

I do think that AIDS arose from an environmental source, and I hold to the concept that the epidemic started from a breakdown in the environment and public health in these endemic areas. It spread from those areas through people traveling, given the large numbers of people who travel worldwide.

I do not believe that it spread as a primarily sexually transmitted disease. I do strongly believe that these agents can be sexually transmitted, including heterosexually transmitted. I think it is more readily male-female than female-male disease.

I don't think that, however, explains the difference in saturation in endemic areas. They try to explain that with the co-factor of other sexually transmitted diseases, which brings you to the point that all Africans with AIDS are either a) sexually promiscuous or b) have sores on their genitals.

EIR: Since the environmental factor is ignored, measures are not being taken that could control the disease. I recently read a book on AIDS in Africa which went so far as to suggest that it was unsafe for any Ugandan to have any sex at all!

Whiteside: My view is that there is only so much you can do about people having sex with each other. Since condoms are not 100% protection, if you have sex with an infected person, you could still have potential disease transmission. Most African men don't use condoms anyway. To think you can control an epidemic by putting up some posters and handing out condoms is, I think, the height of absurdity. This is the "blame the victim" concept, and you can then ignore the breakdown of public health.

We have been accused of trying to draw attention away from safe sexual practice and those issues, and that is just a total fallacy. I have always accepted potential sexual transmission and we had one of the first AIDS screening clinics in the United States, long before there was a test for HIV, in 1982, and we always counseled on sexual practices—avoid anal intercourse and all the rest. This was long before it was fashionable. To this day, there's not a day that goes by, that I don't counsel about so-called safe sexual practice.

If the environmental factor were recognized, there would be a lot more you could do about AIDS. It would be everyone's concern. But it would mean more money, and I think that's the so-called hidden agenda.

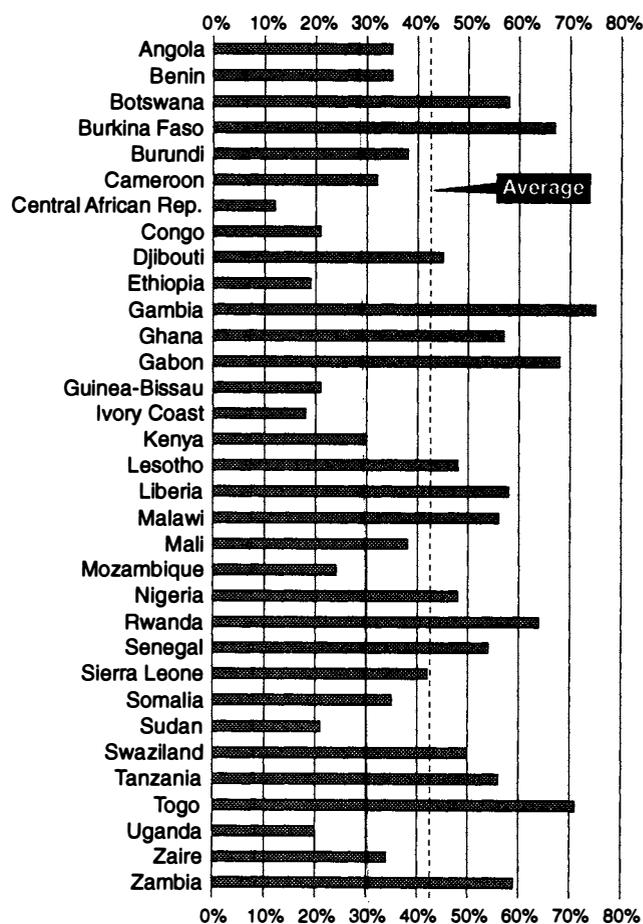
EIR: But public health is cheaper in the long run.

Whiteside: There has to be a decision to make public health a first priority again. I don't know what it would take to make people wake up to the fact that we have to protect our public health. You know the old saying, "You need a good, old-fashioned epidemic to make people wake up to maintain public health." In my view, we have that good old-fashioned epidemic now. Tuberculosis would be a good example, and people are still not fundamentally changing the model.

Deadly diseases of African countries

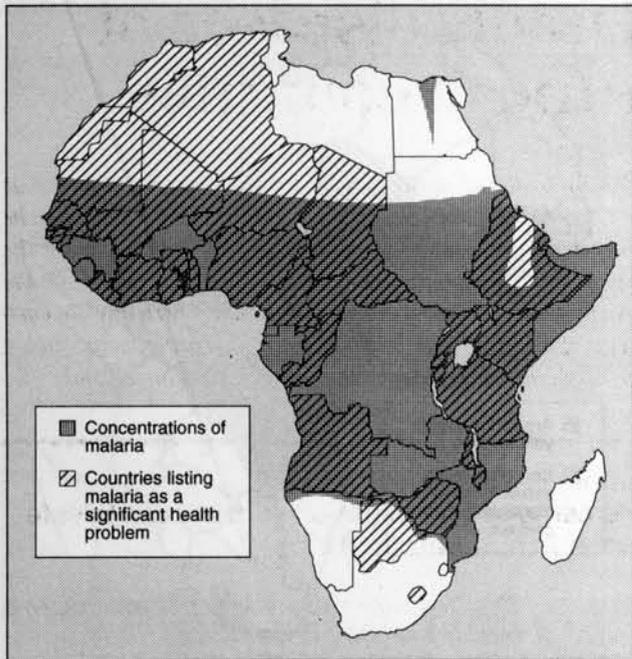
The following diseases are listed by African countries as major health problems. As can be seen, most of them can be prevented by the presence of clean water and sanitation, the usage of DDT and other methods of vector control, or the use of vaccines. Nevertheless, millions of Africans die each year of these diseases. Source for disease specifications: Hunter's Tropical Medicine, by G. Thomas Strickland.

FIGURE 1
Percentage of population with access to safe water in sub-Saharan Africa



Source: UNDP, 1992.

FIGURE 2
Malaria



Source: *Hunter's Tropical Medicine and Encyclopedia of the Third World*

Malaria

type: protozoa

method of transmission: anopheles mosquito

RX cure, although drug-resistance is emerging for *P. falciparum* malaria

remarks: Over 200 million people have malaria worldwide, with 100 million of those in sub-Saharan Africa. One million Africans die each year of malaria. Morbidity is mostly among children under five years, and pregnant women. Chronic malaria is associated with Tropical Splenomegaly Syndrome, which is an immunological disorder rendering the victim more susceptible to infection, including infection of malaria itself. This disorder is found mostly in Uganda, Nigeria, Zambia, and New Guinea.

Tuberculosis

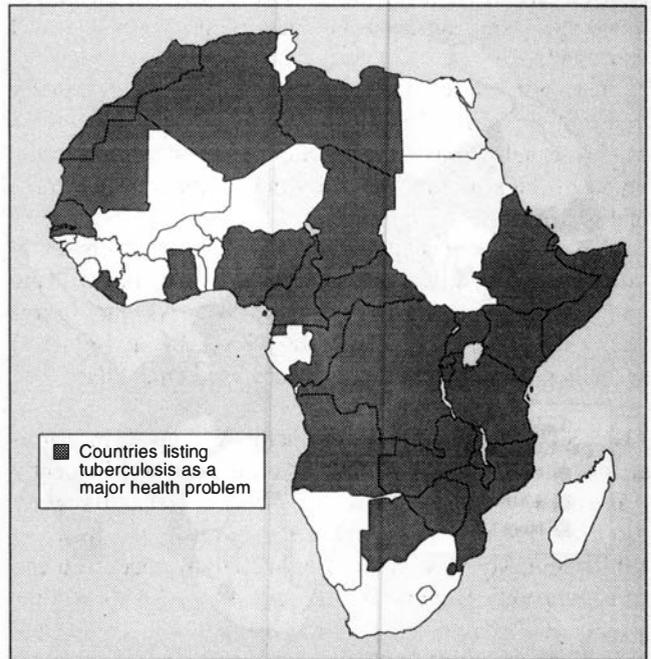
type: bacteria

method of transmission: contaminated milk and droplets from infected persons

RX cure, but drug-resistant strain now exists

remarks: "TB is one of the greatest single causes of

FIGURE 3
Tuberculosis



Source: *Encyclopedia of the Third World*

morbidity and mortality in developing countries, owing to crowding, poor nutrition, and shortage of treatment."

Leprosy

type: bacteria

method of transmission: upper respiratory tract passages likely source of contagion

RX cure available, if diagnosed at early stages

remarks: Half of the world's leprosy cases are in Africa. "Improved living conditions have probably played an important role in diminishing the prevalence of leprosy. There is, for instance, no satisfactory explanation for the virtual disappearance of leprosy from northern Europe after the Middle Ages well before the advent of effective chemotherapeutic agents."

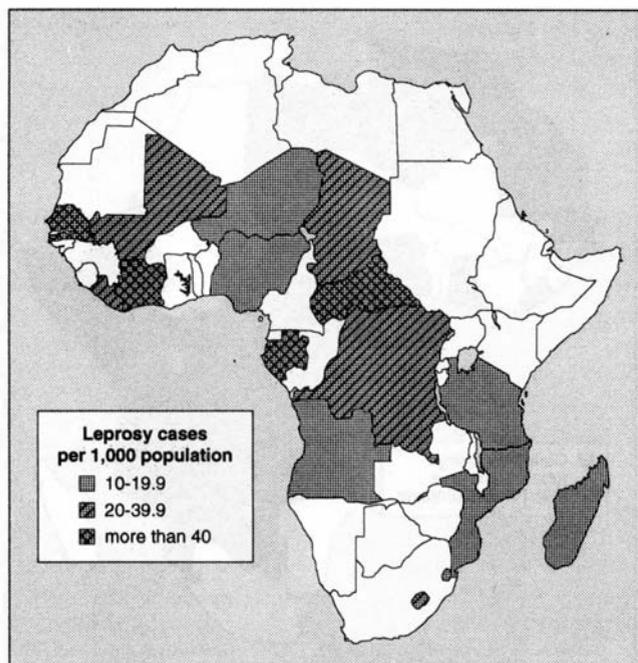
Yellow fever

type: virus

method of transmission: mosquito from monkey host vaccination available

remarks: Large epidemics occur in dry season, which have

FIGURE 4
Leprosy



Source: *Hunter's Tropical Medicine*

been known to afflict up to 100,000 people at a time. A major epidemic occurred in The Gambia in 1979.

Yaws

type: bacteria

method of transmission: direct contact

penicillin cure

remarks: Yaws has been on the increase in Africa since the 1970s. It is most common "in tropical regions where there is little clothing and poor hygiene."

high incidence: Togo, Uganda, Nigeria, Benin, Central African Republic, Djibouti, Ghana

African trypanosomiasis (Sleeping sickness)

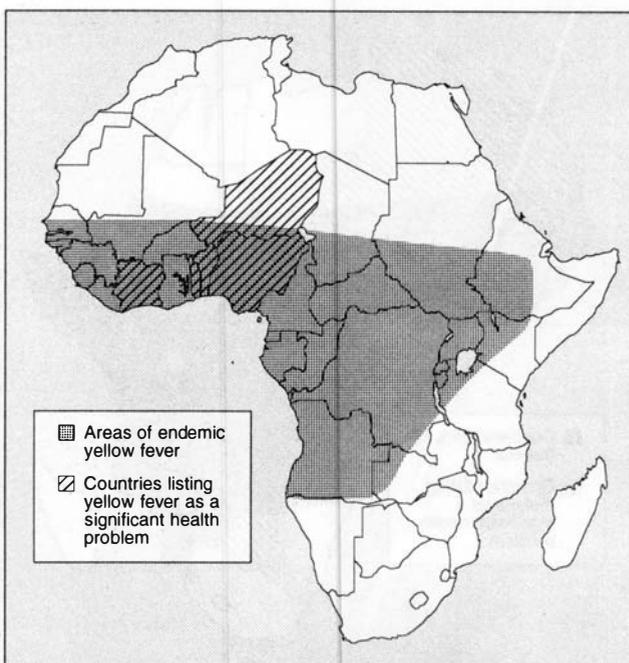
type: protozoa

method of transmission: tsetse fly

RX cure is possible in early stages, but a drug-resistance is developing

remarks: In an epidemic in Zaire 1896-1906, trypanosomiasis killed 500,000 people. During the same

FIGURE 5
Yellow fever



Source: *Hunter's Tropical Medicine* and *Encyclopedia of the Third World*

period, it killed another 250,000 in the Lake Victoria region of Uganda. It is endemic in cattle, where it "has been a major obstacle to livestock development."

Trypanosomo gambiense, which is more prevalent in west Africa, is dormant, and may take four years to enter the central nervous system. During this dormancy, it suppresses the immune system.

Schistosomiasis

type: parasite

method of transmission: contaminated water

RX cure available

remarks: afflicts 200 million people worldwide

Cholera

type: bacteria

method of transmission: contaminated water

RX treatment and rehydration

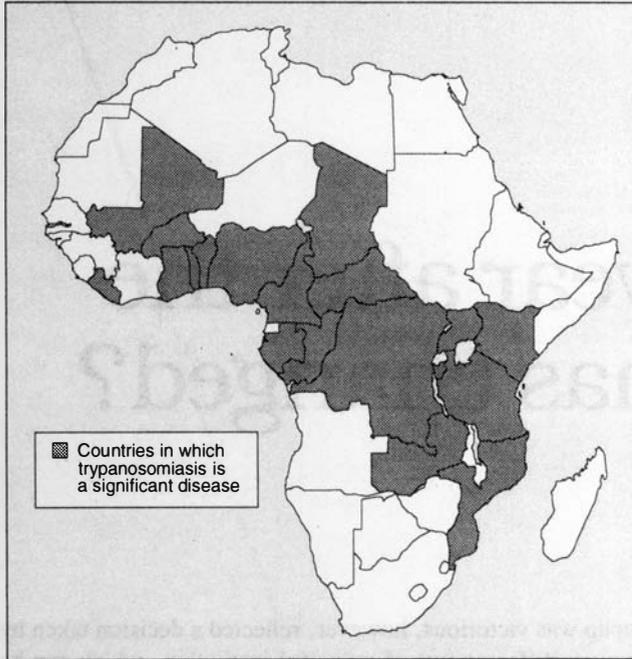
remarks: Rehydration and tetracyclin can reduce fatality rate to 1%. However, this treatment is often unavailable.

Epidemics occur during dry season.

high incidence: Mali, Nigeria

FIGURE 6

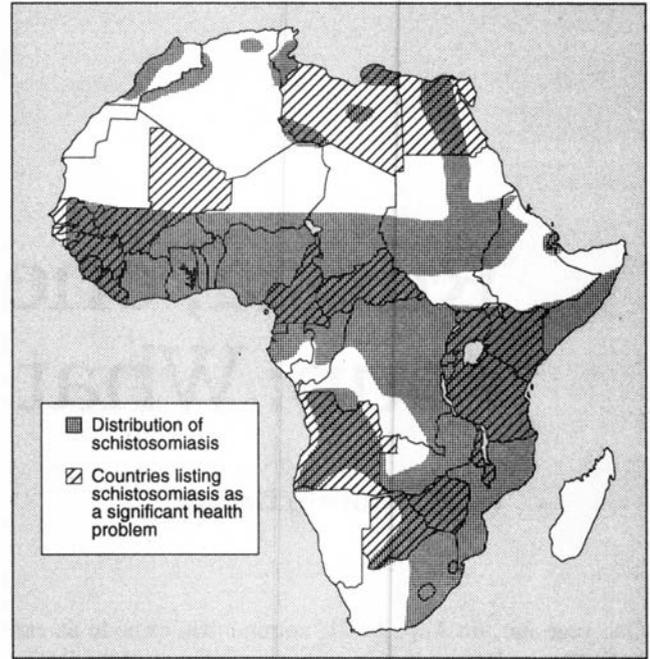
Trypanosomiasis



Source: *Encyclopedia of the Third World*

FIGURE 7

Schistosomiasis



Source: *Hunter's Tropical Medicine and Encyclopedia of the Third World*

Typhoid

type: bacteria

method of transmission: contaminated water or food

RX treatment: vaccine available

high incidence: Uganda, Libya, Morocco, Ethiopia

Onchocerciasis (river blindness)

type: parasite

method of transmission: blackflies

remarks: major cause of blindness due to continual reinfection

Gastroenteritis

type: bacteria, protozoa

method of transmission: contaminated water
rehydration cure

remarks: A major cause of death among children in developing countries. "Children are most often and most seriously affected. Dehydration is the main cause of death, whereas deterioration of the nutritional state is the main cause of morbidity. Providing clean drinking water

and proper sewage disposal reduces incidence of gut infections."

high incidence: Senegal, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Mali, Morocco, Mozambique, Botswana, Chad, Ghana

Visceral leishmaniasis

type: protozoa

method of transmission: sandfly, blood transfusions, sexual transmission

RX treatment

remarks: Pulmonary tuberculosis is common complication of leishmaniasis. "End of DDT spraying caused an increase in India, and an epidemic in Kenya in the 1970s."

high incidence: Libya

Plague

type: bacteria

method of transmission: flea

RX treatment: if diagnosed at early stage; vaccine available

high incidence: Niger