Teaching and Learning Beyond Sustainability – Regenerative Praxis

Teaching and learning for a future we can shape

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Regenerative Praxis for a Healing World

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AGENDA - 14:20–15:00

From Reducing Harm to Restoration of Life

1. Global health is not only a scientific challenge — it is a learning challenge.

2. The world is already wounded; education must become a force for healing.

3. **Regenerative pedagogy** is a shift from minimising harm to restoring and enhancing life.

ABSTRACT

When we talk about global health, we often turn first to science, medicine, and policy. But global health is, at its core, a learning challenge. The choices we make in our classrooms today will shape the well-being of generations tomorrow. For decades, sustainability taught us how **to reduce harm, how to slow the damage**. Yet in a world already wounded, minimising harm is no longer enough. We need an educational shift as bold as the challenges before us, a shift toward regenerative practice, where teaching and learning become forces that **restore, renew, and enhance life**. This is what it means to teach and learn for a future we can transform.

WORKSHOP

1. Introduction — 5 minutes

Teaching and learning for a future we do not know

- The future is uncertain, unpredictable, and beyond our control.
- Emphasis is on adaptability, resilience, and openness.
- It’s honest, but it can leave people feeling passive — as if the future is something that **happens *to* us**.

Teaching and learning for a future we can change

- The future is malleable, influenceable, and responsive to human action.
- Emphasis is on agency, creativity, and responsibility.
- Regeneration is fundamentally about **intervention, restoration, and possibility**.

Teaching and learning for a future we can shape

- If you are a teacher, *the future is not something we wait for — it is something we cultivate*.

- “The future already exists as a trajectory, but we can bend it.”
- “From minimising footprints to maximising handprints.”
- “From tenants to gardeners.”

2. Background Input — 10 minutes

“Teaching and Learning for a Future We Can Shape.”

- The choices educators make today will shape the well-being of future generations.
- Sustainability has helped us reduce harm, but in a world already wounded, minimising damage is no longer enough.
- **Regenerative practice invites education to move beyond preserving life toward restoring, renewing, and enhancing it.**

Why Global Health Needs Regenerative Pedagogy / Regenerative Praxis

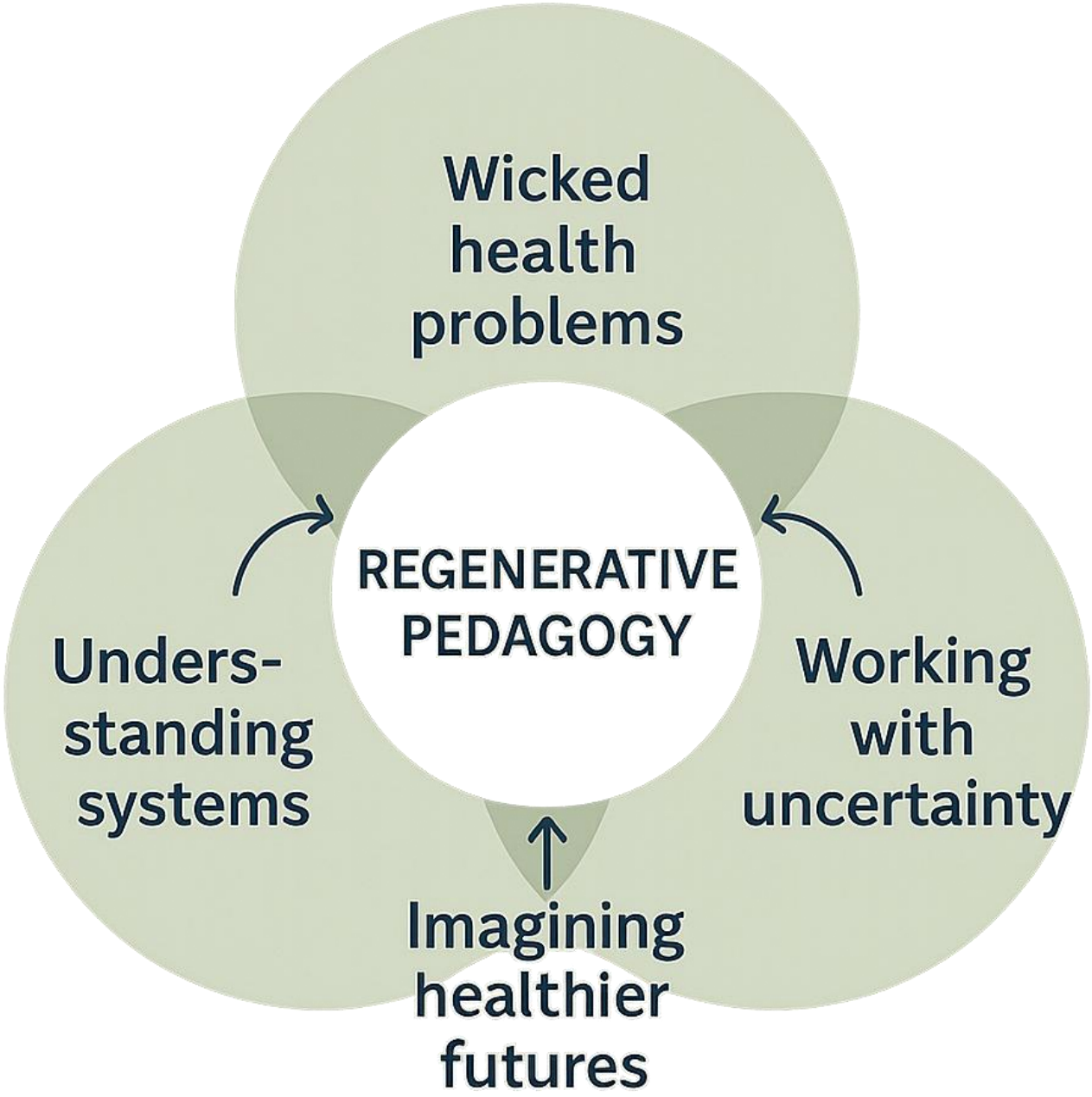
- **Global health challenges are deeply interconnected.** Pandemics, climate-related illness, food insecurity, and mental health crises are not isolated events but expressions of complex, interdependent systems.

- **Regenerative thinking equips learners for complexity.** It helps students see patterns, understand relationships, work with uncertainty, and imagine healthier futures.

- **Teachers become catalysts of transformation.** Through regenerative pedagogy, educators shape the mindsets, values, and capabilities needed for communities to thrive—locally and globally.

The Workshop

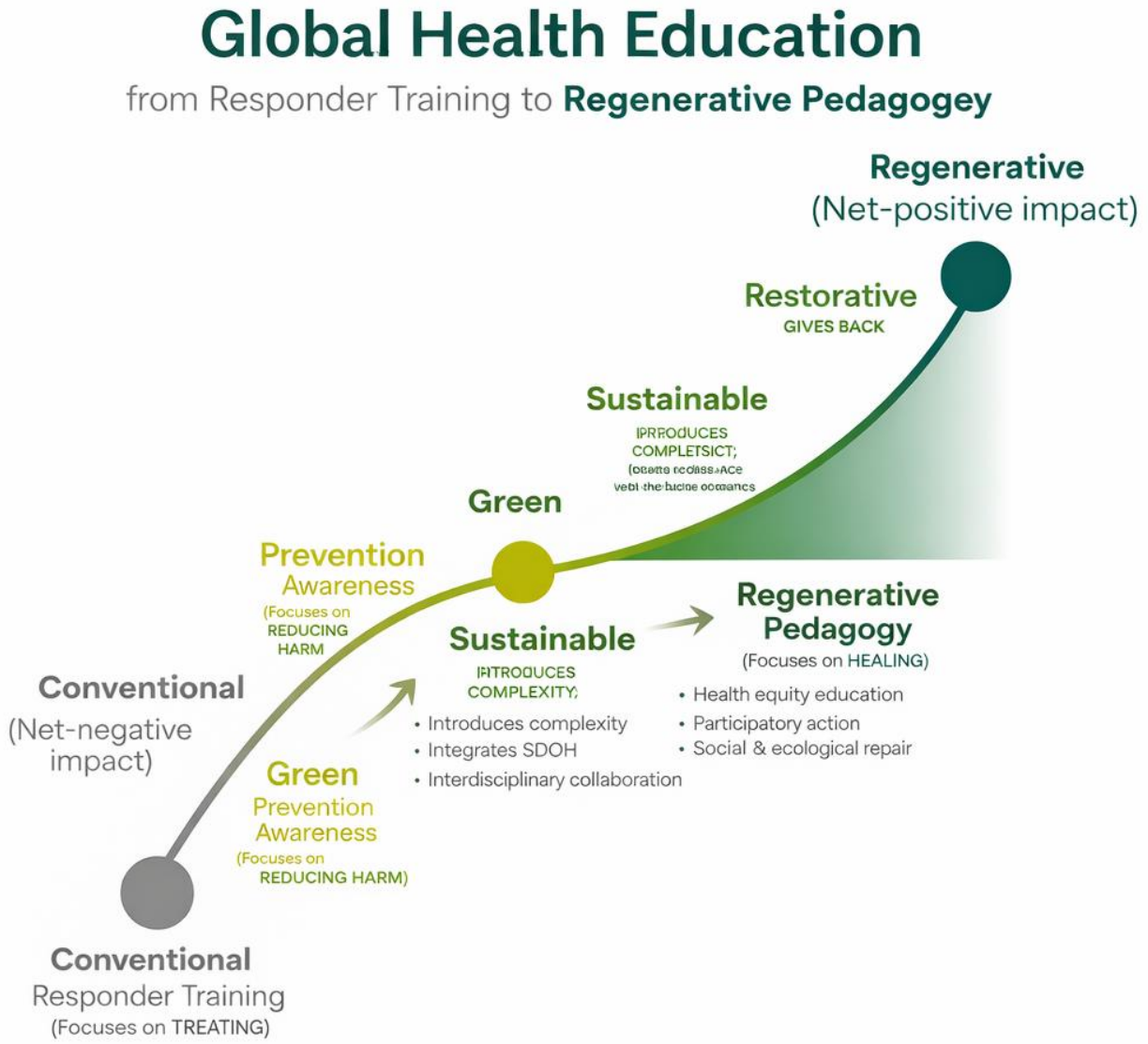
- This workshop will explore how regenerative education empowers teachers and learners to become active participants in shaping a healthier, more resilient future.



This continuum draws on regenerative development thinking from Bill Reed and colleagues, who argue that sustainability is a midpoint, not the endpoint.

And when we redesign education around living systems, the energy required to hold systems together decreases, because resilience increases.

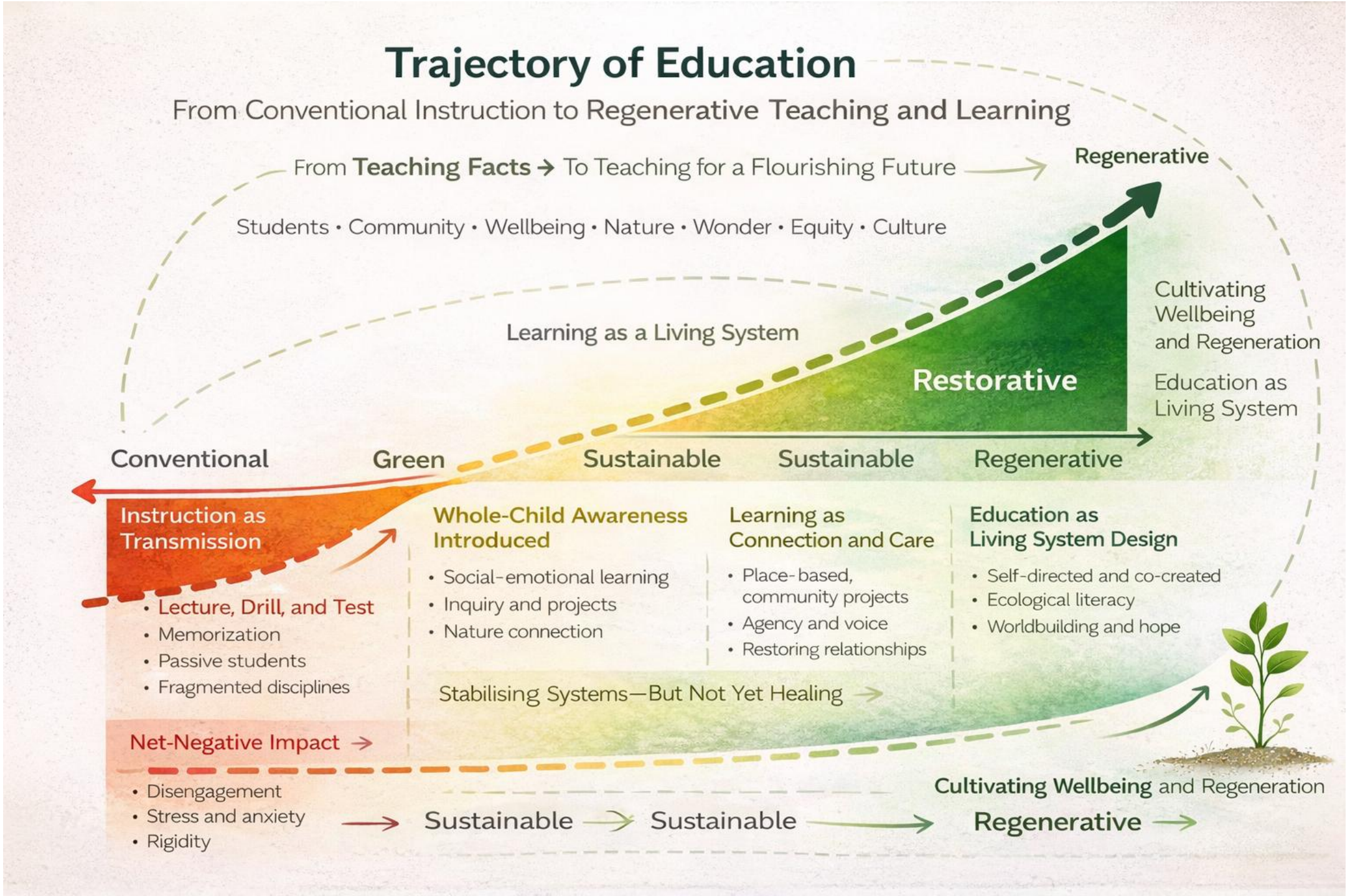
The shift from sustainable to regenerative is the shift from stabilising disease systems to cultivating health ecosystems.



Urenje, 2026; Adapted from regenerative development frameworks (Reed, 2007; Mang & Reed, 2012).

Conventional global health education produces responders.

Regenerative global health education cultivates system healers.



A. Why sustainability is no longer enough

- Sustainability = reducing harm, slowing decline.
- Regeneration = restoring systems, renewing vitality, enabling thriving.

WICKED PROBLEMS (Gibson and Fox, 2013)

Simple

EASY TO SOLVE

Summary

A clear problem with a clear solution

Properties

Predictable
Straightforward
Obvious

Complex

RESISTS SOLVING

Summary

The problem and the solution are not clear but can be understood with time

Properties

Many familiar elements
Hidden root courses
Nonlinear
Interoperating parts affect each other

Wicked

RESISTS DEFINING

Summary

Problem and solution not understood and keep shifting when we try to define them

Properties

Ambiguous, chaotic
Many stakeholders with conflicting perspectives
Many elements are hidden and unknown
No right or wrong solution
Not quantifiable
No precedents

Wicked Problems Have No Final Solutions

- They are not mechanical problems to be fixed
- They are **living systems challenges**
- We can only **“live with”** and **“manage”** rather than “solve” them.

Malaria cases reported in Europe (EU/EEA)

- Scientific surveillance shows that *locally acquired malaria cases* have indeed been detected — people contracted malaria within **EU/EEA without travelling to a malaria-endemic country**.

- 2022 Data (ECDC Annual Report)
  - 13 cases were confirmed as acquired within the EU/EEA:
  - 7 in France
  - 3 in Germany
  - 2 in Spain
  - 1 in Ireland

- These represent rare instances of *locally acquired malaria*.

Malaria Mosquito

ECDC Communicable Disease Threats Report (Week 37, 2025)

Chikungunya *viral infection*

- The “tiger mosquito” has become established in many parts of Europe

- Mosquitoes have caused locally transmitted outbreaks

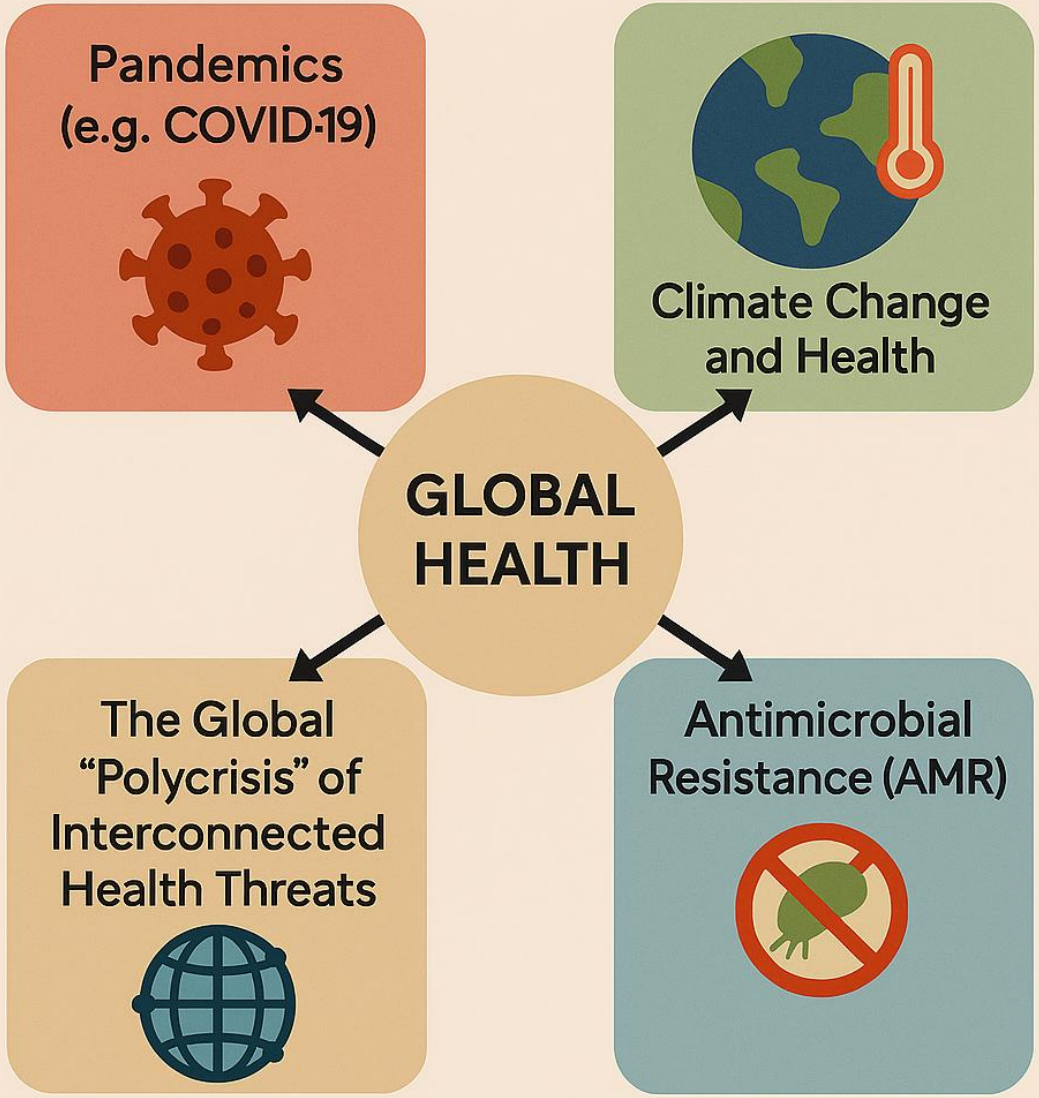
Tiger Mosquito

European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control. (2025)

SUPER WICKED PROBLEMS

Major disruptors influencing Global Health

- **Time is running out**
- **Those trying to solve the problem also cause it**
- **No central authority**
- **Policies irrationally discount the future**



Identified by Levin, Cashore, Bernstein, and Auld:

B. Why global health needs regenerative pedagogy

- Global health issues are **interconnected systems problems**: pandemics, climate-related illness, food insecurity, mental health.

- Regenerative thinking helps learners:
  - see relationships
  - work with uncertainty
  - imagine healthier futures

- Teachers become **catalysts of transformation**, not just transmitters of knowledge.

C. Key metaphors to anchor the shift

- From tenants → gardeners
  - We have spent a generation teaching our students to be better *tenants* on a damaged planet. It is now time to teach them to be skilled *gardeners,* active participants in the planet's healing.

- From Minimising Footprints → maximising handprints
  - We have spent years teaching students to shrink their footprints, to tread lightly on a fragile world. Regenerative practice invites them to maximise their handprints, leaving behind not less damage, but more life.

3. Group Discussion & Activity — 20 minutes

Activity: “See the System → Understand the Patterns → Transform the Future”

Group Discussion & Activity

- **Step 1: Choose a global health issue (2 minutes)**
  - Examples: air quality, nutrition, mental health, infectious disease, water access.

- **Step 2: Map the system (6 minutes)**
  - Groups sketch the ecological, social, economic, and behavioural factors shaping the issue. Prompt: “What is connected to what?”

- **Step 3: Identify patterns (6 minutes)**
  - Where is the system breaking down?
  - Where is life already thriving?
  - Prompt: “What is the system trying to tell us?”

Group Discussion & Activity

- **Step 4: Propose a regenerative intervention (6 minutes)**

- "What could a school or classroom do that would *increase the system's capacity to thrive*?"

- Examples:
  - student-led mental health circles
  - school garden for nutrition and biodiversity
  - air-quality monitoring as a science project
  - intergenerational storytelling for community resilience

4. Plenary — 5 minutes

What did I learn?

Plenary

- Gallery Walk - Group Presentation

- **Closing reflection:** “What is one small regenerative action you can take back to your classroom next week?”

- “Global health becomes everyone’s business when education becomes regenerative — when we teach and learn for a future we can transform.”

THANK YOU