



ICPCM Newsletter – July 2016

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and Relevance to Person-centered Health Care

Tesfamicael Ghebrehiwet, MPH, PhD
ICPCM Board Director of Education

Introduction

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are 17 goals with 169 targets that all 191 UN Member States have agreed to try to achieve by the year 2030. Health has a central place in SDG 3 “Ensure healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages”, underpinned by 13 targets. Almost all of the other 16 goals are directly related to health or will contribute to health indirectly. The new agenda, which builds on the Millennium Development Goals, aims to be relevant to all countries and focuses on improving equity to meet the needs of women, children and the poorest, most disadvantaged people [1]. In this regard the SDGs are relevant to the work of the International College of Person-Centered Medicine (ICPCM).

As articulated in the 2014 ICPCM Geneva Declaration...“*the increased economic productivity and social value that occur as a result of improved health in low-income countries makes the achievement of equity feasible as a result of increased self-sufficiency of people and of the synergies that emerge from global cooperation [2].* The SDGs place the individual, family and community at the centre of development which is compatible with the ICPCM’s overarching goal of “medicine of the person, for the person, by the person and with the person” [3].

Building on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the SDG agenda demonstrates a broad scope and aspiration. Poverty eradication, health, education, and food security and nutrition remain priorities, but the 17 SDGs also encompass a broad range of economic, social and environmental objectives, as well as the promise of more peaceful and inclusive societies [4].

Ensuring healthy lives and promoting the well-being for all at all ages is essential to sustainable development. SDG 3 aims to do just that.

Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

This single health goal “Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages” is broad, underpinned by 13 targets that cover a wide spectrum. Furthermore, as a major contributor and beneficiary of sustainable development policies, health cuts across many of the other 16 goals and thus occupies a central position across the entire SDG framework. Health is positioned by the SDGs as a key feature of human development in a more integrated manner than was the case for the MDGs. Social, environmental and economic determinants, such as education,

income and urbanization, have an impact on health and, in turn, benefit from a healthy population [5]. Health targets for SDG 3:

- By 2030, reduce the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births
- By 2030, end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age, with all countries aiming to reduce neonatal mortality to at least as low as 12 per 1,000 live births and under-5 mortality to at least as low as 25 per 1,000 live births
- By 2030, end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases and other communicable diseases
- By 2030, reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being
- Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol
- By 2020, halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents
- By 2030, ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes
- Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all
- By 2030, substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination
- Strengthen the implementation of the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in all countries, as appropriate
- Support the research and development of vaccines and medicines for the communicable and non-communicable diseases that primarily affect developing countries and provide access to affordable essential medicines and vaccines, and, in particular, provide access to medicines for all
- Substantially increase health financing and the recruitment, development, training and retention of the health workforce in developing countries, especially in least developed countries and small island developing States
- Strengthen the capacity of all countries, in particular developing countries, for early warning, risk reduction and management of national and global health risks.

Other SDG targets that directly impact health include [6].

- Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation
- Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere
- End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children
- By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round
- By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons
- By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations

Conclusion

The SDGs in general and SDG 3 in particular are congruent with the work and mission of the ICPCM in that targets and goals are set to impact on the social, economic and environmental dimensions of human development. The ICPCM values of equity, universal health coverage and person- and people-centeredness are paramount in the SDGs; thus making them relevant to ICPCM. To this end the ICPCM endeavours to address the health agenda set out in Goal 3 through its international congresses and publications.

References

1. United Nations. Sustainable Development Goals: 17 Goals to Transform Our World. <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/>
2. International College of Person Centred Medicine. ICPCM 2014 Geneva Declaration on Person – and People-Centred Integrated Health Care for All (page 1). http://www.personcenteredmedicine.org/doc/2014_Geneva_Declaration_Released_May_27.pdf
3. International College of Person-Centred Medicine. <http://personcenteredmedicine.org/mission.html>
4. World Health Organization. <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/statements/2015/healthy-lives/en/>
5. World Health Organization. <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/events/meetings/2015/MDGs-SDGs-Summary.pdf?ua=1>
6. World Health Organization. From MDGs to SDGs: a new era for global public health 2016-2030. <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/events/meetings/2015/MDGs-SDGs-Summary.pdf?ua=1>