Dear colleagues,

Last week delegations from five Central Asian countries came to Astana/Kazakhstan, to take part in the 2nd Regional Steering Committee Meeting of the Central Asia Drug Action Programme (CADAP), highlighting its impressive achievements in effectively reducing both drug demand and supply.

Next week three interdisciplinary teams of young Kenyan professionals will pitch their innovative e-health projects for health promotion and disease prevention at the International German Forum in Berlin.

And for this weekend’s reading, you have a rich choice in this issue of our News Briefing: Browse, discover and enjoy!

Your editorial team
Dieter Neuvians, Karolina Luczak Santana, Anna von Roenne

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Social Determinants and Teen Pregnancy Prevention: Exploring the Role of Nontraditional Partnerships

Regional Gender Strategy and Action Plan 2017–2019 for Asia and the Pacific

Gender-Based Violence Manual

I’m Your Maker: Power, Heteronormativity and Violence in Women’s Same-Sex Relationships

Health System Governance, Health Workforce and Health Information Systems

Health workforce metrics pre- and post-2015: a stimulus to public policy and planning

Access to Medical Products, Vaccines and Technologies

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Powerful ideas for Global Access to Medicines

Innovative solution: use of unmanned aircraft vehicles to deliver life-saving medicines and supplies

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Global Public Health Special Issue: The Emergence of Asian Tobacco Companies: Implications for Global Health Governance

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Economic Development Strategy: prosperity, poverty and meeting global challenges

How to achieve the SDGs by 2030 – lessons from 50 case studies

Starting strong implementation of the social SDGs in Latin America

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ONLINE RESOURCES

Healthy Developments – Germany’s commitment to health and social protection

**Guppy Fish reduce dengue fever in rural Cambodia**

http://health.bmz.de/what_we_do/climate_health/adaptation_measures/cambodia/index.html

An increase in dengue cases, which is likely to be related to climate change, threatens rural Cambodians’ health and welfare. The keeping of Guppy Fish has emerged as a sustainable and cost-effective response.

**Joining forces against demand for drugs in Central Asia**

Results and impressions from the Second Regional Steering Committee Meeting, 31 January 2017, Astana, Kazakhstan

http://health.bmz.de/events/Events_2016/Joining_forces_against_demand_for_drugs_in_Central_Asia/index.html

Delegations from five Central Asian countries came to Astana/Kazakhstan, to take part in the 2nd Regional Steering Committee Meeting of the Central Asia Drug Action Programme (CADAP). Regional efforts to reduce drug demand and supply reduction were strengthened while national partners expressed their interest in the possible extension of the programme.

**From Nairobi to Berlin: Young hackers for Global Health**

http://health.bmz.de/events/Events_2016/From_Nairobi_to_Berlin/index.html

Three interdisciplinary teams of young professionals from Nairobi will present their e-health projects for health promotion and disease prevention for young people in Kenya to the International German Forum in Berlin on 21/22 February 2017. What happens when Kenyan hackers meet German IT experts and business leaders?

by Rachel Winnik Yavinsky, Carolyn Lamere, Kristen P. Patterson et al.
The Evidence Project, Population Council, June 2015
46 pp. 1.0 MB
http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pa00mgjp.pdf

Integrating family planning into non-health sector development projects has been promoted as a win-win for multiple sectors, leading to both increased access to and use of contraceptives as well as improvements in many other development indicators. This synthesis report examines and summarizes recent available evidence from integrated Population, Health, and Environment (PHE) projects to document what they are measuring and/or not measuring, assess the current state of PHE project monitoring and evaluation, and identify gaps in evaluation and research for current and future PHE projects to improve upon.

Listening to African Voices - Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting among Immigrants in Hamburg: Knowledge, Attitudes and Practice

by Alice Behrendt
Plan International, February 2011
116 pp. 2.1 MB
https://www.planusa.org/docs/ListeningtoAfricanVoices.pdf

Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C) is a harmful traditional practice. It is estimated that between 100 and 140 million girls and women have been subjected to the practice worldwide. Most of them live in Africa, but there is also a considerable number of women concerned among immigrant populations in Europe. Little attention has been given so far to the perceptions of African immigrants in relation to FGM/C. Campaigns and activities are mostly based on anecdotal evidence and are often carried out without the implication of main stakeholders of the African immigrant communities. The purpose of the current project was to listen to the opinions, perceptions and propositions of immigrants from Sub-Saharan Africa regarding the practice of FGM/C.

Virility, pleasure and female genital mutilation/cutting. A qualitative study of perceptions and experiences of medicalized defibulation among Somali and Sudanese migrants in Norway

by R. Elise B. Johansen
Reproductive Health, 2017 14:25 - Published: 10 February 2017
12 pp. 443 kB
The most pervasive form of female genital mutilation/cutting – infibulation - involves the almost complete closure of the vaginal orifice by cutting and closing the labia to create a skin seal. A small opening remains for the passage of urine and menstrual blood. This physical closure has to be re-opened – defibulated - later in life. When they marry, a partial opening is made to enable sexual intercourse. The husband commonly uses his penis to create this opening. In some settings, a circumciser or traditional midwife opens the infibulated scar with a knife or razor blade. Later, during childbirth, a further opening is necessary to make room for the child’s passage. In Norway, public health services provide surgical defibulation, which is less risky and painful than traditional forms of defibulation. This paper explores the perceptions and experiences of surgical defibulation among migrants in Norway and investigates whether surgical defibulation is an accepted medicalization of a traditional procedure or instead challenges the cultural underpinnings of infibulation.

**Frequency-dependent female genital cutting behaviour confers evolutionary fitness benefits**

by Janet A. Howard and Mhairi A. Gibson

Nature Ecology & Evolution 1, Article number: 0049 (2017)

6 pp. 213 kB

http://www.nature.com/articles/s41559-016-0049.pdf

Female genital cutting (FGC) has immediate and long-term negative health consequences that are well-documented, and its elimination is a priority for policymakers. The persistence of this widespread practice also presents a puzzle for evolutionary anthropologists due to its potentially detrimental impact on survival and reproductive fitness. The authors show that FGC behaviour is frequency-dependent; the probability that girls are cut varies in proportion to the FGC frequency found in their ethnic group. They also show that in ethnic groups with high FGC frequency, women with FGC have significantly more surviving offspring than their uncut peers, and the reverse is found in ethnic groups with low FGC frequency. The results demonstrate how evolutionary and cultural forces can drive the persistence of harmful behaviours.

**Estimating infertility prevalence in low-to-middle-income countries: an application of a current duration approach to Demographic and Health Survey data**

by Chelsea B. Polis, Carie M. Cox, Özge Tunçalp et al.

Human Reproduction, pp. 1–11, 2017 - Published: 15 February 2017

11 pp. 290 kB


Nationally representative estimates of time-to-pregnancy (TTP) and infertility
based on a clinical definition of 12 months have been limited within developing countries. The described approach represents a pragmatic advance in our ability to measure and monitor infertility in the developing world, with potentially far-reaching implications for policies and programs intended to address reproductive health. The analysis suggests that a current duration (CD) approach applied to Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) data from Nigeria provides infertility prevalence estimates comparable to other smaller studies in the same region.

**In a State of Crisis: Meeting the Sexual and Reproductive Health Needs of Women in Humanitarian Situations**

by Sneha Barot
7 pp. 96 kB

Despite progress in recent decades - especially related to the development of standards to address sexual and reproductive health in crisis settings - services on the ground have lagged far behind the need, because of challenges relating to culture and ideology, insufficient data, financial and resource constraints, and inadequate health care systems. Prevention, preparedness and resiliency are increasingly recognized as crucial to equipping communities to avoid crises, endure their effects and get on the path to recovery more quickly.

**Religion & Sexuality: A Report on Faith-Based Responses to Children’s Comprehensive Sexuality Education and Information**

by Ezra Chitando and Bonginkosi Moyo-Bango
Save the Children International and International Network of Religious Leaders Living with or Personally Affected by HIV and AIDS (INERELA+)
48 pp. 2.7 MB

As the world is rapidly becoming more complex, with many children maturing earlier and being exposed to competing sources of information, the need for Comprehensive Sexuality Education and Information (CSE & I) has become urgent. There is a growing need to ensure that children are equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills and information regarding their sexuality in order for them to be in a better position to navigate the present and the future. This research on faith-based perspectives on CSE & I seeks to explore the role of African faith-leaders in providing CSE & I, specifically the extent of their current and potential involvement, and how their involvement can be enhanced.
Essential Packages Manual: Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Programmes for Young People

What young people want, what young people need
by Rachel Wilder, Woutine van Beek et al.
Access, Services and Knowledge Programme, 2016
86 pp. 2.3 MB

The Essential Packages Manual is designed to be a comprehensive guide for successful sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) programmes for young people. It seeks to help organisations to critically review programmes and identify gaps and areas to improve a programme in line with a rights-based, gender-transformative, and youth-centred approach. As stated in the manual, “It is a starting point for managers, programme officers, monitoring and evaluation staff and others to critically review their programmes against proven standards of good practice, to identify gaps and areas where they could improve to better serve young people, and to learn more about a holistic approach to programming that places young people at the centre.”

Investing in a Research Revolution for LGBTI Inclusion

by M. V. Lee Badgett and Phil Crehan
The World Bank Group (WBG) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), November 2016
29 pp. 1.0 MB

This paper is not a specific proposal. Rather, its intention is to highlight for discussion the critical research and knowledge gaps with regard to human rights and inclusion for LGBTI people that require investments to ensure that they are part of the human rights and development agendas. In light of these significant gaps, the paper outlines a number of high-priority research needs that have been identified as a result of wide-ranging consultations with civil society organizations (CSOs), governments, research institutions, human rights and development agencies, and researchers.

Abortion Incidence and Unintended Pregnancy in Nepal

by Mahesh Puri, Susheela Singh, Aparna Sundaram et al.
International Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health, Vol. 42, Nr. 4, December 2016
14 pp. 491 kB

Although abortion has been legal under broad criteria in Nepal since 2002, a signifi-
cant proportion of women continue to obtain illegal, unsafe abortions, and no national estimates exist of the incidence of safe and unsafe abortions. The authors conclude that unsafe abortion is still common and exacts a heavy toll on women. Programs and policies to reduce rates of unintended pregnancy and unsafe abortion, increase access to high-quality contraceptive care and expand safe abortion services are warranted.

Innovations in Investing in Young Children Globally

Proceedings of a Workshop - in Brief
by Jocelyn Widmer
National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, February 2017
8 pp. 278 kB

The Forum on Investing in Young Children Globally convened its ninth and final workshop in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire, on October 20–21, 2016, to explore topics related to innovations in investing in young children globally. During the course of the 2-day workshop, researchers, policy makers, program practitioners, industry partners, funders, and other experts came together to highlight innovative research, policy, business models, and implementation strategies occurring in West Africa and around the world that positively affect investments made in young children. Innovations ranged from prioritizing the needs of children in national agendas to unique partnerships that enable services to reach children in remote contexts. This publication briefly summarizes the presentations and discussions from the workshop.

Development and validation of an early childhood development scale for use in low-resourced settings

by Dana Charles McCoy, Christopher R. Sudfeld, David C. Bellinger et al.
Population Health Metrics, 2017 15:3 - Published: 9 February 2017
18 pp. 2.6 MB

Low-cost, cross-culturally comparable measures of the motor, cognitive, and socioemotional skills of children under 3 years remain scarce. In the present paper, the authors aim to develop a new caregiver-reported early childhood development (ECD) scale designed to be implemented as part of household surveys in low-resourced settings. Results of this study provide empirical support from a low-income country setting (Tanzania) for the acceptability, reliability, and validity of a new caregiver-reported ECD scale. Additional research is needed to test these and other caregiver reported items in children in the full 0 to 3 year range across multiple cultural and linguistic settings.
Positive Youth Development (PYD) Toolkit: A Practical Guide for Implementers of Youth Programs

by Laura Hinson, Chisina Kapungu, Cassandra Jessee et al.
USAID’s YouthPower Learning, 2017
124 pp. 1.9 MB

Positive youth development (PYD) is an approach that aims to build and support the competencies, skills and abilities of youth so that they are empowered to reach their full potential. Building the assets and skills of young people has been shown to improve outcomes for youth in high-income countries. But what does PYD look like in programs for youth in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs)? This toolkit is geared toward helping program implementers, researchers and funders integrate PYD principles into program monitoring and evaluation, and to adjust and improve program performance. The toolkit provides a framework for measuring PYD, resources and PYD principles into program monitoring and evaluation, and to adjust and improve program performance. The toolkit provides a framework for measuring PYD, resources and references for implementers and evaluators, illustrative PYD indicators that can be applied across multiple sectors and information on major considerations for adapting measures cross-culturally.

HIV, Tuberculosis & Malaria

Relationship between time to initiation of antiretroviral therapy and treatment outcomes: a cohort analysis of ART eligible adolescents in Zimbabwe

by Florian Vogt, Andrea Rehman, Katharina Kranzer et al.
29 pp. 1.7 MB
http://journals.lww.com/jaids/Abstract/publishahead/Relationship_between_time_to_initiation_of.97055.aspx

Age-specific retention challenges make ART initiation in adolescents difficult, often requiring a lengthy preparation process. This needs to be balanced against the benefits of starting treatment quickly. The optimal time to initiation duration in adolescents is currently unknown. The authors conclude that neither mortality or loss to follow-up (LTFU) was associated with varying time to ART. The initiation process can be tailored to the adolescents’ needs and individual life situations without risking to increase poor treatment outcomes. Early mortality was high despite rapid ART initiation, calling for earlier rather than faster initiation through HIV testing scale-up.
Should HIV testing for all pregnant women continue? Cost-effectiveness of universal antenatal testing compared to focused approaches across high to very low HIV prevalence settings

by Naoko Ishikawa, Shona Dalal, Cheryl Johnson et al.
9 pp. 344 kB

HIV testing is the entry point for the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV. Decreasing external funding for the HIV response in some low- and middle-income countries has triggered the question of whether a focused approach to HIV testing targeting pregnant women in high-burden areas should be considered. The authors conclude that universal approach to antenatal HIV testing achieves the best health outcomes and is cost-saving or cost-effective in the long term across the range of HIV prevalence settings. It is further a prerequisite for quality maternal and child healthcare and for the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV.


by Jill Gay, Melanie Croce-Galis, Karen Hardee et al.
What Works for Women & Girls, 2017
Download chapter by chapter at:
http://www.whatworksforwomen.org/pages/download

The publication is a comprehensive website (http://www.whatworksforwomen.org) documenting the evidence for effective HIV interventions to guide donors, policymakers, and program managers in planning effective HIV/AIDS policies and programs for women and girls. This comprehensive review spans more than 2,000 articles and reports with data from more than 90 countries. It contains - in one centralized, searchable location - the evidence of successful gender-specific programming from global programs and studies, with a focus on the Global South.

Educating religious leaders to promote uptake of male circumcision in Tanzania: a cluster randomised trial

by Jennifer A Downs, Agrey H Mwakisole, Alphonce B Chandika et al.
The Lancet - Published Online February 14, 2017
9 pp. 926 kB

Male circumcision is being widely deployed as an HIV prevention strategy in countries with high HIV incidence, but its uptake in sub-Saharan Africa has been below targets. The authors did a study to establish whether educating religious leaders about male circumcision...
cision would increase uptake in their village. They conclude that education of religious leaders had a substantial effect on uptake of male circumcision, and should be considered as part of male circumcision programmes in other sub-Saharan African countries. They think that the process of working through religious leaders can serve as an innovative model to promote healthy behaviour, leading to HIV prevention and other clinically relevant outcomes, in a variety of settings.

Antiretroviral therapy related adverse effects: Can sub-Saharan Africa cope with the new “test and treat” policy of the World Health Organization?

by Jobert Richie N. Nansseu and Jean Joel R. Bigna
Infectious Diseases of Poverty, 2017 6:24 - Published: 15 February 2017
5 pp. 375 kB

Recent studies have shown that early antiretroviral therapy (ART) initiation results in significant HIV transmission reduction. This is the rationale behind the “test and treat” policy of the World Health Organization (WHO). Implementation of this policy will lead to an increased incidence of ART-related adverse effects, especially in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). Is the region yet ready to cope with such a challenging issue? The authors conclude that while SSA would be the first region to experience the huge benefits of implementing the “test and treat” policy of the WHO, the region is not yet prepared to manage the consequential increased burden of ART-related toxic and metabolic complications. Urgent measures should be taken to fill the lacunae if SSA is not to become over-burdened by the consequences of the “test and treat” policy.

Ending Child Marriage and Stopping the Spread of HIV …Opportunities and challenges for action

Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Inter-Agency Task Team on Children Affected by AIDS (RIATT-ESA)
African Union Commission, December 2016
40 pp. 593 kB


AIDS is now the number-one killer of adolescents in Africa. What is more worrying is that seven of every 10 new infections of HIV among adolescents are girls, which shows how vulnerable girls are to acquiring HIV. Similar socioeconomic factors drive both HIV and child marriage, but very few studies have shown the causal effects and links between the two. This desk review examines some of the existing literature to highlight what is known about the links between child marriage and HIV, and spotlights opportunities for further action.
Lessons learned from the HIV care cascade can help End TB
by Michael J. A. Reid and Eric Goosby
The International Journal of Tuberculosis and Lung Disease, Vol. 21, Nr. 3, 1 March 2017, pp. 245-246
2 pp. 37 kB
http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/iuatld/ijtld/2017/00000021/00000003/art0001

First used to describe the HIV epidemic in Washington DC, the care cascade model has proved an effective tool for evaluating the epidemic across a wide range of geographic and clinical settings. The model defines an outcome that patients should achieve - virologic suppression in the case of HIV - and outlines a series of sequential steps needed to achieve the outcome (diagnosis, linkage to care, retention in care, prescription of antiretroviral therapy and viral suppression). The authors believe that TB control programs can learn from the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) community's systematic use of care cascades, not only to identify the missing cases, but also as a tool for delivering comprehensive, patient-centered programs.

Deadliest form of TB has potential cure at last

Usually a death sentence, extensively drug-resistant tuberculosis (XDR-TB) can potentially be cured with a new drug combination.
by Amy Green
Health ENews, February 16, 2017
2 pp. 72 kB
https://pdf.printfriendly.com/pdfs/1487241425_6853ae/download

Interim results from the Nix-TB trial, which were presented at the Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI 2017) in Seattle, are extremely promising and point to new hope for people diagnosed with XDR-TB. According to the TB Alliance, the organisation conducting the trial, the “vast majority” of patients with XDR-TB in the study were “clinically well” and “able to go home to their families” after completing just six months of treatment with a new drug regimen (bedaquiline and pretomanid together with linezolid).

Effect of Delay in Tuberculosis Diagnosis on Pre-Diagnosis Cost

by Adel Hamood Noman Aldhubhani, Mohamed Izhamb Mohamed Ibrahim, Pazilah Ibrahim et al.
5 pp. 386 kB

This study aimed to evaluate the pre-diagnosis costs for delayed TB patients (prior
to the actual TB diagnosis) in a tuberculosis referral center in Sana’a, Yemen. The authors conclude that the delayed group incurred extra costs prior to the actual TB diagnosis compared with the non-delayed group. Promoting information and awareness on TB and health care systems in both public and private sectors should be done for both groups to detect TB at an earlier stage and to reduce extra costs incurred during the pre-diagnosis period.

The spread of artemisinin-resistant Plasmodium falciparum in the Greater Mekong Subregion: a molecular epidemiology observational study

by Mallika Imwong, Kanokon Suwannasin, Chanon Kunasol et al.
Lancet Infect Dis 2017 - Published Online February 1, 2017
7 pp. 539 kB

The study results suggest that the dominant artemisinin-resistant P falciparum C580Y lineage probably arose in western Cambodia and then spread to Thailand and Laos, out-competing other parasites and acquiring piperaquine resistance. The emergence and spread of fit artemisinin-resistant P falciparum parasite lineages, which then acquire partner drug resistance across the Greater Mekong subregion, threatens regional malaria control and elimination goals. Elimination of falciparum malaria from this region should be accelerated while available antimalarial drugs still remain effective.

How to Contain Artemisinin- and Multidrug-Resistant Falciparum Malaria

by Arjen M. Dondorp, Frank M. Smithuis, Charley Woodrow et al.
Trends in Parasitology - Published Online: February 07, 2017
11 pp. 1.9 MB

In the Greater Mekong subregion (GMS), artemisinin resistance is increasingly compounded by partner drug resistance, causing high failure rates of artemisinin combination therapies in some areas. Village health workers (VHWs) play a key role in the provision of community-based services which have to reach even the most remote populations. Additional, more aggressive, approaches will be important to accelerate malaria elimination, which could include mass drug administrations, potentially in combination with ivermectin and vaccination, mass screening and treatment with novel diagnostics, reactive case detection, and other measures.

Evaluating Cinchona bark and quinine for treating and preventing malaria

by G Gachelin, P Garner, E Ferroni et al.
Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine; 2017, Vol. 110(2) 73–82 - First Published February 7, 2017
Although the use of quinine to treat and prevent malaria in individuals was dramatically successful, research in Italy in particular showed that scaling this up to prevent malaria in populations was unsuccessful, both because of poor compliance with self-medication, and because of the frequency of reinfection. This general conclusion applied except in circumstances – prisons and navies, for example – in which community self-discipline could be assured. It was not until the 21st century that any alternative antimalarial drugs were shown in well-designed, large controlled trials to be superior to quinine, and then only in severe malaria. The enduring beneficial effects of Cinchona bark and quinine over three and a half centuries are remarkable.

*Spectrum-Malaria: a user-friendly projection tool for health impact assessment and strategic planning by malaria control programmes in sub-Saharan Africa*

by Matthew Hamilton, Guy Mahiane, Eline L. Korenromp et al.

Malaria Journal 2017 16:68 - Published 10 February 2017

15 pp. 4.2 MB

https://malariajournal.biomedcentral.com/track/pdf/10.1186/s12936-017-1705-3?site=malariajournal.biomedcentral.com

Scale-up of malaria prevention and treatment needs to continue but national strategies and budget allocations are not always evidence-based. This article presents a new modelling tool projecting malaria infection, cases and deaths to support impact evaluation, target setting and strategic planning. Spectrum-Malaria’s user-friendly interface and intuitive display of baseline data and scenario projections holds promise to facilitate capacity building and policy dialogue in malaria programme prioritization. The module’s linking to the OneHealth Tool for costing will support use of the software for strategic budget allocation.

*Out of Africa: origins and evolution of the human malaria parasites Plasmodium falciparum and Plasmodium vivax*

by Dorothy E. Loy, Weimin Liu, Yingying Li et al.


11 pp. 1.6 MB


Plasmodium falciparum and Plasmodium vivax account for more than 95% of all human malaria infections, and thus pose a serious public health challenge. To control and potentially eliminate these pathogens, it is important to understand their origins and evolutionary history. The discovery of a multitude of Plasmodium spp. in chimpanzees and gorillas has revealed that both P.
falciparum and P. vivax evolved from parasites infecting wild-living African apes. Comparative genomics, coupled with functional parasite and vector studies, are likely to yield new insights into ape Plasmodium transmission and pathogenesis that are relevant to the treatment and prevention of human malaria.

Neglected Tropical Diseases, Other Infectious diseases & Pandemic Preparedness

Socio-ecological dynamics and challenges to the governance of Neglected Tropical Disease control

by Edwin Michael and Shirin Madon
Infectious Diseases of Poverty, 6 (35); February 2017
13 pp. 1.4 MB
http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/69195/1/Madon_Socio-ecological_dynamics_and_challenges_published_2017%20LSERO.pdf

The current global attempts to control the so-called “Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs)” have the potential to significantly reduce the morbidity suffered by some of the world’s poorest communities. However, the governance of these control programmes is driven by a managerial rationality that assumes predictability of proposed interventions, and which thus primarily seeks to improve the cost-effectiveness of implementation by measuring performance in terms of pre-determined outputs. Here, we argue that this approach has reinforced the narrow normal-science model for controlling parasitic diseases, and in doing so fails to address the complex dynamics, uncertainty and socio-ecological context-specificity that invariably underlie parasite transmission.

An R&D Blueprint for Action to Prevent Epidemics

Plan of Action, World Health Organization, May 2016
48 pp. 12.5 MB
http://www.who.int/csr/research-and-development/r_d_blueprint_plan_of_action.pdf?ua=1

At the request of its 194 Member States, WHO has convened a broad global coalition to develop the Research & Development (R&D) Blueprint as a platform for accelerating R&D. The R&D Blueprint is intended to focus on severe emerging diseases with potential to generate a public health emergency, and for which no, or insufficient, preventative and curative solutions exist. The methodology under review identifies those diseases which most readily meet these characteristics.

The updated 2017 list of priority diseases include:
- Arenaviral hemorrhagic fevers (including Lassa Fever)
- Crimean Congo Hemorrhagic Fever (CCHF)
- Filoviral diseases (including Ebola and Marburg)
Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV)
Other highly pathogenic coronaviral diseases (such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome, (SARS))
Nipah and related henipaviral diseases
Rift Valley Fever (RVF)
Severe Fever with Thrombocytopenia Syndrome (SFTS)
Zika

Disease and economic burdens of dengue
by Marcia C Castro, Mary E Wilson, David E Bloom
Lancet Infect Dis 2017 - Published: 06 February 2017
9 pp. 98 kB

The burden of dengue is large and growing. More than half of the global population lives in areas with risk of dengue transmission. Uncertainty in burden estimates, however, challenges policy makers’ ability to set priorities, allocate resources, and plan for interventions. In this report, the first in a Series on dengue, the authors explore the estimations of disease and economic burdens of dengue, and the major estimation challenges, limitations, and sources of uncertainty. They also reflect on opportunities to remedy these deficiencies.

The second paper of this series on Dengue “Prevention and control of dengue - the light at the end of the tunnel” is available at:

The third paper “Dengue: knowledge gaps, unmet needs, and research priorities” is available at: http://www.thelancet.com/pdfs/journals/laninf/PIIS1473-3099(16)30473-X.pdf

Household Dengue Prevention Interventions, Expenditures, and Barriers to Aedes aegypti Control in Machala, Ecuador
by Naveed Heydari, David A. Larsen, Marco Neira et al.
15 pp. 1.7 MB
http://www.mdpi.com/1660-4601/14/2/196/pdf

The Aedes aegypti mosquito is an efficient vector for the transmission of Zika, chikungunya, and dengue viruses, causing major epidemics and a significant social and economic burden throughout the tropics and subtropics. The primary means of preventing these diseases is household-level mosquito control. However, relatively little is known about the economic burden of Ae. aegypti control in resource-limited communities. The results of this study show that households spend a monthly median
of US$ 2.00, or 1.90% of their family income on Ae. aegypti control interventions. Households reported employing, on average, five different mosquito control and dengue prevention interventions, including aerosols, liquid sprays, repellents, mosquito coils, and unimpregnated bed nets. The authors found that effectiveness and cost were the most important factors that influence people’s decisions to purchase a mosquito control product.

**Infectious Diseases of Haiti**

by Stephen Berger  
Gideon E-book Series, 2014  
374 pp. 5.1 MB  

There are 347 forms of human infectious disease in the world today – and 198 of these (more than half) are known to occur in Haiti. Sadly, one of the “side effects” of living in a poor and disaster-ridden economy is a lack of useful facts regarding the local status of individual diseases. GIDEON (Global Infectious Diseases and Epidemiology Online Network) is a Web-based application which follows diseases – both on a global level and within each country. Data are updated daily and are derived from all relevant journals, websites, Health Ministry reports and publications of the World Health Organization. The electronic book (ebook) is generated from information in the GIDEON database, and will serve as the first comprehensive review of infectious diseases in Haiti.

**Impact of single annual treatment and four-monthly treatment for hookworm and Ascaris lumbricoides, and factors associated with residual infection among Kenyan school children**

by Stella Kepha, Charles S. Mwandawiro, Roy M. Anderson et al.  
Infectious Diseases of Poverty, 2017 6:30 - Published: 9 February 2017  
12 pp. 644 kB  
http://idpjournal.biomedcentral.com/track/pdf/10.1186/s40249-017-0244-z?site=idpjournal.biomedcentral.com  

School-based deworming is widely implemented in various countries to reduce the burden of soil-transmitted helminths (STHs), however, the frequency of drug administration varies in different settings. The authors conclude that 4-monthly treatment was more effective than single annual treatment. Repeated treatments led to dramatic reductions in the intensities of STHs, but did not completely clear infections among school children in Kenya, a presumed reflection of reinfection in a setting where there is ongoing transmission.
Mystery nodding syndrome may be triggered by parasitic worm

By Gretchen Vogel
Science Magazine, February 15, 2017
Read online at:

Between 1990 and 2013, thousands of children in war-torn South Sudan and northern Uganda suddenly developed a severe and puzzling form of epilepsy. When exposed to food or cold temperatures, affected children nodded their heads uncontrollably. Over time the seizures often worsened, leaving the children severely disabled. Many died of malnutrition, accidents, or secondary infections. But the cause of the devastation was a mystery. Now, a study finds that a parasitic worm often found in the children might trigger the body’s own defenses to attack neurons. The study doesn’t prove the worm is the culprit, but it is the first to show that a cause-effect relationship is plausible.

Nutrition, Non-Communicable Diseases & Environmental Health (incl. WASH & Climate Change)

Alcohol industry looks to boost drinks sales in Africa

By Chris McCall
2 pp. 539 kB

Alcohol manufacturers are setting their sights on the growing African market to increase sales of their products, often using aggressive advertising tactics to lure new drinkers. Africa’s population is young and growing and rapid economic growth means that many people, who might not have been able to afford to drink alcohol in the past, can now do so. Much of the traditional alcohol is locally brewed, but the big companies have realised they can lure this market over to their own products, and potentially attract new buyers as well.

Black Sheep: An Investigation into Existing Support for Problematic Cannabis Use

By Lizzie McCulloch
A Volteface Report, 2017
38 pp. 581 kB

People who need comprehensive help to tackle their problematic cannabis use will continue to be left in the hands of the criminals operating in an illegal, unregulated market around the drug, with severe consequences, unless politicians are willing to confront the real-
ities of its use. Legalising the use of cannabis would radically help increase the visibility of people experiencing problems with their cannabis use, allowing professionals to offer advice and recognise the signs of dependency in those presenting for purchase, and better signpost people to the appropriate level of treatment available – all helping to end the social stigma around cannabis use which so often acts as a barrier to problematic users seeking help.

The Impact of Water and Sanitation on Diarrhoeal Disease Burden and Over-Consumption of Antibiotics

by Pablo Araya, Julia Hug, Genevieve Joy et al.
London School of Economics and Political Science, March 2016
73 pp. 3.1 MB
https://amr-review.org/sites/default/files/LSE%20AMR%20Capstone.pdf

Infectious disease control through improved water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) infrastructure needs to be placed at the centre of the antimicrobial resistance (AMR) agenda. The spread of infectious diseases caused by inadequate WASH standards is a major driver of antibiotic demand in developing countries. Growing usage of antibiotics together with persistent infectious disease levels have led to a dangerous cycle in which reliance on antimicrobials increases while the efficacy of drugs diminishes. This report combines recent findings on the costs of reaching the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for water and sanitation with an analysis on the potential reduction in the related disease burden to assess how antibiotic consumption may fall by improving WASH. The focus countries of this report are Brazil, India, Indonesia and Nigeria – all large countries with big populations that have access to antimicrobials and scope for improvements in WASH.

Social Determinants and Teen Pregnancy Prevention: Exploring the Role of Nontraditional Partnerships

by Taleria Fuller, Carla White, Jocelyn Chu et al.
Health Promotion Practice Vol. 1-8, 2016
8 pp. 373 kB
http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1524839916680797

Addressing the social determinants of health (SDOH) that influence teen pregnancy is paramount to eliminating disparities and achieving health equity. Expanding prevention efforts from purely individual behaviour change to improving the social, political, economic, and built environments in which people live, learn, work, and play may better equip vulnerable youth to adopt and sustain healthy decisions. This article describes the value of an SDOH approach for achieving health equity, explains the integration of such an approach into community-level teen pregnancy prevention activities, and highlights two project partners’ efforts to establish and nurture non-traditional partnerships to address specific SDOH.
Regional Gender Strategy and Action Plan 2017-2019 for Asia and the Pacific

Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Bangkok, 2017
26 pp. 12.6 MB
http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/a-i6755e.pdf

Progress towards gender equality is key to meeting global goals of eradicating poverty and eliminating hunger and malnutrition. Women make important contributions to agriculture and rural livelihoods and play a vital role in the care and reproduction of households and communities. However, persistent gender inequalities, such as unequal access to productive resources - including land, services and inputs, finance, training - and information to markets and institutions hamper the realization of women's human and productive potential. These inequalities must be addressed to realize the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the mandate of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to eliminate hunger and malnutrition and eradicate poverty through sustainable agriculture and management of natural resources.

Gender-Based Violence Manual

World Food Programme Emergencies and Transitions Unit (OSZPH) Programme and Policy Division, November 2016
41 pp. 1.0 MB

This manual provides an overview of the key issues related to gender-based violence (GBV) in the context of World Food Programme’s (WFP) operations. It seeks to guide staff and partners so they can better identify and respond to GBV risks related to hunger and nutrition and to WFP programmes. The guidance should be used as a reference tool for integrating GBV as a protection concern into WFP operations.

I’m Your Maker: Power, Heteronormativity and Violence in Women’s Same-Sex Relationships

by Ingrid Lynch and Nadia Sanger
Triangle Project, Cape Town, 2016
68 pp. 7.9 MB
https://www.academia.edu/28468582/I_m_your_maker_Power_heteronormativity_and_violence_in_womens_same-sex_relationships?auto=download

The same gender norms that promote violence against heterosexual women are at play when South African women are abused by female partners. Intimate partner
violence among lesbian couples in South Africa is underrepresented in research and trivialized by police, leaving victims unwilling or unable to access the protective services. The report features findings from focus groups with 42 South African lesbian and bisexual women.

**Health System Governance, Health Workforce and Health Information Systems**

**Health workforce metrics pre- and post-2015: a stimulus to public policy and planning**

by Francisco Pozo-Martín, Andrea Nove, Sofia Castro Lopes et al.

Human Resources for Health, 2017 15:14 - Published: 15 February 2017

16 pp. 2.2 MB


Evidence-based health workforce policies are essential to ensure the provision of high-quality health services and to support the attainment of universal health coverage (UHC). This paper describes the main characteristics of available health workforce data for 74 of the 75 countries identified under the ‘Countdown to 2015’ initiative as accounting for more than 95% of the world’s maternal, newborn and child deaths. It also discusses best practices in the development of health workforce metrics post-2015.

**Access to Medical Products, Vaccines and Technologies**

**Powerful Ideas for Global Access to Medicines**

by Suerie Moon

N Engl J Med 2017; 376:505-507; February 9, 2017

3 pp. 365 kB


What has recently been headline news in high-income countries has long been a concern everywhere else. Whether low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) are struggling to treat millions of people living with HIV or to immunize refugee children against pneumonia, unaffordable prices mean that many people simply go without. Meanwhile, despite billions of public and private dollars invested in pharmaceutical research and development, urgent needs for new antibiotics and tools for other public health priorities go unmet. Unaffordable medicines and inadequate innovation have become global issues. Like climate change, they require new public policies and international cooperation.
Innovative solution: use of unmanned aircraft vehicles to deliver life-saving medicines and supplies

by Anabella Sanchez, Nora Quesada, Katie Qutub et al.
USAID, Deliver Project, 2016
34 pp. 2.5 MB
http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pa00mhz2.pdf

Universal health coverage will become a reality when all segments of the population receive essential medicines and medical supplies when and where they need them, in every country. One of the possible solutions to resolve the challenges that still exist to transport medicines (especially those medicines that save lives) in a timely manner, to hard-to-reach places, could be the use of technology such as unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) or drones. In this brief, the authors will provide basic information about UAV, what they are, the different models, features, countries that are implementing pilot programs, a pilot experience in some countries, including the Dominican Republic, and future use in public health.

Pilot programmes in Ghana and the Philippines seek to expand access to treatment through differential pricing models

by Michael D. Quinlan
NCD Alliance, 2017
Read online at:
https://ncdalliance.org/node/8876

Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs) are now the leading cause of death and disability, and the poorest and most vulnerable are most affected, with equitable access to medicines a key challenge to improving health and family wellbeing. The Access and Affordability Initiative (AAI) is a work stream of a global health collaboration between pharmaceutical companies and the Gates Foundation that seeks to expand access to treatment for those most in need through differential pricing models.

When free is not fair: the case of vaccine donations

by James Smith
The Lancet Infectious Diseases, Vol. 17, No. 2, pp. 128–130, February 2017
2 pp. 52 kB

On Oct 10, 2015, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) rejected Pfizer’s proposed donation of 1 million doses of its branded pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV). The news caused a stir in the global health community; after all, free essential health goods might be considered something to be celebrated. This decision represents the latest development in a prolonged advocacy campaign spear-
headed by MSF, which aims to reduce the cost of PCV, and presents a timely opportunity to examine the case for vaccine donations.

**Why your doctor’s advice to take all your antibiotics may be wrong**

by Helen Branswell
STAT, February 9, 2017
Read online at:


You’ve heard it many times before from your doctor: If you’re taking antibiotics, don’t stop taking them until the pill vial is empty, even if you feel better. The rationale behind this commandment has always been that stopping treatment too soon would fuel the development of antibiotic resistance — the ability of bugs to evade these drugs. Information campaigns aimed at getting the public to take antibiotics properly have been driving home this message for decades. But the warning, a growing number of experts say, is misguided and may actually be exacerbating antibiotic resistance.

**Evaluation of antibiotic awareness campaigns**

by Mirko Saam, Benedikt Huttner, Stephan Harbarth
World Health Organization, Expert Committee on the Selection and Use of Essential Medicines, Policy, Access and Use (PAU)

[http://www.who.int/selection_medicines/committees/expert/21/applications/s6_antibiotic_awareness_campaigns.pdf?ua=1](http://www.who.int/selection_medicines/committees/expert/21/applications/s6_antibiotic_awareness_campaigns.pdf?ua=1)

Tackling the global spread of antibiotic resistance is a high priority for the World Health Organization (WHO).

Evaluation of the impact of antibiotic awareness campaigns is still suboptimal, with 36 of 60 campaigns (60%) reporting no formal evaluation. The most effective messages and interventions remain unclear. The lack of thorough evaluation, the absence of prospectively determined control groups and the multifaceted nature of most campaigns makes any formal conclusions difficult. It seems, however, that some campaigns were associated with a reduction in overall antibiotic use.

**Tackling Drug-Resistant Infections Globally: Final Report and Recommendations**

The Review on Antimicrobial Resistance
Chaired by Jim O’Neill, May 2016
84 pp. 2.3 MB

[https://amr-review.org/sites/default/files/160525_Final%20paper_with%20cover.pdf](https://amr-review.org/sites/default/files/160525_Final%20paper_with%20cover.pdf)
The Review on Antimicrobial Resistance has now completed its work. This report outlines the Review’s final recommendations. It first discusses the mounting problem of resistance and why action is needed to combat it and then provides an overview of the solutions that the Review thinks should be implemented to curtail unnecessary use and increase the supply of new antimicrobials. It then looks at the role of public awareness campaigns, the need to improve sanitation and hygiene, reduce pollution from agriculture and the environment, improve global surveillance, introduce rapid diagnostics and vaccines, the need to increase the number of people in this area, and use of market entry rewards and an innovation fund to generate more drugs. Finally the paper examines how these solutions can be funded and looks at ways to build political consensus around them.

Management and Quality of Health Services and Facilities

Revisiting informal payments in 29 transitional countries: The scale and socio-economic correlates

by Nazim Habibov and Alex Cheung
Social Science & Medicine, Vol. 178, April 2017, pp. 28–37
10 pp. 264 kB

Informal Payments (IPs) are commonly defined as under-the-counter monetary (e.g. cash) or non-monetary in-kind (e.g. gift) payments made to healthcare professionals in exchange for services, medicines, and supplies that are meant to be provided for free. The countries of the former Soviet Union, especially those in the Caucasus and Central Asia, exhibit the highest scale of IPs, followed by Southern Europe, and then Eastern Europe. The authors found that being from a wealthier household is associated with more informal payments. Experiencing lower quality of healthcare is associated with more informal payments and working for the government is associated with less informal payments.

Aspiration in injections: should we continue or abandon the practice?

by Yasir Sepah, Lubna Samad, Arshad Altaf et al.
F1000Research 2017, 3:157 - Last updated: 01 February 2017
13 pp. 560 kB
https://f1000research.com/articles/3-157/v2/pdf

Aspiration during any kind of injection is meant to ensure that the needle tip is at the desired location during this blind procedure. While aspiration appears to be a simple procedure, it has generated a lot of controversy concerning the perceived benefits and indications. Advocates and opponents of aspiration both make logically sound claims. However, due to scarcity of available data, there is no evidence that this procedure is truly beneficial or unwarranted. Keeping in view the huge number of
injections given worldwide, it is important that we draw attention to key questions regarding aspiration that, up till now, remain unanswered.

Universal Health Coverage, Health Financing and Social Health Protection

Impact of health financing policies in Cambodia: A 20 year experience

by Tim Ensor, Chhim Chhun, Ton Kimsun et al.
Social Science & Medicine 177 (2017) 118e126
9 pp. 441 kB

Improving financial access to services is an essential part of extending universal health coverage in low resource settings. In Cambodia, high out of pocket spending and low levels of utilisation have impeded the expansion of coverage and improvement in health outcomes. For twenty years a series of health financing policies have focused on mitigating costs to increase access particularly by vulnerable groups. The authors conclude that formalising fees led to an increase in mean health spending but a fall for the poor. It takes a number of years for health financing policies to reach full impact. Financing policies have led to a reduction in health spending by the poor. Interactions between policies affect their impact.

How does social protection build resilience?

by Rachel Slater and Martina Ulrichs
Building Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Extremes and Disasters (BRACED) Policy Brief, February 2017
4 pp. 113 kB

The paper reflects on the actual and potential contributions social protection can make to increase the resilience of the poorest and most vulnerable. The analysis is informed by an understanding that resilience to climate extremes and disasters cannot be built by one programme or sector alone, but requires a range of programmes that together increase the capacity of people and governments to reduce the diverse set of risks that underpin poverty and vulnerability and increase the risk of disasters. For this, the competitive advantage of different sectors needs to be identified and strengthened to form part of a wider cross-sectoral sustainable development agenda.
Road map to community resilience: Operationalizing the Framework for Community Resilience

by Bruno Haghebaert
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Geneva, 2016
104 pp. 7.1 MB

In recent years, humanitarian needs have grown at an alarming rate. The number of people dependent on humanitarian assistance has more than tripled while the cost of responding has increased five-fold. If we continue a business-as-usual approach of crisis and crisis response, we will not be able to manage the increasing scale of the challenges. We need a paradigm shift in the way we work with communities at risk - and to act preventively to reduce exposure, vulnerability and impact at local level. For Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies, fostering community resilience is the answer. It empowers communities to shape their lives and create a safe, healthy and prosperous future.

Shock-Responsive Social Protection Systems

A research programme for DFID
by Clare O'Brien
Working paper 1: Conceptualising Shock-Responsive Social Protection
Oxford Policy Management, October 2015
15 pp. 527 kB
http://www.opml.co.uk/sites/default/files/WP1%20Shock-resp%20SP%20concept%20note.pdf

This is the first in a series of papers from the ongoing research. Together, the set of papers will develop theoretical perspectives about the interface between social protection, humanitarian assistance and disaster risk management (DRM), review the latest literature and generate insights from new case studies across sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. The next working paper will offer a synthesis of the evidence from a comprehensive review of literature. Future papers will attempt to offer new insights using evidence from the case studies.

Old Age, Unemployment and Occupational Injuries Protection

Use of Information and Communication Technologies Among Older People With and Without Frailty: A Population-Based Survey

by Niina Susanna Keränen, Maarit Kangas, Milla Immonen et al.
J Med Internet Res 2017;19(2):e29
11 pp. 485 kB
Use of information and communication technologies (ICT) among seniors is increasing; however, studies on the use of ICT by seniors at the highest risk of health impairment are lacking. Frail and prefrail seniors are a group that would likely benefit from preventive nutrition and exercise interventions, both of which can take advantage of ICT. The authors conclude that physical frailty status is associated with older people’s ICT use independent of age, education, and opinions on ICT use. While older people at large are increasingly using computers, mobile technologies, and the Internet, it is still difficult to reach those most in the need of health care support through such means. This should be taken into consideration when designing preventive and assistive technologies and interventions for older people at risk of health impairment.

Social Transfers

The effects of DFID’s cash transfer programmes on poverty and vulnerability: An impact review

The Independent Commission for Aid Impact, (ICAI) January 2017
53 pp. 387 kB


ICAI examined how well the Department for International Development (DFID) used cash transfer programmes to reduce poverty and vulnerability. The review found that the transfers – which include any regular payments made to individuals or households – had consistently increased incomes and consumption levels among some of the world’s poorest people, and presented a strong value for money case. The review gave DFID a ‘green-amber’ score, concluding DFID’s cash transfer programmes – which amount to average spending of £201 million a year – were making a good impact, but could achieve even more.

Poverty and perceived stress: Evidence from two unconditional cash transfer programs in Zambia

by Lisa Hjelm, Sudhanshu Handa, Jacobus de Hoop et al.
8 pp. 286 kB


Poverty is a chronic stressor that can lead to poor physical and mental health. This
study examines whether two similar government poverty alleviation programs reduced the levels of perceived stress and poverty among poor households in Zambia. The authors conclude that in theory, poverty reduction programs may reduce psychological stress. Experimental evidence from Zambia sheds new light on this hypothesis. Unconditional cash transfers reduce poverty indicators and key stressors. However, they do not lower a standard measure of self-perceived stress. Future research on causal pathways and stress measurement is recommended.

Scaling up humanitarian cash transfers in Nepal

by Barnaby Willitts-King and John Bryant
Overseas Development Institute (ODI), January 2017
20 pp. 96 kB

Humanitarian cash transfers after the 2015 Nepal earthquakes were a major and highly appropriate part of the response given the challenging logistics of delivering in-kind aid to remote mountainous areas. But the Government of Nepal and humanitarian agencies were not sufficiently prepared to respond rapidly to this disaster using humanitarian cash responses to their maximum potential. While there has been some progress towards being able to mount better, more efficient and large scale cash responses in the future, cash preparedness still remains too low a priority in Nepal given the disasters that will continue to affect the country.

Why not cash? The case for cash transfers for refugees in Mozambique

by Sarah Bailey
Overseas Development Institute Working and Discussion Papers, January 2017
21 pp. 104 kB

There are two areas where cash transfers could play a role in humanitarian assistance in Mozambique: in response to natural disasters and in support of the long-term refugee population. This working paper focuses on refugees. The Mozambique case study is different because it focuses on one refugee camp, hosting a relatively small number of people, assisted by only a few agencies. By analysing the potential for cash transfers in Maratane camp, we can better understand opportunities and obstacles in the humanitarian system to using cash transfers when they are appropriate.
Social Protection in Africa: Inventory of Non-Contributory Programmes

by Cristina Cirillo and Raquel Tebaldi
International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth / UNICEF, 2016
200 pp. 2.0 MB


In the last decade, an increasing number of developing countries started to develop social protection programmes with the objective of contributing to the eradication of poverty, food insecurity and vulnerabilities. The successful impacts of conditional cash transfers in Latin American countries encouraged other governments to develop and strengthen their social protection systems. Particularly in Africa in recent years, there has been an impressive growth of non-contributory programmes targeting poor and vulnerable households and individuals. This publication offers a broad overview of the existing non-contributory social protection programmes in Africa in order to support a better general understanding of interventions in the region and their main design choices and features.

Global Public Health Special Issue: The Emergence of Asian Tobacco Companies: Implications for Global Health Governance

Global Public Health, Volume 12, 2017
All articles open access at:
http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rgph20/current

The conceptualisation and empirical analysis of tobacco industry globalisation in the public health literature remains limited. This collection of case studies on five Asian tobacco companies, seeks to address this neglect in two respects. First, with two million tobacco-related deaths annually and rising levels of consumption, the Asian region is central to the future of global tobacco control. With the exception of Japan Tobacco International (JTI), there has been limited study to date of how Asian tobacco companies have been affected by, and have adapted to, globalisation. Second, a fuller understanding of the extent to which Asian tobacco companies are globalising their operations, and seeking to compete in the world market, has important implications for public health and global health governance.

Priorities of the 2017 G20 Summit

Hamburg, Germany, December 2016
13 pp. 473 kB
In a briefing to UN Member States, Permanent Representative of Germany Harald Braun outlined the key priorities of its presidency for the Group of 20 (G20) in 2017, including implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, climate and energy policies, and an intensified partnership with Africa. During the informal briefing on preparations for the 2017 Summit, many welcomed the “depth and breadth” of the German presidency’s agenda.

Economic Development Strategy: prosperity, poverty and meeting global challenges

The Department for International Development (DFID), January 2017
35 pp. 2.1 MB


This publication is going to drive what DFID does, and is, in part, an account of what the department is already doing on a substantial scale. It includes a robust commitment to the principles articulated by World Development Report 2017. DFID’s strategy is written, obviously, in the context of the UK government’s search for a new global role outside of the EU. The document’s overarching message is that expanding international trade and investment is a win-win for developing countries and UK business and finance, with aid playing a facilitating role.

How to achieve the SDGs by 2030 - lessons from 50 case studies

by Kate Bird
Overseas Development Institute (ODI), 16 February 2017
Read online at:


The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) risk losing momentum in 2017, as President Trump slashes funding to UN agencies and the international political scene appears in disarray. To stay on track, we need to focus on what works. ODI’s Development Progress initiative looked at more than 50 cases across Africa, Asia and Latin America where progress was faster than expected. Here’s what worked and what got in the way.
Starting strong Implementation of the social SDGs in Latin America

by Gala Díaz Langou and José Florito
Overseas Development Institute (ODI), 2016
30 pp. 1.9 MB


Despite significant progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, Latin America remains one of the most unequal regions of the world with many of the most vulnerable groups being left behind. This paper considers the potential of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 1 (poverty), 3 (health) and 5 (gender) to reduce the gaps between vulnerable populations and those who are better off. The authors identify policy recommendations to enable these SDGs to be achieved as well as priority actions to be taken by Latin American governments in the first 1,000 days – including reform of conditional cash transfers, the prioritisation of primary care and reproductive health, and the promotion of gender equality in the labour market.

Inequalities in women’s and girls’ health opportunities and outcomes: A report from sub-Saharan Africa

by Clara Pons Duran, Andrew Dabalen, Ambar Narayan et al.
Barcelona Institute for Global Health (ISGlobal) and the World Bank Group (WBG), December 2016
140 pp. 13 MB


The report analyzes the extent to which 14 health-related opportunities are equitably available to women of reproductive age in 29 sub-Saharan African countries. For each of the opportunities in all of the 29 countries, a composite metric called the Human Opportunity Index (HOI) was calculated. The HOI takes into account coverage rates and levels of inequality, operationalized as a dissimilarity index (d-index): A higher d-index indicates greater inequality. Coverage varied dramatically among the 29 countries. In general, the greatest levels of inequality were observed for the following opportunities: currently attending school, maternity care package, met need for family planning and delivery with skilled personnel.

Millennium Villages Evaluation: Midterm Summary Report

by Edoardo Masset, Dee Jupp, David Korboe et al.
The Department for International Development (DFID), November 2016
87 pp. 2.3 MB
This report presents the midterm findings from an impact evaluation of the Millennium Villages Project (MVP) in northern Ghana. The MVP has been designed to demonstrate how an integrated approach to community-led development can translate the international Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) into results. Overall, the quantitative analysis finds that the project had moderately positive impacts at the midterm. The project had “little overall impact on poverty” and crucially “has not yet had a sizeable impact on the MDGs”.

Fostering inclusive growth in Malaysia

by Stewart Nixon, Hidekatsu Asada, Vincent Koen
40 pp. 2.6 MB

Malaysia has followed a comparatively equitable development path, largely eliminating absolute poverty and greatly reduced ethnic inequality. Income and wealth inequality have gradually declined since the mid-1970s. With the “people economy” at the centre of Malaysia’s ambition to become a high-income country by 2020, the focus is shifting to the challenges of relative poverty and achieving sustainable improvements in individual and societal well-being through inclusive growth. This shift would be aided by reforms in several policy areas where Malaysia may compare favourably within its region but less so relative to OECD countries. This includes reforms to increase access to quality education, provide comprehensive social protection, raise the labour force participation of women and older persons, maintain universal access to quality public healthcare, improve pension system sustainability and adequacy and move towards a tax and transfer system that does more for inclusiveness.

Bill and Melinda Gates make the case for vaccines - and US engagement in global health

by Helen Branswell
STAT, February 14, 2017
Read online at:
https://www.statnews.com/2017/02/14/bill-melinda-gates-annual-letter/

Bill and Melinda Gates’ annual letter about the work of their philanthropic foundation is styled as a report to Warren Buffett, the business tycoon who has donated billions to their endeavour. But reading between the lines of the report leaves the impression these philanthropists — among the world’s wealthiest people — are making a subtle effort to influence the Trump administration’s thinking on the value of global development and international aid. The letter stresses the importance of vaccines,
calling them one of the best deals in global health spending. It also emphasizes how critical it is that women around the world have access to effective contraception, saying family planning lowers child mortality and enables countries to emerge from poverty.

**The G20 and Global Health**

**A Global Responsibility to implement the Sustainable Development Goals**

Position Paper of German Civil Society Organisations

Ärzte ohne Grenzen e.V. - Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) and Verband Entwicklungspolitik und Humanitäre Hilfe deutscher Nichtregierungsorganisationen e.V. (VENRO), February 2017

3 pp. 333 kB


This position paper by MSF and VENRO (German NGO umbrella organization) builds on the former position paper “The G20 and Global Health”, published in summer 2016 ahead of the G20 summit in China. “…We continue to call on the G20 to include the following important global health issues in the agendas of the G20 development and health tracks: UHC and Health Systems Strengthening (HSS) as agreed in SDG3; global pandemic preparedness and response; antimicrobial resistance (AMR); research and development (R&D); ending the epidemics of neglected and poverty related diseases (NTDs, PRDs); and finishing the ‘unfinished business’ of the MDGs in the spirit of the SDG principle of ‘Leaving No One Behind’."

**Miscellaneous**

**Hans Rosling, statistician and development champion, dies aged 68**

Hans Rosling, the gifted global health and development communicator, statistician and educator who had a knack for explaining complex data simply, died on 7th February after a yearlong illness from pancreatic cancer, *The Guardian* reports.

Rosling rose to global prominence in 2006 when he delivered his first TED talk (“The best stats you've ever seen”). His 10 TED talks delved into poverty, HIV risk factors, child mortality and other issues. In a moving profile from December, Nature's Amy Maxmen found Rosling's motivations in his early years in Asia and Africa. Once he faced down a crowd of machete-wielding Congolese upset by his plans to draw their blood. Armed only with photos and his smarts, he explained his research and that he was there to help them. The disease would come to be known as konzo.
The Lancet Planetary Health: Announcing a new voice for a new discipline

http://www.thelancet.com/planetary-health

The Rockefeller Foundation–Lancet Commission on planetary health, are launching “The Lancet Planetary Health”, a gold open access journal in the Lancet family, dedicated to the health of the human civilisation and the state of the natural systems on which it depends. Starting this April, each monthly issue of this online journal will feature high quality original research, editorials, and provocative comment and opinion with the aim of defining and advancing planetary health worldwide.

Working anytime, anywhere: The effects on the world of work

by Jon Messenger, Oscar Vargas Llave, Lutz Gschwind et al.

Joint ILO–Eurofound Report, 2017

80 pp. 1.5 MB


New information and communications technologies (ICT) have revolutionised everyday work and life in the 21st century. They enable people to connect with friends and family – as well as with work colleagues and supervisors – at any point in time; however, they also facilitate the encroachment of paid work into the spaces and times normally reserved for personal life. Today’s office work and, more broadly, knowledge work, is supported by the internet, and can be carried out from practically any location and at any time. This new spatial independence has transformed the role of technology in the work environment, offering both new opportunities and new challenges.

Dirty Profits 5

Report on Companies and Financial Institutions Benefiting from Human Rights Violations and Environmental Destruction

by Thomas Küchenmeister

Facing Finance e.V., Berlin, February 2017

88 pp. 3.6 MB


For the past four years, the “Dirty Profits Report” has highlighted companies violating environmental and human rights norms and standards, as well as selected financial institutions which support them. The fourteen companies selected for this edition have violated human rights, directly caused environmental devastation, engaged in labour violations such as child labour practices, and have severe governance failures including corruption and embezzlement. The financial insti-
tutions selected for this report, cover the largest banks in Europe – Deutsche Bank, ING, UBS, HSBC, and BNP Paribas.

**Freedom on the Net 2016 - Silencing the Messenger: Communication Apps under Pressure**

by Sanja Kelly, Mai Truong, Adrian Shahbaz et al.
Freedom House, 2017
1025 pp. 12.6 MB


Internet freedom has declined for the sixth consecutive year, with more governments than ever before targeting social media and communication apps as a means of halting the rapid dissemination of information, particularly during anti-government protests. Popular social media sites like Facebook and Twitter have been subject to growing censorship for several years, but governments are now increasingly going after messaging apps like WhatsApp and Telegram.

**CONFERENCES & TRAINING**

**Defeating Poverty-Related and Neglected Diseases in Africa: Harnessing Research for Evidence-Informed Policies**

Abstracts of the Eighth “Forum of the European & Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership” (EDCTP), 6-9 November 2016, Lusaka, Zambia
All Abstracts open access at:

http://gh.bmj.com/content/2/Suppl_2#ABSTRACTSOFTHEEIGHTHEDCTPFORUM69NOVEMBER2016

The biennial EDCTP Forum has grown in size and recognition to become one of the largest international conferences for the presentation and discussion of frontier clinical research on poverty-related infectious diseases, as well as capacity development including ethics, regulatory and training initiatives in sub-Saharan Africa. In this Supplement to BMJ Global Health, the abstracts of the plenary presentations, the oral presentations in the various parallel sessions, and poster presentations are published. The abstracts give a work-in-progress impression of the scope and objectives of the EDCTP programme.

**Introduction to Mathematical Models of the Epidemiology & Control of Infectious Diseases**

4th - 15th September 2017, London, United Kingdom
In recent years our understanding of infectious-disease epidemiology and control has been greatly increased through mathematical modelling. With infectious diseases frequently dominating news
headlines, public health and pharmaceutical industry professionals, policy makers and infectious disease researchers increasingly need to understand the transmission patterns of infectious diseases.

For more information see: http://www.infectiousdiseasemodels.org/

"... and could I just see your insurance card?"

Source: Worldstart.com
TIPS & TRICKS

Let the Mouse snap to the default button

Any time you change a setting on your PC, you have to press OK for it to take effect. Isn't it a little repetitive to have to press that button every single time? How would you like your mouse to automatically do it for you? It is possible and here is how! You just have to enable the "Snap To" feature for your mouse. Go to Start, Control Panel, click on the Mouse icon and then click on the Pointer Options tab. The second choice there is “Snap To”. Checkmark that box and click OK. So, from now on, your mouse pointer will automatically move to the default button in any dialogue box. Every time you are doing something on your computer, the mouse pointer will take care of the finishing touches for you and you won't have to worry about moving your hand back over to your mouse.

Long Distance Scrolling in MS Excel

The scroll bar in MS Excel basically allows for easy movement in the vicinity of the columns and rows that are already in use. But, what if you are looking to scroll well beyond that? You could use the Page Up, Page Down and arrow keys to make your journey, but you may just prefer scrolling. So, what can you do? There is a quick solution to your problem and it is called the Shift key. If you hold down the Shift key and then click on the scroll box, you will find you can do some very rapid and very extended scrolling through your worksheet.