

Monday, April 24th at 4:00PM
Blow Hall - Board of Visitors Room

Rethinking Human Development: Diseases in Developing Countries

Katie Bristol¹, Kate Dean-McKinney², Waverly
Gestrich-Thompson³,
Sarah Goswick⁴, Daniel Luna Guevara⁵ & Peter Woo⁶

¹) ksbristol@email.wm.edu, ²) kedeanmckinney@email.wm.edu, ³)
wvgestrichthom@email.wm.edu

⁴) segoswick@email.wm.edu, ⁵) dalunaguevara@email.wm.edu, ⁶)
nwoo@email.wm.edu

Developing countries face many problems and deficits due to the lack of a thriving economy and government. One of these problems is the prevalence of diseases that can affect millions of citizens every year. In this presentation, through the lens of specific case studies, we will examine the effects of four different conditions—Polio, HIV/AIDS, Rotavirus, and various mental health disorders—on developing countries. There are several underlying factors that contribute to the prevalence of these diseases, as well as a number of different ways to address their impact on nations. The factors that cause these diseases fall into multiple categories including cultural, social, and economic. The treatments discussed are mainly influenced by economic factors, infrastructure of each country, and healthcare practices. Because of this, there is a significant discrepancy between the vaccination and overall health treatment programs in developed and developing countries. HIV is a degenerative retrovirus that, if gone untreated, will develop into AIDS, and at this point, there is no permanent cure. The disparity in numbers of carriers of the disease due to health care practices between developed and developing countries is drastic. Polio is a highly transmittable viral disease, which, despite eradication efforts, continues to pose a threat and act as a significant indicator of human development within certain regions of Africa and the Middle East. Rotavirus is a highly contagious RNA virus that is extremely common in children under the age of 5 and causes severe and often fatal diarrhea and inflammation of the stomach and intestines. Two vaccines to prevent rotavirus first became available in 2006 and have since been gradually introduced into developing countries. The importance of mental well-being is often overlooked, but it has potential to significantly impact development. The case study on Cambodia reveals that there are factors that make people in developing countries more prone to mental illnesses, and hinder the establishment of a sustainable and effective mental healthcare system. Through these case studies, we will demonstrate in our presentation how the development of a country affects that country's prevalence of disease and its resources to combat the disease.