3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

ENSURE HEALTHY LIVES AND PROMOTE WELL-BEING FOR ALL AT ALL AGES

We all deserve to be healthy and able to achieve what we need in our lives. However, to ensure the health of everyone, we also need to address gaps in services, treatment and coverage for vulnerable populations too. We can do this by developing strategies to positively impact the mortality rates of mothers, children, substance users, the extremely poor and other minority groups who have difficulty addressing their health needs. Additionally, this goal seeks to improve access to universal health care, access to affordable medicines and sexual and reproductive health care services for everyone. Through improved access to health care around the world, strong research, health finance and early warning systems, we can address and reduce epidemics such as malaria, HIV/AIDS, mental health and cancer. We can measure how we're doing by looking at population mortality rates to see if the number of new cases or the number of people dying changes through intervention programs.

TARGETS

- By 2030, the global maternal mortality rate will be less than 70 per 100,000 live births, and the number of under-five deaths as low as 25 per 1,000 births.

- By 2030, AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, communicable and tropical or water-borne diseases will be a thing of the past.

- Prevention and treatment of substance abuse will be strengthened.

- Universal access to sexual and reproductive health care services as well as safe, effective, affordable and quality general medical services will be available.

- Increase to health financing, training and retention of skilled health workforce in developing countries.

" Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane. "

Martin Luther King Jr.
American civil rights activist

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1   Learners will understand the concepts of health, hygiene and well-being while critically reflecting on the importance of gender in health and well-being.

2   Learners will understand the socio-political and economic dimensions of health and well-being as well as strategies to promote good health.

3   Learners will understand the importance of mental health and strategies to foster positive physical and mental health and well-being, including reproductive and sexual health.

4   Learners will be able to communicate issues of health, including sexual and reproductive health, and preventative strategies.

5   Learners will be able to include health promoting behaviours in their daily routines and perceive avenues of support when others or themselves need help.

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Media
How are different health issues reported?
How are local stories covered versus international?

Environment
How is our health connected to the health of our environment?

Poverty, wealth and power
How are poverty and health linked?
What are strategies to intervene?

Indigenous Peoples
What are some opportunities for holistic healing in the health and well-being of Indigenous communities?

Oppression and genocide
How are oppression and discrimination related to health and well-being?

Health and biotechnology
What trends are emerging in technological innovation and health?

Gender politics
How is health related to gender inequality?

Social justice and human rights
What do the experiences of people who are discriminated against within the health care system say about the system in general?

Peace and conflict
How do you rebuild a healthcare system in a post-conflict environment?

THE BIG QUESTIONS

1 Where did it begin?

- Poor health and **poverty** are closely linked. They are both a cause and a consequence of each other. This cycle of poor health and poverty can occur at local, national and international levels. At the local level, lack of money, lack of information, cultural barriers, geography and **stigma** can prevent people from accessing necessary health services. At the community national, or international level, poor health can be caused by widespread poverty, infectious diseases and lack of government social support for the poorest and most vulnerable people.

- On an environmental level, overcrowded and poor living conditions can contribute to the spread of airborne diseases such as tuberculosis, and respiratory infections such as pneumonia. Reliance on open fires or traditional stoves can lead to deadly indoor air pollution. **Environmental degradation** caused by pollution, and **overconsumption** leading to lack of food, clean water and **sanitation** can also be fatal.

- When we look at **social determinants of health** such as income, education, job security, **food security**, housing, **gender**, race, disability and where people are born, we can see that there is a wider set of forces and systems shaping the conditions of health for many people.

2 Why does this issue matter?

- "Ensuring health and well-being for all" means working to support those most vulnerable to unequal access to health services and treatment. It is important to understand how access to health care and **health literacy** are impacted by the social, cultural and environmental influences of our lives. The following section will illustrate the specifics of what we mean by good health and well-being.

- **A safe and healthy birth for mothers and children**
  Giving birth can have many challenges and health risks, and this goal highlights the need for mothers and children to receive trained support to minimize the risk of complications or death during delivery.

- **Living through early childhood**
  Children under the age of five are vulnerable to disease and **malnutrition**. With access to proper care, vaccinations and good **nutrition**, children can be better potrected against disease and early death.

- **Protection from preventable diseases**
  Epidemics, or rapid and widespread diseases, can be prevented and managed. Through quick and quality treatment, the risk of spreading contagious diseases can be reduced.

- **Freedom from addiction**
  Treatment, education, and support are the best ways to prevent substance abuse in our communities, and it's important to improve access for all in need of these supports.

- **Knowing your body and your rights**

  Improving access to information and services related to sexual and reproductive health are key to improving health in general. When you can make informed and confident choices about your body, you're flexing your right to health and well-being. Ensuring the protection of these rights can help eliminate harmful practices such as **female genital mutilation.**

- **Access to health care**

  Being able to find health services, vaccinations and information are essential to improving the health and well-being of our population. Ensuring safe, local access to these services is vital.

3 Who and what are affected?

- **Children**

  Children are most at risk of malnutrition, underdevelopment and infectious diseases for many reasons, including poverty, poor health services and lack of treatment. The **neonatal mortality** rate refers to the likelihood of dying in the first 28 days of life. Between 2000 and 2015, this rate declined from 31 deaths to 19 deaths per 1,000 live births.[1] Improving treatment and access to medicine for children and their caregivers, educating individuals and communities and improving hygienic practices are the key to seeing this rate continue to decrease.

- **Women**

  Programs addressing health need to understand how unique barriers impact womens' and girls' access to health services, education and resources. Many women in the world sacrifice their education, waged work and well-being to care for their children and families. Inconsistent or unavailable treatments for women's health and **family planning** impact the overall health of women globally. While this goal seeks to ensure all women have access to health services in general, it specifically recommends women have access to sexual and reproductive health-care services including birth control, counselling and abortion or maternal services.

> "Communities and countries and ultimately the world are only as strong as the health of their women."
>
> **Michelle Obama**
> Lawyer, Former First Lady of the United States of America

- ### People living in unsanitary conditions

  In 2012, an estimated 889,000 people died from infectious diseases caused largely by fecal contamination of water and soil and by inadequate hand-washing facilities and practices resulting from poor or non-existent sanitation services. In the same year, household and ambient air pollution resulted in some 6.5 million deaths.[2]   From simple hand washing skills to having clean air to breathe, sanitation and hygiene are critical to our health, survival and well-being.

  According to the Center for Disease Control, basic sanitation means being able to safely dispose of human waste (feces and urine), and maintaining hygienic conditions through services such as garbage collection, industrial or hazardous waste management and wastewater treatment and disposal. Investments like these take national level policies with local level investments and education opportunities to prevent unnecessary losses of life due to unsanitary conditions.

- ### People suffering from mental health issues and substance abuse

  Mental illness occurs across regions and cultures. The most common mental health issues are anxiety and depression, which can lead to death by suicide. In 2012, an estimated 800,000 people worldwide died by suicide, and 86 per cent of them were under the age of 70.[3] Globally, death by suicide is the second leading cause of death among those between the ages of 15 and 29.[4] Making space to discuss mental health issues and identify strategies for support and treatment is important to reducing stigma and highlighting the network of support available.

  Substance abuse, or the overindulgence in or dependence on an addictive substance, especially alcohol or drugs, remains a burden for the health sector. Treatment is also inconsistent: only about one in six people worldwide suffering from drug-use disorders received treatment in 2013.[5] Unlike infectious and communicable diseases, mental health and substance abuse can be harder to detect, for individuals and their communities alike, making them a subtler burden on our health and well-being.

4 What needs to be done?

- ### Water, sanitation and hygiene

  From dengue to diarrhea, poor sanitation and hygiene are the cause of a number of diseases for vulnerable individuals and communities. More than 33 per cent the world's population practice open defecation or lack adequate sanitation facilities.[6] Improving access to clean water, promoting hygienic practices such as hand washing, waste disposal and food preparation can help reduce the risk of diseases and infections. Building proper latrines and fixing old ones are also great ways to improve our waste disposal so that we don't contaminate our communities.

- ## Health care workers
  From HIV-AIDS to mental health, one of the biggest barriers to health treatment of vulnerable populations is stigma, or negative attitudes and behaviours, towards people suffering from a particular condition. Fear of infection, discrimination, violence and/or shame can impact a person's willingness to seek treatment for their disease. Changing behaviours and attitudes towards acceptance, inclusion, respect and equal treatment can happen when we talk about the issues in a way that doesn't judge or criticize someone with a disease or illness. One way to do this is to increase the number of trained healthcare professionals able to work with vulnerable and stigmatized individuals and communities to increase safe access to healthcare.

- ## Mental health
  Addressing mental health should focus on wellness, social determinants of health and resilience for vulnerable individuals and communities. One of these vulnerable groups are refugees and asylum seekers. Moving from your home country as a result of war, oppression, violence or **famine** can severely impact mental health. Post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, culture shock and depression can all contribute to poor mental health and difficulty settling in a new community.

- ## Gender
  Part of the process of empowering women in their health is improving access to health-related resources. At the crossroads of sanitation, sustainability and empowerment lies the sanitary pad. For many women in developed and developing countries alike, sanitary pads and other feminine hygiene products like tampons and menstrual cups are out of reach. In India, only 16 per cent of women use sanitary pads during menstruation.[7] One example of an organization taking action is Saathi, who use sustainable and local agriculture to harvest banana fibers to create sanitary pads for distribution in rural communities. Take a look at the work Saathi is doing in this video.[8] Through education and awareness, **stigma reduction** around female hygiene and sanitation can help improve access and discussion about these issues.

- ## Environmental
  Climate change affects social and environmental determinants of health, including clean air, safe drinking water, sufficient food and secure shelter. Increased drought, high temperatures, allergies and increased natural disasters can contribute to transmission of diseases and poor health practices. As a cycle, poor health practices, such as improper human waste disposal, can contribute to the degradation of our ecosystems. From policies to individual choices, there is a lot we can do to reduce our emissions and improve cleaner energy use and waste disposal. Raising awareness and sharing information about the impacts of climate change on human health can assist to reduce health vulnerability and environmental degradation. In response to the relationship between climate change and our health, the World Health Organization asked choreographer Marie Elangovan to use traditional Indian Bharatanatyam dance to advocate for more action and attention to these issues.[9]

CONNECTION TO THE OTHER GOALS

13 CLIMATE ACTION **14 LIFE BELOW WATER** **15 LIFE ON LAND**

To build the foundation of healthy people and communities, a number of building blocks need to be in place. Our health benefits from the health of our environment. When we pollute our air, water and land, it impacts our health through disease, drought and desalination—just to name a few.

5 GENDER EQUALITY **10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES**

Making health care accessible is also a mission of **gender equality**. Improvements to health care and health literacy must support the particular needs of vulnerable populations such as women and transgender people.

1 NO POVERTY

Poor health is related to the outcomes of the **poverty cycle**. If we can address the causes of poverty by improving access to housing, stable income and nutrition, we can work towards improving the health of our bodies.

> "You cannot have maternal health without reproductive health. And reproductive health includes contraception and family planning and access to legal, safe abortion."

Hillary Clinton
Former US Secretary of State

Consequences of inaction

- Our health is linked to so many elements of our lives and our planet. If we don't address the pressing issues of climate change, poverty, gender equality, nutrition or **sustainable agriculture**, we will be putting our health, our planet's health and the future generations' health at risk.

- If we don't address the causes of poor health like clean water, sanitation, environmental degradation, gender inequality, poverty and overconsumption, we will see unnecessary loss of life and ecosystems in our lifetime.

- If we don't strengthen our research, education and awareness, we won't be able to protect ourselves and our communities from dangerous or unhealthy attitudes and behaviours contributing to poor health.

REFLECTION AND ACTION QUESTIONS

1 How do you feel about the issue now that you know more about it?

2 How might this issue have been prevented? What could have been done differently?

3 How has this problem changed over time? Where do you see it going in the future?

4 What questions do you still have?

RESOURCES

How to take action

- **Try walking the talk.** Healthy living starts with you. Learn what healthy living is all about, what kinds of food you need to eat, what kinds of fun things you can do to exercise and get your community involved. Start a local sports day. Challenge your friends to make the healthiest lunch they can. Have a "Jumping Jacks for Charity" day. The sky is the limit!

- **Get involved in a community garden.** Get your green thumbs growing and join a community garden to grow some food to support yourself and your community. Learn what grows best in your area and how you can incorporate sustainable agriculture into local farming practices.

- **Run around and give back.** Join a charity run and give back while you get healthy. Find a cause that speaks to you, or start your own for "Healthy Living Mad Dash" and support a local health charity.

- **Get informed.** Infectious diseases can spread quickly, but misinformation can spread even faster. When reports of outbreaks happen, make sure you check your sources and get savvy on what the facts are and how you can protect yourself and help inform others.

- **Assess your school's nutrition.** Students and teachers can work together to assess the nutrition levels of food available in their school using this tool. For even more information and resources, take a look at the Manitoba Healthy Food in Schools page.

- **Start a school garden!** This will help improve nutrition, food security, good health, sustainability, and teach students new skills. You can find all the information you need to get started here.

- **Host an assembly.** Help your students educate the rest of the school on the importance of Goal 3 for themselves and the world!

- **Start a fundraising campaign.** Support good health in your community or a community overseas. Show your students their actions matter and can make a difference around the world!

- **Support local and international organizations working to promote good health and well-being around the world.** You can start locally with an organization like Food Matters Manitoba, or raise funds for international NGOs working to improve health around the world. A good starting point is MCIC's list of member organizations with links to their websites. You can also contact us anytime to get information on health projects, or organizations to support or connect with on these issues.

Educational resources

- The World's Largest Lesson page for Goal 3 has downloadable comics, posters and lesson plans here. You can also download a lesson called A Healthy Start (ages 8-11). This lesson helps students explore the ideas of good health and well-being.

- Check out the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health's resources on discussing and teaching about mental health and substance abuse with students.

- Check out UNICEF's Kid Power lesson resources. Select "lessons" to choose activities by grade. For example, there are lesson plans for Grades 6 to 8 on exploring the impact of malnutrition or learning about key nutrients for good health.

" Saving our planet, lifting people out of poverty, advancing economic growth...these are one and the same fight. We must connect the dots between climate change, water scarcity, energy shortages, global health, food security and women's empowerment. Solutions to one problem must be solutions for all. "

Ban Ki-moon
Former Secretary-General of the United Nations

CASE STUDIES

1 Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH)

In order to address the hardships of relocation experienced by refugees to Canada, the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) in Toronto is working to improve community support for newcomer mental health through their Refugee Mental Health Project. The intention is to help health service providers understand the specific needs of refugee mental health to promote training, tools and resources to better support newcomers to Canada.

2 World Health Organization (WHO)

The World Health Organization (WHO) is the UN specialized agency concerned with international public health. WHO came to be on July 22, 1946 when 61 countries signed its constitution. WHO has become a leading force in eradicating small pox, as well as addressing communicable diseases, sexual and reproductive health, nutrition, food security and the development of reports, briefs and networking in the field. On their website you can search by country, program or topic of interest to learn more about health efforts around the world.[10]

3 Make Music Matter

The Make Music Matter program in Rwanda has developed a project to use music production as a way to educate Rwandan youth and their community about the health risks of HIV-AIDS. By putting preventative messages to a beat, the program hopes to help increase awareness about HIV-AIDS prevention in post-conflict and extreme poverty areas.[11]

4 United Church of Canada

The United Church of Canada works with nutritional and health services to offer vulnerable children and babies support through health education in Palestine. Through the well-baby services provided through this organization, participants are learning to identify and treat early childhood illnesses, particularly malnutrition and anemia, for over 10,000 children living in the highly vulnerable areas of Rafah, Darraj and Shijaia.

5 Mennonite Economic Development Associates

Mennonite Economic Development Associates is working in Tanzania to help vulnerable populations get insecticide-treated bed nets using an electronic voucher system, helping reduce the high rate of malaria. The e-voucher system will also give increased access to vitamin A-fortified sunflower oil and clean cook stoves through sustainable commercial channels, to help combat nutrient deficiency and hypertension.

6 Canadian Multicultural Disability Centre

Canadian Multicultural Disability Centre is working in Zimbabwe to build a clinic in the Chirasauta Community in the Chikomba District in Zimbabwe. This project was developed over three years to improve available health services for over 1,000 households in an impoverished rural area by building a clinic. The maternity ward will reduce infant mortality and morbidity rates, especially through the supply and installation of two elevated, 5,000-litre tanks and roofing material for the clinic.

End notes

[1] https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg3

[2] https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg3

[3] https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg3

[4] https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg3

[5] https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg3

[6] http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs392/en/

[7] https://borgenproject.org/feminine-hygiene-women-india/

[8] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Blc4ZoS5VY

[9] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BUiniY8kAQ4

[10] http://who.int/en/

[11] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ptopi7LIWjI