

Introduction to Global Health

Introduction to Global Health

1. What Is Global Health?

- **Definition** – A collaborative, interdisciplinary field that seeks to improve health and achieve equity for all people worldwide.
 - **Scope** – Encompasses disease prevention, health promotion, and health system strengthening across borders.
 - **Core Principles**
 - **Equity** – Reducing health disparities between and within countries.
 - **Solidarity** – Shared responsibility for health outcomes.
 - **Interdependence** – Health of one population influences the health of others.
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2. Why Global Health Matters

Reason	Explanation
Disease Burden	Communicable (e.g., COVID-19, malaria) and non-communicable diseases (e.g., diabetes) affect billions.
Economic Impact	Ill health reduces productivity, strains health budgets, and hampers development.
Security	Pandemics, antimicrobial resistance, and health-related migration are threats to global stability.
Human Rights	Access to health care is recognized as a fundamental right in international law.

3. Determinants of Global Health

Category	Key Factors
Biological	Genetics, age, sex, immunity
Environmental	Climate change, air/water quality, urbanization
Social & Economic	Poverty, education, gender equity, employment

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Category	Key Factors
Behavioral	Nutrition, physical activity, substance use
Health System	Service coverage, workforce, financing, governance
Political	Policy frameworks, conflict, trade agreements

4. Major Global Health Challenges

1. **Infectious Diseases** – Emerging pathogens, vaccine-preventable diseases, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis.
 2. **Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)** – Cardiovascular disease, cancer, chronic respiratory disease, diabetes.
 3. **Maternal & Child Health** – High rates of maternal mortality, under-5 mortality, malnutrition.
 4. **Health Inequities** – Disparities based on geography, income, ethnicity, gender.
 5. **Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR)** – Growing resistance threatens treatment of common infections.
 6. **Climate Change & Environmental Health** – Heat-related illness, vector-borne disease expansion, food insecurity.
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5. Global Health Governance

Actor	Role
World Health Organization (WHO)	Sets norms, provides technical assistance, coordinates responses to health emergencies.
United Nations (UN) System	UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA address child health, development, and reproductive health.
Donor Agencies	The Global Fund, Gavi, USAID, DFID fund disease-specific programs and health system strengthening.
International NGOs	Médecins Sans Frontières, Save the Children, Partners In Health deliver care and advocacy.
Multilateral Partnerships	Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially Goal 3: “Good Health and Well-Being.”
National Governments	Implement policies, allocate resources, and enforce regulations.

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6. Approaches & Strategies

6.1. Health Systems Strengthening

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