Activities Guide: Healthy Communities
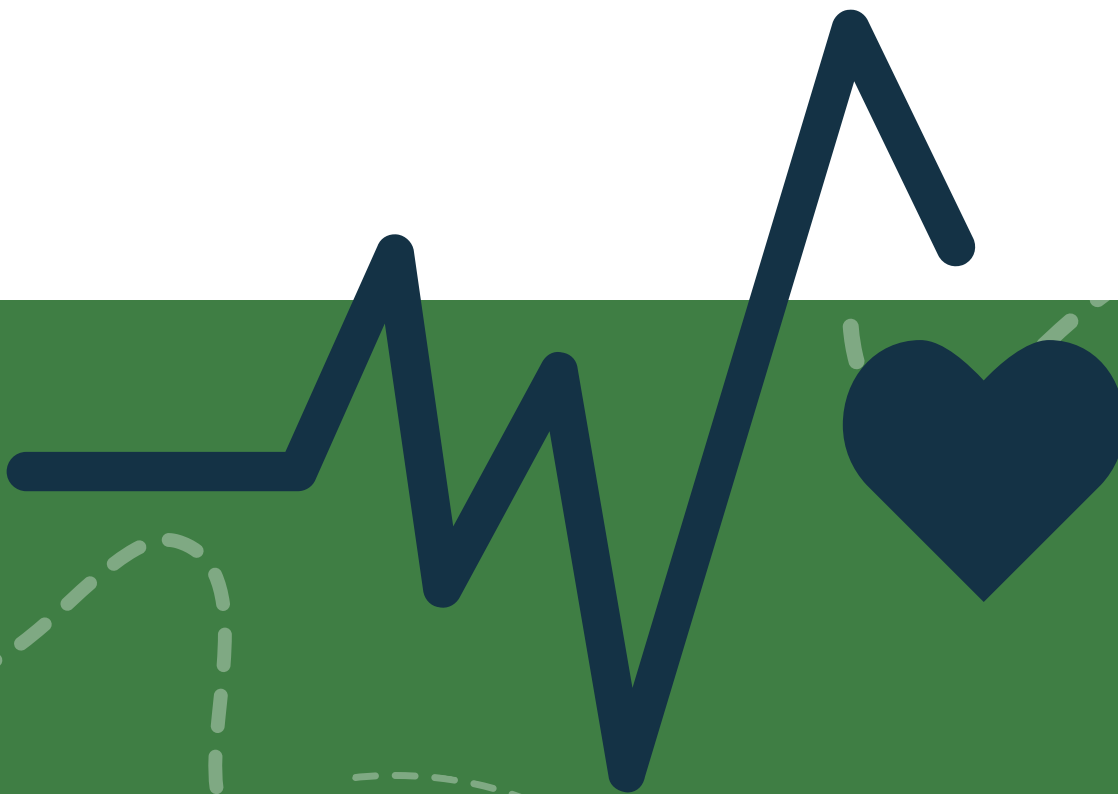
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Part 1: Introduction and Global Competencies

Introduction

How to Use this Activities Guide
The Global Schools Activities Guide on **Good Health and Well-Being** is meant to support teachers or facilitators in carrying out activities in school communities with students. The Activities can be carried out in the classroom or the whole-of-school. Educators can select activities, videos, articles, or worksheets to use in a lesson plan. Additionally, they can use the guide to build a long-term unit using a project-based approach to learning. Teachers and facilitators can use all of the activities in a step-by-step process to develop an entire unit on **Good Health and Well-Being.**

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

5 GENDER EQUALITY

13 CLIMATE ACTION

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

Facilitator's Objectives
The topic of **Good Health and Well-Being** is one of the main knowledge components of education for sustainable development and it spans subjects beyond science, including personal, social, and physical education. The purpose of teaching this topic is to:

1. Facilitate student knowledge on these concepts through research on their local communities, in their school communities, and also by strengthening independent research skills;
2. Promote positive values and awareness on the topic;
3. Inspire positive actions by the students that contribute back to their school and local community.

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Overview of the Unit

Title	Good Health and Well-Being
Enduring Understandings	- The choices people make impact their health and wellbeing. - A balanced lifestyle contributes to the health and wellbeing of people. - The interconnectedness of the natural world and people's health and wellbeing.
Suggested Level	12 years old and up
Learning Goal	To develop knowledge, values, awareness, and skills related to the issues, challenges, and importance of good health and well being.
Learning Objectives	- Students will be able to describe the essential connections between personal health and the health of the natural environment and of the community. - Students will be able to articulate a clear understanding of different disease types. - Students will be able to make connections between their wellbeing and how it is related to the well-being of an entire community. - Students will be able to identify and articulate the cause and effect relationship between mental health, first-aid, tobacco/drug use, and promote SDG 3 among their communities. - Students will be able to explain and describe good living conditions.
Global Competencies	Systems thinking, Critical thinking, Self-awareness, Collaboration, Problem Solving, Global Awareness
Standards Explicitly Taught	*Global Schools encourages teachers to align the above learning objectives and goals to their national standards
Success Criteria and Assessment	Sample quizzes, essays, debates, and presentation topics can be found on the final pages of the guide.

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Education for Sustainable Development Competencies

ESD Competencies	Description of the Competency	Applications to Health and Well-Being
Systems thinking competency	"The abilities to recognize and understand relationships; to analyze complex systems; to think of how systems are embedded within different domains and different scales, and to deal with uncertainty."	Encourage students to explore the work done globally in health and well-being, and foster an understanding of how this will change the overall workforce locally. How will the mental state of a person change with constant examination? Will human productivity improve? How do healthy and unhealthy choices impact communities?
Anticipatory competency	"The abilities to understand and evaluate multiple futures – possible, probable and desirable; to create one's visions for the future; to apply the precautionary principle; to assess the consequences of actions, and to deal with risks and changes."	Encourage learners to envision how certain actions will change the well-being of people in the future. Plan scenarios considering all paths to success.
Normative competency	"The abilities to understand and reflect on the norms and values that underlie one's actions; and to negotiate sustainability values, principles, goals, and targets, in a context of conflicts of interests and trade-offs, uncertain knowledge and contradictions."	Encourage students to assess the mental health impact of various sustainable development products / solutions. Encourage students to reflect on their own health and the health of their loved ones
Strategic competency	"The abilities to collectively develop and implement innovative actions that further sustainability at the local level and further afield."	Encourage learners to create robust solutions that will engage and transform methods of thinking across school communities e.g. if the school would like to launch a mental health services, students need to think about their local context and how to engage the appropriate leaders.

[Leicht et al. (2018). "Issues and Trends in Education for Sustainable Development ." Pg 44. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000261802

Collaboration competency	"The abilities to learn from others; to understand and respect the needs, perspectives and actions of others (empathy); to understand, relate to and be sensitive to others (empathic leadership); to deal with conflicts in a group"	Encourage students to work together to explore topics and apply the problem solving framework. Promote empathy in students for those who have any medical or mental health problems.
Integrated Problem Solving	"To facilitate collaborative and participatory problem solving...the overarching ability to apply different problem-solving frameworks to complex sustainability problems and develop viable, inclusive and equitable solution options that promote sustainable development."	Encourage students to work to solve complex problems and understand how different solutions can impact the health and well-being of individuals.
Critical thinking competency	"The ability to question norms, practices and opinions; to reflect on one's values, perceptions and actions; and to take a position in the sustainability discourse."	Encourage learners to reflect on how their personal actions contribute to the adoption of well-being. Showcase organizations or companies that are working towards building better health and well-being. It is important for students to recognize that small changes will cause large ripple effects.
Self-Awareness	"The ability to reflect on one's own role in the local community and (global) society; to continually evaluate and further motivate one's actions; and to deal with one's feelings and desires."	Encourage students to understand their role in creating and fostering healthy communities for themselves and others.

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Part 2:
Topics in SDG 3: Good Health and Wellbeing

The first step is to introduce the topic. You can use the text below for your own background, or you can give this text to your students as a reading comprehension activity:

What is Good Health and Well-Being?

Health is a fundamental human right and a key indicator of **sustainable development**. People maintain their health through diet, activity, and drinking enough water. Global health is an area for study, research, and practice that places a priority on improving health and achieving equality in health for all people worldwide ([Koplan et al., 2009](#)). **Well-being** is a positive state experienced by individuals and societies, and encompasses quality of life and the ability of people and societies to contribute to the world with a sense of meaning and purpose ([WHO](#)). Well-being can be maintained by having an active lifestyle, seeking care for mental and physical health, and being involved in a community with others.

Although the health status of the world has generally increased over the past few decades, countries across the world are still combating waterborne illnesses and infectious diseases. Poor health limits the economic opportunities of men and women, threatens children's rights to education, and increases poverty in communities and countries around the world.

Health disparities are preventable differences in the burden of disease, injury, violence, or opportunities to achieve optimal health that are experienced by socially disadvantaged populations ([CDC](#)). These disparities contribute the overall health status of the population and are influenced by social determinants of health.

The **social determinants of health (SDH)** are the non-medical factors that influence health outcomes. They are the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, and age, and include the wider set of forces and systems shaping the conditions of daily life ([WHO](#)). These forces and systems include economic policies and systems, development agendas, social norms, as well as policies and political systems ([WHO](#)).

Health systems are the providers, facilities, and infrastructure that provide health services and insurance to individuals seeking health coverage and care. **Universal health coverage** (UHC) means that all people have access to the full range of quality health services they need, when and where they need them, without financial hardship ([WHO](#)). Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, there was worldwide progress towards UHC. The UHC service coverage index increased from 45 in 2000 to 67 in 2019, with the fastest gains in the WHO African Region. However, 2 billion people are facing catastrophic or impoverishing health spending ([WHO](#)). **Catastrophic health spending** occurs when people have to spend a significant amount of their income on health expenses ([WHO](#)).

SDG 3 is an all encompassing ambitious goal and aims to improve overall health and well-being and reduce or eliminate a number of health-related problems, including:

- Maternal mortality and preventable mortality of newborns and young children;
- Mental health of adolescents and young adults;
- Environmental health impacts, including hazardous chemicals, pollution and climate change;
- Infectious diseases such as AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria;
- Non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment.

SDG 3 also encourages the promotion of:

- Mental health and well-being;
- Universal health coverage;
- Access to reproductive health services.

A lot of work remains to be done to ensure a healthy future: to cope with infectious, or communicable diseases, which can be transmitted from person to person or through a vector, such as AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, as well as non-communicable diseases, which are typically chronic diseases that do not spread from person to person, such as diabetes and obesity, to put an end to preventable maternal and children mortality, which persists even in some of the most developed countries, and to ensure access to quality medical care (including psychiatric) (UNICEF).

In addition, there has been a 13% rise in mental health conditions and substance use disorders in the last decade (WHO). Furthermore, mental health conditions are on the rise in students and youth. In 2021, more than 4 in 10 (42%) students felt persistently sad or hopeless and nearly one-third (29%) experienced poor mental health (CDC). Mental health problems in youth often go hand-in-hand with other health and behavioral risks like increased risk of drug use, experiencing violence, and higher risk sexual behaviors that can lead to HIV, STDs, and unintended pregnancy (CDC). Therefore, it is important to develop healthy mental health habits from a young age.

Additionally, climate change and the environment have impacts on our physical and mental health. Extreme temperatures, floods, pollution and drought all contribute to overall health and may make health worse and increase exposure to disease and malnutrition in some cases (Save the Children).

Policies taken by governments can begin to address health and well-being. However, as individuals, we can take necessary actions to help build healthy habits and communities. From keeping ourselves and families healthy, to making health care accessible to everyone, we must learn how to take small steps towards health for all. Together, we can prioritize the importance of good health and well-being.

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Part 3: Classroom Activities
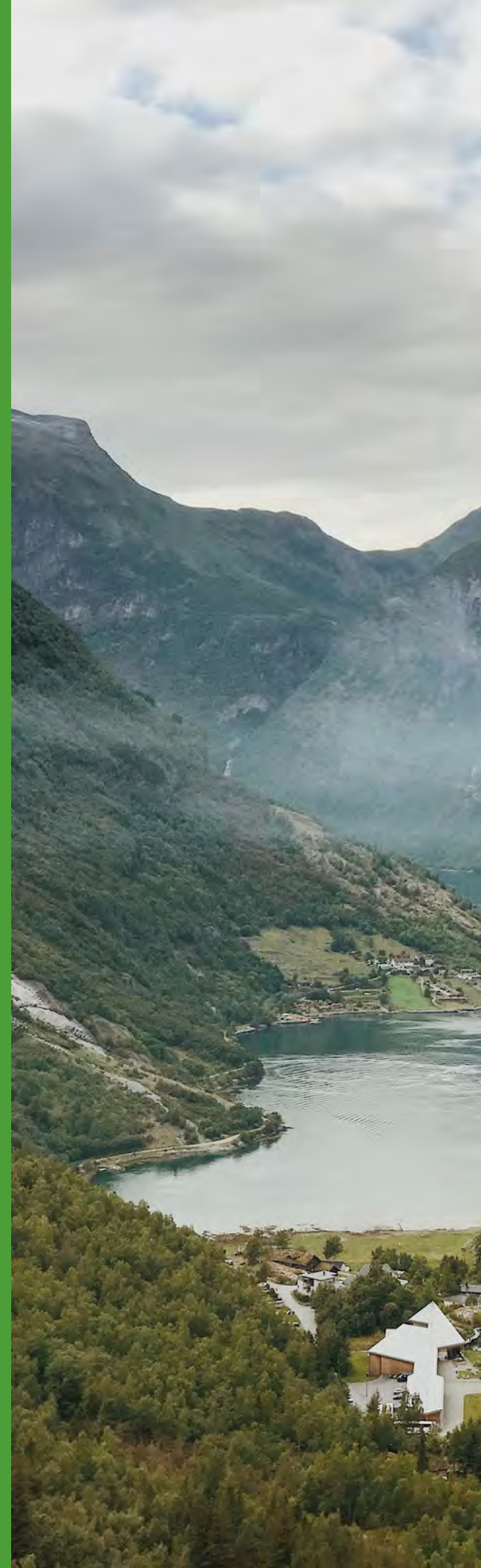
Step 1: Set the Context

Preparing for the Unit
Watch these videos from the SDG Academy to gain technical background and prepare yourself for teaching Good Health and Well-being. The readings below can also be used in advanced-level courses with students.

- Health and Well-being
- Implementing SDG 3
- An Introduction to Health Systems
- Intro to Non-Communicable Diseases
- Climate Change and Health
- Disasters and Public Health
- Multiple Determinants of Health
- New and Re-emerging Infectious Diseases
- Universal Access to Health Care
- Achieving Universal Health Coverage
- Health Services for Improving Urban Health

Pre Reading Assignments for Advanced Courses

- Towards a Common Definition of Global Health;
- Trends in global health and the CDC's international role;
- Globalization and social determinants of health: introduction and methodological background;

Concepts and Definitions

- Social Determinants of Health
- Communicable disease
- Non-communicable disease
- Maternal mortality
- Infant mortality
- Tuberculosis
- HIV/AIDS
- Malaria
- Vector
- Diabetes
- Obesity
- Health Status
- Health disparities
- Mental Health
- Universal Health Coverage
- Global Health
- Well-being
- Catastrophic Health Spending
- Health System

Click here for a full list of definitions of the above topics!

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Sample Introduction Activities

Activity One: World Health Organization Fact Sheets

Using the World Health Organization's database of fact sheets, explore a range of health related topics. You can start by reviewing some of the key topics discussed in the background sectio of this guide to help your students build their understanding of good health and well-being. Then engage your students to find out what health topics and diseases they find interesting and have them read about some interesting facts listed. One way to adapt this activity without internet is to write out several topics and definitions on the board from the factsheets and have your students sort the topics. The goal is not to be correct, but to have students be able to explain their sorting reasoning and the connections they see between different concepts and facts related to good health.

Activity Two: Resource Watch

Using the World Resource Institute's Resource Watch, explore different health and climate related data on a world map. You are able to view numerous different indicators, such as pollution exposure, air quality, national infant mortality, and a few others. Feel free to ask your students what they find interesting and what they observe on the maps. Then have your students identify possible trends in the maps and similarities and differences between the different data maps. To carry out this activity offline, ask students to think about a community in their area. Then write four categories on the board: water, food, weather, air. Ask students to raise their hands and describe these elements in their local community. Then, work together as a class to list ideas about how these elements affect health.

Activity Three: What I know, What I used to know

Have students fill out this worksheet following the initial discussion of the topic. This encourages students to reflect on what they are learning and how their knowledge has developed (Project Zero, "I Used to Think - Now I Think").

Videos

1. How Climate Affects Community Health
2. Community Needs Assessment
3. How Local Governments can Build Healthy Communities
4. Teen Health: Substance Use and Abuse
5. SDG Academy video library

More videos can be found on the website of our partner organization: SIMA Classroom.

Data Visualizations

1. Find out here where your country is ranked in global health.
2. Discover where your country stands in the share of the population smoking in the world.
3. Look at statistics made by Our World in Data to understand the share of the population worldwide that uses drugs (smoking, alcohol, illicit drugs) and their consequences.

Articles

1. What is the "right to health"? Try to define this subject altogether as a class. Afterwards, read this article by the ESCR-Net.
2. Discuss how to strengthen countries and improve early warning systems for health risks. Introduce your students to the concept of International Health Regulations capacity and health emergency preparedness. This tool shows how prepared countries across the world are for another health pandemic or emergency.
3. Learn about new technologies in health, such as robotics, nanomedicine, AI, and more. Start with a simple article such as the Medical Technologies of the Decade. Or, read the article together in class. Discuss your learnings all together.

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Step 2: Research

Now, students are encouraged to partake in guided research and activities to explore the topic of Good Health and Well-being.

Students are encouraged to partake in guided research to explore the topic of Health and Well-Being. Research can be completed independently in a computer lab, as a homework assignment via talking to members of the community, through visiting a library, or as a classroom activity. Educators can also show the videos and articles linked above in the classroom.

In this research worksheet, students will pick a specific disease and research it, in order to understand the history of the disease, how it is transmitted, and what solutions exist for combatting this disease.

Student Research Worksheet

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What disease or illness are you studying?	
Is this disease found in a specific country or region? Please include a definition of Global Health and how it connects to this disease	
Is this disease a communicable or noncommunicable disease? Please explain the difference.	
How is this disease spread? If the disease is a non-communicable disease, explain what factors lead to developing the disease.	
What is the history of this illness? For example, when was it first contracted in humans? What predictions or trends can we establish considering the disease's history?	
What age group is primarily impacted by this disease and how many people are currently impacted in the world?	
Describe how one of the SDG 3 targets would help improve outcomes related to this disease.	
What solutions exist for controlling this illness?	
Define Universal health Coverage. Describe how this might help the illness you are researching	
How is this disease related to climate change and environmental factors/sustainability?	

Step 3: Investigate

Students are encouraged to apply critical thinking and research skills to investigate their schools' contribution to Good Health and Well-being. In this activity, students will act as detectives working to find clues. They will be responsible for taking notes, asking questions, and speaking with peers, teachers, and school leadership.

01 Group Students

Split students into groups of 2 to 4 for the following activity.

02 Distribute Questions

Give students a copy of the School Investigation Worksheet or post the questions at the front of the room. Worksheets can be adapted based upon the local context and the time allocated for the activity.

03 Set the timeframe

Allocate at least 25 minutes for students to work together to answer the questions.

04 Discuss

After students have completed the activity, lead a discussion:
- Where in the school can we improve health and wellbeing?
- How can all students understand the importance of SDG 3?
- How can we provide more access to good health and wellbeing for students in the entire school?
- What is the biggest problem in the school or community? How can you help your school community in this area?

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School Investigation Worksheet

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Does your school educate the students about the dangers of tobacco/drug use?	
Does your school have a water filtration system for drinking water?	
Does your school have an air filtration system?	
Is there a cafeteria at your school? If yes, how many students consider the food provided by the cafeteria to be clean and healthy?	
Does your school provide guides on healthy eating or incorporate healthy eating into the school curriculum?	
Does your school provide mental health services to its students and teachers?	
What does first aid care look like at your school?	
Does your school organize blood drives?	
How does your school determine whether students need to stay at home based on being sick?	
If your school has a wellness plan, what does it encompass?	
Are there physical education classes for students to remain healthy?	

Step 4: Data Activities

Now that students have had the opportunity to investigate their schools, it is time to explore more data in the world around them.

These actvities can be small or they can be longer-term projects that are worked on over the course of a few class periods.

Activity One: Design and Experiment

Have your students work together in small groups (depending on class size) to design their own experiment to examine a health status indicator of a country; these indicators include maternal mortality, infant mortality, spending on healthcare, and others. Students can pick a country and examine how the country has performed on that indicator overtime, choosing a time frame based on data availability, and using the resources previously explored. Students can determine, for example, the percent change (increase or decrease), in child mortality of Sierra Leone. Another example is looking at how maternal mortality in the U.S. has changed over the past three decades.

Activity Two: Measuring Student Health

Have your students work together in small groups (depending on class size) to design their own survey to investigate the general health of their classmates. We suggest reviewing your students' survey questions. For example, asking students how many days they are sick in a month, or how long they exercise each day, instead of asking what illness a student has or had in the past. Additionally, based on class size, determine how many students each group has to survey. Following the completion of the survey, have your students create graphs for a brief presentation on three to five key findings.

Activity Three: Disease Eradication

Review this information from Rotary Club International on the progress of eradicating Polio. Research and determine a plan for eradication of a disease chosen by the students. Have students brainstorm as a group what steps they have to take to reduce the incidence of the illness. To effectively communicate their plan to the appropriate stakeholders, your students will have to gather key advocacy data and present this to a mock jury, that wil determine if their plan has been approved and funded.

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Step 5: Take Action

Now, encourage students to take action! Actions can be small or they can be longer-term projects that are worked on over the course of a few class periods.

Global Schools Action Ideas for Students

Have your students generate their own ideas based on their interests and skills, but here are some ideas if students are looking for suggestions or directions.

- **Run a campaign about drugs, alcohol or/and tobacco-related risks**. Healthy communities begin with healthy youth. The dangers of serious addictions and awareness raising on substance abuse is vital for peers and young people. Organize a conference, run workshops, invite speakers to share testimonies on the topic, or carry out any other ideas you can think of!
- **Look up the local blood donation institution near your school** and create a half-day event where all student volunteers come together and give blood.
- **Look up the maternal mortality ratio in your country**; use your analysis skills to look at charts on the number of maternal deaths by region and country; devise a plan for how you can reduce global maternal mortality to less than 70 per 100,000 live births. Complete a similar exercise for the under-5 child mortality rate. Compare the child mortality rate for boys vs. girls.
- **Analyze the state of your community.** Look at the share of the population infected with HIV. How does the percentage in your country compare to the world globally? Complete a similar exercise for tuberculosis, malaria, hepatitis B, and/or other tropical diseases. Turn this into a briefing for local offiicals.
- **Play the Pandemic game online or the Plague game online** to discuss real-time policy solutions to global health emergencies. (*Please be sensitive when playing this game due to the COVID-19 Pandemic)
- **Create an informative flyer about a health topic you are interested in,** such as the importance of healthy eating or drug abuse awareness, that could be posted at school.
- **Calculate different health statistics** such as the average household expenditure on health. Compare this to different cities around the world. Calculate mortality rates due to air pollution, unsafe water and sanitation services, and/or availability of essential medicines. Turn this into a briefing for local offiicals.
- **Create a student advocacy group for wellbeing and wellness.** One of your first tasks could be to interview the community and students about their perceptions on community health!

Action Planning Template for Students

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Describe your idea or action.	
Why do you feel this action is necessary, and what evidence have you gathered to show this?	
What do you know about this topic? Use research, facts, and statistics you gathered.	
What is your #1 goal in completing this action? How many people do you want to reach? What exactly will you accomplish?	
How will you implement this action?	
Where will you implement your action? Your school, classroom, or local community?	
What outside resources might you need to accomplish your action/project? Are there any local organizations, aligned with your vision, that you could partner with?	
What are your next steps for completing this action?	

Step 6: Sharing Student Work

Celebrating Successes

Finally, your students have completed their project. They've done so much work up to this point, and now you deserve to celebrate their accomplishments and achievements. It's also time to share their project with other students, teachers, parents, and the community. We encourage you to facilitate the celebration of their work by having a platform to share their project outcomes. This also allows students to work towards a common goal.

- Host an exhibition in the school lobby or courtyard, where everyone in the class can showcase their projects and share what they have accomplished. Invite parents, teachers, community members, and other students.
- Host a Ted Talk Day. Students will speak for 5-10 minutes about their project. Invite the head of the school, teachers, and parents.
- Encourage students to write a blog post about their work. Share it with Global Schools leadership and amanda.abrom@unsdsn.org to feature projects on the Global Schools website and social media, which has over 20,000 followers from around the world.
- Encourage students to write a blog post or a short article for the school or local newspaper.
- Have students create a video about their project and the SDGs to share with your school.

Student Feedback

It is also important to encourage students to collect peer feedback on the project. This includes comments, experiences, lessons learned, and roadblocks. Additionally, make sure that you host a reflection session within your classroom.

- Have students answer 1 to 5 questions about their favorite and least favorite parts of the project and what they would like to do again.
- Hold a feedback session in the form of a focus group where everyone can discuss. Make sure you have someone take notes.
- Ask students to quantify their impact. Did they reach 80 other students in the school? How can they reach 100 next time?
- Have students speak to another classroom to receive feedback.
- Encourage other students to leave comments in a "comment box" in the school's lobby, offering their opinions and feedback. Save these comments so that you have quotes to use in the future.

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Step 7: Review and Assessment

Use these resources to assess students' learning through quiz questions, debates, and essays. Feel free to use any combination of questions and activities to engage your students.
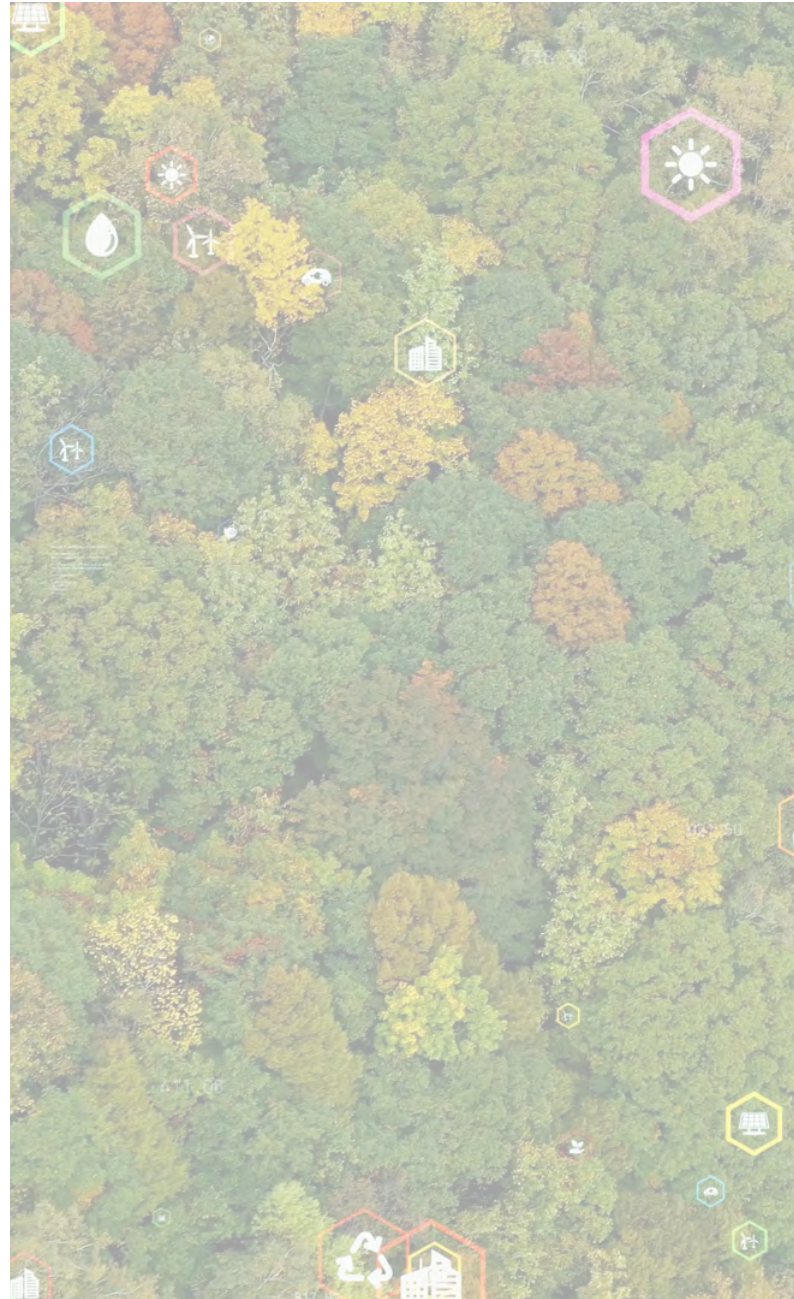
❓❓ Quiz Questions

1. List three common communicable diseases
2. List three common non-communicable diseases.
3. Define global health.
4. Elaborate on one of the SDG 3 targets.
5. Approximately, what is the maternal mortality rate in your country?
6. Briefly describe the social determinants of health.
7. Describe why good health and well-being are important to individuals and societies.
8. What is the purpose of Universal Health Coverage?
9. Explain the importance of mental health to overall health and well-being, and how these are interconnected.

Debate Topics

1. Governments should play a larger role in healthcare regulation.
2. All vaccines should be mandatory.
3. Environmental toxins and waste do not impact human health.
4. If it is possible, should we eradicate all diseases?
5. There should be more restrictions on travel to prevent the spread of disease.

Example Questions for Exams, Essays and Projects

Lower Secondary

1. How would you define well-being? What are three things that you can do to maintain your well-being?
2. Describe the difference between communicable and noncommunicable diseases. Be sure to include an example of one of each.
3. Write out three ways that you can stay healthy on a day-to-day basis. Which way do you think is the best way to stay healthy?

Upper Secondary

1. Explore a few different strategies for healthcare and elaborate on how your country can improve. Imagine you are writing a proposal that will be sent to the school director.
2. Propose three recommendations for your school to practice more healthy habits. Be sure to include evidence on why these policies would contribute to positive health and well-being outcomes. Be sure to include evidence on why these recommendations are practical and achievable by the school.

Advanced Upper Secondary

1. Review the maternal mortality rate in your country. Explain what governmental policies or projects you would like to adopt or implement in your country that could help affect this rate in a positive way.
2. Explore how communities, industries, and private businesses implement good health and well-being. How can they change and adapt sustainable practices, products, services, and/or strategies? Focus on one company or hospital for an in-depth case-study presentation and analysis.
3. List a major health problem in your country and discuss implementing health education. How would you go about this? Be sure to include what potential policies could look like and how these could be implemented to educate the public on health and well-being.

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Additional Resources for Teachers

1. UNESCO SDG 3 Resources for Teachers, UNESCO
2. Worlds Largest Lesson lesson resources from the World's Largest Lesson on healthy eating and live sessions on individual health
3. Population Education Ideas on incorporating SDG 3 into the classroom
4. Teaching Health and Well-being, Free resources on Health and Well-being

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