



PLANETARY HEALTH WEEKLY

BRINGING YOU CURRENT NEWS ON GLOBAL HEALTH & ECOLOGICAL WELLNESS

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Who Will Mourn the Guinea Worm?

Guinea worm disease afflicted an estimated 3.5 million people every year less than 30 years ago. Last year, that number was down to 126. So far in 2015 there have only been 15 cases, limited to a few African countries. Ongoing conflict in some Guinea worm-endemic states, Mali and South Sudan in particular, could stall the eradication effort. Still, it is only a matter of time until the infectious worm is gone forever.

[Read More on Devex](#)



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Worldwide, Climate Change is Worse News for Women

If political leaders around the world are serious about gender equality, they must also get serious about climate change. The impacts of climate change are set to hit the world's poorest countries far harder than the wealthy ones. And the bad news for women in those societies is that the effects are not gender-neutral. Some key drivers of climate change also directly damage the health of women and girls.

[Read More on theconversation.com](#)





Re-Engaging the Health Community Around Peace

The wars and violence in the Middle East and north Africa, together with tragic scenes of refugees seeking safety in Europe, offer the starkest of reminders that good health is incompatible with war and conflict. Apart from their direct physical and psychological effects, wars and conflict damage health-care, food, water and sanitation systems, pollute, degrade the environment and undermine development.

[Read More on The Lancet](#)

Getting Cancer on the Global Health Agenda

The United Nations did not include tackling cancer as part of its 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Although the international governing body promised to “ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages,” it will be a difficult goal to achieve if the UN focuses on only ending the epidemics of tuberculosis, malaria and HIV as it states in the agenda. Why? Because cancer actually kills more people than all of those diseases combined.

[Read More on UN Dispatch](#)



Health Threat of Sugar is Vastly Underestimated

Sugar is a bigger threat to health than many suppose, according to a study which claims it causes metabolic diseases such as high blood pressure and heart disease whether or not we put on weight. In the study, the health of 43 obese children dramatically improved when the sugar in their diet was replaced with starchy foods like crisps. They ate the same number of calories yet their metabolic disease, which can cause diabetes, was reversed within 10 days.

[Read More on The Guardian](#)



Climate Change Migration is ‘Genocide’

Marshall Islands foreign minister Tony de Brum has compared the prospect of forced migration of atoll nations to genocide. The loaded intervention came as island states vulnerable to sea-level rise were slated to meet in Kiribati to discuss preparations for future evacuations as climate impacts ramp up this century. Displacements of populations and destruction of cultural language and tradition is equivalent to genocide.

[Read More on Climate Home](#)

Blame Climate Change for Lousy Sex Life

Aside from the rising temperatures, there's nothing hot about climate change. A new paper suggests that climate change could decrease the amount of sex, in particular during those scorching summers. The paper examines the long-term effects of climate change on birth rates. The study tested, above all, for changes in the month of conception, shortened gestation periods, and pregnancies that did not result in births.

[Read More on Vice News](#)



Transition Alberta off Oil Sands, Climate Thinkers Urge

Canada is uniquely positioned to help meet growing global energy demands. At the same time, we must all do our part to fight climate change. There's an opportunity to collaborate with governments on technological investment to develop and deploy new emissions reducing technologies in the oil and gas sector while meeting global energy demands. And if oil sands production is expanded from 2.3 million to 4 million barrels per day as planned, then tack on 41 more million tonnes of emissions. That's clearly incompatible with climate protection.

[Read More on National Observer](#)



Bill Clinton to COP21: Make Sure you Have More Winners Than Losers

While carbon dioxide is the largest contributor to global warming, Clinton said there needs to be an international support system for aggressive efforts on non-CO2 greenhouse gases like methane, HFCs and “black carbon,” otherwise known as soot. He said he wants to convince every country in Central America and the Caribbean to develop a plan to transition to 100 percent self-sufficient clean energy.

[Read More on Devex](#)

Faith Based Delivery of Science Based Care

The 2015 agenda for sustainable development is being negotiated, the contribution of faith-based health-care providers is potentially crucial. For better partnerships to be achieved and for health systems to be strengthened by the alignment of faith-based health-providers with national systems and priorities, improved information is needed at all levels.

[Read More on The Lancet](#)

[Also Read More on The Lancet](#)

[Also Read More on The Lancet](#)



Where Oil and Water Mix - Fort McKay, Alberta

Fort McKay lies in the heart of the Alberta oil sands. The region is closely identified with the vast Alberta oil sands, but tiny Fort McKay lies in the very heart of them. Located 55 kilometres down the Athabasca River, the community of nearly 400 Cree, Dene and Métis people is surrounded, either by the massive pits produced by the strip-mining of sand laden with bitumen, or by smaller operations that extract the oil “in situ” by injecting massive amounts of steam into the ground.

[Read More on The Globe and Mail](#)



QUOTE OF THE WEEK



"Your businesses can do right by your bottom lines and by our planet and future generations. The old rules that said we can't grow our economy and protect our environment at the same time - those are outdated."

In Manila, the Philippines' capital, President Obama urged business leaders to reduce emissions in their operations and use their sway to pressure governments to sign on to the international pact.

[Read More on CTV News](#)

EVENTSTABLE

DATE	CONFERENCE	LOCATION	REGISTER
Nov. 27	Humanitarian Health Ethics Symposium	Hamilton Canada	http://humanitarianhealthethics.n
Nov. 25-27	7th Canadian Science Policy Conference	Ottawa Canada	http://www.sciencepolicy.ca/
Dec. 1	Planetary Health Film Series Vol. 1 "Fire in the Blood"	Toronto Canada	https://www.eventbrite.ca
Apr. 9-11	7th Annual Consortium of Universities for Global Health Conference	San Francisco USA	http://cugh.org/
Apr. 16-17	Global Health and Innovation Conference	New Haven USA	https://maestro
May. 26-27	Indigenous Health Conference	Toronto Canada	http://www.cpd.utoronto.ca/
Nov. 14-18	Fourth Global Symposium on Health Systems Research	Vancouver Canada	http://www.csih.org/en/events/



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STATE OF THE WORLD'S MIDWIFERY 2014

REPORT

CHALLENGES

The 73 countries profiled in the 2014 report account for:

96% of all maternal deaths

91% of all stillbirths

93% of all newborn death

but only have 42% of the world's midwives, nurses, and doctors.

In 2013, **289,000** women died from childbirth complications. Nearly **3 million** newborns die in the first month of life and **2.6 million** newborns are stillborn each year.

In sub-Saharan Africa a woman is

100x MORE LIKELY

to die in pregnancy or childbirth than a woman from an industrialized country.



Millennium Development Goals (MDG) 4, 5: Reduce child and maternal deaths by 3/4

Four key actions will help ensure more effective health coverage:

AVAILABILITY + ACCESSIBILITY + ACCEPTABILITY + QUALITY

Educate more midwives and use international standards



Ensure financial protection for access to basic health services



Provide respectful care



Close gaps in infrastructure and resources for maternal and newborn health



Ensure that midwives can focus on midwifery practice

Bring midwifery services close to women



Dispel common misperceptions about midwives



Regulate, register and re-license midwives



Implementing quality midwifery services could prevent about **TWO THIRDS** of women's and newborns' death globally.

IMPACT

Investing in educated and well-trained midwives can save **MILLIONS** of lives each year.

Contribute to healthier families and communities

Can yield a **16x return** on investment

Help **end** preventable child and maternal deaths

BANGLADESH CASE STUDY

- 500 educated and deployed midwives can reduce maternal mortality by **over 80%**
- Decrease infant mortality by **75%**
- Over the course of a 30-year career, **save over 36,000 lives**

87% of the essential care for women and newborns can be performed by an educated midwife.



#SoWMY2014
WWW.SOWMY.ORG



[Read More WHO](#)

A photograph of a classroom setting. In the foreground, a young woman with long brown hair is sitting on a wooden bench, looking down at a book or paper. Behind her, other students are visible, some sitting and some standing, in a room with large windows and wooden furniture.

GRADUATE PROGRAMS

How to Choose a Graduate Program

Most people face three nagging questions when considering graduate school: What degree should I get? What specific area should I focus on? How do I go about finding the right program and university? Here are five things to consider when choosing a graduate program.

[Read More on Devex](#)

How Students Can Finance a Graduate Degree in Development

Having spent the last 16 years running a master's program in international development, I've seen bright, driven, passionate people put their graduate education on hold because of a lack of funding. These applicants were no less impressive than others who were winning scholarships and attending the programs of their choice. So what was the difference? Often it came down to one thing: They had not done the necessary planning in advance. Applying for funding can be as involved and complex a process as applying for graduate school.

[Read More on Devex](#)



Major Issues for COP 21



Paris Climate Summit: Huge Stakes, Deep Divides

Still reeling from the worst terrorist attacks in French history, Paris will host nearly 140 world leaders gathering next week to spearhead a climate pact tasked with keeping Earth livable for humanity. Preoccupied by a recent spate of extremist attacks around the globe, world leaders will have their work cut out for them at the 12-day climate huddle. The highly-anticipated conference is tasked with fixing a problem that threatens the very well-being of our species: global warming. After six years of preparatory negotiations, the 195 nations gathering under the UN flag remain sharply divided on a raft of intertwined issues. There are at least three battlegrounds where the talks could stumble. As always, the first is money. A second thorny issue is defining a long-term goal. A third sticking point is the agreement's legal status.

[Read More on Rappler](#)



**WORLD
AIDS DAY
December 1st
2015**

fire in the blood



Planetary Health Commission's Film Series Vol. 1

"FIRE IN THE BLOOD"

An award winning movie that tells the story of how Western pharmaceutical companies and governments aggressively blocked access to low-cost AIDS drugs for the countries of Africa and the Global South in the years after 1996, causing ten million or more unnecessary deaths.

Special Guest Speaker Dr. Jillian Kohler

Associate Professor in the Leslie Dan Faculty of Pharmacy, Munk School of Global Affairs & Dalla Lana School of Public Health at University of Toronto. Director of the WHO Collaborating Centre for Governance, Transparency and Accountability in the Pharmaceutical Sector

When? December 1st 5:30pm – 8:00pm

Where? Tecumseh Auditorium (SCC), 55 Gould Street

Light supper will be provided!

Get your FREE tickets: phcfilmfestival.eventbrite.ca



planetaryhealthweekly



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planetary health commission





Winter and more darkness arrives to Canada after an unusually long and warm Autumn.
About 125 km north of Toronto, November 24, 2015.

This Newsletter is FREE.

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