

Excess Mortality associated with Covid-19

Steve MacFeely
World Health Organization

Global death registrations

SCORE for Health Data Technical Package



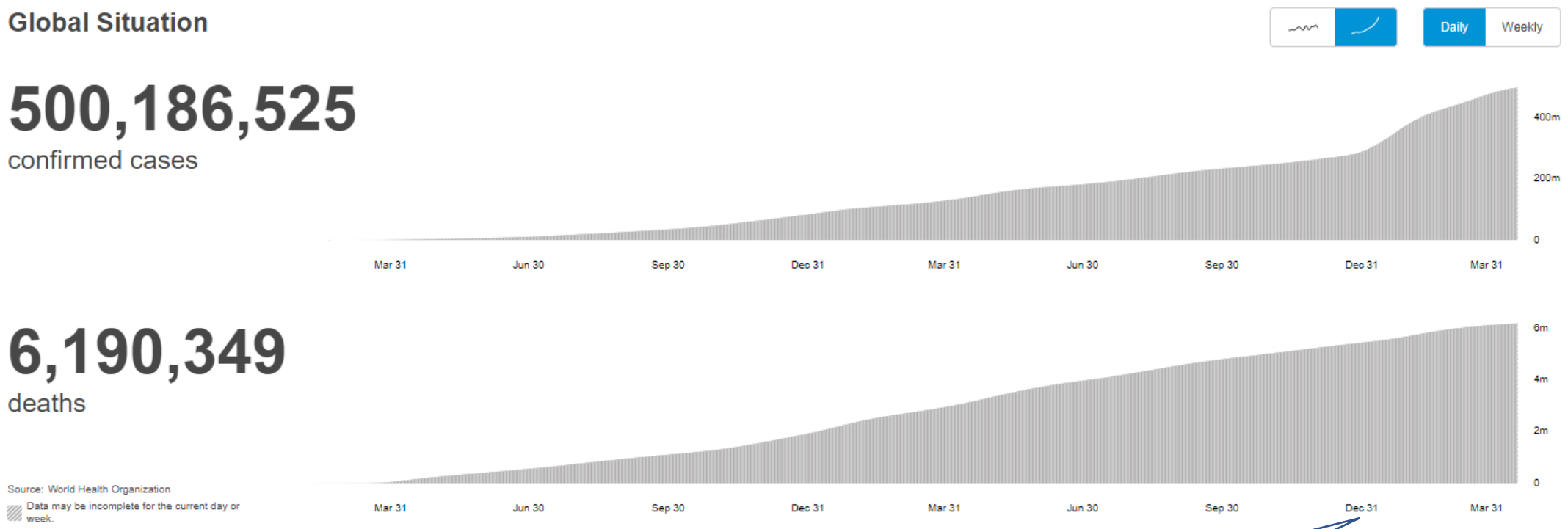
NEARLY

40%

of countries register at least 90% of deaths.



The official numbers…



Dec 31, 2021
Deaths = 5.4 million

Excess mortality is a comprehensive measure

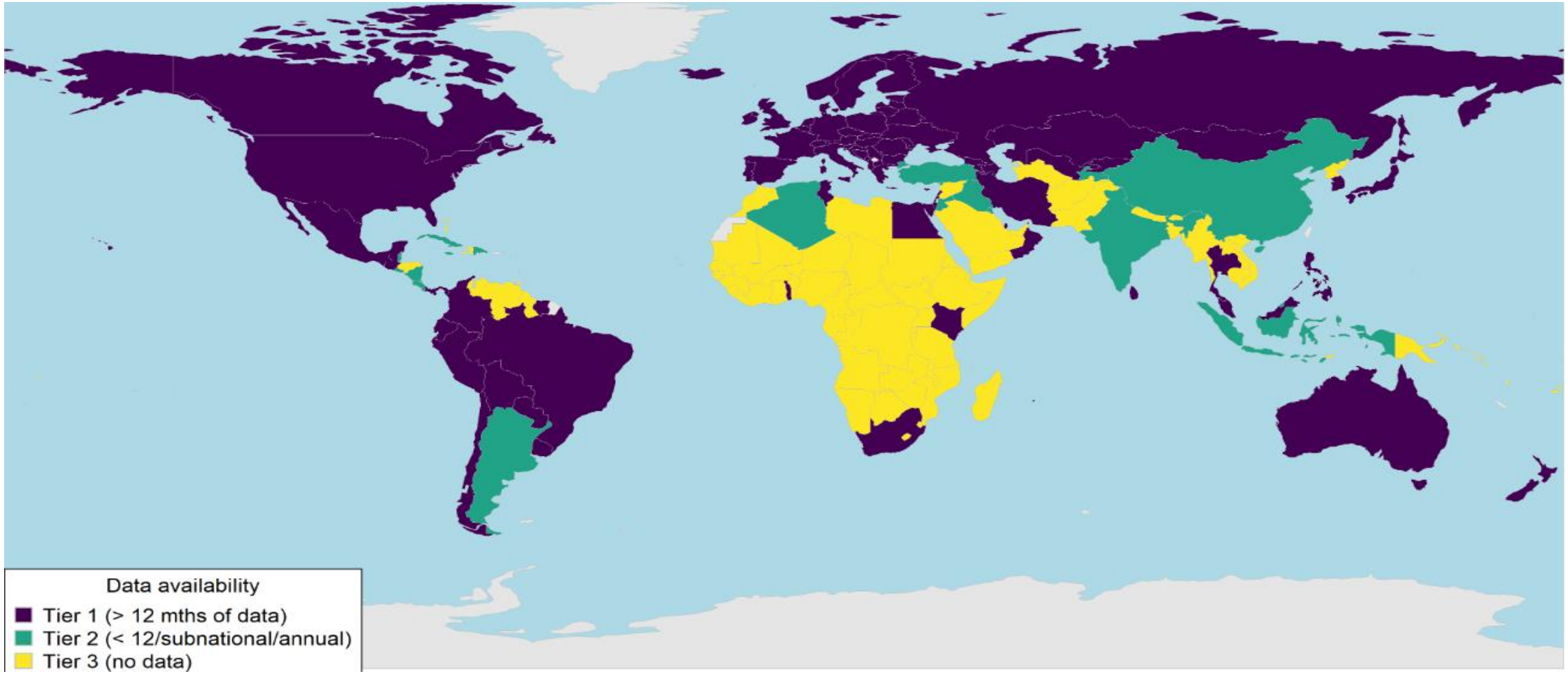
- Excess mortality associated with the COVID-19 pandemic is the *difference* between **actual deaths from all-causes (**for a specific place and time since the pandemic began) and the **expected deaths** based on historical trends in the absence of COVID-19.

- Accounts for both the **direct** and **indirect** impact of the pandemic making it a more objective measure than reported COVID-19 deaths alone.

- Excess mortality is not a new concept. It is an internationally recognized statistical concept and widely used by international organizations, including WHO, and academics.

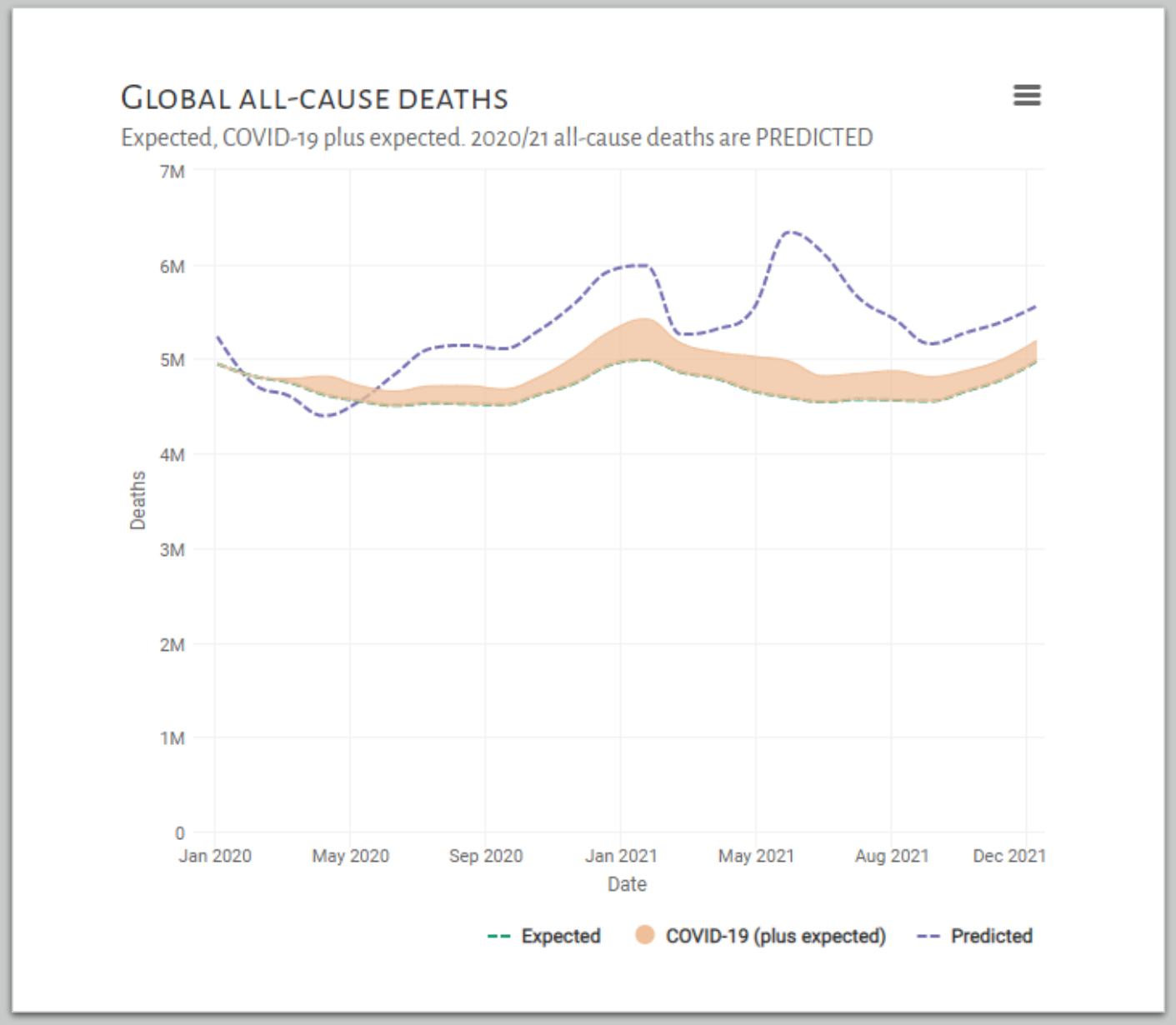
- Excess mortality is a more comprehensive measure of the total impact of a crisis as it takes into account deaths that can be directly and indirectly attributed to the crisis.

Excess Mortality associated with Covid-19: data availability

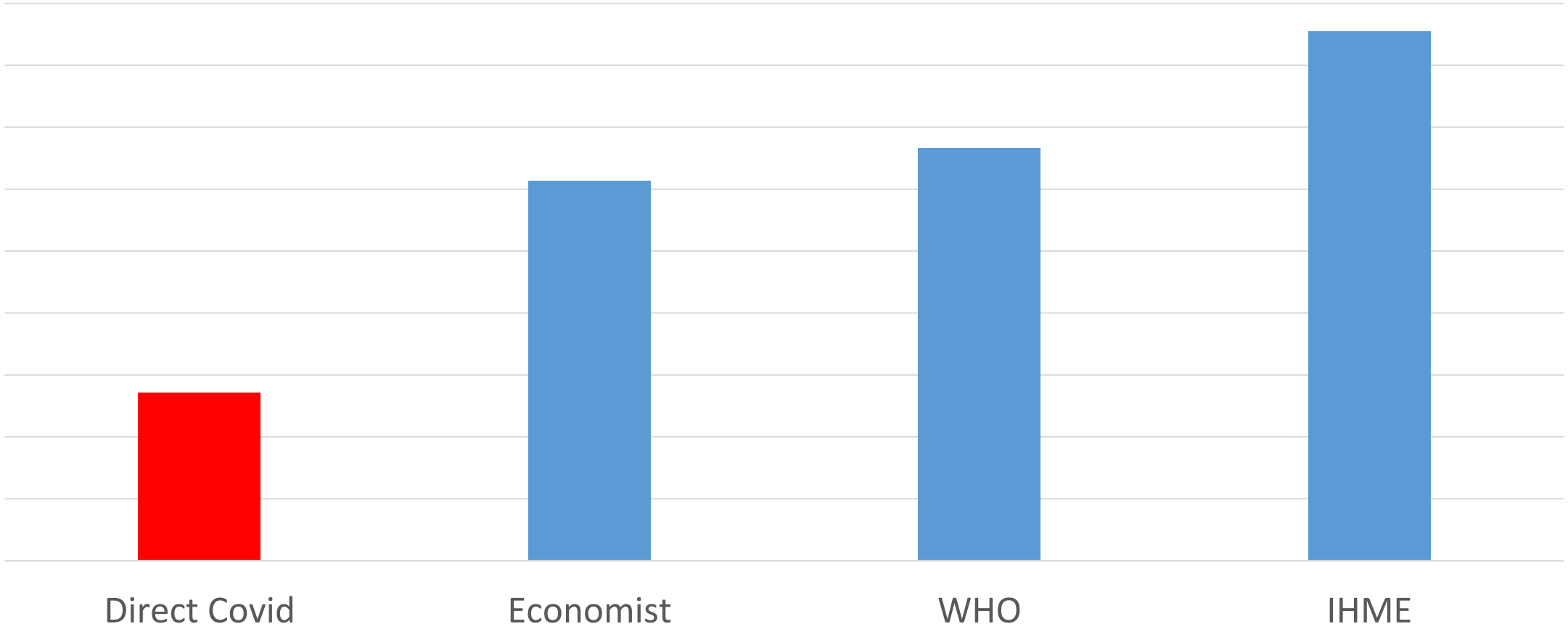


TAG: Impartial, robust statistics

- WHO – UN DESA Technical Advisory Group on COVID-19 Mortality Assessment comprised of world-class demographers, epidemiologists, data and social scientists, and statisticians from a wide range of backgrounds and geographies.
- Globally standardized method established to estimate excess mortality estimates while taking country specificities into account.
- Estimates of excess deaths produced at global, regional, and national levels for a 24-month period (January 2020 to December 2021) by age and sex.



Differing Estimates



Why is this important?

- WHO's Global Health Estimates which measures the overall and cause-specific burden of diseases cannot be calculated

- The global health estimates are the foundation for monitoring numerous other health indicators:
  - health-related SDGs (premature mortality due to NCDs; neonatal, child and maternal mortality; mortality due to suicide, road traffic injuries, air pollution, poisoning and WASH)
  - Other indicators (e.g. life expectancy and healthy life expectancy (HALE))

- Global preparedness (what metric of success or failure?)

- Global and regional population estimates