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Global Impact

BY NIR EYAL ON FEBRUARY 19, 2015 IN GLOBAL HEALTH, HEALTH SYSTEMS, HEALTHCARE DISPARITIES, INFECTIOUS DISEASE

A new index measures how essential medicines are impacting Malaria, TB and HIV/AIDS around the world.



Uneven availability of key medications is an important part of health disparities around the world.

An interesting [new index](#) for drugs and pharmaceutical companies seeks primarily to strengthen drug producers' incentives to create access to essential medicines in the areas of TB, malaria, and HIV/AIDS by ranking them in that regard.

Four sub-indices are included:

- A Drug Index, which ranks drugs by their impact scores (primarily a reflection of the need for the drug, its effectiveness, and how many people around the world who need the drug can access it);
- A Disease Index, which looks at the size of the drugs' impact on each of the diseases studied (TB, malaria, and HIV/AIDS);
- A Country Index, which looks at the amount of need in each country that is alleviated by the drugs used in that country; and finally,
- A Company Index, which ranks companies by the sum the impact of the drugs each company makes.

Here are some of the initial results:

Nigeria is the highest ranked country primarily because drugs for malaria are having a large impact there. Sanofi's drugs top the company list because it Sanofi holds the patent on key anti-malaria and TB medicines. Artemether-lumefantrine, lamivudine, and isoniazid are the highest impact drugs for malaria, HIV/AIDS and TB, respectively. There is great unmet need for drugs for all diseases. The drugs for each disease together are having approximately equal global impact.

Work on this index was presided by philosopher Nicole Hassoun, who has put into this impressive project a decade of hard work; the Board includes Larry Gostin, Thomas Pogge, and other big names. Worth taking a look!

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Authors

[Agnes Binagwaho](#)[Bruce Landon](#)[Compass](#)[David Cameron](#)[David Jones](#)[Jake Miller](#)[Louise Ivers](#)[Muriel Gillick](#)[Nir Eyal](#)[Paul Farmer](#)[Richard Frank](#)

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