

**Future Africa – 1 HOPE**  
Webinar Series

*Building Transdisciplinary  
Research Capacity*

# REIMAGINING the FUTURE of UNIVERSITIES in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

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(1 HOPE)

November 11, 2020



## Aim

### REIMAGINING THE FUTURE OF UNIVERSITIES IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

#### FOCUS:

*UN-2030 Vision: a “just, sustainable and peaceful world”*

## THEMES

### A case for societal transformation

- *“The ‘big’ picture” (P1)*
- *Global responses (P2)*

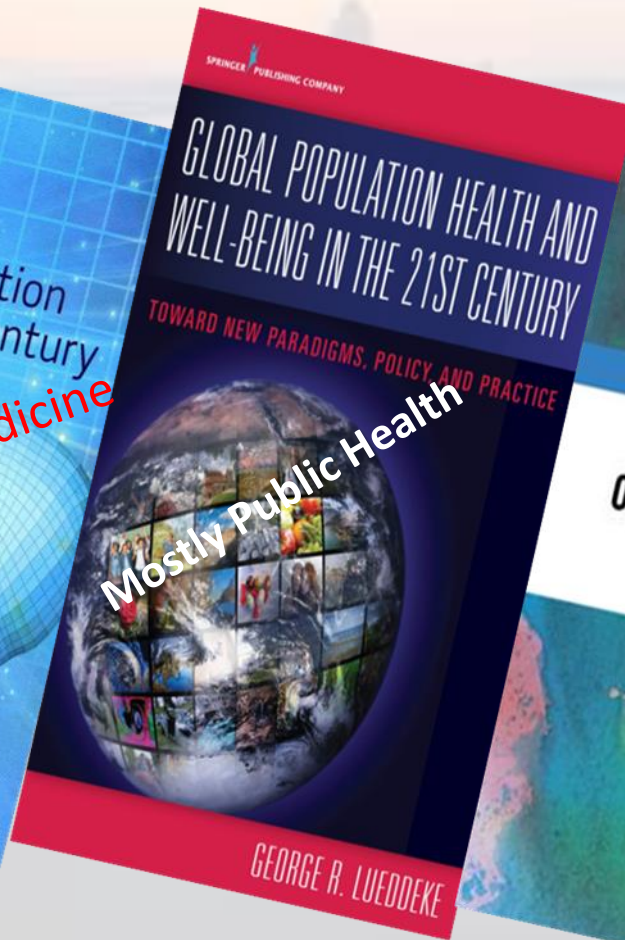
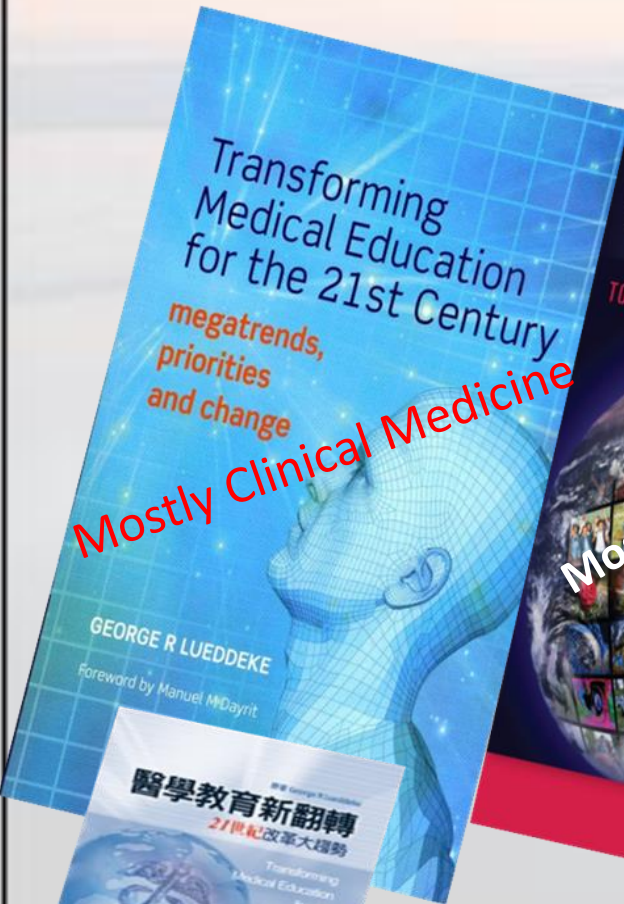
### Learning is key!

- *Toward a new worldview (P3)*
- *Reflections on 21<sup>st</sup> century education and research (P4)*

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Q/A

# Personal journal toward One Health & Well-Being







## A case for societal transformation



# A. *The 'Big Picture'*



## A case for societal transformation

# A. *The 'Big Picture'*

# Putting things in perspective



## Earth Evolution

13.7 billion years ago (YA): matter, energy, time, space

13.2 billion YA: atoms and molecules

3.8 billion YA: organisms

2.0 billion YA: energy cell - rise to complex life

c. 2.5 MYA.. humans - but just another species

c. 200,000 YA modern *Homo sapiens* – African continent



## Revolutions Shaping the Course of History

c. 70, 000 YA : Cognitive Revolution

c.12,000 YA: Agricultural Revolution

c.500 YA: Scientific Revolution

**c. 80 YA: first antibiotic (1935!)**

c. 30 YA: Information Revolution

**Present:**

**Sustainability Revolution ?**





A.

# Existential Risks



Earth in midst of  
sixth mass  
extinction phase

*Anthropocene Period*

Human activity dominant  
influence on climate and the environment!

“Since 1950s animal populations have more than halved.”

Sir David Attenborough (2020)



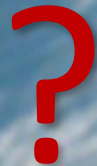
# Climate Change

## Paris Climate Agreement-Dec 2015

(Signed by 197 Nations ratified by 187 nations Nov 2019)

Emit c. 34 gigatons of CO<sub>2</sub> per year. Most remains in atmosphere for thousands of years

Keep long-term average temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels





## Covid-19 Could Push Half A Billion People Into Poverty

Additional people in poverty due to a 20% income drop caused by a Covid-19 recession\*



\* Poverty level - people earning below \$5.50 per day  
Source: Oxfam

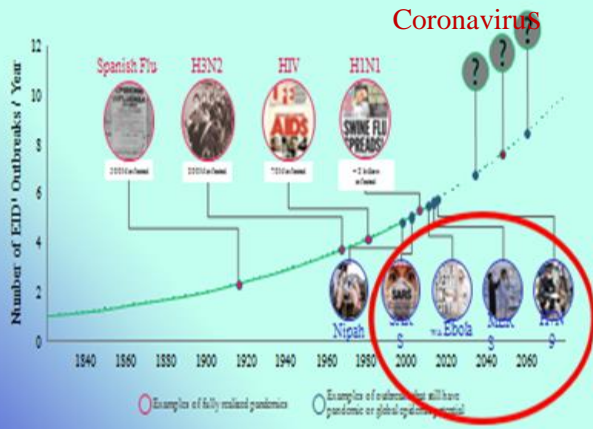


statista





**The threat of viral outbreaks will grow rapidly...**  
Largely driven by population growth, wildlife encroachment, and globalization



# Other global risks



**War:**  
"The greatest failure of humanity"

### Global Food Security in an Urbanizing World

By 2050, 2/3 of the world's population will live in urban areas.

In the next 20 years, 80% of the poorest households in the developing world spend 60-80% of their incomes on food.

95% of food for cities comes from domestic sources in rural areas.

of the world's population growth will occur in developing nations.

The Chicago Council on Global Affairs | @GlobalAgDev | #GlobalAg | thechicagoCouncil.org/globalag

### Modernity: mismatch between our genetic make-up and our 21<sup>st</sup> century lifestyles?

**AI vs Humanity?**

"AI IS LIKELY TO BE EITHER THE BEST OR WORST THING TO HAPPEN TO HUMANITY."  
-STEPHEN HAWKING

"ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) IS AN INFANT AT BEST. ONCE IT BECOMES A TEENAGER AND BELIEVES IT IS SMARTER THAN ITS PARENTS WILL AI REBEL!"  
-DAVE WATERS





## A case for societal transformation



### Poll 1

*What is the main obstacle to addressing global risks?*

- A. Lack of funding \_\_\_
- B. Lack of awareness \_\_\_
- C. Lack of commitment \_\_\_
- D. Other \_\_\_\_\_



Global south transdisciplinary knowledge generation on high risk, high reward, adaptation and high performance





## A case for societal transformation

# *B.*

# *Global Response*



# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



**"TO END POVERTY, PROTECT THE PLANET AND ENSURE THAT ALL PEOPLE ENJOY PEACE AND PROSPERITY BY 2030."**

**Covid-19**  
**"SDGs-epochal reversal"**

**Need for commitment to new global values, principles and actions!**



*Time to  
Stop, Think and Do!*

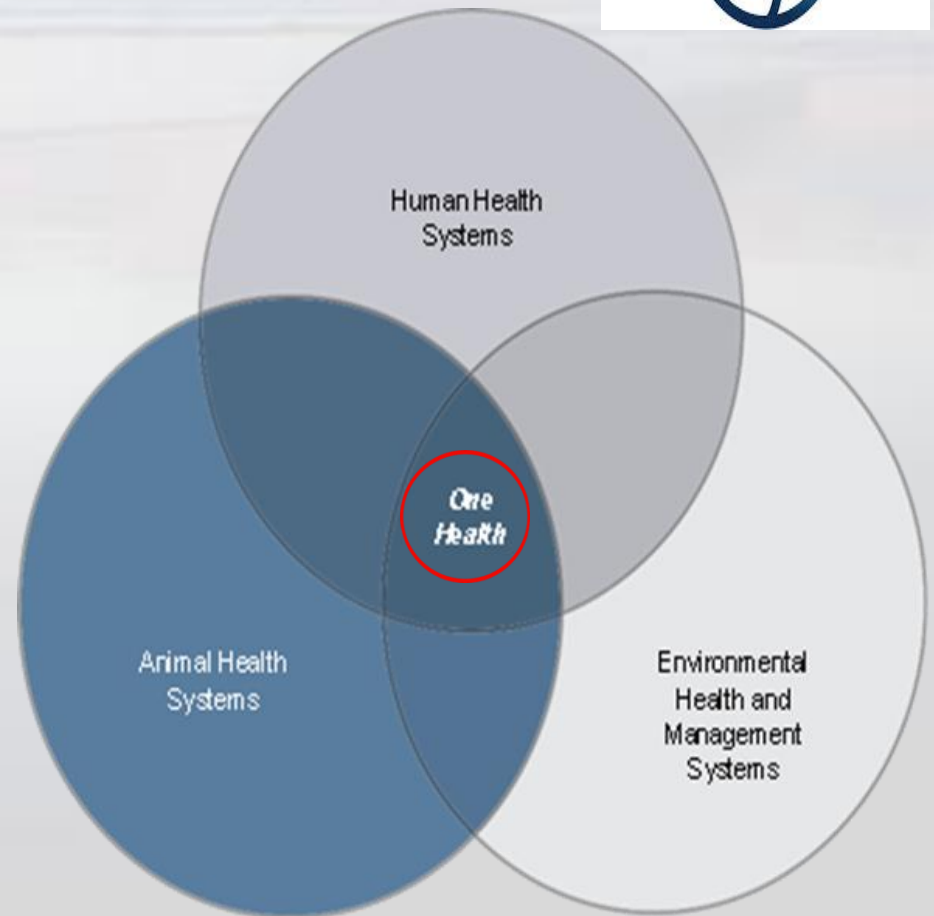
**World Bank One Health  
Operational framework**



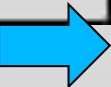
**The One Health  
& Well-Being Concept  
*movement - approach –  
philosophy?***

- **Interconnections among humans, animals, plants in a shared environment**
- **Collaboration across sectors**

**Sustainability!**



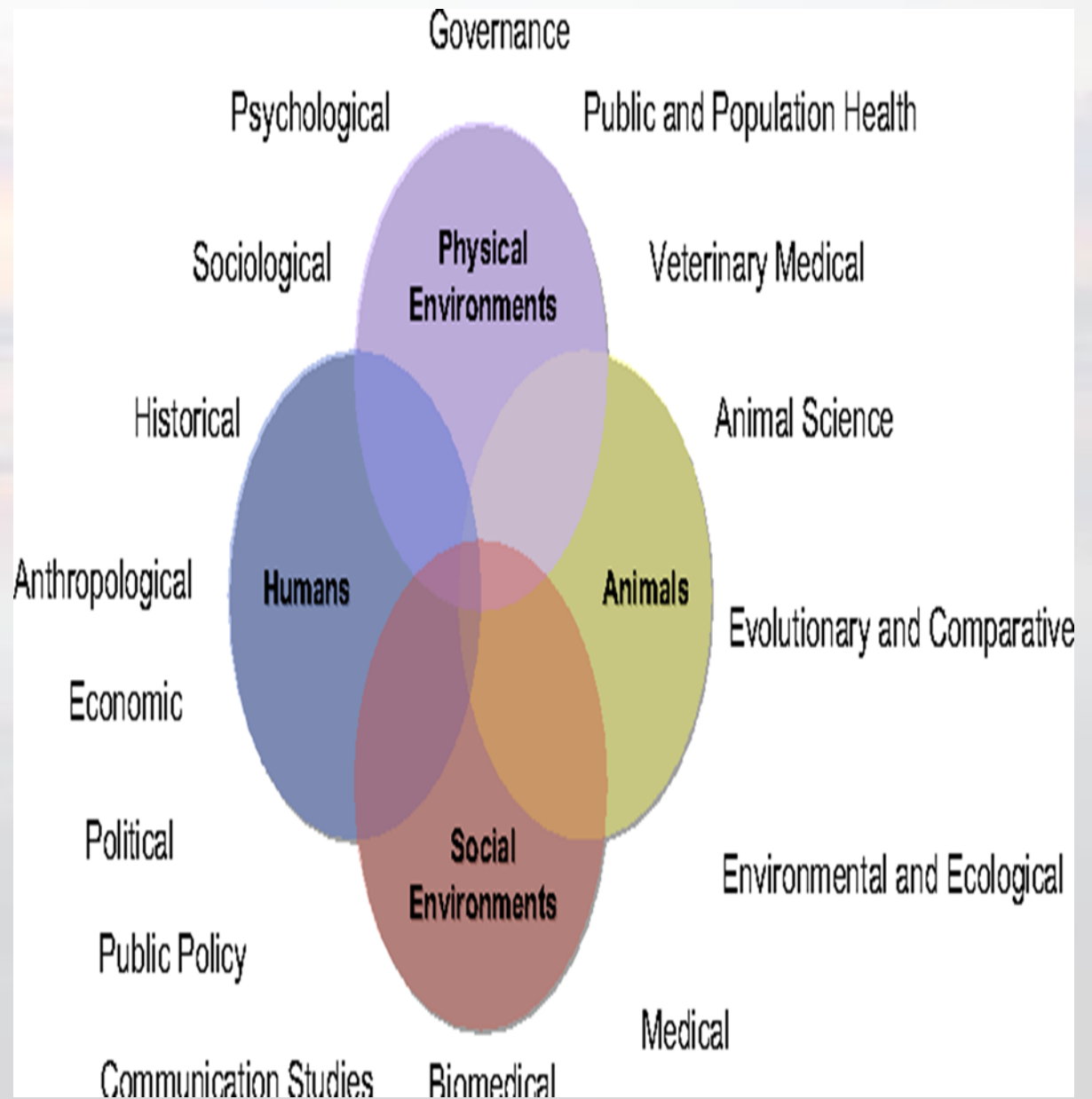
**Cuts across all disciplines**



***The One Health & Well-Being Concept***

***Applies to the planet  
and all species***

***All disciplines,  
policies &  
Strategies***



# A case for societal transformation

## POLL 2

*What main lesson is the world learning from Covid-19?*

- A. That we must learn to rise above beliefs that divide us\_\_
- B. That survival of our planet depends on adopting new values\_\_
- C. That rhetoric must be turned into life-saving action on the ground\_\_
- D. Other? \_\_\_\_\_







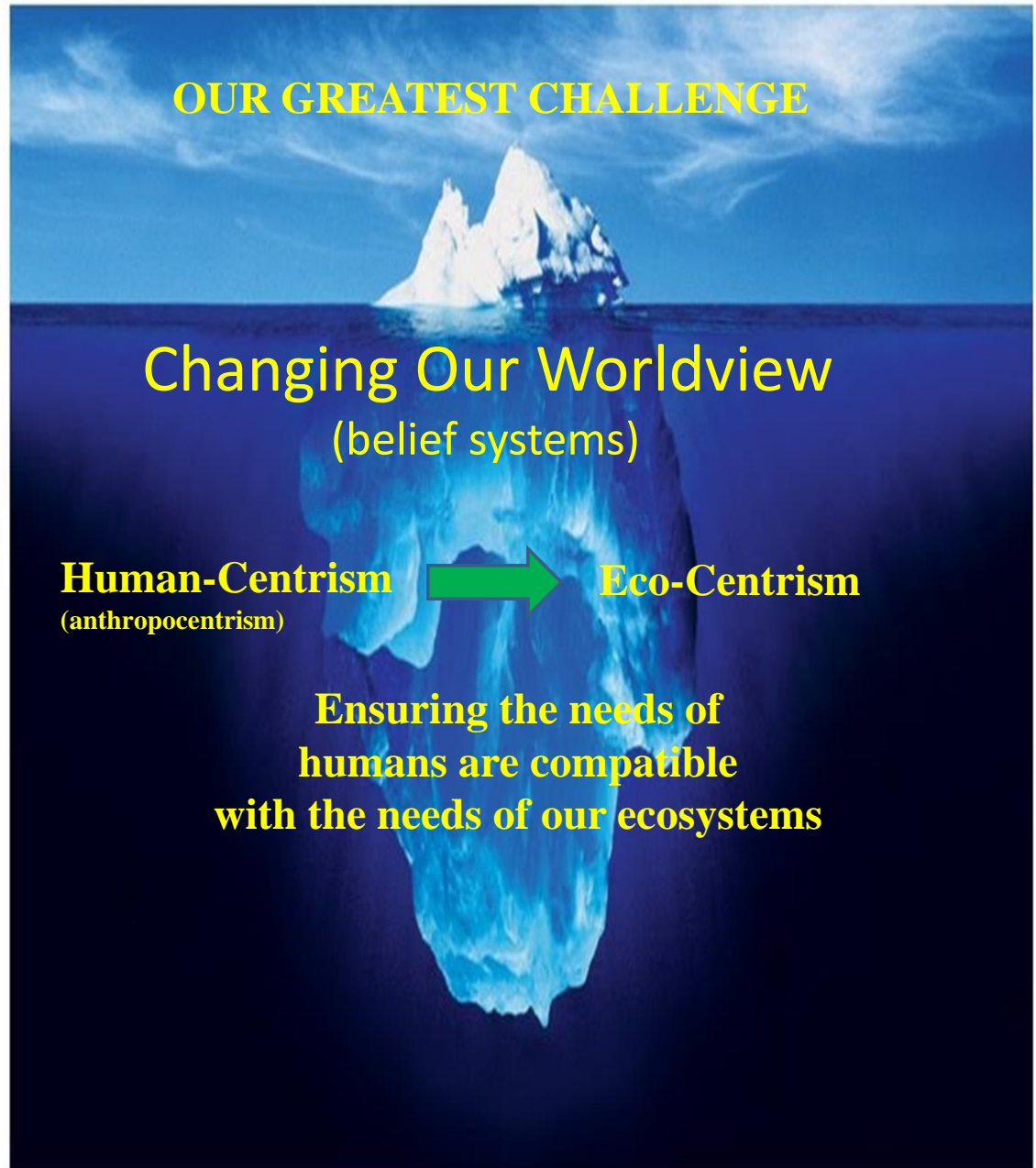
Learning is key!

# C. *Toward a new worldview*

**Towards a  
*New Normal***

***Covid-19 World*  
Societal & Workforce  
Development**

**NEW VALUES,  
KNOWLEDGE  
& COMPETENCIES**



# Biosphere is now the master!

**“For a start, we need to accept that business and finance are the servants of our civilization, not its masters.”**

Edward Lucas (former senior editor at *The Economist*):

