

IHP news 886: AI summary & some key reads

Introduction and Featured Article

The newsletter opens with a reflection on the **escalating climate crisis**, noting that extreme heat in Western Europe has brought the "airco debate" to the forefront, highlighting growing climate inequalities. Editor Kristof Decoster notes that while global health "power corridors" remain focused on building resilient systems, the world continues to play "Russian roulette" with environmental tipping points. Central to this week's discussion is the **Sustainable Development Report 2026**, which argues that the 2030 Agenda has underdelivered not because of its goals, but due to a failure to build the necessary **financing and governance infrastructure**. Additionally, the newsletter highlights the **UN High-Level Meeting on HIV/AIDS**, which, despite a poorly attended opening, resulted in an encouraging political declaration.

The **Featured Article** by Mohamed Ali Ag Ahmed examines **health system resilience in the Sahel**. With Bamako hosting the AFRAFRA network scientific days, the piece argues that the Sahel's experience is globally relevant. In regions like Mali and Niger, health workers maintain services despite permanent crisis, supply shortages, and displaced populations. Ahmed urges the international community to look beyond the Sahel's vulnerabilities and recognize the **remarkable adaptation capacity** of local actors as a model for future global health resilience.

Highlights of the Week

UN High-Level Meeting on HIV/AIDS UNAIDS warned that "progress is not success," noting that 40 million people live with HIV while funding cuts and human rights rollbacks threaten the 2030 goal of ending the epidemic. The meeting was marked by a **historic lack of consensus**; the US, Russia, and six other nations voted against the political declaration. Key disputes involved **technology transfer**, with the Africa Group successfully removing "mutually agreed terms" to boost local production, a move opposed by the US and several European nations.

Ebola Emergency (DRC and Uganda) The Bundibugyo Ebola outbreak in the DRC and Uganda has surpassed **1,000 cases**, with children accounting for a disproportionate 25% of deaths. Africa CDC chief Jean Kaseya emphasized that the continent must **invest its own funds** rather than relying on foreign partners, though a \$1.4 billion funding gap remains for the next six months. Clinical trials for antivirals like **remdesivir** are set to begin, but experts warn the outbreak is outpacing the response.

Ebola: Analysis and Countermeasures Research highlights that the Bundibugyo strain may have a **lower case fatality rate (approx. 20%)** than Zaire Ebola, but milder symptoms could paradoxically make it harder to track and contain. Tensions exist regarding **pathogen sharing**, as scientists lack access to samples needed for vaccine testing. The Independent Panel for PPPR has called for urgent transparency, noting that less than 10% of pledged funds have actually been disbursed.

PPPR & Global Health Security Experts argue for **institutionalizing preparedness** through routine investments in local laboratories and surveillance. UHC2030 emphasizes that **Universal Health Coverage and health security are not separate**, calling for a shift away from parallel investments toward integrated systems grounded in primary health care.

Sustainable Development Report 2026 Only **16% of SDG targets** are currently on track for 2030. The report calls for eight priorities, including ending wars, introducing new global taxes for public goods, and establishing UN campuses in the Global South to decentralize governance. The core message is that **structural reform of the implementation systems** is now more critical than revising the goals themselves.

Global Health Reform & Development Cooperation A coalition of over 30 Global South governments is advancing a roadmap for **Global Public Investment (GPI)**, expected to be operational by 2030. Meanwhile, analyst Andrew Sheriff provides a "recommended" look at the future of **EU development policy** ten years after Brexit. Ben Ramalingam introduces the "**Bumble Bee Principle**," exploring how crises can force marginal innovations into the mainstream to reshape humanitarian systems.

WHO DG Race A "must-read" analysis explores the race for the next WHO Director-General in the context of the **US retreat** from the agency. With Washington no longer at the formal table, influence is shifting toward Europe, the Gulf states, and Asia, testing who will shape the future "global health model".

Global Health Governance & Financing The search for a new **Global Fund leader** has prompted calls for a more open, public selection process to build investment support. Peter Sands suggests "bundling" infectious and non-communicable diseases (NCDs) to address health inequities more efficiently. In Ghana, a landmark conference adopted a framework for **reparatory justice**, linking historical injustices like colonialism to current debt burdens.

Middle Powers (South Korea) Middle powers like **South Korea** are identified as essential bridge-builders between the Global North and South. Korea's own history of flexible intellectual property (IP) use positions it to broker compromises on technology transfer and capacity building.

ODA Projections & African Agency OECD data predicts **steep cuts to health ODA** in 2026, with funding for reproductive health and malaria potentially falling by over 50%. In response, researchers argue this "aid squeeze" is an opportunity for Africa to assert its **own policy compass (Agenda 2063)** through better domestic tax collection and firmer negotiations with creditors.

Global Tax Justice A "must-read" BMJ editorial argues that the **global tax system is a major determinant of health**, diverting hundreds of billions away from public services. ActionAid critiques the IMF's "failed recipe" of rigid spending cuts, which continues to harm the poor in countries like Ghana and Zambia.

Trump 2.0 & US Strategy The Trump administration is reportedly ending **PEPFAR funding for South Africa** following policy disagreements, a move UNAIDS warns could cost many lives. There is also significant criticism regarding the opacity of 32 **bilateral health MOUs** and allegations that US aid is being linked to access to critical minerals.

NCDs & Commercial Determinants FIFA is accused of "social washing" by broadcasting health campaigns alongside **alcohol advertising** during the World Cup. Separately, Habib Benzian argues that **oral health** reveals the quality of a country's health system, sitting at the fault line between collective responsibility and ability to pay.

Planetary Health Bonn climate talks ended in **gridlock** over finance for adaptation. The UN Secretary-General has issued a "blueprint" for a clean energy transition, while new briefs warn of the governance challenges posed by **Earth system tipping points**.

Access to Medicines & Conflict Efforts to boost **African vaccine manufacturing** (e.g., Biovac) show momentum once initial "bets" are taken by funders. Meanwhile, analysis shows the **Iran War** has significantly increased the prices of essential medicines like methotrexate due to oil and transport vulnerabilities. In **Gaza**, a UN inquiry found that targeting children is undermining the Palestinian people's capacity to exist.

Some Key Reads of the Week

1. **UNAIDS (Byanyima)** – [Health Policy Watch](#) – Warning that progress is not success at the UN HIV meeting.
2. **Kaseya & Twum-Amoah** – [The Guardian](#) – Africa must treat health as sovereignty rather than charity.
3. **Kaseya** – [AP News](#) – Africa CDC chief urges self-financing for Ebola vaccines.
4. **Bloomberg** – [Article Link](#) – Disputes over pathogen sharing hamper Ebola research.
5. **WHO** – [Publication](#) – New guidance on effective financing for filovirus outbreaks.
6. **Independent Panel (IPPPR)** – [Statement](#) – Call for a real-time public financing tracker for Ebola.
7. **Dereje & Kaseya** – [The Lancet GH](#) – Lessons for institutionalizing preparedness in Africa.
8. **SDSN** – [SDR 2026 Report](#) – The 11th edition of the Sustainable Development Report.
9. **R. Siddiqui** – [Modern Diplomacy](#) – Why the 2026 SDG report is an urgent wake-up call.
10. **Ben Phillips** – [IPS News](#) – Global South leaders redesigning international cooperation.
11. **Andrew Sheriff** – [LinkedIn](#) – **Recommended** analysis of EU development policy post-Brexit.
12. **Ben Ramalingam** – [The New Humanitarian](#) – Explaining the "Bumble Bee Principle" in crisis response.
13. **Politico** – [Article Link](#) – **Must-read** on the race to lead the WHO after the US retreat.
14. **J. Ratevosian** – [The Lancet](#) – Case for an open search for the Global Fund leader.
15. **The Guardian** – [Article Link](#) – Landmark framework for reparatory justice adopted in Ghana.
16. **J-A Rottingen** – [Wellcome](#) – New strategy for Wellcome's 90th anniversary.
17. **S. Moon et al.** – [The Lancet](#) – How middle powers like South Korea strengthen governance.
18. **OECD** – [Policy Brief](#) – Alarming ODA projections for health in 2026.
19. **H G Gebrihet** – [The Conversation](#) – Africa's survival of the global aid squeeze.
20. **Remco van de Pas** – [The Collective](#) – A power analysis of the rise and fall of One Health.
21. **Wu Yanni & Zhou Qing'an** – [CGTN](#) – China's global health logic and aggregation technology.
22. **Waris & Kavanagh** – [BMJ](#) – **Important Read** on action for a healthier global tax system.
23. **Action Aid** – [Report](#) – Review of IMF advice on social spending and debt.
24. **Semafor** – [Article Link](#) – Trump administration to end PEPFAR funding for South Africa.
25. **Public Citizen** – [Tracker](#) – Tracker for Trump administration global health agreements.
26. **Villalba & Torres** – [The Lancet](#) – Alcohol promotion at the 2026 men's World Cup.
27. **Habib Benzian** – [Substack](#) – Oral health and the limits of healthcare solidarity.
28. **Carbon Brief** – [Bonn Summary](#) – Key outcomes from the June 2026 climate talks.
29. **Paul Adepoju** – [Resolve](#) – Can market shaping improve medicine access in Africa?.
30. **Cidrap News** – [Article Link](#) – Ranking global EID burdens from 2000 to 2022.