



## WHEC UPDATE

**Briefings of worldwide activity of Women's Health and Education Center (WHEC)**

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### *Anniversary Edition*

Global economic, political, cultural, and environmental interconnections – many of which are made through advanced technologies such as this telecommunications satellite – make many of the world's current borders irrelevant and contribute to the social processes that lead to the phenomenon we know as globalization. While helpful in explaining the intricacies of international trade policy, global financial markets, worldwide flows of goods, services, and labor, transnational corporations, off-shore financial centers, foreign direct investment, and the new international economic institutions, such narrow accounts often leave the general reader with a shallow understanding of globalization as primarily an economic phenomenon mediated by new technologies. We hope our efforts in international arena and our initiative –

***WomensHealthSection.com*** – makes the case that globalization is best thought of as a multidimensional set of social processes that resists being confined to any single thematic framework. Indeed, the transformative powers of globalization reach deeply into the economic, political, cultural, technological, and ecological dimensions of contemporary social life. In addition, globalization contains important *ideological* aspects in the form of politically charged narratives that put before the public a particular agenda of topics for discussion, questions to ask, and claims to make. The social forces behind these competing accounts of globalization seek to endow this concept with norms, values, and meanings that not only legitimate and advance specific power interests, but also shape the personal and collective identities of billions of people. After all, it is mostly the question of whether globalization ought to be considered a “good” or a “bad” thing that has spawned heated debates in classrooms, in boardrooms, and on the streets. The old geographical scales that distinguish sharply between *local*, *national*, *regional*, and *global* no longer work in a complex, networked world where these scales overlap and interpenetrate each other. Indeed, the best place to study the “global” is often the “local” – reflected, for example, in “global cities” like New York, London, Tokyo, New Delhi and Shanghai. Finally, let us adopt *global imaginaries* as a concept referring to people's growing consciousness of belonging to a global community.

The term *globalization* applies to a *set of social processes* that appear to transform our present social condition of weakening nationality into one of global citizenship. The concept of globalization reflects the sense of an immense enlargement of world communication, as well as the horizon of a world market, both of which seem far more tangible and immediate than in earlier stages of modernity. As a concept it refers both to the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole. In the nutshell, globalization compresses the time and space aspects of social relations. It refers to the expansion and intensification of social relations and consciousness across world-time and world-space. Globalization is a long-term process that, over many centuries, has crossed distinct qualitative thresholds. We must link the future course of globalization to a profoundly reformist agenda. The building of a truly democratic and egalitarian global order that protects universal human rights without destroying the cultural diversity is the lifeblood of human evolution, and that is a noble mission.

On 12<sup>th</sup> April 2012, Women's Health and Education Center (WHEC) celebrates its 11<sup>th</sup> birthday. Many people have contributed to improving the quality of its projects and programs; its remaining flaws are my own responsibility. We hope our efforts help us all to have better understanding of *Globalization*.

Globalization: A Contested Concept  
Rita Luthra, MD

## Your Questions, Our Reply

How does globalization occur? Is globalization a uniform or an uneven process? How does globalization differ from previous social developments?

**Dimensions of Globalization:** Let us adopt *global imaginary* as a concept referring to people's growing consciousness of belonging to a global community. This is not to say that national and local communal frameworks have lost their power to provide people with a meaningful sense of home and identity. But it would be a mistake to close one's eyes to the weakening of the national imaginary. As the global imaginary erupts with increasing frequency within and onto the national and local, it destabilizes and unsettles the conventional parameters of understanding within which people imagine their communal existence. One of the reasons why globalization remains a contested concept is because there exists no scholarly consensus on what kinds of social processes constitute its essence. After all, globalization is an uneven process, meaning that people living in various parts of the world are affected very differently by this gigantic transformation of social structures and cultural zones. Hence, the social processes that make up globalization have been analyzed and explained by various commentators in different, often contradictory ways. Many global studies experts argue that economic processes lie at the core of globalization. Others privilege political, cultural, or ideological aspects. Still others point to environmental processes as the essence of globalization. Surely, one of the central tasks for global studies as an emerging field must be to devise better ways for gauging the relative importance of each dimension without losing sight of the interconnected whole. Fortunately, more and more researchers have begun to heed this call for a genuine multidimensional approach to globalization that avoids pernicious reductionism.

Globalization involves the *intensification* and *acceleration* of social exchanges and activities. The creation of a global "network society" requires a technological revolution – one that has been powered chiefly by the rapid development of new information and transportation technologies. Proceeding at breakneck speed, these innovations are reshaping the social landscape of human life. The Internet relays distant information in real time, and satellites provide consumers with instant pictures of remote events. The intensification of worldwide social relations means that local happenings are shaped by events occurring far away, and vice versa. In other words, the seemingly opposing processes of globalization and localization actually imply each other. The enhancement of worldwide interdependence and the general growth of awareness of deepening global connections are gradual processes with deep historical roots. Globalization is not a single process but a set of processes that operate simultaneously and unevenly on several levels and in various dimensions. We could compare these interactions and interdependencies to an intricate tapestry of overlapping shapes and colors.

## United Nations At A Glance

### ESCAP – Economic, Social Commission for Asia & The Pacific

The Millennium Development Goals Asia and the Pacific website is developed and maintained by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) under the tripartite regional project of UNESCAP, UNDP and ADB. The website is designed to provide Governments and key stakeholders in Asia-Pacific with easy access to information on various MDG initiatives in Asia and the Pacific as well as other parts of the world with a view of supporting regional solidarity, national policy making and planning and local level implementation of strategies and programmes for achieving the MDGs.

Overall guidance and direction for the implementation of the project are provided by Ms. Noeleen Heyzer, United Nations Under-Secretary-General & Executive Secretary of UNESCAP, Mr. Ajay Chhibber, Assistant Secretary-General, Assistant Administrator of UNDP and Director of UNDP's

Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific and Ms. Ursula Schaefer-Preuss, Vice President for Knowledge Management, ADB.

### [Approaches to Combat Hunger in Asia and the Pacific](#)

The extreme poverty in Asia and the Pacific that affects around 900 million people, as well as the persistence of hunger in well over half a billion, questions the long-term sustainability of the region's economic growth and development. About one in every six persons in the region suffers from malnourishment, and about one in three children is underweight. These problems are particularly severe in South Asia and Southeast Asia. The MDG target to reduce hunger by half is unlikely to be achieved in the case of child hunger; the region may also miss the target for undernourishment, particularly if restored economic growth from the current slowdown is sluggish and if food prices start increasing. The task before the region's governments to achieve this crucial development goal is thus demanding, requiring greater prioritization of efforts and the adoption of new, more efficient approaches. Further, more regional and international efforts are also needed. The primary purposes of this paper are to trace the progress of efforts to (i) reduce hunger in Asia and the Pacific, (ii) identify reasons for their successes and failures, and (iii) suggest policy initiatives to help make tangible progress on these first MDG targets in the time remaining to 2015.

<http://www.mdgasiapacific.org/files/ADB-WP11-approaches-combat-hunger.pdf>

## Collaboration with World Health Organization (WHO)

World Health Day - 7 April



World Health Day 2012

### Ageing and health

Over the past century life expectancy has increased dramatically and the world will soon have more older people than children. Ageing populations occur everywhere, but less-developed countries are witnessing the fastest change. This social transformation represents both challenges and opportunities. In particular, countries may only have a single generation to prepare their health and social systems for an ageing world.

In the 21st century, health is determined by and contributes to broad social trends. Economies are globalizing, more and more people live and work in cities, family patterns are changing and technology is evolving rapidly. One of the biggest social transformations is population ageing. Soon, the world will have more older people than children and more people of very old age than ever before.

The world will have more people who live to see their 80s or 90s than ever before. The number of people aged 80 years or older, for example, will have almost quadrupled to 395 million between 2000 and 2050. There is no historical precedent for a majority of middle-aged and older adults having living parents, as is already the case today. More children will know their grandparents and even their great-grandparents, especially their great-grandmothers. On average, women live six to eight years longer than men.

### [Ageing and health: Good health adds life to years](#)

**Bulletin of the World Health Organization; Complete list of [contents](#) for Volume 90, Number 4, April 2012, 245-320**

## Collaboration with UN University (UNU)

UNU-WIDER (World Institute for Development Economics Research) *Expert Series on Health Economics*:

### What Does Good Governance Mean?

Almost all major development institutions today say that promoting good governance is an important part of their agendas. The outcome document of the recent 2011 Busan High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness further reflects these commitments. In a well-cited quote, former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan noted that 'good governance is perhaps the single most important factor in eradicating poverty and promoting development'. Despite this consensus, 'good governance' is an extremely elusive objective. It means different things to different organizations, not to mention to different actors within these organizations (to make matters even more confusing, governance experts also routinely focus on other types of governance—global governance, corporate governance, IT governance, participatory governance, and so on—which may be related only peripherally to the good governance agenda vis-à-vis domestic politics and administration which is our focus here.)

### Good governance as a concept

In general, work by the World Bank and other multilateral development banks on good governance addresses economic institutions and public sector management, including transparency and accountability, regulatory reform, and public sector skills and leadership. Other organizations, like the United Nations, European Commission, and OECD, are more likely to highlight democratic governance and human rights, aspects of political governance avoided by the Bank. Some of the many issues that are treated under the governance programs of various donors include election monitoring, political party support, combating corruption, building independent judiciaries, security sector reform, improved service delivery, transparency of government accounts, decentralization, civil and political rights, government responsiveness and 'forward vision', and the stability of the regulatory environment for private sector activities (including price systems, exchange regimes, and banking systems).

In short, working uses of the term 'good governance' include a variety of generally 'good' things. But these 'good' things do not necessarily fit together in any meaningful way. Indeed, good governance would be a great example of a poorly specified concept for an introductory course in social science methodology. What makes a concept good? In a 1999 article, political scientist John Gerring spelled out eight 'criteria of conceptual goodness' that provide a useful framework.

Four of these criteria are especially relevant here:

- First, 'good governance' lacks parsimony. Unlike good concepts, good governance has endless definitions, and we always need the details of each to understand if we are talking about the same thing.
- Second, 'good governance' lacks differentiation. Well-governed countries often sound a lot like functioning liberal democracies, for instance, and it is not clear how they differ.
- Third, 'good governance' lacks coherence. Its many possible characteristics—from respect for human rights to efficient banking regulations—do not clearly belong together.
- Fourth, and most important, 'good governance' lacks theoretical utility. It confuses, rather than aids, in the formulation of theory and the related project of hypothesis testing, not least because the concept is so fluid that analysts can easily define it in the way that best fits their data.

Author: Rachel M. Gisselquist; WIDER *Angle* Article 2012

(Details of the paper can be accessed from the link of UNU-WIDER on CME Page <http://www.womenshealthsection.com/content/cme/>)

## **EVERY WOMAN EVERY CHILD**

*The Effort to Advance the Global Strategy  
(Continued)*

### **Commitments to Every Woman and Every Child GOVERNMENTS**

#### **Burundi**

Burundi commits to increase the allocation to health sector from 8% in 2011 to 15% in 2015, with a focus on women and children's health; increase the number of midwives from 39 in 2010 to 250, and the number of training schools for midwives from 1 in 2011 to 4 in 2015; increase the percentage of births attended by a skilled birth attendant from 60% in 2010 to 85% in 2015. Burundi also commits to increase contraception prevalence from 18.9% in 2010 to 30%; PMTCT service coverage from 15% in 2010 to 85% with a focus on integration with reproductive health; and reduce percentage of underweight children under-five from 29% to 21% by 2015.  
<http://www.burundi-gov.bi/>

#### **Cambodia**

Cambodia will ensure that 95% of the poor are covered by health equity funds by 2015, and develop a new policy to ensure availability of emergency obstetric care at the district level. Cambodia will improve reproductive health by increasing the proportion of deliveries assisted by a skilled birth attendant to 70%; increase the proportion of couples using modern contraception to 60%; and increase the number of health facilities offering safe abortion/post abortion services. Cambodia will further seek to increase attendance at ante-natal clinics to 90% and attendance at post-natal clinics to 50%. <http://www.moh.gov.kh/Backup10June2010/>

#### **Cameroon**

Cameroon commits to implement and expand the Campaign on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal Mortality in Africa (CARMMA), re-establish midwifery training to train 200 midwives a year, and pilot a performance-based financing and a voucher system in order to promote access to maternal and child care services. Cameroon further commits to increase the contraception prevalence from 14% to 38%; the proportion of HIV+ pregnant women access to antiretrovirals from 57% to 75%; and the vaccine coverage from 84% to 93%. Cameroon will increase to 60% the proportion of health facilities offering integrated services; increase to 50% the proportion of women with access to Emergency Obstetric Care (EmOC) services; offer free malaria care to children under 5; ensure free availability of mosquito-treated nets to every family; increase funding to paediatric HIV/AIDS; strengthen health information systems management and integrated disease surveillance.

*To be continued.....*

### **Top Two-Articles Accessed in March 2012**

1. Female Genital Cutting: Impact on Maternal and Neonatal Outcomes;  
<http://www.womenshealthsection.com/content/obs/obs023.php3>  
WHEC Publications. Special thanks to WHO, and UN for the contributions.
2. Psychiatric Disorders During Pregnancy;  
<http://www.womenshealthsection.com/content/obsmd/obsmd017.php3>  
WHEC Publications. Special thanks to reviewers for helpful suggestions. Funding was provided by WHEC Initiatives for the Global Health.

## From Editor's Desk

### A Promise to Keep - Ending Preventable Child Deaths



Planning has begun on a new and potentially very significant “movement” on child survival. It is called A Promise to Keep is designed to renew and re-energize the commitment to end preventable child deaths made at the 2002 UN Special Session on Children and other global commitments and initiatives including the Millennium Development Goals and Every Women, Every Child. Part of the effort, PMNCH is looking for comments on the

proposal from its Partners.

We need your involvement in child survival. A Promise to Keep is designed to renew and re-energize the commitment to end preventable child deaths made through the 2002 UN Special Session on Children, and many other global commitments, including the Millennium Development Goals and Every Women, Every Child initiative and consists of a series of events and activities, designed and organized by governmental and non-governmental actors.

The activities will span 2012 to 2015 and beyond, possibly to 2025. PMNCH is part of the effort and is looking for comments on the proposal from its Partners.  
Your comments

We need our Partners views and comments on the issues raised in the public documents describing the project found below to give our partners at USAID valuable guidance for the development of the strategic framework.

[A Promise to Keep: Ending Preventable Child Deaths pdf, 205kb](#)

[Proposed Deliverables: Child Survival: A Call to Action - Ending Preventable Child Deaths: June 14-15, 2012 pdf, 109kb](#)

Specifically, we are interested in Partners views on the following with relation to this initiative:

- Are the deliverables and timeline suitable and relevant?
- How can important social and economic determinants of child survival, including nutrition, water and sanitation, women’s education and empowerment, rural economic development and food security be integrated into this event?
- How can this proposal best complement existing global RMNCH campaigns?

## Words of Wisdom

Any man’s death diminishes me, because I am involved in Mankind;  
And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls;  
It tolls for thee.

– John Donne

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*Monthly newsletter of WHEC designed to keep you informed on the latest UN and NGO activities*

