Global One Health and Infectious Diseases: An Interdisciplinary Practitioner's Guide

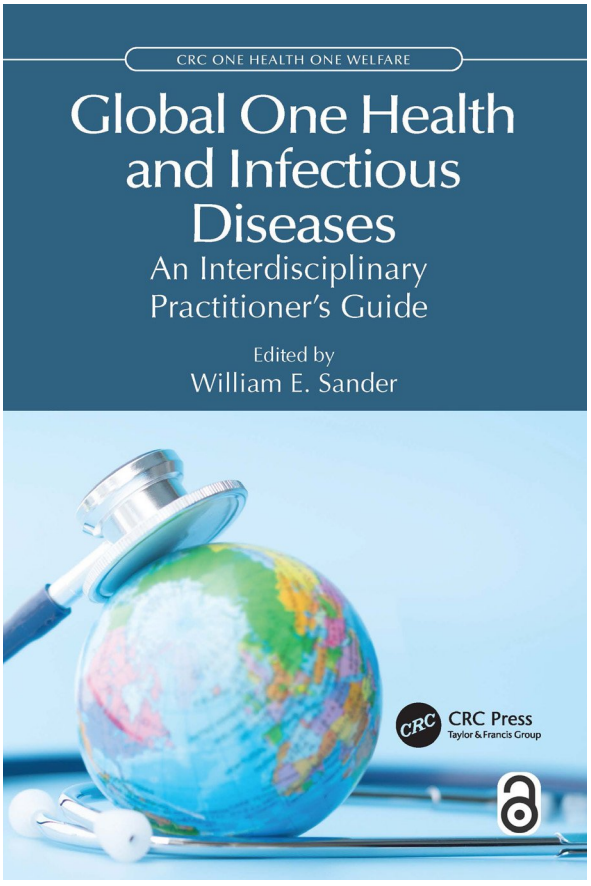
Through the lens of infectious disease, the book, Global One Health and Infectious Diseases: An Interdisciplinary Practitioner's Guide, brings together the diverse range of topics necessary to be an effective global health practitioner at the intersection of human and animal health, particularly in developing countries. It explores what an aspiring or mid-career practitioner should be aware of when working with infectious diseases, including technical skills, cultural competency, capacity building, big data, and understanding the landscape and history of global health. Each chapter focuses on a specific area of necessary knowledge with background information, case examples, and resources to use moving forward.

The aspiring global health practitioner has been appealing for decades and even centuries long before the term global health came into being. Missionaries dating back to the 13th and 14th centuries, as part of the Crusades and many other Western explorations, not only brought religion but also attempts at improving livelihoods often in caring for those who were sick. This drive has shaped much of how the world is today both in some of the improvements as well as some of the large disparities. While the idea of international health or global health often originates from those of developed or Western countries bringing expertise and solutions to those of other areas of the world, this idea has shifted more recently. The recognition of imperialism still existing through medicine and health has sparked a change in mindset. However, this shift has been variable across initiatives in the global health field and much of what is called helicopter medicine is often practiced.

At the same time, the term One Health, or the integration of human, animal, and environmental health, has grown with the recognition that complex problems in health require multidisciplinary efforts. Additionally, these problems are often driven by many different factors from across sectors. While many terms relate to One Health (e.g., planetary health, one medicine, etc.), the idea remains the same to think outside a chosen area of specialty and be able to work collaboratively as part of a team to better solve and improve health status around the world. This involves the collective effort of physicians, veterinarians, public health practitioners, ecologists, anthropologists, social workers, economists, and many others. Collectively, these are the global one health practitioners.

Within the realm of global one health, infectious diseases are a key component that draws from all of these disciplines and the focus of this book. Often an expert in one area that touches global one health has not considered the other components necessary for successful programs, initiatives, and outcomes in the targeted areas. One cannot just focus on technical aspects like surveillance, metrics, investment, and training, but must also consider the upstream and downstream components like ecosystem services, nutrition, climate change, and migration as well as the interactive and relationship components like the role of gender, cultural competency, and consensus building. Without an understanding of these pieces prior to engagement, the chances of success diminish as do the chances of sustainability after a program or intervention concludes or funding ends.

An important reference for upper-level undergraduate students, graduate students, and early practitioners in human, animal, and public health, this text highlights the competencies rather than focusing on the problems in Global One Health. It provides a blueprint of areas that the reader should pay attention to, particularly in the realm of infectious diseases.



Book Cover

Will Sander is an assistant professor in the Department of Veterinary Clinical Medicine and the director of the DVM/MPH Joint Degree Program. College of Vetrinary Medicine, University of Illinois, USA.