# UN SDG 3: Ensuring Healthy Lives and Promoting Well-being for All

**Executive Summary:**

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 3 (SDG 3) aims to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages. This ambitious goal encompasses a wide array of direct and indirect health challenges, ranging from reducing maternal and child mortality and combating communicable and non-communicable diseases to addressing the detrimental impacts of poverty, inequality, lack of access to clean water and sanitation, and environmental degradation on health outcomes. This report provides a comprehensive overview of SDG 3, detailing its specific targets and outlining evidence-based solutions derived from extensive research for tackling these multifaceted health problems. Achieving SDG 3 is not only crucial for improving individual well-being but also forms a fundamental pillar for broader sustainable development, economic prosperity, and social equity, highlighting its interconnectedness with other Sustainable Development Goals.

**Introduction:**

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by the United Nations in 2015, provides a global framework for addressing the most pressing challenges facing humanity. At the heart of this agenda are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which offer a blueprint for achieving peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future 1. Among these goals, SDG 3 stands as a cornerstone, recognizing that health is a fundamental human right and a prerequisite for sustainable development 1. The well-being of individuals directly influences their capacity to participate in education, engage in productive work, and contribute to their communities 6. Indeed, healthy populations form the bedrock of thriving economies 2. Conversely, poor health can perpetuate cycles of poverty, limit economic opportunities, and hinder overall societal progress 6. This report aims to provide a detailed exposition of the guidelines and specific goals outlined within UN SDG 3. Furthermore, it will delve into the intricate web of direct and indirect problems that SDG 3 seeks to address, offering comprehensive, evidence-based solutions derived from extensive research to facilitate the achievement of its ambitious targets. The scope of this analysis encompasses the thirteen specific targets articulated under SDG 3, alongside a thorough examination of the interconnected indirect factors that exert a significant influence on global health outcomes.

**UN SDG 3: Guidelines and Specific Goals:**

The overarching guideline of SDG 3 is encapsulated in its central goal: "Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages" 1. This broad aspiration is further delineated into thirteen specific targets, each with a defined focus and timeline, primarily set for 2030, with one target aimed for 2020 2. These targets collectively represent a comprehensive strategy to tackle the diverse health challenges facing the global population. The targets range from addressing specific health outcomes like reducing maternal and child mortality to combating major epidemics and promoting mental health. They also encompass crucial aspects of healthcare access, including universal health coverage and access to essential medicines and vaccines. Furthermore, SDG 3 recognizes the importance of addressing environmental and behavioral risk factors that impact health. The targets also explicitly call for strengthening health systems, particularly in developing countries, and enhancing global capacity for early warning and risk management of health threats 2. This multifaceted approach underscores the understanding that achieving good health and well-being requires interventions at various levels, from individual care to public health systems and global cooperation. The specific metrics associated with many of these targets, such as the reduction of maternal mortality to less than 70 per 100,000 live births, demonstrate a commitment to measurable progress and accountability 2. The breadth of these targets, addressing mortality, disease, prevention, access, and system strengthening, reflects a holistic vision for global health transformation. Recognizing that setting health goals alone is insufficient, SDG 3 explicitly addresses the necessary resources and infrastructure. The inclusion of targets related to research and development of vaccines and medicines for diseases primarily affecting developing countries (3.B), and the substantial increase in health financing and the health workforce in developing countries (3.C), underscores the critical role of enabling factors in achieving desired health outcomes.

For a clear overview, the following table summarizes the SDG 3 targets and selected key indicators:

| **Target** | **Key Aim and Timeline** | **Key Indicators (Examples)** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 3.1 | Reduce global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births by 2030 | Maternal mortality ratio (deaths per 100,000 live births) 8 |
| 3.2 | End preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age by 2030 | Under-5 mortality rate (deaths per 1,000 live births), Neonatal mortality rate (deaths per 1,000 live births) 8 |
| 3.3 | End the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, and neglected tropical diseases; combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases, and other communicable diseases by 2030 | Number of new HIV infections per 1,000 uninfected population, Tuberculosis incidence per 100,000 population, Malaria incidence per 1,000 population at risk 8 |
| 3.4 | Reduce by one-third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment; promote mental health and well-being by 2030 | Mortality rate attributed to cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, or chronic respiratory disease, Suicide mortality rate 8 |
| 3.5 | Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol | Coverage of treatment interventions for substance use disorders, Alcohol per capita consumption (aged 15+ years) 8 |
| 3.6 | Halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents by 2020 | Death rate due to road traffic injuries 8 |
| 3.7 | Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including family planning, information, and education by 2030 | Proportion of women of reproductive age (15-49 years) who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods 8 |
| 3.8 | Achieve universal health coverage (UHC), including financial risk protection and access to quality essential health-care services and affordable medicines and vaccines for all by 2030 | Coverage of essential health services, Proportion of population with large household expenditures on health as a share of total household expenditure or income 8 |
| 3.9 | Substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water, and soil pollution and contamination by 2030 | Mortality rate attributed to household and ambient air pollution, Mortality rate attributed to unsafe water, unsafe sanitation, and lack of hygiene 8 |
| 3.A | Strengthen the implementation of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in all countries, as appropriate | Age-standardized prevalence of current tobacco use among persons aged 15 years and older 8 |
| 3.B | Support research and development of vaccines and medicines for communicable and non-communicable diseases primarily affecting developing countries; provide access to affordable essential medicines and vaccines | Proportion of the target population covered by all vaccines included in their national program, Proportion of health facilities that have a core set of relevant essential medicines available and affordable on a sustainable basis 8 |
| 3.C | Substantially increase health financing and the recruitment, development, training, and retention of the health workforce in developing countries, especially in least developed countries and small island developing States | Health worker density and distribution 8 |
| 3.D | Strengthen the capacity of all countries, particularly developing countries, for early warning, risk reduction, and management of national and global health risks | (Specific indicators not readily available in provided snippets) |

**Detailed Solutions for Direct Health Problems Addressed by SDG 3:**

**Reducing Maternal Mortality (Target 3.1):**

The aim of reducing the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births by 2030 is a critical component of SDG 3 2. A significant proportion of maternal deaths occur in low-resource settings and are often preventable through access to appropriate sexual and reproductive health services 4. Ensuring that all births are attended by skilled health professionals, including doctors, nurses, and midwives, is paramount. Timely management and treatment of complications during pregnancy, childbirth, and the postpartum period can be life-saving for both mothers and newborns 9. Key interventions include the administration of oxytocics immediately after childbirth to reduce the risk of severe bleeding, practicing good hygiene to prevent infections, and detecting and appropriately managing conditions like pre-eclampsia with drugs such as magnesium sulfate to prevent eclampsia 9. Furthermore, preventing unintended pregnancies through universal access to contraception, safe abortion services to the full extent of the law, and quality post-abortion care is vital in reducing maternal deaths 9. Strengthening health systems, particularly the availability, accessibility, use, and quality of essential obstetric care, is crucial for creating an environment where these life-saving interventions can be consistently delivered 11. This includes ensuring the availability of parenteral antibiotics, oxytocics, and anticonvulsants, as well as facilities for manual removal of the placenta, removal of retained products of conception, assisted vaginal delivery, and blood transfusion 11. Sustainable impact on maternal mortality requires sector-wide approaches that allow for comprehensive improvements in health systems 11. The consistent emphasis on skilled birth attendance and emergency obstetric care highlights their foundational role in preventing maternal deaths. Moreover, the clear link between preventing unintended pregnancies and reducing maternal mortality underscores the importance of comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services. Addressing maternal mortality necessitates systemic changes beyond individual interventions, requiring robust health systems capable of consistently delivering quality care.

**Ending Preventable Deaths of Newborns and Children Under 5 (Target 3.2):**

A core objective of SDG 3 is to end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age by 2030, with all countries aiming to reduce neonatal mortality to at least as low as 12 per 1,000 live births and under-5 mortality to at least as low as 25 per 1,000 live births 2. A significant number of the estimated 5.9 million deaths in children under age 5 in 2015 were preventable 4. The leading causes of death in this age group include preterm birth complications, birth asphyxia/trauma, pneumonia, diarrhoea, and malaria, all of which can be prevented or treated with access to affordable interventions in health and sanitation 12. Access to basic life-saving interventions such as skilled delivery at birth, postnatal care, breastfeeding and adequate nutrition, vaccinations, and treatment for common childhood diseases can save many young lives 12. Malnourished children, particularly those with severe acute malnutrition, face a higher risk of death from common childhood illnesses 12. Immunization programs and oral rehydration therapy (ORT) ORS have played a crucial role in reducing child mortality 13. Achieving this target requires targeted investments in available, accessible, quality healthcare, including skilled health personnel at birth, antenatal and postnatal care, care for small and sick newborns, preventive services such as vaccination, and diagnostic, preventive, and curative medicines 14. Addressing underlying social and environmental determinants of child health, such as nutrition and sanitation, is also paramount 12. The consistent emphasis on key interventions like vaccination, skilled birth attendance, and breastfeeding underscores their proven effectiveness. Furthermore, addressing nutrition and sanitation highlights the importance of broader social and environmental factors. Achieving this target necessitates not only the availability of basic interventions but also ensuring they are of high quality and reach all children, especially in underserved communities.

**Combating Communicable Diseases (Target 3.3):**

SDG 3 sets an ambitious goal to end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, and neglected tropical diseases by 2030, and to combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases, and other communicable diseases 2.

**HIV/AIDS:** While progress has been made in reducing HIV incidence, with a decline observed between 2000 and 2015 4, the epidemic is far from over. UNAIDS has set ambitious 90-90-90 targets: by 2020, 90% of people living with HIV should know their status, 90% of those diagnosed should be on antiretroviral treatment, and 90% of those on treatment should have viral suppression 15. Achieving these targets requires scaling up HIV testing services, reducing the cost of antiretroviral therapy, and ensuring access to viral load testing 15. Efforts also focus on eliminating childhood AIDS through initiatives like Start Free, Stay Free, AIDS Free, aiming to provide treatment to 1.6 million children by 2018 and eliminate new infections among children by 2020 15. Ensuring access to a range of prevention options, including pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), voluntary medical male circumcision, harm reduction, and condoms, is also crucial 15. Addressing the intersection of gender-based violence and HIV risk is vital, as violence against women and girls increases their risk of HIV infection 16. Prioritizing the rights, health, and agency of women and girls, and ensuring their access to affordable and controllable HIV prevention methods, alongside accessible care and psychosocial support, is essential 16. Despite progress, a significant number of people living with HIV still lack access to life-saving treatment, and new infections remain alarmingly high, highlighting the need to address gender inequalities and funding shortfalls 17. The 90-90-90 targets provide a clear framework for treatment efforts, but persistent gaps indicate the need for continued action. The link between gender inequality and HIV risk underscores the importance of addressing social determinants. The ongoing challenges in treatment access and new infections highlight the need to overcome barriers like stigma, discrimination, and inadequate funding.

**Tuberculosis:** Similar to HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis incidence declined between 2000 and 2015, but ending the epidemic by 2030 requires intensified efforts 4. The 2023 UN High-Level Meeting on TB set new targets for 2023-2027, aiming to reach 90% of people with TB treatment and preventive treatment, ensure 100% of diagnosed individuals receive WHO-recommended rapid diagnostic tests, provide social benefit packages to all eligible people with TB, license at least one new TB vaccine, and reach US$22 billion annually for TB services and US$5 billion for research by 2027 18. Establishing high-level multisectoral mechanisms that report directly to heads of state is crucial for coordinating efforts across various sectors 18. The WHO's End TB Strategy also aims for a 95% reduction in TB deaths and a 90% reduction in TB incidence rate by 2035, along with ensuring no families face catastrophic costs due to TB 19. A multisectoral response at global, regional, and country levels is needed, with increased political attention and effective tools for prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and care 19. Progress towards previous targets set in 2018 has been hampered by the COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing conflicts, resulting in shortfalls in treatment and preventive therapy coverage, as well as funding gaps for services and research 20. The launch of the TB Vaccine Accelerator Council aims to facilitate the development, licensing, and use of new TB vaccines 20. The repeated emphasis on multisectoral approaches highlights the need to address social determinants like poverty and malnutrition. The focus on developing a new TB vaccine acknowledges the limitations of current tools. The reported funding gaps and the impact of the pandemic underscore the need for sustained investment and resilient health systems.

**Malaria:** Nearly half of the world's population remains at risk of malaria 4. Prevention strategies include avoiding mosquito bites through the use of insecticide-treated nets (ITNs), mosquito repellents, coils, vaporizers, and protective clothing 21. Vector control through ITNs and indoor residual spraying (IRS) is a vital component of malaria control and elimination strategies 21. Preventive chemotherapy, using antimalarial medicines for vulnerable populations, is also effective 21. Early diagnosis and treatment of malaria are crucial for reducing disease, preventing deaths, and limiting transmission 21. The Global Fund plays a significant role in financing malaria programs, supporting the distribution of millions of mosquito nets and indoor residual spraying 22. Innovations in malaria prevention and treatment include rapid diagnostic tests (RDTs) and artemisinin-based combination therapies (ACT) 23. Intermittent preventive treatment for pregnant women (IPTp) and seasonal malaria chemoprevention (SMC) for children in high-risk areas are also key interventions 23. The WHO recommends the broad use of the RTS,S/AS01 and R21/Matrix-M malaria vaccines among children in regions with moderate to high transmission 21. Addressing antimalarial drug resistance through regular monitoring and the development of new drugs is essential 21. A comprehensive strategy involving vector control, preventive measures, early diagnosis and treatment, and vaccines is crucial. Sustained investment and equitable access to these interventions are paramount. The development and availability of malaria vaccines represent a significant advancement. The ongoing challenge of antimalarial drug resistance necessitates continuous research and monitoring.

**Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs):** Ending the epidemics of neglected tropical diseases requires a multifaceted approach. The WHO recommends five core strategic interventions: innovative and intensified disease management, preventive chemotherapy (large-scale delivery of medicines), vector control, veterinary public health, and the provision of safe water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) 24. Combining these interventions often yields a more effective impact on both morbidity and transmission 24. Many NTDs are preventable through clean water, sanitary food handling, and good hygiene 25. Vector control measures, such as mass spraying of insecticides, can also be effective 25. Strengthening national capabilities to implement effective preventive, therapeutic, and control programs is crucial, including developing infrastructure for clinical and laboratory field operations, epidemiological analysis, surveillance systems, vector biology, and operational research 26. Integrated approaches that address multiple NTDs simultaneously can increase cost-effectiveness and expand coverage 24. The emphasis on preventive chemotherapy highlights the feasibility of reaching large populations. The strong link between NTDs and WASH underscores the importance of environmental health. Sustainable progress requires building local capacity and coordinating efforts across different programs and sectors.

**Hepatitis and Water-borne Diseases:** Combating hepatitis and water-borne diseases necessitates a focus on prevention and treatment. For water-borne diseases, drinking clean and purified water, maintaining personal hygiene (especially handwashing), environmental management (proper sanitation), vaccination (for typhoid and hepatitis A), and ensuring food safety are key preventive measures 27. Treatment typically involves hydration therapy, antibiotics for bacterial infections, and antiparasitic medications for parasitic infections 27. For viral hepatitis, prevention strategies vary by type. Hepatitis B can be prevented through vaccination, including a birth dose within the first 24 hours 28. There is currently no vaccine for hepatitis C, so prevention focuses on avoiding behaviors that can spread the virus, such as sharing needles or practicing poor sanitation in healthcare settings 29. Safe practices for tattoos, piercings, and medical procedures are also important 29. Effective treatments, involving 8-12 weeks of oral therapy, are available for hepatitis C and can cure most people 29. Combating these diseases requires prioritizing vaccination, ensuring access to safe water and sanitation, promoting hygiene, and providing access to testing and treatment. While vaccines exist for hepatitis A and B, the lack of a vaccine for hepatitis C necessitates a focus on preventing transmission. Solutions for water-borne diseases are closely linked to improving water and sanitation infrastructure.

**Reducing Premature Mortality from Non-Communicable Diseases (Target 3.4):**

Reducing premature mortality from non-communicable diseases (NCDs) by one-third by 2030 through prevention and treatment, and promoting mental health and well-being, is a significant challenge 2. NCDs, including cardiovascular diseases, cancer, diabetes, and chronic respiratory diseases, were responsible for a large proportion of global deaths 4. Many NCDs share five major risk factors: tobacco use, physical inactivity, the harmful use of alcohol, unhealthy diets, and air pollution 30. Prevention efforts should focus on controlling these risk factors through public health interventions and policies 30. Actions include reducing tobacco use, promoting physical activity, reducing harmful alcohol consumption, encouraging healthy diets, and improving air quality 30. Universal health coverage plays a critical role in the management of NCDs by ensuring access to detection, screening, treatment, and palliative care 30. Addressing modifiable risk factors through integrated prevention strategies is key. Universal health coverage is crucial for ensuring equitable access to care. Promoting mental health and well-being alongside addressing physical NCDs is essential for overall health.

**Strengthening Prevention and Treatment of Substance Abuse (Target 3.5):**

Strengthening the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol, is crucial for public health 2. Evidence-based drug prevention programs can safeguard individuals and communities and weaken illicit economies 32. Drug use disorders are complex health conditions with psychosocial, environmental, and biological determinants, requiring multidisciplinary, comprehensive, and public health-oriented responses 33. Managing these disorders within the public health system, similar to other chronic medical conditions, is considered best practice 33. Prevention efforts should be evidence-based and aim to reduce the demand for illicit substances 33. Treatment services should be accessible, integrated, and well-coordinated 33. SAMHSA's initiatives in the US, such as the "Talk. They Hear You." campaign and the provision of funding through block grants, illustrate efforts to prevent underage drinking and substance misuse and support treatment and recovery 34. Evidence-based prevention programs are essential for preventing substance use. Multidisciplinary and comprehensive treatment services are needed for effective management. A public health approach that emphasizes treatment and harm reduction is crucial.

**Reducing Road Injuries and Deaths (Target 3.6):**

The target of halving the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents by 2020, while the timeline has passed, remains a critical objective for improving global health 2. Road traffic accidents result in a significant number of fatalities and injuries each year, with vulnerable road users like children, pedestrians, cyclists, and older people being disproportionately affected 4. The UN Road Safety Strategy, built on five pillars – road safety management, safer vehicles, safer road users, post-crash response, and safer driving environments – provides a comprehensive framework for action 35. The Second Decade of Action for Road Safety (2021-2030) reiterates the goal of a 50% reduction in road deaths and serious injuries 35. Accelerating safety measures, particularly in low- and middle-income countries where vulnerable road users are at higher risk, is essential 36. Strengthening trauma and emergency care systems is also crucial for improving outcomes after accidents 36. A holistic approach requires collaboration with local governments, urban planners, traffic police, and law enforcement 36. The five pillars of the UN Road Safety Strategy offer a comprehensive framework. Tailored interventions are needed to protect vulnerable road users in LMICs. Strengthening trauma and emergency care systems is crucial for improving outcomes.

**Ensuring Universal Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health-Care Services (Target 3.7):**

Ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services by 2030, including for family planning, information, and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programs, is a fundamental aspect of SDG 3 2. Women's rights to reproductive and sexual health are recognized as key to their overall health and are supported by international human rights documents 37. These rights encompass the right to life, liberty, security, health care, information, non-discrimination, autonomy, privacy, informed consent, and confidentiality 37. WHO's reproductive health strategy covers improving antenatal, perinatal, postpartum, and newborn care; providing family planning services; eliminating unsafe abortion; combating sexually transmitted infections (STIs); and promoting sexual health 38. While progress has been made in areas like HPV vaccination and contraceptive use, geopolitical tensions and global crises have caused setbacks 38. Addressing gender discrimination and violence, which undermine women's access to healthcare, is crucial 39. A rights-based approach is fundamental to ensuring universal access. A comprehensive range of services is needed, including family planning and maternal health. Addressing gender discrimination and violence is crucial for equitable access.

**Achieving Universal Health Coverage (Target 3.8):**

Achieving universal health coverage (UHC) by 2030, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services, and access to safe, effective, quality, and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all, is a core aim of SDG 3 2. 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 40. WHO recommends reorienting health systems using a primary health care (PHC) approach as the foundation for UHC 40. Achieving UHC requires strengthening health systems, ensuring financial risk protection, addressing health inequities, and fostering collaboration between governments, communities, and the private sector 40. Community-based organizations and civil society play a vital role in reaching local communities, particularly in low-income countries 42. A primary health care approach is a cornerstone for achieving UHC. Financial risk protection is a key element, ensuring affordability. The involvement of community organizations is crucial for effective implementation.

**Reducing Deaths and Illnesses from Hazardous Chemicals and Pollution (Target 3.9):**

Substantially reducing the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water, and soil pollution and contamination by 2030 is a critical environmental health target within SDG 3 2. Air and water pollution, along with poor management of hazardous chemicals, undermine health 43. Clean air, stable climate, adequate WASH, safe use of chemicals, and healthy workplaces are prerequisites for good health 44. Addressing this requires a stronger link between science and policy, international collaboration, and robust legislation 45. Policies and investments supporting cleaner transport, energy-efficient housing, and better waste management are essential 46. Individuals can also contribute by adopting sustainable practices in their daily lives 46. Addressing pollution requires strong regulations and enforcement. Investments in cleaner technologies and infrastructure are essential. A multi-sectoral approach, including the One Health framework, is necessary.

**Detailed Solutions for Indirect Health Problems Impacting SDG 3:**

**Addressing the Impact of Poverty on Health:**

Poverty has a profound and multifaceted negative impact on health 6. It exacerbates health risks, leads to higher mortality rates and undernourishment, and severely limits access to essential healthcare services 7. This creates a vicious cycle where poor health further entrenches poverty by limiting economic opportunities and increasing healthcare costs 6. Regions with the highest rates of extreme poverty, such as South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, often experience the most significant health challenges, including high rates of hunger and malnutrition, which act as major barriers to overall development 48. SDG 1, which aims to end poverty in all its forms, is therefore intrinsically linked to achieving SDG 3 1. Solutions to mitigate the impact of poverty on health require a multipronged approach. Implementing nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, can provide a safety net for the most vulnerable, ensuring access to basic services and reducing their exposure to economic shocks that can worsen health outcomes 48. Ensuring that all individuals, particularly the poor and vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services like healthcare, education, and clean water and sanitation, is crucial 48. Building the resilience of the poor to climate-related extreme events and other economic and social shocks can also prevent further deterioration of their health status 48. Furthermore, addressing hunger and malnutrition through sustainable agricultural practices, supporting small-scale farmers, and ensuring equitable access to land, technology, and markets are essential for improving the nutritional status of impoverished populations and bolstering their overall health 48. Comprehensive social protection programs are needed to provide a safety net. Economic empowerment initiatives can enable individuals to escape poverty. Addressing hunger and malnutrition is essential for improving nutritional status and overall health.

**Addressing the Impact of Inequality on Health:**

Inequalities in income, social status, gender, and access to resources are significant drivers of health inequities 2. Countries with higher levels of income inequality often exhibit higher infant mortality rates, lower life expectancy, and a greater prevalence of non-communicable diseases, including mental illness and obesity 49. Health outcomes and access to health-promoting life conditions often follow a social gradient, with poorer health rates corresponding to lower socioeconomic positions 49. Gender discrimination systematically undermines women's access to healthcare due to factors such as fewer financial resources and constraints on mobility, further exacerbating health disparities 39. Progress towards achieving health-related SDGs has been uneven, both between and within countries, with significant gaps in life expectancy observed globally 48. Addressing these health inequalities requires policies that promote health equity across all segments of society. This includes reducing inequalities in access to healthcare services, ensuring that quality care is available to all regardless of their socioeconomic status or geographic location 48. Multisectoral, rights-based, and gender-sensitive approaches are essential for tackling the underlying social and economic conditions that drive health inequities 48. Strengthening health systems to be more inclusive and equitable, and working with governments to improve health services for women and girls, including survivors of violence, are crucial steps 39. Policies promoting health equity need to address social determinants of health. Ensuring universal access to quality healthcare is essential for mitigating the impact of inequality. Adopting rights-based and gender-sensitive approaches is crucial for addressing the specific needs of marginalized populations.

**Improving Access to Clean Water and Sanitation (Linked to SDG 6):**

Access to clean water and sanitation is fundamental for preventing a wide range of diseases and promoting overall health and well-being 6. Lack of access to safe water sources is a leading cause of infectious diseases like diarrhoea, cholera, dysentery, hepatitis A, typhoid, and polio, and is a primary cause of illness and death among children under 5 in low- and middle-income countries 53. Waterborne diseases also place a heavy burden on healthcare systems 52. SDG 6 focuses specifically on ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all, and its achievement is critical for realizing the health targets of SDG 3 55. Improving access requires substantial investments in water and sanitation infrastructure, including the construction and maintenance of wells, pipelines, and sewage treatment plants 56. Promoting hygiene education, such as handwashing, is also crucial for reducing the spread of waterborne diseases 55. Community-led development approaches can ensure that solutions are tailored to local contexts and are sustainable in the long term 57. Integrated water resource management is also essential for ensuring the sustainable and equitable use of water resources 55. Significant investment in infrastructure is crucial for expanding access. Promoting hygiene education is essential for maximizing health benefits. Integrated water resource management is necessary for sustainability.

**Mitigating the Negative Impact of Environmental Factors on Health (Linked to SDGs 13, 14, 15):**

Environmental factors, including air and water pollution, poor management of hazardous chemicals, and the impacts of climate change, have significant direct and indirect effects on human health 6. Pollution and environmental factors are responsible for a substantial proportion of global deaths 59. Air pollution, in particular, is a major risk factor for non-communicable diseases, ranking just below high blood pressure and tobacco use 58. Climate change contributes to health problems through extreme weather events, food and water insecurity, and changes in the distribution of vector-borne diseases 58. Addressing these environmental threats requires a multifaceted approach. Implementing policies and making investments that support cleaner transport, energy-efficient housing, power generation, industry, and better municipal waste management are crucial 46. Strengthening the link between science and policy, fostering international collaboration, and enacting robust legislation are also necessary 45. The health sector, through the One Health approach, plays a vital role in reducing pollution by recognizing the interconnectedness of human, animal, and environmental health 45. Individual actions, such as saving energy, using sustainable transport, reducing waste, and eating more vegetables, can also contribute to a healthier environment 47. Implementing policies to reduce air and water pollution is critical. Taking action to mitigate climate change is essential for preventing adverse health impacts. Strengthening environmental public health programs and promoting intersectoral collaboration are necessary for effective action.

**Conclusion:**

Achieving the ambitious targets of SDG 3 requires a concerted global effort employing integrated and multi-sectoral approaches. The solutions outlined in this report underscore the interconnectedness of health with various other aspects of sustainable development. Reducing poverty (SDG 1) and inequality (SDG 10) are fundamental for improving health outcomes, as are ensuring access to clean water and sanitation (SDG 6) and mitigating the negative impacts of environmental factors (SDGs 13, 14, 15). Furthermore, achieving gender equality (SDG 5) is crucial for ensuring women's access to essential health services. Sustained political will, adequate financial investment, robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, and effective global collaboration are indispensable for realizing the goals of SDG 3 by the 2030 deadline. Success in this endeavor holds the potential to transform global health, enhance well-being, and pave the way for a more sustainable and equitable future for all.

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