

# IHP news 885: AI summary & some key reads ( Mid-June in Global Health)

## Introduction

The mid-June 2026 edition of the IHP newsletter opens with a critical look at the **WHO's partnership with FIFA**, noting a "low profile" stance due to FIFA's sponsorship agreement with **Aramco**, a major climate polluter, which sits in tension with the WHO's climate-health agenda. The editorial highlights the **worsening Ebola outbreak in the DRC**, which Africa CDC warns could become the "worst ever" if not contained quickly. Amidst this, the **G7 Leaders' summit** in Evian issued a call for a coordinated response, potentially signalling a breakthrough for the **Pathogen Access and Benefit-Sharing (PABS)** mechanism. Other key focuses include the **UN High-Level Meeting on HIV/AIDS** and the conclusion of **Tlaleng Mofokeng's mandate** as UN Special Rapporteur on the right to health, emphasizing her final report on health as an "enabler of dignity".

## Featured article

The **Featured Article** analyzes lessons from the **4th Global Health Security Conference (GHS2026)** in Kuala Lumpur. Authors **Valérie Vermeersch and Gorik Ooms** observe a striking **disconnect between the optimism** projected in high-level plenary sessions and the **sober realism** in break-out rooms. While plenaries suggested global health security is improving, break-out sessions critiqued systemic pressures like shrinking international solidarity and unfit global governance. A central fault line remains **equity in PABS**, with concerns that pharmaceutical companies may continue to access pathogens without enforceable obligations to share benefits. Some delegates suggested focusing on **International Health Regulations (IHR) amendments**, implying that if benefit-sharing is not mandatory, domestic preparedness may also become optional.

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## Highlights of the Week

**G7 Leaders' Summit in Evian, France** The G7 summit marked a "**hard pivot**" from **traditional development aid** toward a model of **investment and mutually beneficial partnerships**. Leaders called for a coordinated response to the **Bundibugyo Ebola outbreak** and urged other nations to dedicate resources. However, the shift toward "health sovereignty financing" through private capital and development banks suggests a move away from the WHO as the primary lead. Notably, the heads of the **World Bank and IMF** were present while the UN Secretary-General and WHO Director-General were absent from the final list of top attendees.

**Ebola Emergency: Key Messages and Analysis** The Ebola situation is increasingly dire, with **WHO epidemiologists noting "blind spots"** that may hide the true extent of the spread in the DRC and Uganda. Africa CDC's Jean Kaseya warned the outbreak could cost **billions of dollars** if not stopped immediately, yet a **\$518 million response plan** has received less than \$100 million in funding. Critical gaps persist: over **28,000 contacts are not being tracked**, and community mistrust remains a major barrier. While the institutional response was initially rapid, the lack of vaccines and therapeutics for

the **Bundibugyo strain** hampers efforts. Advocacy groups are now urging the US to release **experimental antibody treatments** for emergency use.

**More on Pandemic Preparedness (PPPR) & Global Health Security (GHS)** Discussions continue regarding the **economic case for pandemic preparedness**, with calls for a clearer "economic lens" to help finance ministries prioritize investments. Progress in **PABS negotiations** is described as grinding forward despite deep divisions. A major milestone was reached as **Africa CDC secured accreditation** as an Implementing Entity for the **Pandemic Fund**, allowing it direct access to manage health financing on the continent.

**Run-up to the UN High-Level Meeting on HIV/AIDS** UNAIDS warns of a "**perilous moment**" as external funding for HIV/AIDS fell by **23% last year**—the sharpest drop on record. This "funding shock" follows the dismantling of USAID and cuts to the US contributions that anchored the response for two decades. The upcoming meeting aims to adopt a **final Political Declaration** before the 2030 deadline, targeting 40 million people on antiretroviral treatment. Concurrently, the **African-led HIV Control Working Group** is advocating for a sustainable, African-owned response to decolonize the health architecture.

**Global Health Reform and Post-2030 Brainstorm** Reform discussions are "bifurcating," with major initiatives like the **Accra Reset** and WHO-hosted processes gaining curiosity but facing doubts about their transformative power. Critics argue that the **architecture of global health** is often discussed without considering the people—staff and experts—who are being moved out of the system alongside the money. The "**Nairobi moment**" emphasized that any new framework must respect regional sovereignty and grounded, structural equity.

**US Global Health Strategy & Bilateral Health Agreements** A controversial new plan by the **US State Department** aims to overhaul the **CDC's role in global health**, shifting control of funds and decisions away from health experts to diplomats. This change could **sideline the CDC**, turning it into a "fee-for-service" provider that countries must pay for, which critics warn will **destabilize HIV work abroad** and unravel public health networks.

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**More on Global Health Governance, Financing, and Funding** In Accra, Ghana, a summit is advancing **reparatory justice** for the trafficking of enslaved Africans, framing it as a concrete institutional commitment. Meanwhile, the **EU's Global Gateway** initiative faces criticism for focusing heavily on infrastructure while neglecting primary healthcare and health system strengthening. Civil society groups argue that the EU's "health resilience" model risks **reorganizing dependencies** rather than eliminating them, as it relies on European private firms as default partners.

**The Right to Health** As **Tlaleng Mofokeng's mandate** as UN Special Rapporteur ends, she asserts that **health cannot be realized without dignity**. She highlights how stigma, criminalization, and unregulated commercial practices act as root causes of poor health. She calls for an **anti-racist and anti-colonial model** for Africa, where the marginalized are the anchor for system design.

**The Future of Development Cooperation** A new "Balance Sheet" approach argues that **long-term development is a result of domestic policy choices** and institutional strength rather than just external aid. Oxfam has criticized the G7 for **replacing aid with investment**, noting that billionaire wealth is at record highs while aid cuts are the deepest on record. They urge for **taxing windfall profits** and cancelling debts to fund public goods.

**Malaria and Primary Health Care (PHC)** Leading scientists warn that **tools alone will not end malaria**; the disease is "killing people socially" by limiting educational and economic futures. There is a call for greater "appetite for eradication". In PHC, the **Agora initiative** is working to mainstream **private pharmacies and drug shops** into formal systems, as they are already the first point of care for many in low-income countries.

**Social and Commercial Determinants of Health** The **International Labour Organization (ILO)** adopted the first global standards for **gig workers**, though the US voted against the convention. In health research, **Men's Health Week** highlighted that the male-female life expectancy gap is largely **structural, commercial, and social**, rather than purely biological.

**Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)** A landmark **Lancet Series on Postpartum Haemorrhage (PPH)** estimates it affects 27 million women annually. In Sierra Leone, the First Lady faces controversy for refusing to condemn **FGM** without "reliable data" on harms. Additionally, USAID is under scrutiny for leaving **contraceptives in storage** in Belgium at high costs while their final destination remains in limbo.

**Child Health and Planetary Health** UNICEF warns that nearly **half the world's children face "triple climate threats"** (drought, extreme heat, and heatwaves). Foodborne diarrhoeal diseases also remain a major burden, particularly for children in the African region. In climate talks, the **Bonn Climate Conference** saw civil society calling for a **tripling of adaptation finance**, even as the **World Bank considers scrapping its 45% climate finance target** under pressure from the US.

**World Blood Donor Day and Access to Medicines** While voluntary blood donations have increased, many regions—especially in sub-Saharan Africa—remain **"blood deserts"** with insufficient supply for life-saving transfusions. Regarding access to medicines, **Egypt has joined the African Pooled Procurement Mechanism**, a major step for continental health sovereignty. However, a **patent fight in Harare** against Gilead Sciences over HIV drug compounds could determine how easily future treatments reach 21 African countries.

**Miscellaneous** The WHO has launched the first **global database on STI prevalence** to provide standardized data for low- and middle-income countries. Finally, analysis from the Center for Global Development shows a measurable **expansion of childcare investments** by multilateral development banks, though making these policies last remains the "hard part".

## Some key reads of the week

1. **Vermeersch, V. & Ooms, G.**, [Between Optimism and Reality: Lessons from the 2026 Global Health Security Conference](#), **Featured Article**. This essential analysis examines the disconnect between high-level optimism and ground-level realism regarding global pandemic preparedness and equity.
2. **Geneva Solutions**, [G7 summit: World's top donors to mark shift from traditional development](#), **G7 Leaders' summit**. This analysis highlights the G7's pivot from a "handout model" toward private capital and mutually beneficial investment partnerships.
3. **Lula da Silva, L. I. & Ghebreyesus, T. A.**, [Open letter to leaders of G7, G20, BRICS and all nations on finalizing the WHO Pandemic Agreement's PABS annex](#), **WHO**. This high-level advocacy urges political leaders to show the urgency and equity needed to finalize the critical pathogen-sharing mechanism.

4. **Reuters**, ['Blind spots' could hide full spread of Congo's Ebola outbreak, WHO suggests](#), **Ebola Emergency: WHO/CDC Messages**. WHO experts warn that surveillance gaps may be hiding the true scale of the current Ebola spread in the DRC and Uganda.
5. **Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus**, [WHO director-general is profoundly concerned after visit to Ebola outbreak area](#), **Stat**. This **must-read** message describes the dire reality where communities increasingly view Ebola as a "lesser evil" compared to conflict and hunger.
6. **Geneva Health Files**, [A quick update on Ebola from the Africa CDC](#), **Ebola Emergency: Analysis**. Provides key updates on Africa CDC's push for \$100 million in regional solidarity funding from African member states.
7. **Karim, S. A. et al.**, [The Bundibugyo Ebolavirus Outbreak: the need for a solidaristic response under the revised International Health Regulations](#), **Lancet Regional Health Africa**. This recommended read advocates for coordinated multilateral action and evidence-based measures to manage the current public health emergency.
8. **Pandemic Fund External Advisory Council**, [Global Health Security and the Elusive Economic Lens](#), **More on PPPR & GHS**. This think piece argues that pandemic preparedness decisions must be backed by clearer economic evidence of return on investment to compete for funding.
9. **Moon, S. et al.**, [8th issue of the Governing Pandemics Snapshot](#), **Geneva Graduate Institute**. A **must-read** summary of the diplomacy and technical nitty-gritty remaining in the Pathogen Access and Benefit-Sharing (PABS) negotiations.
10. **UNAIDS**, [A 'perilous moment' for the response to HIV warns UNAIDS](#), **UN High-Level meeting on HIV/AIDS**. UNAIDS warns that external funding cuts and human rights rollbacks are threatening to reverse decades of progress in the AIDS response.
11. **Health Policy Watch**, [HIV Response Faces 'Biggest Storm' in Its History After Funding Nosedive](#), **HPW**. This analysis highlights the record 23% drop in external development assistance for HIV programs following US policy shifts.
12. **Partnership for International Politics and Diplomacy for Health**, [Insights on global health reform discussions, trends and perspectives: June 2026](#), **Global Health Reform**. Explores the major initiatives like the Accra Reset and warns that current proposals may not be ambitious enough to deliver systemic change.
13. **Orya, B.**, [The Missing Piece in the Global Health Architecture Conversation: The People Inside It](#), **LinkedIn**. This **well-worth-a-read** piece discusses the quiet and painful transition of people who built their careers inside a system that is now moving them out alongside the money.
14. **New York Times**, [New Plan Scales Back C.D.C.' Work on Diseases Abroad](#), **US Global Health Strategy**. Details a controversial plan to shift global health oversight from CDC experts to the State Department using a "fee-for-service" model.
15. **Brown, M. D.**, [Ebola Recalls Why the U.S. Needs a Foreign Health Service](#), **Think Global Health**. Argues that the US response architecture is only holding because of long-built relationships that current policy shifts may dismantle.
16. **Guardian**, [Ghana to advance reparatory justice at first major gathering since landmark UN resolution](#), **Global Health Governance**. Reports on a landmark event in Accra pursuing institutional commitments for reparatory justice and restitution.
17. **Lenz, C. et al.**, [Health under the Global Gateway: achievements and future prospects](#), **CEPS**. This paper examines the EU's strategic health focus on pharmaceutical manufacturing and infrastructure over primary healthcare.
18. **Mofokeng, T.**, [The Right to Health as an Enabler of Dignity](#), **UN Special Rapporteur**. Dr. Mofokeng's final report asserts that health cannot be realized without dignity and addresses the root causes of systematic marginalization.
19. **Development Cooperation**, [The Development Balance Sheet: Rethinking Development Cooperation from the Ground Up](#), **Future of Development Cooperation**. This first report from the Coalition argues that long-term development is primarily the result of domestic policy choices and institutional strength.

20. **Behar, A.**, [Aid is being replaced by investment. That's a dangerous mistake](#), **Devex**. Oxfam's executive director warns that viewing human solidarity as a "commercial investment fair" is a grave error during historic aid cuts.
21. **Health Policy Watch**, [Leading Malaria Scientist Warns Tools Alone Will Not End the Disease](#), **Malaria**. Dr. Marcus Lacerda explains that malaria is "killing people socially" by limiting the education and economic futures of children.
22. **Results for Development**, [Mainstreaming Private Pharmacies and Drug Shops into Primary Health Care in Low- and Middle-Income Countries](#), **PHC**. Details the Agora initiative to transform peripheral drug shops into connected and accountable contributors to primary care.
23. **Reuters**, [UN labour organisation sets first global standards for gig workers](#), **Social Determinants**. Reports on the first global standards providing pay, safety, and social benefits for up to 435 million gig workers.
24. **WHO**, [A new blueprint offers definitive solutions to end one of childbirth's deadliest complications](#), **SRHR**. A landmark Lancet Series blueprint for tackling postpartum haemorrhage, the leading cause of maternal mortality worldwide.
25. **UN News**, [Triple climate threats affect nearly half the world's children](#), **Child Health**. Highlights a UNICEF report finding that 1.1 billion children now face at least three overlapping climate hazards.
26. **WHO**, [Safe blood supply improves as voluntary donations exceed 85%, but many people still lack access](#), **World Blood Donor Day**. Reports on global increases in blood donations while flagging persistent "blood deserts" in low-income regions.
27. **Devex**, [Global Fund partners with CIFF to bring new TB tests to 13 countries](#), **Access to Medicines**. Details the rollout of a new diagnostic test that experts hope will identify millions more tuberculosis cases.
28. **Gem Nation**, [ARIPO Faces Test of Transparency as Groups Challenge Gilead HIV Drug Patent Bid](#), **Intellectual Property**. A significant patent fight that could determine access to future HIV medicines for millions across Southern and East Africa.
29. **Climate Change News**, [Bonn Bulletin: Finance dominates discussions in every room](#), **Planetary Health**. Reports on the lack of progress on a new goal to triple adaptation funding during UN climate talks.
30. **WHO**, [WHO launches first global database on the prevalence of sexually transmitted infections](#), **Miscellaneous**. Announces a standardized database providing quality-assured STI prevalence data for low- and middle-income countries.