

# **BEST PRACTICES ON INTEGRATING THE ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE INTO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

## **SDG 3: Ensure Healthy Lives and Promote Well-Being for All at All Ages**

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**BEST PRACTICES ON INTEGRATING THE ENVIRONMENTAL  
PERSPECTIVE INTO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SDG 3:  
Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages**

**Executive Summary**

Nature is integral to human health and well-being. When we have a mutually beneficial connection with Nature we have plenty of energy, feel happy and our bodies, minds and psyche function optimally. When our connection with Nature is fragmented, we lose the energetic connection with the world around us and our social interactions suffer, conflicts flare up, epidemics can more easily take hold and the economy suffers. So, beside the physical and mental health of individuals, the health of societies and economies are rooted in a healthy relationship with Nature. At the same time, the more our societies and economies lack sensitivity to the rest of Nature, the less Nature can support human health.

It is useful to bear the following principles in mind when integrating Nature in SDG 3:

- Where possible, return to the natural state of association to the natural elements of life;
- It is important to maintain focus on the community as a whole, the country as a whole and the planet as a whole;
- It is useful to study the practices within the country and learn what changes need to be made and make them in such a way that sustainable health-giving practices are employed;
- It is vital that we place value on Health. Since we are all interconnected, humans, animals and nature, creating “Health” must include attention to all of these entities.

Actions are recommended that can be taken with the help of education, law, and the private sector.

The targets stress,

- the larger familial, social and economic factors that influence maternal and infant mortality;
- the advantages and disadvantages of taking an allopathic versus a homeopathic approach to health in terms of cost, effectiveness, and their relationship to local conditions; and
- the effectiveness and cost of building a local healthcare workforce.

Finally, ways are discussed in which Nature can help us to develop more sensitive early warning systems.

## Introduction

Nature is integral to human health and well-being, for Nature and humans are inextricably one. The air we breathe the water we drink, the minerals, plants and animals we eat nurture and revitalize each cell of our bodies and help to determine our life's energy, which in turn influences how we think and feel. So, the more we cultivate a state of vitality in Nature, including with our own bodies and minds, the more Nature “within us” and “outside of us” fosters human health and well-being.

When we have a mutually beneficial connection with Nature we have plenty of energy, feel happy and our bodies, minds and psyche function optimally. We tend to feel more benevolent and open to others, our well-being increases, inspiration and creativity can thrive with the result that both society and the economy tend to flourish.

When we lack minerals, fresh air or water or these are out of balance, our life energy diminishes, we lack lustre and we might feel depressed. We lose the energetic connection with the world around us and our social relations become fragmented, conflicts flare up, epidemics can more easily take hold, and the economy suffers.

So, beside the physical and mental health of individuals, the health of societies and economies are rooted in a healthy relationship with Nature.

Inherent in Nature there is a Will for survival, but Nature also exemplifies an inherent balance that is finely crafted to make all systems work.

*For example, if we have a healthy pond in a clearing, there is a perfectly balanced system at play, where the sun feeds the algae which feed the fish. Larger birds come to prey on the fish. Frogs and small birds keep the mosquitoes in check. The deer find shelter in the trees and forage on the grasses and plants that are fed by the pond. The pond is kept oxygenated (which feeds the fish, etc.) by a steady stream of fresh water from the creek running in to the pond on one end, and the out flow on the other on its way to the river, then on to the ocean. But should there be a wind and lightning storm, striking down trees which fall upon the inlet and the outlet of the pond, then the cycle that keeps the pond in a healthy state is disrupted. The pond water is trapped in a stagnant state. Algae will grow out of control, faster than the fish can keep it down. The mosquitoes will multiply, and the pond will choke out the fish. The system becomes stagnant and unable to correct itself, and eventually will dry up and die. The solution here is not to eradicate the mosquitoes, or even the algae, although doing so may slow down the current trajectory, but it will not cure the sick pond. The cure lies in the reversal of the original disruption – the logs blocking the free flow of fresh water.*

When we apply this principle to human health and well-being, we would do well to consider whether it is more sustainably effective to treat whole systems, whether to focus on the symptoms or focus on both. When taking Nature into account in

implementing SDG 3, we suggest a shift in perspective to help us make this decision, as follows:

1. Look at “wholes”:

- Where possible, return to the natural state of association to the natural elements of life – clean water, clean air, sunshine, hygiene, appropriate nourishment, and rest. For, as with the pond, first and foremost, our harmonious connection to the natural systems as a whole helps the prevention and curing of diseases. If every human were provided with these fundamentals, then it is likely our health would be better. In addition, there are of course many cases, as with a broken arm, for instance, where additional attention will be required to deal with individual symptoms.
- There are great advantages to focussing on the whole. Beside relating consciously to all natural systems, it is important to maintain focus on the community as a whole, the country as a whole and the planet as a whole. When health becomes the priority communitywide, countrywide and finally globally, many of the health challenges will disappear, because products and practices which weaken and destroy the immune systems of humans that are not contained by human-made boundaries are eliminated. The continued survival of the human species and all species becomes priority over short-term financial gain.
- While moving toward this global situation, It is useful to study the practices within the country, and to focus on the specific changes that must be made and then to use sustainable health-giving practices that are rooted in that nation’s culture. Working in this focussed manner will lift the immune system of the nation, its people and all other expressions of life. Everything will be more resilient including people’s minds, their ingenuity, creativity and joy in living.
- Any one country no matter it’s size can be a leader on the planet in this way and an inspiration to all other countries. Once harmful practices and procedures are terminated, region by region, specific health challenges will be easier to manage. Many will simply disappear. Everyone will have a higher level of functioning and this will give rise to an entirely new experience of well-being on the planet.

2. Change the perception of disease into a disturbance of the “whole” system:

- What we label as “Disease” is often the physical manifestation of imbalance and internal toxicity, both within an individual organism and in every type of system. We tend to look at “Disease” as an external intruder that attacks what is otherwise healthy and whole. Seen through this lens, it seems that the way to restore health is through destruction of “the invader”. This can often be compared to classic case of “winning the battle and losing the war”. As with all forms of violence, there are no true “winners”. A key to improving health and promoting wellness is to be able to discern what to keep and what to throw out. We can learn from observing the wisdom of Nature and the wisdom of those who are living in harmony with Nature’s systems. Nature, for instance, among others, uses an ecosystem approach.
- In addressing imbalance, we must first look beneath the surface:
  - \*Explore the source of the imbalance and toxicity
  - \*Educate people about the damage of imbalance and a lack of harmonyWhile we take steps to eliminate the imbalance and toxicity in the environment, individually and collectively

- Part of what creates the imbalance in modern societies is our “mind set about work”. Shifting from survival mode to an easier flow and greater sense of joy about work will bring about greater health. We under-utilize our human ability to create a more positive proactive attitude. By encouraging people to be motivated by what they love to do, we are mustering powerful energies at the disposal of each of us for health and success.
- These shifts begin with awareness. Each individual must take responsibility for their own part. This will require education and encouragement about the possibilities and the potential harm of not doing so. People are best reached with sensitivity, compassion and caring through their emotional core.

### **Actions (Education):**

Education in every context can help people to live more in harmony with Nature and in so doing to achieve the following:

- Letting go of old unhealthy habits which increase stress and disease.
- Embracing new healthy habits which lead to greater ease and well-being.
- Becoming good stewards; aware of, attuned to and harmonized with our own bodies and the planetary body.
- Eating and drinking what is natural and nourishing, getting adequate sleep and exercise; breathing fresh air, bathing in salty sea and sun, listening to harmonious music, dancing to the rhythms of nature.
- Using natural products which keep our air, water and earth clean.
- Clearing the clutter and toxic materials from our bodies and our environment. Recycling allows nature to reclaim and purify that which we do not need, such as trees turning carbon dioxide into oxygen and dead leaves adding nutrients to soil.
- Creating beautiful gardens and parks to expand beauty and build community to feed the senses, promote connection with Nature and each other, fostering relaxation and well-being.
- Following the natural laws of human biochemistry and physiology.
- Utilizing the medicines that the earth naturally provides in a sustainable and conscious way. Recognize that the medicines of the earth in the form of water, food, herbs, and healing arts such as homeopathy and acupuncture have been utilized and sustained life and health for thousands of years. And that these are in keeping with the principle of living in harmony with Nature.

### **Actions (By and for the private sector):**

Here are some ways in which businesses can help to fuel SDG3:

- Prioritize humanism over profit making, while maintaining the focus on performance and high output management.
- Invest in the organization in such a way to increase both resources and the health of workers,
- Provide a balance between leisure time and working time;

- Encourage life-long learning. This will produce increased opportunities in the workplace, increased life-expectancy and an upward spiral as opportunities are used to the full to reduce poverty and promote prosperity in a changing world.
- Promote the "risk-sharing society" with educational, sport and youth training that can develop autonomous behaviour and reduce dependencies at all ages and for all backgrounds

### **Actions (Legal):**

- Implement strict codes of conduct backed by enforceable laws to ensure that all have access to clean water and air; and that the soils remain fertile and the harming of any species of animals or plants can be prosecuted under universal jurisdiction.
- Implement fundamental human rights.
- Ensure that communities provide as many health services as possible locally. Where services do not exist locally, connect to them on-line, as is increasingly done worldwide.
- Ensure that all have access to the Internet so that when information, goods and services are not available locally they can be accessed from afar, meanwhile safeguarding the stability and all-round provisions of local communities.

### **Targets**

#### **Target 3.1 By 2030, reduce the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births**

This target has the focus to tremendously decrease the number of maternal mortalities by the year 2030. What if we were to look to not only keep these mothers alive but to actually contribute to the quality of their lives from the understanding that their children are truly our children. They are our future and how we are with them makes a difference.

Here are some ways to decrease maternal deaths as well as infant mortality:

1. Create a secure, loving atmosphere for women who are pregnant and those who are in the process of giving birth. Foster awareness and responsibility in people that children are the responsibility of all people because they are the future of our species. Therefore, the well-being of mothers and children are important to us all. Each person truly is responsible for children and can make a difference when this is realized. We can learn from the wolves who work together as a pack to care for wolf cubs. One female may have cubs each season so that all the adult and juvenile wolves can work together as a community to be sure these cubs which are the future of their species are safe and nourished. Community is absolutely essential to their survival and so wolves who are not even related to the pups will bring back food for the pups. The pups are the main focus and priority for the entire wolf community.
2. Maternal mortality rates are much higher in poorer countries. Toxic pollution is many times higher in these areas, along with contaminated water, untreated sewage, etc.

Women in these regions often have to walk miles to fetch water and firewood; they breath smoke from cooking fires; they have the stress of being poor with no safety net; lack of access to healthcare and birthing assistance as well as a lack of adequate diet. If they had access to healthy food, housing and clean water in addition to the emotional support and services of the community this could make a world of difference for their lives and our future.

This is easier to do in smaller more intimate communities, as found often in developing countries where intergenerational family constellations and cultural and religious cohesion are frequently more intact than in large, industrialized cities. The synergy found in such communities is an invaluable asset.

2. Totally eliminate toxin-producing practices on the planet. This will further the cause and sustain any advancement in reducing maternal mortality and the amount of disease and death in all parts of the population. Also, the immune systems of all people will be elevated.

**Target 3.2 By 2030, end preventable deaths of new-borns 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**

The points listed above under target 1—maternal deaths—also apply to infant mortality, including:

1. Creating a natural support system for pregnant women, and women with children such that they are taken care of.
2. The education of the “whole” child can be the focus of the mother, and the community, as opposed to the mere survival of the child.

**Actions (Education, which will be different for diverse cultures):**

1. Preparation for what is involved in having children, emotionally, physically, socially, psychologically grow into maturity and to develop their full potential; the consequences when an infant dies; and what is needed for child bearing to be successful. Such education can best be given via media (such as video, film and theatre) where the recognition of the consequences will be most likely to affect the subsequent behaviour of the parents.
2. Emphasis on the important role of mother, father, family and community for an infant to fully mature.
3. The development of a new level of respect and care towards our women and children as being of utmost importance to the survival of our species and the joy of our future. If the community prides itself in its children then all people would be involved and in a way the children would have many parents and many grandparents. Community members would see themselves as leaders and influential in the lives of the local children and

therefore perhaps hold themselves to a higher standard to make a difference for the children and society as a whole.

**Target 3.3 By 2030, end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases and other communicable diseases**

In Nature, animal and plant species survive in a balanced give and take with the rest of Nature. Each species contributes to other species shelter, food, protection, etc. Where imbalances occur, say through diseases, these can cause huge upheavals until eventually a new form of balance comes into being.

Humans on the other hand, have the potential to eradicate whole diseases. Take, for instance, the eradication of small pox. The paradigm involves one species (human beings) in conflict” with a series of others, most of which can and do mutate and then do "become resistant" to the drugs with which humans try to combat them.

Each approach has advantages and disadvantages. And humans have the luxury of being able to combine the two approaches.

**Actions:**

1. Create pharmaceuticals that can eradicate the organisms this target aims to combat by producing drugs that can potentially eradicate their whole species; and being prepared, if the disease re-emerges, to then develop new drugs to combat the new form of the disease agent.

**Advantages:**

- It could be successful. Human beings have eradicated small pox, for instance
- A huge industry is maintained that produces both employment for large numbers of people and helps to stimulate economies
- The pharmaceutical industry is maintained in two ways:
  1. making medication as long as this is effective and
  2. developing new medication as disease agents become resistant.
- A percentage of lives will be saved.
- Some of those who do not have access to drugs will be exposed to the diseases and become resistant, if they are strong enough to resist succumbing to those or other diseases.

**Disadvantages:**

- Where the disease agents are bacteria, these are likely to mutate, since there is an instant transferal of knowledge when these are in contact with one another. In this case many people will fall ill, who might have been saved using pharmaceuticals while new medications are being developed.
- Not everyone will have access to medications or be able to afford them.

- Species loss is an issue: We have transgressed the planetary boundary with regard to the rate of biodiversity loss. The question arises whether the approach of eradicating further species is wise.
- In Nature, with the exception of humans, one species does not eradicate other species. Nature thrives on diversity.

2. Fortify people and their living conditions in such a way that people are less susceptible to disease and human habitation is less accessible to disease agents.

**Advantages:**

- In developing countries where people are exposed to myriad diseases, those who are able to resist falling ill, are often immune to a larger number of diseases than those in wealthy environments that are more antiseptic.
- To fully meet this target everyone's fundamental human rights would have to be implemented. While this requires a far greater investment of time, energy and finances, it would bring about much needed lasting change and a spurt in sustainable development while leaving no one behind.
- This target requires a deeper interspecies understanding to be able to fortify living conditions against disease agents and will bring human beings closer to living in harmony with Nature.
- This is an alternative to using pharmaceuticals that have been developed by human beings, the full impact of which is often not understood and which are moreover often known to be toxic to humans and the environment.
- People will be inclined to use forms of medicine that are more in harmony with Nature, such as naturally wholesome foods, healing approaches that align the body and mind as a means to achieving greater physical, mental and spiritual health and well-being and being more resistant to disease.
- This form of action would be in harmony with Nature where species survive because they are strong and well adapted to the rest of Nature.
- It would not require further extinction of species.

**Disadvantages:**

- Because this approach requires involving all people and sweeping social and economic changes, it will take time to implement. While research and development of pharmaceuticals takes much time, the time involved will be much shorter and many more lives will be saved in the period required to bring about the required social, economic and other changes.
- Perhaps the best option would be to combine both approaches.

**Target 3.4 By 2030, reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being**

We often see Nature as allowing those plants and animals to perish that are weak. In fact, if we take a closer look we find that when it comes to species, each one has its

individual strengths and weaknesses and that those that survive have found a niche within the network of life where they perform a unique and important function within the systems of Nature.

As people, we also recognize that physical weakness in humans is frequently offset by emotional, mental, social or spiritual strengths and a role they play in their relationship with other human beings that is irreplaceable.

Increasing the resilience and decreasing the challenges for those who have a non-communicable disease or are so-called “disabled” in any way has great benefits for all concerned in that all who relate to the disabled person will then also be able to benefit for a longer time from what they have to offer.

One reason why some people succumb to a non-communicable disease and others do not, is, beside heredity, the amount of resilience they build up through their caring connections with their environments, especially in very early childhood.

### **Actions:**

- Strengthen the foundation for health and resilience within the person who has the disease through unselfish love from family and community members.
- Recognize that those who are disadvantaged in one way often have counterbalancing strengths in other ways that bring great rewards to care-givers, employers and others they come into contact with. For instance, people who are ill and/or have other disabilities often have greater compassion for others who are also disadvantaged. People with Down's Syndrome are known to bring great love and acceptance to those they are with. People who are autistic can sometimes stand out through their intellectual brilliance.
- Promote bonding in early childhood, since that shows a child how to connect; and helps it recognize and appreciate what brings fulfillment between people. This can best come from those who bring up the child and the earliest possible relationships.
- Empower the child to develop its own potential.
- Provide training in skills that enable each person to develop positive connection within their communities. This integrative approach will moreover enhance mental health and well-being.

### **Target 3.5 Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol**

Addictions consist of the interaction of a vast array of factors. They have physical, mental, psychological, heredity, social, economic, and spiritual causes and ramifications. Human beings often use and “push” drugs to make up for emptiness and lack of fulfillment.

Despite their complexity, there are many diverse approaches within different cultures that are actually helping individuals to overcome these complex diseases.

Nature does not encourage addiction. For among many other things, it involves over consumption. And overconsumption by one element of an ecosystem is detrimental to all parts.

### **Actions (Education):**

- Promote a global sharing of ways of combating addiction.
- Promote forms of education that allow people to touch on the natural well-spring within to bring satisfaction into their lives and to develop their own potential. Here student centred education can be an invaluable tool. Also,
  - Create community and connection
  - Foster and reward ingenuity and creativity
  - Teach to feel and express emotion in a balanced healthy way
  - Teach to be aware of and release shame.

### **Target 3.6 By 2020, halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents**

Although animals travel vast distances for feeding and breeding purposes, their everyday activities of foraging take place as they travel. So, in that way, everything is “localized”.

More and more humans commute over long distances for work and much of that is by road. Ford's goal of one car per person has not even been realized in the USA and already the great limitations of road travel are becoming apparent: road accidents, air pollution, wasted time spent in traffic jams and in commuting that can be used more constructively during commutes by bus and train. All these are detracting from the advantages of travel by road.

There are increasing efforts and opportunities to encourage people to limit their activities to their local communities. This would decrease the number of cars on the roads and thereby the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents.

### **Actions:**

Reduce the numbers of cars on roads by

- Creating more self-reliant, self-sustainable, self-containing communities where people participate in their daily activities close to their home.
- Implementing technologies for small ecological vehicular transport for within these communities for short to moderate distances.
- Encourage flexible work/life balance to decrease stress-related distraction and hurried impulses.
- Create systems for mass transit that are convenient, ecologically sound, and enjoyable.
  - Increase the capacity for people to work peacefully on busses and trains with WIFI available;

- Implement and improve on current technologies within the vehicles for hazard and distraction detection.
- Create flexible working times so that people commute throughout the day and not all at the same time and so always can find a seat when using public transportation.
- Provide bonus travel for commuters who use public transportation, so that they can take their families on free trips on weekends or in the holiday season as a reward for being a regular user of public transportation to commute to and from work.
- Have snacks on board, and ways in which people can meet and get to know fellow commuters better. Some people take busses and trains from the same place of boarding daily and it can be a pleasure to meet and have a brief chat with the same people every day for those who are inclined that way.
- Provide tax incentives for those using public transportation and able to prove it by for instance sending in their cancelled tickets with their tax returns every year.
- Discourage use of cars through increasing the taxes paid on fuel.
- Require high fees for carbon emissions and use the resulting income to expand the public transportation system.
- Build public opinion in favour of public transportation so as not to create a “privileged” class who by virtue of their financial capacity might use road travel and thereby aggravate social divisions.

**Target 3.7 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**

In Nature, there are natural constraints to overpopulation of one species in their relationships with others. In human society we are experiencing similar constraints, such as poverty and the inability to provide quality care for each member of society. At the same time we do have ways in which people can pull together to achieve common goals.

It is increasingly accepted that access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, are critical for the empowerment and education of women and girl's to participate at all levels of society and that this, in turn, benefits the society as a whole. Among other things, It has a significant effect in decreasing the rates of population growth, particularly in poor regions where population growth tends to be the highest.

At the same, time while governments have agreed to implement this goal, it is likely that the implementation of this target will meet with resistance in some parts of our societies. For the numbers of children born and the sex of those allowed to survive in a family depends on the culture and religion of the family and is often influenced by considerations of economic and social power. Women are often prevented from access to sexual and reproductive health-care services by their husbands or partners, since fertility and virility are connected in the minds of some.

Here education can play an important role.

**Actions:**

- Create a shift from a society where individuals are left to fend for themselves to one where fundamental human rights are implemented and the society as a whole ensures that all can live fulfilling lives.
- Provide education in the principles and advantages of sexual and reproductive health-care in schools from an early age; and show the disadvantages that occur when that is not put to good use.
- Ensure that physical and verbal abuse and intimidation of women is reported by all who are aware of it: neighbours, teachers, medical personnel and social services.
- Ensure education from the first school year shows boys and girls to be equal.
- Provide education at schools to show the advantages of societies where there is gender equality within families, societies, and the economy.
- Provide media programmes that show the advantages of gender equality to all members of the family.

**Target 3.8 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**

Creating a program, which provides universal health coverage for all people globally would have a number of advantages.

Above all it would lead to a concerted global effort to do away with agents that create diseases that cannot be contained through national borders. For instance, many diseases begin in one locality and spread from there through contact between people internationally including via the transportation systems.

Also, many diseases are a result of toxins in the air, water, land and food sources. Approaching this as a part of a global effort would do much to decrease this hazard.

The more pristine the environment, the less environmentally induced illnesses occur and the more knowledgeable people worldwide, the fewer diseases we shall have to contend with and the more affordable healthcare can be.

One barrier to universal healthcare is often seen as its affordability.

Here are some examples of how Nature can help alleviate this problem.

The human body/mind/spirit can be significantly regenerated and strengthened where people are open to being infused by the health-giving effects of their natural environments. Here are some ways of achieving this:

- By allowing them to relax in green spaces, streams and lakes, and in parks in cities. These exist in many parts of the world and such recreation is for many low in cost.

- By using forms of medicine that align the body/mind/spirit with its natural connection to natural forces. Such approaches are used widely in much of the world. Here are some examples:
  - Approaches to medicine that open the meridians –the energy channels—of the body (acupuncture, acupressure, shiatsu, etc.) and thereby allow healing of the body/mind to occur through opening the systems that are in harmony with those of Nature as a whole.
  - Approaches to mental health such as meditation of all sorts, diverse forms of yoga, the martial arts, etc. with the same effects.
  - The use of physical/spiritual energy of the healer to heal the patient (hands on healing, distance healing, polarity, attunements, etc. can have similar effects.
  - Diagnosis that uses the natural (often unconscious) energetic response of the patient's body to specific substances to establish the effectiveness of that substance in healing him/her (such as Touch for Health;)
  - Natural forces, such as solar energy, healing waters, herbs are also frequently used in healing.
  - Homeopathy.

**The great advantage of such approaches is that:**

- The treatment costs nothing except the fees of the healer. Even though such healers can require at least as much stringent lifelong training/discipline as do those who use allopathic medicine and industrially produced pharmaceutical drugs, the latter uses more expensive medications and diagnostic instruments.
- They avoid the skyrocketing costs of R&D, industrial manufacture, the cost of middle-men and advertising.
- They can be used in disaster areas which often cannot be reached when the disaster first strikes and immediate first aid is required
- Many of these approaches to healing have proved effective over millennia-much longer than allopathic medicine.

There are some industrial countries where such treatments are forbidden. Here are some possible reasons:

- They use intuitive capacities as an integral facet of holistic mental functions for diagnosis and treatment. While holistic approaches to healing are fast being recognized in the West, they are still less well developed through educational institutions in industrialized nations than linear thinking; and so their value is less well recognized there.
- To play the dominant role, they do today, the pharmaceutical companies would have to specialize in medications that are more easily found in the natural environment which are used by nature-based traditions and require much less research to develop and so fewer people would be required for their research and development and determining their specialized applications. This could contribute to a rise in unemployment, until a new balance is found.
- This would decrease the monopoly of the Western pharmaceutical industry in industrialized nations and worldwide and, given the powerful role that they play, cause somewhat of a reorientation of industrialized economies.

### **Target 3.9 By 2030, substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination**

Human beings, through their growing numbers and their creativity, are changing the conditions on Earth that are necessary to support human health and wellbeing. In earlier times, people were attuned to Nature and knew (instinctively and through experience) which plants, animals, minerals and planetary conditions were hazardous to their health.

That inner knowing still exists in all people, though it seems to be more readily discernible among some than others. It is for instance applied in disciplines such as Touch for Health (mentioned above in 3.8 ) where the physical strength of a person is clearly diminished when s/he is brought into contact with substances that detract from his or her individual health and well-being.

Such disciplines are still alive in many Indigenous cultures. It would make a great difference in our capacity to change if such insights were taught so that they can be applied to situations and substances we encounter in our day-to-day lives.

#### **Actions:**

- Teach ways of awakening our connection to the energies that surround us so that we can discern more easily what detracts from our inherent strength. Such instruction can be given as an integral part of courses on sustainable development. Some schools and universities already have relevant courses.
- It will both help each individually to seek situations that enhance his or her well-being and result in more people avoiding buying products that detract from their physical strength. If enough people apply such practices routinely the sale of “unhealthy” products will decrease and so will their fabrication and storage. There is little doubt that, once people are fully awakened to the personal harm their actions bring about, that they will also find ways to support the Earth System to restore the boundaries within which human life can flourish.
- Make it clear through education and programmes in the mass media that we are all “in the same boat—Spaceship Earth.” We must wake up. Humans have the knowledge. Now we must grasp that we are all one from the environmental perspective.
- Every one of us has an interest in creating a healthy planet. This is a message that, as humans, we must wake up to, embrace and act on while we still have the option to do so.

### **3.b Support the research and development of vaccines and medicines for the communicable and non-communicable diseases that primarily affect developing countries, provide access to affordable essential medicines and vaccines, in accordance with the Doha Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health, which affirms the right of developing countries to use to the full the provisions in the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property**

### **Rights regarding flexibilities to protect public health, and, in particular, provide access to medicines for all**

While it is important to make maximum use of medicines and vaccines for diseases that primarily affect developing countries, it can be useful where obstacles occur to also make use of alternatives and possibly build industries in developing countries that provide a broader selection of alternatives.

In Nature, dangers to life and means of preserving life are readily available, often in close proximity to one another. There is an inherent knowledge how to overcome challenges to health and well-being that used to exist among human beings and often survives in indigenous and local cultures.

Above under 3.3 we discussed advantages and disadvantages of choosing allopathic as opposed to homeopathic approaches to combating disease. Each one has advantages and has had its successes. To ensure that the preference for one form or another is based on real merit as opposed to the profit motive for some, here are some actions that can be taken:

#### **Actions:**

- Make visible for all to see
  - The costs and profits made at every point as each medicine and vaccine moves from R&D to the end-user; and
  - Their degree of effectiveness over lengthy periods of time.
- Where one company begins this process, others are likely to follow as a means of gaining public trust.
- Legalize other traditional forms of healing which in many cases take a more nature-inspired approach and expose these to the same rigorous research as if suggested for allopathic medicines and vaccines.

### **3.c 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**

In Nature, all species of animals and plants and all Earth formations are involved in providing health for those they come into contact with by providing food and habitat, as well as harvesting one another to keep each species strong. In this way, each species is helped to provide the beneficial effects that it, itself, can provide both for other species and for itself.

Building local healthcare workforces based among others on local cultural knowledge can also have advantages for humans both in developing nations and others. Human health is multi-faceted –it has social, economic, psychological and spiritual facets which have a significant impact on physical health per se. If all facets were brought into play to foster human health and resilience, the physical aspects would play a much smaller role than they do today, people would have many more choices with

regard to the types of health care they can best use; and health care would be much less costly.

The greatest resources of a nation, city, town, or family are the natural resources of that area, and the people that live there. A community's health is very much influenced by the degree to which the human population there lives in harmony and respect for its national as well as natural resources.

Expanding the national health industry to embrace practices indigenous to that nation will provide jobs and also a niche in the market for developing countries, that can also be of interest in industrialized nations, where people are increasingly looking for alternatives. It could help to free developing countries from domination by others and place them more on a par with the health industry in wealthy nations.

### **Actions:**

- Adopt a holistic approach to human health which includes the social, economic, psychological and spiritual—all of which contribute to human health. This can largely be achieved through the caring and scrupulous Implementation of fundamental human rights. This will decrease physical illness and thereby save the costs of health-care provision.
- Provide cooperative education and implementation of environmental and health programs that encourage the fostering of universally available resources of clean air, food, water, shelter, and proximity to integrated Nature.
- Make it profitable to a community to utilize sustainable measures to nurture, protect, and utilize the local natural resources in harmony with the laws of Nature. The community will remain healthier by living in a cleaner, more nature-oriented environment thus requiring fewer funds, while providing the funds needed where direct healthcare is needed.
- Recognize that there are traditional, often holistic health practices that have worked over long stretches of time. These were discussed in more detail in the context of target 3.8.
- While the establishment of professional standards will be extremely important in all aspects of medicine and involve costly lifelong learning in many cases, combining approaches to medicine (as mentioned above) will decrease the overall costs and increase effectiveness.
- These diverse approaches to human health should be made available to people along with, as necessary, the "Western" approaches that hold sway in many countries today. This larger choice of healing modalities will decrease the cost of people's healthcare since many will opt for less costly approaches that implement a multi-faceted form of health care. Such a broadening of recognition that other forms of healing are relevant will also give legitimacy to healing modalities used in developing countries worldwide.
- Encourage the recruitment of people of a community to be the health advocates and workforce for their community by appropriate training and remuneration.
- Respect, honour, and allow the use of healing modalities indigenous to that area.

- Increase the focus on the effectiveness of medicines and decrease the need for them to generate income for universities, advertisers and other middlemen.
- Free the dependence of the World Health Organization on those forms of corporate funding, where corporations are beholden to their investors to provide them with profits. Instead where the cost of medications are exorbitant, know that there are businesses, like cooperatives that are based on sharing of profits also with the communities where they are situated.

### **3.d Strengthen the capacity of all countries, in particular developing countries, for early warning, risk reduction and management of national and global health risks**

#### **Actions:**

- Early warning systems are available in the shifts in subtle energy systems of Nature. Our capacity to interpret these natural early warning systems can help make our own early warning systems more effective and timely.
- Universal energy systems are always in flux. As human beings, it is to our advantage to learn to differentiate between healthy and necessary energy shifts, and those which are in response to human generated changes to natural systems.
- It will be critical for human beings to take responsibility for the shifts taking place due to human influence that may be detrimental to other aspects of Nature and humans alike. For this will empower people to avoid human-generated catastrophes.
- It is important to respond to natural shifts in ways that maintain what is healthy for the earth, instead of blocking it.

5. Health risks decrease proportionately to a community's loving interaction and cooperative and harmonious living within the laws and systems of Nature, provided communities are free and able to live in areas that can support them.