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Racism is a widespread public health harm, disproportionately affecting marginalized communities. Power structures actively maintain this inequality by neglecting and opposing the participation of marginalized people in the systems that govern their lives. It is essential for epidemiologists, public health organizations, governments, and the international community to condemn these systems and take concrete actions to dismantle them.

BACKGROUND

- To examine the impact of racism as a global public health crisis, in collaboration with communities and policymakers.

Racism perpetuates severe public health harms, disproportionately affecting vulnerable populations.

METHODS

- Community-led, interdisciplinary, local-global approach;
- Data collection: epidemiological and bibliographic studies, personal and collective narratives from marginalized populations (supported by the collaboration of 24 member organizations within the International Network for Epidemiology in Policy (INEP));
- Hypothesis tested through the development of the Recife Declaration (2023) on Racism as a Global Public Health Crisis, using an inclusive methodology.

RESULTS

- Successful development and launch of the Recife Declaration;
- The data revealed the widespread and systemic nature of racism as both acute and broadly disseminated harms to public health;
- Community partners played a central role in shaping the declaration, confirming a collective commitment to dismantling the systemic racism embedded in health policies and law;
- In 2025, the Recife Declaration will be taken to the community of Gary, Indiana – a predominantly Black community of extreme poverty in the United States – to highlight and document their harms and create their own living document to present to policymakers;
- It will also be submitted as a Motion for Adoption to the Congress of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, an International Organization founded in 1948 whose members include States, NGOs, Indigenous Peoples, and Sub-National Governments.



CONCLUSIONS

Key Conclusions:

1. *Systemic Racism as a Public Health Issue:* The data clearly demonstrates that racism contributes to severe health inequities. The disparities in health outcomes, combined with personal testimonies, highlight the urgent need to address systemic racism in public health systems.
2. *Importance of Community-Led Solutions:* The success of the Recife Declaration emphasizes the importance of involving marginalized communities in the development of public health policies. Their expertise and experiences are crucial for creating effective and equitable health interventions.
3. *Call to Action for Global Collaboration:* The findings stress the need for coordinated international efforts to dismantle systems of racism. The endorsement of the Recife Declaration by global health professionals and organizations marks a significant step towards this goal.

Significance:

Driving policy changes and fostering an inclusive approach to public health. By confronting colonial systems and power imbalances, stands out a pathway for public health officials, policymakers, epidemiologists and communities to collaboratively address and reduce health disparities driven by racism. The continued evolution of the Recife Declaration as a living document will play a key role in guiding and measuring progress in this critical area.

