

IHP news 688 : Global Goals week

(23 September 2022)

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

Dear Colleagues,

Now that summer is finally over, it's perhaps good to come back on some of the **recent changes implemented at International Health Policies (IHP) in terms of format, structure & content**, among others thanks to some tech-savvy colleagues of mine. Soon, we'll also run a survey, to get your feedback on how you perceive and use IHP. Stay tuned for that!

As you might have noticed, lately, we've "refocused" our **Highlights section**, which has become much shorter than it used to be (*i.e. Godzilla-style*). True, in a 'Global Goals week', it's still relatively long, as there's so much happening on the global health front in weeks like these, but we do encourage the many among you with relatively little time to at least go through this section. It's the '**essential (new(s)) stuff**', albeit from our slightly idiosyncratic IHP angle (with GHG/HPSR bias among others).

The **other sections of the newsletter** can be considered more as '**knowledge management**'. If you have some extra time, you should probably first of all scan the sections that are of specific interest for you. For some that will be global health governance, for others planetary health, UHC, SRHR, etc. - these sections tend to offer more (references to) new papers. And if you are the kind of person, like me, who likes to finish the whole (thick) weekend newspaper (*as otherwise you just can't sleep!*), you might want to scan "till the bitter end" 😊. But as mentioned, the 'Highlights section' should already give you a fair idea of what happened in a particular week.

Consider this as IHP's way of implementing a "sufficiency economy" 😊. What's "enough" information for you in a given week? Trust me, it's easier said than done, implementing this sufficiency thinking in one's own daily (knowledge acquiring) practice...

Over to the global health arena then. Pretty big #UNGA77 week, obviously (with among others, the [Global Fund Replenishment](#) and Ursula awarded as a "[Gates Goalkeeper](#)", world-class moreover 😊), some [action in Geneva](#) (with a [TRIPS Council informal meeting](#), and [the start of publicly broadcast "informal, focused consultations" on the pandemic treaty](#)), ... and this all, as we see on our tv screens on a daily basis, against the backdrop of multiple intertwining crises. The geopolitical/nuclear one looks even more worrying now, while mankind still faces "[the mother of all emergencies](#)" due to the climate. In the words of Chomsky: the current "[unleashed savage capitalism is a death sentence for the species](#)". We agree. By now it's clear for (almost) everybody the entire system is rotten.

So we know what to do if we still want to avert that fate. Let that be our overriding 'Global Goal' for the years to come.

Enjoy your reading.

Kristof Decoster

Featured Article

On decolonisation & Buen vivir: sharing lessons from Latin America

Werner Soors

In less than four weeks from now, three dozen [Emerging Voices](#) from all over the world will gather in Medellín, Colombia, for their final leap towards exposure. Following ten days of face-to-face coaching, they will be the next cohort (EV2022) of an established [Thematic Working Group](#) of [Health Systems Global](#) and will have their rite of passage at the [7th Global Symposium in Health Systems Research](#) (HSR2022) in Bogotá. The Symposium, themed ‘Health Systems Performance in the Political Agenda’, aims at ‘Sharing lessons for current and future global challenges’. Among the priority themes that the EV coaching will focus on are violence and health, and migration and health.

The HSR symposium never before took place in Latin America. I would argue that finally ‘going Latin’ provides an opportunity not to be missed. There’s plenty of things to learn from Latin America, both conceptually and practically, that usually go unseen in the dominant Anglophone research and policy communities. Allow me to briefly elaborate on one example: decolonisation.

Decolonisation, in [global health](#) and [beyond](#), is without doubt a hot topic. But all too often, our scope is [short-sighted](#) and the way forward [ill-defined](#). Can Latin American thought broaden our understanding and contribute to a road map worth walking?

For a European whitey (*which I confess I am, even male and white-haired*), it might come as a surprise that Latin Americans updated the well-known social determinants framework by adding ‘ongoing colonialism’ as a structural driver of health inequities in a [2019 PAHO flagship report](#). After all, most Latin American countries already ‘decolonised’ around the time Belgium came into existence. As an inhabitant of the latter, tiny yet infamous colonial power, I might be tempted to see colonialism as something restricted to the African continent we co-colonised in the late 19th century. Unhappily ever after, though, such myopic framing is also becoming the dominant scope of (much of) the decolonisation discourse. Yet, noting the exceptions of a few Iberian excursions along African and Indian coast lines, old Europe started massive colonisation in 1492, and did so first in the Americas (now you finally grasped the meaning of this weird picture of a Belgian king with an ‘illegal migration’ T-shirt). If any peoples have a large experience with colonialism to learn from, it must be the survivors of the native Americans, joined by the descendants of the Africans we enslaved and sent over. We should thank Latin America for reminding us of the wider picture, in both space and time. This leaves us with the question why Latin American scholars bring this up two centuries after having gained ‘independence’.

First of all, because this independence has never been real, as was indicated first and firmly more than half a century ago by the Latin American (yes, again) [dependency school](#).

Second, and intimately related to the first, because formal independence failed to erase the legacy of European colonialism. That legacy is called [coloniality](#), or coloniality of power. The term was

coined two decades ago by [Quijano](#) (yes, another Latino). Among other things the concept helps us to realize that today we are in fact all colonised, and that we need no more nation states to become colonised (*in times of consumerism, capital doesn't need middlemen anymore...*). And, as far as Latin America is concerned, [coloniality is omnipresent and ever increasing](#): in racism, in violence, in market reification, in extractivism, and in rampant inequity. No wonder Latin American health scholars felt the need to make this explicit in the updated social determinants framework.

But Latin America also offers us a way out, one that is highly relevant for health and helps us think out of the box: [Buen vivir](#) (living well). Grown out of discontent with Western development paradigms and building on alternatives from indigenous traditions, it is a concept, a social movement and a road map, but not a copy-paste blueprint. It aims to be community-centric, ecologically balanced and culturally sensitive. As such, it is the practical application of what Quijano called the '[decoloniality of power](#)' (my italics). In essence, it is a '[rethinking of the future we want](#)'. With a track record of less than two decades, 'Buen vivir' already made it into the constitution of Bolivia and Ecuador. While in both cases co-optation by party politics was an issue, this did not prevent the concept from [receiving worldwide attention](#). Eventually, early 2022, 'Buen vivir' was declared one of the pillars of the '[People's charter for an eco-social world](#)' at a global summit co-organised by the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development.

I truly hope that EV2022 and HSR2022 will be the next steppingstone to co-construct an equitable and liveable future, for health and beyond, for mankind and nature alike.

Highlights of the week

UNGA 77

Let's start with a short intro to the UNGA77 agenda, via the [WHO page on UNGA77](#):

"The 77th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) open[ed] on Tuesday, 13 September 2022 at the UN Headquarters in New York, in the first in-person format since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Heads of states and governments from 193 Member States [will] exchange[d] statements in-person in the General Assembly Hall, on the theme "A watershed moment: transformative solutions to interlocking challenges". "

"High-level events will include the annual [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDG\) Moment](#), the [Transforming Education Summit](#), the commemoration of the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, a high-level plenary to commemorate and promote the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, and several Member State and partner side events, including WHO sponsored events....."

Guardian - Ukraine war to take centre stage at UN as west and Russia vie for support

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/sep/20/united-nations-ukraine-russia-war-climate-crisis-famine-global-south>

Some good analysis published ahead of UNGA 77, by the Guardian's diplomatic editors, worth reading. (Guess you saw their analysis confirmed by now.)

*"The general assembly is expected to see **fresh tussles over future of Ukraine, as well as the threats of famine and the climate crisis in the global south.**"*

Below you find some coverage & key events from this week, including on global health more narrowly defined.

Devex Newswire: The real action begins at the UN General Assembly

<https://www.devex.com/news/devex-newswire-the-real-action-begins-at-the-un-general-assembly-104008>

Focus on the **Transformation Education Summit** here. *"We already saw **one big announcement Saturday ahead of today's session of the [Transforming Education Summit](#) with the launch of the [International Finance Facility for Education](#), or IFFEd. The name isn't actually new, and nor is the idea: It's a revival of sorts [from a 2016 proposal](#). The goal is to **increase education funding to lower-to middle-income countries through donor-backed low-interest loans from multilateral development banks**. The Education Commission says this model **could unlock an extra \$10 billion in new education funding** by 2030, with an initial \$2 billion announced at the launch...."***

More detail via Devex: [Creative financing model aims to reverse staggering education loss](#)

Link: UN News: [Financing education, imperative for 'peaceful, prosperous, stable societies' – UN chief](#) Guterres' view: *"Education systems around the world need **more, not less money**" the UN chief told journalists on Saturday during a joint press stakeout on the [Transforming Education Summit and the International Finance Facility for Education](#)."*

UN News - Transforming Education Summit: Halt the crisis, or risk failing an entire generation

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/09/1126791>

On a **UNICEF report**, released just before the Transforming Education summit. *"Just a few hours before the start of the crucial Transforming Education Summit, UN Children's Fund UNICEF on Friday, warned that **globally, only a third of 10-year-olds are estimated to be able to read and understand a simple written story**. This shocking statistic represents a 50 per cent decrease from pre-pandemic estimates....."*

UN News - In turbulent times, 'work of the United Nations is more necessary than ever': Guterres

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/09/1126711>

“The past year has been one of deep and interlocking crises that are growing in scale and severity, UN Secretary-General António Guterres has said, citing the persisting COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine and the deepening climate crisis as challenges that extend beyond borders, and which have made the work of the United Nations more vital than ever. “ Check out his [Annual Report](#), released on Thursday just ahead of UNGA77..

Link: UN News - [Guterres: ‘Global addiction to fossil fuels’ must end and a ‘renewables revolution’ jumpstarted](#)

Guardian - ‘Polluters must pay’: UN chief calls for windfall tax on fossil fuel companies

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/sep/20/un-secretary-general-tax-fossil-fuel-companies-climate-crisis>

“António Guterres said money raised should be diverted to vulnerable nations suffering losses caused by climate crisis.” No brainer indeed. Think of Pakistan, for example.

UN News - Rescuing the SDGs: General Assembly highlights ‘world’s to-do list’

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/09/1126981>

Coverage of the annual **SDG Moment**. *“The UN Secretary-General and the President of the 77TH General Assembly joined world leaders and Goodwill Ambassadors on Monday in a global call to rescue the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and get back on track to building a better world that “leaves no one behind”.”*

“The 2022 SDG Moment, which places an annual spotlight on the 17 Global Goals agreed by countries in December 2015, took place as the world faces a deepening cost-of-living crisis against the backdrop of the Ukraine war and the COVID-19 pandemic, which have halted development, especially in low-income countries. “The world has a long ‘to do’ list”, António Guterres told world leaders, asking for more finance and investment from the public and private sectors, to meet growing needs.....”

Related links:

- NPR- [The clock is ticking for U.N. goals to end poverty — and it doesn't look promising](#)

“NPR spoke with Masood Ahmed, president of the Center for Global Development, a Washington think tank.....”

- IISD - [Speakers at Annual SDG Moment Urge Leaders to Rescue SDGs Amid “Great Peril”](#)

Euractiv - World leaders vow response against global food insecurity, disinformation

<https://www.euractiv.com/section/global-europe/news/global-food-security-point-of-contention-as-world-leaders-vow-response/>

Coverage of the **Global Food Security Summit**.

“Leaders from Europe, the Americas and Africa on Tuesday (20 September) called for urgent action and funding to ease a growing global food security crisis, exacerbated by Russia’s war in Ukraine, climate change fallout and disinformation. Speaking at a Global Food Security Summit on the sidelines of the annual UN General Assembly, leaders demanded an end to the war as they discussed food shortages, seen as a key factor in conflicts and instability....”

“... US officials said the purpose of the summit was to build on a commitment to global food security that emerged during both a meeting of G7 leaders in June and a US-led ministerial in May, when the country had the presidency of the UN Security Council. The G7 in June had promised \$5 billion to fight food insecurity.”

Related: [Hunger now killing one person every four seconds, NGOs say](#) (Al Jazeera)

“ In an open letter addressing world leaders, more than 200 NGOs urge decisive international action to ‘end the spiralling global hunger crisis’.”

Devex - [Gates Foundation pledges \\$100M for food crisis in Africa, South Asia](#)

“ The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has pledged \$100 million to address the food security crisis that is disproportionately hurting communities in Africa and South Asia. Increasing the production of fertilizer for African farmers and supporting women and children will be two of the main investment areas, foundation CEO Mark Suzman said Wednesday....”

Devex - [Unprecedented \\$280M raised for child malnutrition treatment](#)

“Donors pledged an unprecedented \$280 million for malnutrition treatment at an event on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly on Wednesday, more than doubling financial commitments made in July to increase access to ready-to-use-therapeutic food, or RUTF, as famine looms in multiple countries. UNICEF will use the money for early prevention, detection, and treatment of child wasting....”

Outcomes Fund for Fevers: Financing Initiative to Test and Treat Fevers in African Private Sector Launches at Clinton Global Initiative Meeting

https://healthfinancecoalition.org/_off_launch_hfc/

On the launch of OFF at the Clinton Global Initiative meeting. ***“ Malaria No More and the Health Finance Coalition (HFC) today launched the Outcomes Fund for Fevers (OFF) in partnership with the Global Fund, Global Citizen, NPX, and the Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI). OFF is a new performance-based financing initiative aimed at scaling fever testing, treatment, and digital***

reporting through the private sector in sub-Saharan Africa. The initiative was announced by Dr. Chelsea Clinton at the Clinton Global Initiative meeting today during the Community Health session. The OFF will use performance-based payments and product subsidies to expand rapid malaria testing and access to quality treatments through innovative private sector delivery and care models. **While OFF will initially focus on increasing malaria rapid diagnostic tests (RDTs) and artemisinin-based combination therapies (ACT) treatments, once established, OFF can be expanded to include additional fever diagnostic products such as COVID-19 tests, and other quality-assured drugs....”**

WHO - Heads of State commit to Noncommunicable Disease Global Compact to save 50 million lives by 2030

<https://www.who.int/news/item/21-09-2022-heads-of-state-commit-to-noncommunicable-disease-global-compact-to-save-50-million-lives-by-2030>

“Michael R. Bloomberg reappointed as WHO Global Ambassador of Noncommunicable Diseases and Injuries; New Gallup survey indicates strong global support for policies outlined in WHO report to combat growing public health burden of noncommunicable diseases.”

“Today, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of WHO, launched a new report calling on global leaders to take urgent action on noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), responsible for 17 million premature deaths every year. The announcement came at the first annual gathering of a Heads of State and Government Group for the Prevention of NCDs, led by the President of Ghana and the Prime Minister of Norway, held during the 77th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). This follows the launch of a [Global NCD Compact](#) earlier this year by Ghana and Norway. To mark the occasion, WHO released a new report, **“Invisible Numbers: The true scale of noncommunicable diseases,” and a [data portal](#) that for the first time, brings together all WHO data related to NCDs for 194 countries....”**

- Related coverage via **the Guardian** – [Non-communicable diseases kill a person under 70 every two seconds, says WHO](#)

“The [WHO study](#), released today at the UN general assembly in New York, said that **LMICs account for 86% of these premature deaths, most of which could be avoided or delayed if people had access to prevention, treatment and care. The diseases pose one of the greatest health and development challenges of the century but **they are “overlooked and underfunded”**, according to the report, entitled **Invisible Numbers....”****

- And **UN News** - [Noncommunicable diseases now ‘top killers globally’ – UN health agency report](#)

“From heart disease to cancer and diabetes, noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) now outnumber infectious diseases as the “top killers globally”....”

HPW - At UN, a Call to ‘Pandemic Proof’ the World Through Leadership

<https://healthpolicy-watch.news/at-un-a-call-to-pandemic-proof-the-world-through-leadership/>

“Global health leaders and experts urged nations to improve their preparedness and ability to respond to global pandemics in ways that go well beyond the health sector, even as political will to

handle the COVID-19 pandemic and other health crises seems to be lagging. **“Pandemic issues go far wider than health,”** former New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark told a meeting that she moderated on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly’s annual high-level gathering in New York City. **The event, hosted by members of the Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response, the government of New Zealand, and the Pandemic Action Network, focused on stories of effective leadership seen during the COVID-19 pandemic and other complex health threats, as well as the leadership needed to prevent and mitigate future health crises...”**

And some more UNGA77 related links:

- [WHO at the high-level session of the 77th UN General Assembly \(UNGA\)](#) With overview of all sessions in which WHO is involved.
- IPS - [UN Bans NGOs During High-Level Meetings of World Leaders— Triggering Strong Protests](#)

As this is outrageous, some quotes in full:

“... Louis Charbonneau, UN Director of Human Rights Watch said: “As you know, the UN Secretariat has an unhelpful policy of barring civil society organizations (CSOs) from UN headquarters during high-level week, so we won’t be in the building. But we will be around to answer questions or do interviews, when possible, outside of UNHQ.” “We’re also asking member states and the UN secretariat to end the senseless exclusion of civil society during one of the most important weeks on the UN calendar,” said Charbonneau.” “...He said: “Our experience with the outrageous ban on civil society on the pretext of Covid when everyone else – including tourists – was allowed back in the building made us realize there’s an urgent need for civil society to push back against attempts to marginalize NGOs at the UN.” “The way Covid was used to keep civil society out of the UN when diplomats, UN officials and journalists were allowed back in confirmed our belief that it is high time for us to push to end the UNGA high-level ban and other senseless restrictions.” He pointed out that the Secretary-General’s “Common Agenda” is full of language about the importance of civil society....”

“Jens Martens, Director, Global Policy Forum Europe, told IPS the behavior of the UN and Member States towards NGOs has often been hypocritical. “On the one hand, they praise NGOs and declare that engaging civil society in the work of the UN is a top priority. On the other hand, they restrict or even prevent access for NGOs, as just now during the high-level week of the UN General Assembly,” he said....”

Global Fund replenishment (21 Sept)

HPW - Global Fund Still Short of \$18 Billion Target – But UK and Italy Have Yet to Announce Pledges

<https://healthpolicy-watch.news/global-fund-still-short-of-18-billion-target-but-uk-and-italy-have-yet-to-announce-pledges/>

(must-read) *“The Global Fund raised \$14.25 billion at its seventh replenishment conference in New York on Wednesday – some way short of its \$18 billion target, although the UK and Italy have yet to make their pledges.....”* Check out who the main contributors were.

- See also the GF press release - [Global Fund Partners Pledge Record Level of Support to End Deadly Diseases, Prevent Future Pandemics](#)
- And the full list of pledges : https://www.theglobalfund.org/media/12328/core_seventh-replenishment-pledges_list_en.pdf Pledges by high-income countries, private sector partners and developing countries, many with high HIV burdens.
- [Global Fund Private Sector Partners Pledge Record Levels of Support to End AIDS, TB, Malaria and Strengthen Systems for Health](#)

As we just love the private sector, some extra info on them: *“Over US\$1.23 billion in pledges, up from US\$1.13 billion from the Sixth Replenishment.”* Do compare with the profits that have been made in recent years by various parts of the private sector....

“US\$136 million for catalytic initiatives designed to accelerate progress across a range of crucial areas, from digital health to laboratory systems to community health workers. US\$250 million in innovative finance investments to support access to innovation and increase domestic capacity. More than US\$30 million in vital non-financial resources and capabilities to support digital health, build stronger supply chains and improve behavior change approaches and prevention programs....”

“This commitment and strong call to action for other partners to join in was led by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, who committed a record US\$912 million, and (RED), who pledged US\$150 million. ...”

GFO – Global Fund records a record number of pledges for its 7th Replenishment
<https://aidspan.org/en/c/article/6102>

“Many donors met the Investment Case’s request for a 30% increase on previous pledging levels.”

Devex – UK pledges nothing during Global Fund replenishment event

<https://www.devex.com/news/uk-pledges-nothing-during-global-fund-replenishment-event-104009>

The UK contribution didn’t ‘trickle down’ yet.

“...The U.K. has until October to make a pledge, and any amount that is announced will be seen by experts as a key indicator of the U.K.’s position as a leading player in international development — a reputation that has already suffered as a result of its aid cuts. “We will be announcing our pledge in the coming weeks, we will work with the Global Fund to fight for what counts,” said Vicky Ford, international development minister at the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, in her first major announcement since taking the role.....”

Related (recommended) analysis via the Guardian - [UK criticised for failing to boost contribution to Global Fund](#) *“The British government has been accused of abandoning people in the global south after it failed to commit to boosting its spending”* on the Global Fund.

“Liz Truss’s new administration became the only major world power not to raise its spending at a UN pledging event for the Global Fund... The UK said it would make a pledge later, but aid agencies pointed out that Truss had found time to lift the cap on bankers’ bonuses and to commit at least £2.3bn in military aid to Ukraine in 2023....” “David Lammy, the UK’s shadow foreign secretary, said cynicism was creeping into some African leaders’ views of the UK approach to aid....”

UNAIDS press statement - [UNAIDS applauds donors for pledging the largest amount ever to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria](#)

A few chunks:

“...Developing countries, many tackling large HIV epidemics also stepped up in support of the Global Fund. Burkina Faso increased its contribution by 100%, Uganda and Togo increased by 50%, Kenya by 40% and Cote d’Ivoire by more than 30%. The Central African Republic, Eswatini, Malawi, Nigeria, Tanzania, Rwanda and Zimbabwe all made contributions to the Global Fund despite facing huge fiscal challenges, exacerbated by current global crises.”

“... Two major donors are still to pledge, the UK and Italy, both of whom reiterated their support to the Global Fund and indicated they will be pledging in the coming weeks. UNAIDS urges them to match the 30% increase of their peers to get closer to the Global Fund US\$ 18 billion target. ...”

MSF - Countries must re-engage on HIV, TB and malaria or risk seeing everything undone

<https://www.msf.org/countries-must-re-engage-hiv-tb-and-malaria>

Briefing paper ahead of (7 Sept) the Replenishment.

*“MSF teams witness the very real consequences of the funding shortfall for our patients. **This briefing paper presents examples from seven countries:** Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea, Mozambique, Myanmar, South Sudan and Uganda....”*

Global Health Governance / Decolonize Global Health

Reimagining PEPFAR at 20 to End the HIV/AIDS Pandemic by 2030

<https://www.state.gov/reimagining-pepfar-at-20-to-end-the-hiv-aids-pandemic-by-2030/>

Cfr press release 22 Sept. *“As the U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) approaches its 20th anniversary in January, U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator and Special Representative for Health Diplomacy Ambassador at Large Dr. John Nkengasong has embarked on a journey of **reimagining the HIV/AIDS response [3 MB]** together with PEPFAR’s stakeholders and partners. Those are the*

guiding principles Nkengasong revealed today as he outlined the program’s strategic direction for positioning PEPFAR on the path to end the HIV/AIDS pandemic as a public health threat by 2030 and sustainably strengthening public health systems through the PEPFAR platform, in partnership with communities and countries. He shared five strategic pillars and three enablers for reimagining PEPFAR at 20 to achieve the 2030 goals. The 5x3 Strategic Approach includes....”

Blog - Astroturfing in global health – why this is a serious problem (for me)

K Bertram; <https://katribertram.wordpress.com/2022/09/16/astroturfing-in-global-health-why-this-is-a-serious-problem-for-me/>

This blog went viral last week. Absolute must-read. A few quotes:

Quote: “... At some point, I realised something that I at first found to be a coincidence, then amusing, then slightly uncomfortable, and later on worrying. No matter where I worked, whether NGO, consultant, or international organisation, **I was paid by one global health donor**. At some point, I consciously started looking for jobs that would be paid for by someone else – anybody else – just to get out of the narrow niche I had slipped into....”

“... I came across the term “**astroturfing**” a while back. The definition is “the practice of masking the sponsors of a message or organisation to make it appear as though it originates from and is supported by grassroots participants”. You may consider me paranoid – and some people lump this together with “conspiracy theory” – but this concept blew my mind. ”

“...Twenty years later, **I’m tired of being an astroturfer**. I’m tired of calling myself an independent consultant or claim that I’m working for an independent NGO or organisation when I now know that’s neither true, and increasingly also not the direction I think global health should take....”

Devex - Dr. Ayoade Alakija: 'ACT-A is not winding down'

<https://www.devex.com/news/dr-ayoade-alakija-act-a-is-not-winding-down-103976>

“More than nine months after she took over the role of WHO Special Envoy for the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator, Dr. Ayoade Alakija believes the goal of the coordinating body has not been achieved yet. **Clearing the air about ACT-A’s future, she said it is not winding down**. “Nothing is ending because the pandemic has evolved and the virus is evolving.” **Alakija was also candid about the limitations of the body**. She believes it was the best possible mechanism that was created at a time of crisis — but one that is not without its flaws in communication and execution....” **Q & A**.

PS: “**And COVAX has assured funding until 2023, is that right?** Everyone who talks to me about ACT-A talks about COVAX. I mean, COVAX is the vaccine pillar of ACT-Accelerator, there is also a diagnostics pillar and the therapeutics pillar and a health systems connector. **All of those have been supported through until 2023**. But I mean, if there is need for greater funding in the future, I imagine the world is not going to stop and say, “well, we’re not going to fund what is needed going forward.” ...”

The Collective Blog: Contemporary Colonialism and Global Health

<https://www.sum.uio.no/english/research/networks/the-collective-for-the-political-determinants-of-health/blog/david-mccoy/contemporary-colonialism-and-global-health.html>

*“In this blog, Collective member **David McCoy** discusses how contemporary colonialism in global health can be approached through three intersecting dimensions. “*

*“Last week, the United Nations University International Institute for Global Health (IIGH) [launched a programme of work to decolonise Global Health](#) (GH). **In our programme to decolonise GH, we adopt a broad and multi-faceted definition of colonialism and highlight three intersecting dimensions.** First, we examine power asymmetries and colonialism **within GH** which includes the use of official development assistance by donors [to reinforce the power and privilege](#) of health actors from the Global North relative to actors in the Global South. Second, is the colonisation **of GH** itself.... Third, is colonialism **through GH**, whereby health problems are transformed into opportunities for wealth extraction. ...”*

Debate on whether the Covid-19 pandemic is over (or not)

Stat -Is the Covid-19 pandemic over? The answer is more art than science

<https://www.statnews.com/2022/09/19/is-the-covid-19-pandemic-over-the-answer-is-more-art-than-science/>

Analysis by H Branswell. The question is being raised after Biden said so (and dr Tedros mentioned last week ‘the end was in sight’). There’s a fierce debate on the question, and especially (many) public health experts aren’t very pleased with Biden’s statement.

Time - Biden Is Wrong, the COVID-19 Pandemic Isn't Over

G Yamey; <https://time.com/6214853/biden-wrong-covid-19-pandemic-isnt-over/>

By way of example, one of the views of public health experts not agreeing with Biden.

*“**We are not yet at low endemic levels**—but these are within our grasp. Only then can we declare the pandemic over. Until then, there is much work to do....”*

Or see an op-ed by Eric Topol (in the LA Times) - [No, Mr. President, the pandemic isn't over](#)

As for the opposite view, see for example **The Intelligencer** - [Biden Is Right to Declare the ‘Pandemic Is Over’](#) Also worth a read. ..

For more detail on this ongoing debate, see also the section on Covid below.

WHO - No time for COVID-19 complacency, say key countries responsible for tracking global rollout of COVID-19 vaccines, tests and treatments

<https://www.who.int/news/item/22-09-2022-no-time-for-covid-19-complacency--say-key-countries-responsible-for-tracking-global-rollout-of-covid-19-vaccines--tests-and-treatments>

And clearly, the ACT-A Facilitation Council also doesn't agree (with Biden's assessment).

"Warning comes from Norway and South Africa on behalf of the ACT-Accelerator Facilitation Council, as rollout of medical countermeasures and other tools stagnate. Emphasizing the global pandemic is not over, they say coordinated action, funding and political commitments are key to saving lives and preventing economic, health and societal damage from COVID-19. New report from Council's Diagnostics and Therapeutics Working Group sets out key recommendations for improving access to COVID-19 tests and treatments."

"The Working Group notes with concern: COVID-19 vaccination rates in low-income countries stand at 19%, compared to almost 75% in high-income countries. Low income and lower-middle income countries are still far from the 100 tests per 100k population per day target; low-income countries are testing at a rate of just 2/100k population, while lower-middle income countries are at 22/100k population. The roll-out of new lifesaving COVID-19 treatments including oral antivirals in low and lower-middle income countries remains limited or non-existent. Equitable access to these COVID-19 countermeasures and preparation for the delivery is critical for countries to integrate the management of the virus into their primary health systems, as part of a longer-term strategy...."

Report - [ACT-Accelerator Facilitation Council Working Group Report on Diagnostics and Therapeutics](#)

Access to Medicines & Health Technology

Oxfam/People's Vaccine Alliance - World leaders' UNGA pledge to vaccinate world falls woefully short as only a third of countries meet target

<https://www.oxfam.org/en/press-releases/world-leaders-unga-pledge-vaccinate-world-falls-woefully-short-only-third-countries>

On a new report. *"Two-thirds of countries are yet to meet the target of vaccinating 70 percent of people in all countries against COVID-19 set a year ago at the UN General Assembly, according to figures published today by Oxfam and The People's Vaccine Alliance."*

"...They are calling for leaders to radically shift their approach for the current and future pandemics by prioritizing sustainable, local manufacturing in all regions of the world to ensure developing countries get equal access to vaccines, tests, and treatments. They said the continued approach of leaving Big Pharma in charge of the response has prolonged the pandemic for all of us and continues to cause havoc the world cannot afford. The death toll from COVID-19 is four times higher in lower-income countries, where less than half (48 percent) of the population have had

their full initial round of vaccinations. At the current rate, it will take almost two and a half years for 70 percent of people in the poorest countries to be fully vaccinated...”

“They are calling for leaders to: Implement an immediate extension of the June 2022 WTO decision on COVID-19 vaccine patents to include tests and treatments –there can be no justification for delay. Support and protect the World Health Organisation led mRNA technology transfer hub, including demanding Moderna withdraw patents in South Africa and ensure the hub has freedom to develop COVID-19 and other life-saving vaccines now and into the future. Deliver a Pandemic Treaty that delivers life-saving vaccines, tests, and treatments as global public goods, free of the monopoly control of pharmaceutical corporations. Commit to an unprecedented scale-up of financing to strengthen country health systems in low and middle-income countries and global funding support to close the vaccination coverage gaps for low-and middle-income countries that have yet to hit the 70 percent target. Reject Big Pharma-led proposals –the so-called Berlin Declaration -which would leave full control of who lives and who dies in their hands.”

Geneva Health Files - Power Asymmetries Re-emerge in the Discussions On COVID-19 Drugs & Tests at the WTO

https://genevahealthfiles.substack.com/p/power-asymmetries-re-emerge-in-the?utm_source=email

This issue zooms in on the **informal TRIPS Informal Council meeting from 19 September** and look ahead to **upcoming negotiations over COVID-19 tests and drugs at the WTO.**

“... Power Asymmetries Re-emerge in the Discussions On COVID-19 Drugs & Tests at the WTO: A replay of delaying tactics witnessed during TRIPS waiver talks?” A few quotes:

“This week WTO members met for an informal meeting of the TRIPS Council on 19 September to discuss the way forward on potentially extending the June Ministerial decision to medicines and tests, beyond vaccines. ... There are already clear indications that these negotiations are expected to be difficult on their merit. ...”

“... Proponents, mostly developing countries, are pushing for a timely and early resolution of this mandate within the indicated timeline of December 17, 2022, six months from the Ministerial decision as articulated in the text agreed in June 2022. Members have three months left to find ways on extending the potential mechanism to tests and treatments...”

PS: *“... Irrespective of what lies ahead, it appears both sides to this debate, are determined to tread carefully, for these negotiations at the WTO could set a precedent for the future.”*

Reuters - GAVI financing to allow for immediate funds for next pandemic

[Reuters](#)

“Global vaccine alliance GAVI has set up financial instruments that will allow the group to immediately access pledged donor funding if it needs to buy vaccines for future pandemics, Chief Executive Seth Berkley told Reuters.”

*“Berkley said that in 2020 and 2021, GAVI was limited in its ability to buy COVID-19 vaccines because even though donors had committed \$2.4 billion, the vaccine alliance only had \$400 million in cash on hand. “The idea would be to have enough to jumpstart it,” Berkley said. **“We’ve now put in a series of really interesting instruments. Some here in the U.S., some in Europe, that allow us to front-load donor funding... we can then go ahead and make those commitments and start spending, knowing that those donors’ funds will come.”**”*

*“... Improved output from manufacturers has led to a glut of vaccine in 2022. **COVAX has been negotiating since June with vaccine manufacturers to cut or slow deliveries of 400 million to 600 million vaccine doses.** COVAX already has 300 to 400 million COVID-19 vaccine doses available if countries need more supply, Berkley said....”*

The Global Fund Signs Agreement with Pfizer to Expand Access to PAXLOVID™ Antiviral

<https://www.theglobalfund.org/en/news/2022/2022-09-22-the-global-fund-signs-agreement-with-pfizer-to-expand-access-to-paxlovid-antiviral/>

*“**The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria has signed an agreement with Pfizer for the procurement of the new oral antiviral medicine nirmatrelvir/ritonavir, sold under the name PAXLOVID™.** Thanks to partner collaboration through the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (ACT-Accelerator), **all 132 countries eligible for Global Fund grants will have access to PAXLOVID™, subject to local regulatory approval or authorization.** The Global Fund, together with ACT-A partners, is also monitoring developments from generic manufacturers to further improve access to antivirals for vulnerable populations in low- and middle-income countries....”*

See also Reuters - [Pfizer to supply up to 6 mln COVID pill courses for lower income countries.](#)

Bloomberg - Moderna Gives WHO’s mRNA Hub Some Help, Pfizer Snubs Request

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-09-19/moderna-gives-who-s-mrna-hub-some-help-pfizer-snubs-request>

*“**Moderna Inc. has allowed its Covid-19 vaccine to be used in a World Health Organization effort to develop mRNA shots that would increase production and access for poor countries.***

*Afrigen Biologics & Vaccines, a South African biotechnology company working with the WHO, has **used the Moderna vaccine in comparison studies in mice** to test the effectiveness of its own shots, said Petro Terblanche, Afrigen’s managing director....”*

*“...**Moderna didn’t supply the vaccine directly. It allowed the vaccine to be provided by the French government after a request from the United Nations-backed Medicines Patent Pool,** according to Marie-Paule Kieny, the pool’s chair. **Pfizer Inc. refused a similar request** because it didn’t regard the need as urgent, she said....”*

Related **tweet** **Anna Marriot (Oxfam):** “What an enormous stretch to suggest that Moderna has 'helped' WHO mRNA hub in South Africa”.

Bloomberg - WHO's Africa Hub Starts Work on mRNA Tuberculosis Vaccine

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-09-21/the-hub-is-already-moving-a-covid-19-shot-toward-trials>

"A World Health Organization-backed group started work on developing an mRNA vaccine for tuberculosis, expanding on plans to develop local shots for the coronavirus...."

Global inequity

World-Renowned Economists Call for 'Emergency' Corporate Profit Taxes to Avert Global Recession

<https://www.commondreams.org/news/2022/09/20/world-renowned-economists-call-emergency-corporate-profit-taxes-avert-global>

"Governments have a choice, argues a new report: Impose austerity programs that harm the poor, or tax "the multinationals and the super-rich, many of whom have also benefited from the crisis."

On the **new report launched by the Independent Commission for the Reform of International Corporate Taxation (ICRICT)**, an organization whose commissioners include Nobel laureate Joseph Stiglitz, University of Massachusetts at Amherst professor Jayati Ghosh, and Paris School of Economics professor Thomas Piketty.

*"The 27-page paper argues that governments have a fundamental choice in how to respond to the intertwined emergencies of an ongoing pandemic, war in Eastern Europe, supply chain disruptions, energy market chaos, high inflation, and worsening costs-of-living crises, which are **fueling mass uprisings** around the world as they threaten to push **tens of millions more into poverty**. The new report says governments, in response, "can opt for austerity programs, cutting funding to public services and increasing the contribution of the poorest through inflation-enhanced consumption taxes, at the expense, once again, of the most vulnerable." "Or they can decide to increase taxation on those who have so far failed to pay their fair share: the multinationals and the super-rich, many of whom have also benefited from the crisis," the report adds...."*

Open Global Rights - Lessons from the pandemic: Building a movement for global public investment

A E Yamin et al ; <https://www.openglobalrights.org/movement-for-global-public-investment/?lang=English>

« There is a window of opportunity to move toward a model of financing based on Global Public Investment (GPI) to advance health and other social rights.» We sure hope so.

PS: *"...At the UN General Assembly this week, a **GPI Network was officially launched**, which is the first step toward **building a movement for GPI**...."*

Global health events

World Patient Safety Day

HPW - World Patient Safety Day: Ensuring Medicines are Properly Prescribed

<https://healthpolicy-watch.news/world-patient-safety-day-2022/>

*“The WHO chose the **theme for this year’s day**, which falls on Saturday, as **“Medication Without Harm”**, in light of the heavy burden of preventable errors in the prescription, administration, and surveillance of medicines. Since the time the Patient Safety Alliance was launched in 2004, progress in reducing medical errors has faltered....”*

*“... **Africa carries heaviest burden**: Patients in low- and middle-income countries are twice more likely to experience preventable medication harm than in high-income countries, [according to the WHO](#). **COVID-19, and the strain it has placed on health care systems, has made things worse**. “More than two years of the COVID-19 pandemic have caused a high-risk emergency which has exacerbated many of the circumstances that drive medication errors,” said WHO Africa Regional Director Dr Matshidiso Moeti. **Africa also faces a uniquely acute challenge in the area of substandard and falsified medicines....”***

PS: “... **Opioids are responsible for 70% of global drug deaths....”**

Related: WHO (press release) – [WHO calls for urgent action by countries for achieving Medication Without Harm](#)

*“Globally, half of all preventable harm in medical care is medication related, a quarter of which is severe or life-threatening. In the lead up to [World Patient Safety Day](#) on 17 September 2022, WHO is emphasizing the global burden of medication harm. The elderly population is one of the most at-risk groups of medication harm, especially those taking multiple medications. High rates of medication-related harm are also seen in surgical care, intensive care and emergency medicine. **The global cost associated with medication errors has been estimated at US\$42 billion annually....”***

Global health governance & governance of health

African Centres for Disease Control and Prevention and AFD strengthen cooperation on public health and Covid-19 response in Africa

<https://www.afd.fr/en/signature-MoU/Africa-CDC/AFD/public-health/COVID19>

*“The African Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) and France have signed a Memorandum of Understanding, marking a shared commitment to expand their partnership in public health. Through this Memorandum, the Agence Française de Développement (AFD), will provide a grant amounting to 2.4million euros under **two pillars, devoted to supporting Africa CDC’s mandate in Africa’s public health, particularly in emergency preparedness and response.** A first portion of the grant will **support the development and strengthening of the Africa CDC Health Economics Unit (HEU) over a period of two years**, through the recruitment of staff and facilitate the creation of a framework for collaboration in the field of health economics across the continent....”*

Devex - Samantha Power announces USAID Africa Localization Initiative

<https://www.devex.com/news/samantha-power-announces-usaid-africa-localization-initiative-104028>

*“The **U.S. Agency for International Development** will launch a regional initiative to direct more funding to local organizations based in sub-Saharan Africa, USAID Administrator Samantha Power announced Monday. It will be modeled after a similar effort USAID is undertaking in Central America known as **Centroamérica Local**, which has set aside \$300 million over five years to address the drivers of irregular migration from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras to the United States.*

*“Based on what we’ve learned in Central America, today I’m announcing a new, similar regional approach in sub-Saharan Africa — **the Africa Localization Initiative.**”*

*....Power noted Monday that **increasing the amount of direct funding to local organizations to 25% of the agency’s program budget is only one part of her locally led and inclusive development agenda.** The second goal aims to put communities in the lead of program design, implementation, or evaluation for at least 50% of USAID’s programming.....”*

Global Health Hub Germany - Output of our Catalyst Dialogue on Global Health Architecture

<https://www.globalhealthhub.de/de/news/detail/output-catalyst-dialogue-global-health-architecture>

“Insights from a debate on where we stand, what must change and how Germany can contribute to a Global Health Architecture that can serve the needs of all.”

*“To enrich the German government’s position on relevant developments in Global Health, **the Global Health Hub Germany, in cooperation with Healthy DEvelopments**, on behalf respectively of the German Federal Ministries of Health and of Economic Cooperation and Development, **convened a high-level ‘Catalyst Dialogue’ between April and June 2022.***

*... Based on the insights shared, **seven suggestions for political leadership emerged** that seek to present insights into learning, challenges and opportunities....”*

Lancet World Report - Volker Türk appointed top UN human rights chief

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(22\)01832-3/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(22)01832-3/fulltext)

*“The global health and humanitarian communities have **high expectations** of the new UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. John Zarocostas reports from Geneva.”*

*“Global health and humanitarian leaders have “high expectations” that Volker Türk, the incoming UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, **will champion the right to health and forcefully speak out for the protection of humanitarians in conflict hotspots....”***

Global health financing

WB’s Investing in Health (blog) - Back to the future? Amid complex crisis, weak spending prospects threaten fragile health systems—again

C Kurowski et al;

<https://blogs.worldbank.org/health/back-future-amid-complex-crisis-weak-spending-prospects-threaten-fragile-health-systems>

Important blog.

*“In the 1980s and 90s, a convergence of factors including high debt burdens contributed to severe and prolonged weakening of health systems in some of the world’s poorest countries. Resource-starved health systems proved powerless to control the spread of HIV/AIDS, leading in the ensuing years to vast loss of life and squandered economic opportunity on a global scale. **Comparable forces are coming to bear on some of the world’s most fragile health systems in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis—but there’s still time for countries and their partners to avoid repeating the health financing errors made 40 years ago.....”***

*“.... [A new update to our March 2021 paper](#), “From Double Shock to Double Recovery – Implications and Options for Health Financing in the Time of COVID-19,” analyzes the evolving macro-fiscal situation in 177 countries and assesses its likely impacts on health spending through 2027. Subtitled “**Old scars, new wounds**,” the update argues that, by acting together now, countries can narrow global gaps in health spending capacities, bolster future pandemic preparedness, and prime health systems in all countries for inclusive health and economic recovery.”*

OurCrowd launches \$200mn global health equity fund

<https://www.cnbc.com/media/6312593130112/>

“Venture capital firm OurCrowd has partnered with the World Health Organisation Foundation to launch a \$200 million global health equity fund that seeks to fund start-ups innovating for healthcare.”

CGD (blog) - Where Is the UK's Global Fund Commitment? Four Questions the UK Should be Asking to Cleverly Navigate the Seventh Global Fund Replenishment

P Baker et al; <https://www.cgdev.org/blog/where-uks-global-fund-commitment-four-questions-uk-should-be-asking-cleverly-navigate-seventh>

“...The UK is being asked for £1.8 billion, making this one of the biggest decisions facing James Cleverly, the new Secretary of State, within his first two weeks of the job. We will review what is known about the FCDO's likely commitment, and recommend four key questions that the new Secretary of State should be asking before making the commitment: What must the Global Fund change to improve value for money? How can it improve data collection and estimates of impact? How can it promote integration of health services? And what is its exit strategy given the post-Covid fiscal crises?....”

KFF factsheet - Breaking Down the U.S. Global Health Budget by Program Area

<https://www.kff.org/global-health-policy/fact-sheet/breaking-down-the-u-s-global-health-budget-by-program-area/>

As of 15 Sept.

UHC & PHC

BMJ GH - Reviewing the evidence on health financing for effective coverage: do financial incentives work?

D de Walque et al ; <https://gh.bmj.com/content/7/9/e009932>

« ... New research, presented in a World Bank report, examines one type of relevant policy reform: performance-based financing (PBF), which is a package reform that always includes performance pay to front-line health workers and often also provides facility autonomy, transparency and community engagement. A large body of rigorous studies and new analysis show that in under-resourced, centralised health systems, PBF can result in gains to service utilisation, but only has limited impacts on quality. Even the relative benefits of PBF on service utilisation are less clear when compared with (1) direct facility financing which provides front-line facilities with operating budgets and provider autonomy, but not performance pay and (2) demand-side financial support for health services (ie, conditional cash transfers and vouchers). Thus, **the central component of PBF—the performance pay—appears to add little value over flexible payment systems and provider autonomy. The analysis shows that this lack of impact is unsurprising because most of the constraints to improving quality do not lie with the health worker in these settings. While PBF was conceived as a complex package ‘blueprint’, we review the evidence to conclude that only some elements seem to make sense. To improve quality of care, health financing should pivot from performance pay while retaining the elements of direct facility financing, autonomy, transparency and community engagement.** »

UHC 2030 Newsflash: Let the UHC countdown begin!

<https://uhc2030.cmail20.com/t/ViewEmail/d/3D6FCDA4642A573C2540EF23F30FEDED/9A9BD47ED03712FA765E7602346EC846?alternativeLink=False>

“We are one year out from the 2023 UN High-Level Meeting on UHC. The second UN HLM on UHC is taking place in September 2023, and the time to engage is now!... Check out our latest newsflash for tips, including key #UNGA77 events, exciting #UHCDay announcements, ...”

Global Health: Science & Practice (supplement) - Advancing Learning Health Systems: Lessons from the African Health Initiative

C Baynes et al ; https://www.ghspjournal.org/content/10/Supplement_1

Start with the **Editorial** - [Learning Health Systems to Bridge the Evidence-Policy-Practice Gap in Primary Health Care: Lessons From the African Health Initiative](#)

*“..... efforts to advance the use of **evidence-based interventions (EBIs)** in global health are replete with experiences of lengthy delays between the recognition of EBIs and their equitable and high-quality delivery throughout health systems and their integration into policies, which is needed to ensure sustainability. Demonstrating ways to bridge the gap between the promulgation of sound health policy and changes in real-world practice, including how systems support these changes, is essential to achieving UHC. The **articles in this Global Health: Science and Practice supplement showcase the experience of action research projects led by policy-implementation-academic partnerships that aimed to address this gap in 3 sub-Saharan African countries: Ethiopia, Ghana, and Mozambique.....”***

International Journal of Equity in Health - The use of legal empowerment to improve access to quality health services: a scoping review

A Joshi, M Schaaf et al ; <https://equityhealthj.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12939-022-01731-3>

“This paper presents the results of a scoping review that examines the extent to which legal empowerment has been used as a strategy in efforts to improve access to quality health services in low- and middle-income countries.....”

WHO Bulletin - Physiotherapy as part of primary health care

https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/bulletin/online-first/blt.22.288339.pdf?sfvrsn=6c436245_2

*“....To describe **the Family and Community Physiotherapist model**, which aims to incorporate rehabilitation services within primary health care in Tuscany, Italy.....”*

WHO - Planning and budgeting tool for vaccine-preventable disease surveillance in priority countries for polio transition: user guide

<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/planning-and-budgeting-tool-for-vaccine-preventable-disease-surveillance-in-priority-countries-for-polio-transition--user-guide>

“The [Planning and Budgeting Tool for Vaccine-Preventable Disease Surveillance in Priority Countries for Polio Transition](#) aims to provide methodology and technical support to health authorities to quantify the resources required to sustain and strengthen vaccine-preventable disease (VPD) surveillance.....”

Pandemic preparedness & response/ Global Health Security

KEI - Informal, focused consultations (IFCs) on WHO’s pandemic treaty to address: 1) legal matters, 2) equity, 3) IP and access to pandemic response products, and 4) One Health, AMR, Climate and Zoonosis

<https://www.keionline.org/38022>

With some info on the first IFC (which took place on 21 September). **“As part of ongoing WHO negotiations on a pandemic treaty, the WHO secretariat is set to convene four informal, focused consultations (IFCs) on the following themes: 1) legal matters, 2) operationalizing and achieving equity, 3) intellectual property and access to pandemic response products, and 4) One Health, AMR, climate and zoonosis. Each IFC will be publicly broadcast on WHO’s website. According to WHO’s white paper on the IFCs, the “INB Bureau will select the experts to participate in each IFC session.” The consultation on legal matters will take place on Wednesday, 21 September 2022 from 14:00 CEST to 17:00 CEST. The legal matters IFC will tackle the following issues: Relationship between the Pandemic agreement and other instruments, notably IHR; Sovereignty; Institutional arrangements and alternatives; Structural and framework considerations; Ratification / accession; Entry into force.”**

PS: Related Twitter thread by [Balasubramaniam](#) (on a KEI session, ahead of this first IFC):

"Experts at a session on improving the transparency of contracts related to COVID-19 hosted by KEI on Tuesday argued for the inclusion of a chapter on transparency in a future pandemic treaty."

National Academy of medicine - The Influenza Imperative: An Urgent Need to Leverage Lessons from COVID-19 to Prepare for a Global Response to Seasonal and Pandemic Influenza

<https://nam.edu/the-influenza-imperative-an-urgent-need-to-leverage-lessons-from-covid-19-to-prepare-for-a-global-response-to-seasonal-and-pandemic-influenza/>

Discussion paper.

Geneva Graduate Institute – Governing Pandemics

<https://www.governingpandemics.org/>

Resource. “Covid-19 has exposed major gaps in the global system for governing preparedness for and responses to pandemics. **The Global Health Centre's Governing Pandemics initiative is tracking efforts to address these gaps. This site offers a one-stop information source on six issues that have been identified as requiring reform, and on the proposed pandemic treaty.....**”

International Studies Perspectives - The Unintended Consequences of Information Provision: The World Health Organization and Border Restrictions during COVID-19

C Worsnop, K Grepin et al ; <https://academic.oup.com/isp/advance-article-abstract/doi/10.1093/isp/ekac010/6710392?login=false>

“...Building on findings from the 2014 Ebola outbreak, we argue that without raising the cost of disregarding (or the benefits of following) recommendations against border restrictions, information from WHO about outbreak spread and severity leads states to impose border restrictions inconsistent with WHO's guidance. **Using new data from COVID-19, we show that WHO's public health emergency declaration and pandemic announcement are associated with increases in the number of states imposing border restrictions.....**”

TGH - Strengthening the Biological Weapons Convention's Contributions to Global Health Security

Aurelia Attal-Juncqua et al ; <https://www.thinkglobalhealth.org/article/strengthening-biological-weapons-conventions-contributions-global-health-security>

« Countering Russian disinformation creates opportunities to enhance the BWC's role against dangerous pathogens.”

“... The Ukraine consultation took place shortly before **BWC parties gather in November and December to shape the BWC's future at the treaty's ninth review conference.** This meeting provides BWC parties with a major opportunity to institutionalize the lessons from the consultation and set other ambitious goals concerning the complex and evolving biosecurity challenges facing countries for the foreseeable future. **The review conference offers a timely forum for mitigating the risk that Article V could be wielded as a political weapon**—leveraged in bad faith to sow distrust in legitimate biological pursuits—by formalizing consultation procedures and increasing transparency—steps that could incentivize more frequent and constructive use of Article V. Transparency builds trust, which is critical for increasing assurance that the biological sciences are being used responsibly and for peaceful purposes.”

“... **Many BWC stakeholders believe that a positive and concrete outcome at the Ninth Review Conference is necessary to demonstrate the treaty's ability to adapt to rapidly evolving biological capabilities and threats and to reinforce the global prohibition on biological weapons.**”

And a link:

Lancet - [Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System: 70 years of responding to the expected and preparing for the unexpected](#) (by T Ziegler et al)

Planetary health

AP - First public global database of fossil fuels launches

<https://apnews.com/article/united-nations-general-assembly-russia-ukraine-science-climate-and-environment-caf483a62b314ad5842f2d3e70badd73>

“A first-of-its-kind database for tracking the world’s fossil fuel production, reserves and emissions launches on Monday to coincide with climate talks taking place at the United Nations General Assembly in New York.”

*“The Global Registry of Fossil Fuels includes data from over 50,000 oil, gas and coal fields in 89 countries. That covers 75% of global reserves, production and emissions, and is available for public use, a first for a collection of this size. Until now there has been private data available for purchase, and analysis of the world’s fossil fuel usage and reserves. The International Energy Agency also maintains public data on oil, gas and coal, but it focuses on the demand for those fossil fuels, whereas this new database looks at what is yet to be burned. **The registry was developed by Carbon Tracker, a nonprofit think tank that researches the energy transition’s effect on financial markets, and the Global Energy Monitor, an organization that tracks a variety of energy projects around the globe....”***

For the database, see [Carbon tracker](#).

Guardian - Vulnerable countries demand global tax to pay for climate-led loss and damage

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/sep/19/vulnerable-countries-demand-global-tax-to-pay-for-climate-led-loss-and-damage>

“Poor nations exhort UN to consider ‘climate-related and justice-based’ tax on big fossil fuel users and air travel.”

*“Some of the world’s most vulnerable countries have prepared a paper, seen by the Guardian, for discussion this week at the [UN general assembly](#). It shows that **poor countries are preparing to ask for a “climate-related and justice-based” global tax**, as a way of funding payments for loss and damage suffered by the developing world. **The funds could be raised by a global carbon tax, a tax on airline travel, a levy on the heavily polluting and carbon-intensive bunker fuels used by ships, adding taxes to fossil fuel extraction, or a tax on financial transactions.** The discussion paper notes advantages and drawbacks to each of these, and the alternatives of raising funding from rich countries through the world’s development banks, such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the private sector....”*

The Nation - The White House Wants a Climate Denier Out as World Bank President

<https://www.thenation.com/article/environment/david-malpass-climate-denier/>

*“John Kerry, the United States special presidential envoy for climate, signaled Tuesday that **the Biden administration is working behind the scenes to remove the president of the World Bank, Trump appointee David Malpass. ...**”*

Related: [Climate groups from around world call on World Bank President David Malpass to be fired](#)

“Climate change organisations under the Big Shift Coalition have called on the World Bank to fire its President David Malpass. In a panel discussion at a New York Times event yesterday, Malpass refused to back climate science and was labeled a “climate denier” by former US Vice President Al Gore.....”

And via Devex - [World Bank chief clarifies climate beliefs amid calls for his ouster](#)

“Facing widespread calls for his ouster, World Bank President David Malpass defended his record on climate and walked back comments he made this week when he refused to definitively state that climate change is caused by humans burning fossil fuels.....”

Guardian - Burning world's fossil fuel reserves could emit 3.5tn tons of greenhouse gas

https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/sep/19/world-fossil-fuel-reserve-greenhouse-gas-emissions?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other

“The world will have released more planet-heating emissions than have occurred since the industrial revolution, analysis found.”

*“Burning the world's proven reserves of fossil fuels would emit more planet-heating emissions than have occurred since the industrial revolution, easily blowing the remaining carbon budget before societies are subjected to catastrophic global heating, a new analysis has found. **An enormous 3.5tn tons of greenhouse gas emissions will be emitted if governments allow identified reserves of coal, oil and gas to be extracted and used,** according to what has been described as the first public database of fossil fuel production.....”*

Reuters - Denmark becomes first to offer 'loss and damage' climate funding

<https://www.reuters.com/world/denmark-becomes-first-offer-loss-damage-climate-funding-2022-09-20/>

“Denmark on Tuesday pledged over \$13 million (100 million Danish crowns) to support developing nations that have experienced losses caused by climate disruptions, becoming the first country to offer “loss and damage” compensation to the most climate-vulnerable areas....”

See also **Development Today** - [Danes break deadlock in climate talks, offering funds for loss and damage](#)

*“Denmark is the first UN member to pledge funding to compensate poor countries for “loss and damage” due to climate change, **breaking a deadlock in international climate negotiations.** “*

Transnational Institute (primer) - From Crisis to Transformation

<https://www.tni.org/en/publication/just-transition-primer>

Primer on a ‘**Just transition**’.

PS: Do check out the **three main current global responses** (p. 21-...) to global instability/crises.

Nature (comment) - A cleaner future for flight — aviation needs a radical redesign

S Kallbekken et al; <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-022-02963-7>

*“**Efficiency and clean fuels won’t be enough.** Governments and industry must experiment with other approaches to bring the climate impact of aviation close to zero.”*

Guardian - Governments urged to act after oil giants accused of misleading public

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2022/sep/16/oil-giants-shell-bp-climate-crisis>

*“Documents suggest **Shell and BP staff privately downplayed public commitments on climate crisis.**”*

*“**Campaigners have urged governments to intervene after oil companies were accused of misleading the public about their commitment to reducing carbon emissions.** Oil and gas companies including Britain’s Shell and BP were urged to “stop their deception” this week as the US House committee on oversight and reform **released documents** showing that oil industry executives privately downplayed their public messages on efforts to tackle the climate crisis.....”*

Harvard investigation reveals social media as the new frontier of climate deception and delay

<https://www.greenpeace.org/eu-unit/issues/climate-energy/46388/harvard-investigation-social-media-new-frontier-climate-deception-delay/>

*“A new **Harvard University investigation commissioned by Greenpeace Netherlands, Three shades of green(washing)**, has tracked the social media activities of the largest car brands, airlines and oil and gas companies in Europe, revealing the shameless use of greenwashing and tokenism to leverage on the climate crisis. **The report** is the most thorough assessment of recent greenwashing by fossil fuel interests on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and YouTube.”*

Scientists for Global Responsibility - SGR launches 1.5°C living targets – sign up to pressure governments to act on climate

<https://www.sgr.org.uk/resources/sgr-launches-15degc-living-targets-sign-pressure-governments-act-climate>

“Scientists for Global Responsibility (SGR) has constructed a set of ten evidence-based [1.5°C living targets](#) that together will bring an individual’s lifestyle in line with the Paris climate goal.”

Time – We can’t have a stable climate if we keep destroying nature

J Rockström; [We Can’t Have a Stable Climate If We Keep Destroying Nature | Time](#)

*“This month, scientists from Conservation International and the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research released the Exponential Roadmap for Natural Climate Solutions, a first-of-its-kind blueprint for maximizing nature’s climate-stabilizing potential. In this [report](#), we propose a new guiding principle known as **the Carbon Law for Nature**: To limit planetary warming and keep 1.50C within sight, **we must reach net-zero land-sector emissions by 2030, then reach 10 billion tons of annual negative emissions by 2050**. No doubt, this is an ambitious target, but we have a realistic plan for achieving it. Our plan does not call for unproven technologies or science-fiction geoengineering projects. Instead, it relies on a toolkit of proven conservation measures, many of which are centuries-old and can be rapidly scaled.....”. Check out what it involves in terms of protection, management, and restoration.*

Link:

Lancet GH – [Safeguarding children's health in a changing global environment](#) (by A Binagwaho et al) *“...Three hazards of particular concern today are air pollution, toxic chemicals, and climate change. ...”*

Covid

Covid key news

Cidrap News - Global COVID-19 cases stabilize as deaths drop

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2022/09/global-covid-19-cases-stabilize-deaths-drop>

“After a 5-week drop, global COVID-19 cases stabilized last week, though deaths continued to decline, the World Health Organization (WHO) said today in its [weekly update](#) on the pandemic.”

“Cases were down in all but one of the six world regions, with the biggest drop in African countries (-35%). Cases were up 3% in the Western Pacific and down only 1% in Europe. Meanwhile, deaths declined 17% from the previous week, with countries reporting more than 9,800 fatalities to the WHO....”

Also with some info on WHO's take on **diversifying Omicron subvariants**.

Cidrap News – Biden's 'pandemic is over' comments muddle COVID messaging

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2022/09/bidens-pandemic-over-comments-muddle-covid-messaging>

See also the Highlights section. *“The comments prompt swift, sharp criticism from some public health experts.”* Here among others, the view of **M Osterholm**.

- See also twitter thread [L Gostin](#).
- [HHS Sec: 'The president is correct' that the COVID-19 pandemic is over'](#)

“ U.S. Health Sec. Xavier Becerra supported a surprise comment over the weekend from President Joe Biden, who declared the pandemic over.....”

PS: *“Vasan [NYC Health Commissioner], too, agreed with Biden's comments, noting that **the country is in a transitional phase of dealing with an infectious disease. "We are no longer in the emergency phase of the pandemic...we haven't yet defined what endemicity looks like," Vasan said.***

TGH - Is It the End of COVID-19 as We Know it?

C Murray; <https://www.thinkglobalhealth.org/article/it-end-covid-19-we-know-it>

“IHME Director Christopher Murray weighs in on the state of the pandemic, the new omicron vaccine, and flu season.”

*“...What I meant, and what I think the President means, **is an era of extraordinary emergency measures—not that the disease is going away. Because it's not.....”***

“...We can think of it as endemic, and that's probably the right way to think about COVID at this point.....”

Reuters - U.S. cutting global donations of Pfizer COVID shots as demand slows

[Reuters](#);

“The United States is significantly cutting back the number of Pfizer (PFE.N)/BioNTech (22UAY.DE) COVID-19 vaccine doses it will buy for donation to poorer nations this year, Pfizer said on Thursday, citing diminished demand for the shots in those countries.”

FT - Investors ditch vaccine stocks after Joe Biden says ‘pandemic is over’

<https://www.ft.com/content/c6fcbde9-9575-4c9c-a6eb-2c8796c2c5cb>

“Top job makers lose combined \$10bn of market value amid fears over growing public apathy.”

“Investors wiped more than \$10bn off the market value of the main Covid-19 vaccine makers on Monday after US president Joe Biden said “the pandemic is over”. Shares in Moderna, BioNTech and Novavax fell as much as 9 per cent while Pfizer, which has a much broader portfolio of products, fell as much as 2 per cent in early trading in New York. The S&P 500 index was roughly unchanged. Analysts said the sell-off reflected concerns over demand for Covid vaccines at a time of increasing public apathy and the message from leaders in the US and elsewhere that the crisis phase of the coronavirus pandemic is coming to an end.....”

WSJ – Asia to Roll Out First Inhaled and Nasal-Spray Covid Vaccines

https://www.wsj.com/articles/asia-to-roll-out-first-inhaled-and-nasal-spray-covid-vaccines-will-they-work-11663752601?mod=hp_listb_pos1

“New vaccines are far less studied than existing Covid-19 shots, as regulators in China and India are first to give the green light.”

Covid research & analysis

Science - The evolving SARS-CoV-2 epidemic in Africa: Insights from rapidly expanding genomic surveillance

<https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.abq5358>

*“Investment in SARS-CoV-2 sequencing in Africa over the past year has led to a major increase in the number of sequences generated, now exceeding 100,000 genomes, used to track the pandemic on the continent. Our results show an increase in the number of African countries able to sequence **domestically**, and highlight that local sequencing enables faster turnaround time and more regular routine surveillance. Despite limitations of low testing proportions, **findings from this genomic surveillance study underscore the heterogeneous nature of the pandemic and shed light on the distinct dispersal dynamics of Variants of Concern, particularly Alpha, Beta, Delta, and Omicron, on the continent....”***

NPR - Scientists debate how lethal COVID is. Some say it's now less risky than flu

<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2022/09/16/1122650502/scientists-debate-how-lethal-covid-is-some-say-its-now-less-risky-than-flu>

But not everybody agrees. “... “We have all been questioning, ‘When does COVID look like influenza?’” says Dr. [Monica Gandhi](#), an infectious disease specialist at the University of California, San Francisco. “And, I would say, ‘Yes, we are there.’” **Gandhi and other researchers argue that most people today have enough immunity — gained from vaccination, infection or both — to protect them against getting seriously ill from COVID.** And this is especially so since the omicron variant [doesn't appear to make people as sick as earlier strains](#), Gandhi says. So **unless a more virulent variant emerges, COVID's menace has diminished considerably for most people, which means that they can go about their daily lives, says Gandhi, “in a way that you used to live with endemic seasonal flu.” ...”**

“But there's still plenty of differing views on this topic. While the threat from COVID-19 may be approaching the peril the flu poses, skeptics doubt it's hit that point yet. “I'm sorry — I just disagree,” says Dr. [A Fauci...](#)” ...”

“... The debate over COVID's mortality rate hinges on what counts as a COVID death. Gandhi and other researchers argue that the daily death toll attributed to COVID [is exaggerated](#) because many deaths blamed on the disease are actually from other causes.”

CGD (policy paper) - Learning from Different Nations' Experiences with COVID-19: Models of Public Inquiry, Methods to Globally Network

A Glassman et al; <https://www.cgdev.org/publication/learning-different-nations-experiences-covid-19-models-public-inquiry-methods-globally>

“... This paper looks in detail at one important approach for learning from the pandemic: country-level COVID-19 commissions, i.e. interdisciplinary, country-level and country-led bodies carrying out “lessons learned” reviews of the given country’s experience confronting COVID-19. This paper examines how country-level COVID-19 commissions could be a powerful tool to generate lasting changes in public policy and spending on pandemic preparedness and response, key questions for countries to consider as they develop their own commissions and thematic areas they could focus on, as well as how to link learning at the local and national levels to analysis and recommendations made by international bodies. ...”

BMJ Feature -How “long covid” is shedding light on postviral syndromes

<https://www.bmj.com/content/378/bmj.o2188>

“The global burden of long covid has put a spotlight on the long neglected mystery of postviral syndromes. [Brian Owens](#) asks what’s changing.”

“Finding a common cause of the various syndromes would be a breakthrough in postviral syndrome research. Several hypotheses have been put forward, including persistent but undetected infections, autoimmune responses, dysregulation of the microbiome, and tissue damage.⁴ But Andrew Lloyd of the University of New South Wales mostly dismisses those ideas. “The lessons we’ve learned from other post-infection syndromes is that it is not a persistent infection, not immunological, not a simple psychological disorder,” he says. Among researchers who study these illnesses, including long covid, **the smart money is now on some kind of disorder of the central**

nervous system, he explains. And since there's no clear evidence of any major structural problems in the brain, this suggests that the disorder lies at the cellular and protein level....."

Stat Plus - Have researchers hit a wall in the hunt for severe Covid drugs?

<https://www.statnews.com/2022/09/19/have-researchers-hit-a-wall-in-the-hunt-for-severe-covid-drugs/>

Gated, though.

NYT - Why Omicron might stick around

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/22/science/omicron-covid-variant.html>

"Omicron, the 13th named variant of the coronavirus, seems to have a remarkable capacity to evolve new tricks."

Links:

- Eric Topol - [To boost or not to boost: should that be the question?](#)

He concludes: *"In summary, there's ample evidence that a 3rd shot or 4th shot (1st or 2nd booster) will help provide important protection, and that is especially vital for people age 50+, with ample support for the recommendation for all age 12 and older to get boosters. The right question is about the 5th booster, for which there are no clinical data yet, but will likely extend a high level of protection against severe Covid. But 4 or 6 months isn't going to cut it as a public health protection policy, as there will be further attrition of interest and uptake for boosters as we go forward. Fortunately, we're declining in cases and will likely experience a fairly quiescent phase (further descent, no surge) with respect to infections and hospitalizations for the next couple of months until BA.2.75.2 gets legs (or an alternative BA.2 derivative). **Now is the time to stop chasing SARS-CoV-2 and start mounting an aggressive get-ahead strategy.** There's the intertwined triad to contend with: more immune escape, more evidence of imprinting, and the inevitability of new variants that are already laying a foundation for spread. **Enough of the booster after booster, shot-centric approach; it has been formidable, lifesaving, sickness-avoiding, and essential as a bootstrap, temporizing measure. Now we need to press on with innovation for more durable, palatable, and effective solutions. They are in our reach.**"*

- BMJ GH - [Experiences of violence and discrimination among LGBTQ+ individuals during the COVID-19 pandemic: a global cross-sectional analysis](#)

Monkeypox

Prospect - How a Danish Company Grabbed Control of the Monkeypox Vaccine

Z Rizvi ; <https://prospect.org/health/how-danish-company-grabbed-control-of-monkeypox-vaccine/>

“German government science and American public money underpinned the development of Jynneos, but a Danish company now controls it.”

Cfr tweet: *“Jynneos, the monkeypox vaccine, is yet another example of a medication created with public money and public science falling into the hands of a for-profit company that controls access for profit. From @ZainRizvi of @Public_Citizen.”*

Cidrap News - Low risk of monkeypox spread noted in health workers

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2022/09/low-risk-monkeypox-spread-noted-health-workers>

“In a report today of 313 healthcare workers (HCWs) exposed to monkeypox in Colorado, none of them contracted the virus, despite few wearing the recommended personal protective equipment (PPE) or receiving postexposure prophylaxis (PEP) vaccination.....”

Economist - Makers of monkeypox drugs face a rash of orders

[Economist;](#)

“Defeating a worldwide outbreaks falls on two small drugmakers.”

PS: *“....As monkeypox hit the headlines over the summer, investors piled in. The market value of Bavarian Nordic ballooned from \$1.4bn in early May to nearly \$4bn in August. siga’s soared four-fold, to almost \$2bn. Both have fallen back since, by about two-fifths and a half, respectively, as concerns about the next pandemic receded. But they remain twice as valuable, more or less, as they were in the spring. Not so poxy anymore.”*

Infectious diseases & NTDs

Devex - Uganda declares outbreak of rare Ebola strain with no approved vaccine

<https://www.devex.com/news/uganda-declares-outbreak-of-rare-ebola-strain-with-no-approved-vaccine-104034>

*“The government of Uganda declared an outbreak of Ebola in the central part of the country on Tuesday. **The strain detected is a relatively rare strain, called the Sudan strain**, which doesn’t have an approved vaccine that can prevent its spread. It’s been a decade since this strain was reported globally.....”*

Related – HPW - [Uganda Detects Rare Ebola Strain With No Approved Vaccine, Marburg outbreak ends in Ghana.](#)

And updates via UN News - [Seven Ebola cases, one death confirmed in Uganda, WHO scales up response.](#)

And analysis in the Telegraph - [Doctors scramble to contain new Ebola outbreak as virus spreads](#)

“A strain of the virus with no approved vaccine has been detected near a busy road which connects the Ugandan capital to the DRC.”

Reuters - PAHO says Brazil, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Peru at very high risk for polio as vaccination dwindles

<https://www.reuters.com/article/health-polio-americas/paho-says-brazil-dominican-republic-haiti-peru-at-very-high-risk-for-polio-as-vaccination-dwindles-idUSKBN2QM1KA>

“The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) on Wednesday said Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Peru are at very high risk for the reintroduction of polio, as dwindling vaccination rates during the coronavirus pandemic has led to historic lows in protection against the illness....”

Health Affairs Forefront - To Meet Global HIV Prevention Goals, Expand The PEPFAR-FDA Tentative Approval Pathway

A Mishra et al; <https://www.healthaffairs.org/content/forefront/meet-global-hiv-prevention-goals-expand-pepfar-fda-tentative-approval-pathway>

*“... Worldwide HIV prevention efforts have failed to achieve global targets in reducing new HIV infections. This failure has been driven in part by a lack of HIV prevention options that reflect the needs and lifestyles of individuals in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). **Emerging HIV prevention tools have the potential to remedy this inequity but accelerating access to them will require a global effort. The President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) can play a catalytic role in this process by expanding the review and approval policy for HIV commodities in 2023, when PEPFAR’s mandate is to be renewed....”***

Links:

- BMJ GH - [Approaches to improving the efficiency of HIV programme investments”](#) (By M Shahid, G Yamey et al)

*“Current annual funding levels are insufficient to tackle the global burden of HIV and it is unlikely that these levels will increase substantially in the near future. **Improving the efficiency of investments in HIV control programmes is, thus, critical to the ongoing HIV response.** While there is considerable variation between countries, **the most promising areas for efficiency include measures to:** (a) reallocate resources to the most effective interventions, including testing and antiretroviral therapy, (b) reduce the unit cost of delivering key services via better targeting, procurement and management practices, (c) use community-based treatment support and target models to deliver interventions to the most affected groups and (d) use cost-effective interventions such as demand creation incentives, HIV self-testing, and integration of services.”*

- Global Public Health – [When is the use of suboptimal treatment in functionally untreatable multi-drug resistant tuberculosis morally permissible?](#)

AMR

Telegraph - Superbug 'pandemic' stalks India as antibiotic resistance jumps 10pc in a year

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/global-health/science-and-disease/superbug-pandemic-stalks-india-antibiotic-resistance-jumps-10pc/>

"Report warns that, if immediate measures are not taken, AMR has the potential to take the form of a pandemic in the near future."

"India faces a "pandemic" of superbugs, the country's top public health experts have warned, as resistance to common antibiotics has jumped by 10 per cent in India in just one year. In the fifth edition of its annual report on antimicrobial resistance (AMR), the Indian Council of Medical Research warned that urgent action is needed to prevent a major health crisis caused by the rampant misuse of antibiotics.... "The resistance level is increasing to five to ten per cent every year for broad spectrum antimicrobials, which are highly misused," said Dr Kamini Walia, who led the ICMR's report.The report, published this week, warned that only 43 per cent of pneumonia infections in India could be treated with first line antibiotics in 2021 – down from 65 per cent in 2016."

"... "We could absolutely see a pandemic driven by AMR infections in India," said Ramanan Laxminarayan, director of the One Health Trust, a global public health think tank. "It is certainly within the realms of possibility, it could be next year or over the next two decades...."

Critical Public Health - Vulnerability and antimicrobial resistance

A Broom et al ; <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09581596.2022.2123733>

"...vulnerability is rarely discussed in the AMR literature, except in terms of 'disproportionate effects' of AMR. In this paper, we offer a reconceptualisation of vulnerability as manifest in the AMR scene, showing that vulnerability is both a predictable consequence of AMR and, critically, productive of AMR to begin with. We underline why comprehending vulnerability as embodied, assembled, multivalent and reproduced through surveillance matters for international efforts to combat resistance."

NCDs

HPW - Closing the Treatment Gap for Children with Severe NCDs

<https://healthpolicy-watch.news/closing-the-treatment-gap-for-children-with-severe-ncds/>

"Children with type 1 diabetes living in rural parts of the world's poorest countries often struggle to get life-saving insulin as programmes addressing non-communicable diseases (NCDs) tend to be urban-based and adult-focused. But an initiative to address life-threatening NCDs affecting children and young adults – particularly type 1 diabetes, rheumatic and congenital heart disease, and sickle

cell disease – is being extended to rural parts of a number of African and Southeast Asian countries.”

*“Called **PEN-Plus**, the initiative is based on the World Health Organization’s (WHO) Package of Essential NCD Interventions (WHO PEN), which encourages the decentralisation of NCD services to the primary care level. The “plus” indicates the inclusion of these more severe NCDs that mostly affect young people.”*

*“... **PEN-Plus** was first pioneered by the Rwandan Health Ministry together with the international NGO, Partners in Health, and has since been extended to 22 countries. Ten of these countries were announced this week at a meeting hosted by NCDI Poverty Network, Helmsley Charitable Trust, UNICEF, and WHO AFRO.....”*

*“At last month’s WHO Regional Committee for Africa, the 47 member states also adopted **PEN-Plus**, committing to achieve high levels of coverage by 2030.”*

Link:

- [BMJ GH - **Economic impacts of overweight and obesity \(OAO\): current and future estimates for 161 countries**](#)

Among the results: *“ **The economic impact of OAO in 2019 is estimated at 2.19% of global gross domestic product (GDP) ranging on average from US\$20 per capita in Africa to US\$872 per capita in the Americas and from US\$6 in low-income countries to US\$1110 in HICs. If current trends continue, by 2060, the economic impacts from OAO are projected to rise to 3.29% of GDP globally....”***

See also HPW coverage - [The Hefty Price Tag of Obesity](#)

*“After three years of number-crunching, **economists have come up with a price tag for what overweight and obesity cost countries in 2019, and it’s a staggering 2.19% of their gross domestic product (GDP).** On average, African countries paid \$20 per capita to address the consequences of overweight and obesity, while in countries in the Americas, the cost per capita was \$872, according to a study of 161 countries published in BMJ Global Health on Wednesday. **But the cost is predicted to balloon to 3.3% of GDP by 2060** if nothing is done to curb overweight and obesity, according to the study....”*

*“**The report provides the first ever country-specific global estimate of the economic impacts of obesity-related non-communicable diseases,**” the lead author, **Dr Rachel Nugent** from RTI International, told a media briefing this week....”*

Mental health & psycho-social wellbeing

UN News - New UN guide helps support perinatal mental healthcare in 'stigma-free' environment

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/09/1127041>

“Almost one in five women will experience a mental health condition during pregnancy or in the year after the birth, the UN health agency said on Monday, launching new recommendations for health authorities worldwide, to help improve women’s lives.”

Check out WHO’s new [guide for integration of perinatal mental health in maternal and child health services.](#)

Social & commercial determinants of health

BMJ GH - Identifying kidney trade networks using web scraping data

Meng-Hao Li et al; <https://gh.bmj.com/content/7/9/e009803>

*“Kidney trade has been on the rise despite the domestic and international law enforcement aiming to protect the vulnerable population from potential exploitation. **Regional hubs are emerging in several parts of the world including South Asia, Central America, the Middle East and East Asia. Kidney trade networks reported in these hot spots are often complex systems** involving several players such as buyers, sellers and surgery countries operating across international borders so that they can bypass domestic laws in sellers and buyers’ countries. The exact patterns of the country networks are, however, largely unknown due to the lack of a systematic approach to collect the data. Most of the kidney trade information is currently available in the form of case studies, court materials and news articles or reports, and no comprehensive database exists at this time. **The present study thus explored online newspaper scraping to systematically collect 10 419 news articles from 24 major English newspapers in South Asia (January 2016 to May 2019) and build transnational kidney trade networks at the country level.”***

BMJ Open - Describing and mapping scientific articles on alcohol globally for the period 2010–2021: a bibliometric analysis

L Jaeger, R Marten et al ; <https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/12/9/e063365.full>

Conclusion: *“**Although the attributable harm of alcohol is known to affect more significantly lower-income and middle-income countries, scientific publications primarily report on HIC contexts by authors from HICs.** Research themes reflect known cost-effective policy actions, though skewed towards HICs and a focus on consumption. The implementation of context-specific alcohol control policies requires addressing the determinants of the uneven geographical and thematic distribution of research.”*

Guardian - Small number of huge companies dominate global food chain, study finds

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2022/sep/22/small-number-of-huge-companies-dominate-global-food-chain-study-finds>

“The dominance of a small number of big companies over the global food chain is increasing, aided by the rising use of “big data” and artificial intelligence, new research has found. “

“Only two companies control 40% of the global commercial seed market, compared with 10 companies controlling the same proportion of the market 25 years ago, according to the ETC Group, an eco-justice organisation. Agricultural commodity trading is similarly concentrated, with 10 commodity traders in 2020 dominating a market worth half a trillion dollars....”

Link: preprint - [Design and approval of the nutritional warnings’ policy in Peru: Milestones, key stakeholders, and policy drivers for its approval](#)

Sexual & Reproductive health rights

BMJ Editorial - Menstrual health for all requires wider high level commitment

J Martin et al ; <https://www.bmj.com/content/378/bmj.o2222>

« Access to affordable period products is not nearly enough. » A few quotes:

“...accessibility to menstrual health is not just about the affordability of products, it is about creating enabling the environments that address psychosocial and physical constructs so that everyone who menstruates has the information, education, hygiene facilities, and body autonomy to manage it....”

“...By making period products available, however, we also run the risk of curtailing the broader dialogue needed about menstruation. It is therefore essential that we continue to push for accessibility to menstrual health for women, adolescent girls, transgender men, and non-binary people who menstruate, including those living with disabilities, experiencing homelessness or displacement, or who are incarcerated, as well as within the workplace. Comprehensive programmes that address the full scope of menstrual health are required. They should be tailored to respond to each context to avoid creating a demand for period pads in settings where they are not available. This could be seen as unethical and an attempt to universalise menstrual health needs through the translation of the high income countries’ perception of menstrual health into low to middle income contexts. To decolonise and diversify the menstrual health narrative, programmes should be developed with target populations so that intersectional needs, including socioeconomic status, geography, gender, race, and ethnicity, reflect their reproductive health priorities. We need commitment from multilateral organisations at the global level. We call on the International Labor Organization to amend article 3 of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination (CEDAW) to add reproductive rights to the list of human rights....”

Lancet GH - COVID-19 in pregnancy: evidence from LMICs

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X\(22\)00410-7/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X(22)00410-7/fulltext)

Comment linked to a new Lancet GH [study](#) in Malawi.

Access to medicines & health technology

I-Mak (Report) – Overpatented, Overpriced

<https://www.i-mak.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Overpatented-Overpriced-2022-FINAL.pdf>

Short report by a consumer advocacy group, on how **Big Pharma is gaming the system in the US**, exploiting US patent laws to keep generics off-market.

Stat - Brazil dismisses antitrust complaint against Gilead over pricing for a hepatitis C drug

<https://www.statnews.com/pharmalot/2022/09/15/gilead-brazil-antitrust-hepatitis/>

“In a victory for Gilead Sciences, Brazilian antitrust authorities dismissed a complaint filed by several advocacy groups that alleged the company charged “abusive” prices for a hepatitis C treatment.....”

Human resources for health

HP&P - The role of community health worker-based care in post-conflict settings: a systematic review

<https://academic.oup.com/heapol/advance-article/doi/10.1093/heapol/czac072/6705072?searchresult=1>

By K Werner et al.

And a tweet by Nina Schwalbe :

*“How do we reach children across Africa who have not received vaccines (“zero dose kids”)?
“Community health workers. 2 million are required fully paid. This will result in less and less risk of zero dose children.” Clear call to action from @AfricaCDC head @laktarr001.”*

Decolonize Global Health

The Journal of Peasant studies - The ideology of innovation: philanthropy and racial capitalism in global food governance

M Canfield; <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/03066150.2022.2099739>

“The converging crises of growing food insecurity and climate change have produced a global struggle to govern food systems. While a range of actors promote innovation as a solution to transform food systems, Bill Gates has leveraged his vast philanthropic funding to advocate for a

particular vision of technology-driven innovation led by the private sector. **This article elaborates Gates' 'ideology of innovation' and analyzes its continuities with an earlier ideology developed to legitimize racial capitalism-improvement. In doing so, it reveals how Gates' ideology serves to reproduce racialized regimes of ownership and relations of dependence in the information economy.**"

See also some related tweets from the author:

*"The article sketches **3 features of the Gates Foundation's approach to innovation**: (1) the supremacy of Northern knowledge; (2) the duty of states to adopt liberal IP rights and technologies; and (3) the reform of multilateral institutions through multistakeholder partnerships."*

"I argue that the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation's ideology of "innovation" recalibrates the ideology of improvement, which was articulated by colonial theorists to justify the enclosure of Indigenous lands based on culturally contingent ideas of race, nature, and labor."

"The ideology of innovation, which Gates has articulated through his work on the African continent, operates to renew racial regimes of ownership for the information age by recognizing only certain forms of knowledge as innovative and only certain subjects as value creators."

BMJ GH (Editorial) - Working in the wake: transformative global health in an imperfect world

R Burgess et al; <https://gh.bmj.com/content/7/9/e010520>

*"...In her recent work **In the Wake: On Blackness and Being**, Christina Sharpe asks us to imagine, and acknowledge, that the world and life of Black people, exist in and are shaped by the enduring afterlife of slavery, colonialism and racism. **This moment in global health is highly attuned to this fact. There is an 'awakening' to the fact that every dimension of global health praxis has been inexorably shaped by its past.....**"*

African Affairs - The potential and pitfalls of collaborating with development organizations and policy makers in Africa

<https://academic.oup.com/afraf/article-abstract/117/466/130/4626916?login=true>

By S Dodsworth et al. *"In this Research Note, we draw on a collaborative research project with the Westminster Foundation for Democracy to illuminate these difficulties....."*

Miscellaneous

Eurodad - The Emperor's New Clothes: What's new about the EU's Global Gateway?

https://www.eurodad.org/the_emperor_s_new_clothes_what_s_new_about_the_eu_s_global_gateway?utm_campaign=newsletter_22_09_2022&utm_medium=email&utm_source=eurodad

“In 2021, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen presented the EU Global Gateway in her State of the Union speech. She claimed it was the EU’s new flagship strategy, investing in infrastructure to counter the influence of China’s Belt and Road Initiative. One year later, a new Eurodad and Counter Balance report reveals that the Global Gateway lacks a clear development mandate.”

Partners In Health Establishes \$200M Paul E. Farmer Scholarship Fund to Educate Health Care Leaders in Africa

<https://www.pih.org/press/paul-farmer-scholarship-fund-educate-health-care-leaders>

“The fund will support students attending PIH’s University of Global Health Equity in Rwanda and help fulfill Farmer’s mission to educate the next generation of global health leaders.”

“Today Partners In Health (PIH) announced plans for a \$200 million scholarship fund for students attending the University of Global Health Equity (UGHE) in Rwanda, as part of a \$92 million catalytic commitment by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, CRI Foundation, and other donors. The Paul E. Farmer Scholarship Fund was announced on stage at the Clinton Global Initiative by Partners In Health CEO Dr. Sheila Davis, UGHE Vice Chancellor Dr. Agnes Binagwaho, and Melinda French Gates, co-chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. As part of her remarks, French Gates announced a \$50 million commitment to the fund.....”

“... The fund will cover the tuition, room, board, and expenses of 3,000 medical students and global health delivery degree candidates over the next 25 years. It is named in honor of PIH Co-founder Dr. Paul Farmer, who passed away in February while teaching at UGHE....”

Telegraph - This man wants to give \$1,000 to every poor person on Earth – but could his plan really work?

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/global-health/climate-and-people/man-wants-give-1000-every-poor-person-earth-could-plan-really/>

“...Rory Stewart, former cabinet minister, reveals a radical approach to tackle extreme poverty he has just been appointed President of GiveDirectly, an American NGO trying to shake the foundations of the aid world. GiveDirectly’s pitch is as radical as it is simple. They argue that if you give every family in an impoverished community a no-strings-attached one-time payment of \$1,000 (£865) – roughly four days’ salary for a typical UN staffer – you can transform their lives for the better in almost every way.”

Devex - Global development is in 'crisis,' World Bank president says

<https://www.devex.com/news/global-development-is-in-crisis-world-bank-president-says-104029>

“Global development is in “crisis,” World Bank President David Malpass said Monday, as the world tries to fend off multiple crises while still battling a two-and-a-half-year-old COVID-19 pandemic that continues to kill people and wreak havoc on the global economy. Speaking at the Concordia Annual Summit during the the United Nations General Assembly annual gathering in New York City, Malpass explained that countries are now struggling to improve their people’s livelihoods.”

“That’s hard to do,” he said. “Development, I think, is in crisis right now, without a direction of how to get that done for a lot of the countries.” The existential threat of climate change combined with the war in Ukraine and soaring inflation have injected volatility and uncertainty into the global economy, a reality that may continue for a while.....”

Devex - Beyond the US: Dr. Anthony Fauci's global health contributions

<https://www.devex.com/news/beyond-the-us-dr-anthony-fauci-s-global-health-contributions-103941>

“Fauci is known as the chief architect behind PEPFAR. But his long-time colleagues say he has also done a lot of work in advancing research for a range of diseases afflicting the global south and in mentoring other scientists and global health leaders.”

China Global South - China’s Write-Off of 23 African Loans Doesn’t Move the Debt Needle: Report

<https://chinaglobalsouth.com/analysis/chinas-write-off-of-23-african-loans-doesnt-move-the-debt-needle-report/>

“China’s announcement last month that it is canceling 23 interest-free loans (IFLs) to seventeen African countries covers at most about 1% of African debt to China, according to a new study by Boston University’s Global Development Policy Center. ... Last month’s cancellation announcement drew much media attention, but Beijing didn’t mention specific amounts or the countries affected. The authors of the report also didn’t have access to official numbers. However, using debt databases, they estimated the written-off debt to range between \$45 million and \$610 million, with an average of \$192.65 million.....”

UN News - Closing gender pay gaps is more important than ever

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/09/1126901>

“On average, women globally are paid about 20 per cent less than men, the International Labour (ILO) Organization said on Saturday, [International Equal Pay Day](#)....”

Papers & reports

BMC Health Services research - Health systems resilience in practice: a scoping review to identify strategies for building resilience

L Forsgren, K Blanchett et al;

<https://bmchealthservres.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12913-022-08544-8>

“Research on health systems resilience has focused primarily on the theoretical development of the concept and its dimensions. There is an identified knowledge gap in the research on how to build

resilience in health systems in practice and ‘what works’ in different contexts. **The aim of this study is to identify practical strategies for building resilient health systems from the empirical research on health systems resilience.....”**

Lancet (Lecture) - Has traditional medicine had its day? The need to redefine academic medicine

V Dzau et al; [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(22\)01603-8/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(22)01603-8/fulltext)

“The field of medicine has traditionally focused on care for individual patients, with emphasis on disease treatment and less focus on disease deterrence and the socioeconomic and behavioural factors that impact health and wellbeing. Over the years, this model has served patient care well. However, the most pressing issues facing health and health care today—including non-communicable diseases (NCDs), an ageing global population, and complex, systemic barriers to health equity—are not easily solved with an individual patient approach. Infectious diseases outbreaks such as COVID-19 present similar challenges, in that effective response and preparedness all require population-level management in addition to direct clinical care. This combination of strategies is made difficult by the continued fragmentation of the traditional medical system and a lack of a strong relationship with community public health infrastructure....”

Their conclusion: “ The title of this paper asks the question, **has traditional medicine had its day? The answer is a strong no. Over the years, the medical model has served patients well. Our society needs the dedicated practitioners of medicine to provide direct compassionate patient care and retain the important attributes of traditional medicine. However, to address the increasing challenges in health in the current era, traditional medicine must evolve to meet the demands of our time. Medicine must extend from the traditional individual patient-disease focus to promote prevention and alignment with public health and social needs. The foundation of traditional medicine is rooted in the education, research, and practice of academic medicine. To change traditional medicine, it is necessary to redefine academic medicine. Over the past decade, academic medicine has faced rapid, dramatic changes, including the impact of a global pandemic. Given the complex, systematic challenges facing global health care today, there is a need to transition away from the bench-to-bedside model to an approach that more accurately reflects the need for attention to social determinants of health, healthy equity, and broad population-level needs: the bench-to-bedside-to-population-to-society model.”**

Health Research Policy & systems - Framing rehabilitation through health policy and systems research: priorities for strengthening rehabilitation

A Cieza, A Kwamie et al ; <https://health-policy-systems.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12961-022-00903-5>

« Recent estimates report that 2.4 billion people with health conditions globally could benefit from rehabilitation. While the benefits of rehabilitation for individuals and society have been described in the literature, many individuals, especially in low- and middle-income countries do not have access to quality rehabilitation. As the need for rehabilitation continues to increase, it is crucial that health systems are adequately prepared to meet this need. Practice- and policy-relevant evidence plays an important role in health systems strengthening efforts. The aim of this paper is to report on the outcome of a global consultative process to advance the development of a research framework to

stimulate health policy and systems research (HPSR) for rehabilitation, in order to generate evidence needed by key stakeholders....”

Values for a post-pandemic future - Rhetorics of Resilience and Extended Crises: Reasoning in the Moral Situation of Our Post-Pandemic World

S Copeland et al ; https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-031-08424-9_13

One chapter from a new book, ‘Values for a post-pandemic future’.

Global Health Science: & Practice - Health Policy and Systems Research Capacities in Ethiopia and Ghana: Findings From a Self-Assessment

Viroj T***** et al ; https://www.ghspjournal.org/content/10/Supplement_1/e2100715

“Given the health systems-development challenges in Ethiopia and Ghana, the current level of government investment in health policy and systems research (HPSR) is inadequate to support evidence-informed policies. Reliance on donor funding for health policy and systems research is not sustainable, nor does it encourage researchers to be responsive to a country’s health priorities. Despite limited HPSR capacity, research portfolios have responded to country priorities in relation to communicable, maternal, neonatal, and nutritional diseases—as well as expansion of health service coverage—as part of moving toward universal health coverage...”

Lancet Digital health (series) - Translating data in a pandemic

<https://www.thelancet.com/series/translating-data-in-a-pandemic>

*“During the global COVID-19 pandemic, researchers and clinicians have investigated how best to leverage technology and big data to provide virtual clinical care, model the effect of health policies on transmission, identify novel therapeutic treatments, and more. But these efforts have been hampered by challenges to collecting and sharing real-world data and developing accurate forecasting models. **This Series in The Lancet Digital Health explores these challenges and identifies potential solutions that can be applied to future infectious disease outbreaks.** The solutions include standardising data capture and codes, mandating adherence to reporting guidelines developed for modelling studies, ensuring datasets are representative across a range of sociodemographic factors, and encouraging better communication of findings to the public via a sustainable information-sharing system. Implementing these solutions will ensure future outbreak research and actionable outcomes will be robust, accurate, and equitable.”*

The Development World: Conflicts of Interest at All Levels

Valéry Ridde et Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardan ; <https://journals.openedition.org/ried/1530>

*“We analyze the multitude of conflicts of interest to which all actors in the development chain are subject. Our aim is to reflect on how the findings of research and evaluations conducted on development interventions of all kinds can be biased as a result. **This analysis rests on an inclusive definition of conflict of interest**, which exists whenever an actor’s public stance is constrained by interests that put pressure on him or her to either express statements that contradict his or her own*

perceptions or knowledge, or to withhold criticism that he or she would otherwise be prepared to express. **We illustrate the analysis with many cases based on our long experience in the field.**

Tweets of the week

Ilona Kickbusch

*“It’s clear - there is little new to say in all the events at the #UNGA both on #UHC or on #pandemics - the meetings reiterate the **tragedy of the unwillingness to act** - at global collective level but also at national level by #investment in health.”*

Podcasts & webinars

Global Health Matters Podcast - The health journey of refugees and migrants is global health

<https://tdr.who.int/global-health-matters-podcast/the-health-journey-of-refugees-and-migrants-is-global-health>

The latest episode, re **the health of refugees and migrants**. *“This podcast episode lays out the key issues for the listener and through our guests it builds an awareness to ensure this topic gets better attention in the future. Guests, Reem Mussa and Eugen Ghita, share their expertise and lived experiences with our host, [Garry Aslanyan](#).....”*