Review Article

Global Health Partnerships in Contemporary World: An Overview, Orientation and Evolution

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A B S T R A C T

Introduction: Global health partnerships have become increasingly important in addressing the global burden of disease and improving health outcomes in low- and middle-income countries. However, the factors that contribute to the success or failure of these partnerships are not well understood.

Objective: This article aims to analyse the associated factors behind global health partnerships by conducting a systematic review of the literature.

Methodology: The study is based on the systematic review which identified several key factors that are associated with successful partnerships, including clear goals and objectives, effective communication and collaboration, shared values and vision, adequate funding and resources, and strong leadership and governance. In addition, contextual factors such as political and economic stability, cultural norms and beliefs, and health system capacity were found to influence partnership outcomes.

Conclusion: The findings of the study have important implications for policymakers and practitioners working in global health partnerships, highlighting the importance of considering a range of factors when designing and implementing these partnerships to maximise their impact and sustainability.

Keywords: Global Health Partnerships, Associated Factors, Leadership, Governance

Introduction

Partnerships in global health include the collaborative efforts of several groups to address global health challenges. These groups include governments, NGOs, international organisations, academic institutions, and private sector firms. The purpose of these collaborations is to promote health fairness, enhance health outcomes, and fortify health systems by encouraging the free flow of information, resources, and expert knowledge across various countries and regions. Several public health emergencies, such as the HIV/ AIDS pandemic and the current COVID-19 outbreak, have resulted in the development of global health alliances throughout the years. These alliances have evolved through time to become increasingly sophisticated, numerous, and all-encompassing. The agenda for global health, the organisation of resources and skills, and the promotion of sustainable development are all areas in which they play a crucial role.

Literature Review

Global Health Partnerships

Multi-stakeholder efforts to better the health of populations throughout the globe are what we call "partnerships in global health". Governments, NGOs, international organisations, universities, and businesses have created such alliances to improve the health and welfare of citizens in low- and middle-income countries. There is a wide variety of global health partnerships, including those aimed at doing research, providing financial support, building organisational capacity, and promoting awareness and change. Its objectives include but are not limited to, enhancing maternal and infant health, fortifying healthcare infrastructure, and decreasing the incidence of communicable and non-communicable diseases. There are many international organisations working together to improve health around the world. Some examples include the Global Alliance for Chronic Diseases, the World Health Organization's Global Health Security Strategy, the Vaccine Alliance, and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria. All of these organisations are working together for various reasons. Global health partnerships have the potential to significantly improve health outcomes, health equity, and health inequities in low- and middle-income countries. They serve as a focal point for the sharing of knowledge and the coordination of initiatives aimed at improving the health of the world's most marginalised populations.[1]

Genesis and Evolution of Global Health Partnerships

During the course of the last few years, global health partnerships have emerged as a coordinated response to worldwide health concerns that are having an effect on people all over the world. Governments, non-governmental organisations, international organisations, universities, and private corporations all collaborate in an effort to improve health outcomes and increase access to medical treatment.[2]

Infectious epidemics such as cholera and yellow fever in the 19th century inspired the first international health conferences, which in turn provided the framework for the vast global health programmes that are being implemented today. These get-togethers had to take place since the global spread of infectious illnesses necessitated the participation of people from other countries (Figure 1).
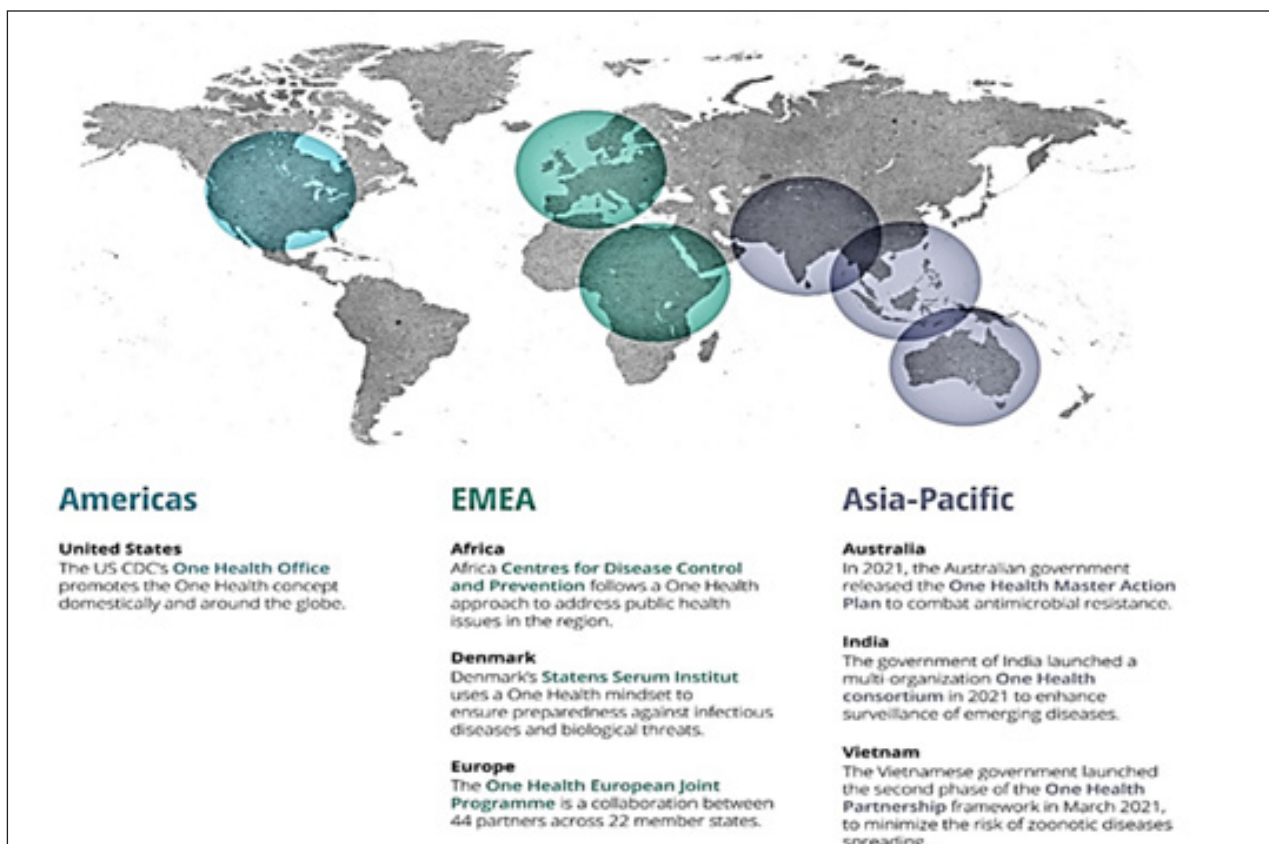

Americas

United States
The US CDC's **One Health Office** promotes the One Health concept domestically and around the globe.

EMEA

Africa
Africa **Centres for Disease Control and Prevention** follows a One Health approach to address public health issues in the region.

Denmark
Denmark's **Statens Serum Institut** uses a One Health mindset to ensure preparedness against infectious diseases and biological threats.

Europe
The **One Health European Joint Programme** is a collaboration between 44 partners across 22 member states.

Asia-Pacific

Australia
In 2021, the Australian government released the **One Health Master Action Plan** to combat antimicrobial resistance.

India
The government of India launched a multi-organization **One Health** consortium in 2021 to enhance surveillance of emerging diseases.

Vietnam
The Vietnamese government launched the second phase of the **One Health Partnership** framework in March 2021, to minimize the risk of zoonotic diseases spreading.

Figure 1.Global Health Programmes[3]

The global scenarios and takeaways from some of the countries as shown in Figure 1 are as follows:

1. **USA:** The establishment of a dedicated USA One Health Office promoting interdisciplinary collaboration and awareness is crucial for addressing and mitigating public health crises effectively; however, the implementation of such an office may face challenges including bureaucratic impediments, budget constraints, and potential resistance from stakeholders within existing health organisations.

2. **Africa:** The implementation of the One Health approach in Africa demonstrates the significance of interdisciplinary collaboration between human and animal health professionals, leading to improved disease surveillance, prevention, and control. However, its success is hindered by challenges such as inadequate funding, limited infrastructure, and cultural barriers to cooperation.

3. **Denmark:** The adoption of the One Health approach in Denmark not only demonstrates the country's commitment to addressing complex health issues at the human-animal-environment interface, but also brings about advancements in disease prevention, improved veterinary practices, and enhanced research collaborations. However, the implementation of this approach faces challenges, such as a lack of standardised protocols, insufficient funding, and potential conflicts between stakeholders, which need to be addressed in order to fully realise its potential benefits.

4. **Europe:** The One Health European Joint Programme globally facilitates international collaboration by bringing together experts from different fields such as medicine, veterinary science, and environmental science. By harnessing collective expertise, the programme can effectively tackle complex health issues that transcend borders.

5. **Australia:** The implementation of a One Health Master Plan in Australia has the potential to improve global health outcomes, as it promotes the integration of human, animal, and environmental health; however, its success may be hindered by challenges such as lack of resources, resistance to change, and conflicting national priorities.

6. **India:** The establishment of the One Health Consortium in India has the potential to improve global health outcomes through its collaborative approach, although it faces challenges related to resource allocation and cultural differences that may hinder its effectiveness.

7. **Vietnam:** The One Health approach adopted by Vietnam is commendable, as it promotes the holistic understanding of the interconnectivity between humans, animals, and the environment, leading to effective disease prevention and control measures. While the country's efforts are highly beneficial and efficient, there are challenges faced, such as limited resources and insufficient public awareness, that impede the complete realisation of the One Health approach.

In the contemporary world, one health approach represents the global efforts for better outcomes towards mutual health welfare deliverables.

Yet, it was not until the 1990s that global health alliances were established in order to tackle the HIV/ AIDS epidemic. Since it first appeared in the 1980s, the HIV/ AIDS pandemic has had a profound impact on the lives of millions of individuals around the globe. It is imperative that communities afflicted by the HIV/ AIDS pandemic, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and governments all work together to formulate an appropriate response. To combat the spread of the HIV/ AIDS pandemic, a broad collection of stakeholders came together in 1996 to establish the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/ AIDS (UNAIDS). This was done in an effort to construct UNAIDS.[4]

At the turn of the century, there was a considerable increase in the number of partnerships that were established to address global health issues such as malaria and tuberculosis.

Another important global health cooperation that came into existence in the early 2000s is known as Gavi, which stands for the Global Alliance for Immunization. Using a combination of governmental and private sector efforts, the Gavi has been working since 2005 to expand the availability of immunisations in countries with low per capita income. Because of the work that Gavi has done and the development of new vaccinations, the lives of millions of children in underdeveloped countries have been saved.[5]

Following in their footsteps were the World Health Organization's Global Health Security Plan and the Global Partnership for Chronic Diseases. The Global Alliance for Chronic Diseases was founded in 2009 by a group of international research funders with the goal of lessening the impact of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) in nations with low and moderate levels of income. The World Health Organization (WHO), together with other international organisations and civil society organisations, worked together in 2014 to develop the Global Health Security Agenda with the goal of improving global health security and being better prepared to deal with outbreaks and epidemics.

During the course of time, there has been an expansion of collaborations in the field of global health, encompassing new sectors such as the impacted communities and the commercial sector. Another trend that has recently gained traction is the integration of improvements to healthcare systems with consideration of the socioeconomic factors that influence people's health. Partnerships are becoming more important as a means of advancing health equality and sustainable development, as well as in the process of formulating the agenda for global health.[6]

Limitations of Global Health Partnerships

Several health problems have been effectively addressed via global health collaborations, but these efforts are not without their drawbacks. The following are examples of restrictions:

Aid that isn't shared fairly: Partnerships between high- and low-income nations may lead to unequal power relations in global health. This might lead to high-income nations having undue influence in the partnership and gaining disproportionate access to its benefits and resources.[7]

Fragmentation: In order to battle a specific illness or collection of issues, most global health coalitions get together. Cooperation may be less effective if efforts are not coordinated and integrated.

Limited in scope: Partnerships in global health cannot function without financial support from governments, philanthropies, and businesses. The establishment and maintenance of long-term health initiatives may be difficult if financing is unstable.[8]

Lack of focus on healthcare systems: The goals of global health partnerships are not aligned with the need to construct health systems capable of delivering all-encompassing, long-term care.

Lack of responsibility: Lack of transparent accountability procedures may make it difficult to assess the value of global health collaborations. This makes it more difficult to guarantee that collaboration will be efficient and fruitful.[9]

Partnerships in global health are used to tackle a broad variety of health issues, but they are not without their drawbacks. If these problems are going to be resolved, then all parties involved will need to work together to guarantee that partnerships are fair, integrated, sustainable, and responsible.

Methodology

The present study is based on the secondary information collected from various databases like Scopus, Google Scholar, ProQuest, press releases, newspaper articles and other authentic government websites. Qualitative criteria were employed for completing the research work by considering relevant data. The systematic review process has been beneficial in terms of exploring many previous literature papers to extract the most relevant data for this research. In the initial stage, research articles were screened based on the relevance of the study objectives followed by suitable articles only selected for the review process. The study followed all the ethical norms for keeping all the data private.

Global Partnerships for Global Health Equity, Better Health Outcomes, and Stronger Health Systems

Global partnerships for global health equity, better health outcomes, and stronger health systems are crucial, as they offer new perspectives, resources, and collaborative approaches to address global health challenges, while also presenting challenges such as power dynamics, resource allocation, and potential cultural insensitivity.

Supportive Arguments

1. **New perspectives:** Global partnerships bring together diverse experiences, knowledge, and expertise from different countries and regions, thus enabling the exchange of innovative ideas and approaches to tackling global health issues.
2. **Resources:** Collaborative efforts facilitate the sharing of financial, technological, and human resources among partners, ensuring that even resource-constrained countries can access necessary tools, medicines, and interventions to improve health outcomes.
3. **Collaborative approaches:** Global partnerships encourage cooperation and coordination among various stakeholders, including governments, NGOs, and academic institutions, leading to the development and implementation of comprehensive strategies that address complex health challenges holistically.

Negative Arguments

Power dynamics: Global partnerships may be skewed towards high-income countries, with power imbalances and inequality in decision-making processes. This can lead to the dominance of certain agendas over others, hindering equitable resource allocation and sustainable solutions.

Resource allocation: Limited resources and competing priorities within global partnerships can create tensions, as various partners strive to align their interests and secure their own benefits, potentially diverting resources away from marginalised communities or failing to address local health needs adequately.

Cultural insensitivity: Differences in cultural norms, values, and beliefs across partner countries can lead to

misunderstandings and conflicts within global partnerships. Failure to consider cultural sensitivities may impede the effective implementation and acceptance of health interventions, jeopardising their long-term impact.

In conclusion, while global partnerships offer great potential for global health equity, better health outcomes, and stronger health systems, they must navigate power dynamics, resource allocation challenges, and potential cultural insensitivity to truly address global health challenges effectively.

One significant benefit of international health partnerships is enhanced support for expectant and nursing moms. The Partnership for Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health has been instrumental in improving maternity and child health outcomes throughout the globe by combining advocacy and resource mobilisation efforts.[10] As a result, maternal and newborn mortality rates have plummeted worldwide, but particularly in low- and middle-income countries.[11]

The development of health systems in many parts of the globe is another win for global health partnerships. Partnerships like the Global Health Security Agenda (Figure 2) have focused on strengthening disease surveillance, outbreak response, and laboratory systems, all of which are crucial for detecting and responding to health hazards.[12]

Notwithstanding this development, global health alliances continue to face challenges. To get over these obstacles and reach more long-term and equitable results, it is essential to put a premium on improving health systems and addressing the underlying socioeconomic determinants of health. As a result, there is a pressing need for a more comprehensive and coordinated approach to global health, in which international groups work together to combat not only specific diseases and conditions but also the health system as a whole and societal factor that have an impact on people's health.[14]

It is essential to address power inequities and foster more equitable connections to ensure that the benefits of global health cooperation are spread properly. To achieve this goal, the customary donor-recipient dynamic must give way to mutually beneficial partnerships.

Only with reliable, long-term funding can global health partnerships thrive. Hence, it is imperative that all relevant parties work together to pool resources and develop long-term strategies for healthcare projects, requiring a more strategic and long-term approach to finance.

Encouraging accountability and monitoring and assessing the consequences of global health partnerships are also crucial to ensuring their efficacy and success. This calls for the establishment of open and distinct accountability procedures to ensure that all stakeholders are held responsible for their actions.[15]

To sum up, global health partnerships have proven crucial in addressing a wide range of health issues throughout the globe. But, addressing the limitations and challenges of these collaborations is crucial if we are to achieve more sustainable and equitable outcomes. To achieve this goal, global health programmes must change their focus from treating specific diseases to improving the whole range of healthcare systems and socioeconomic factors that influence patient outcomes.
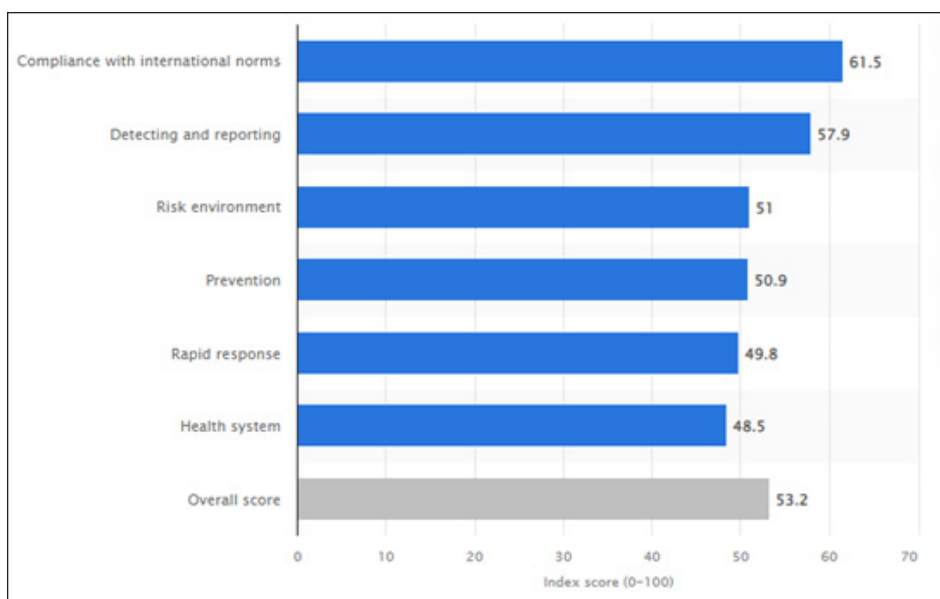

Figure 2.Global Health Security (GHS) Index Score[13]

Discussion

The importance of partnerships in global health in achieving better global health outcomes has been shown. Partnerships like this one let several groups work together to address pressing global health issues. The government and international organisations, as well as the public and commercial sectors, should all be involved.

When individuals from diverse backgrounds and organisations work together to address global health problems, everyone benefits. That's why collaborative efforts across institutions are so important for bettering global health. The Global Polio Eradication Initiative is an example of a collaborative effort that shares its resources with other nations to eliminate polio via mass immunisation campaigns, financial support, and technical advice. The consequence has been a dramatic decrease in the number of confirmed cases of polio across the globe.

Alliances for global health have also been useful in ensuring that everyone has access to excellent healthcare and eliminating health disparities. The fundamental goal of these partnerships is to enhance the health of low- and middle-income countries and communities. The Gavi Alliance and its partners have successfully reduced the rates of vaccine-preventable illnesses in poor and middle-income countries.[16]

The ability to collaborate and coordinate responses to health crises is another important benefit of global health partnerships. That's why it's so important for organisations to work together to improve global health. Quick and coordinated action by a number of actors is essential to contain an epidemic or pandemic and provide adequate care and treatment to those affected. The Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations is one such global health collaboration that has considerably benefited the development of vaccines, diagnostics, and therapeutics for new infectious diseases like COVID-19 (CEPI).

Yet, the success of international health partnerships is jeopardised by a variety of variables. One of the main problems is that they don't have enough power to work together effectively. The balance of power may shift if countries with very different economies work together. If high-income countries use their greater control-imposing capabilities to impose more influence and control over the partnership, this might lead to inequitable decision-making authority, resources, and benefits. In low- and middle-income countries, a lack of ownership over these efforts may endanger the long-term survival of health services.

Many health initiatives fail because global health coalitions focus on a single disease or problem. If this is allowed to persist, the partnership's efficiency may suffer as a result of poor coordination and integration. To overcome this obstacle, one needs a healthcare system that is both more comprehensive and better coordinated. That's why it's important for teams to collaborate on behalf of patients in ways that go beyond simply treating the diseases and conditions at hand.

Making ends meet is a challenge that global health partnerships must face. It's possible for private companies, public agencies, and nonprofits to all contribute to a partnership's funding pot. It is difficult to plan and carry out long-term health projects when there is no assurance that funding will be stable or predictable. This could delay adequate action in the face of emerging health threats.[17]

In addition, strengthening healthcare systems is often overlooked despite being central to providing comprehensive treatment over the long term. In global health partnerships, the elimination of specific diseases or health issues is often prioritised over the enhancement of healthcare delivery systems. If we're serious about finding a solution to this issue, we need to prioritise strengthening our healthcare infrastructure. Furthermore, it may be difficult to monitor and analyse the effects of global health partnerships due to the lack of clearly defined systems for accountability. This may be a problem because it makes it more challenging to establish and maintain productive partnerships. In order to effectively address this issue, it is crucial to establish transparent and clear lines of responsibility. These systems need to make sure everyone is accountable for their actions and words.

Conclusion

Global health partnerships have been essential to addressing and improving a broad range of health problems and outcomes throughout the globe. To combat complex health issues, these partnerships have enabled the sharing of resources and information. Furthermore, they have been crucial in the effort to end global health disparities. Global health cooperation may be hampered by a variety of challenges. Concerns include a lack of resources, a lack of focus on prioritising the development of health systems, an unequal distribution of power among partners, and a lack of defined accountability procedures. These challenges can only be surmounted by a more comprehensive and integrated strategy for healthcare, one that prioritises the development of stronger health systems and the introduction of transparent systems of accountability. For a partnership to succeed over the long term, it's crucial that the power dynamics be balanced. There is hope that partnerships in global health may continue to play a significant role in addressing and improving health challenges throughout the world.

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