



# PLANETARY HEALTH WEEKLY

BRINGING YOU CURRENT NEWS ON GLOBAL HEALTH & ECOLOGICAL WELLNESS

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CELEBRATING ONE YEAR!

Volume 2, Issue 11

## Across the Middle East, Doctors Are Being Killed Like Never Before

Attacks against hospitals and clinics from Afghanistan to South Sudan and Yemen have grown distressingly common in recent years, killing hundreds, forcing the shuttering of numerous medical facilities, and adding to the misery of already war-torn nations. In South Sudan, MSF facilities were recently looted in the town of Pibor after fighting in the town forced the agency's doctors and staff to flee to a U.N. compound for safety.

[Read More on ForeignPolicy](#)



## ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

Medicine in India Sanitary Pads and School Attendance Families of Cholera Patients	2
Panasonic's Supper Efficient Solar Cells Climate Change Altering Ice Sheets Salmon Loaded With Anti-Depressants	3
Teach for Ghana Evidence-Based Policies Problem Mental Health Cost of Climate Change	4
Weekly Bulletin: QOTW & Events	5
FYI#1: Determinants of Health	6
FYI#2: Stolen Academic Papers	7
FYI#3: Uzima Women Relief Group	8
FYI#4: Haiti Earthquake Five Years Later	9
FYI#5: FREE Climate Activist eBook	10
FYI#6: Planetary Health Conference	11

## Ocean Acidification Causing Worse Than Feared Decline of Great Barrier Reef

The first-of-a-kind study of more than 3,000 coral reefs off the northeast coast of Australia reveals how some parts are already experiencing the kind of conditions scientists were predicting many decades from now. Since humans began industrializing, the oceans have absorbed about 30% of the extra carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) in the atmosphere. This is changing the chemistry of the seawater. As the oceans absorb CO<sub>2</sub> they become gradually acidic.

[Read More on CarbonBrief](#)







## Medicine in India: 'Qualified Quacks' and a Baffling Drug Landscape

Data is emerging that show how dismal medical care is for many in India, with providers routinely failing to diagnose common diseases and frequently prescribing useless and hazardous drugs. In North India, for example, the chances of getting a helpful prescription at the doctor's office are no better than a coin toss, while you have about an 80 percent chance of getting stuff you don't need. Child deaths remain more common in India than in Bangladesh and Nepal, where the average income is lower. Poor people may be hit harder because they are more likely to go to the free government clinics, where doctors use particularly little effort.

[Read More on Vice News](#)

## Sanitary Pads and School Attendance: The Numbers and What They Mean

**What if not having sanitary supplies meant days without school?**

This is among the many claims from nongovernmental organizations that girls miss school due to lack of access to sanitary pads, the embarrassment of leaks, or the pain and discomfort from using rags. In some cases, NGOs even argue that menstruation is the “number one reason that girls miss school.” If this were true, it would follow that all that is needed to achieve gender parity in secondary schools is the distribution of a few sanitary products.

[Read More on Devex](#)



## Targeting the Families of Cholera Patients Could Have a Major Impact on the Reduction of Disease

WHO estimates that cholera causes up to 142,000 deaths worldwide each year. It is most usually transmitted through contaminated water and poor hygiene practices. Family members and household contacts are at more than 100 times higher risk of contracting cholera after a patient seeks hospital care. Targeting the household contacts of cholera patients – who are themselves at high risk of contracting the disease – could dramatically cut the spread of cholera.

[Read More on icddr.org](#)



## Panasonic Hails New World Record With Super-Efficient Solar Cell

Japanese electronics giant Panasonic announced it has officially created the world's most efficient crystalline silicon-based solar module. It is a technological breakthrough that could deliver more power per square foot of photovoltaic (PV) cells than ever before. To create the record-breaking module, Panasonic developed a unique "silicon heterojunction structure" - a structure that covers the silicon base surface with an additional silicon layer - that features electrodes on the front and back to enable the most efficient use of sunlight. Panasonic continues to develop the module to make it more efficient and suitable for mass production.

[Read More on Business Green](#)

## Climate Change Altering Greenland Ice Sheet and Accelerating Sea Level Rise

The Greenland ice sheet has traditionally been pictured as a bit of a sponge for glacier meltwater, but new research has found it is rapidly losing the ability to buffer its contribution to rising sea levels. Researchers were interested in the thin porous near-surface firn layer, and how its physical structure is changing rapidly with climate change. They looked at how the last couple of years of melt have really altered the structure of the ice sheet firn and made it behave differently to future melt due to climate change.

[Read More on yorku.ca](#)



## Seattle-Area Salmon Are Loaded With Anti-Depressants and Other Drugs Thanks to Human Waste

The everyday chemicals that humans ingest to relieve pain, fight depression and diabetes, or treat infection are winding up in the tissue of fish. Over 4,000 pharmaceuticals are currently in use or in development and many of them are finding their way into rivers, streams, and lakes, raising concerns about how exposure could impact wildlife, or even humans who consume fish. While the presence of toxins sounds alarm bells, more research is needed to understand the impact of chemicals on aquatic and human life.

[Read More on Vice News](#)





## Training Teachers: Meet the young CEO launching Teach For Ghana

More than half of children not enrolled in school live in sub-Saharan Africa, according to the United Nations. And on average, there is one reading textbook for about two students and one math textbook for about three students in sub-Saharan Africa. Teach For Ghana — part of the Teach For All global network — officially launched last month in Accra. It is the first Teach For All partner organization on the African continent. Teach For All partner organizations are bound together by the philosophy that recruiting top talent from diverse backgrounds into the teaching profession for at least two years contributes to ending educational inequity.

[Read More on Devex](#)

## The Problem With Evidence-Based Policies

Many organizations, from government agencies to philanthropic institutions and aid organizations, now require that programs and policies be “evidence-based.” It makes sense to demand that policies be based on evidence and that such evidence be as good as possible, within reasonable time and budgetary limits. But the way this approach is being implemented may be doing a lot of harm, impairing our ability to learn and improve on what we do.

[Read More on Project-Syndicate](#)



## SPOTLIGHT ON INDIGENOUS HEALTH Aboriginal Leaders Are Warning of The Mental Health Cost of Climate Change in The North

An unusually warm winter in Ontario's north has left the roads unstable and unsafe, and kept local road groomers out of work. Despair over climate change — its impact on roads, infrastructure, hunting traditions and the surrounding environment — is contributing to mental health and social problems in northern aboriginal communities, possibly even to record-breaking suicide rates.

[Read More on The Star](#)



## QUOTE OF THE WEEK

**"Compassion is not just feeling with someone, but seeking to change the situation. Frequently people think compassion and love are merely sentimental. No! They are very demanding. If you are going to be compassionate, be prepared for action!"**

Archbishop Desmond Tutu,  
South Africa and 1984 Nobel Peace Prize Recipient

[Read More on Psychology Today](#)

## EVENTSTABLE

DATE	CONFERENCE	LOCATION	REGISTER
Mar. 22-26	Water Docs 2016	Toronto Canada	<a href="http://ecologos.ca/water-docs-2016/">http://ecologos.ca/water-docs-2016/</a>
Apr. 8-9	Planetary Health Conference: Global Health and Ecological Wellness	Toronto Canada	<a href="http://ryerson.ca/fcs/conferences/">http://ryerson.ca/fcs/conferences/</a>
Apr. 16-17	Global Health and Innovation Conference	New Haven USA	<a href="https://maestro">https://maestro</a>
May 11-13	Interdisciplinary Thinking and Planning: Sharing Good Practice and Learning New Ways of Doing	Prague Czech Republic	<a href="http://www.inter-disciplinary.net/">http://www.inter-disciplinary.net/</a>
May 13	Integrative Health Institute (IHI) Inaugural Conference	Edmonton Canada	<a href="https://uofa.ualberta.ca/">https://uofa.ualberta.ca/</a>
May 13-15	Peace, Global Health and Sustainability (PEGASUS)	Toronto Canada	<a href="http://www.pegasusconference.ca/">http://www.pegasusconference.ca/</a>
May 17-20	International Congress on Integrative Medicine and Health (ICIMH)	Las Vegas USA	<a href="https://www.cvent.com/">https://www.cvent.com/</a>
May 26-27	Indigenous Health Conference	Toronto Canada	<a href="http://www.cpd.utoronto.ca/">http://www.cpd.utoronto.ca/</a>
Jul. 8-9	2016 Summer Global Nursing Symposium	Los Angeles USA	<a href="http://www.uofriverside.com/">http://www.uofriverside.com/</a>



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## A Review of Frameworks on the Determinants of Health

Our health is influenced by many factors such as the work we do, our level of education, our income, where we live, the quality of our early childhood experiences and the physical environment that surrounds us (PHAC, 2008). These factors are called the determinants of health.

Frameworks, or visual depictions, can improve understanding of complex issues such as the determinants of health by explaining their impact on the well-being of individuals, communities and populations. Through clear depictions of the complex relationships among determinants, frameworks can support innovative planning and policy development by identifying opportunities for health and other sectors to act to reduce health inequities experienced by certain population groups.

[Read More on ccsdh.ca](https://www.ccsdh.ca)



## Why One Woman Stole 47 Million Academic Papers and Made Them All Free to Read

Many academic journals are extremely expensive. Want to read just one article? That could cost you around \$30. The best way to access academic papers is through universities or libraries. But those institutions can pay millions of dollars a year to subscribe to a comprehensive collection. Alexandra Elbakyan has had enough. Elbakyan is a Russia-based neuroscientist turned academic Robin Hood. In 2011 she founded the website Sci-Hub, which has grown to host some 47 million academic papers — Elbakyan **claims** this is nearly all the paywalled scientific knowledge that exists in the world. These papers are free for anyone to view and download.

For students and researchers around the globe who can't afford academic journals, Elbakyan is a hero. For academic publishers that have historically been shielded from competition, she's a villain.

Either way, what she's doing is most definitely illegal.

[Read More on Vox](#)





## **Uzima Women Relief Group International**

Uzima Women Relief Group International provides care and support to families affected by, poverty, war and disease with particular focus on women and children living with HIV/AIDS and orphaned children in developing countries.

Uzima is a Swahili word meaning wellness. The organization works to alleviate poverty and augment wellness among at-risk populations facing health challenges brought about by lack of access to medical care and medicines, good nutrition and education for girls. By improving the health of women and their families the general wellness of families and marginalized communities will be achieved. Among planned projects will be improving women's access to health care and promoting healthy lifestyles, teaching women to be self-sustainable through income generating projects, improving education of women and children.

Uzima Women Relief Group International envisions a world where women understand their rights and have access to quality health, education and economic stability.

[Learn More on uzimawomeninternational.org](http://uzimawomeninternational.org)



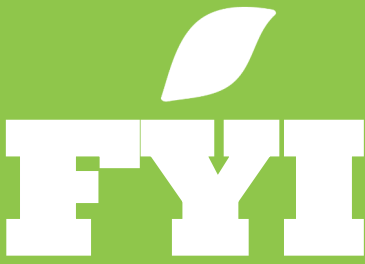


## Haiti Earthquake: Five Years Later, Country Still Feeling Aftershocks

January marked the fifth anniversary of the 7.0 magnitude earthquake that devastated Haiti, killing more than 300,000 people according to estimates by the Haitian government. Tens of thousands of homes, businesses, schools and government buildings were leveled, with roughly a quarter of all the country's civil servants killed and much of its public infrastructure destroyed.

Haiti is often cited as the poorest nation in the Western hemisphere with roughly 60 percent of its population living on less than \$2 a day. Despite this severe blow to an already struggling economy, an overwhelming majority of the 1.5 million people left homeless by the quake have been resettled. Thousands of new homes as well as hospitals, schools and roads have been built. From a school rebuilt with help from UNICEF to a pioneering community for children with disabilities run by Partners in Health, Haiti is a country bouncing back from catastrophe.

[Read More on abc News](#)



# THE 12 QUESTIONS

*Every Climate Activist Hears  
and What to Say*

A handy guide to the most common arguments  
against the reality of man-made climate change  
*and why they're totally wrong.*

*The 12 Questions Every Climate Activist Hears and What to Say* FREE e-book details the most common misconceptions and arguments against the reality of man-made climate change – and simple ways to explain why they're totally wrong.

[Download The FREE Book from Climate Reality Project](#)



Planetary Health Conference

# Global Health and Ecological Wellness

**Start Local - Think Global - Make the Connections  
Meet the Players - Become a Global Citizen**



**April 8, 2016**

**5:30 - 9:00 P.M.**

**The Stephen Lewis Conversations Series** with **Maude Barlow**, National Chairperson of the Council of Canadians.

**April 8 & 9, 2016**

**Ryerson University  
Tecumseh Auditorium  
Oakham House  
63 Gould Street**

**April 9, 2016**

**9:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.**

Presentations showcasing global health and ecological wellness initiatives led by Ryerson's professors, students and staff with keynote speaker, **Bill Ryerson**, Founder and President of Population Media Center, and Chair and CEO of the Population Institute.

**Explore engagement and ideas from across Ryerson's campus dealing with important and urgent Planetary Health issues.**

**RSVP:** <http://ryerson.ca/fcs/conferences/planetary-health/>

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**Faculty of Community Services**



planetary health commission



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Please spread the word and join others in working towards health and prosperity for all people and our mother earth.

**This Newsletter is FREE.**

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disciplinary boundaries to find lasting  
solutions to social issues.*

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