



**GLOBAL
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HEALTH LAB**
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6th International Symposium for Sustainable Development

**Abstracts and Narratives
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Contents

SDG 1:

“Harm Reduction Practices to Address SDGs 1, 3, 10, and 11” Noam Greene - Pg 6

SDG 3 :

“Promoting Health and Wellbeing of Infants and Medical Staff in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) by Reducing Noise” Mariah Cheyney - Pg 7

“Assessing the Outlook: A Review on the Global Burden of Blindness” Jack Saddemi - Pg 8

“The Importance of Cenotes for Local and Tourist Populations - The case of the Northeastern Yucatan Peninsula” Dayani Davilla - Pg 9

SDG 6

“Sustainable Water Supply System in Illinois” Dzeneta Dujkovic - Pg 10

“Behind the Scenes of Sustainable Tourism: Access to Public Water Systems and Related to Health Concerns in Popular Tourist Suburbs” Estephano Munoz - Soto Pg - 11

“Quantification of Mosquito Repellents and Sunscreens Released into Water from the Skin” Erick Zendejas - Pg 12

“The Impact of Cenotes on Water Resources in the Yucatán Peninsula” Vanessa Vazquez - Pg 13

SDG 7:

“The Application of Green Office Standard in Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emission and Resource Utilization in Thailand” Phyu Sabai Mon - Pg 14

SDG 8:

“Studying the Social Impacts of the Maya Train Project in Puerto Morelos, Quintana Roo, México” Pheleep Sidhom - Pg 15

SDG 9:

“Perception of potential impacts from the Maya Train in Puerto Morelos, Mexico” Emely Hernandez - Pg 16

SDG 10:

“Quality of Life of Children with Disabilities in Myanmar” Alyssa Zlatkin - Pg 17

“Role of Data in the Provision of Accessible Toilet” Alisha Salsabila Indrawan - Pg 18

SDG 11:

“Open Source Controlled Environment Agriculture including Development of Water Quality Systems” Kevin Martin - Pg 19

“TransAsia Perspectives of Musicking and Environmental Health: Sustainable Communities Influencing Lives in Dynamic Spaces” Matthew Werstler - Pg 20

“Sustainability from a Complexity Lens” Jamie Andres Cardenas Sanchez - Pg 21

SDG 12:

“Recycling in the Operating Room” Gabriella Wagoner - Pg 22

SDG 13:

“Climate Change and Farmer Mental Health: A Community Based System Dynamics Approach” Christopher Weatherly - Pg 23

SDG 16:

“ Incorporating the Basics of International Humanitarian Law and Humanitarian Aid in MPH Curriculums” Katrina Jacoby - Pg 24

All:

“Child Tobacco Use and Smoking Risk Perception in South Sulawesi, Indonesia” Ryan Sutherland - Pg 25

“Prevalence, Policies, Practices and Norms Surrounding Antibiotic Resistant Diseases in Myanmar” Sabrina Hennecke - Pg 26

“Perception of the Risk that the construction of the Mayan Train would represent in the Infrastructure of Puerto Morelos, Mexico” Pamela Collazo - Pg 27

“Internal migration as a social determinant of occupational health and WASH access in Myanmar” Heidi Sierra West - Pg 28

Countries Represented: Myanmar, Indonesia, Mexico, Thailand & United States



Primary Goal: 1, 3, 10, 11

Practice: Harm Reduction Practices to Address SDGs 1, 3, 10, and 11

Noam Greene

Narrative

This presentation will present evidence that harm reduction practices are effective in addressing Sustainable Development Goals 1 (no poverty), 3 (good health and well-being), 10 (reduced inequalities), and 11 (sustainable cities and communities). Harm reduction practices are based on the philosophy that people who use drugs deserve respect and consideration in health policy. These practices aim to reduce potential negative consequences of drug use in any form, whether by intravenous injection, smoking, snorting, or oral ingestion. Some forms of harm reduction practice are needle, pipe, and naloxone distribution, education for and by drug users, equal healthcare access, and safer injection sites. As a primary prevention public health strategy, harm reduction improves health outcomes by reducing skin and soft tissue infections, reliance on emergency room services, communicable disease transmission, and death from overdose.

I will present data from my field work among unhoused people who use drugs in Chicago alongside international studies. There is ample qualitative and quantitative evidence that harm reduction practices improve drug users' health and well-being, reduce inequity in healthcare access based on income, and increase safety in urban areas. The criminalization of specific drugs has worsened inequality and poverty among racialized communities in urban centers. Harm reduction practices are an important example of how primary prevention strategies are necessary to reduce poverty and social inequalities while improving cities' health and sustainability. Opioid and street drug use has no national borders. Therefore, the SDGs must take into account the needs of people who use drugs in urban areas.

Keywords: harm reduction, drug use, health promotion, opioids, health equity

Relevant goals: SDGs 1, 3, 10, 11

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yvRZvIZ9qXc&list=PLAyTArF1SmP-1TDwGJ_pzYEQKRj4dOL2R&index=7

Primary Goal: 3

Practice: Promoting Health and Wellbeing of Infants and Medical Staff in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) by Reducing Noise

Cheyney, Mariah

Narrative

In hospital systems, sound levels in neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) can negatively impact neonatal health as well as hospital staff wellbeing. Many hospitals in the United States surpass recommended average noise levels, fail to monitor noise levels, and do not have noise monitoring protocols. Noise levels in the NICU can result in physiologic responses and an alteration of infant health stability. High noise can also contribute to fatigue among staff, as well as decreased accuracy and productivity. The risk factors for noise in the NICU are discussed, including medical equipment, the built environment, behavioral and social risk factors, and policy factors. Environmental, behavioral, and policy solutions for noise levels are presented. The ideas created through this report may be used to reduce and monitor sound output in the NICU, which will encourage healing and recovery in neonates and promote reduction of medical mistakes and wellness in hospital staff. Future endeavors include implementing these noise protocols in the NICU environment in a stepwise fashion, to determine the impact of each protocol step in reducing noise and promoting staff productivity.

Keywords: NICU, noise, sound levels, hospital, neonatal health

Relevant goals: SDG 3.2, 8.5

<https://youtu.be/rGddTWjY8h0>

Primary Goal: 3

Education: Assessing the Outlook: A review on the global burden of blindness

Jack Saddemi, MPH

Narrative

Vision impairment is often a severe toll on quality of life, however, many causes of visual impairment can be prevented or treated. With age being a primary risk factor³ for several ophthalmic conditions, the demands for global eye care will continue rising with the aging of the population, and populations will shift towards predominantly non-communicable diseases.¹ An estimated 38.5 million people are currently blind globally¹, with greater than 50% of cases being due to treatable causes such as uncorrected refractive error or cataracts.^{1,3,5} Trachoma from *Chlamydia trachomatis* persists as the leading cause of infectious blindness worldwide with an estimated 21 million people with active disease and over 2 million individuals who are blind from this disease.⁶ This disease is preventable with improved sanitation and antibiotic distribution. Many countries throughout the world, particularly Africa, are still plagued by endemic trachoma. However, some Asian countries, such as Myanmar, have been heralded for nearly eradicating disease.⁹

It has been well documented that blindness not only impacts the individual, but it impacts entire families as family members are also forced to adapt—often sacrificing lost wages.⁴ One study even found that most of the costs associated with being blind are due to increased costs of residential care.⁸ Cataract surgery and lens distribution remain among the top interventions for return on investment strategies to implement in low- and middle income countries.^{2,7}

There remains a need for further intervention and international outreach to address avoidable vision loss, improve overall health, and reduce inequalities and access to care.

Keywords: global, outreach, ophthalmology, cataract, trachoma

Relevant goals: SDGs 1, 3, 9, and 10

<https://youtu.be/6J0yU2MPeG8>

Primary Goal: 3

Research: The Importance of Cenotes for Local and Tourist Populations - The case of the Northeastern Yucatan Peninsula

Dayani Davilla, Vanessa Vazquez, Melissa Lenczewski, Kenneth Voglesonger

Abstract

Background: Sources of nutrient contamination, like sewage and runoff, have an impact on the Yucatán Peninsula's main source of drinking water: freshwater aquifers exposed to the surface as cenotes. Cenotes are popular tourist sites and they are places where pollution can easily infiltrate the aquifer. The amount of nutrient pollution entering the karst aquifer, primarily from nitrogen (N) and phosphorus (P), may increase as the local and tourist populations grow. For them, access to clean water and sanitation is critical. Our research will investigate how cenotes respond to nutrient input and depth profiles of nitrate, nitrite, ammonium, phosphate. **Methods:** Three different cenotes were studied: one that is primarily used by tourists, one that is primarily utilized by locals, and one that is not used recreationally. Based on the measured chemical and physical parameters (pH, total dissolved solids, oxidation-reduction potential, temperature, and dissolved oxygen) of the cenotes, we will compare the estimated equilibrium values. **Results:** We will be able to construct a thermodynamic model that determines whether nutrient intake is driving the chemical system out of equilibrium concerning N & P. These cenotes will be compared to pre- and post- COVID-19 measurements to see how variations in tourism due to the pandemic have affected nutrient concentrations. **Conclusion:** It is critical to assess the potential detrimental effects of tourism on cenotes as they play an important part in maintaining human health, providing water supply, and sustaining the local economy and communities.

Keywords: Karst system, cenote, nutrient analysis, Mexico, Yucatan

Relevant goals: SDG 6, SDG 11, SDG 8

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aUQOHhpPIWk&list=PLAyTArF1SmP-1TDwGJ_pzYEQKRj4dOL2R&index=9

Primary Goal: 6

Research: Sustainable Water Supply System in Illinois

Dzeneta Dujkovic, B.S. Dr. Tomoyuki Shibata, Ph.D.

Abstract

Background: Providing clean and safe water to communities is essential in protecting the public's health. People depend on water for various functions such as hydration, cooking, and proper sanitation. Access to safe water is critical for reducing global diseases and enhancing the population's health and well-being. The United Nations General Assembly lists access to clean drinking water, as well as sanitation, a human right that is vital for good quality of life and is the foundation for meeting all human rights. The conventional centralized public water system has been widely employed to provide access to safe drinking water. However, there are concerns regarding the sustainability of the water supply. Sustainable water management refers to the ability to meet current water needs without jeopardizing the future generation's ability to do so. To improve the scientific understanding of sustainable water management, this project's objective is to analyze existing findings regarding the sustainability of public water systems in the U.S., specifically within Illinois, to learn about the public water systems that are currently being utilized. *Methods:* Data will be collected from various public water systems in Illinois and will be analyzed to determine how sustainable the current practices are and how they can be improved. *Results:* This study will provide quantitative data on water conservation, greenhouse gas emissions, energy efficiency, public health risks and cost effectiveness that indicate sustainability of public water systems. The project's goal is to improve knowledge for implementing more sustainable water management practices by stakeholders in Illinois and beyond.

Keywords: Clean and safe water, public's health, sustainability

Relevant goals: SDGs 7, 11, 12

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hHXJv4cph-E&list=PLAyTarF1SmP-1TDwGJ_pzYEQKRj4dOL2R&index=3

Primary Goal: 6

Research: Behind the Scenes of Sustainable Tourism: Access to Public Water Systems and Related to Health Concerns in Popular Tourist Suburbs

Estephano Muñoz-Soto, AS, Erick Zendejas , Diego Armando Casas Beltrán, Ph.D.

Rosa Maria Leal-Bautista Ph.D., Melissa Lenczewski, Ph.D., Ken Voglesonger Ph.D., Tomoyuki Shibata, Ph.D.

Abstract

Background: Cancun is one of the most popular tourists' destinations in the world. The Mexican government aims to promote economic growth by 2024 through investment in infrastructure, sustainable, and inclusive tourism (SDG 8.9) that create jobs, promote local culture and products. While many people migrate to Cancun areas from all over Mexico for better job opportunities, there is a raising concern that some domestic migrants have limited access to public water systems and quality drinking water. The objective of this study is to evaluate accessibility to public water system, its water quality, and health effects in tourist and non-tourist areas in the suburbs of Cancun. *Methods:* Two methods including an epidemiologic survey and water testing have been used in this study. Survey questionnaire included socioeconomic data, access to drinking water, and health symptoms. Water samples were collected from wells (pozos), pumping stations (estacion de bombeo, carcamo) chlorine stations (estacion de clorinacion), household and business water access points. The samples were analyzed for chlorine residuals and total organic carbon based on spectrophotometer and *E. coli* based on the membrane filter method and compartment bag test. *Results:* It is hypothesized that access to public water system and health conditions would be different depending on socioeconomic factors, geographic locations, and water quality. This study will address the importance of achieving universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all (SDG target 6.1), which has been potentially neglected behind the rapid growth of tourism.

Keywords: tourism, water contamination, chlorine, total organic carbon, *E. coli*

Relevant goals: SDG's 8, 3, 4, 2, 1, 11,

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HnwgZQ_xSJs&list=PLAyTArF1SmP-1TDwGJ_pzYEQKRj4dOL2R&index=5

Primary Goal: 6

Research: Quantification of Mosquito Repellents and Sunscreens Released into Water from the Skin

Erick Zendejas, Estephano Muñoz, Megan P. Davis, B.S. , Kevin Tucker, Ph.D., Melissa Lenczewski, Ph.D., Kenneth Voglesonger, Ph.D., and Tomoyuki Shibata, Ph.D.

Abstract

Background: Reducing discharge of hazardous chemicals to improve water quality aids in the global endeavor of maintaining clean sources of drinking water, as promoted by the Sustainable Development Goals (target 6.3). There has been a rising concern of emerging water pollutants including pharmaceuticals and personal care products (PPCPs). Applying mosquito repellents and sunscreens in the summer are important recommendations to reduce risk of mosquito-borne diseases (target 3.3) and skin cancers (target 3.4), but those PPCPs could be released into water while enjoying recreational water activities. The objective of this study was to quantify mosquito repellents and sunscreens released into water from the skin. *Methods:* A hand-rinsing experiment was conducted to simulate the amounts of PPCPs that could be released from the skin. Popular insect repellents with different DEET percentages and sunscreens with different SPF levels were used for this experiment. Known amount of each PPCP was applied on a hand surface, then the hand was placed into 1 L of deionized water after different drying times (e.g. <1, 15, and 120 minutes) and submerging periods (e.g. <1, 15, and 30 minutes). Hand rinsate samples were analyzed for N,N-Diethyl-meta-toluamide, titanium oxide, oxybenzone and other organic chemicals. *Results:* It is hypothesized that larger amounts of target chemicals will increase as DEET and SPF levels increase and time spent submerged in the water increases. It is also hypothesized that amounts of chemicals released decrease as drying time increases. Study findings would improve our understanding of contamination of drinking water sources exposed to PPCPs.

Keywords: Public health, water quality, drinking water, sunscreen, DEET

Relevant goals: SDGs 3 and 6

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g6Bp9C9uqS0&list=PLAyTArf1SmP-1TDwGJ_pzYEQKRj4dOL2R&index=1

Primary Goal: 6

Research: The Impact of Cenotes on Water Resources in the Yucatán Peninsula

Vanessa Vazquez, Dayani Davilla, Melissa Lenczewski Ph.D., Kenneth Voglesonger Ph.D

Abstract

Background: Both tourist and local populations rely on the Riviera Maya's karst aquifer for fresh water. These waters can be easily contaminated due to the system's interconnecting conduits and cenotes, especially as inland tourist activities at cenotes become more popular. The Riviera Maya's coastal ecology, water resources, and economic development are all dependent on the wellbeing of cenotes. However, little is known regarding groundwater flow and major ion profiles in specific locations of the Yucatán Peninsula's northeastern region. Consequently, the aim of this study was to understand the flow pathways and hydrogeochemical processes within the aquifer by looking into the major ion geochemistry of three cenotes that are believed to span the Yalahau fracture zone. **Methods:** We examined water quality parameters and major ion profiles in three cenotes to study how groundwater chemistry varies between locations and groundwater flow regimes. Piper diagrams, stiff diagrams, and plots of major ion ratios were used for the purpose of the analysis. **Results:** We expect to characterize each of these cenotes in terms of their geochemistry and determine how they are connected to the primary coastal aquifer that underlies most of the region. **Conclusion:** An understanding of the region's hydrogeochemistry adds to the knowledge related to groundwater flow of the Yucatan Peninsula. This will provide a clue into the potential impacts of tourism, patterns of potential contamination, groundwater withdrawal, wastewater injection, and access to freshwater, contributing to issues of clean water and sanitation, as well as responsible consumption of resources in the region.

Keywords: groundwater resources, Mexico, cenote

Relevant Goals: SDG 6, 12

Primary Goals: 7, 11, 12

Practice: The Application of Green Office Standard in Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emission and Resource Utilization in Thailand

Phyu Sabai Mon¹, Sayam Aroonsrimorakot^{1*}, Kampanad Bhaktikul¹, Pijak Hinjiranani¹

Abstract

This research aimed to evaluate the emission of greenhouse gases (GHGs), in terms of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e), from the resource utilization at the registered green offices in Thailand such as private sectors, state enterprise, universities or institutions, government organization among 104 registered green offices in Thailand. The problem statement of this study is to study how much green office can reduce resource utilization and greenhouse gas emissions by implementing the green office standard. This study aims to compare the resource efficiency by implementing the green office by the activities of sample green office registered organizations in Thailand and observing the greenhouse gas generation reduction by using the resource consumption measures.

The results show that the maximum GHG emissions from the sampling green offices were highest from electricity consumption, followed by water consumption, waste consumption, and fuel consumption in 2019 and 2020. There are significant changes in decreasing percentages before and after the application of the green office standard. From statistical analysis, as the significance level was set at 0.05, it was found that the season was a significant factor that affected the volume of GHG emissions from activities of fuel consumption, tap water use, paper consumption, and quantity and quality of wastewater at the offices in 2019 and 2020. The finding of the study of GHG emissions can be used for proposing energy-saving measures to reduce GHG emissions.

Key Words: green office, carbon footprint, resource utilization, greenhouse gas

Relevant Goals: 7, 11, 12

<https://youtu.be/6JOyU2MPeG8>

Primary Goals: 8

Research: Studying the Social Impacts of the Maya Train Project in Puerto Morelos, Quintana Roo, México

Pheleep Farid Sidhom, Emely Hernández Yac, Rafael Pérez, Pamela Collazo Soto, Rosario Cecilio Flores, Bryan Olivieri, Dr. Courtney Maloof Gallaher, Dr. Diego Casas Beltrán, Dr. Melissa Lenczewski, Dr. Rosa María Leal Bautista

Abstract

The Maya Train Project (MTP) is a megaproject in México that will provide improved transportation for tourism, industry, and agriculture along the perimeter of the Yucatán Peninsula. Due to the dependence on tourism in this region, the MTP will catalyze economic and population growth which in turn will lead to an increase in social and environmental impacts for local communities, especially by accelerating uneven development. This study focused on Puerto Morelos, a beach town in Quintana Roo, México located approximately a one hour drive south of the heavily urbanized city of Cancún. To study the potential social impacts of the MTP on Puerto Morelos, mixed methods including qualitative interviews with local residents and key informants, surveys, and document analysis were implemented. It was found that the MTP will likely result in numerous social impacts in Puerto Morelos. These findings suggest that to be sustainable, major infrastructure projects should consider the perspectives of local people and impacts on communities. Relevant United Nations Sustainable Development Goals to this project include promoting development-oriented policies that support decent job creation, achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, reducing the proportion of youth not in employment, devising and implementing policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs, providing access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, expanding public transport, and strengthening efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage (source: UN SDGs).

Keywords: Maya Train Project, Puerto Morelos, social impacts, local community, transportation

Relevant Goals: 9, 10, 11

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dYeODfoB4V8&list=PLAyTarF1SmP-1TDwGJ_pzYEQKRj4dOL2R&index=2

Primary Goal: 9

Research: Perception of potential impacts from the Maya Train in Puerto Morelos, Mexico.

Emely Hernandez, Pamela Collazo, Rafael Perez, Pheleep Sidhom, Courtney Gallaher, Diego Casas Beltran, Rosa-Maria Leal-Bautista, Melissa Lenczewski

Abstract

The Maya Train Project (MTP) is a new national megaproject in Mexico, meant to connect the perimeter of the Yucatan Peninsula, and facilitate easier transportation for tourism, industry, and agriculture. Given the region's dependence on tourism, the train will accelerate the growth, as well as the social and environmental impacts of tourism in the region. Globally, the tourism industry has resulted in inequitable social and environmental impacts for the local communities and there is concern that this new Maya Train Project will serve to accelerate uneven development in the region. This project focused on the coastal tourist city of Puerto Morelos, which is a small town in the state of Quintana Roo, about an hour south of highly urbanized Cancun city. This project used surveys, qualitative interviews with local residents and key informants, and document analysis to understand the potential impact of the MTP on Puerto Morelos. Findings from this project demonstrate the need to consider diverse impacts on local communities to sustainably plan major infrastructure projects.

Keywords: Tourism, Sustainability, Transportation, Maya Train, Puerto Morelos

Relevant Goals: 8, 10, 11, 12

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iNsHRr77bwg&list=PLAyTArF1SmP-1TDwGJ_pzYEQKRj4dOL2R&index=10

Primary Goal: 10

Research: Quality of Life of Children with Disabilities in Myanmar

Alyssa L. Zlatkin

Abstract

Due to increased vulnerabilities, children with disabilities experience reduced access to services and barriers to attaining quality of life. Quality of life is defined as an individual's perception of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards, and concerns. Quality of life is affected by physical and psychological health, beliefs, relationships, and environment. This study aims to form a deeper understanding of the struggles and triumphs of children with disabilities in Myanmar by focusing on the intersection of public health, medicine, education, and culture. By utilizing surveys, interviews, and focus groups of professionals who work directly with this population, our work will uplift the voices of the people on the ground. One survey will be distributed among health professionals working with children with disabilities as well as teachers and parents in schools with students with disabilities. The same survey will be distributed to health professionals, teachers, and parents of children without disabilities to serve as a comparison group. The ultimate goal of this study is to enact positive change for children with disabilities in Myanmar and around the world. The objective is to assess the current state of children with disabilities in Myanmar: their quality of life, access to healthcare, and access to education. Ultimately, this work seeks to elucidate the barriers and inequalities children with disabilities face as well as to uplift a vulnerable population that is too often silenced and forgotten.

Keywords: disability, quality of life, education, healthcare, access

Relevant goals: 3. 4. 10, 11

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JRTVcGL9rrs&list=PLAyTArF1SmP-1TDwGJ_pzYEQKRj4dOL2R&index=4

Primary goal: 10

Role of Data in the Provision of Accessible Toilet

Alisha Salsabila Indrawan¹

Narrative

In Indonesia, approximately 25 million people do not use toilets¹, the condition may worsen in disaster prone areas. With fragile structure of the building, many of the survivors lost their houses, including toilet. Without a toilet, many choose to go to the mosque or public toilet and some do open defecation in the fields. It exposes individuals to greater sexual exploitation as well as being a public health concern. The provision of sanitation to populations affected by natural disasters is one of the most urgent and indispensable forms of aid. Unfortunately, not all groups in the community have access, vulnerable groups such as women, elderly, and especially people with disability are often left behind. The main reason because they are not recorded in the database, and this situation increases their vulnerability.

The Sphere standard is a common reference point in humanitarian response², where the sex-, age-, and disability- disaggregated data (SADD) are collected. Additionally, to improve efficiency and accountability, all of the data were gathered with digital questionnaire. The questions asked don't just stop at "Do you have a disability?", but a deeper exploration was carried out by asking the type of disability and their preferences in related to the toilet. Responding to human needs and differentiating risk within affected populations is important as different segments have different needs and face different barriers. SADD allow agencies to target assistance more efficiently and to provide programming that is more specific and effective to particular populations especially people with disability.

Keywords: Accessibility, Toilet, Sanitation, Household, Post-disaster

Relevant goals: SDG #6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), SDG #10 (Reduce Inequalities)

<https://youtu.be/rGddTWjY8h0>

Primary Goal: 11

Research: Open source controlled environment agriculture including development of water quality system

Omer Bin Ali Bajubair, Kevin Martin, William Mills Ethan Tse

Abstract

With the rise of urbanization and an increasing scarcity of fresh water, the world is looking towards other means to address growing food insecurity issues. Hydroponic based controlled environment agriculture (CEA) such as some greenhouses and vertical farms utilize significantly less water to grow in comparison to traditional cropland. A key concern in utilizing such growing methods and in general overall around the world is water quality. In many developing countries, if water quality is checked it is on a limited basis requiring manual methods. In response, this presentation will present on the development of a vertical farming system including the development of a low cost water quality system that continuously measures temperature, pH, dissolved oxygen, electrical conductivity, and oxidation reduction potential while also maintaining nutrient concentrations. The system is based around the Raspberry Pi microcomputer and open source software and components. Results from continuous operation of the vertical farm including the water quality system and lessons learned will be discussed. The water quality system could be developed into a portable water testing system and/or setup to be remotely accessed through wireless communication systems.

Keywords: Water quality, low cost, controlled environment agriculture

Relevant SDGs: 6, 11

<https://youtu.be/6JOyU2MPeG8>

Primary Goal: 11

Research: TransAsia Perspectives of Musicking and Environmental Health: Sustainable Communities
Influencing Lives in Dynamic Spaces

Matthew Werstler

Abstract

From the mountainous region in Southwest China to the urban city of Chiang Mai, Thailand and across the ocean to Thai communities in Midwest USA, musicking provides communities for lasting relationships and connectivity for sustainability for cultural and overall community health.

Sustainability in regard to music is often discussed in and around ecomusicology, which is the study of the relationship of music and the environment. This can include preservation of musical cultures (Titon 2013, Schippers and Grant 2016) and regarding music and environmental issues (Allen 2010). With an emphasis on community musicking, the proposed research observes TransAsia perspectives. This research is based on ongoing projects at different progress of where I observe three communities: the Zhuang (Tai) singers of antiphonal singing in Southwest China, Thai Americans musicking in religious spaces in Chicagoland, or various ethnic minorities such as Shan, Ahka, and Karen communities uniting and finding refuge through music in Chiang Mai. The commonality of these proposed communities is the SDG 11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities, it is through musicking that communities achieve viable sustainable futures both culturally and everyday living. Through musicking, members are able to address needs of the overall community. The differences of the TransAsia perspectives can provide further understanding on how communities engage various issues within their dynamic spaces. These approaches lead to addressing other community issues which align to other SDGs, such as environmental health.

These case studies show the status and future research goals of TransAsia perspectives of musicking communities and sustainable development.

Keywords: Musicking, Community, Tai/Thai, TransAsia, Sustainability

Relevant goals: 3, 4, 5, 10, 13, 17

<https://youtu.be/6J0yU2MPeG8>

Primary Goal: 11

Practice: Sustainability from a Complexity Lens

Jaime Andrés Cárdenas Sánchez

Narrative

My motivation to pursue Sustainability related work comes from my experience working on several engineering projects as a research assistant in the Engineering Department and a MA student in the Sustainability program at Wake Forest University. I have studied the accompanying societal impact of this process that is often neglected in the undertaking of major engineering projects. More specifically, I am interested in projects that have the potential to have a positive impact on the living standards and development of any given community, illustrating the critical bond between human beings and their environment. Exploring and implementing drinking water and wastewater treatment technologies to reduce the harmful impacts associated with the ingestion of water having chemical and/or microbial contaminants helped to acknowledge how technology-driven solutions can become a means to implement social equity. Furthermore, concepts such as social justice drift to environmental justice and new perspectives appear that redefine our way of understanding fundamental issues of community development. Such understanding could lead to the transition from an Anthropocentric Era to a more Biocentric Era that recognizes all the biotic and non-biotic organisms that compose the Earth Ecosystem, and which work in concert with each other to make life sustainable. If we began by establishing the social and environmental impacts of major engineering projects, instead of just the economic effects, we could provide a shift toward an integration of economic, social, and ecological facets of society and away from the more singular focus of an economy-based system.

Keywords: Environmental Justice, Earth Ecosystems, Economy-based system, Biocentrism, and Anthropocentrism.

Relevant goals: 6, 10, 16

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vchtftmgoyw&list=PLAvTArF1SmP-1TDwGJ_pzYEQKRj4dOL2R&index=11

Primary Goal: 12

Research: Recycling in the Operating Room

Gabriella Wagoner

Narrative

The Sustainable Development Goals that will be discussed are goals 12, responsible consumption and production and 13, climate action. These goals will be discussed through recycling of medical plastics in the operating room (OR). While, the larger overarching problem is the impact plastics have on our environment, the implementation of recycling in the OR is a small, yet instrumental step in bettering the health of our environment. This implementation would provide enormous benefit if implemented nationwide. The health care sector is the second leading contributor to waste in the United States producing more than 4 billion pounds of waste annually, which equates to about 30lbs of waste a day per patient (Martin, D. M., 2017). Operating rooms specifically, have a large environmental impact, in fact, they account for 20 to 30 percent of all hospital supply costs. A large majority of the products used in the operating rooms are single use disposable plastics, for which many are eligible for recycling. A few examples of medical plastics that can be recycled are: sterilization wrap and blue wrap, irrigation bottles, IV bags, flexible clear packaging, basins, and pitchers. The excessive consumption and production of plastics has become a major public health issue. Plastic is composed of synthetic organic polymers that are used in a wide variety of items such as water bottles, clothing, food packaging, medical supplies and electronic goods (OA, *Public and environmental health effects of plastic Wastes Disposal: A review*). Once these plastics have served their purpose they are thrown out, best case scenario they end up in a landfill where they take decades to break down. Unfortunately, this is not the case. A large quantity of plastics finds their way into our environment, such as the oceans, where they have detrimental adverse effects on marine life and other living systems. Recycling of medical plastics is a great step to begin greening the operating room and becoming more environmentally responsible. It is evident that large corporations must implement initiatives that promote the well-being of the environment in order to see major changes take place. Additionally, it is important to examine the way in which one lives and implement sustainable living habits where necessary.

Keywords: Medical plastics, operating room, consumption, environment, sustainable

Relevant goals: 13, 14, 15

<https://youtu.be/rGddTWjY8h0>

Primary Goal: 13

Research: Climate Change and Farmer Mental Health: A Community Based System Dynamics Approach

Christopher Weatherly

Abstract

Background: Ensuring the mental health and wellbeing of all populations within the context of a changing climate represents a global priority, as illustrated by the Sustainable Development Goals. Because of their closeness to and dependence on the land, climate change will disproportionately impact farmer mental health. However, despite global reliance on the wellbeing of farmers, there are few studies elucidating these impacts. This study addresses this gap by leveraging qualitative data from stakeholders and applying a systems perspective in two phases. **Methods:** The study is part of the investigator's dissertation and is currently taking place in farming communities in rural southeastern Iowa, which recently experienced record flooding linked to climate change. Semi-structured interviews with farmers and local mental health providers will explore varied impacts of these weather events on farmers' livelihoods. Findings from these interviews will inform later group model building (GMB) sessions, which will be conducted with farmers and mental health providers to map varied pathways and mechanisms between flooding and mental health. GMB sessions will also generate action ideas for potential interventions to mitigate adverse mental health outcomes. **Expected Results:** The final product will be a preliminary qualitative model which will serve as a concept-raising step that sets the scope of future agent-based and dynamic models. **Conclusion:** Climate change-related mental health impacts will not occur in a vacuum, and the proposed study recognizes this and the multiple systemic drivers of farmer mental health and answers calls from prominent researchers for systems-based and participatory approaches to map these linkages.

Keywords: Climate Change, mental health, farmer mental health, community based system dynamics.

Relevant goals: SDGs 3, 8, 13 and 15

<https://youtu.be/rGddTWjY8h0>

Primary Goals: 16 , 17

Practice: Incorporating the Basics of International Humanitarian Law and Humanitarian Aid in MPH
Curriculums

Katrina Jacoby

Narrative

Health care professionals often respond during times of distress and disaster to deliver humanitarian aid. These disaster scenarios may mean natural disasters such as floods or earthquakes but may also include other threats to human life such as armed conflict. Most American Master of Public Health programs have a variety of concentrations such as epidemiology, biostatistics, environmental health, health administration. Each intends to send students into the world with the ability to contribute to creating a healthier global population. I chose global health as my concentration because I wanted understand health from an international perspective. However I feel that my curriculum is lacking and not teaching me how to appropriately handle international crises - work that I intend to partake in post- graduation. After evaluating several of the top MPH programs in the country with global health as a concentration I believe that MPH students are not prepared to work effectively in challenging environments where aid is necessary. No university evaluated offered or required coursework on the development and implementation of the basic principals of humanitarian aid and/or International Humanitarian Law. Though not technically health topics, they give students an understanding of how to effectively operate as both a health professional and humanitarian aid worker. In addition to creating a lack of efficacy among responders, this gap in knowledge can land workers in situations that can prolong or contribute to current conflicts, disasters, social issues and inequalities. This can put the lives of themselves and other aid workers in danger. Providing and requiring at least one class on the fundamentals of humanitarian aid will create more versatile and prepared future health professionals.

Key words: Humanitarian, Aid, International Humanitarian Law, Global Health, Disaster, Conflict

Relevant SDGs: 8, 9

<https://youtu.be/6JOyU2MPeG8>

Primary Goal: SDG

Research: Child Tobacco Use and Smoking Risk Perception in South Sulawesi, Indonesia

Ryan Sutherland, Tomoyuki Shibata, Can Meng

Abstract

Background: Approximately 21.4% of Indonesian boys and 1.4% of Indonesian girls between the ages of 13-15 are current cigarette smokers, statistics that fail to include children unenrolled in formal education.

Methods: This observational study surveyed knowledge, practice, and attitudes (KAP) of N=1,016 youth 13 – 18 years of age in South Sulawesi regarding cigarette use, knowledge of tobacco health risks, and attitudes toward smoking. N=64 urban street children (Makassar) and N=58 rural island children (Saugi, Satando and Sepuli islands) completed KAP surveys, and their responses were statistically analyzed using chi-squared (χ^2) and logistic regressions in SAS. These results were compared to those of students enrolled in formal education (n=894) in urban Makassar. **Results:** Sex, age, schooling and environment, and friend group smoking status had significant effects on youths' decisions to smoke. Female youth were less likely to smoke than male youth (OR 0.45, $p = 0.0002$), and those who reported some, most or all of their friends smoked were more likely to smoke than those who indicate that none of their friends smoked (OR 5.10, $p < 0.0001$; OR 16.19, $p < 0.0001$). Current or former smokers were more likely to have insufficient knowledge of smoking risk compared to those who were non-smokers (OR 0.39, $p = 0.0002$) and were also more likely than non-smokers to view smoking behaviors and tobacco use favorably (OR smokers 6.54, $p < 0.0001$). **Conclusion:** More than 225,000 Indonesians die each year from cigarette-related illnesses (14.7% of all deaths). Understanding the motivations that encourage youth to smoke is vitally important to develop prevention programming.

Keywords: Cigarette, Smoking Cessation, Child Smoking, Tobacco Risk Perception, Street Children

Relevant goals: SDGs

<https://youtu.be/rGddTWjY8h0>

Primary Goal: SDG

Research: Prevalence, Policies, Practices and Norms Surrounding Antibiotic Resistant Diseases in Myanmar

Sabrina Hennecke¹, Tomoyuki Shibata, Alyssa Zlatkin

Abstract

Background: The overuse of antibiotics globally jeopardizes their effectiveness by increasing selection for and prevalence of antibiotic-resistant strains. A range of practices and misuse lead to the overuse of antibiotics for human and animal health globally, and leads to the expansion of antibiotics resistance. Although data on AMR in Southeast Asia (SEA) does exist, the data is largely fragmented across a range of different studies over several decades and countries or regions. **Methods:** A multifaceted approach involving surveys and focus group discussions with key stakeholders will be used to adequately assess usage and prevalence in both rural and urban settings of Myanmar and/or Indonesia. **Results:** This study is ongoing, but we expect based on existing comparable regional data to find improper antibiotic usage, knowledge gaps, and prevalent antibiotic resistance. The goal of this study is to use new data to build capacity within the nations and push for development, budgeting, and effective implementation of policy and surveillance plans to control both antibiotic usage, and antimicrobial resistance (AMR) prevalence in Myanmar. In this comprehensive study, we aim to examine 1) AMR disease prevalence, 2) common practices or uses, 3) social norms surrounding AMR and antibiotic use in Myanmar and 4) existing and absent policies.

Conclusion: Without sufficient, country-specific data to support the breadth of this issue, it is unlikely that the necessary political preventative actions will be taken. If we are to avoid the catastrophic effects of losing this vital class of drugs, urgent investigation and preventative action is required.

Keywords: Antibiotic resistance, Public Health, Global Health, Southeast Asia, Agriculture

Relevant goals: SDGs

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OpnDkHoTOMc&list=PLAyTArF1SmP-1TDwGJ_pzYEQKRj4dOL2R&index=8

Primary Goal: SDG

Research: Perception of the Risk that the construction of the Mayan Train would represent in the Infrastructure of Puerto Morelos, Mexico.

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Abstract

The Mayan Train is a transportation project that aims to effectively connect four states of The Yucatan Peninsula in Mexico. One of these states is Quintana Roo in which the main source of income is tourism. There has been an abrupt population growth due to this. In our project we try to understand what the risk is and the perception of risk in the infrastructure of Puerto Morelos, one of its most recent municipalities since it has less than 10 years of being founded. For this, we developed a survey and a series of interviews for locals and key informants to understand not only how the residents of Puerto Morelos think, but also to understand why they do. This study hopes to understand whether the municipality is prepared for the construction of the Mayan Train. Although tourism involves infrastructure development, but unplanned urbanization can affect the quality of life of residents and eventually the tourism industry itself. This study hopes to explain why is so important to apply sustainability in industry, innovation and infrastructure for sustainable communities and cities.

Keywords: Infrastructure, Maya Train, Transportation, Tourism, Sustainability

Relevant goals: SDGs

Primary Goal: All

Research: Internal migration as a social determinant of occupational health and WASH access in Myanmar
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ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND: Migration is at an all-time high worldwide, and despite increased focus on international migrants, there is little evidence about internal migrants' exposures to socioeconomic, occupational, and environmental risk factors in low-and middle-income countries.

OBJECTIVE: The aim of this study was to examine differences in occupational health and access to water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) between internal migrants and non-migrants.

METHODS: A face-to-face survey (n = 937) was conducted in Mandalay, Myanmar. Bivariate and multivariate analysis included traditional social determinants such as education, income, occupation, gender, age, and location in addition to internal migration status. **FINDINGS:** The majority of internal migrants (23% of the total sample) were labor migrants (67.3%), and while common social determinants (e.g. household income, education, and gender) were not statistically different between migrants and non-migrants, these groups reported different occupational profiles (p < 0.001). Migrants had higher odds of being street vendors (AOR = 2.26; 95% CI 1.33 – 3.85; p = 0.003) and were less likely to work labor jobs such as in factories or construction (AOR = 0.44; 95% CI 0.19 - 1.00; p = 0.051) when controlling for age, gender, education, and location. Internal migrants had significantly greater probabilities of experiencing some injuries and illness symptoms, such as cuts, vomiting, coughing, heatstroke, and diarrhea at work (p < 0.001). Compared to non-migrants, migrants' households were approximately three times more likely (AOR = 3.45; 95% CI 2.17 - 5.62; p < 0.001) to have an unimproved source of drinking water and twice as likely (AOR = 1.98; 95% CI 1.10 - 3.58; p < 0.05) to have unimproved sanitation facilities in their homes. **CONCLUSIONS:** The results underscore the importance of considering internal migration as an aspect of social determinants analyses, and the need for targeting appropriate WASH interventions to address inequities.

Keywords: Myanmar, migration, occupational health, sanitation, water, hygiene

Relevant SDGs: 1, 3, 6, 10

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1y0bbr_srlg&list=PLAyTArF1SmP-1TDwGJ_pzYEQKRj4dOL2R&index=6

