

IHP News 883: AI summary & some key reads

Introduction

The weekly newsletter begins with a reflection on the **extreme commercialization of football**, noting the Champions League final's links to authoritarian regimes and a FIFA presidency tied to controversial political figures. Shifting to global health, the editor highlights the **Ebola outbreak in the DRC**, where despite a "rapidly evolving situation," WHO officials express cautious optimism. In Ghana, the community faces significant fear following the passage of a bill **criminalizing LGBTQ+ activities**, which coincides with a conservative inter-parliamentary conference in Accra. Additionally, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio's recent testimony suggests a potential **re-engagement with Gavi**, reflecting a shift in the Trump administration's stance on multilateral health security.

Featured Article

"Transcending Boundaries: From Inner Embodiment to Planetary Health," proposes a new framework for the climate-health nexus. Authors B. van Mierlo and W. van de Put argue that planetary health is fundamentally challenged by a **crisis of disconnection and alienation** rooted in contemporary self-optimization and social acceleration. They suggest that modern societies suffer from **dysregulated and disembodied nervous systems**, which manifest as defensive behaviors and extractive patterns toward the world. The piece concludes that expanding emotional and embodied capacities is essential for fostering the connection and care needed to address ecological degradation.

Highlights of the Week

Read of the Week

The **World Inequality Lab (WIL)** released the "Global Justice Report," presenting a sweeping vision for planetary survival that grounds human development in **planetary habitability**. The report proposes bold policies, such as **hefty wealth taxes on billionaires** (reducing their share of global wealth from 6% to 0.05%) and halving average annual working hours to 1,000. Central to the plan is the concept of "**sufficiency**"—prospering without excessive consumption—and the creation of a **Global Justice Fund** to increase world education and healthcare spending to 38% of GDP.

World No Tobacco Day On May 31, the WHO urged governments to protect youth from **nicotine addiction**, warning that tobacco companies are deliberately engineering products like **nicotine pouches** to appeal to adolescents. The campaign highlights that 40 million children aged 13–15 already use tobacco products, and calls for bans on flavors and marketing that target a new generation.

Ebola PHEIC: Overview of the Past Week The Ebola outbreak in the DRC is now the **third-largest on record**, with suspected cases passing 1,000 before being refined to 321 confirmed cases. WHO Director-General Tedros emphasizes that **community trust and ownership** will be decisive in containing the Bundibugyo strain. Meanwhile, in Kenya, a court suspended plans for a **US-backed quarantine facility** for Americans exposed to Ebola following intense backlash from medical workers who feared the country was being used as a "dumping ground".

Ebola PHEIC: More Analysis, Advocacy, Snippets, ... Analysis suggests the outbreak may have been spreading **undetected since January**, representing a collective failure of global health security. There is an **urgent need for rapid diagnostic tests** for the Bundibugyo species, as current kits are manual and slow. Funding remains a critical gap; while the African Union estimates a \$318 million requirement, African governments have only pledged about **10% of the funding**, testing the continent's rhetoric regarding health sovereignty.

More on PPPR, GHS & Health Emergencies Africa CDC Director Jean Kaseya linked the Ebola emergency to ongoing negotiations for a **Pathogen Access and Benefit Sharing System**, emphasizing the importance of accessing countermeasures during crises. In Europe, the Commission remains committed to the pandemic agreement but continues to **defend intellectual property rights**, leading to tensions with low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). Additionally, the UK invested £25 million to strengthen pandemic preparedness in **Southeast Asia**.

AMR A new UN report warns that **antibiotic use in livestock** could rise by 30% over the next 15 years without intervention, potentially having disastrous impacts on human resistance to essential medicines.

More on Global Health Reform (& Early Post-2030 Brainstorm) The World Health Assembly (WHA) reaffirmed a commitment to the "**Accra Reset**" and joint reform processes. However, critics warn that the reform architecture often remains fundamentally the same despite sounding different, failing to address **structural dependencies** and global inequalities. A new paradigm is being sought that views global health as a **political and moral project** rather than just a technical one.

Future of Development Cooperation Gates Foundation CEO Mark Suzman argues the world can "**do more with less**" by investing in local capacity and making aid unnecessary within 20 years. Conversely, the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) is under review to move beyond the traditional "**donors' club**" model, seeking to become a more inclusive platform for negotiating development norms.

More on Global Health Governance & Financing/Funding The US State Department is reclaiming control over its relationship with **Gavi** in a move described as a rebuke of the "Secretary Kennedy" approach. To survive funding cuts, Gavi is reducing its headcount by 30% and **trialing AI** for more accurate vaccine demand forecasting. Additionally, **Erna Solberg** has been selected as the new Chair of the Global Fund Board.

Debt Reform & Global Tax Justice Ghana's President Mahama called for **faster and fairer debt restructuring** mechanisms, emphasizing that Africa needs investment and climate finance rather than traditional aid. Experts are pushing for a **permanent sovereign debt restructuring mechanism** grounded in human rights and justice, housed closer to debtors than creditors.

Bilateral Health Agreements & US Global Health Strategy Implementation plans for the "**America First Global Health Strategy**" in countries like Uganda have been criticized as being "thin on explanations" and public health metrics. Reports indicate that some African nations are **bridling at US demands** for private health data and access to minerals in exchange for assistance.

NCDs A milestone WHA resolution recognized **fatty liver disease** (steatotic liver disease) as a critical missing piece of the global NCD response. Simultaneously, a Lancet Commission warned of a **global cancer workforce crisis**, projecting a shortfall of 100 million staff by 2050, particularly in Africa and Asia.

Determinants of Health New research reveals that **tobacco companies** played a significant role in engineering the **ultra-processed food industry**, leveraging their expertise in flavor and processing to create addictive products. Additionally, the ILO is finalizing the first international convention to safeguard workers in the **gig economy**.

SRHR & Women's Health Pascale Allotey (WHO) delivered a hard-hitting address on the future of sexual and reproductive health and rights. **Melinda French Gates** committed \$215 million to women's health, expanding her focus beyond maternal care to include **menopause and mental health support**.

AI & Health The WHO published a discussion paper on AI's role in health policy, while **China's massive AI rollout** in long-term care—covering 300 million people—has spurred calls for global ethical guardrails. Experts urge for "**participatory AI**" that involves public understanding and literacy to ensure digital governance remains democratic.

Decolonize Global Health The **Journal of Public Health in Africa**, owned by Africa CDC, expanded its categories to include rapid communications and health policy to ensure key information reaches African decision-makers more quickly.

Access to Medicines, Vaccines & other Health Technologies Innovative trials in India showed that **ultra-low doses of nivolumab** could extend survival for cancer patients, potentially making expensive immunotherapies accessible in resource-limited settings.

Planetary Health Health organizations are urging the WHO to integrate **climate considerations** across all planning, recognizing fossil fuels as a primary driver of health harm. New studies have linked drought exposure in Southern Africa to a **46% increase in sexual violence** among adolescents, while others highlight the significant **carbon and water footprint of AI**.

Some More Reports The WHO updated estimates show that **unsafe food** causes 866 million illnesses and 1.5 million deaths annually. Young children bear a disproportionate burden, and **chemical hazards**—primarily inorganic arsenic and lead—account for 73% of food-related deaths.

Miscellaneous

Ghana's President Mahama is under pressure from over 100 civil society groups to reject the **anti-LGBTQ+ bill**, which passed without a quorum and is already predicted to cause a **25% drop in HIV treatment consultations**. On a more positive note, the **2026 Virchow Prize** was awarded to JJ Muyembe and P Piot for their pioneering work on Ebola. Finally, **Google** has requested permission to release 32 million sterile mosquitoes in the US to combat illness-spreading bugs.

Some key reads of the week

1. **Read of the Week:** *'An equal and habitable world is possible': academics set out sweeping vision for planetary survival*, **The Guardian**, <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2026/jun/04/world-inequality-lab-equality-academics-planetary-survival>. This report presents a bold vision for planetary survival through wealth taxes, reduced working hours, and shifting investment to health and education.

2. **Recommended Read (Intro):** *The Global Justice Report*, **World Inequality Lab**, <https://globaljusticeproject.wid.world/>. Grounding development in planetary habitability, this report offers a comprehensive vision to navigate the current climate and economic polycrisis.
3. **World No Tobacco Day:** *WHO urges governments to protect young people from addiction to tobacco and nicotine products*, **WHO**, <https://www.who.int/news/item/29-05-2026-who-urges-governments-to-protect-young-people-from-addiction-to-tobacco-and-nicotine-products>. The WHO calls for a ban on flavours and marketing tactics that deliberately target adolescents to create a new generation of nicotine addicts.
4. **World No Tobacco Day (Related):** *Availability, appeal, and addictiveness by design: Tobacco and nicotine industry deliberate targeting of youth*, **Plos Med**, <https://journals.plos.org/plosmedicine/>. This read details how the industry engineers products to specifically appeal to and addict young users.
5. **Ebola PHEIC (Overview):** *US commits \$13.5M to Kenya as Ebola evacuation plan sparks backlash*, **Devex**, <https://www.devex.com/news/us-commits-13-5m-to-kenya-as-ebola-evacuation-plan-sparks-backlash-112634>. The US State Department pledged funds to Kenya's preparedness efforts amid controversy over a proposed quarantine facility for Americans.
6. **Ebola PHEIC (Overview):** *Congo Ebola Outbreak Now Third-Largest on Record as Suspected Cases Pass 1,000*, **Health Policy Watch**, <https://healthpolicy-watch.news/congo-ebola-outbreak-now-third-largest-on-record-as-suspected-cases-pass-1000/>. This update highlights the rapid evolution of the Bundibugyo strain outbreak and the decisive role of community trust in containment.
7. **Ebola PHEIC (Analysis):** *Ebola may have been spreading unchecked since January, aid groups fear*, **The Telegraph**, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/global-health/science-and-disease/ebola-outbreak-may-have-begun-in-january-aid-groups-fear/>. Medics suspect the outbreak began months earlier than officially reported, suggesting the virus had a significant head start.
8. **Ebola PHEIC (Analysis - Must-Read):** *Can Africa pay for its own outbreaks? Ebola offers an early test*, **Devex**, <https://www.devex.com/news/can-africa-pay-for-its-own-outbreaks-ebola-offers-an-early-test-112601>. This must-read examines the gap between the continent's rhetoric on health sovereignty and its actual financial commitments to containment.
9. **Ebola PHEIC (Analysis):** *Ebola can be stopped — but only if world leaders prioritize public health*, **Nature Editorial**, <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-026-01630-5>. The editorial argues that public health must be viewed as essential infrastructure, rather than a moral obligation alone, to ensure economic stability.
10. **PPPR, GHS & Emergencies:** *Africa CDC: Ebola Emergency Underscores The Access to Countermeasures in the Negotiations On Pathogen Access & Benefit Sharing*, **Geneva Health Files**, <https://newsletter.genevahealthfiles.com/>. Africa CDC emphasizes the importance of benefit-sharing systems for accessing countermeasures during current and future health emergencies.
11. **PPPR, GHS & Emergencies (Recommended):** *Simon Rushton, Global health security: The retreat of the liberal international order and the prospects for cooperation in a multi-order world*, **Contemporary Security Policy**, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/13523260.2026.2678468>. This article examines the risk of global health security splintering into sets of parallel, ineffective cooperative arrangements.
12. **AMR:** *Antibiotics use in livestock could rise by a third in next 15 years, UN report warns*, **The Guardian**, <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2026/jun/03/antibiotics-use-in-livestock-rise-un-fao>. A UN report warns that livestock antibiotic use will surpass previous peaks by 2040, potentially destroying human resistance to essential medicines.
13. **Global Health Reform:** *What's at Stake and What Comes Next for Global Health Reform - May 2026*, **Partnership for International Politics & Diplomacy for Health**, <https://globalhealthdiplomacy.se/whats-at-stake-and-what-comes-next-for-global-health->

- [reform-may-2026](#). This slide deck provides a comprehensive update on major reform processes and the obstacles that could prevent meaningful change.
14. **Global Health Reform (Important):** M J A Reid & E Goosby, *Redefining Global Health in the 21st Century (Chapter 1)*, **ScienceDirect**, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/book/monograph/9780443236174/redefining-global-health-in-the-21st-century>. This chapter calls for a new health paradigm grounded in domestic leadership and plural knowledge systems.
 15. **Development Cooperation:** A Sumner & S Klingebiel, *Beyond the Donors' Club: What Future for the OECD-DAC?*, **Global Policy**, <https://www.globalpolicyjournal.com/blog/28/05/2026/beyond-donors-club-what-future-oecd-dac>. The authors propose five essential shifts for the DAC to reinvent itself for a more inclusive, multi-polar development world.
 16. **Development Cooperation:** Mark Suzman, *The End of Foreign Aid Is Not the End of Development*, **Foreign Affairs**, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/end-foreign-aid-not-end-development-mark-suzman>. Suzman argues that aid institutions must focus on local capacity to eventually move beyond reliance on external assistance altogether.
 17. **Governance & Financing:** *US to re-engage with Gavi vaccine alliance amid Ebola outbreak, Rubio says*, **Reuters**, <https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/us-re-engage-with-gavi-vaccine-alliance-amid-ebola-outbreak-rubio-says-2026-06-02/>. The US State Department is reclaiming control of the Gavi relationship, signaling a shift back toward multilateral health security.
 18. **Governance & Financing:** Simon Williams, *Six ways Gavi will continue to immunise half the world's children amid vaccine backlash and a funding crisis*, **BMJ**, <https://www.bmj.com/content/393/bmj-2026-393658>. This feature explores how Gavi is implementing staffing cuts and AI trials to navigate significant funding setbacks.
 19. **Debt Reform:** *Ghana's president calls for fairer debt restructuring tools*, **Reuters**. President Mahama emphasizes that debt mechanisms must become faster and more inclusive to support national development.
 20. **Debt Reform (Important):** Attiya Waris, *The Need for a Permanent Mechanism on Sovereign Debt Restructuring*, **SAIIA**, <https://saiia.org.za/research/the-need-for-a-permanent-mechanism-on-sovereign-debt-restructuring/>. This policy brief advocates for a restructuring mechanism grounded in justice and human rights, housed closer to debtor nations.
 21. **Bilateral Agreements:** Emily Bass, *First Look at a Full America First Global Health Strategy Country Implementation Plan: Not Exactly a Plan*, **Substack**, <https://emilybass.substack.com/>. Bass analyzes the Ugandan plan, finding it surprisingly thin on how aspirations will translate into public health results.
 22. **Bilateral Agreements:** *Trump Wants Minerals, Health Data for Aid. African Nations Are Pushing Back.*, **Wall Street Journal**, <https://www.wsj.com/world/africa/trump-wants-minerals-health-data-for-aid-african-nations-are-pushing-back-c04bed87>. Some African governments are bridleing at US demands for private medical data and mineral access in exchange for health aid.
 23. **NCDs:** *Historic WHA Resolution on Fatty Liver Disease Opens Door for Integration into National NCD Strategies*, **Health Policy Watch**, <https://healthpolicy-watch.news/milestone-wha-resolution-on-fatty-liver-disease-offers-path-to-more-awareness-and-action/>. A new WHA resolution recognizes fatty liver disease as the fastest-growing chronic liver disease needing urgent action.
 24. **NCDs (Important):** *Cancer workforce—a global crisis: a Lancet Oncology Commission*, **Lancet Oncology**, [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanonc/article/PIIS1470-2045\(26\)00065-3/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanonc/article/PIIS1470-2045(26)00065-3/fulltext). This report warns of a 100 million staff shortfall by 2050, particularly impacting diagnostic and nursing specialists in Africa and Asia.
 25. **Determinants of Health:** Nicholas Chartres et al., *Big Tobacco Engineered Ultra-Processed Food, Creating Harmful and Addictive Products*, **AJPH / Health Policy Watch**,

<https://healthpolicy-watch.news/big-tobacco-engineered-ultra-processed-food/>. Secret documents reveal how tobacco companies leveraged flavor engineering to normalise addictive ultra-processed foods.

26. **SRHR & Women's Health (Must-Read):** Pascale Allotey, *The future we want for sexual and reproductive health and rights*, **LinkedIn/WHO**, <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/future-we-want-sexual-reproductive-health-rights-hrp-research-2yuue/>. Allotey delivers a hard-hitting address on the moral and political project required to safeguard SRHR globally.
27. **AI & Health:** *New WHO discussion paper sets out opportunities and risks of AI in evidence-informed health policy*, **WHO**, <https://www.who.int/news/item/02-06-2026-new-who-discussion-paper-sets-out-opportunities-and-risks-of-ai-in-evidence-informed-health-policy>. This paper examines how AI is reshaping health policy and the steps needed to protect its evidence base.
28. **Access to Medicines:** *Ultra-low doses could bring costly cancer treatments to more patients in poorer countries*, **Stat News**, <https://www.statnews.com/2026/05/31/low-dose-nivolumab-extends-survival-trial-head-neck-squamous-cell-carcinoma-asco-2026/>. Researchers found that tiny doses of nivolumab could help patients in resource-limited settings live longer by making immunotherapy affordable.
29. **Planetary Health (Featured Article):** Bibiane van Mierlo & Willem van de Put, *Transcending Boundaries: From Inner Embodiment to Planetary Health*, **IHP**. The authors argue that planetary health must address a fundamental crisis of alienation from the self and the world.
30. **Miscellaneous:** *People 'panicking' as Ghana passes sweeping law criminalising LGBTQ+ activity*, **The Guardian**, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2026/jun/01/ghana-new-law-criminalising-lgbtq-activity>. Community groups warn that the new bill is causing widespread fear and threatening access to essential healthcare.