

# HOW DOES WEALTH AFFECT HEALTH IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA?

While it's not surprising that industrialized countries fare better with respect to health than developing countries, the health and well-being of people in developing countries varies greatly. And national averages can hide disparities between the poorest and wealthiest groups. Consider two African countries: Niger, classified by the World Bank as a low-income country; and Ghana, a lower-middle-income country.



## WHEN INCOMES RISE,

people are healthier and have smaller families.  
As income per person increases....

### ...SO DOES LIFE EXPECTANCY



### ...FEWER CHILDREN UNDER AGE 5 DIE (deaths per 1,000 children under 5)



### ...MORE CHILDREN ARE BORN WITH THE CARE OF DOCTORS, NURSES, AND TRAINED MIDWIVES (deliveries attended by skilled health personnel)



### ...WOMEN HAVE FEWER CHILDREN (children per woman)



## YET NATIONAL AVERAGES HIDE DISPARITIES.

The poorest 20% of the population in each country...

### ...EARN ONLY A FRACTION OF THE TOTAL INCOME COMPARED WITH THE WEALTHIEST 20%

**8%**  
poorest

**43%**  
wealthiest

NIGER



**5%**  
poorest

**49%**  
wealthiest

GHANA

### ...ARE MORE LIKELY TO HAVE A CHILD DIE THAN WEALTHY FAMILIES (deaths per 1,000 children under 5)

**206**  
poorest

**157**  
wealthiest

NIGER



**103**  
poorest

**60**  
wealthiest

GHANA

### ...ARE LESS LIKELY TO HAVE GOOD CARE AT BIRTH (deliveries attended by skilled health personnel)

**21%**  
poorest

**71%**  
wealthiest

NIGER



**22%**  
poorest

**94%**  
wealthiest

GHANA

### ...HAVE LARGER FAMILIES (children per woman)

**7.9**  
poorest

**6.4**  
wealthiest



NIGER



**6.5**  
poorest

**2.3**  
wealthiest



GHANA

The wealth of individuals and of countries affects health status and use of health services. As countries develop economically, their people become healthier. But within any country, it is critical to focus attention on the poor, who have limited access to health services and are most vulnerable to poor health.

Sources: PRB, *Population and Economic Development 2012 Data Sheet*; ICF Macro, *Ghana Demographic and Health Survey 2008*; and ICF Macro, *Enquête Démographique et de Santé et à Indicateurs Multiples du Niger 2006*.

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