

Fortnightly links: voluntourism, WHO and WB, cash transfers, UK aid, and more

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In *Scientific American*, Noelle Sullivan [writes](#) that while students and volunteers volunteering in health and medical roles overseas are usually well-intentioned, they can cause serious harm.

The EconTalk podcast has a [great episode](#) featuring Harvard University's Lant Pritchett on poverty, growth and experiments.

At the World Health Assembly, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus was [selected](#) as the next director-general of the World Health Organization (WHO) -- the first African to occupy the role. He takes over on 1 July. In related news, the WHO came under criticism after financial data [revealed](#) that the agency spent about \$200m of its \$2bn budget on travel in 2015 and 2016.

The news that World Bank chief economist Paul Romer had been relieved of oversight over the Bank's Development Economics Group, [apparently](#) because he sought to make researchers in the group communicate more clearly, made waves this fortnight. You can read different takes on the matter from the [Sydney Morning Herald](#), the [Guardian](#), the [Economist](#), and Bloomberg blogger [Noah Smith](#). In [related news](#), Bank of England staff have apparently been told to study Dr Seuss in efforts to improve the intelligibility of their reports.

Phil Baty [plots the relationship](#) between wealth and world-class universities, showing a clear relationship between GDP per capita and the availability of quality higher education.

Chris Blattman, Michael Faye, Dean Karlan, Paul Niehaus & Chris Udry have a [great, non-technical article](#) on what we do and don't know on unconditional cash transfers.

Next week, Britain goes to the polls -- *The Guardian* has a [breakdown](#) of the major parties' key commitments on aid and development issues.