

IHP news 801 : Bracing for Tuesday (and this century more in general)

(1 November 2024)

The weekly International Health Policies (IHP) newsletter is an initiative of the Health Policy unit at the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Antwerp, Belgium.

Dear Colleagues,

Although I'm not exactly a 'glass half-full' person, I used to think **Stephen Hawking's dire warnings on the existential threats mankind faces** for [this century](#) and [beyond](#) (see also [here](#)) were a bit, well, dire. For a number of reasons, I no longer think so. [Apparently, the Elders think so too.](#)

Back in the 90s, when studying political science, I also couldn't get my head around why so many Germans had been voting in the early 30s for a screaming madman with silly moustache, frantically raising his right arm at every other turn. By now, that has changed too. And not just because of that MAGA (*annex* [/MAHA](#)) cult and their 'God-chosen leader' in the US.

I won't spend much words on the **US presidential election** next Tuesday, as everything has been said I guess. Too bad we don't have a say in this, though, as the superpower in decline still heavily impacts billions. But no, the rest of the world can just watch - wavering between despair and a bit of hope.

Just this perhaps: even in our dystopian and disinformation times, I have enough confidence in human beings to predict that Harris will easily win the popular vote (%) (*in spite of the tragic, and sometimes [criminal mistakes](#) made by the Biden administration over the past year*). I'm far less confident though about what's going to happen in the US swing states, always a bit of a lottery (*and increasingly now also a rigged one, due to ludicrous gerrymandering and plenty of other dirty tricks, played by billionaires or not*). I'm also anything but confident about what Trump & cronies might come up with in case the election result doesn't go their way. Or rather, I know: not much good. Still, it's fair to say that US democracy has been [dysfunctional](#) for decades now, with neoliberalist capitalism also providing [more than fertile ground](#) for the current 'spectacle'. From that angle, Biden's Manicheism of 'democracies' versus 'authoritarian regimes' was always more like a sad joke (*long before the world got to see a rogue extreme-right "democracy" [at work](#) in the Middle East, aided by Western weapons*).

In other notable global & planetary health news, this newsletter will among others zoom in on the latest **Lancet Countdown on health and the 'climate breakdown'** - as - correctly - [framed by the Guardian](#) . Already, people across the world '*face unprecedented threats to their health from the rapidly changing climate*'. Or in the words of Tedros: "**The climate crisis is a health crisis. As the planet heats up, the frequency and intensity of climate-related disasters increase, leaving no region untouched. ... The report makes it clear that "climate change is not a distant threat, but an immediate risk to health"**. PS: Part of the reason according to Oxfam: [billionaire 'pollutocrats'](#) .

We continue to pay attention to **COP16** in Cali, Colombia (UN SG Guterres: "[making peace with nature is the defining task of the 21st century](#)"), and the **upcoming COP29 in Baku**. We also briefly come back on the **IMF/WB annual meetings**, and already flag another important report from this week here, [WHO's Global TB report 2024](#), re-establishing TB as the top infectious diseases killer.

Brazil also gets its share of the limelight, in the run-up to the G20 Leaders' meeting (18-19 Nov), starting with some health related meetings this week. Vinicius Jr might not have gotten that [Ballon d'Or](#) but I'm sure his compatriots will more than make up for that. Let's Make Global Health Healthy Again (MGHHA) 😊.

We leave the most important news for last. On **29 October**, the [International Day of Care and Support](#) was celebrated. Here's to hoping that the 21st century global economy will at last sufficiently reward care. The current World Bank president doesn't seem to know, but you bet "[care work is real work](#)".

In the meantime, cross fingers for Tuesday. Let's hope it doesn't turn out to be an ultra-nasty 'House of Cards' episode.

Enjoy your reading.

Kristof Decoster

Featured Article

Regulating the Emergency Contraceptive Pill or Sexual Morality?

Sana Contractor

About a month ago, multiple news outlets in India reported on a [rather troubling proposal](#) – the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO), India's national drug regulatory authority, was apparently likely to ban the sale of over-the-counter hormonal contraceptives, including emergency contraceptive (EC) pills across the country, based on recommendations from an "expert panel". The CDSCO later [clarified](#) that no such ban was being proposed and that the status quo would be maintained. However, news had already set off a wave of concern across academics, health professionals and activists, with many issuing statements and opinions warning against the move, arguing that it would increase barriers to obtaining contraceptives, lead to unwanted pregnancies, and would increase black marketeering and subsequent costs. This sense of concern is justified. Conservative strains among health professionals and indeed, society at large, demonstrate an anxiety about young people exercising sexual autonomy outside the prescribed norms of marriage and pro-creation. However, [evidence](#) overwhelmingly points to not just the fact that young people in India are sexually active outside of marriage, but that they need options for preventing unwanted births. Given this context, ensuring that over-the-counter sale of the EC pill is maintained is crucial, but only one part of the picture.

The EC pill was introduced in India in 2005 and is part of the country's national family planning program. It has been available over the counter since then, and over the years, its use has grown. This suggests [a great demand for the pill](#), and that it has been a means for women to exercise their agency in controlling fertility. While the on-paper EC pills are to be made available under the [National Health Mission](#) and meant to be sold over-the-counter, access is contingent on availability and access. For instance, since 2017 there have been [consistent reports](#) that in the state of Tamil Nadu, [pharmacies largely did not stock EC pills](#), and the ones who did, were not willing to sell it without a prescription. Investigations in large metropolitan cities of India ([Chennai](#) and [Hyderabad](#)) have highlighted how frustrating the search for an EC pill can be. The situation was so dire, that [activists began stocking EC pills](#) sourced from other states, and were contacted through email and social media, to provide them to young people. In Tamil Nadu, even though the health department clarified that there is no ban on the pills and that they are available freely at government institutions, the shadow ban continued. The notion that EC pills are "unsafe" and "misused" prevails. And since this appears to be the case even among health professionals and pharmacists who are supposed to be in the know, one cannot help but put it down to [an implicit bias](#). After all, despite all the evidence and concern around antibiotic resistance, no pharmacist appears reluctant to stock them, and most are willing to sell them without prescription.

But even if EC pills were readily available over the counter, as they are in many cities in India, social stigma makes it almost impossible for women (unmarried women especially) to walk into a pharmacy in their neighbourhood and ask for a pill or a condom. In Mumbai, Delhi and Lucknow – three cities where I have done research with adolescent girls and young women, I repeatedly heard how difficult it is to go into a pharmacy and buy an EC pill or even a condom. At best, a pharmacist would turn them away if they looked like they were under 18 years (since the law criminalizes adolescent sexual relations), and at worst word could eventually get around to their families. Thus the easy availability of pills is indeed helpful and critical, but is not sufficient in and of itself.

What it comes down to, then, is that in India, like in other places across the world, sexuality is a highly regulated business. As a woman in India, one is expected to be sexually active only *after* marriage, and thereafter remain solely monogamous with one's husband. Chronologically, the woman is then expected to immediately conceive and rapidly give birth to two children – at most (based on family planning campaigns to stem population growth). Socially, this must imply also preferably a male child in the first year of marriage, and another after 2-3 years spacing for health reasons, of course. What business do women have going about having sex outside marriage in the first place? And if they can escape the consequences so easily what would it do to our "moral order"? Pharmacists, doctors and society at large, may see the easy availability of the pill as "enabling" such "immoral behaviour", but they typically couch it in their language of "rationality" and "regulation".

This makes it essential to reflect on the broader concerns and barriers to sexual and reproductive health for unmarried and adolescent/young people in India. Although the EC pill is a safe and easily available method to ensure that unwanted pregnancies do not take place, without any absolute medical contraindications, and suitable for use at all ages, it must [not be used in place of routine contraception](#). Moreover, in case EC fails, women must be able to access safe and timely abortion. Yet, in India, access to much needed routine contraception and safe and timely abortion are both rife with attitudinal barriers. While the government of India has [a programme](#) that addresses sexual and reproductive health concerns of adolescents, has it been able to translate it to safe and judgment-free access to contraceptives for girls and young women on the ground? Are health care providers, social workers and pharmacists, prepared to leave behind archaic notions of morality and honour, and allow young people to exercise their rights?

For now, the CDSCO has announced that status quo on the sale of the EC pill will be maintained, but it is certainly time to shift the status quo on sexual morality.

On the author:

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Highlights of the week

G20 Health related meetings in Brazil (29-31 Oct)

<https://www.gov.br/secom/en/latest-news/2024/10/g20-meetings-enter-final-stretch-ahead-of-leaders-summit>

As a reminder: “ **The G20 Health Ministers' Meeting [will] take place in Rio de Janeiro between October 29 and 31.** The Brazilian presidency established “**building resilient health systems**” as the theme of the Health Working Group and defined **four priorities**. The event’s program includes topics that were widely discussed in previous meetings of the Health Working Group which took place in Brasília, Salvador, and Natal. **Ministerial summit topics include combating health disinformation; the response to Mpox; discussions to establish a commitment to a climate declaration; tackling inequalities; and preparing for future pandemics. ...** ”

“The **Joint Ministerial Meeting on Finance and Health [will] take place on October 31**, also in Rio de Janeiro, to discuss ways to strengthen health systems and ensure financing for countries to deal with upcoming health emergencies.”

Stay tuned for **press releases**.

Meanwhile, a few snippets already:

Via [Politico Pro](#): “**Brazil will use its presidency of the G20 to push for regional drug production and innovation**, as health ministers gather in Rio de Janeiro today.” “Health leaders are enthusiastic, but **want funding to make the words a reality.**” “**Brazil has the backing of UNAIDS and other members of the Global Council on Inequality, AIDS and Pandemics.**”

More detail via [Ben Philips](#) and [M Kavanagh](#) on X.

“The @g20org Health Ministerial **will launch a major new Coalition for Local and Regional Production...**” “**There was a lot of debate, some high income countries tried hard to make the coalition small and restricted to a few diseases. But Brazil alongside S Africa and others pushed and secured a bold vision for this effort to expand capacity worldwide on dengue, TB, HIV and**

beyond...” Final text, via M Kavanagh (X):
<https://x.com/MMKavanagh/status/1852102462532129253>

“At the #G20Brazil Health & Finance ministers meeting some important developments. Ministers specifically commit to measure and act on the social determinants of pandemics—a first of its type.

And via [A Wyns](#) (LinkedIn): “The G20 declaration on climate and health was just approved in Rio by the health ministers of all G20 economies. This is the first time ever that climate and health was discussed at this level in the G20 - offering a step forward from the COP28 declaration on climate and health that was adopted last year (which was endorsed by 150 countries but was not endorsed at the time by some G20 countries like South Africa, Saudi Arabia and Russia)...”

There was also a G20 [HL meeting on One Health](#).

Pandemic Fund Raises US\$982 million in New Commitments from Governments and an Additional US\$1.8 billion in Co-financing from International Partner Organizations in the First Three Months of its Resource Mobilization Campaign

<https://www.thepandemicfund.org/news/press-release/pandemic-fund-raises-us982-million-new-commitments-governments-and-additional>

Press release of the **Pandemic Funding pledging event (31 Oct)** in Rio.

“On the margins of today’s G20 Finance and Health Ministers’ Joint Meeting held today, **the Pandemic Fund announced that it has mobilized US\$2.8 billion over the past three months** in new international financing for low- and middle-income countries to strengthen critical pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response capacities. **The additional resources include commitments from 10 countries amounting to US\$982 million, and co-financing from international organizations totaling over US\$1.8 billion. ...**”

PS: “In the first three months of its resource mobilization campaign, the Pandemic Fund has **successfully secured close to 50 percent of its target to mobilize at least US\$2 billion in new pledges** to support its [strategic plan](#). The resource mobilization campaign **will continue through Spring 2025....**”

UNAIDS - Experts back G20 action to tackle pandemics by addressing the inequalities which drive them and by boosting production of medicines in every region of the world

https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/presscentre/pressreleaseandstatementarchive/2024/october/20241029_g20

(from earlier this week, on 29 October) (*you can also re-watch the recording*)

“...Today, at a special event organized for the G20 Joint Finance and Health Ministerial, the Brazilian government and experts from the Global Council on Inequality, AIDS and Pandemics backed calls for efforts to break the “inequality-pandemic cycle” that is fueling continued disease emergencies. **Two crucial measures could enable the world to tackle current and future pandemics.** They urged leaders to **recognise, for the first time in G20 history, inequality as a driver of pandemics,** requiring both measurement and decisive action. They **also championed boosting the development, production and supply of life-saving health products in every region of the world....”**

“... The two initiatives—**addressing inequality as a pandemic driver and the move to boost regional health product production**— offer a unique opportunity for G20 leaders to take transformative action towards greater health equity and global health security, speakers agreed....” “... Tributes were paid to the Ministry of Health in Brazil for its leadership in advancing these critical issues at the G20, including **proposing a new Global Coalition for Regional Production, Innovation and Equitable Access** and including **social determinants of pandemics** in the work of the **G20 Joint Health and Finance Ministers task force....** “

Wrap-up IMF/WB Annual meetings (21-26 Oct)

With some final analyses – with focus on **reform of the international financial architecture.**

Devex - Annual meetings special edition: Ajay Banga’s big vision for the World Bank

<https://www.devex.com/news/annual-meetings-special-edition-ajay-banga-s-big-vision-for-the-world-bank-108530>

“**The World Bank president outlines some of his post-evolution plans for the global lender, with job creation a major focus.** Plus, where the annual meetings left the big issues for global development.”

“... **The emphasis on job creation** was a thread that ran through the entire annual meetings week. Friday’s speech was when Banga made it explicit that **his post-evolution vision for the World Bank is about closing the gap between the number of jobs the world’s population will need and the number of jobs that exist....**” “ “The specter of unemployment looms large, potentially leaving 800 million young people without meaningful employment, and threatening to destabilize societies and hinder economic growth....”

“**Banga pledged to put the tools of the World Bank Group in the service of job creation.** He has **already assembled a High-Level Advisory Council on Jobs** led by Singapore’s President Tharman Shanmugaratnam and former Chilean President Michelle Bachelet, which met for the first time last week....”

The Devex analysis also provides an update on **debt** (“**No major decisions were made on any of the proposals** we outlined, or to fix the existing Common Framework process for debt resolution”) ; **IDA, reforms,....**

- Related: [Development Today - World Bank sharpens IDA narrative by lifting it above special interests and earmarking in global aid](#)

(gated) “A World Bank campaign to convince donors to grant at least USD 27 billion for the International Development Association (IDA), its concessional arm for poor countries, is more open and outspoken than usual. The bank presents IDA as an antidote to a fractured aid architecture, but it faces competition from an unprecedented number of agencies.”

BWP - Annual Meetings 2024 Wrap-up – Don’t look back: BWIs plough down path of reforms lacking evidence and willingness to engage with broader UN-led reform processes

<https://www.brettonwoodsproject.org/2024/10/dont-look-back-bwis-plough-down-path-of-reforms-lacking-evidence-and-willingness-to-engage-with-broader-un-led-reform-processes/>

“The 2024 World Bank and IMF Annual Meetings proved to be another missed opportunity for meaningful reform of the international financial architecture. The Annuals main topics of discussion - the Bank’s Scorecard launch & IMF’s charges review - showed a palpable gap between talk about BWIs reform and the very real struggle to pass incremental changes. **The IFIs are struggling with an identity crisis, with the Bank focused on serving private sector interests (“development actor or private capital de-risker?”) and the IMF failing to achieve its mandate of providing an international safety net for its vulnerable members.**”

- Related: [Global Policy Forum - 2024 Annual Meetings of the IMF and the World Bank: Continuing disconnect between IFI and UN agendas](#) (by B Ellmers)

“Last week’s **Annual Meeting** of the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) that took place in Washington, D.C. were the first major gathering of policymakers after the UN Summit of the Future (SotF), and one of the few remaining milestones before the international community gathers for the **Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4) in Sevilla in summer 2025**. However, neither the outcome of the SotF has been reflected in the international financial institutions’ (IFIs) own outcome documents, nor have the Annual Meetings been used as a strategic step to prepare for FfD4. **The need for better coordination of UN and IFI agendas is more visible than ever.**”

Excerpt: “... The **Chairs’ Statement** of the International Monetary and Financial Committee (again, the IMFC failed to adopt a Communiqué by consensus, due to the ongoing geopolitical tensions) states that „fiscal policy should pivot toward consolidation“ and „monetary policy must ensure inflation returns durably to target“. In other words, it **proposes a global austerity programme. It remains the IMFC’s secret how a combination of fiscal cuts and monetary tightening will help to overcome the current low-growth trap.** Where is growth supposed to come from? **Certainly, this policy mix does not reflect the UN’s desire for a massive SDG stimulus to catch up with the Sustainable Development Goals. ...”**

GPF - Building new foundations: Reimagining the International Financial Architecture: Views and proposals from Civil society

[Civil society \(report\) - Building new foundations: Reimagining the International Financial Architecture](#)

Now fully available. And recommended.

CESR at the 2024 Annual Meetings: advocating for a rights-based transformation of the international financial architecture

<https://www.cesr.org/cesr-at-the-2024-imfwb-annual-meetings-advocating-for-a-rights-based-transformation-of-the-international-financial-architecture/>

(21 Oct) Published before the 2024 IMF/World Bank Annual Meetings, but well worth a read as it gives **insight into the broad agenda CESR advocates for**.

“CESR and allies [will] get together to challenge the unjust economic structures perpetuated by the Bretton Woods institutions. We **aim to push for a decolonial, feminist, and rights-aligned financial system that addresses the interconnected crises of debt, climate, and inequality**. CESR’s “inside-outside” strategy combines policy advocacy within the meetings and grassroots mobilization outside to amplify Global South voices and **demand a shift toward a just, people-centered, and sustainable international financial architecture.**”

What issues are we addressing, and what change are we advocating? Debt crisis: A rights-based solution... ; Tax Justice: toward a rights-aligned global tax framework ...; Climate finance: addressing historical injustices.... ; Gender Justice: Integrating feminist economic reforms....”

Listing a **number of key proposals for each of these axes**.

- And finally, a few links:

Eurodad - [G20, IMF and World Bank kick the can down the road and fail to deliver solutions to the worst debt crisis ever - CSOs react](#) (24 Oct)

[CGD \(blog\) –The United States Uses the Annual Meetings as a Legacy-Framing Moment](#) (by K Mathiasen)

“**Biden Administration officials** used the final World Bank/IMF Annual Meetings before the U.S. election **to shape their legacy on multilateral development bank (MDB) reform.**”

Global Health Governance

Lancet Editorial - Hope for rare diseases

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(24\)02414-0/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(24)02414-0/fulltext)

“Advocates for action on rare diseases are having a moment... . In a push to address disparities in care, research, and treatment, the organisation **Rare Diseases International, along with Egypt, Qatar, France, Malaysia, Spain, Panama, and Chile, is **calling for the 2025 World Health Assembly to [adopt a resolution on rare diseases](#)**.”**

“...A World Health Assembly resolution would be a culminating victory for patient advocacy. The hope is to make rare diseases a global health priority and provide a framework for countries to take action. A resolution could raise awareness, drive countries to produce national action plans, and set targets to bring much needed health equity to the forefront. A word of caution though: all too often such documents, despite the best intentions, fail to make much difference for patients. Success depends on having a strong secretariat, robust accountability, and—perhaps most importantly—substantial funding and financing for implementation.....”

Tim Schwab - Diplomatic immunity for Gates in Kenya

https://timschwab.substack.com/p/diplomatic-immunity-for-gates-in?utm_campaign=post&utm_medium=web&triedRedirect=true

“New rules treat the Gates Foundation like a sovereign state, Bill Gates like a king.”

“While nations around the world have long treated Bill Gates as a head of state, it’s now been practically codified into law in Kenya. Last week, the government announced that the Gates Foundation—and its “servants”—would be granted diplomatic immunity, a privilege normally given to foreign officials, like ambassadors. The foundation’s new ‘special status’ includes “immunity from legal action for acts done in the course of official duties,” [according to Kenyan news reports](#).....”

Quote: **“...the moral of the story is that the Gates Foundation has a history of highly questionable, colonial behavior, and this history indicates a need for more checks and balances, not fewer. Giving the foundation even greater unaccountable power, through diplomatic immunity, may have serious, harmful consequences, like driving vaccine hesitancy. Or hurting farmers. Or creating distrust in public institutions. Or eroding democracy....”**

Report - Protecting our Collective Future: Renewing Canada’s Role in Global Health

Tim Evans, Kelley Lee et al; https://rsc-src.ca/sites/default/files/Global%20Health_ES_EN.pdf

Report of the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences and the Royal Society of Canada Expert Panel on Canada’s Role in Global Health

“... Advancing global health [against the current polycrisis backdrop]... depends on three perspectives: a) the need for intergenerational protection and promotion of all life and of the earth’s ecosystems that sustain life (**planetary**); b) the need to address unfair, avoidable or remediable differences between groups of people, whether those groups are defined socially, economically, demographically, geographically or by other dimensions of inequality (**equity**); and c) the need to move from siloed to holistic thinking and practice (**integration**). Most importantly, **our definition of global health emphasises the close connection between the global and domestic spheres....”**

“...Building on analyses of the last 20 years including the COVID-19 pandemic; recognizing the country’s history of colonisation and nation-building, and ongoing processes of reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples; and responding to profound shifts in the global landscape over the next two decades, **the Panel identified seven key findings.** The **first four findings set out “what” issue areas require priority attention and where Canada’s leadership could make a substantial contribution.** Importantly, each issue area embodies domestic global interconnectedness, recognising that health in Canada cannot be provided, protected or promoted without attention to the global landscape. **The remaining three findings concern “how” Canada can effectively take forward these priority issue areas** through clear strategy, targeted investments in research and innovation systems, and capacity building to support Canadian leadership.”

PS: even if you’re not Canadian, make sure you read at least the **executive summary**. I especially like the ‘**net-zero poaching**’ goal (re HRH).

Kazan Declaration : "Strengthening Multilateralism For Just Global Development And Security"

[BRICS+](#)

From last week’s **BRICS+ summit**. Paragraphs 93 to 97 concern global health cooperation.

And include, among others: the **launch of the BRICS Public Health Institutes Network** (art. 97) and **“...support to the central coordinating role of the World Health Organization** in the implementation of multilateral international efforts to protect public health from infectious diseases and epidemics and commit to reform and strengthen the international pandemic prevention, preparedness and response system.” (art. 93)

Euractiv - Global health expert: EU strategy risks being ‘all talk, no action’

<https://www.euractiv.com/section/health-consumers/interview/global-health-expert-eu-strategy-risks-being-all-talk-no-action/>

“Professor Dr Beate Kampmann, head of Charité’s Center for Global Health, looks at the challenges ahead for the EU’s global health strategy.” “ Clearer strategies and proper implementation within the European Union are needed to properly address global health challenges.... “

Concord - Whose Interests does ODA Truly Serve? AidWatch 2024 Launch Event

<https://concordeurope.org/2024/10/23/whose-interests-does-oda-truly-serve-aidwatch-2024-launch-event/>

“On Tuesday 22 October, **CONCORD** launched the **2024** edition of its **AidWatch** report, which is published every year and analyses the quality and quantity of EU Official Development Assistance (ODA). This year, the report posed the question, **‘Whose interests does ODA truly serve?’** and found that a significant portion of European ODA provision is being shaped by self-interests instead of the wellbeing of partner countries.....”

CSIS - U.S. Response to Mpox in the DRC: Leveraging PEPFAR as a Global Health Security Asset

A Carbaugh; <https://www.csis.org/analysis/us-response-mpox-drc-leveraging-pepfar-global-health-security-asset>

“... this outbreak—driven by a more contagious and deadly strain of the mpox virus—is important to spotlight given its growing toll and implications for global health security. The U.S. government (USG) has mobilized a multipronged response, of which its billion-dollar global HIV/AIDS program, PEPFAR, is a core element. **The President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) has a unique role to play given the intersection of HIV and mpox, as well as the potential to leverage its platform in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and in other African countries where mpox cases are being reported.** U.S. support for the regional mpox response underscores PEPFAR’s importance as a provider of life-saving HIV services in areas facing an emerging health threat, as well as its critical contributions to the USG’s global health security approach. **This is especially relevant as the program faces another reauthorization in early 2025 amid a potentially unsettled political climate....”**

Devex - UK aid on track to stay at 0.5% for rest of the decade

<https://www.devex.com/news/uk-aid-on-track-to-stay-at-0-5-for-rest-of-the-decade-108657>

“Labour government adopts the Conservative Party’s economic tests for reversing cut from 0.7% — tests which won’t be “met within the Parliament,” says official forecast.”

“The United Kingdom will not return to spending 0.7% of gross national income on international aid until at least 2030, following the Labour Party’s first budget back in power — and immediate spending cuts look inevitable.”

PS: **“The decision was criticized by billionaire philanthropist Bill Gates.** “Today’s budget is a disappointing outcome for the world’s most vulnerable people. Global challenges like climate change and epidemic disease are a shared responsibility with shared consequences, and the UK withdrawing leaves us all at greater risk,” he said in a statement shared by his foundation. “Our foundation’s partnership in the UK is based on our shared values of solidarity, fairness, and a belief that anyone, anywhere, should be able to live and work with dignity to achieve their full potential. I hope to see the UK chart a path back to the commitments that demonstrate this global outlook in action,” he added.”

PS: clearly, in some circles, Bill is seen now as “the official spokesperson for the world’s most vulnerable”, and “ODA more in general”.

- And via [Pandemic Action Playbook](#): “ **French government slashes aid.** The French government is risking its strong reputation in international development and climate finance by **slashing aid by 34%** — a disproportionately severe cut — and France intends to remove the “solidarity” aspects of key taxes. “

WHO in Africa, WomenLift Health sign pivotal agreement to strengthen women’s leadership in health

<https://www.afro.who.int/news/who-africa-womenlift-health-sign-pivotal-agreement-strengthen-womens-leadership-health>

“World Health Organization (WHO) in the African Region and WomenLift Health today crossed a major milestone, cementing a crucial partnership to bolster investments in women’s leadership in health and promote gender equity in the sector across the region. The two organizations formally signed an agreement to augment the existing women empowerment initiatives at WHO in the African Region that aim to enhance the leadership capacity of mid- to senior-level women leaders as well as to equip them to navigate complex health challenges, foster resilience and strengthen their leadership capacities. The agreement, signed at the opening of a three-day leadership workshop organized for women health leaders in Addis Ababa from 28 – 30 October 2024, stems from the two organizations’ strong commitment to promote women’s leadership in health.”

Global Health Financing

CGD (blog) - Response to The Lancet Commission on Investing in Health 3.0: We Must Prioritise Better

P Baker, K Chalkidou, J Guzman et al; <https://www.cgdev.org/blog/response-lancet-commission-investing-health-30-we-must-prioritise-better>

- Cfr Tweet by the authors: “**In this @CGDev blog, @kchalkidou @JavierHGuzmanC @SullivanProf & I argue: by setting 15 priority diseases globally & dismissing QALYs/DALYs it undermines country-led priority setting.**”

“... In this blog, we argue the reports’ approach to setting priorities globally and by burden of disease, combined with historically determined and (perhaps) politically negotiated modular health system budget envelopes, risks undermining its own objectives. Instead, we argue for an alternative tripartite approach to prioritisation: (1) by services and interventions using standard comparable metrics, such as quality-adjusted life years (QALYs) or daily-adjusted life years (DALYs); (2) carried out by national priority-setting processes accountable to their own populations and with due consideration to the specific context-sensitive evidence and values; and (3) through resource allocation processes that use this evidence and values to quantify and consider trade-offs between priorities, rather than replicate historic inefficiencies and political biases.”

“This approach [can substantially improve health system performance](#) and drive us faster towards the 50 by 50 target. Furthermore, if supplemented through a [New Compact](#) with donors to clarify the centrality of domestic financing, it **offers a more concrete way forward to improve health financing in settings that receive external assistance, including advancing the key shifts in the global health architecture outlined in the [Lusaka Agenda](#).....**

Devex - Why the Pandemic Fund is considering an emergency financing mechanism

<https://www.devex.com/news/why-the-pandemic-fund-is-considering-an-emergency-financing-mechanism-108623>

(gated) **“Much of what it can do however is dependent on how much funding it is able to raise.”**

“ The Pandemic Fund was set up to help build countries’ capacity to prepare, prevent, and respond to future outbreaks. But it quickly realized there’s no such thing as an “interpandemic year.”

“There's always an outbreak ... occurring,” including the recent outbreaks of mpox in Africa and Marburg in Rwanda, the Pandemic Fund’s executive head, Priya Basu, said during Devex World 2024. **This is why the fund’s board decided to fast-track some \$129 million to support several countries affected by mpox, and is considering an [emergency financing mechanism](#) to help with ongoing, new, and future outbreaks.....”**

Lancet Letter - The Pandemic Fund's inclusivity problem

S S Han et al; [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(24\)02195-0/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(24)02195-0/fulltext)

“... Although its goals are laudable, **the Fund's reliance on institutional membership of countries in the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank creates exclusionary barriers.** The most recent list of countries eligible for International Development Association funding leaves several vulnerable countries (in respect to under-resourced health-care systems susceptible to the effects of future pandemics) without access....”

“...**To enhance global pandemic preparedness, the Pandemic Fund should adopt more inclusive policies. Aside from North Korea, countries such as Cuba, Zimbabwe, Syria, and Eritrea face similar barriers in accessing international financial mechanisms. Even for countries that are technically eligible, political instability, economic sanctions, and strained relations with international bodies can further complicate their timely access to crucial health-care funding.** Revising the **eligibility framework to prioritise health risk and pandemic vulnerability, rather than just institutional membership,** would enable support for countries facing the most pressing health challenges while contending with limited avenues to global funding initiatives. Encouraging regional collaborations through multicountry proposals and removing any eligibility ambiguity can mitigate the risks posed by excluding certain nations.....”

American presidential elections

Time - The Presidential Election Will Shape the Future of Human Health

J Ratevosian & G Yamey; <https://time.com/7027503/harris-trump-election-global-health/>

(from 2 October) “... The next president will play a critical role in addressing the world’s most pressing challenges: **climate change, global health, and international cooperation** (eg. SDG agenda). And the choice between Kamala Harris and Donald Trump could not be clearer.....”

We obviously agree: even if Biden & co have taken some disastrous decisions over the past years (including very much the last), not exactly facilitating ‘international cooperation’ for example.

Devex - What the US election means for global development

<https://www.devex.com/news/what-the-us-election-means-for-global-development-108556>

(gated) “At Devex World in Washington, D.C., **Republicans and Democrats shared their expectations for the direction that a Kamala Harris presidency or a Donald Trump presidency would take U.S. development efforts.**”

“...**If former President Donald Trump wins the election on Nov. 5**, his administration would likely reduce the foreign aid budget, shift resources from United Nations agencies and NGOs to local and faith-based groups, eliminate climate change programs, and pursue better “alignment” between foreign aid agencies, according to former Trump administration officials James Richardson and Max Primorac.....”

- And via [Devex Newswire – Two possible post-election futures for US development](#)

“... On the other hand, **multilateralism and alliances** could be the **hallmarks of a Harris presidency**, according to Democrats Jonathan Fantini-Porter and Ertharin Cousin. “The vice president’s philosophy on change is rooted on, first and foremost, the idea of multilateral, alliance-based, and partnership models,” said Fantini-Porter, who leads the Partnership for Central America, a White House initiative launched by Harris to address the root causes of migration.....”

Science - Researchers ‘in a state of panic’ after Robert F. Kennedy Jr. says Trump will hand him health agencies

<https://www.science.org/content/article/researchers-state-panic-after-robert-f-kennedy-jr-says-trump-will-hand-him-health>

“Former presidential candidate holds extreme views on vaccines, disease research, drug regulation.”

- Related: Stat - [What Trump and RFK Jr.’s ‘Make America Healthy Again’ gets right — and very wrong](#) (by Tom Frieden)

Nature Editorial - The world needs a US president who respects evidence

<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-024-03417-y>

“As Kamala Harris and Donald Trump face off, the fate of US democracy, science and evidence-based policy hangs in the balance.”

Stat - How a Donald Trump presidency would change health care, from Medicaid to the CDC

<https://www.statnews.com/2024/10/28/donald-trump-health-care-policy-medicaid-abortion-aca-transgender/>

Re Revisiting the Affordable Care Act, Public health agency reforms, Reshaping a Medicaid program under pressure, Slashing drug prices, Reproductive rights, Substance use and border policy, Barring gender-affirming care.”

- See also a [JAMA Editorial – Health and the 2024 US Election](#)
- And a Lancet World Report - [Harris or Trump? Health in the US election](#)
“**Aside from abortion, health issues have largely been neglected in the run-up to the Nov 5 election.** What have the candidates proposed to improve health? Susan Jaffe reports.”

Brookings (Commentary) - What Trump and Harris mean for global reproductive health and rights

Amna Qayyum; <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/what-trump-and-harris-mean-for-global-reproductive-health-and-rights/>

Analysis.

- Related: [HPW – As Election Draws Close, Trump Groups Push Hard Against Abortion, LGBTQ Rights in Africa](#)

“Post 2020, ex-Trump officials have worked through NGOs to undermine abortion and LGBTQ rights in Africa, preparing the ground for his re-election.” Dire must-read.

- And Devex - [Will Trump gut UN family planning funds ... again?](#)

“The U.N. population agency braces for more than \$160 million in possible cuts.”

K Bertram (blog) - Allyship in times of authoritarian patriarchy: Feminism, anti-racism, anti-ableism, and LGBTQI activism

<https://katribertram.wordpress.com/2024/10/27/allyship-in-times-of-authoritarian-patriarchy-feminism-anti-racism-anti-ableism-and-lgbtqi-activism/>

Going beyond the US presidential elections, clearly. *“When your gender, body, sexual orientation, or where you come from determine what rights you have – and those rights are rolled back and questioned – it’s time to recognize authoritarian patriarchy is on the rise again. What should we do?”*

Devex – US election puts UN community on edge

<https://www.devex.com/news/us-election-puts-un-community-on-edge-108591>

(gated) See also [Devex Newswire](#) for some more detail: **“The U.N. wants a hand at revamping the international financial system, but Trump and Russia could ruin those plans.”**

More on global tax justice, debt crisis & carbon inequality

Telegraph - The real reason Africa is up to its neck in debt

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/global-health/climate-and-people/the-real-reason-africa-is-up-to-its-neck-in-debt/>

“It’s not the IMF or even China but private banks that threaten developing country’s finances, lending at exorbitant rates.”

“While China and international bodies like the IMF and World Bank shouldered much of the blame during recent violent protests in Nairobi, **campaigners say private banks that own bonds issued by the Kenyan government are also a significant barrier to progress.** Of Kenya’s external debt payments between 2023 and 2025, **almost half are to private creditors, primarily bondholders, demanding higher interest and quicker returns.** This is one of the main reasons why Kenya is spending four times more servicing external debts – £27.7 billion at the end of 2022 – than it does on healthcare and education...”

“... For a **recent report called Between Life and Debt, Christian Aid** calculated that between the start of last year and the end of 2025, **the nation will have to repay a total of £4.4 billion to its private creditors. This is nearly three times what it is scheduled to give back to international bodies like the World Bank, even though private lenders represent only a quarter of the total Kenya owes. Interest payments to commercial lenders are often four times higher than to the multilateral donors, and the loans have the shortest maturities.....”**

“... Across the continent, 32 out of 54 African countries spend more on debt than healthcare.”

“Working with the European Network on Debt and Development, **Christian Aid also ascertained that the total being paid to private creditors by all African countries is around £36.3 billion, just under half of the total.**”

“... **If Kenya stopped paying back the creditors and tried to restructure its debts, the banks could sue them in London courts,** as English law governs all of Kenya’s foreign currency bonds. **The banks effectively retain a choke hold over African economies,** locking them into a never-ending cycle of taking out fresh loans to repay existing ones.....”

Global Policy – Harnessing network power: Weaponised interdependence in global tax policy

Rasmus Corlin Christensen; <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1758-5899.13456>

“...This article spotlights the dynamics of ‘weaponized interdependence’, suggesting a critical role for strategically targeting global corporate and financial networks in reinvigorating action against tax havens, tax avoidance and tax evasion. Identifying and exploiting network chokepoints – financial institutions, corporate subsidiaries and expert intermediaries – can empower states to reassert their sovereignty and counterbalance the structural advantages of global capital....”

Guardian – Carbon emissions of richest 1% increase hunger, poverty and deaths, says Oxfam

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2024/oct/28/carbon-emissions-of-richest-1-increase-hunger-poverty-and-deaths-says-oxfam>

Hard-hitting report. “The high carbon emissions of the world’s richest 1% are worsening hunger, poverty and excess deaths, a [report](#) has found. Owing to luxury yachts, private jets and investments in polluting industries, the consumption of the world’s wealthiest people is also making it increasingly difficult to limit global heating to 1.5C....”

“If everyone on Earth emitted planet-warming gases at the same rate as the average billionaire, the remaining carbon budget to stay within 1.5C would be gone in less than two days, the [Oxfam](#) analysis said, rather than current estimates of four years if carbon emissions remain as they are today....”

“Preceding a budget in the UK, a presidential election in the US and the Cop29 climate summit in Baku, Azerbaijan, the anti-poverty group’s examination of [carbon inequality](#) calls on governments to tax the super-rich in order to curtail excessive consumption and generate revenue for the transition to clean energy, and to compensate those worst affected by global heating....”

- Related: [Oxfam \(Briefing Paper\) - Carbon Inequality Kills: Why curbing the excessive emissions of an elite few can create a sustainable planet for all](#)

Run-up to INB 12 (on the pandemic agreement)

WHO - [Twelfth meeting of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body \(INB\) for a WHO instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response](#) (4-15 Nov)

TGH - The Pandemic Agreement Fractures in the Latest Negotiations

D Fidler; <https://www.thinkglobalhealth.org/article/pandemic-agreement-fractures-latest-negotiations>

« WHO member states continue to disagree on critical issues and might tackle them after adopting a pandemic agreement.”

“The latest negotiating round, however, could dictate what progress means going forward. The INB11's outcome portends the adoption of a watered-down pandemic agreement and future negotiations on contentious issues the results of which only a limited number of countries might accept....”

Quote: “... In short, WHO member states concluded that they could not produce a consensus pandemic agreement during the INB's extended mandate because of disagreements over the PABS System. That decision breaks the Pandemic Agreement into two parts—what some commentators have called a "[pandemic agreement lite](#)" and the PABS Instrument. Based on the draft text, that instrument would only be binding on those parties to the Pandemic Agreement that specifically accept it. That approach could mean fewer WHO member states accept the PABS Instrument than join the Pandemic Agreement—an outcome seen elsewhere, including with the [FCTC](#) (183 parties) and its [protocol on illicit tobacco trade](#) (69 parties). ...”

On the possible journey ahead: “... **Whether INB12 can produce a consensus pandemic agreement in time for a special session of the World Health Assembly to adopt in December seems unlikely** given how much the INB11's draft text had not achieved initial agreement. **The INB11's draft, however, contains a roadmap for concluding the Pandemic Agreement when the World Health Assembly meets in May 2025**—agree to weak obligations, avoid strong implementation and compliance mechanisms, and defer disagreements over the PABS System to future negotiations on a separate instrument.”

- Link: O’Neill institute - [One Health and the WHO Pandemic Accord: Institutionalizing a Unified Approach to Global Health](#)

“ **A cornerstone of the proposed treaty is the integration of the One Health approach**, which recognizes the interconnectedness of human, animal, and environmental health **in pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response (PPPR)**. The institutionalization of One Health within the treaty framework is seen as a vital step toward addressing the multifaceted drivers of pandemics. **However, operationalizing this approach poses several challenges, as evidenced by the evolving nature of the treaty negotiations.....”**

Mpox emergency response

HPW - Mpox Spread in Uganda is ‘Concerning’ ...

<https://healthpolicy-watch.news/mpox-spread-in-uganda-is-concerning-as-rwanda-reports-a-few-more-marburg-cases/>

Coverage Africa CDC briefing on Thursday.

“The spread of mpox in Uganda is “of great concern”, with some 830 recorded cases in 19 states, according to the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC). ... Unlike the DRC

where children make up half the mpox cases, **only 12,5% of Uganda's mpox cases are children**. The majority, 63%, are adult men and **clade 1b, which can be sexually transmitted, is the dominant strain. ...**"

... **The continent's weekly case tally increased by 2,766 cases – a similar increase to previous weeks. The vast majority of cases are in the DRC and Burundi. Almost 900,000 mpox vaccines have been distributed to nine countries, with vaccination campaigns going well in the DRC and Rwanda. However, Nigeria postponed its planned vaccination campaign this week....**"

Lancet GH - Africa's mpox strategic preparedness and response plan: a coordinated continental effort to boost health security

Nicaise Ndembu et al ; [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X\(24\)00464-9/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X(24)00464-9/fulltext)

« **... The Africa Continental Mpox Preparedness and Response Plan (CMPRP) aims to accelerate mpox preparedness, readiness, and response efforts across the African region.** The joint plan fosters synergy, alignment, and complementarity between interventions by Member States and the technical support from more than 20 key partners and stakeholders. **CMPRP is designed to implement the mpox response using a One Team, One Plan, One Budget, and One Monitoring and evaluation framework** to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the response. **The joint plan marks a historical collaboration between Africa CDC, WHO, and other key stakeholders** to support Member States to implement an integrated multisectoral response that engages communities as key partners to stop the current mpox outbreak.”

Read what it entails.

PS: And **re the funding:** “ **...The plan proposes that US\$599 million is needed** to implement the continent-wide response exclusive of funds for vaccines. Mechanisms needed to raise funds include domestic resource mobilisation from within Africa. Beyond that, the timely release of funds from various global and continental pandemic response funds, such as the Pandemic Fund, African Epidemics Fund, the Pandemic Emergency Financing Facility, and GAVI's first response fund is also needed to enable countries in need to augment the current actions. Far more than these, funders, regional and multilateral organisations, cooperation agencies, private sectors, and stakeholders are urged to prioritise funding for other essentials. such as end-to-end research, product development, knowledge-sharing, and technology transfer, as well as donations of medical countermeasures such as vaccines. ... Although **current actions have led to a pledge of more than \$1.1 billion** inclusive of the USA Government plead of \$500 million, Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations plead of \$145 million to enhance manufacturing capacities for diagnostics and \$72 million for vaccine development, \$129 million from the pandemic fund to support surveillance, laboratory testing, and health workforce actions, **more funds are still needed to strengthen the health and surveillance system. Current response gaps include \$49.7 million for the surveillance plan, \$22.6 million for laboratory capacity development, \$77 155 497 for case management, and \$76 089 325 for infection prevention and control....**”

WHO and partners activate Global Health Emergency Corps for the first time in response to mpox outbreak

<https://www.who.int/news/item/29-10-2024-who-and-partners-activate-global-health-emergency-corps-for-the-first-time-in-response-to-mpox-outbreak>

“In October 2024, WHO and partners, in collaboration with Member States, activated the [Global Health Emergency Corps \(GHEC\)](#) for the first time to provide support to countries facing mpox outbreaks. GHEC is a **grouping of professionals** with the objective of strengthening the response to health emergencies, and a collaboration platform for countries and health emergency networks. It supports countries on their health emergency workforce, the surge deployment of experts and the networking of technical leaders. ...”

“...In collaboration with the International Association of National Public Health Institutes, **GHEC is assessing the emergency workforce capacities in 8 countries affected by the mpox outbreak**, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi, the two most affected countries. **As of 17 October, WHO has managed the deployment of 56 experts to the affected countries.** This includes WHO staff as well as experts mobilized through the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN) and the African Volunteers Health Corps (AVoHC-SURGE).”

Nature (News) - Monkeypox virus keeps getting better at spreading among humans

<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-024-03531-x>

“Analysis of a clade Ia strain of the virus circulating in Central Africa shows genetic mutations indicative of sustained human-to-human spread.”

Public Citizen - Letter to Bavarian Nordic Urging Lower Price, Greater Supply of Jynneos Mpox Vaccine

<https://www.citizen.org/article/letter-to-bavarian-nordic-urging-lower-price-increased-supply-of-the-jynneos-mpox-vaccine/>

- And related **Public Citizen Fact sheet** (30 Oct): [Fact Sheet: Expanding Access to Mpox Vaccines Through Affordable Transparent Pricing](#)

“... To remedy its excessive pricing and better provide for health need, Bavarian Nordic should quadruple its vaccine supply order with UNICEF from one million doses to four million doses. This supply should be made available free of charge, cutting the effective per dose price to \$16.25 for the existing agreement. Additionally, the company must publicly justify its pricing and clarify its pricing strategy for low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) to ensure greater access and transparency....”

Quickstart - Tracking and Analyzing Medical Countermeasures for Emerging Health Challenges: Mpox

<https://dukeghic.org/2024/10/25/tracking-and-analyzing-medical-countermeasures-for-emerging-health-challenges-mpox/>

Quickstart is supported by Duke University, Americares, the Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI), and COVID Collaborative. First report of their new report series.

And some links

- WHO - [WHO lists additional mpox diagnostic tests for emergency use](#)

“As part of ongoing efforts to enhance quality-assured testing options, the World Health Organization (WHO) has **listed two additional mpox in vitro diagnostics under its Emergency Use Listing (EUL) procedure...**”

- [DR Congo starts second phase of vaccination against mpox](#) (26 Oct)

Marburg outbreak Rwanda

HPW – Rwanda Reports a Few More Marburg Cases

<https://healthpolicy-watch.news/mpox-spread-in-uganda-is-concerning-as-rwanda-reports-a-few-more-marburg-cases/>

Via Africa CDC: “... **Rwanda recorded four new Marburg cases in the past two weeks** – a health worker ([reported on last week](#)) and three contacts of other cases, according to Dr Yvan Butera, Minister of State in the health ministry. Two people have also died in the past week.”

Rwanda has confirmed 66 Marburg cases and 15 deaths reported, a case-fatality rate of around 23%. Close to 6,000 people have now been tested while close to 1,600 frontline workers have been vaccinated, said Butera.....”

Bird flu

Stat – Bird flu found in a pig in U.S. for the first time, raising concerns about potential risks to humans

<https://www.statnews.com/2024/10/30/h5n1-bird-flu-found-in-oregon-pig-reassortment-threat-human-transmission/>

“Scientists worry the species could generate a hybrid virus better able to spread to and among people.”

AMR

**Guardian - How can we help stop deadly drug-resistant infections spreading?
Debt relief**

G Gray (board chair of the Global Antibiotic Research and Development Partnership) ;
https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2024/oct/29/drug-resistant-infections-debt-relief-millions-lives-amr?CMP=tw_t_a-global-development_b-gdndevelopment

“Millions of lives could be saved if **the world would only consider more innovative ways** to help poorer nations tackle AMR.”

“... Given [the current] debt crisis, it is little wonder that, during the recent negotiations over a UN political declaration on AMR, **one of the major disagreements was on how to finance the response. Low- and middle-income countries called for increased contributions to a [multi-partner trust fund](#) set up to help countries manage their response to AMR through national action plans.** All countries committed in 2015 to these plans, designed to [strengthen and coordinate measures](#) to tackle drug resistance, but in some countries these remain largely [incomplete and underfunded](#). **Some wealthier nations have suggested that these countries should be spending more. Debt relief is one way to reconcile both these positions. Debt swaps**, for example, could be used to replace high-interest debt with low-interest debt, where the interest savings are redirected to tackling AMR. **Alternatively, debt could be cancelled entirely in return for governments investing substantially in ways that support their action plans.** Either way, resources that would have been servicing debt would instead be channelled into activities that would not only help to mitigate AMR, but also have wider benefits across entire health systems, as well as globally...”

HIV

Devex - John Nkengasong: First battle against HIV was won, but war isn't over

<https://www.devex.com/news/john-nkengasong-first-battle-against-hiv-was-won-but-war-isn-t-over-108557>

(gated) “Dr. John Nkengasong, who leads the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, says that **winning the second battle is dependent on political commitment.**” “He pointed specifically to the **ongoing uncertainty about the reauthorization of the U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief**, which played a critical role in bringing the epidemic under control.”

Devex – Can personalized medicine alter South Africa's fight against HIV?

P Adepoju ; <https://www.devex.com/news/can-personalized-medicine-alter-south-africa-s-fight-against-hiv-108580>

“**South Africa's HIV Host Genome Project** seeks to unlock the genetic factors that enable a rare group of HIV-positive individuals, known as "elite controllers," to naturally suppress the virus without needing antiretroviral medication.”

“**In South Africa**, a country long struggling with one of the [world's highest rates of HIV infection](#), a **quiet yet ambitious health care transformation is taking shape**. South Africa is **pushing to integrate personalized medicine — using genetic data to tailor treatments — into its public health framework**. This move could reshape health care for millions, potentially transforming the country into a leader in genomics-driven medicine on the African continent. **However, the colossal undertaking demands significant changes in infrastructure, regulatory frameworks, and public health policies**. For its advocates, however, these are necessary steps toward a future where treatments are customized to the genetic makeup of individuals rather than taking a one-size-fits-all approach.....”

“That vision has leapfrogged genomics research with **pivotal initiatives such as the HIV Host Genome Project leading the charge.....**”

TB: WHO’s Global TB report 2024

WHO - Tuberculosis resurges as top infectious disease killer

<https://www.who.int/news/item/29-10-2024-tuberculosis-resurges-as-top-infectious-disease-killer>

(WHO press release) “ The **World Health Organization (WHO)** today published a new report on **tuberculosis** revealing that **approximately 8.2 million people were newly diagnosed with TB in 2023** – the highest number recorded since WHO began global TB monitoring in 1995. This represents a **notable increase from 7.5 million reported in 2022**, placing TB again as the **leading infectious disease killer in 2023, surpassing COVID-19....**”

“WHO’s [Global Tuberculosis Report 2024](#) highlights **mixed progress** in the global fight against TB, with **persistent challenges such as significant underfunding**. While the **number of TB-related deaths decreased from 1.32 million in 2022 to 1.25 million in 2023**, the total number of people falling ill with TB rose slightly to an estimated 10.8 million in 2023..... With the **disease disproportionately affecting people in 30 high-burden countries, India (26%), Indonesia (10%), China (6.8%), the Philippines (6.8%) and Pakistan (6.3%) together accounted for 56% of the global**

TB burden. According to the report, 55% of people who developed TB were men, 33% were women and 12% were children and young adolescents....”

“...**multidrug-resistant TB remains a public health crisis.** Treatment success rates for multidrug-resistant or rifampicin-resistant TB (MDR/RR-TB) have now reached 68%. But, of the 400 000 people estimated to have developed MDR/RR-TB, only 44% were diagnosed and treated in 2023.....”

“... **Funding gaps and challenges:** Global funding for TB prevention and care decreased further in 2023 and remains far below target. Low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), which bear 98% of the TB burden, faced significant funding shortages. **Only US\$ 5.7 billion of the US\$ 22 billion annual funding target was available in 2023, equivalent to only 26% of the global target.** The **total amount of international donor funding in LMICs has remained at around US\$ 1.1–1.2 billion per year for several years.**” “

“Globally, **TB research remains severely underfunded with only one-fifth of the US\$ 5 billion annual target reached in 2022.** This impedes the development of new TB diagnostics, drugs, and vaccines. **WHO continues leading efforts to advance the TB vaccine agenda,** including with the support of the **TB Vaccine Accelerator Council** launched by the WHO Director-General.”

Re “...**For the first time, the report provides estimates on the percentage of TB-affected households that face catastrophic costs** (exceeding 20% of annual household income) **to access TB diagnosis and treatment in all LMICs.** These indicate that half of TB-affected households face such catastrophic costs. A significant number of new TB cases are driven by **5 major risk factors: undernutrition, HIV infection, alcohol use disorders, smoking (especially among men), and diabetes.** Tackling these issues, along with critical determinants like poverty and GDP per capita, requires coordinated multisectoral action.....”

- Coverage via [HPW – WHO Report Reveals Tuberculosis as 2023’s Deadliest Infectious Disease](#)

“... The WHO’s release of its [2024 Global Tuberculosis Report](#). The 68-page report offers **comprehensive data on TB trends and the global response, covering 215 countries and regions, including all 193 WHO member states.** It provides the latest insights into the TB epidemic, tracking global, regional, and national progress, along with the impact of key factors driving the disease.”

“In 2023, TB reclaimed its position as the world’s leading **infectious disease** killer, following three years when COVID-19 took the lead. **It caused almost twice as many deaths as HIV/AIDS.** Specifically, there were an estimated 1.25 million deaths in 2023, including 161,000 amongst people with HIV.... **Domestic sources provided 80% of TB funding, while international funding for low- and middle-income countries has held steady at around \$1.2 billion per year.** Funding for TB research also remains critically low at around \$1 billion per year—just a fifth of what’s needed....”

- And via [BMJ News - Tuberculosis: Disruption to health services from pandemic has allowed cases to reach record levels worldwide](#)

“The disruption to health services caused by the covid pandemic has been a major setback for efforts to eradicate TB. ...”

The Lancet Countdown on health and climate change

The 2024 report of the *Lancet* Countdown on health and climate change: facing record-breaking threats from delayed action

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(24\)01822-1/abstract?dgcid=tlcom_carousel1_lancetcountdown24_lancet](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(24)01822-1/abstract?dgcid=tlcom_carousel1_lancetcountdown24_lancet)

As a reminder: “The Lancet Countdown was set up to monitor health impacts after the Paris agreement on climate change was adopted in 2015. It draws on the work of 122 experts from 57 academic institutions and UN agencies, including the WHO and the World Meteorological Organization.” With [Wellcome Trust](#) funding.

Via the [press release](#):

“The Lancet: Health threats of climate change reach record-breaking levels, as experts call for trillions of dollars spent on fossil fuels to be redirected towards protecting people’s health, lives and livelihoods

- New global findings in the 8th annual indicator report of the Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change reveal that **people in every country face record-breaking threats to health and survival from the rapidly changing climate, with 10 of 15 indicators tracking health threats reaching concerning new records.**
- **In 2023, people were exposed to, on average, an unprecedented 50 more days of health-threatening temperatures than expected without climate change.** Extreme drought affected 48% of the global land area - the second-highest level recorded – and the higher frequency of heatwaves and droughts was associated with 151 million more people experiencing moderate or severe food insecurity than annually between 1981 and 2010.
- Authors call out governments and companies who continue “fuelling the fire” with persistent investment in fossil fuels, all-time high energy-related greenhouse gas emissions, and years of delays in adaptation that are narrowing the survival chances of people across the globe.
- **Report underscores that the financial resources to deliver net zero emissions and secure a healthy future are available.** Yet governments and companies are **spending trillions of dollars on fossil fuel subsidies and investments that are making climate change worse**— money that could be redirected towards clean renewable energy and activities that benefit people’s health, livelihoods and wellbeing.” **“Authors argue that the findings must force a global health-centred transformation of financial systems – shifting resources from the fossil fuel-based economy towards a zero-emissions future – that will deliver rapid health and economic benefits through improved energy access and security, cleaner air and water, healthier diets and lifestyles, and more sustainable job opportunities. “**

PS: “The 2023 report of the Lancet Countdown presented 11 priorities for a healthy future. These recommendations remain relevant. Over the past year, new opportunities have emerged to enact these recommendations and put health at the centre of the world's response to climate change. **Indicators in this 2024 report inform the following seven near-term opportunities to act on the**

priorities presented in the 2023 report of the Lancet Countdown and deliver a healthy future for all....” Check out what they are (panel 1).

PS: The Lancet climate and health report presents 56 indicators of health and climate change across five domains.

Related:

- [Lancet Infographic with key findings](#)
- Coverage via HPW - [Lancet’s Climate and Health Report Card: Governments, Oil & Gas Companies ‘Fuelling the Fire’ of Cascading Impacts](#)

“ Authors call out governments and companies that continue “fuelling the fire” with continued investment in fossil fuels and subsidies....”

With also extensive coverage of an expert panel launching the report on Wednesday.

PS: “... **Global potential income losses are equivalent to \$835 billion** because of increasing temperatures leading to over 500 billion **potential hours of labour lost in 2023....”**

- Coverage via FT - [Deaths of older people from climate extremes soar, annual review shows](#)

“... **Climate change-related hazards have caused death rates among older people to soar** and a spike in the risk of infectious diseases as a result of heavy rainfall, an annual audit of health threats from global warming found. The review by more than 100 scientists published in The Lancet underscores how **climate change threatens both survival and quality of life. Low and middle-income countries are hit hardest**, it said, as each fraction of a degree rise in global mean temperatures compounds the problems....”

- More coverage via the Guardian – [Record levels of heat-related deaths in 2023 due to climate crisis, report finds](#)

COP16 in Cali, Colombia

Ending today – on **1 November**.

UN News - At COP16, Guterres urges world to ‘choose wisely...make peace with nature’

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/10/1156261>

“UN Secretary-General António Guterres on Tuesday called for decisive action to restore harmony with nature, warning that environmental crises are pushing humanity toward tipping points that threaten ecosystems, livelihoods and global stability. **Speaking at the opening of the 16th**

Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (COP16), he emphasized that “making peace with nature is the defining task of the 21st century.”

“... The theme for the conference in Cali, Colombia, is “la COP de la gente” (a COP of the people). It continues until 1 November with discussions focused on biodiversity conservation, environmental justice and the role of indigenous and local communities in shaping sustainable futures.... It is the first Biodiversity COP since the adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework in December 2022 in Montreal, Canada.”

HPW - Nations Deadlocked Over Health-Biodiversity Framework at COP16

<https://healthpolicy-watch.news/nations-deadlocked-over-health-biodiversity-framework-at-cop16/>

Important analysis (from last weekend, halfway the COP) *“A Health Policy Watch analysis of 35 national biodiversity plans shows all but two countries linked environmental protection with human health. With 82% of nations missing UN submission deadlines, global commitment to the 2022 Montreal biodiversity deal remains in question.”*

“Midway through the UN biodiversity summit COP16 in Cali, Colombia, delegates from nearly 200 countries remain deadlocked over rules to protect human health from Earth’s mounting ecological crisis. UN Environment chief Inger Andersen urged delegates Thursday to break the impasse over the **Global Action Plan on Biodiversity and Health**, which would align conservation efforts with human health priorities as nations wrestle with implementing the landmark 2022 Montreal biodiversity treaty. “Our health cannot be separated from the health of the planet and its many species,” she told delegates in Cali. “We must adopt this action plan and implement it with a holistic, systemic approach that unifies action across health, environment, finance, industry and agriculture.””

“The proposed framework would strengthen the 2022 [Kunming-Montreal](#) biodiversity agreement – nature’s equivalent to the Paris Climate Accord – **which committed 197 nations to protect 30% of Earth’s land and seas by 2030, but left crucial health provisions largely undefined.** While the Convention on Biodiversity itself is legally binding, the **proposed health framework would serve as a voluntary roadmap for nations.**”

Guardian - Alarm grows over ‘disturbing’ lack of progress to save nature at Cop16

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2024/oct/31/alarm-grows-over-disturbing-lack-of-progress-revealed-at-biodiversity-summit-cop16>

Analysis as of Thursday morning. “Fears raised that **biodiversity summit not addressing countries’ failure to meet a single target** to stem destruction of natural world.”

“Governments risk another decade of failure on biodiversity loss, due to the slow implementation of an international agreement to halt the destruction of Earth’s ecosystems, experts have warned. Less than two years ago, the world reached a historic agreement at the Cop15 summit in Montreal to stop the human-caused destruction of life on our planet. The deal included targets to protect **30% of the planet for nature by the end of the decade (30x30), reform \$500bn (then £410bn) of environmentally damaging subsidies, and begin restoring 30% of the planet’s degraded**

ecosystems. But as country representatives dig into their second week of negotiations at Cop16 in Cali, Colombia – their first meeting since Montreal – **alarm is growing at the lack of concrete progress on any of the major targets they agreed upon. An increasing number of indicators show that governments are not on track...**”

FT - Pharma and agritech groups push against biodiversity levy at UN summit

<https://www.ft.com/content/eec332f-a71e-4b7f-9a36-743aa041857f>

“One contentious proposal seeks to impose 1% levy on returns from products made using genetic data.”

“Pharmaceutical and agricultural companies are among the industry groups pushing against a proposed levy on their returns from products made using genetic data from nature. Negotiators are wrangling over a deal at the UN COP16 biodiversity summit under way in Colombia around **payment for the use of the data known as digital sequence information (DSI),** used heavily by makers of drugs and agricultural products. The data is collected by academic researchers from around the world and made widely available on publicly funded, open-access databases. **Companies ranging from AstraZeneca and GSK to Bayer access the information mainly for free, but nations agreed at the last COP15 summit to establish a multilateral fund for “benefit-sharing” from its use. The details of how companies and other entities will pay into a fund, and how the money will be distributed, are among the issues at the centre of the second and final week of negotiations at COP16. The most contentious option, put forward by a group of African nations, would impose a levy of 1 per cent of the retail value of all products made using DSI.** Accredited observers at the talks said momentum was instead building behind **an alternative proposal** that would see companies in sectors that benefit from the data pay a smaller percentage of annual sales or profit...”

“... Another key contention is whether countries’ income from the multilateral fund should depend on how much money is generated from their genetic data, or on the nations’ need of funds to conserve biodiversity. Developed countries, where the biggest corporate users of genetic data are based, were broadly backing a system of voluntary contributions, said Nithin Ramakrishnan, a researcher at Third World Network, a non-profit organisation with official observer status. **Developing nations, where much of the world’s biodiversity is located, were in favour of mandatory corporate payments,** he said.....”

Climate Change News - Fossil fuel transition pledge left out of COP16 draft agreement

<https://www.climatechangenews.com/2024/10/29/fossil-fuel-transition-pledge-left-out-of-cop16-draft-agreement/>

“A draft decision at the COP16 nature summit included a call to transition away from fossil fuels, which was later removed from the current version.”

Guardian (Analysis) - The world needs \$700bn a year to restore nature. But where is the money coming from?

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2024/oct/30/the-world-needs-700bn-a-year-to-restore-nature-but-where-is-the-money-coming-from>

“Representatives from nearly 200 countries at the UN’s Cop16 summit in Colombia have **yet to break the deadlock over who pays and how much.”**

Run-up to COP 29 in Baku (11-22 Nov)

Among others with a flurry of new (mostly dire) reports, setting the scene ahead of COP29.

WEF - WHO and COP29 launch health initiatives ahead of summit, and other top health stories

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2024/10/who-cop29-and-other-health-stories-you-should-read/>

But we start this section by reiterating some of the health related plans at COP 29. (See also last week’s IHP newsletter)

“... COP29 will feature a Health Pavilion hosted by the WHO and Wellcome Trust, with a two-week programme of events, as well as a dedicated Health Day on 18 November. The WHO will launch its COP29 Special Report focusing on the health benefits of climate initiatives.”

“ “Health will be integrated across various themes, emphasizing the need for equitable climate action that prioritizes vulnerable populations,” explained Elmar Mammadov, Co-Lead of the COP29 Global and Regional Initiatives and Action Agenda Team. With initiatives like **the Baku Initiative on Human Development for Climate Resilience, which opens Health Day, and **the One Health approach** – “the interconnectedness of human, animal and environmental health” – the conference aims to bring health to the forefront of climate policy, he said....” “ **Also centre stage will be discussions on maternal, newborn and child health, as well as the intersection of health with food, agriculture and urban planning.** The diverse agenda reflects a growing recognition that health cannot be separated from climate action....”**

Guardian - Miscarriages due to climate crisis a ‘blind spot’ in action plans – report

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2024/oct/28/miscarriages-due-to-climate-crisis-a-blind-spot-in-action-plans-report>

Over to the reports then. **“The harm to babies and mothers** is one of the warnings being sent to Cop29 decision-makers by leading scientists.”

“Miscarriages, premature babies and harm to mothers caused by the climate crisis are a “blind spot” in action plans, according to a report aimed at the decision-makers who will attend

the **Cop29 summit in November**. Potential collapse of the [Amazon rainforest](#), [vital Atlantic Ocean currents](#) and essential infrastructure in cities are also among the dangers cited by an international group of 80 leading scientists from 45 countries. **The [report](#) collects the latest insights from physical and social science to inform the negotiations at the UN climate summit in Azerbaijan....**”

“... only 27 out of 119 national climate plans submitted to the UN include action related to mothers and newborns, making this a major “blind spot”, the report said.”

- [The Report: The 10 New Insights in Climate Science](#)

More coverage of this report via HPW - [Amid Grim New Climate Insights, Scientists Appeal for COP29 to Move from Talk to Implementation](#)

“Amid grim research showing global warming is happening faster than previously projected, scientists urged world leaders to move from talk to implementation of global agreements when they meet at COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, next month. “

“Up to 600 million people already live in uninhabitable places, said Professor Johan Rockström, while introducing the [10 New Insights In Climate Science](#) report at a media briefing on Monday. ... The report synthesises the “latest and most pivotal climate research published over the past 18 months”, aimed at informing the COP29 negotiators and future policy, said Rockström, who directs the Potsdam Institute of Climate Impact Research in Germany. It was produced by a consortium of globally renowned social, natural and climate scientists. “Our conclusion is that we’ve underestimated the pace [of global warming]. The unprecedented ocean warming, for example, since 2023 has broken sea surface temperatures well beyond anything expected – a sudden 0.2 degrees Celsius jump,” he said.....”

PS: “Describing the Baku meeting as a “finance COP”, Rockström said it needs to “shift the \$7 trillion per year in subsidies to fossil fuels into mechanisms that allow particularly rapidly developing economies in the global South to afford and get interest rates and get credit worthiness so that they can invest in in the green technologies and avoid investment in coal-fired plants”.

“ Secondly, scientists have been communicating also with the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (UNFCCC) COP reform, he added. After almost 30 years, a pile of legally binding agreements have been signed to reverse climate change – the Paris Agreement, a global methane pledge signed by 120 countries to reduce emissions by 30% by 2030, a deforestation agreement, a loss and damages agreement, and the [Sixth Assessment Report of the UNFCCC](#) (IPCC AR 6) of 2021 requiring the world to cut global greenhouse gas emissions by 42% by 2030. “We even have an agreement that all countries in the world signed that we are now phasing out oil, coal and gas, accelerating this decade and following science. **So now is the time to shift over into a COP logic where we start reporting on progress, being held accountable, get money on the table and share solutions, meaning sharing technologies.**”

HPW - Global Emissions Set to Fall 2.6% by 2030 – 40% Short of Paris Agreement Target

<https://healthpolicy-watch.news/global-emissions-set-to-fall-2-6-by-2030-40-short-of-paris-agreement-target/>

“Global climate plans will cut emissions by just 2.6% by 2030, falling 40% short of what’s needed to keep a future within the Paris agreement’s 1.5C goal alive, according to a [report](#) released Monday by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).”

“The combined emissions cut by the national climate plans, known as “nationally determined contributions” (NDCs), have increased by a mere 0.6% since last year, an insignificant change that will not affect global warming trajectories, the UN climate body said in its [annual assessment](#) ahead of next month’s COP29 summit in Baku.....”

Guardian - Planet-heating pollutants in atmosphere hit record levels in 2023

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2024/oct/28/planet-heating-pollutants-in-atmosphere-hit-record-levels-in-2023>

“Carbon dioxide concentration has increased by more than 10% in just two decades, reports World Meteorological Organization The concentration of CO2 reached 420 parts per million (ppm) in 2023, the scientists observed. The level of pollution is 51% greater than before the Industrial Revolution, when people began to burn large amounts of coal, oil and fossil gas...”

“... The WMO announcement comes ahead of the Cop29 climate summit in Azerbaijan next month. It follows a report from the UN Environment Programme on Thursday that found the world is on track to heat 3C by the end of the century.”

Devex special report – The State of Global climate Financing

<https://www.devex.com/downloadables/the-state-of-global-climate-financing-32>

“In this special report, we looked into several sources to provide answers to some of the most important questions around climate change: What is its current state? How much is needed to curb the effects and mitigate future harms? **What are donors and multilaterals doing?...**” “....In this report, **Devex also looks at 10 of the countries most seriously affected** and identifies what funding they receive and from where.....”

CGD (Notes) – Baselines for the New Climate Goal: Why \$200 Billion Means No Ambition

I Mitchell et al; <https://www.cgdev.org/publication/baselines-and-ambition-new-climate-goal-why-200-billion-means-no-ambition>

“ a major shortcoming of the \$100 billion climate finance goal agreed in 2009 was the absence of a clear baseline. **With draft negotiating text for a new climate finance goal now available, we set out some relevant starting measures and amounts to inform the negotiations going into COP29 and make recommendations for an ambitious but coherent target.** We argue that a \$200 billion per year target would amount to a “no-ambition” target. Equally, an ambitious target over \$400 billion with no extra fiscal commitment would mean major cuts to wider development finance. **We would prefer to see a grant-equivalent target, and we provide the baseline figures for such a target below. We also provide figures for a combined climate and development finance target which would ensure additional resources for climate and put an end to greenwashing.** This

remainder of this note looks at the options in the negotiations; it then examines finance under the existing and potential new measures in 2022 and projects them to 2035. It also looks at the scale of potential new providers' contribution before concluding on which measures create the best incentives for tackling climate change.....”

More on Planetary Health

Potsdam Institute for Climate Change - Three pathways to achieve global climate and sustainable development goals

<https://www.pik-potsdam.de/en/news/latest-news/three-pathways-to-achieve-global-climate-and-sustainable-development-goals>

“Sustainable lifestyles, green-tech innovation, and government-led transformation each offer promising routes to make significant progress towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement, according to a new study by the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK). The team of researchers examined how these strategies could transform consumption and production across different sectors, identifying both benefits and trade-offs for enhancing human well-being within planetary boundaries. Contrary to the belief that the path to sustainable development is increasingly out of reach, the results show that humankind has a variety of pathways to depart from its current unsustainable trajectory.....”

“...The study is the first to systematically compare such different sustainable development pathways, analysing results from four models, two integrated assessment models of the global energy, economy, land and climate system and two models focused on the global buildings and materials sectors, respectively.....”

Guardian - Corporations using ‘ineffectual’ carbon offsets are slowing path to ‘real zero’, more than 60 climate scientists say

https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2024/oct/28/corporations-using-ineffectual-carbon-offsets-are-slowing-path-to-real-zero-more-than-60-climate-scientists-say?CMP=share_btn_url

“Pledge signed by experts from nine countries reflects concerns that offsets generated from forest-related projects may not have cut emissions.”

“Carbon offsets used by corporations around the world to lower their reportable greenhouse gas emissions are “ineffectual” and “hindering the energy transition”, according to more than 60 leading climate change scientists. A pledge signed by scientists from nine countries, including the UK, the US and Australia, said the “only path that can prevent further escalation of climate impacts” was “real zero” and not “net zero”. The “[real zero pledge](#)” was organised by the Lethal Humidity Global Council, a group of scientists, health experts and policymakers. Among the signatories are Prof Michael Mann, of the University of Pennsylvania; Prof Johan Rockström, director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research; and Bill Hare, founder of Climate Analytics and a member of a UN expert group that has [warned about the overuse of carbon offsets](#).”

PS: “**The Lethal Humidity Global Council** is a group focused on the threat of rising temperatures that, when combined with high humidity, can threaten human health....”

Croakey (blog) - Keeping hope alive, in an era of planetary health crisis

<https://www.croakey.org/keeping-hope-alive-in-an-era-of-planetary-health-crisis/>

Important piece, with views by researchers who recently participated in [the Planetary Health Equity Hothouse’s 2024 Future Leaders Program](#). On their strategies to keep hope alive.

Potsdam Institute for Climate Research - Green growth: 30 percent of regions worldwide achieve economic growth while reducing carbon emissions

<https://www.pik-potsdam.de/en/news/latest-news/green-growth-30-percent-of-regions-worldwide-achieve-economic-growth-while-reducing-carbon-emissions>

“More and more regions around the globe combine economic growth with reducing carbon emissions, researchers from the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research found. Their new study highlights the vital role of national climate actions in decoupling economic growth from CO2 emissions. The analysis of data from 1,500 regions over the past 30 years showed that 30 percent have managed to lower their carbon emissions while continuing to thrive economically. While this accelerating trend marks significant progress towards achieving the Paris Climate Agreement, the authors caution that the current pace of decoupling is insufficient to meet the global climate target of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050.”

International day of Care and Support (29 October)

CGD (blog) - Care Work Is Real Work

K Ajayi; <https://www.cgdev.org/blog/care-work-real-work>

“Today is the **International Day of Care and Support**. Last year the **United Nations General Assembly proclaimed** October 29 as a day to “raise awareness of the importance of care and support and its key contribution to the achievement of gender equality and the sustainability of our societies and economies, as well as of the need to invest in a resilient and inclusive care economy, including the development of strong and resilient care and support systems.”

“As we observe the International Day of Care and Support today, there’s lots to celebrate in terms of global progress towards recognizing the importance of care work and investment in the care economy, but there are also many reminders of how far we still need to go. “

“Coincidentally, today is also the last day of the **4th International Development Assistance (IDA) replenishment meeting**, with the aim of finalizing the policy package for the current replenishment cycle of the World Bank’s concessional lending arm for lower-income countries (IDA21). “

PS: "... The big reveal at the annual meetings event was Banga's announcement of three targets the World Bank has set towards advancing gender equality by 2030: enabling 300 million more women to use broadband, supporting 250 million women with social protection programs, and providing capital to 80 million more women and women-led businesses. **Disappointingly, none of these commitments address the undervaluation of care work...**"

Child health

Lancet Comment – Racism and health inequity: a global syndemic for children—the Lancet Commission on racism and child health

D Devakumar, P Das et al ; [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(24\)02358-4/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(24)02358-4/fulltext)

"... In response to the glaring problem of racism in childhood, we are launching the **Lancet Commission on racism and child health**. Our **priorities**, co-developed with adolescents ([panel](#)), are to study how racism, xenophobia, and discrimination affect child health globally by focusing on interventions and using an intersectional, child-centred, and rights-based approach. We conceptualise both racism and children broadly and will take a global health perspective and include the child before they are born, during adolescence, and in the context of their families..."

NCDs

HPW – New Food Guidelines Aim to Clarify What Constitutes a ‘Healthy’ Diet

<https://healthpolicy-watch.news/new-food-guidelines-aim-to-clarify-what-constitutes-a-healthy-diet/>

"Diets should be guided by four key principles, say the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and World Health Organization (WHO) in a [joint statement](#) released this week. Their statement highlights the importance of **adequate, balanced, moderate, and diverse food intake**, and aims to clarify what exactly a healthy diet means. " "... FAO and WHO released the statement alongside this year's annual meeting of the [Committee on World Food Security](#), where stakeholders gathered to strengthen policy responses to food crises, and the [Convention on Biodiversity](#) in Cali, Colombia..."

PS: "Yet the **statement acknowledges that further research is needed before issuing recommendations, especially on ultra-processed foods (UFP)**, including sugar-sweetened beverages and desserts, dyed snacks, and processed meats. [More than 50%](#) of energy intake comes from UFP in high-income countries, and this trend increasingly mirrored in lower- and middle- income countries. "**It's probably going to take another several years to have a sufficient evidence base,**" noted Dr JoAnn Manson, a physician and researcher at Harvard, in a recent [STAT](#) news article. **In the meantime, the WHO and FAO recommended "considering moderation" of UFP...."**

UHC

WHO – Governance of the private healthcare sector in low- and middle-income countries: a scoping review of approaches, effectiveness, and enablers

<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240093522>

“The private sector’s role in healthcare is growing across many settings. However, the sector remains under-governed in many contexts, particularly in low- and middle income countries. Further, the understanding of the evidence base relating to **private sector governance** remains inadequate, with limited information available on the effectiveness of various approaches, and factors which facilitate or hinder their functioning. **This scoping review was commissioned by the World Health Organization (WHO) to address this gap by synthesising the available literature on the governance of private healthcare financing and delivery.**”

“**The review seeks to answer the following questions:** 1. What are the different approaches adopted to govern the private sector? 2. How effective are these approaches? 3. What are the key enablers of, and barriers to, the adoption of these approaches, and what potential avenues have been identified to strengthen Governance Behaviours across different contexts?... “

“...**The results of the review have been used to develop a Progression Pathway for the Governance of Mixed Health Systems**, to assist countries in assessing their governance capacities relating to work effectively with the private sector, prioritising actions to improve governance, and tracking progress over time....”

Access to medicines, vaccines & other health technologies

GHF op-ed - Profits Over People: The High Price of Pharma’s Influence in Global Health

By Peter Maybarduk & Michael Weinstein; [Geneva Health Files](#);

“**Lobbying Disclosures in the US: How Big Pharma Fought the TRIPS Waiver & is Pushing for Strong Intellectual Property Protection in the Pandemic Agreement.**”

“ An **exclusive investigation conducted by Public Citizen, an American nonprofit consumer advocacy organization**, that has examined lobbying disclosures of private actors, revealing efforts to protect strong intellectual property protections with implications for public health during, and in the aftermath of COVID-19. ... **The investigation reveals lobbying efforts in the context of the difficult policy discussions in Geneva including on the negotiations on the TRIPS Waiver at the WTO, and the ongoing Pandemic Agreement talks at WHO....”**

“**[New Public Citizen research](#) shows that, in the US alone, corporations, trade groups, and other organizations deployed more than 500 lobbyists during the COVID-19 emergency to shape the US government’s global position on intellectual property, with nearly 90 percent of these lobbyists opposing the TRIPS waiver....”**

PS: “.... In Europe, where a substantial portion of many nations' economies comes from the pharmaceutical industry, [the Corporate Europe Observatory revealed](#) that, **as of 2021, over 40 pharmaceutical companies reported spending an estimated €25.3 million annually on lobbying while deploying 290 lobbyists to influence EU policies.** A spokesperson from Janssen, the pharmaceutical research and development subsidiary that developed Johnson & Johnson's single-shot vaccine, went even further by allegedly threatening the Belgian Prime Minister's office that the company would reconsider their investments in the country if Belgium backed the waiver.....”

Re the pandemic agreement negotiations: **“Unsatisfied by the mere killing of the waiver at the WTO, the industry has pressed on with efforts to further undermine the ongoing global equity negotiations in the WHO Pandemic Agreement. Its lobbying efforts appear to have made a lasting impact, as many wealthy nations involved in the WHO Pandemic Agreement negotiations have since embraced stances that parallel those that the industry previously asserted at the WTO.** Countries like the US and EU member states, for example, have adopted strict positions around technology sharing and other affirmations of IP flexibilities, echoing industry talking points, which claim that certain provisions for the operationalization of equity would entail “eliminating intellectual property protections....”

Maybarduk & Weinstein conclude: “.... **the fundamental issue** standing in the way of the grand bargain that can prevent deadly outbreaks and make available medical tools to fight them, **is whether wealthy nations are prepared to break step with the pharmaceutical industry and say “no” to insatiable greed and corporate interests.....”**

See [Public Citizen – Industry Lobbyists Work to Influence U.S. Position in Critical Global Health Negotiations](#)

- PS: “(compared with the TRIPS waiver lobbying,) ... **Fewer entities have lobbied on the Pandemic Agreement.** Entities included the Chamber of Commerce and the Biotechnology Innovation Organization, who hired dozens of lobbyists to influence the Pandemic Agreement negotiations....”

Africa CDC/CHAI/PATH - African Vaccine Manufacturing Mapping – Supply and Demand Landscape

<https://africacdc.org/download/african-vaccine-manufacturing-mapping-supply-and-demand-landscape/>

“This slide deck, presented at the **Developing Countries Vaccine Manufacturers Network International Annual General Meeting in October 2024**, describes **updated results from a study to assess the current and planned state of vaccine manufacturing in Africa** and provides insights into what's needed to develop a robust and sustainable vaccine manufacturing ecosystem. We surveyed African vaccine manufacturers to better understand their current manufacturing capacity and capabilities, the progress they've made since 2023, and their future outlooks. This information can help stakeholders and funders better coordinate and prioritize actions to build a successful African vaccine manufacturing ecosystem.”

HPW - powering Africa's Pharmaceutical Future: The Critical Role of Local API Manufacturing

H Malan et al ; <https://healthpolicy-watch.news/empowering-africas-pharmaceutical-future-the-critical-role-of-local-api-manufacturing/>

« There is an urgent need for Africa to develop local manufacturing capabilities for Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs) so as to reduce reliance on imports, enhance healthcare outcomes, and stimulate economic growth. But innovative technologies and international partnerships can help stimulate African pharma growth, revolutionize API production, and ensure self-sufficiency across the continent in a post-pandemic world. »

« Africa's pharmaceutical industry is at a critical crossroads, with significant progress in downstream activities but a gap in upstream manufacturing, particularly in the production of Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs).”

Nevertheless, « Several pharmaceutical companies in Africa are making significant strides in producing local APIs for their manufacturing processes.”

« ... Funding, however, remains a significant challenge for local API production in Africa. In comparison to “fill and finish” contracts that African manufacturers more commonly receive from pharma companies abroad, expanding API manufacturing capabilities requires substantial financial investment.”

Nature Medicine (Comment) - Regulatory reforms will boost African vaccine production and access

Niteen Wairagkar et al; <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41591-024-03314-x>

“Growing momentum to transform the African regulatory landscape should enable 60% of the vaccines needed in Africa to be locally produced by 2040.”

HPW – Global Stockpile is Empty, But Cholera Vaccines Are Being Shipped to Outbreaks

<https://healthpolicy-watch.news/global-stockpile-is-empty-but-cholera-vaccines-are-being-shipped/>

“While the global stockpile of oral cholera vaccines (OCV) has been empty since mid-October, vaccine doses are being produced each week and shipped directly to countries in need, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). “As soon as adequate quantities are produced, they are shipped to countries in need. This is why the stockpile can remain at zero for long periods. It does not mean that there is no production,” a WHO spokesperson clarified to Health Policy Watch after [reporting on 18 October](#) that the stockpile was empty....”

PS: “The global stockpile of the oral cholera vaccine was established in 2013 with two million doses. By 2023, this had expanded to 36 million doses. The stockpile is overseen by the International Coordinating Group on Vaccine Provision (ICG) consisting of the International Federation of the Red

Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Médecins Sans Frontières, UNICEF, and WHO. **Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance pays for the vaccine and its distribution to all eligible countries.**”

“**The ICG has approved 14 million cholera doses for outbreak response over the last two months, a volume that represents twice the size of the current stockpile,**” according to a Gavi spokesperson. “However, while there may be short periods where all available doses are allocated to specific country requests, **the stockpile is continually replenished on a rolling basis by the manufacturer.**” Investments made by Gavi and its partners to increase the volume and speed of supply have halved the timeline needed for replenishing the global vaccine stockpile this year. **Gavi expects close to three million new doses to be made available this week, seven million in November, and six million in December,** “all ready to be shipped to countries that may request them for ongoing outbreaks”.

War & health

UN News - Israeli Knesset vote on UNRWA set to deepen Palestinian suffering

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/10/1156231>

“**Monday’s vote by the Israeli Knesset banning the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) contradicts principles of the UN Charter, violates Israel’s obligations under international law, and sets a dangerous precedent,** the head of the Agency, **Philippe Lazzarini** has warned. The UN chief pledged later he would take the issue to the General Assembly.....”

BMJ (News) - Gaza: Entire population at risk of genocide “executed under our watch,” says UN expert

<https://www.bmj.com/content/387/bmj.q2386>

“Israel’s military operations in northern Gaza have caused “widespread devastation and deprivation” and made “conditions of life untenable for the Palestinian population,” the United Nations has said. **Stéphane Dujarric, spokesman for António Guterres, secretary general of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA),** said that there have been “harrowing levels of death, injury, and destruction” in the area and “little regard for the requirements of international humanitarian law.” He added that “repeated efforts to deliver humanitarian supplies essential to survive—food, medicine, and shelter—continue to be denied by the Israeli authorities, with few exceptions, putting countless lives in peril.”

Migration & Health

Salud por Derecho (report) - We denounce the impact of European Migration Policies on the health of migrant persons

<https://saludporderecho.org/en/we-denounce-the-impact-of-european-migration-policies-on-the-health-of-migrant-persons/>

“During the first six months of 2024, more than 120 million people around the world were forced to leave their homes due to armed conflict, human rights violations, humanitarian crises, or the effects of climate change. Despite these figures, **the European Union continues to tighten its migration and border control policies.** **Salud por Derecho has presented the report *Migration policy in the EU as a global health crisis*, revealing how these measures focused on deterrence, detention, and border sealing are triggering a public health crisis affecting millions of migrants.** The report highlights that these policies are pushing migrants to take more dangerous paths, increasing the risks to their health. **The report warns that this situation is not an inevitable consequence of the migration process, but a political decision.** The EU, which already has walls on 15% of its borders, has increased by 94% the funding allocated to migration control for 2021-2027....”

Miscellaneous

The Elders - Failure to respect rule of law risks collapse of global stability

<https://theelders.org/news/failure-respect-rule-law-risks-collapse-global-stability>

“**The Elders express their alarm at the escalating crises facing the world:** a proliferation of conflicts, abuse of human rights and insufficient progress on protecting the planet.”

Science – A field’s dilemmas

K Kupferschmidt; <https://www.science.org/content/article/five-biggest-challenges-facing-misinformation-researchers>

“**Misinformation research** has exploded. But scientists are still grappling with fundamental challenges.” On the **five biggest challenges** facing the field.

Devex – ONE Campaign CEO: Africa wants investment — and a move away from aid

<https://www.devex.com/news/one-campaign-ceo-africa-wants-investment-and-a-move-away-from-aid-108617>

(gated) “**Ndidi Okonkwo Nwuneli**, the organization's first African head, **wants to reframe the narrative on the continent.**”

BMJ Investigation - Dispute arises over World Professional Association for Transgender Health’s involvement in WHO’s trans health guideline

<https://www.bmj.com/content/387/bmj.q2227>

“WHO says that it adheres to standard protocol for its transgender health guideline, but the process has been criticised for lacking transparency and an association with WPATH—an organisation under fire for meddling with its own guideline development. **Jennifer Block** reports.”

Devex Pro - Health innovation pipeline 'more robust' than ever, says Gates Venture

<https://www.devex.com/news/health-innovation-pipeline-more-robust-than-ever-says-gates-venture-108558>

(gated) "The pipeline is there — what's needed is help scaling these innovations."

"The pipeline for global health innovations is "more robust than it's ever been," according to Niranjana Bose, who is managing director of the health and life sciences strategy at Gates Ventures. This includes innovations in areas such as vaccines, drugs, diagnostics, and tools to measure the performance of health systems. "Continued investment in getting those pipelines to market is one thing that we should not lose sight on, but the pipeline is one that I'm very optimistic about," he said, while on stage at Devex's [flagship event](#) in Washington, D.C. "Scaling the fantastic pipeline innovations is truly the challenge we're going to face."

PS: "[Gates Ventures](#) is Bill Gates' private office that works to complement the [Gates Foundation's](#) work in global health. The ventures launched **Exemplars in Global Health**, which is an international research collaboration that aims to address unmet needs through innovation and then works to scale those innovations....."

Africa HealthTech Marketplace

<https://apps.africacdc.org/>

"...the Africa #HealthTech Marketplace is officially live. Created by the Digital Impact Alliance in partnership with @AfricaCDC, this platform serves as a one-stop shop for targeted, accessible digital health solutions. It simplifies the process for government decision-makers to find the tools and platforms that best meet their needs, all aimed at fostering a stronger, healthier Africa."

Global health events

Coming up in December: the inaugural Global Surveillance Summit (Cape Town)

<https://africacdc.org/news-item/inaugural-global-surveillance-summit-2024-cape-town-south-africa/>

"The Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) in partnership with the International Society for Infectious Diseases (ISID) will host the inaugural Global Surveillance Summit, an invitational event that will bring together global leaders, innovators, and frontline workers to tackle the challenges posed by new and reemerging pandemic threats. The summit is scheduled for December 3, 2024, at the Cape Town International Convention Centre and will be held alongside the 20th International Congress on Infectious Diseases...."

"...Africa CDC and ISID will draft a joint communique during the summit on investments in sustainable early warning surveillance systems."

Global health governance & Governance of Health

Devex Newswire: An insider's view of World Bank reform

<https://www.devex.com/news/devex-newswire-an-insider-s-view-of-world-bank-reform-108529>

“At Devex World 2024, **World Bank Senior Managing Director Axel van Trotsenburg sheds light on the push to mobilize funds to help low- and middle-income countries on their development journey.** Axel van Trotsenburg — the World Bank’s senior managing director — said that **governments are putting the fight against poverty at risk when they spend money on other priorities and call it development assistance.**”

“**“People think this is development support for developing countries. These days, a large chunk is actually staying in the countries themselves, the donors themselves,”** he said at Devex World yesterday....”

Also re the ongoing **IDA replenishment.**

- Related link: **CGD blog - [Pathways to IMF Reform](#)** (by D Andrews)

G20 Brazil - International Financial Institutions Celebrate Membership in the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty at Final G20 Finance Track Meeting

<https://www.g20.org/en/news/international-financial-institutions-celebrate-membership-in-the-global-alliance-against-hunger-and-poverty-at-final-g20-finance-track-meeting>

“IFI Memberships Highlight the Strength of the Financial Pillar of the Global Alliance and a United Effort to Implement Evidence-Based Public Policies and Programs That **Can Accelerate Progress Toward SDGs 1 and 2.**”

Journal of Global Health - ‘Show me the money’: An analysis of US global health funding from 1995 to 2019

Madeleine Carroll et al; <https://jogh.org/2024/jogh-14-04173>

Findings: “From 1995 to 1999, US DAH allocated to HSS decreased from 42% to 34%. The allocation decreased further from 34% in 2000 to 4% in 2007; correspondingly, DAH allocated to disease-specific interventions increased from 67% to 96%. Between 2008 and 2019, the distribution of US DAH remained relatively stable, with funds allocated to HSS versus disease-specific interventions ranging from 3–12% and 88–98% respectively.”

Conclusion: “**While total US DAH contributions in the 1990s and early 2000s were significantly lower compared to the decade that followed, the distribution of these funds was more evenly divided between HSS and disease-specific interventions.** Despite attempts by the WHO and United Nations to redirect attention to HSS as the path to achieving UHC, **the US continues to largely support disease-specific interventions and overlook the importance of HSS,** including surgical capacity building.”

- And via Devex- [EU and you](#)

“Ask not what we can do for you, but what you can do for EU. That’s the message from the European Union’s latest aid review, which takes a more nakedly self-interested approach to international development and promises to cut “less performant” countries out of the deal. The [new approach](#) moves the focus toward the private sector, and toward countries that have stronger diplomatic links with Europe.....”

Global health financing

GAVI - What is the International Finance Facility for Immunisation (IFFIm)?

<https://www.gavi.org/vaccineswork/what-iffim>

“This week IFFIm priced a new US\$ 1 billion three year bond to help protect millions of children against preventable disease and prevent the next pandemic. But **how exactly does this financing mechanism work, and what has its impact been so far?”**

UHC & PHC

Health Systems & Reform - The Future of Health Technology Assessment in Low- and Middle-Income Countries

Javier Guzman, Victoria Y. Fan & Peter Baker;

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23288604.2024.2400399#abstract>

“In recent decades, low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) have turned to health technology assessment (HTA) to prioritize health care interventions in pursuit of universal health coverage. HTA has demonstrated its value through significant cost savings, as shown by Thailand and Brazil, where HTA processes facilitated substantial government savings and drug price reductions. Despite these successes, **many LMICs still struggle with insufficient capacity to conduct HTA or incorporate its findings into policy decisions. Only 53 percent of countries surveyed by the World Health Organization (WHO) have a legislative requirement to consider HTA results in coverage decisions. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the need for efficient health expenditure, prompting LMICs to seek greater value for money by investing in cost-effective interventions. To achieve this, **countries will need to change the way they use HTA in the future, accounting for three important elements:** agile leapfrogging past traditional HTA methodologies, aid localization to enhance country ownership and accountability, and regional collaboration to overcome common limitations such as data scarcity and limited local capacity....”**

Plos One - Health outcome convergence and the roles of public health financing and governance in Africa

Ariane Ephemina Ndzignat Mouteyica & Nicholas Nwanyek Ngepah;

<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0312089>

“Health outcome convergence and the roles of public health financing and governance in Africa” dives into health disparities across African nations and their impact on SDG 3 and SDG 10. The research examines **infant and under-5 mortality rates, and life expectancy from 2000-2019 in 40 countries**, highlighting how factors like governance quality and public health spending drive health outcomes. The findings suggest tailored health policies based on unique national needs and call for regional monitoring to advance health equity across the continent.”

Among the results: **“... The convergence analysis across the overall sample reveal evidence of divergence in Africa concerning infant and under-five mortality rates, as well as life expectancy at birth.** This implies that African countries are not collectively progressing toward the consistent health outcomes, despite shared policies and interventions at the continental level. Thus, the benefits of health integration predominantly favor countries with comparatively higher levels of development within the continent. The results reveal the **presence of seven final clubs for infant mortality rates, six for under-five mortality rates, and two for life expectancy at birth.....”**

The Journal of Applied Economic research – The ‘Missing Middle’: How to Provide 350 Million Indians with Health Coverage?

A Mahal, S Kane et al; <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/00252921241284190>

“Despite recent expansion in its population covered by public-funded insurance, a large section of India’s population remains at major financial risk from health shocks. This segment of the population, sometimes referred to as **the ‘missing middle’**, typically consists of population groups that are, or have been, engaged in informal sector work, and are not poor enough to be eligible for state-subsidised contributions to insurance premiums; and potentially includes many even among those who satisfy the eligibility criteria. **We estimate that the missing middle number is at least 300–350 million in India, with large variations in their economic circumstances.** Using extensive international and India-based evidence, **we assess two approaches to cover the missing middle:** an expansion in public sector health delivery and a contributory demand-side financing system, that is currently popular in India. **We conclude that a mix of the two approaches appears to be the most feasible in the short run, given limited regulatory and management capacity and resource constraints, with a longer-run emphasis on integrated systems.”**

WHO Bulletin - What justifies public engagement in health financing decisions?

M McCoy et al; https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/bulletin/online-first/blt.24.291860.pdf?sfvrsn=8a3553b7_3

“The World Bank’s report, Open and inclusive: fair processes for financing universal health coverage, represents an important effort to specify the benefits and criteria of fair processes in health financing decisions. **Here we argue that the report’s justification for increasing public engagement in health financing decisions, one of its most novel contributions, rests on a widely shared but flawed assumption that public engagement will produce more equitable outcomes.** Examining evidence from national-level public engagement initiatives cited in the report, we argue that there is no reason to assume that engaged publics will prioritize equity over other relevant values such as the maximization of population health. We conclude that instead of seeing public engagement as a tool for advancing particular values, policy-makers should view it as a neutral way of assessing what the public values and gathering insights that can inform the design of health

benefits packages. If policy-makers wish to prioritize equity, they should do so directly through substantive policy choices regarding the design and financing of coverage schemes.”

CFR - China’s Hospital Admission Paradox: Institutional Design and Perverse Incentives

Yanzhong Huang; <https://www.cfr.org/blog/chinas-hospital-admission-paradox-institutional-design-and-perverse-incentives>

“Without comprehensive reforms, the sustainability of China’s healthcare system remains at risk, compromising its ability to meet the genuine medical needs of its population in the long term.”

Pandemic preparedness & response/ Global Health Security

Africa CDC – Strengthening Cross-Border Surveillance and Information Sharing in Africa

<https://africacdc.org/news-item/strengthening-cross-border-surveillance-and-information-sharing-in-africa/>

Strategic framework. “... Africa CDC has developed a **continental strategic framework to strengthen cross-border surveillance, coordination, and information sharing among AU MS...** The **key objectives of the framework** include enhancing coordination and governance, building capacities at Points of Entry, improving data sharing mechanisms, strengthening risk communication, and monitoring population mobility patterns across AU MS...”

Lancet Infectious Diseases - How to face a pandemic

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099\(24\)00733-3/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099(24)00733-3/fulltext)

Review of **Donald McNeil Jr’s new book**, *The Wisdom of Plagues: Lessons from 25 Years of Covering Pandemics*.

International Journal of Health Planning & Management - The power of artificial intelligence for managing pandemics: A primer for public health professionals

M McKee, D Stuckler et al; <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/hpm.3864>

“Artificial intelligence (AI) applications are complex and rapidly evolving, and thus often poorly understood, but have potentially profound implications for public health. **We offer a primer for public health professionals that explains some of the key concepts involved and examines how these applications might be used in the response to a future pandemic.** They include **early outbreak detection, predictive modelling, healthcare management, risk communication, and health surveillance.....**”

TGH - Global Health Security Lessons from the U.S. Biodefense Response

S Jha et al ; <https://www.thinkglobalhealth.org/article/global-health-security-lessons-us-biodefense-response>

“The COVID-19 pandemic exemplified how a military research institute could pivot to serve public health needs.”

- And a link: **Washington Post - [Satellite images show major expansion at Russian site with secret bioweapons past](#)**

Planetary health

Ecological Economics - Buzzword or breakthrough beyond growth? The mainstreaming of the Wellbeing Economy

A Hayden; <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0921800924002726>

“**The Wellbeing Economy (WE)** has found considerable mainstream support. **Despite having post-growth roots, the WE has taken on pro-growth meanings.** The WE risks becoming an empty buzzword as it is mainstreamed. **Wellbeing Economy Governments have not moved beyond economic growth. Possible strategies are proposed to strengthen the WE's post-growth character.**”

Climate Change News - G20 waters down experts' climate finance report, despite UN pressure to act

<https://www.climatechangenews.com/2024/10/24/g20-waters-down-experts-climate-finance-report-despite-un-pressure-to-act/>

From last week. “A report by top economists on finance for climate action was weakened after feedback from G20 nations, even as the UN says they must all slash emissions.”

iC3 - New study warns that melting Arctic sea-ice could affect global ocean circulation

<https://ic3.uit.no/news/amoc>

“**New study warns that melting Arctic sea-ice could affect global ocean circulation.** The warming climate in polar regions may significantly disrupt ocean circulation patterns, a [new study published today](#) in **Nature Communications** indicates.....”

“Scientists discovered that in the distant past, growing inflows of freshwater from melting Arctic sea-ice into the Nordic Seas likely significantly affected ocean circulation, sending temperatures plummeting across northern Europe.....”

NYT – Why Heat Waves of the Future May Be Even Deadlier Than Feared

<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/10/25/health/heat-tolerance-climate-change.html>

“The body’s cooling defenses fail at lower “wet bulb” temperatures than scientists had estimated.”

Nature – The seas are on the rise — and that surge is accelerating

https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-024-03489-w?utm_medium=Social&utm_campaign=nature&utm_source=Twitter#Echobox=1730393463

“Sea-surface data show that the **average sea-level rise in 2023 was more than double that in 1993.**”

Scientific Data - A comprehensive Beyond-GDP database to accelerate wellbeing, inclusion, and sustainability research

K Liu et al ; <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41597-024-04006-4>

“**“Beyond-GDP” metrics** are essential for understanding societal progress. Yet despite their importance, these metrics are scattered across various databases, hindering accessibility and interdisciplinary analysis. Addressing this gap, **we present the ‘WISE database’ – the first extensive collection of important Beyond-GDP metrics organized by Wellbeing, Inclusion, and Sustainability (WISE) dimensions.** The WISE database consolidates data from a variety of sources, including international institutions and academic publications. It encompasses over one million data points across 244 metrics, covering 218 countries and 61 country groupings...” The **data primarily spans from 1995 to 2015**, with some metrics extending back to the 19th century...”

Environmental Politics (Introduction) - What is planetary justice?

Stefan Pedersen et al; <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09644016.2024.2418222>

“**To reconsider the meaning of justice in a planetary frame** is both a necessity in our time of multiple entangled crises and an endeavour that seeks convergence and synthesis where there might instead be irreconcilable differences. **We invited scholars from diverse disciplinary backgrounds to share their perspectives on the scope, scale, and purpose of planetary justice and received a variety of responses** – all highly worthwhile in their own right. What we can conclude from this **new milestone in the literature on planetary justice** is that people emphasize different justice concerns and operate with different ontologies. Are the Earth system and the pluriverse opposing frameworks or somehow reconcilable? What concerns should be prioritized is also contested. Can there be a decolonial, multispecies, Earth systemic, justice that begins with the self and where matter is included in our sphere of justice? However, one agreement seems to be that **planetary justice is inevitably ecosocial justice.**”

Nature (News) - Will AI's huge energy demands spur a nuclear renaissance?

[Nature News](#);

“Contracts with Google and Amazon could help, but bringing new types of reactor online will take larger investments — and time.”

- And a link: Science - [At global biodiversity summit, AI starts to make a splash](#).
“Automated tools could help nations reach conservation goals, scientists say.”

Mpox

Cidrap News - WHO analysis of 67 years of mpox surveillance data reveals patterns in spread, mutations over time

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/mpox/who-analysis-67-years-mpox-surveillance-data-reveals-patterns-spread-mutations-over-time>

“A World Health Organization (WHO) **analysis** of global mpox surveillance from 1958 to 2024 reveals highly mobile clade 1 viruses in Central Africa, sustained human-to-human spread of clade 2b lineage A in the Eastern Mediterranean, distinct mutations that can distinguish between sustained transmission among humans with that among animals, and unique clade 1 sequences from Sudan that suggest local circulation in Eastern Africa. “ The study was published last week in *Nature Medicine*.

Infectious diseases & NTDs

Guardian - Growth the size of a melon: a scrotum-swelling disease threatening thousands

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2024/oct/25/genital-swelling-disease-mosquito-borne-infection-lymphatic-filariasis-hydrocele>

In-depth analysis. “Efforts to eradicate the painful and disfiguring mosquito-borne infection **lymphatic filariasis** are advancing, but it is **still rife in 51 countries**.”

Plos GPH - Promising results of HIV prevention trials highlight the benefits of collaboration in global health: The perspective of the Forum HIV Recency Assay Working Group

Robin Schaefer et al;

<https://journals.plos.org/globalpublichealth/article?id=10.1371/journal.pgph.0003878>

“...In this article, **we argue that collaboration between diverse stakeholders is necessary to address critical issues in the HIV response and advance global health...**”

Key messages: “The increasing number of efficacious HIV prevention products challenges the feasibility of conducting HIV prevention clinical trials, requiring adjustments in how trials are conducted. **Consensus-building:** The Forum for Collaborative Research facilitated a consensus among diverse stakeholders—including regulatory agencies, academia, industry, and community—on HIV prevention trial design, proposing to use background HIV incidence, estimated with the HIV recency assay, as a comparator. **Implementation of a novel design:** This trial design was implemented in large phase 3 clinical trials on six-monthly injections with lenacapavir for HIV prevention, which found this product highly efficacious and safe. **Collaboration matters:** These trials underscore the importance of collaboration in global health. By providing an independent space and emphasizing a common goal (enabling future HIV prevention trials), a consensus could be reached among stakeholders who may have conflicting views.”

Vox - Zika is still spreading. Why don't we have a vaccine yet?

<https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/379740/zika-virus-vaccine-mosquitoes-climate-change>

“... Private pharmaceutical companies aren't willing to invest in vaccine development because so few people are getting infected now — and those who are getting infected largely live in relatively poor countries. Researchers say governments aren't investing sufficient public funds in vaccine development. And it is almost impossible to run a traditional clinical trial for the few vaccines hastily developed during the 2015 outbreak...”

Stat - U.S. death from Lassa fever, an Ebola-like virus, is reported in Iowa

<https://www.statnews.com/2024/10/28/lassa-fever-us-case-iowa-death/>

“The risk of further transmission in the state is described as ‘incredibly low’.”

“A person from Iowa who recently returned to the United States from West Africa has died after contracting Lassa fever, a virus that can cause Ebola-like illness in some patients. State health officials reported the case on Monday.”

AP - Pakistan begins another vaccination campaign after a worrying surge in polio cases

[AP;](#)

“Pakistan began a nationwide vaccination campaign Monday to protect 45 million children from polio after a surge in new cases that has hampered years of efforts to stop the disease in one of the two countries where it has never been eradicated.....”

- And a link: [Johns Hopkins - Discovery Illuminates How Sleeping Sickness Parasite Outsmarts Immune Response](#)

NCDs

Economist briefing -GLP-1s like Ozempic are among the most important drug breakthroughs ever

<https://www.economist.com/briefing/2024/10/24/glp-1s-like-ozempic-are-among-the-most-important-drug-breakthroughs-ever>

“Their far-reaching potential could transform how chronic diseases are managed.” The Economist was quite lyrical last week, almost going Bob Dylan-style – *the times they are a-changin’*... (version 2024).

The Conversation - Cancer care in Africa: translations of key words convey fear and need to change

H Simba; <https://theconversation.com/cancer-care-in-africa-translations-of-key-words-convey-fear-and-need-to-change-241928>

“... I am an epidemiologist and global health researcher who recently **coauthored a paper about the way cancer terminology is expressed in African languages**. The findings suggest that **translations of key terms, including “cancer”, “malignant”, “chronic” and “radiotherapy”, commonly conveyed elements of fear and tragedy**. And that the **words used may contribute to fear, health disparities and barriers to care, and pose communication difficulties for health professionals**. The results **reinforce the need for culturally sensitive cancer terminology**. This would improve cancer awareness and communication. ... For cancer patients, the words used to describe their diagnosis and treatment can affect how they perceive their condition, their willingness to seek treatment, and their interaction with healthcare providers.”

Stat - Q&A: Why drafting new rules on ultra-processed foods is so hard

[Stat](#);

“The diversity of the products means some ‘don’t need to become taboo,’ one researcher says.”

“... ultra-processed foods are not all the same. Whole grain cereal and breads also qualify for the label, as do yogurts and some other dairy desserts. **JoAnn Manson**, a professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School and Brigham and Women’s Hospital, **reported in Lancet Regional Health** last month on a **large analysis of long-running studies looking at links between ultra-processed foods and cardiovascular disease**. **The bottom line: One size does not fit all...**”

“... Looking more closely, **some foods were more tightly tied to higher risk of disease**: sugar-sweetened drinks and processed meat were linked to higher risk, while breakfast cereals, yogurt, some dairy desserts, and whole grains were associated with comparatively lower risk. ...” “... We actually were surprised that **there were several types of ultra-processed foods linked to lower risk of cardiovascular disease**.”

PS: “... **The research is going in the direction of trying to look at more biomarkers of ultra-processed intake**: not only insulin resistance, glucose tolerance, and change in weight, but also

looking at the effect on the microbiome, the metabolomic patterns, the changes in the proteome, and then DNA methylation markers for epigenetic aging. All of these can be looked at in terms of chronic disease outcomes, and I think that will further accelerate the research in this area....”

Social & commercial determinants of health

WHO Bulletin - A scoping review and expert consensus on digital determinants of health

R Van Kessel et al; https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/bulletin/online-first/blt.24.292057.pdf?sfvrsn=125e259_3

“This review offers a comprehensive overview of health determinants across digital, social, commercial and economic and political domains, highlighting how policy decisions, individual behaviours and broader factors influence health by digitalization.....”

Nature Medicine - Political polarization and health

Jay J Van Bavel et al; <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41591-024-03307-w>

Review article. “In addition to social determinants of health, such as economic resources, education, access to care and various environmental factors, **there is growing evidence that political polarization poses a substantial risk to individual and collective well-being.** Here **we review the impact of political polarization on public health.** We describe the different forms of polarization and how they are connected to health outcomes, highlighting the COVID-19 pandemic as a case study of the health risks of polarization. We then offer strategies for mitigating potential harms associated with polarization, with an emphasis on building social trust. Finally, we propose future research directions on this topic, underscore the need for more work in a global context and encourage greater collaboration between social scientists and medical scientists. **We conclude that polarization is a serious—if largely overlooked—determinant of health,** whose impacts must be more thoroughly understood and mitigated.”

WHO - Urban health capacity assessment and response: Resource kit

<https://www.who.int/teams/social-determinants-of-health/urban-health/urban-health-capacity-assessment-and-response>

Published on **World Cities Day** (31 Oct). “**WHO has developed an Urban health capacities and assessment resource kit** that equips multi-sectoral teams to assess whether a given initiative can meet its goals in a complex urban environment. It helps answer a **critical question:** Do we have the right capacities in place to achieve our objectives that influence urban health —whether directly or indirectly?”

BMJ Opinion - The commercial determinants of infant and child health

N Moodi et al; <https://www.bmj.com/content/387/bmj.q2395>

“Understanding of the multiple determinants of infant and child health has evolved over time, but **there’s been relatively little discussion, in relation to infants and children, of what have been termed the “commercial determinants of health. For this reason the Venice Forum, an international group of academics concerned with improving maternal and child health, met in April 2024 to discuss the issue. Here we present some of the results of our discussions.....”**

PS: And in order to deal with these CDH: **“...A conventional approach is to tax products that harm health, but this often simply makes them seem more desirable. A more fundamental route would be to place measurable value on health as a crucial determinant of sustainable human progress.** From this perspective, the focus by most governments on increasing gross domestic product (GDP) is a major problem, as it prioritises economic growth in policy making, often to the detriment of health.

We argue that a focus on net rather than gross domestic product should be adopted, as this measure would be reduced by commercial outputs adversely affecting health and increased by those benefiting health. This would also require a re-evaluation of the concept of “product”: for example, we suggest that GDP should include largely unremunerated activities that have major and positive effects on mental and physical health, such as breastfeeding and childcare.....”

Mental health & psycho-social wellbeing

AI-powered avatars set for mental health trials in India and Ethiopia

<https://www.news-medical.net/news/20241029/AI-powered-avatars-set-for-mental-health-trials-in-India-and-Ethiopia.aspx>

“AI-powered digital avatars are to be trialled for people in India and Ethiopia who hear voices in their heads, as researchers try to adapt mental health treatment so they can be used effectively in low-resource settings.”

Related tweet **Jon Shaffer:** *“Grim. AI avatar “mental health care” being studied as the cheap alternative in place of investing in actual faculties or caregiving professionals in impoverished settings in the global south.....”*

Lancet Comment - Global mental health and collaborative care

Michael Berk et al; [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(24\)02149-4/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(24)02149-4/fulltext)

“The global public health burden of depression is extensively documented and is particularly challenging in low-income and middle-income countries (LMICs), where medical resources are scarce and health services need to manage the dual burden of high-prevalence communicable and non-communicable disorders. Creative solutions are needed, and work in the growing field of global mental health, including work on collaborative care and task-sharing, has made important advances in developing these solutions. The **study by Ryan K McBain and colleagues published in *The Lancet* makes an important contribution, focusing on integrating depression care into chronic care clinics in an LMIC setting, and introduces several innovations in methods.....”**

- The related Lancet study: [Effectiveness, cost-effectiveness, and positive externalities of integrated chronic care for adults with major depressive disorder in Malawi \(IC3D\): a stepped-wedge, cluster-randomised, controlled trial](#)

The Lancet Healthy Longevity (Editorial) - Mental health deserves attention at all ages

[Lancet Healthy Longevity](#);

"We must challenge attitudes that ageing is intrinsically a negative experience and mental distress an inevitable consequence." The [@LancetLongevity](#) 's latest Editorial highlights that mental health deserves attention at all ages.

SS&M - Does receipt of social housing impact mental health? Results of a quasi-experimental study in the Greater Toronto Area

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0277953624008177>

By J R Dunn et al.

- Related: Our World in Data - [Homelessness](#)

"How many people are affected by homelessness? How is their number changing over time? How does it look by gender?" "...On this page, you can find **data and visualizations on the number of people affected by homelessness across different countries** and how these **numbers have changed over time.**"

Sexual & Reproductive health rights

Guardian - UN rules forcible sterilizations of women in Peru 'crime against humanity'

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/oct/30/un-peru-compensation-forced-sterilization>

"Country ordered to compensate victims of programme that affected more than 300,000 women in 1990s."

Journal of Urban Health (Editorial) Progress in Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health in Cities in Sub-Saharan Africa: Are Wide Inequities Holding Back Cities?

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11524-024-00936-x>

By C M Fayé, T Boerma et al.

WHO Bulletin - Progress towards sustainable development goals related to sexual health

Onikepe O Owolabi et al ; https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/bulletin/online-first/blt.23.291163.pdf?sfvrsn=fe436698_3

“... This article explores the availability of global indicators for the different components of sexual health by analysing two key sources: global indicator framework of the SDGs and the indicator index of the Global Health Observatory. We summarize the indicators for each component of sexual health using the Guttmacher–Lancet Commission framework, highlighting gaps in current indicators and recommend areas where additional indicators are needed, along with strategies how to improve data availability, quality and inclusiveness...”

WHO Bulletin - Menstruation and sexual health, well-being and justice

Carmen H Logie et al ; https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/bulletin/online-first/blt.23.291159.pdf?sfvrsn=a8ac4967_3

“...In this article, we contextualize menstruation in relation to sexual health, sexual wellbeing and sexual justice across the life course, and argue that these dimensions are essential to overall health and well-being outcomes...”

And a few links:

- **WHO Bulletin - [Inputs to WHO’s Sexual Health Assessment of Experiences](#)** (on behalf of the Cognitive testing of a survey instrument to assess sexual practices, behaviours and healthrelated outcomes (CoTSIS) study group)
- **[Global Health Action – “When you provide abortion services, you are looked upon as a bad guy”](#): experiences of abortion stigma by health providers in Nigeria** (By Friday Okonofua et al)

Neonatal and child health

Telegraph - Poor child protection leaves millions at risk of family separation, says study

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/global-health/climate-and-people/poor-child-protection-leaves-millions-at-risk-of-family-sep/>

“New report on children and young people without parental care is among the first of its kind to investigate the impact.”

“Millions of children across the globe are at risk of being “unnecessarily” separated from their families because of poor child protection systems, a groundbreaking new report has revealed. The study – commissioned by SOS Children’s Villages, an NGO focused on children and young people

without parental care – is one of the first of its kind to investigate the complex forces driving child-family separation globally and how it can be prevented. ... **“Inadequate care for children and young people has long-lasting – even intergenerational – physical and mental effects,”** said Dereje Wordofa, President of SOS Children’s Villages International....”

Plos GPH - Perinatal depression and adverse child growth outcomes in low-income and middle-income countries (LMICs): A systematic review and meta-analysis

Elizabeth Carosella et al ;

<https://journals.plos.org/globalpublichealth/article?id=10.1371/journal.pgph.0003586>

“Perinatal depression (PND), which encompasses the antepartum and postpartum depression (APD and PPD), is a neglected crisis in low-income and middle-income countries (LMICs). **We aimed to systematically search and meta-analyze existing evidence to determine whether a mother’s PND affects adverse growth outcomes in children in LMICs** (PROSPERO protocol: CRD42021246803)....”

CGD (blog) - Resolving the Deworming Paradox: Rethinking Deworming Campaigns for Children

Witold Więcek; <https://www.cgdev.org/blog/resolving-deworming-paradox-rethinking-deworming-campaigns-children>

On a **“paradox in deworming meta-analyses:** if infected children benefit from deworming, why would we not find smaller, but still meaningful effects from the mass deworming in the areas where worms are prevalent? In a **new paper, “[Meta-analysis and public policy: Reconciling the evidence on deworming](#),”** together with colleagues, we aimed to address this paradox. **This blog captures the paper’s main takeaways....”**

Access to medicines & health technology

OECD (Health Working Papers) - Exploring the feasibility of sharing information on medicine prices across countries

https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/exploring-the-feasibility-of-sharing-information-on-medicine-prices-across-countries_5e4a7a47-en

« In recent years, the call for transparency in pharmaceutical pricing has gained momentum among policymakers and stakeholders. Following a resolution of the 72nd World Health Assembly and the establishment of the Oslo Medicines Initiative, there has been a concerted push for greater transparency in pricing practices. However, the exact scope of transparency measures remains unclear. Key questions persist regarding which prices and for which medicines should be disclosed, the conditions under which countries are willing to share this information, and the barriers hindering such efforts. **To clarify these issues and advance the policy debate, the OECD examined the feasibility of sharing medicine price information across countries.** A country survey was conducted to explore the willingness, expectations, and motives of governments and payers for sharing

information on medicine prices. **This report presents the key findings derived from the survey and concludes with an assessment of the feasibility of sharing net medicine price information among OECD countries. »**

HPW - Egyptians Still Face Barriers to Insulin Access, Despite Promises of Expanded Domestic Production

<https://healthpolicy-watch.news/egyptians-still-face-barriers-to-insulin-access-despite-promises-of-expanded-domestic-production/>

“... In a country where over 18% of adults live with diabetes, and with the number of adults living with diabetes expected to hit 20 million by 2045, diagnosis, monitoring, and medication are all difficult to come by. In response, **Egypt is now taking significant steps to expand insulin access and diabetes prevention—in the context of rising prevalence. But financial and logistic barriers as well as competing political priorities still leave rural families at the ‘last mile’ of service in a precarious situation.”**

“**To address the growing health and financial burden of the disease, the Egyptian National Health Insurance system recently began to cover the initial cost of a glucometer for newly diagnosed people as well as 25 test strips per month.** Yet while over-the-counter glucose monitoring ads flood US airwaves for non-diabetic consumers, **many Egyptians, like people in other developing world countries, still struggle to obtain such basic devices for diabetes control. Diabetes care coverage remains below 50 percent for low- and middle-income countries, according to a Lancet estimate.** Many or most low-income and informal Egyptian laborers simply don’t have health insurance while their income are not enough to afford their monthly diabetes supplies, notes T1 International, a non-profit diabetes care advocacy group....”

“... **In terms of treatment, there is little local insulin manufacturing in Egypt as well as the rest of Africa, leaving people to depend on expensive, important supplies. Several big initiatives have recently been announced to change that. But their status remains unclear.** In May, 2023, Eli Lilly announced a major new partnership with the Egypt-based pharmaceutical company EVA Pharma to provide the company with the active pharmaceutical ingredients (API) of insulin at a “significantly reduced price.””

PS: “... Asked for comment, **the World Health Organization also was unable to offer further updates on a timeline for Egypt’s rollout of its much-touted expanded insulin production.....”**

Plos GPH - Improving the last mile delivery of vaccines through an informed push model: Experiences, opportunities and costs based on an implementation study in a rural district in Uganda

<https://journals.plos.org/globalpublichealth/article?id=10.1371/journal.pgph.0002647>

By Pamela Bakkabulindi et al.

Stat Plus - VCs move to launch U.S.-based companies to develop drugs developed in China

<https://www.statnews.com/2024/10/29/china-biotech-pharma-venture-capital/>

(gated) “For investors, the deals are a way to hedge their bets when it comes to partnering with Chinese firms.”

“As Chinese biopharma companies rise on the international stage, they are increasingly finding VC partners — in the United States. U.S. companies have long signed licensing deals with Chinese drugmakers. But increasingly American venture capitalists are building U.S.-based companies from scratch to test and ultimately seek to commercialize innovative drugs developed in China.....”

Human resources for health

Health Policy - Do international medical graduates' recruitment policies help to overcome healthcare shortage areas in developed countries? A systematic review

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0168851024002008>

By Loup Beduchaud et al.

Decolonize Global Health

Guardian - ‘People didn’t believe Africa could be a source of innovation’: how the continent holds the key to future drug research

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2024/oct/28/africa-innovation-how-the-continent-holds-the-key-to-future-drug-research-kelly-chibale>

“Prof Kelly Chibale says the world is failing to take advantage of African genetic diversity, and everyone could be losing out.”

“ About 18% of the global population lives in Africa – a proportion set to [rise over the next few decades](#) – and it accounts for 20% of the global disease burden. But [only 3% of clinical trials take place on the continent](#), and [most of those in just two countries](#) – South Africa and Egypt. “I would argue that **actually, if you really want to have confidence in a clinical trial, it must start in Africa. Why? If it works in Africa, there’s a good chance it’ll work somewhere else, because there is such [huge genetic diversity](#),**” says Chibale, of the [University of Cape Town](#). ... He leads the [H3D research centre at the University of Cape Town](#), a unit he founded in 2011, which is working on drugs to fight diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis, and combat antimicrobial resistance – conditions that predominantly affect people in Africa....”

CGD (blog) - The Challenge of Localization

R Dissanayake ; <https://www.cgdev.org/blog/challenge-localization>

“One of the most consistent themes of Samantha Power’s leadership at USAID has been her desire to shift decision-making power to local actors. In August 2022, [she wrote](#) that “[USAID’s] role is to support and catalyze local change efforts and processes.” ... **And she is not alone in her enthusiasm.** In the UK, the Labour Party has [repeatedly stressed](#) the importance of “genuine partnerships” with developing countries, and the international development [White Paper](#) produced by the Conservative government Labour replaced committed to publishing a new localization strategy. Denmark, Sweden, and the Netherlands all (together with the UK and US) adopted the “locally led adaptation” principles at COP26. **Donors have embraced the idea of localization. But the reality has proven trickier. In [a new paper published today](#), I set out why, and what to do about it....”**

- Related [CGD Policy paper – Localization in Theory and Practice](#)

The Conversation - Africa’s flagship universities have a proud history – but are they serving local communities?

J Ransom; <https://theconversation.com/africas-flagship-universities-have-a-proud-history-but-are-they-serving-local-communities-240813>

« **Universities play a number of crucial roles in society.** They educate students, research solutions to problems and serve as spaces for national debate. This is especially true for large public institutions, often referred to as flagship universities. **A number were launched with great fanfare around the time of a country’s independence from colonial rule.** They were tasked with driving national development by training skilled graduates to fill workforce gaps and conducting applied research to address societal challenges. **Many have done well in their historic national missions. But how are they performing today when it comes to serving their local communities?** Higher education researcher **James Ransom set out to answer this question in his new book, [Revisiting Africa’s Flagship Universities: Local, National and International Dynamics](#).** He analysed local engagement at ten African flagship universities: Ethiopia’s University of Addis Ababa; Makerere University in Uganda; the universities of Ghana, Namibia, Rwanda, Mauritius, Zambia and Zimbabwe; the University of Cape Town in South Africa and Nigeria’s University of Ibadan. **He tells The Conversation Africa what he learned.”**

Migration & Health

TGH - Abortion Access for U.S. Immigrants

V Foubister; <https://www.thinkglobalhealth.org/article/abortion-access-us-immigrants>

“A reproductive epidemiologist explores the barriers and gateways to abortion access for U.S. immigrants.”

“.... Your [Journal of Migration and Health](#) article identified three obstacles to immigrants seeking abortion services....”

Miscellaneous

New Humanitarian - Nigeria's malnutrition crisis reveals the extent of its healthcare collapse

I Mohammed; <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news-feature/2024/10/28/nigeria-malnutrition-crisis-reveals-extent-healthcare-collapse>

'At the end of the day, malnutrition is really a proxy indicator for a weak healthcare system.'

"A malnutrition emergency is stalking northern Nigeria, driven by a cost of living crisis, the shambolic state of the country's primary healthcare system, and staggering levels of insecurity, health workers warn....."

Devex - Opinion: Italy's G7 plan must deliver on food and climate in Africa

<https://www.devex.com/news/opinion-italy-s-g7-plan-must-deliver-on-food-and-climate-in-africa-108624>

"Italy's G7 presidency has set ambitious commitments to transforming sustainable food systems in Africa, but all depends on delivering concrete actions, ensuring inclusivity, and overcoming significant financing and policy hurdles....."

"Held in Pescara, Italy, the meeting provided more details on the [Apulia Food Systems Initiative launched by G7 leaders](#) in June. This renewed focus on food systems and food security in Africa is timely, especially as the region faces the combined pressures of climate change, economic instability, and persistent hunger. Yet, **while the words of the communiqué are encouraging, the path from ambition to actual results remains uncertain....**"

Devex - Multibillion-dollar fund aims to fill Africa's agribusiness financing gap

<https://www.devex.com/news/multibillion-dollar-fund-aims-to-fill-africa-s-agribusiness-financing-gap-108648>

(gated) "FASA is a "fund of funds" — one that's being supported by governments in Norway, Korea, the United Kingdom, and the United States."

"FASA stands for [Financing for Agricultural SMEs in Africa](#), with SMEs referring to small and medium-sized enterprises. It is financed by the United States, Norway, the United Kingdom, South Korea, and the Small Foundation, a Dublin-based philanthropy"

IDS - Unlocking the power of social protection

J Lind et al; <https://www.ids.ac.uk/opinions/unlocking-the-power-of-social-protection/>

Introduction to a new IDS Bulletin issue.

“The future of social protection is far from clear. The global context today, with uncertain global financing and under-funded programmes struggling to keep pace with needs in many countries, is very different to that of 10-15 years ago. What will remain behind if financial and technical assistance from development agencies is reduced or withdrawn? **The challenge for social protection advocates now is how to reimagine the role and shape of social protection at a time of considerable uncertainty.** This is the focus of a new *IDS Bulletin*, featuring insights from an international conference on ‘Reimagining social protection in a time of global uncertainty’, held at IDS in September 2023. Covering contexts ranging from Nigeria to the Peruvian Amazon, Zambia, Malawi, the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Somalia and Bangladesh, **we focused on three broad themes that we considered to shape the trajectories of social protection policy, programming and research.....**” They are: Politics; crises; and inclusion & innovation.

- See also [IDS – Social protection needs reinvention, says new Bulletin issue](#)

“Social protection needs urgent reimagining in the light of growing pressures and opportunities, according to new research published today in the *IDS Bulletin*.”

Stat - Helsinki Declaration says researchers must disclose trial results on a timely basis

<https://www.statnews.com/pharmalot/2024/10/28/research-helsinki-transparency-trials-disclosure-nih-fda-uk/>

(gated) “The move follows calls for greater oversight.”

“In a boost for clinical trial transparency, the Declaration of Helsinki was updated so that medical researchers are now responsible not only for making study results public, but also for doing so in a timely manner. Specifically, medical researchers are now told they “have a duty to make publicly available the results of their research on human participants and are accountable for the timeliness, completeness, and accuracy of their reports.” **The language was formally adopted last week at a World Medical Association General Assembly meeting in Helsinki, Finland.**”

“The **revision to the Declaration**, which was developed by the WMA six decades ago to provide ethical guidance for medical research, comes after ongoing controversy surrounding the disclosure of clinical trial work. In recent years, efforts have intensified to push regulators and lawmakers to increase oversight of clinical trial registration and publication....”

- See also **Science Insider** – [Key global bioethics guidelines get ‘dramatic’ update](#)

“Revised Declaration of Helsinki stresses **need for equity, protection of vulnerable groups, and research integrity.**”

Science Insider - Rare disease initiative aims to speed diagnoses and treatment in Latin America

<https://www.science.org/content/article/rare-disease-initiative-aims-speed-diagnoses-and-treatment-latin-america>

“A network of researchers, clinicians, and patient groups wants genetic screening and data access to improve how rare conditions are identified and studied.”

“... set up the **Collaborative for Rare Diseases in the Caribbean and Latin America (CEPCAL)**, an organization launched in 2020 to boost research, raise awareness, and improve access to diagnosis and treatment in the region. Although several rare disease networks already exist, such as the [United States’s Rare Diseases Clinical Research Network](#) and [EURORDIS-Rare Diseases Europe](#), **CEPCAL is the first to focus on Latin America**. Earlier this month, at its second meeting here, the group discussed progress and future projects, including expanding Mexico’s rare disease registry across Latin America and creating a local diagnostic network....”

Devex - Development Initiatives, group using data to ‘end poverty,’ goes bust

<https://www.devex.com/news/development-initiatives-group-using-data-to-end-poverty-goes-bust-108607>

“U.K.-based Development Initiatives had lost vital contracts but the spotlight falls on failed restructuring — as analysts shutter after 31 years.”

“The analysis group Development Initiatives, which championed the use of high-quality data to “end poverty,” has closed down in fresh evidence of what it called the **“tough financial climate” facing civil society organizations....**

Papers & reports

Scandinavian Journal of Public Health -Health beyond borders: the future of health promotion

Evelyn de Leeuw; <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/14034948241288272>

“This article situates the field of health promotion in its current cutting-edge agendas around health and wellbeing; social and other determinants of health; complexity and its associated sciences; planetary health; and inclusion and diversity. However, it is also proposed that there are emergent dimensions that should be placed more deliberately on the agendas of health promotion research and practice. The piece offers three dimensions for noting health promotion futures: a cognitive, spatial and temporal one. The first is a non-anthropocentric appreciation of the complex interactions between geosphere, biosphere and anthroposphere that can be framed through a lens of governance and cosmology; the second one is established by humankind’s journeys beyond the atmosphere into outer space; and the third one argues we – that is, the global health (promotion) community – need to account for temporal determinants of health, more consciously and conscientiously. The gazes seem beyond current agendas of health – but the article demonstrates how they are to become mission-critical aspects of contemporary and future worlds....”

Health Policy Open - The role of document analysis in health policy analysis studies in low and middle-income countries: Lessons for HPA researchers from a qualitative systematic review

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2590229620300228>

By N Karen Kayesa et al.

Tweets (via X & Bluesky)

Dr Tedros

“@UNRWA is an irreplaceable lifeline to the Palestinian people. And it has been for the past seven decades. UNRWA was created by the @UN Member States. Today’s decision by the Israeli parliament barring UNRWA from its life-saving and health-protecting work on behalf of millions of Palestinians will have devastating consequences. This is intolerable. It contravenes Israel’s obligations and responsibilities, and threatens the lives and health of all those who depend on UNRWA.”

“ Over two years of conflict in #Ukraine, and over a year of conflict in #Israel, the occupied Palestinian territory and now Lebanon show us once again that war solves nothing. What the people of Israel, Gaza, Lebanon, Ukraine and the Russian Federation need is not more war; they need a ceasefire, a political solution, and peace. The best medicine is peace. #RC74CPH”

“Had a virtual meeting with #China’s new Health Minister Lei Haichao about global health issues, including traditional medicine, the #mpox response, and the need to strengthen the health workforce around the world. My main ask to the Minister was full cooperation from China on understanding the #COVID19 origins, as well as data and access for experts to advance further investigation and research.”

Mark Suzman (Gates Foundation)

“Since the @GatesFoundation opened in 2000, it has worked in partnership with African governments, the private sector, non-profit organizations and civil society in 49 African countries to contribute funding and scientific expertise for everyone a chance to live a healthy, productive life. This week, the foundation is proud to announce the opening of our new office in Dakar, Senegal. I'm grateful for all of our partners and @GatesAfrica staff who have worked so hard to make this happen. This expansion is an outcome of our existing commitment to supporting local partners and initiatives in West Africa and beyond - and our new office will enable us to continue driving sustainable development across the region.”

Global Health 50/50

“Our Co-Founder & Co-CEO @kentbuse has just delivered the keynote at the 10th @ISPAH Congress in Paris! In his address, he emphasised the urgent need to channel our passion for physical activity into a political force, advocating for policies that ensure physical activity is recognised as a right for all. As Kent noted, "special efforts must be made for communities

disadvantaged by various social factors." This is particularly critical when considering gender disparities: a recent study in *The Lancet* found that in 2022, 34% of women globally didn't get enough physical activity compared to 29% of men..."