Dear colleagues,

the theme of this year’s World Health Day, on April 7, is depression, the largest cause of disability worldwide. According to WHO’s global health estimates, 80% of this disease burden occurs in low- and middle-income countries. Vikram Patel, a pioneer in the provision of mental health care in settings without mental health professionals, argues that many people with depression and other mental health problems could be treated successfully by community health workers.

Chancellor Merkel’s International German Forum in Berlin on 21/22 February showcased the winners of a hackathon amongst young Kenyan IT-experts who propose IT-solutions for child and adolescent health in Kenya and beyond.

Browse through a variety of other interesting reads in this News Briefing and feel free to share it with your colleagues and other experts in your networks.

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

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ONLINE RESOURCES

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

Kenyan IT-students impress international health experts

Six young Kenyans presented their IT-based ideas for better healthcare in Kenya at the International German Forum. Hosting the Forum, Chancellor Angela Merkel emphasized that health is a key topic for Germany’s G20 presidency and thanked the Kenyan hackers for their commitment to improving global health. The Kenyan students had taken part in a hackathon in Nairobi in November 2016 which aimed at generating IT solutions for child and adolescent health in Kenya. The three teams who had conceived the most promising pitches were then invited to participate in the International German Forum in Berlin on 21/22 February 2017.

Reproductive, maternal, neonatal, child and adolescent health & Right to health

Brussels International Conference ‘She Decides’ rallies support from more than 45 countries and raises 181 million euros

Joint Statement of Belgium, The Netherlands, Denmark and Sweden, co-organizers Brussels International Conference ‘She Decides’

Brussels, March 2nd, 2017 – More than 45 government representatives of all continents and 400 parliamentarians and civil society participants gathered in Brussels today to express their support for women’s rights. They raised in total 181 million euros for the Global Fundraising Initiative ‘She Decides’. The Brussels International Conference was co-organized by Alexander De Croo, Lilianne Ploumen, Isabella Lövin and Ulla Tørnæs, Ministers for Development Cooperation of respectively Belgium, the Netherlands, Sweden and Denmark.

It is estimated that Trump’s “global gag rule”, which denies funding to organizations that even so much as counsel women about legal abortion rights, will lose them US$ 600 million over the course of his term. Marie Stopes International estimates that this translates to 6.5 million unintended pregnancies, 2.1 million unsafe abortions and 21,700 maternal deaths. The 1-day drive raised money in record time and included US$ 50 million from an anonymous American donor.
Selected Practice Recommendations for Contraceptive Use, 3rd edition

by Erin Berry-Bibee, Melissa Chen, Kathryn Curtis et al.
World Health Organization, 2016
72 pp. 2.1 MB


This document is part of the process for improving the quality of care in family planning. It provides guidance for how to use contraceptive methods safely and effectively once they are deemed to be medically appropriate. For recommendations issued in the selected practice recommendations (SPR), safety considerations include common barriers to safe, correct and consistent use of contraception and the benefits of preventing unintended or unwanted pregnancy.

Consolidated guideline on sexual and reproductive health and rights of women living with HIV

Executive summary
Department of Reproductive Health and Research, World Health Organization, 2017
12 pp. 470 kB

http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/254634/1/WHO-RHR-17.03-eng.pdf?ua=1

This guideline responds to requests from organizations, institutions and individuals for guidance which consolidates existing recommendations specific to women living with HIV along with new recommendations and good practice statements. It is expected to support front-line health-care providers, programme managers and public health policy-makers around the world to better address the sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) of women living with HIV.

Youth Voucher Program in Madagascar Increases Access to Voluntary Family Planning and STI Services for Young People

by Eva Burke, Judy Gold, Lalaina Razafinirinasa et al.
Glob Health Sci Pract; February 23, 2017
11 pp. 365 kB

http://www.ghspjournal.org/content/early/2017/02/23/GHSP-D-16-00321.full.pdf+html

Marie Stopes Madagascar's (MSM's) youth voucher program has revealed a high demand for voluntary family planning services, especially among youth under 20 years old, and MSM has since integrated the youth voucher beyond the initial pilot locations. MSM's experience indicates that youth vouchers are a novel and effective means of increasing young people's access to voluntary family planning services in Madagascar, and this model could potentially be
replicated or adapted in other contexts where young people are faced with barriers to accessing quality information and services.

The contribution of poor and rural populations to national trends in reproductive, maternal, newborn, and child health coverage: analyses of cross-sectional surveys from 64 countries

by Cesar G victoria, Aluisio J D Barros, Giovanny V A França et al.
The Lancet Glob Health 2017 - Published Online February 23, 2017
6 pp. 895 kB

Coverage levels for essential interventions aimed at reducing deaths of mothers and children are increasing steadily in most low-income and middle-income countries. The authors assessed how much poor and rural populations in these countries are benefiting from national-level progress. They conclude that national coverage gains were accelerated by important increases among poor and rural mothers and children. Despite progress, important inequalities persist, and need to be addressed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Untreated Violence: The Need for Patient-Centred Care for Survivors of Sexual Violence in the Platinum Mining Belt

Doctors Without Borders/ Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), February 2017
20 pp. 980 kB

MSF’s report on “Untreated Violence” in Rustenburg, South Africa, reveals that sexual violence, including rape, is at worryingly high levels in the Platinum Mining Belt area: one in four women had been raped in their lifetime, and approximately half have experienced some form of sexual or intimate partner violence. Yet fewer than half those surveyed knew about how to prevent or mitigate the serious health consequences of rape, such as HIV infection, unwanted pregnancy and psychological trauma. As South Africa finalizes a new five-year National Strategic Plan for HIV, TB and STIs, government departments must ensure they adequately support survivors to receive prevention and treatment services, and manage other detrimental impacts of sexual violence on individual and national health and wellbeing.
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 Poverty and Equity Global Practice of the World Bank Group (WBG), 2016
140 pp. 13.0 MB


Half of women and girls in sub-Saharan Africa are not receiving the most essential reproductive and maternal health interventions. The report finds strikingly uneven access to care across and within the countries. Maternity care, delivery attended by skilled personnel and school attendance have the most unequal access. The authors note that universal health coverage strategies offer the best mechanism for reaching “every woman, everywhere” with essential health care. Women in sub-Saharan Africa account for 2/3rds (201,000 deaths in 2015) of total maternal deaths globally.

HIV, Tuberculosis & Malaria

Global Fund releases new resources related to the applications process

by David Garmaise
Global Fund Observer, Issue 306: 01 March 2017
http://www.aidspan.org/node/4104

The Global Fund has released two resources which will be of interest to persons involved in the applications process – an Applicant Handbook, designed to support applicants in the preparation of funding requests for the 2017-2019 funding cycle; and a Funding Request Status Tracker. This article provides information on both resources. It also reports on some items of interest contained in the Applicant Handbook.

Global Fund Board to “restart the process” of searching for a new executive director

by David Garmaise
Global Fund Observer, 28 February 2017
Read online at:
http://www.aidspan.org/node/4108

Citing concerns about the process, the Global Fund Board has decided to prolong the search for a new executive director. The decision was taken on 27 February at the Board Retreat in Geneva, Switzerland. “Due to issues encountered in the recruitment process, the Board felt they were unable to bring the process to conclusion,” the Fund said in a brief news release. “While expressing its complete
support for the work of the Nominations Committee, the Board decided to restart the process.” “The Board’s overarching priority is to continue looking for a new Executive Director to provide visionary leadership and implement an ambitious new strategy to end AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria as epidemics” the news release said. It added that more information would be provided as soon as possible.

How we engage: Stories of effective community engagement on AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria

The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, November 2016
36 pp. 1.9 MB
http://www.theglobalfund.org/documents/publications/other/Publication_HowWeEngage_Report_en/

Civil society involvement - in advocacy, in governance, and in the design, delivery and monitoring of programs - is critical to the effort to save lives and respond to AIDS, TB and malaria. Since 2014, the Global Fund has been working directly with community-based organizations and representatives of people living with the diseases and of key populations to ensure timely and effective engagement. These eight case studies demonstrate how expanded dialogue and increased participation has led to more focused and responsive programming - and more impact on the diseases.

Strong Science, Bold Activism

Annual Letter - International AIDS Society (IAS), Switzerland, March 2017
12 pp. 3.9 MB
http://www.iasociety.org/Web/WebContent/File/Strong_science_bold_activism.pdf

If 2016, with faltering prevention efforts and worrying funding trends, was a wake-up call to the HIV/AIDS community, 2017 must be the year of resolve to confront the challenges head-on, according to the International AIDS Society Annual Letter. Owen Ryan, IAS’s executive director, urges greater cooperation between HIV/AIDS and other communities: the TB community, gearing up for the first UN High-Level Meeting on TB; reproductive health and rights advocates coping with the Global Gag Rule; and the hepatitis and cancer communities as well. The Quote: “As corners of the planet shift towards nationalism and xenophobia, we wonder where the future of our global cause lies. Is the progress we have made against the greatest pandemic of our time slipping through our hands?”
**Defining the HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis care continuum**

by Amy S. Nunn, Lauren Brinkley-Rubinstein, Catherine E. Oldenburg et al.  
4 pp. 244 kB  
http://journals.lww.com/aidsonline/Fulltext/2017/03130/Defining_the_HIV_pre_exposure prophylaxis_care.15.aspx

Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) has demonstrated efficacy in preventing HIV. Whereas PrEP use is expanding globally, there is little consensus about how to measure progress in PrEP care other than to measure the number who initiate and adhere to PrEP and then impute reductions in HIV incidence. Standard benchmarks are necessary in order to compare progress in PrEP programs. The authors draw on more than 4 years of PrEP implementation experience and propose a PrEP care continuum that assesses the multiple steps related to PrEP uptake, adherence, and retention in care.

**Evidence for scaling up HIV treatment in sub-Saharan Africa: A call for incorporating health system constraints**

by Evelinn Mikkelsen, J An A. C. Hontelez, Maarten P. M. Jansen et al.  
*PLoS Med 14(2): e1002240 - Published: February 21, 2017*  
5 pp. 600 kB  
http://journals.plos.org/plosmedicine/article/file?id=10.1371/journal.pmed.1002240&type=printable

The ever-growing HIV treatment programs in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) present local policy makers with complex decision dilemmas, as international guidelines emphasize the need for expanded access to antiretroviral therapy (ART), yet funding has flatlined. The authors argue that the current evidence base for prioritizing ART scale-up strategies results in recommendations that are theoretically optimal but practically infeasible to implement. Cost-effectiveness analyses (CEAs) of scaling up ART in SSA should be made more responsive to the needs of policy makers by taking into account the local health system.

**Relationship between Time to Initiation of Antiretroviral Therapy and Treatment Outcomes: A Cohort Analysis of ART Eligible Adolescents in Zimbabwe**

by Florian Vogt, Andrea M. Rehman, Katharina Kranzer et al.  
9 pp. 679 kB  
http://journals.lww.com/aidsonline/Fulltext/2017/04010/Relationship_Between_Time_to_Initiation_of.7.aspx

Antiretroviral therapy (ART) scale-up has reduced HIV-related deaths substantial-
Adolescents remain the only age group where HIV-associated mortality is still rising, mainly because of delayed diagnosis and high attrition, and in particular around the time of ART initiation. Currently, multiple preparatory counselling and education sessions stretching over several weeks are considered necessary before treatment start to ensure long-term retention and adherence. The authors investigated treatment initiation patterns and related patient outcomes, and in particular the effect of time to ART initiation on mortality and loss to follow-up (LTFU) among treatment eligible adolescents aged ≥10 to <19 years registered in a public sector HIV care service in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.

**Tuberculosis exposure, infection and disease in children: a systematic diagnostic approach**

by Claudia L. Roya-Pabon and Carlos M. Perez-Velez

Pneumonia, 2016 8:23 - Published: 24 November 2016
18 pp. 7.3 MB


Diagnosing tuberculosis (TB) in children is challenging and often it is only considered after the child has failed various therapeutic trials for other disorders. Even with intensive specimen collection and optimal molecular and culture-based diagnostics, most children with non-severe pulmonary TB are not confirmed bacteriologically, despite having an exposure history, immune-based confirmation of infection and clinical features consistent with this diagnosis. Nonetheless, with currently available tools, it is possible to make an accurate clinical diagnosis of intrathoracic TB in most diseased children. This review presents a systematic approach to diagnosing intrathoracic TB in children.

**Anti-malarial effect of novel chloroquine derivatives as agents for the treatment of malaria**

by Seon-Ju Yeo, Dong-Xu Liu, Hak-Sung Kim et al.

Malaria Journal, 2017 16:80 - Published: 17 February 2017
9 pp. 1.1 MB


The widespread emergence of anti-malarial drug resistance has necessitated the discovery of novel anti-malarial drug candidates. In this study, chloroquine derivatives were evaluated for the improved anti-malarial activity. Novel two derivatives (SKM13 and SKM14) were synthesized based on the chloroquine (CQ) template containing modified side chains such as α,β-unsaturated amides and phenylmethyl group. The authors conclude that CQ derivatives with substituents have enhanced anti-malarial activity against the CQ-resistant strain P. falciparum, and SKM13 is an excellent anti-malarial drug candidate in mice model.
Adverse effects of mefloquine for the treatment of uncomplicated malaria in Thailand: A pooled analysis of 19,850 individual patients

by Sue J. Lee, Feiko O. ter Kuile, Ric N. Price et al.

PLoS ONE 12(2): e0168780 - Published: February 13, 2017

http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article/file?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0168780&type=printable

Mefloquine (MQ) has been used for the treatment of malaria since the mid-1980s, first as monotherapy or as fixed combination with sulfadoxine-pyrimethamine (MSP) and since the mid-1990s in combination with artemunate. There is a renewed interested in MQ as part of a triple therapy for the treatment of multi-drug resistance *P. falciparum* malaria. The widespread use of MQ beyond south-east Asia has been constrained by reports of poor tolerability. Here the authors present the side effect profile of MQ for the treatment of uncomplicated malaria on the Thai-Myanmar/Cambodia borders.

Changing the policy for intermittent preventive treatment with sulfadoxine-pyrimethamine during pregnancy in Malawi

by Chikondi A. Mwendera, Christiaan de Jager, Herbert Longwe et al.

Malaria Journal, 2017 16:84 - Published: 20 February 2017


The growing resistance of *Plasmodium falciparum* to sulfadoxine-pyrimethamine (SP) treatment for uncomplicated malaria led to a recommendation by the World Health Organization for the use of artemisinin-based combination therapy. Inevitably, concerns were also raised surrounding the use of SP for intermittent prevention treatment of malaria during pregnancy (IPTp) amidst the lack of alternative drugs. Malawi was the first country to adopt intermittent prevention treatment with SP in 1993, and updated in 2013. This case study examines the policy updating process and the contribution of research and key stakeholders to this process. The findings support the development of a malaria research-to-policy framework in Malawi.

Neglected Tropical Diseases, Other Infectious diseases & Pandemic Preparedness

WHO Guidelines on Hepatitis B and C Testing

by Margaret Hellard, Roger Chou, Jacinto Amandua et al.

World Health Organization, February 2017

204 pp. 880 kB
Testing and diagnosis of hepatitis B virus (HBV) and hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection is the gateway for access to both prevention and treatment services, and is a crucial component of an effective response to the hepatitis epidemic. Early identification of persons with chronic HBV or HCV infection enables them to receive the necessary care and treatment to prevent or delay progression of liver disease. These guidelines outline the public health approach to strengthening and expanding current testing practices for HBV and HCV, and are intended for use across age groups and populations.

**Human Papillomaviruses**

International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) Monographs on the Evaluation of Carcinogenic Risks to Humans, No. 64, 1995

428 pp. 29.3 MB(!)

https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/n/iarcmono64/pdf/

This volume of the IARC Monographs evaluates the carcinogenic risk to humans posed by infection with human papillomaviruses (HPVs). To date, more than 70 HPV types have been identified, of which over 15 have been reported in cervical cancer biopsies. Although investigations of cervical cancer are most abundant, the report also considers the possible involvement of HPV infection in cancers at other sites, including the vulva, anus, skin, and aerodigestive tract.

**Predicting Ebola infection: A malaria-sensitive triage score for Ebola virus disease**

by Mary-Anne Hartley, Alyssa Young, Anh-Minh Tran et al.


21 pp 5.5 MB

http://journals.plos.org/plosntds/article/file?id=10.1371/journal.pntd.0005356&type=printable

The non-specific symptoms of Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) pose a major problem to triage and isolation efforts at Ebola Treatment Centres (ETCs). Under the current triage protocol, half the patients allocated to high-risk “probable” wards were EVD(-): a misclassification speculated to predispose nosocomial EVD infection. This study proposes a highly predictive and easy-to-use triage tool, which stratifies the risk of EVD infection with 89% discriminative power for both EVD(-) and EVD(-)/malaria(+) differential diagnoses. Improved triage could preserve resources by identifying those in need of more specific differential diagnostics as well as bolster infection prevention/control measures by better compartmentalizing the risk of nosocomial infection.
The nexus between forest fragmentation in Africa and Ebola virus disease outbreaks

by Maria Cristina Rulli, Monia Santini, David T. S. Hayman et al.

Nature Scientific Reports 7, Article number: 41613 - Published online: 14 February 2017
8 pp. 1.1 MB
http://www.nature.com/articles/srep41613.pdf

Tropical forests are undergoing land use change in many regions of the world, including the African continent. Human populations living close to forest margins fragmented and disturbed by deforestation may be particularly exposed to zoonotic infections because of the higher likelihood for humans to be in contact with disease reservoirs. Quantitative analysis of the nexus between deforestation and the emergence of Ebola virus disease (EVD), however, is still missing. The authors show how in the EVD outbreaks the index cases in humans (i.e. spillover from wildlife reservoirs) occurred mostly in hotspots of forest fragmentation.

Moving from control to elimination of schistosomiasis in sub-Saharan Africa: time to change and adapt strategies

by Louis-Albert Tchuen Tchuenté, David Rollinson, J. Russell Stothard et al.

Infectious Diseases of Poverty, 2017 6:42 - Published: 20 February 2017
14 pp. 3.4 MB

The major focus of preventive chemotherapy of schistosomiasis is delivery of praziquantel by mass drug administration to those shown to be, or presumed to be, at-risk of infection and disease. In some countries, regional progress may be uneven but in certain locations there are very real prospects to transition from control into interruption of transmission, and ultimately elimination. To manage this transition requires reconsideration of some of the currently deployed diagnostic tools used in surveillance and downward realignment of existing prevalence thresholds to trigger mass treatment.

Field Use of Molluscicides in Schistosomiasis Control Programmes: An Operational Manual for Programme Managers

by Amadou Garba Djirmay, Rajpal Singh Yadav, Jiagang Guo et al.

World Health Organization, 2017
50 pp. 2.8 MB
http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/254641/1/9789241511995-eng.pdf

Snail control, mainly by mollusciciding but also by environmental modifications, was for many years the cornerstone of schistosomiasis control and has contributed to
many successful control outcomes. More recently, the focus of control has moved to anti-schistosomiasis chemotherapy, primarily to prevent morbidity in school-age children, who are often associated with the highest levels of schistosome infection. Regular treatment with praziquantel is now being successfully implemented in at-risk areas. This operational manual is intended to facilitate the reintroduction of practices and protocols for use of molluscicides in the field in schistosomiasis control programmes.

Information brochure for early detection and management of noma

by Benoît Varenne, Khady Kâ, Abdikamal Alisalad et al.
WHO Regional Office for Africa, Non communicable Diseases Cluster (NCD), Regional Programme for Noma Control, 2016
24 pp. 2.7 MB

http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/254579/2/978-9290233541-eng.pdf

In countries contending with noma, and in spite of numerous initiatives, families, community health workers and primary health care professionals are still largely under-informed about this disease. To help bridge the knowledge gap on noma and improve early case diagnosis, detection and treatment, WHO has taken the initiative to update the staging of the disease and to provide, for each stage identified, recommendations for enhanced management. This brochure is designed as a training tool and is intended for all stakeholders at the primary health care level: health workers, community health care workers and opinion leaders who are in contact with the population groups at risk of contracting the disease.

Bridging Knowledge Gaps to Understand How Zika Virus Exposure and Infection Affect Child Development

by Bill G. Kapogiannis, Nahida Chakhtoura, Rohan Hazra et al.
JAMA Pediatr. Published online February 20, 2017
8 pp. 201 kB


As the number of children born with Zika virus (ZIKV)-related complications continues to grow, the long-term developmental trajectory for these children and the effect on their families remains largely unknown. Rigorous research is key to improving the identification of ZIKV-infected mothers and babies. Research also is critical to increasing basic understanding of the neuropathogenesis of congenital ZIKV disease and of the spectrum of clinical presentations of ZIKV infection so that agents to prevent and treat this devastating disease can be rapidly developed and studied.
Rationale and support for a One Health program for canine vaccination as the most cost-effective means of controlling zoonotic rabies in endemic settings

by Robert P. Lavan, Alasdair I. MacG. King, David J. Sutton et al.
Vaccine, In Press, Available online 16 February 2017
7 pp. 339 kB

While zoonotic rabies has a minimal presence in developed nations, it is endemic throughout most of Asia and Africa, where it is considered to be a neglected tropical disease. There continue to be avoidable deaths of large numbers of people due to rabies. Dog-mediated rabies can be eliminated through vaccination. Field evidence already exists to support a One Health approach, which is described in this paper. Mass dog vaccination campaigns are cost-effective and proven to work.

Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition: Africa - The Challenges of Building Resilience to Shocks and Stresses

by Koffi Amegbeto, Mohamed Ag Bendech, Farayi Zimudzi et al.
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), 2017
52 pp. 1.9 MB
http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/a-i6813e.pdf

Some 153 million people, representing about 26 percent of the population above 15 years of age in sub-Saharan Africa, suffered from severe food insecurity in 2014-15, according to this new FAO report. The second edition of the Regional Overview of Food Insecurity in sub-Saharan Africa (2016) underscores how severe food insecurity and poverty pose a major challenge to the region’s ability to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal of ending hunger by 2030. The report advocates for continued policy reforms to sharpen their focus, and the creation of an enabling environment for investment and participation by all relevant stakeholders, saying that this is critical to ending hunger, and achieving food security and improved nutrition.

Socioeconomic status and non-communicable disease behavioural risk factors in low-income and lower-middle-income countries: a systematic review

by Luke Allen, Julianne Williams, Nick Townsend et al.
The Lancet Global Health, v5(3) March 2017 - Published online: February 2017
13 pp. 575 kB
Non-communicable diseases are the leading global cause of death and disproportionately afflict those living in low-income and lower-middle-income countries (LLMICs). The association between socioeconomic status and non-communicable disease behavioural risk factors is well established in high-income countries, but it is not clear how behavioural risk factors are distributed within LLMICs. The authors aimed to systematically review evidence on the association between socioeconomic status and harmful use of alcohol, tobacco use, unhealthy diets, and physical inactivity within LLMICs.

Treating depression where there are no mental health professionals

Vikram Patel talks to Fiona Fleck
2 pp. 528 kB
http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/95/3/17-030317.pdf

Many people with depression and other mental health problems can be treated successfully by community health workers, but so far no country has scaled up this approach. The idea of using lay people in the delivery of mental health care is often resisted by mental health professionals, including clinical psychologists, who argue that it is not safe or effective, in spite of evidence to the contrary. Perhaps they see this as a threat to their professional authority and control over these treatments and health conditions.

Global costs of unaddressed hearing loss and cost-effectiveness of interventions

A World Health Organization (WHO) Report, 2017
48 pp. 893 kB
http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/254659/1/9789241512046-eng.pdf

Millions of people across the world continue to live with the adverse impacts of unaddressed hearing loss and lack access to required ear and hearing care services. While the impact of hearing loss on individuals and families is well established, there have been relatively few attempts to assess its economic costs, especially in low- and middle-income countries and at the global level. This report provides an analysis of the global costs of hearing loss. The report also highlights other aspects of cost, including the adverse impacts of hearing loss on the potential for individuals to contribute to the economy through participation in paid work. Finally, the analysis considers some of the broader societal impacts of hearing loss and the way in which they can be incorporated into estimates of global cost.
Depression and Other Common Mental Disorders: Global Health Estimates

World Health Organization, 2017
24 pp. 2.2 MB

The number of people living with depression increased by more than 18% between 2005 and 2015, according to this new WHO report. Depression is also the largest cause of disability worldwide. More than 80% of this disease burden is among people living in low- and middle-income countries. The release of these estimates, along with corresponding data on anxiety disorders, comes just six weeks before the World Health Day, which this year will focus on depression. World Health Day will be the highlight of a one-year campaign "Depression: let's talk", the goal of which is that more people with depression, in all countries, seek and get help.

Afghanistan Synthetic Drugs Situation Assessment

by Abdul Subor Momand, Martin Raithelhuber, Sabrina Levissianos et al.
UNODC Global SMART Programme, January 2017
36 pp. 835 kB

UNODC launched the first Afghanistan Synthetic Drugs Assessment report. The survey draws attention to the presence of synthetic drugs in Afghanistan alongside the continued dominant presence of an illicit opiate market. The main objective of this report is to offer some initial insights into the extent of synthetic drug production, use, and trafficking in Afghanistan and to highlight important areas for further research. While this report is limited in scope and can only present a first assessment of the synthetic drug situation in Afghanistan, its findings are highly relevant for a more nuanced understanding of the drug situation in the country, with regard to drug treatment and law enforcement. A range of potential areas for response is outlined in the report, which may be considered by national and international stakeholders.

What factors impact the effectiveness of emergency WASH interventions?

by Travis Yates, Jelen Allen, Myriam Leandre Joseph et al.
International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie), December 29, 2016
4 pp. 567 kB

This review synthesised findings from 106 published and grey literature papers that evaluated 114 Water, Sanitation, Hygiene (WASH) interventions implemented in 39 low- and middle-income countries. Nearly half (43%) of the studies were from Sub-Saharan Africa, and Haiti and Zimbabwe had the most reported interventions. Most evidence included in this review addresses the question of efficacy or the theoretical potential for breaking transmission routes. The
current state of the evidence shows that most addresses the question of whether or not the intervention works, but little addresses long-term effectiveness or if the intervention had the intended impacts or not.

WASH Interventions in Disease Outbreak Response

by Travis Yates, Jelena V. Allen, Myriam Leandre Joseph
Humanitarian Evidence Programme, Oxfam GB, February 2017
88 pp. 1.8 MB

This evidence synthesis identifies, synthesizes and evaluates existing evidence of the impacts of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) interventions in disease outbreaks in 51 humanitarian contexts in 19 low and middle-income countries (LMICs). WASH interventions are commonly implemented as part of emergency response activities (i.e. in response to disease outbreaks) in LMICs. WASH interventions are provided to large populations to reduce the risk of disease transmission in a variety of settings. This synthesis focuses on WASH interventions targeted at populations affected by cholera, Ebola virus disease, hepatitis E, hepatitis A, typhoid, acute watery diarrhoea and bacillary shigellosis.

Guidelines for Drinking-water Quality

Fourth Edition Incorporating the First Addendum
by F. Ahmed, I. Chorus, J. Cotruvo et al.
World Health Organization 2017
631 pp. 3.9 MB
http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/254637/1/9789241549950-eng.pdf

Access to safe drinking-water is essential to health, a basic human right and a component of effective policy for health protection. The importance of water, sanitation and hygiene for health and development has been reflected in the outcomes of a series of international policy forums. The primary goal of the Guidelines is to protect public health associated with drinking-water quality. This edition of the Guidelines, incorporating the first addendum, further develops concepts, approaches and information introduced in previous editions, including the comprehensive preventive risk management approach for ensuring drinking-water quality that was introduced in the third edition.
Health Care Waste Characteristics at Selected Health Facilities in Mbarara District, Uganda

Strengthening High Impact Interventions for an AIDS-free Generation (AIDSFree) Project, 2016
58 pp. 957 kB

A rapidly growing population with high infectious disease prevalence requires scale up high-impact interventions to prevent, diagnose, treat, and rehabilitate affected communities, which brings with it ever-increasing volumes of Health Care Waste (HCW). Per USAID SIMS reports, waste generated is often managed using methods that pose risks to health workers, patients, communities, and the environment. This assessment evaluated suitable waste treatment technologies, developed equipment specifications, and established operating parameters for health care waste treatment.

Case Studies in Private Sector Participation: Solid Waste Management

Pacific Private Sector Development Initiative, 2017
6 pp. 731 kB

Poor solid waste collection and disposal practices in the Pacific have had serious consequences on environmental quality, public health, fisheries, agriculture, and sustainable development in general. Improving the performance of the sector will require efforts to reduce the amount of waste produced, and to extract maximum practical benefit from that waste before disposal. Public awareness, behavioural change, regulatory reform and enforcement, institutional strengthening, and the introduction of new technologies and investment are needed to achieve this goal.

Environmental Health Management Toolkit for Voluntary Medical Male Circumcision (VMMC) Services


This toolkit provides guidance on health care waste management (HCWM) and environmental hygiene best practices for VMMC services. Each component of the toolkit is based on VMMC program experience, WHO guidance, and USAID environmental protection/compliance regulations.

The toolkit contains two components: program guidance and site guidance.
Climate Change Glossary of Terms

First in a series of four fact files exploring key climate change issues

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN), February 2017
45 pp. 340 kB


Even as we shake our heads over the changing weather, or moan about the fumes belched from the vehicles in our cities, climate change still feels a distant problem. That’s partly because the solution seems to lie with governments and industries, and partly because journalists struggle to engage with the public on the issues. The obscure and impenetrable language of climate change does not help.
So, as part of a project with the Open Society Foundations to help the media better report on (and for all of us to better understand) global warming, IRIN has produced this glossary of terms. From adaptation to zoonoses, you’ll find it here – and a lot more besides.

Africa's climate: helping decision-makers make sense of climate information

by A. Creese, W. Pokam, R. Washington et al.
Future Climate for Africa, November 2016
112 pp. 5.0 MB


African decision-makers need reliable, accessible, and trustworthy information about the continent’s climate, and how this climate might change in future, if they are to plan appropriately to meet the region’s development challenges. This report is designed as a guide for scientists, policy-makers, and practitioners on the continent. The research in this report, written by leading experts in their fields, presents an overview of climate trends across central, eastern, western, and southern Africa, and is distilled into a series of factsheets that are tailored for specific sub-regions and countries.

The Trump Administration and the Environment — Heed the Science

by Jonathan M. Samet, Thomas A. Burke and Bernard D. Goldstein
The New England Journal of Medicine, March 1, 2017
7 pp. 250 kB


Science-based policies and regulations have resulted in tremendous gains in environmental quality and reduced the population’s exposure to harmful pollutants. The 1970 Clean Air Act (CAA) serves as a powerful example. Since the CAA’s passage, despite an increase of more than 50% in the U.S. popu-
lation and a 250% increase in the gross domestic product, there has been a 70% reduction in emissions of criteria air pollutants, and an increasing number of lives have been saved each year (160,000 in 2010). As environmental scientists experienced in the development of evidence-based policy, the authors have several recommendations for the Trump administration.

Inheriting the world: The atlas of children’s health and the environment

by Bruce Gordon, Richard Mackay and Eva Rehfuess
World Health Organization, 2004
64 pp. 9.4 MB

http://www.who.int/ceh/publications/en/atlas.pdf?ua=1

More than three million children die every year due to unhealthy environments. This atlas tackles issues as diverse as the devastating and largely unknown impact of indoor air pollution, the unfashionable yet huge tragedy of sanitation, and complex emerging issues like climate change. Full-colour maps and graphics clearly demonstrate the threats that children face everywhere, and underscore the impact of poverty on children’s health. While this crisis cannot be ignored and demands urgent action, success stories, such as the Montreal Protocol, show a way forward for the world to make sure that our children will inherit a safer planet and a brighter future.

Population Dynamics & Social Determinants of Health (including Gender & Education)

The Demographic Dividend in Africa Relies on Investments in the Reproductive Health and Rights of Adolescents and Youth

by Elizabeth Gay, Marlene Lee, Prudence Ngwenya et al.
Population Reference Bureau (PRB) Policy Brief, February 2017
24 pp. 1.0 MB


A demographic dividend can occur during a window of opportunity created by reductions in child mortality and a demographic shift to fewer dependent people relative to working-age individuals. The full realization of the sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) of adolescents and youth (ages 10 to 24) can facilitate gains in their health, well-being, and educational attainment. Long-term investments in the health of adolescents and youth, including in their sexual and reproductive health, can help accelerate economic growth when combined with the appropriate investments in education and economic planning. This report lays out the importance of youth SRHR to a demographic dividend and points to key investments that can protect and improve SRHR for adolescents and youth.
Leave no one behind: A Call to Action for Gender Equality and Women's Economic Empowerment

Report of the UN Secretary-General’s High-Level Panel on Women’s Economic Empowerment, 2016
by Luis Guillermo Solis Rivera, Simona Scarpaleggia, Jeni Klugman et al.
152 pp. 1.6 MB
http://womenseconomicempowerment.org/assets/reports/UNWomen%20Full%20Report.pdf

Expanding women's economic opportunities is central to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The pace of improvement in expanding women’s economic empowerment and closing gender gaps has been far too slow, while gender inequalities in other critical areas including political representation and protection against violence, are persistent and pervasive. Four overarching systemic constraints to the economic empowerment of women are identified: adverse social norms; discriminatory laws and lack of legal protection; the failure to recognize, reduce and redistribute unpaid household work and care; and a lack of access to financial, digital and property assets.

Girls' Schooling and Women's Literacy: Schooling Targets Alone Won't Reach Learning Goals

by Lant Pritchett and Justin Sandefur
Center for Global Development (CGD) Policy Paper 104, February 2017
20 pp. 571 kB

Using the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) data on the ability of women at various levels of schooling attainment to read a simple sentence, the authors show that reaching universal completion of grade six among girls would not bring the world anywhere close to the goal of universal female literacy. Achieving new Sustainable Development Goal targets of universal literacy and numeracy will require both achievement of universal schooling and dramatic improvements in the learning profile in most developing countries.

Health System Governance, Health Workforce and Health Information Systems

Improving human resource management in development agencies

by Barbara Nunberg
Overseas Development Institute (ODI), January 2017
38 pp. 1.7 MB
In an increasingly uncertain aid environment, many development agencies will need to adjust their internal management practices to improve the quality and impact of their programmes and policies. This report focuses on human resource management (HRM) – the management of people working in these agencies. It argues for the modernisation of a range of HRM policies to ensure the organisational resiliency needed to cope with emergent challenges.

Access to Medical Products, Vaccines and Technologies

Global priority list of antibiotic-resistant bacteria to guide research, discovery, and development of new antibiotics

by E. Tacconelli and N. Magrini, Y. Carmeli et al.
World Health Organization, February 2017
7 pp. 657 kB

http://www.who.int/entity/medicines/publications/WHO-PPL-Short_Summary_25Feb-ET_NM_WHO.pdf?ua=1

The World Health Organization (WHO) published its first ever list of antibiotic-resistant “priority pathogens” - a catalogue of 12 families of bacteria that pose the greatest threat to human health. The list was drawn up in a bid to guide and promote research and development (R&D) of new antibiotics, as part of WHO’s efforts to address growing global resistance to antimicrobial medicines. The list highlights in particular the threat of gram-negative bacteria that are resistant to multiple antibiotics. These bacteria have built-in abilities to find new ways to resist treatment and can pass along genetic material that allows other bacteria to become drug-resistant as well.

TB partners, patients ask: How does a bacterium responsible for nearly a third of drug-resistance deaths not make list of R&D priority pathogens?

by Antigone Barton
Science Speaks, March 1, 2017
Read online at:

The day after the World Health Organization announced it had produced its “first ever” list of drug-resistant bacteria for which new medicines are the most urgently needed, the agency released a second announcement on the topic Tuesday, emphasizing its recognition of drug-resistant tuberculosis, which had been left off the list, as “a top priority for WHO and for the world.” By that time, however, the omission of the leading infectious disease killer that leads to almost a third of all deaths resulting
from drug resistance from a list that WHO called “a catalogue of 12 bacteria that pose the greatest threat to human health,” had drawn responses from communities of tuberculosis response advocates that ranged from “dismay” to a demand that the list be amended.

**Breaking through the Wall: A Call for Concerted Action on Antibiotics Research and Development**

by Selma Stern, Simon Chorzelski, Laura Franken et al.
The Boston Consulting Group (BCG) for the German Federal Ministry of Health, February 2017
84 pp. 2.6 MB

In the face of the lack of attractiveness of investing in research for new antibiotics for the pharmaceutical industry, and the general lack of funding for research and development for novel antibiotics, this new report commissioned by the German Federal Ministry of Health calls for countries to take action. In particular, the report proposes a global union for research and development, a global research fund, and a global launch reward. And access and pricing are key components of the strategy, it says.

**The European Union summary report on antimicrobial resistance in zoonotic and indicator bacteria from humans, animals and food in 2015**

European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), February 2017
EFSA Journal 2017;15(2):4694
212 pp. 22.5 MB(!)

Superbug bacteria found in people, animals and food across the European Union pose an alarming threat to public and animal health having evolved to resist widely used antibiotics, disease and safety experts warned. Drug resistance is driven by the misuse and overuse of antibiotics, which encourages bacteria to evolve to survive and develop new ways of beating the medicines. The report highlighted that in Salmonella bacteria - which can cause the common and serious food-borne infection Salmonellosis - multi-drug resistance is high across the EU. In countries where actions have been taken to reduce, replace and re-think the use of antimicrobials in animals show lower levels of antimicrobial resistance and decreasing trends.
The Developing Countries Vaccine Manufacturers’ Network (DCVMN) gathered leaders in immunization programs, vaccine manufacturing, representatives of the Argentinean Health Authorities and Pan American Health Organization, among other global health stakeholders, for its 17th Annual General Meeting in Buenos Aires, to reflect on how vaccines are shaping global health. After decades of intense competition for high-value markets, collaboration with developing countries has become critical, and involvement of multiple manufacturers as well as public- and private-sector investments are essential, for developing new vaccines against emerging infectious diseases.

**NIH Begins Study of Vaccine to Protect Against Mosquito-Borne Diseases**

The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), has launched a Phase 1 clinical trial to test an investigational vaccine intended to provide broad protection against a range of mosquito-transmitted diseases, such as Zika, malaria, West Nile fever and dengue fever, and to hinder the ability of mosquitoes to transmit such infections. Unlike other vaccines targeting specific mosquito-borne diseases, the AGS-v candidate is designed to trigger an immune response to mosquito saliva rather than to a specific virus or parasite carried by mosquitoes. The test vaccine contains four synthetic proteins from mosquito salivary glands. The proteins are designed to induce antibodies in a vaccinated individual and to cause a modified allergic response that can prevent infection when a person is bitten by a disease-carrying mosquito.

**Vaccines without Needles? Yes, please!**

by Julianna LeMieux
The American Council on Science and Health, March 2, 2017
Read online at:
A company in Boston, MA, wants to change the way that vaccines are administered, and Bill and Melinda Gates are lending them a hand to make it a reality. The technology developed by Vaxess is looking to change how vaccination is done by developing new technologies that remove the need for both needles and the cold chain. Their innovation is called the MIMIX sustained-release microneedle patch platform. The MIMIX is a patch that is placed on the skin for five minutes, with no need for needles. A depiction of the patch, from the website, is shown in the article.

**Management and Quality of Health Services and Facilities**

**Quality of care: measuring a neglected driver of improved health**

by Yoko Akachi & Margaret E Kruk
Bulletin of the World Health Organization - Published online: 21 February 2017
16 pp. 625 kB


There is growing evidence that the impact of health interventions is undermined by poor quality of care in lower income countries. Quality of care will also be crucial to the success of universal health coverage initiatives; citizens unhappy with the quality and scope of covered services are unlikely to support public financing of health care. However, the measurement of quality today in low- and middle-income countries is inadequate to the task. Health information systems provide incomplete and often unreliable data, and facility surveys collect too many indicators of uncertain utility, focus on a limited number of services and are quickly out of date. The authors propose six policy recommendations to improve quality of care measurement and amplify its policy impact.

**A System-Wide Approach to Analysing Efficiency across Health Programmes**

Health Financing Diagnostics & Guidance No 2
by Susan Sparkes, Antonio Durán, Joseph Kutzin
World Health Organization, 2017
36 pp. 795 kB

http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/254644/1/9789241511964-eng.pdf

The approach is meant to equip countries with a framework to identify and correct inefficiencies that compromise governments’ ability to improve, or at the very least sustain, the delivery of priority health services. More specifically, the aim is to look across the array of health programmes that are part of each country’s health system in order to detect “cross-programmatic” duplications, overlaps and misalignments. Once these have been identified, there is a foundation to address them through changes to specific aspects of how programmes are configured and operate within the context of a country’s overall health system.
Interventions to improve immigrant health. A scoping review

by Esperanza Diaz, Gaby Ortiz-Barreda, Yoav Ben-Shlomo et al.
7 pp. 259 kB

Disparities in health between immigrants and their host populations have been described across countries and continents. Hence, interventions for improving health targeting general populations are not necessarily effective for immigrants. A scoping review approach was chosen to provide an overview of the type, extent and quantity of research available. Recommendations for enhancing interventions to improve immigrant health are provided to help researchers, funders and health care commissioners when deciding upon the scope, nature and design of future research in this area.

Universal Health Coverage, Health Financing and Social Health Protection

Achieving Universal Coverage without Turning to a Single Payer: Lessons from 3 other Countries

by Regina E. Herzlinger, Barak D. Richman, Richard J. Boxer
JAMA. Published online February 27, 2017
2 pp. 103 kB

A primary obstacle to achieving affordable universal coverage is the high costs of those with diseases or costly traumatic events - approximately 20% of individuals accounting for approximately 80% of health care spending. So, a key question is how to pay for their care. Some nations in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) rely on a governmental single-payer model to achieve universal coverage, but this approach is politically infeasible in the United States. As the United States relies on private-sector insurance, 3 other countries (Switzerland, Singapore, and Germany) that use private-sector insurance to offer affordable universal coverage provide some potentially helpful lessons.

The politics of promoting social protection in Zambia

by Kate Pruce and Sam Hickey
Effective States and Inclusive Development Research Centre (ESID) Working Paper No. 75, January, 2017
31 pp. 682 kB
Adopting a process tracing approach, the paper compares the progress made on social cash transfers and social health insurance in Zambia. It investigates how the interplay of domestic political economy and transnational factors shaped the commitment of government to formulate and deliver the respective policies in the context of competing demands and priorities within the wider distributional regime. Despite some progress made in both policy areas, social protection has not as yet displaced certain interests, ideas and rent-allocation practices that are more deeply embedded within Zambia’s political settlement.

A Political Economy Analysis of Social Protection Programmes in Botswana

by Emmanuel Botlhale, Lekorwe Mogopodi, Bashi Mothusi et al.
31 pp. 343 kB

While the country's development indicators have continued to rise, owing to the discovery of minerals in the 1970s, Botswana still experiences development challenges such as poverty, unemployment and income inequality. Consequently, the government has put in place a nationwide self-funded Social Protection (SP) regime to address these challenges. This study seeks to establish whether socio-economic, historical, political and institutional factors and actors support the drive or resistance to the SP policy and programmes, and whether this has any implications on its sustainability.

Simplifying Delivery of Social Security Benefits in Karnataka

by D Rajasekhar, K S Manjunath, R Manjula
Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC) Bangalore, August 2016
Indo-German Social Security Papers, Paper III
72 pp. 4.9 MB

The research study aims to find ways to simplify the process of delivery of social security schemes. The study therefore seeks to map and review the processes adopted from filling the application to its submission in order to avail key social security schemes in Karnataka. The objective is to identify those aspects in the delivery process (applications, documents and submission) that affect the access to social security schemes among unorganised workers and provide suggestions to policymakers.
Innovative financing for rural surgical patients: Experience in mission hospitals

by Gnanaraj Jesudian
7 pp. 1.9 MB

In rural India, 40% of surgical patients have to borrow money or sell their assets to have treatment, and three-fourths of them are impoverished by it. The authors describe the various methods that they tried to help these patients pay for the surgical procedures without becoming impoverished. Some of them were successful and many of them were not so successful. The large turnover and innovative methods helped the mission hospitals to serve the poor and the marginalized. Some of these methods might not be relevant in areas other than Northeast India while many could be used in other areas.

Governance of Non-State Social Protection Initiatives: Implications of Addressing Gendered Vulnerability to Poverty in Uganda

38 pp. 315 kB

Non-state actors (NSAs) are offering social protection services in Uganda to address vulnerabilities associated with poverty. Information is limited on their adequacy and efficacy and how their governance mechanisms address gender concerns. This study aimed to fill that gap. A national policy that accommodates the local context is needed to support delivery of NSA services; to facilitate offering of transformative and preventive interventions of long-term and strategic nature; to guide NSAs to incorporate gender responsiveness as a guiding principle in their interventions; and to require NSAs to engage local communities in programme development. Gender should be integral to all policy and programming, supported by gender training at all levels.

Securing Sustainability - Nauru’s New Intergenerational Trust Fund and Beyond

by Roland Rajah
20 pp. 1.2 MB

Through a careful strategy of saving, investing, and spending wisely, Nauru can use its current economic boom to secure a more sustainable economic future for the nation.
and its citizens. This brief argues that the Government of Nauru should establish a more sustainable fiscal strategy that includes increasing its savings in the new Nauru Trust Fund, and implement reforms to improve transparency and the quality of public spending.

Old Age, Unemployment and Occupational Injuries Protection

Disability, poverty, and role of the basic livelihood security system on health services utilization among the elderly in South Korea

by Boyoung Jeon, Haruko Noguchi, Soonman Kwon et al.
Social Science & Medicine, Vol. 178, April 2017, pp. 175-183
9 pp. 272 kB

With rapid aging, many of the elderly suffer from poverty and high healthcare needs. In Korea, there is a means-tested and non-contributory public assistance, the National Basic Livelihood Security System (NBLSS). The purpose of this study is to show older population's condition of disability and poverty, to evaluate the impact of NBLSS on health services utilization, and to examine the differential effect of the NBLSS by disability status among the elderly. The authors conclude that without NBLSS, the disabled elderly suffer from higher burden of health expenditure. Policy is called for to mitigate the difficulties of the severely disabled elderly without adequate social protection.

Work, family and social protection: Old age income security in Bangladesh, Nepal, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam

by Charles Knox-Vydmovan
HelpAge International, East Asia/Pacific Regional Office, 2017
54 pp. 1.3 MB
http://www.helpage.org/download/589dd3c47875b/

How does growing older affect a person's income security in Asia? This question is becoming increasingly urgent in the context of rapid population ageing in the region, yet relatively limited comparative analysis has tried to answer it. This report aims to fill the gap by providing a comparative investigation of the income security of older people in five Asian countries that have diverse contexts; namely, Bangladesh, Nepal, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam. The report paints a picture of the multiple sources of income that contribute to income security in old age and how they interact.
Conditional Cash Transfers in Africa: Limitations and Potentials

by Olabanji Akinola
Southern African Social Protection Experts Network (SASPEN) and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
Zambia, 2016
4 pp. 408 kB

http://www.saspen.org/brief/SASPEN-brief-2016-6-Akinola.pdf

Conditional Cash Transfers (CCTs) are currently amongst the most popular social protection programmes for addressing poverty, vulnerabilities, and risks of poor individuals, households and communities in developing Latin American, African, and Asian countries. However, the increasing popularity and adoption of CCTs in Africa have remained highly understudied in comparison to CCTs in Latin America where they originated in the late 1990s and early 2000s. For this reason, this policy brief discusses some of the current limitations and potentials of CCTs as social protection programmes for reducing poverty and developing the human capital of poor individuals, households, and communities in African countries.

Counting cash: tracking humanitarian expenditure on cash-based programming

by Alexandra Spencer, Chloe Parrish and Charlotte Lattimer
Overseas Development Institute, December 2016
31 pp. 348 kB


Data from aid agencies suggests that, in 2015, at least US$ 1.9 billion was spent on humanitarian assistance in the form of cash-based responses (51% cash and 49% vouchers). There is currently no systematic tracking of the volume of humanitarian assistance delivered in the form of cash and vouchers. The overarching barrier to better data on expenditure by modality is the lack of a single, comprehensive systematic means of reporting on programming by cash, voucher and in-kind assistance. Establishing a common approach requires a concerted global effort to develop and align systems and standards, promote comprehensive reporting, and ensure that information is analysed and used.

Fact checking universal basic income: can we transfer our way out of poverty?

by Berk Ozler
The World Bank Blog, 27 February 2017
Read online at:
The New York Times last week discussed the universal basic income (UBI) experiments in Kenya by GiveDirectly. You can look forward to more pieces in other popular outlets very soon, as soon as they return from the same villages visited by the Times. The Brookings Institution, recently calculated that the global poverty gap - meaning how much it would take to get everyone above the poverty line - was just US$ 66 billion. That is roughly what Americans spend on lottery tickets every year, and it is about half of what the world spends on foreign aid. That means if we just were able to divert 50% of the current foreign aid budget towards cash transfers, we would eliminate extreme poverty. But, is that really true? The answer is: “not even close.” So, the author’s plea to media outlets covering this topic: consider requesting an interview with a few researchers who spent their entire careers worrying about poverty reduction. There are a lot of reasons for us to consider UBI in the portfolio of possible policy choices towards poverty reduction. But, a little restraint and sticking to the existing research and facts would go a long way in creating a healthy debate.

Inclusion of People with Disabilities

Focus on Families of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities

Inclusion International, London, United Kingdom, 2017
5 pp. 83 kB

Around the world, families are the main source of support for people with intellectual disabilities. Often, it is families that are the key to facilitating their sons’ and daughters’ inclusion in community and securing their rights. Families value this role and reject a charitable approach that views them as being “burdened” by disability. They embrace their role but lack support, networks and supportive communities. This leaves them feeling isolated and alone. Supports to families should not be seen in isolation or as a replacement to supports to individuals. For families supporting a family member with an intellectual disability, the best support is ensuring the inclusion, starting in the early years, of our sons and daughters in all aspects of our communities – specifically inclusive education for children and employment opportunities for adults.

Global Health Governance, Sustainable Development Goals & Development Cooperation

How Will President Trump’s Policies Affect Domestic and Global Health and Development?

by Lawrence O. Gostin
JAMA, 2017;317(7):685-686
2 pp. 249 kB
There is still a great deal we don’t know about the policies of a Trump administration, and how those policies will unfold in a constitutional system of checks and balances. Trump has not laid out specific details on major domestic policies, such as reforms related to the Affordable Care Act (ACA) or reproductive rights. Even less well understood are his views on global health issues, such as health assistance, the Paris Climate Change Agreement, and the World Health Organization (WHO). Based on Trump’s earlier statements, what can we expect for 2017 and beyond?

The Directory of Geneva Global Health Actors

Revised and updated 3rd edition, 2017
The Graduate Institute, Geneva
See online at:

This directory serves as a practical guide for anyone interested in global health. It is the first of its kind in mapping the many different global health actors in Geneva, and in documenting their wide-ranging activities and complex interrelationships. It aims to foster cooperation and facilitate networking among the different global health stakeholders. Launched in 2009 and now recently updated in its 3rd edition, the directory covers over 90 Geneva-based organisations ranging from UN organisations to NGOs and the private sector.

A new day for African public health

Editorial - The Lancet Infectious Diseases - Published: March 2017
1 pp 90 kB
http://www.thelancet.com/pdfs/journals/laninf/PIIS1473-3099(17)30061-0.pdf

There is great hope for the new Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC), which was officially launched in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on Jan 31. The Africa CDC is Africa’s first continent-wide public health agency, and it will be headed by John Nkengasong, who worked for more than 20 years for the US CDC. The aim of the Africa CDC will be to establish early warning and response surveillance systems, respond to emergencies, build capacity, and provide technical expertise to address health emergencies in a timely and effective manner. Although at the moment there is optimism regarding Africa CDC, insufficient funding is the key element that could hamper implementation of any programme in the field. Moreover, issues with bureaucracy and limited capacity to recruit and retain experienced epidemiologists have already been identified for the new agency.
Better Business, Better World: The business case for the Sustainable Development Goals

by Jeremy Oppenheim, Olivia Boyd, Gina Campbell et al
Report of the Business & Sustainable Development Commission, January 2017
122 pp. 5.8 MB

The Sustainable Development Goals - also called the Global Goals - offer companies a tremendous new growth strategy that could also help rebuild trust with society. The Better Business, Better World report shows how pursuing the Global Goals could raise trillions in new market opportunities in ways that extend prosperity to all.

Trade in Health Services and Sustainable Development

by Rupa Chanda
31 pp. 1.0 MB

Effective health services form the backbone of health interventions. Accessibility, quality, capacity, organization, availability of human and physical resources, and equity in the provision of health services are essential for a healthcare system to deliver desired outcomes. The authors focus on the impact of health services trade on the realization of sustainable development goals and the various modalities through which this may occur. They highlight the positive and negative implications of health services trade for sustainable development goals and the fact that this impact depends on the specifics of the country and its national healthcare system, the regulatory environment governing the health sector and related sectors, the policies adopted to facilitate or constrain this trade, and the associated externalities.

Facilitate Trade for Development: Aid for Trade

by William Hynes and Frans Lammersen
36 pp. 3.9 MB

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at its core calls to “increase aid-for-trade support for developing countries, in particular least developed countries”. The authors discuss how aid for trade already contributes to the SDGs after highlighting the achievements of the Aid-for-Trade Initiative. This is followed with analysis of the continued importance of aid in financing development, particularly in the least developed countries. Next, the role of the private sector in aid for trade is presented as an example of how to improve partnerships for
development. Finally, the authors draw on lessons from the monitoring of aid for trade for the SDGs and the need for, but also difficulty in, making the process truly country driven.

**The Grand Bargain Explained: An ICVA briefing paper**

International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA), March 2017
19 pp. 1.3 MB


ICVA, a global network of humanitarian NGOs dedicated to principled and effective humanitarian action, has created this Grand Bargain briefing paper to support NGOs (and all humanitarian actors) better understand and engage in the Grand Bargain, which was officially launched during the World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016.

**Islamic Finance: A Catalyst for Shared Prosperity?**

by Azmi Omar, Zamir Iqbal, Dawood Ashraf et al.
The World Bank and Islamic Development Bank Group (IDBG), 2016
251 pp. 6.7 MB


The main aim of the report is to exhibit, how Islamic finance can promote inclusive growth and reduce income inequality. The report provides a commentary on the state of Islamic finance and desired policy interventions to get the full benefit of Islamic finance to achieve sustainable development and shared prosperity. The key findings of the report include a need for sound regulatory framework for Islamic financial institutions due to the obvious differences from the conventional banks, harmonizing of Shariah standards and more discourse related to the underlying mechanism of Islamic financial products.

**Miscellaneous**


Amnesty International, February 2017
409 pp. 2.0 MB

[https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/POL1048002017ENGLISH.PDF](https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/POL1048002017ENGLISH.PDF)

The Amnesty International Report 2016/17 documents the state of the world’s human rights during 2016. The foreword, five regional overviews and a survey of 159
countries and territories bear witness to the suffering endured by many, whether it be through conflict, displacement, discrimination or repression. The Report also shows that, in some areas, progress has been made in the safeguarding and securing of human rights.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Mid-Year Trends 2016

Conflict, persecution and violence newly uprooted at least 3.2 million people in the first half of last year, and low- and middle-income countries played the greatest role in sheltering the world’s displaced. While the numbers of newly displaced were one third lower than during the same period in 2015, when 5 million people were newly displaced, the global total continued to rise. Prospects for displaced people to return to their homes remained slim while conflicts intensified. According to the latter economic measure, eight out of ten of the top countries hosting refugees are in Africa, with the remaining two in the Middle East. Lebanon and Jordan rank among the top ten hosting countries across all categories – absolute numbers, economic contribution and per capita. The only western country making it into the top? Germany, which hosted 478,600 refugees during that period.

Science Literacy in Developing Countries

In late 2016, Network for Information and Digital Access (NIDA) undertook a landscape research survey in the field of Science Literacy (SL) in developing countries in order to assemble and assess available evidence on policies, on initiatives which have taken place or were in progress, on evaluation of what works and what does not and other data. In addition, initiatives and activities in the developed world which were felt to bear potential for replication or adaptation in developing or transitional countries were examined.
Global Health: Thematic Discussion Paper

by Brian Gushulak
2nd Global Consultation on Migrant Health: Resetting the agenda
21-23 February 2017, Colombo, Sri Lanka
IOM Development Fund
53 pp. 1.4 MB

The paper explores the complex and varied aspects of migration health through a global health lens using generalized observations and frameworks to describe the major elements of the issue. Current priorities are outlined in the context of the phases of the migration process, including origin, transit and destination components. The model also accommodates modern aspects of migration including circular migration, labour migration and the process of return. The paper reviews major sources of evidence and health indicators, outlines global needs in terms of additional data and information necessary to develop global policy and describes potential partnerships that could facilitate an integrated, global approach to health and migration.

International Journal for Equity in Health - 15th Anniversary

Edited by Ana Lorena Ruano, Efrat Shadmi and Leiyu Shi
International Journal for Equity in Health
All articles open access at:
http://www.biomedcentral.com/collections/IJEqH15thAnniversary

The International Journal for Equity in Health is celebrating its 15th anniversary with an article collection that covers innovative methodologies, theoretical perspectives and interventions that promote equity in health or its understanding, and manuscripts that look forward to the next 15 years in research in equity in health.

Bulletin of the World Health Organization - Vol. 95, Nr. 3, March 2017

Highlights from the March 2017 issue:

- New data sources reveal adolescents’ need for contraceptives
- The case for integrated rehabilitation services
- The challenges now that Sri Lanka has eliminated malaria
- Interview: treatment for depression without mental health professionals
- Drowning deaths reduced in Victoria, Australia since the 19th century
- The risk of microcephaly after maternal Zika infection in Brazil
- Critical delays in receipt of hepatitis B vaccines
CONFERENCES & TRAINING

Evidence Meets Decision Makers - Better Use of Evidence for Better Health

Swiss TPH Spring Symposium - 6 April 2017 - Parterre Rialto, Basel, Switzerland

The Swiss TPH Spring Symposium 2017 invites public health policy makers, statisticians, global health specialists and students to review and discuss the current evidence on how the use of data and information by decision makers can be improved in the health sector. Topics will include:

- How decision makers make decisions
- What works in promoting the use of evidence
- Teaching and Training evidence
- Technology: from paper to electronics
- Methods: statistical modelling, systematic reviews and guidance development

For more information see: https://www.swisstph.ch/en/about/events/spring-symposium-2017/

World Health Summit 2017

Central topics include:

- Health Policy in the G7/G20
- Global Health Security: Policy Responses to Planetary Challenges
- Healthy and Resilient Cities: Rethinking Urban Transformation
- Vaccination and Eradicating Disease: The Role of Research & Development
- New Frontiers in Health Sciences: Remodeling Healthcare
- Big Data for Health Governance: Benefits, Frameworks & Ethics

For more information see: https://www.worldhealthsummit.org/whs-2017/program.html

Free online course: Managing Gender-based Violence Programmes in Emergencies

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), 2017

https://extranet.unfpa.org/Apps/GBVinEmergencies/index.html

The course targets new or emerging gender-based violence (GBV) specialists as well as humanitarian or development practitioners - and others - who want to increase their knowledge around GBV prevention and response in emergencies. The e-learning course is designed to allow participants to learn new concepts and test their learning through quizzes and direct application of knowledge to case studies. The content of the course has been updated from the 2011 version in collaboration with the
members of the Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility's Learning Task Team. A certificate of completion can be obtained at the end of the course by completing a short survey.

Open Online Courses in Public Health: experience from Peoples-uni

Open Online Courses (OOCs) are offered by Peoples-uni at http://ooc.peoples-uni.org to complement the courses run on a separate site for academic credit at http://courses.peoples-uni.org. They provide a wide range of online learning resources beyond those usually found in credit-bearing Public Health courses. They are self-paced, and students can enrol themselves at any time and utilise Open Educational Resources free of copyright restrictions. In the two years that courses have been running, 1174 students from 100 countries have registered and among the 1597 enrolments in 15 courses, 15% gained a certificate of completion. Easily accessible and appealing to a wide geographical and professional audience, OOCs have the potential to play a part in establishing global Public Health capacity building programmes.

“Do I get partial credit for simply having the courage to get out of bed and face the world again today?”

Source: Glasbergen
TIPS & TRICKS

Inserting Date and Time into a MS WORD document

To insert the actual date into a MS WORD document press ALT + SHIFT + D
To insert the actual time press ALT + SHIFT + T

Dangerous Views

By default Windows does not show the extension of known file types, e.g. in Windows Explorer this pdf document is shown as HESP-News-Briefing-05-2017 instead of HESP-News-Briefing-05-2017.pdf. Hackers might use this fact to seduce unsuspecting users into opening an e-mail attachment named HESP-News-Briefing-05-2017 whereas in fact its full name might be HESP-News-Briefing-05-2017.vbs containing a malicious Visual Basic script that infects the computer with a virus. Since .vbs is a known file extension to Windows it is not shown. To avoid this, change the “View” option in Windows Explorer: Select Tools | Folder Options | View and deselect: Hide extensions for known file types. Click: Apply and OK and you are done.