival gaps in Africa, developing Oceania, Asia and LAC.

Longest-lived populations = 81.4 years

Focus on the sub-regions where infectious causes contribute most to survival gaps

Longest-lived populations = 81.4 years

Neonatal conditions caused 2.4 million deaths in 2011, accounting for one third of under-five mortality.

Longest-lived populations = 81.4 years

HIV/AIDS causes 1.6 million deaths each year

Longest-lived populations = 81.4 years

Tuberculosis causes close to 1 million deaths annually

Malaria causes about 590,000 deaths annually

Pneumonia caused 3.2 million deaths in 2011, down just 9 per cent since 2000.

Longest-lived populations = 81.4 years

Diarrhoeal diseases caused 1.9 million deaths in 2011, down 22 per cent since 2000.

Longest-lived populations = 81.4 years

Which causes of death impede progress towards ICPD survival targets?

- Pneumonia and diarrhoeal diseases produce large survival deficits, as does HIV/AIDS
- Non-communicable diseases suppress longevity in developing countries
- For more information: