



PLANETARY HEALTH WEEKLY

BRINGING YOU CURRENT NEWS ON GLOBAL HEALTH & ECOLOGICAL WELLNESS

April 21, 2016

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Rising Hunger in Central America and Haiti as El Niño Follows Prolonged Drought

The United Nations food relief agency committed itself to assisting 1.6 million people hit by droughts exacerbated by El Niño in Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Haiti and building resilience against future climatic shocks. \$100 million will be needed to assist 1.6 million victims of drought through August in these three countries.

[Read More on UN](#)



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New Maps Show Seven Million Americans at Risk from Industry-Made Quakes

For the first time in its history, the United States government's premier science agency has issued maps identifying "potential ground-shaking hazards" from industry-induced earthquakes caused either by high-volume fracking or the injection of wastewater into the ground.

[Read More on The TYEE](#)

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Parts of fracking-happy Texas and Oklahoma face the same earthquake risk as California.





Protect Breast-Feeding, the Ultimate Personalized Medicine

Breast-feeding plays a significant role in improving nutrition, intelligence, educational attainment, and maternal and child health and survival. But raising awareness — and breast-feeding rates — among mothers will require changes in how milk substitutes are marketed across the globe.

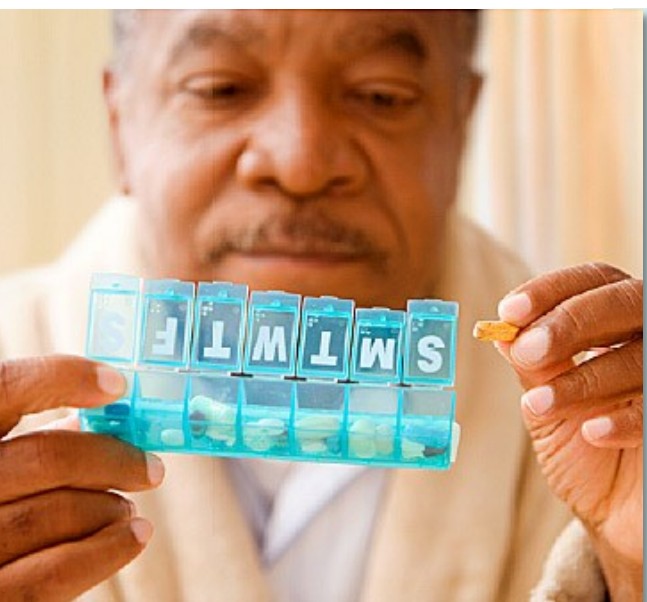
Helping address misperceptions about infant formula and encouraging breastfeeding could contribute significantly to reaching the Sustainable Development Goals.

[Read More on Devex](#)

Mental Health Treatment Shows Economic Returns

Common mental disorders such as anxiety and depression are increasing worldwide, and the number of people suffering from them rose to 615 million in 2013 from 416 million in 1990. Countries will benefit economically from better mental health services, seeing a \$4 return on every \$1 spent on treatment of anxiety and depression, says a study by the World Health Organization. Treatment of depression and anxiety makes good sense for health and well-being; this new study confirms that it makes sound economic sense too.

[Read More on Reuters](#)



Beat Diabetes: An Urgent Call for Global Action

The theme of this year's World Health Day on April 7—Beat Diabetes—adds to a 2011 UN initiative to stem the rise in prevalence of diabetes by 2025, as well as to reduce premature deaths from non-communicable diseases, part of Sustainable Development Goal #3.

In 2014, an estimated 422 million people worldwide were living with diabetes—roughly a four-fold increase over the past 35 years. The massive increase in prevalence of diabetes, in particular Type 2, is sobering. Immediate action is needed to avert this escalating health disaster, cum epidemic.

[Read More on The Lancet](#)



Climate Model Predicts West Antarctic Ice Sheet Could Melt Rapidly

For half a century, climate scientists have seen the West Antarctic ice sheet, a remnant of the last ice age, as a sword of Damocles hanging over human civilization.

The great ice sheet, larger than Mexico, is thought to be potentially vulnerable to disintegration from a relatively small amount of global warming, and capable of raising the sea level by 12 feet or more should it break up. But researchers long assumed the worst effects would take hundreds — if not thousands — of years to occur. Now, new research suggests the disaster scenario could play out much sooner.

[Read More on The New York Times](#)

Water Crisis Developing in Drought-Hit Vietnam

A water crisis is developing in central and southern Vietnam as the region is hit by its worst drought in recent history. A record drought is affecting the water supply and livelihoods of nearly 1.8 million people, 80 per cent of them in urgent need of drinking water, a United Nations situation report says. Twelve out of Vietnam's 63 provinces have so far declared a state of emergency. The drought is forecast to peak in April and persist through May, which means relief may not come until June, a late start for the rainy season.

[Read More on Channel News Asia](#)



Rural Water, Not City Smog, May Be China's Pollution Nightmare

More than 80 percent of the water from underground wells used by farms, factories and households across the heavily populated plains of China is unfit for drinking or bathing because of contamination from industry and farming raising new alarm about pollution in the world's most populous country. After years of focus on China's hazy skies as a measure of environmental blight, the new data from 2,103 underground wells struck a nerve among Chinese citizens who have become increasingly sensitive about health threats from pollution.

[Read More on The New York Times](#)



Lawsuits Charge That 3M Knew About the Danger of Its Chemicals

A state court in Minnesota allowed a lawsuit against 3M to move forward. And late last year, lawyers filed a class-action suit in Decatur, Alabama, home to one of 3M's biggest plants. Both lawsuits charge that 3M knew about the health hazards posed by the perfluorinated chemicals it was manufacturing and using to make carpet coating, Scotchgard, firefighting foam, and other products — and that the company knew the chemicals were spreading beyond its sites. With PFCs cropping up in drinking water around the country and all over the world, the two lawsuits raise the possibility that 3M may finally be held accountable in a court of law.

[Read More on EIN News](#)

Neoliberalism: The Ideology at the Root of Our Problems

Neoliberalism: do you know what it is?

Its anonymity is both a symptom and cause of its power. It has played a major role in a remarkable variety of crises: the financial meltdown of 2007-8, the offshoring of wealth and power, of which the Panama Papers offer us merely a glimpse, the slow collapse of public health and education, resurgent child poverty, the epidemic of loneliness, the collapse of ecosystems, the rise of Donald Trump.

[Read More on The Guardian](#)



SPOTLIGHT ON INDIGENOUS HEALTH Canada Seeks Traditional Aboriginal Knowledge on Climate Change

The indigenous peoples of northern Canada and other Arctic regions around the world have long argued they are the first to experience and suffer from the effects of global warming.

They also possess a wealth of traditional ecological knowledge — through oral histories, hunting and fishing patterns, and other observations that come from calling a place home for millennia — that can document the effects of the changing climate and, perhaps, offer solutions.

[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!”

Elder, Archbishop Desmond Tutu

EVENTSTABLE

DATE	CONFERENCE	LOCATION	REGISTER
May 11-13	Interdisciplinary Thinking and Planning: Sharing Good Practice and Learning New Ways of Doing	Prague Czech Republic	http://www.inter-disciplinary.net/
May 13	Integrative Health Institute (IHI) Inaugural Conference	Edmonton Canada	https://uofa.ualberta.ca/
May 13-15	Peace, Global Health and Sustainability (PEGASUS)	Toronto Canada	http://www.pegasusconference.ca/
May 17-20	International Congress on Integrative Medicine and Health (ICIMH)	Las Vegas USA	https://www.cvent.com/
May 26-27	Indigenous Health Conference	Toronto Canada	http://www.cpd.utoronto.ca/
Jul. 8-9	2016 Summer Global Nursing Symposium	Los Angeles USA	http://www.uofriverside.com/
Nov. 21-24	9th Global Conference on Health Promotion	Shanghai China	http://www.who.int/healthpromotion



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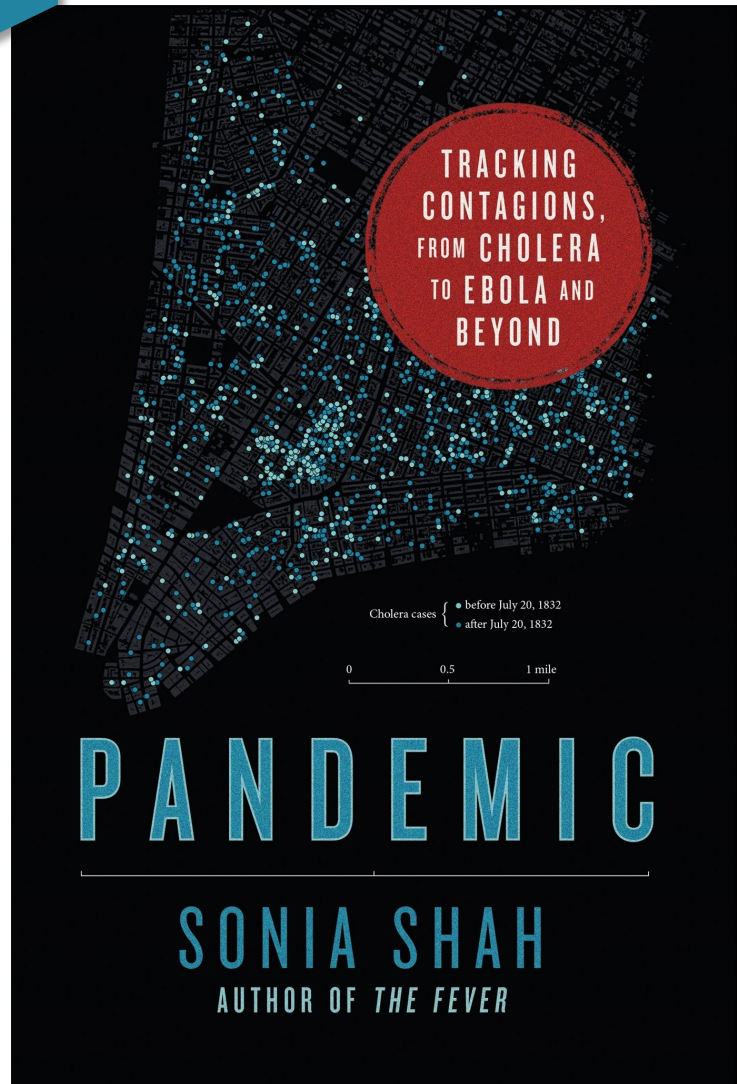


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Science Journalist Tackles Why We Haven't Killed Malaria

The Tyee's Crawford Kilian recently gave American science journalist Sonia Shah a glowing review for her latest book, *Pandemic: Tracking Contagions, From Cholera to Ebola and Beyond*. In it, she uses the history of cholera to take us on a guided tour of other diseases -- all of which rely on humans to spread them.

Shah's been acclaimed for her investigations, such as her previous book, *The Fever*. Its scope is best described by its subtitle: *How Malaria Has Ruled Humankind for 500,000 Years*.

This 2013 TED talk by Shah zones in on "three reasons we still haven't gotten rid of malaria." The reasons are (spoiler alert!): scientific, due to malaria's tenacity as a pathogen; economic, due to poor upkeep in impoverished urban environments; and cultural, due to affected societies viewing it as a fact of life rather than a killer disease.

[Watch The TED Talk on The TYEE](#)



Innovating Pedagogy

This series of reports explores new forms of teaching, learning and assessment for an interactive world, to guide teachers and policy makers in productive innovation. This fourth report proposes ten innovations that are already in currency and are having an increasing effect on education. To produce it, a group of academics at the Institute of Educational Technology in The Open University collaborated with researchers from the Center for Technology in Learning at SRI International. They proposed a long list of new educational terms, theories, and practices. Then they pared these down to ten that have the potential to provoke major shifts in educational practice, particularly in post-school education. Lastly, they drew on published and unpublished writings to compile the ten sketches of new pedagogies that might transform education. These are summarised in an approximate order of immediacy and timescale to widespread implementation.

[Read The Report on Proxima](#)



New Grads Can Make it in This Economy, Says Career Management Expert

Despite a lackluster economic outlook, Canadian higher ed grads can still find success on the job market, says Calgary-based talent and career management consultant Richard Bucher. He encourages recent graduates to overcome the belief that employers won't think they know anything when they come out of school, and recommends that these graduates look for jobs outside their home province if it means building experience in their chosen field. He also suggests that graduates use their existing networks to create a "personal board of directors." This board would be made up of older, professionally established advisors who can offer mentoring and "introduce you to people, potentially build opportunities for you, and provide you guidance about the roles you should be looking at, the relationships that you should be building, the kind of experience that you should be acquiring as you grow into your career."

[Read More on CBC](#)



‘Fortune’ Magazine’s Profile on ONE Cofounder Bono

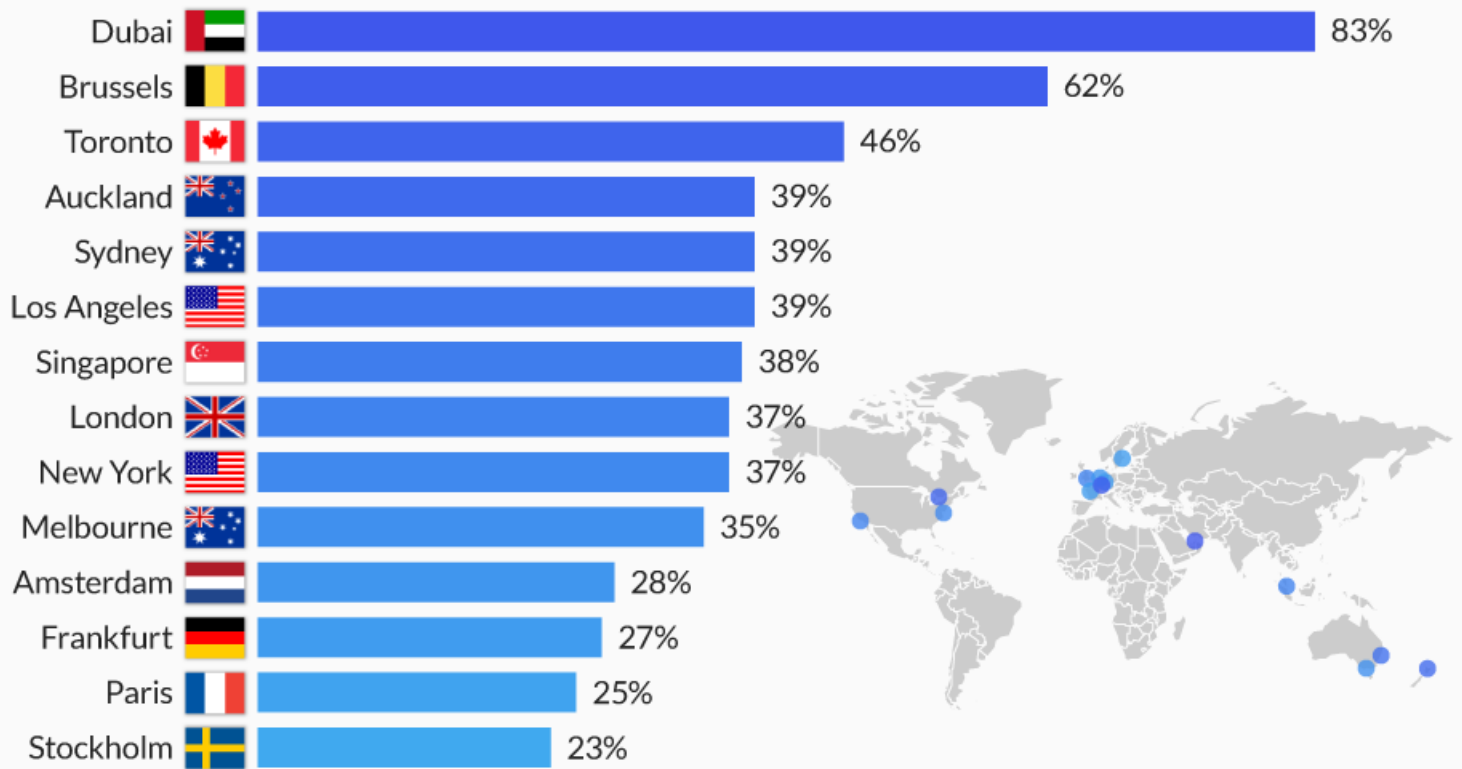
This month’s *Fortune* magazine lists its 50 greatest world leaders—and sitting right at number 14 on the list is ONE and (RED) cofounder Bono. In the profile by Ellen McGirt, Bono talks about AIDS, hunger, global poverty—and how ONE and its members are fighting them all.

[Read More on one.org](http://one.org)



The world's most cosmopolitan cities

Foreign-born population in major cities in 2014 (in %)



Source: International Organization for Migration

i100

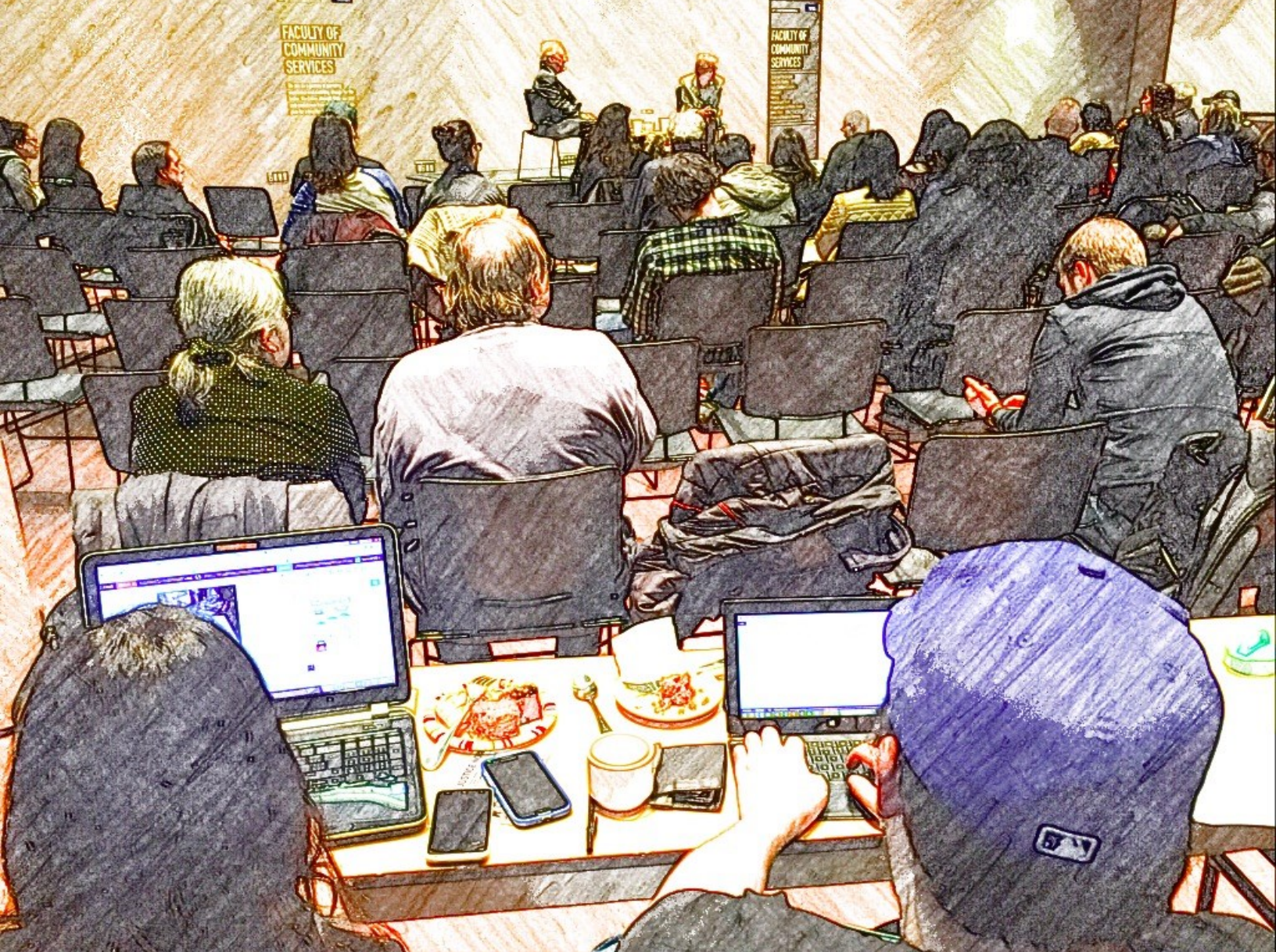
from The INDEPENDENT

statista

Infographics: 14 Cities With Biggest Foreign-Born Populations

The ever-increasing rate of globalization brings with it both risks and opportunities for the people, communities and governments concerned. 2015's World Migration Report from the International Organization for Migration (IOM), was published to find out how international migrants and migration are shaping cities with a focus on sustainable urban development. One of its major findings is that two world cities are now called home by more people who were born outside that country—Dubai (82 %) and Brussels (62 %).

[Read More on Republica](#)



When Steven Lewis and his Conversation guest Maude Barlow talked about the world's water issues and problems at the recent Planetary Health Conference (April 8, 2016 at Ryerson), it was daunting. The conflict between humans and the environment is so profound; it must be acted on by all.

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