

## Congenital Heart Disease Facts

# Congenital Heart Disease

Congenital heart disease (CHD) is an abnormality of the heart's structure present at birth. CHD is a large, rapidly emerging global problem in children's health with significant global inequities. Many children locally lack access to specialty medical care. Interventions and resources must be used to improve survival and quality of life.

**1 in 100**  
is born with CHD

**1 in 4**  
needs surgery in the 1st  
year of life to survive

**9 in 10**  
don't have access to  
the necessary  
cardiovascular care\*\*

## A leading cause of death globally in children under the age of 1\*

SDI Countries**	Rank of Infant Mortality	
YEAR	2017	1990
High-middle	2nd	4th
Middle	4th	5th
Low-middle	7th	8th
Low	8th	13th

**CHD is the  
7th cause of  
infant mortality  
globally**



## Largest noncommunicable disease cause of death in people under the age of 30\*\*\*

**261,247**  
deaths from CHD globally

**70%** of deaths  
were **infants**

**85%** of deaths  
in **low-and  
middle-income  
countries**

## What is needed to reduce the burden of heart disease in children?

### Increased capacity

### Build the pediatric workforce

### Close the data gap

### Better financing

Sustainable Development Goal 3, Improving Health and Wellbeing, **will only be achieved when heart disease in children is acknowledged in the global health agenda.**

Pediatric cardiac care succeeds when a health system is robust and integrated from prenatal care to surgical subspecialties. **Building pediatric cardiac care capacity strengthens the entire health system.**

**Investing in regional training centers** that can adapt best practices to local settings is to key to building a pediatric cardiac workforce.

Treatment of heart disease in children must be included in **universal health coverage** or most families will be catastrophically impoverished.

## Why does CHD need to be addressed?

- **CHD is a chronic disease** and needs life-long specialized care
- **85% of children with CHD can survive** into adulthood when pediatric cardiac care is incorporated into a health system's full continuum of care
- **Patients and families face a high financial burden** due to cost of care often resulting in catastrophic health expenses
- **CHD patients worldwide** do not get needed long-term care in adulthood



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\*Global, regional, and national burden of congenital heart disease, 1990-2017: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2017, *Lancet Child & Adolescent Health*, January 2020

\*\*\*The Invisible Child, 2016, Children's HeartLink. [www.childrensheartlink.org](http://www.childrensheartlink.org)

\*\*NCD Countdown, *Lancet*, 2018

\*\*\*\*SDI= Socio-demographic Index, a summary measure that identifies where countries or other geographic areas sit on the spectrum of development