

**The Assistant Director-General
for Priority Africa and External Relations**

Dr Rita Luthra
President & Editor-in-Chief
Women's Health and Education Center
(WHEC)

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18 September 2026

Dear Dr Luthra,

On behalf of the Director-General, I would like to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 1 September 2026 inviting UNESCO to the side event entitled "Open Science: As Open As Possible for Health Development", to be held on 23 September 2026 during the 81st Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

The Director-General has asked me to thank you for your message and for sharing information about the valuable work undertaken by the Women's Health and Education Center (WHEC) in advancing health and education initiatives worldwide.

While UNESCO appreciates the importance of the issues to be discussed and wishes your event every success, I regret to inform you that, owing to prior commitments and a particularly demanding schedule during the General Assembly, the Director-General will not be in a position to participate in, or be represented at, the event.

The Director-General conveys his best wishes for productive discussions and every success in your continued efforts to promote open science, health, and education for sustainable development.

Yours sincerely,



Lidia Arthur Brito