



WHEC UPDATE

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

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Lessons From The Field

This year, we celebrate 10 years of **WomensHealthSection.com** (A Global Forum). It is the only publication of its kind in cyberspace, and we take great pride in our commitment to share evidence-based medicine with everyone and promote peace, health and development in these pages. I have number of people to thank for our success. First and foremost our Physician's Board who allowed us to share their research and insights with our readers. I am forever grateful to them. And to work of the United Nations and World Health Organization, which makes this publication possible. We share this priceless resource free-of-charge with our readers all around the world; it is the donation of our patrons that makes this publication possible. If you enjoy this publication, please support our efforts to make this world a better place for everyone. Now for my staff and colleagues, with whom I work on daily basis and share my passion for this project / program and it certainly shows in our work and attention to detail – very special thank you! We often spend months researching topic from various data basis and resources, in order to provide you with a better understanding of the reproductive health. And to our partners whose patience with me is tested every month in every edition of *WHEC Update*. Who would have thought electronic media could make such a difference? I so enjoy watching this magic unfold on every page. I would also like to thank contributing writers and editors from all around the world for their professionalism and willingness to be a part of the team. And all our friends, who educate and work at the local levels to provide the best healthcare services they can, which is not always easy in these economically challenged times. There are so many people involved with this project / program – from start to finish – and I wish I could mention them all, but I hope they know I am forever grateful for their contributions. Heading into year eleven and beyond, we will have many more wonderful initiatives to share with you.

Many people – myself included – would say that **WomensHealthSection.com** has been a major part of our lives for the last decade. For that we can credit the energy and vision of our writers, editors and physician's board – transforming this initiative into a leading journal in reproductive health in the world – inviting readers into intriguing research projects. 24th October 2012 marks the tenth anniversary of our e-learning initiative in Women's Health and Health Development, which stresses the importance of Continuing Medical Education and Research and women's participation in development. It calls for the full inclusion of women in all aspects of peace, health and development processes. Our initiative was born out of increasing recognition that women's health and education is the corner stone of achieving Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Women are well placed to negotiate peace, sustainable development and economic progress and their capabilities have been overlooked. Progress is everyone's business. Acclaimed editions of *WHEC Update* of our collaboration were launched in 2006, and along the way, most popular *WHEC Practice Bulletins* left their signature imprints on all those pages – and they will continue to do so as this program evolves and expands. Everyone has, I think, in some quiet corner of the mind, an ideal project in women's health to become a reality. Why wait? Women's Health and Education Center (WHEC) will always be the place to find the ideas, talent, and sources to make your dreams come to realization. This extraordinary accomplishment has given my staff and me so much to think about as we take our initiative to the next level.

We hope **WomensHealthSection.com** tempts you with the promise of excitement and possibility. Beckons you. It calls you. This is where the story begins...

WomensHealthSection.com @ Ten: Looking Back and Looking Ahead

Rita Luthra, MD

Your Questions, Our Reply

What is the contribution of the United Nation's Children's Fund (UNICEF) to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedom? How is WHEC helping these efforts?

WHEC collaboration with UNICEF: WHEC and UNICEF are mandated to advocate the protection of children's rights, to help meet their basic needs, and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential. Our collaboration is guided by the provisions and principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its two optional Protocols. As UNICEF and WHEC collaboration strengthens, our efforts will be directed towards promoting the equal rights of women and girls, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. It will be the central of our work.

Other international human rights standards guiding this work are World Health Organization (WHO), International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions 138 and 182 and the Hague Convention on Inter-Country Adoption. UNICEF offices work with national partners to identify rights-based approaches to complex problems affecting the realization of human rights, such as: maternal mortality, HIV/AIDS, child labor, malnutrition, violence against women and children, and the access of girls to education. With the aim of contributing to a 'World Fit for Children' UNICEF emphasizes the inseparable connection between the promotion of children's and women's rights and the progressive and sustained achievement of human development goals.

Our efforts, messages – and the tools to implement them – have been embraced by people around the world, as evidenced by the popularity of our publications and feed back from our audience. It is the product of a selected team of leading scholars, development practitioners and our members. Our report and publication are translated in six UN languages and available in 223 countries.

WHEC has organized a number of research and training activities on health and human rights issues, including the training of staff as well as the preparation of an annotated bibliography, a database of institutions, and guidelines on a human rights approach to infectious diseases, such as tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS.

WHEC is also involved in the field of the media. The aim is to strengthen and enhance freedom of expression and information and the right to seek, receive and impart information.

Join the efforts!

United Nations At A Glance

[Treaties over time](#)

The Work of the International Law Commission, 7th ed. (2007)

The United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law, established under General Assembly resolution 2099 (XX) of 20 December 1965, includes among its goals the dissemination, through United Nations information media, of information about international law and activities in this field. In connection with this goal, the production of a publication on the work of the International Law Commission was suggested. In accordance with this suggestion, the first edition of the present publication was prepared by the Secretariat in 1966. The second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth editions were produced by the Secretariat in 1972, 1980, 1988, 1996, 2004, respectively, further to requests of the International Law Commission which were endorsed by the General Assembly. The seventh edition brings up to date the 2004 edition by incorporating therein a summary of the latest

developments of the work of the Commission, as well as texts of new Commission drafts and a new codification convention.

The publication is intended to provide a general introduction to the work of the International Law Commission, with sufficient references to facilitate further research. Accordingly, the publication contains, in Part I, a brief historical outline of the various attempts at the development and codification of international law up to the inception of the Commission's work and, in Part II, an account of the organization, programme and methods of work of the Commission, with particular reference to the Statute under which the Commission functions. Finally, Part III is devoted to brief descriptions of the various topics and sub-topics of international law considered by the International Law Commission. An account is also given of the actions decided upon by the General Assembly following the consideration of the topics or sub-topics by the Commission, and of the results achieved by diplomatic conferences convened by the General Assembly to consider drafts prepared by the Commission.

Annexes are appended, containing the text of the Commission's Statute, a list of present and former members of the Commission, the text of the decision of the Swiss Federal Council regarding the juridical status of the members of the Commission at the place of its permanent seat, and the full texts of final draft articles prepared by the Commission or, where appropriate, of multilateral conventions based on such draft articles, as adopted by diplomatic conferences convened under the auspices of the United Nations or the General Assembly itself. The multilateral conventions contained in annex V appear in volume II.

Collaboration with World Health Organization (WHO)

Commission on information and accountability for women's and children's health

Keeping Promises, Measuring Results

Of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the two specifically concerned with improving the health of women and children are the furthest from being achieved by 2015. They are in urgent need of innovative and strategic actions, supported by political will and resources for greater impact. In September 2010, in an effort to accelerate progress, the Secretary-General of the United Nations launched the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health. The main goal of this strategy is to save 16 million lives by 2015 in the world's 49 poorest countries. It has already mobilized commitments estimated at US\$ 40 billion. However, commitments need to be honoured, efforts harmonized, and progress tracked. Actions need to address results and resources.

Given that accountability for financial resources and health outcomes is critical to the objectives of the Global Strategy, the Secretary-General asked the Director-General of the World Health Organization to coordinate a process to determine the most effective international institutional arrangements for global reporting, oversight and accountability on women's and children's health.

The work of the Commission on Information and Accountability for Women's and Children's Health is built on the fundamental human right of every woman and child to the highest attainable standard of health and on the critical importance of achieving equity in health. All accountability mechanisms should be effective, transparent and inclusive of all stakeholders. In addition, the Commission's work has embraced the Global Strategy's key accountability principles:

- Focus on national leadership and ownership of results;
- Strengthen countries' capacity to monitor and evaluate;
- Reduce the reporting burden by aligning efforts with the systems countries use to monitor and evaluate their national health strategies;

- Strengthen and harmonize existing international mechanisms to track progress on all commitments made.

Accountability begins with national sovereignty and the responsibility of a government to its people and to the global community. However, all partners are accountable for the commitments and promises they make and for the health policies and programmes they design and implement.

[Commission on information and accountability for Women's and Children's Health](#)

Bulletin of the World Health Organization; Complete list of [contents](#) for Volume 90, Number 10, October 2012, 713-792

Collaboration with UN University (UNU)

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

Transitional Justice and Aid

This paper examines the current security–governance–development nexus, something that is often also discussed under the concept of ‘transitional justice’ (TJ). The paper analyses how the ambiguous, evolving and expanding nature of the concept of TJ affects the planning, coordination, evaluation and assessment of aid given to conflict ridden, post-conflict or (post) authoritarian societies in order to strengthen their democracy. Special attention is paid to gender justice. Illustrations are drawn mainly from Africa where many TJ processes and mechanisms are currently taking place.

Development aid and support to transitional justice both focus on the move from (what is considered) a worse state to a better one: from war to peace, conflict to harmony, authoritarianism to democracy, poverty to increased human well-being, insecurity to security and inequality to social justice. TJ is now widening scope to take into account the socio-economic roots of conflicts and the remedies of the victims. In doing this it is directly interlinked to long-term social, political and economic reforms, such as the reform of electoral systems, constitution, social and distributive institutions (education, health, employment) including the general financial management of public funds. In order to balance ‘justice during the transition’ and justice in ‘post-transition, normalized’ society, there is a need to make a clear account on what ‘justice’ measures are needed during the transition period and what measures are needed in continuing to build a stable and more impartial state that can deal with its own issues of political, economic and social justice in the future.

Publisher: UNU-WIDER; Series: WIDER Working Paper; Author: Sirkku K. Hellsten; Sponsor: This working paper has been prepared within the UNU-WIDER project ‘Foreign Aid: Research and Communication (ReCom)’, directed by Tony Addison and Finn Tarp. UNU-WIDER gratefully acknowledges specific programme contributions from the governments of Denmark (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Danida) and Sweden (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency—Sida) for the Research and Communication (ReCom) programme. UNU-WIDER also acknowledges core financial support to UNU-WIDER’s work programme from the governments of Finland (Ministry for Foreign Affairs), the United Kingdom (Department for International Development), and the governments of Denmark and Sweden.

(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)

Guinea-Bissau

Guinea-Bissau commits to increase financial spending from 10% to 14% by 2015 and to implement the Campaign on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal Mortality in Africa (CARMMA); to ensure accessible comprehensive emergency obstetric and neonatal care in all regions, and to provide around-the-clock referrals. Guinea-Bissau also commits to ensure that each health center has access to basic Emergency Obstetric Care (EmOC), including strengthening the technical capacity of 95% of the EmOC facilities; increasing the proportion of women giving birth in health facilities from 35% to 60%; ensuring that 75% of the pregnant women are covered by health mutual funds, and that 90% of the most vulnerable are covered by state funds. In addition, Guinea-Bissau also commits to reduce the unmet need for family planning to 10% and to increase contraceptive prevalence from 10% to 20%; to increase pre-natal consultations to 70%, postnatal consultations to 30%, and to reduce the proportion of underweight children from 24% to 10%; and to integrate Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission in 90% of the maternity care centers.

Guyana

Guyana commits to improve the contraceptive prevalence rate from 34.5% to above 60% by increasing the method-mix at national and regional levels, including by promoting long-term methods and emergency contraceptives; and further integrating family planning in community-based activities, as well as gender-based violence and teen mothers initiatives. Guyana also commits to increase Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (EmONC) to 100%, including by strengthening referral and transportation in Basic EmONC facilities and improving the interconnectedness of maternal health facilities to ensure access to EmONC.

Haiti

Haiti will create a financial mechanism to ensure free maternal, newborn and child health services, and develop a plan for human resources in health by 2015. Haiti will also provide emergency obstetric care in 108 health institutions constructing, rehabilitating or equipping facilities as necessary. Haiti will further reduce unmet need for family planning from 38% to 10% by improving commodity security and making services more youth-friendly

<http://www.un.int/wcm/content/site/haiti>

To be continued.....

Top Two-Articles Accessed in September 2012

1. Improving Maternal Health Through Education;
<http://www.womenshealthsection.com/content/heal/heal014.pdf>
WHEC Publications. Gratitude is expressed to UN Chronicle for the collaboration. The Women's Health & Education Center (WHEC) expresses special thanks to all 222 countries/territories for welcoming our educational web-learning project:
[WomensHealthSection.com](http://www.womenshealthsection.com). Their continuing support is deeply appreciated.
2. Child Abuse: A Universal Challenge;
<http://www.womenshealthsection.com/content/vaw/vaw009.php3>
WHEC Publications. Special thanks to WHO, UNICEF and American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) for contributions in creating this document.

From Editor's Desk

Protecting children from violence, exploitation and abuse

All children have the right to be protected from violence, exploitation and abuse. Yet, millions of children worldwide from all socio-economic backgrounds, across all ages, religions and cultures suffer violence, exploitation and abuse every day. Millions more are at risk.



Some girls and boys are particularly vulnerable because of gender, race, ethnic origin or socio-economic status. Higher levels of vulnerability are often associated with [children with disabilities](#), who are [orphaned](#), indigenous, from ethnic minorities and other marginalized groups. Other risks for children are associated with living and working on the streets, [living in institutions](#) and [detention](#), and living in communities where inequality, unemployment and poverty are highly concentrated. Natural disasters, armed conflict, and [displacement](#) may expose children to additional risks. Child refugees, internally displaced children and unaccompanied migrant children are also populations of concern. Vulnerability is also associated with age; younger children are at greater risk of certain types of violence and the risks differ as they get older.

Violence, exploitation and abuse are often practiced by someone known to the child, including parents, other family members, caretakers, teachers, employers, law enforcement authorities, state and non-state actors and other children. Only a small proportion of acts of violence, exploitation and abuse are reported and investigated, and few perpetrators are held accountable. Violence, exploitation and abuse occur in the homes, families, [schools](#), care and justice systems, workplaces and communities across all contexts, including as a result of conflict and natural disasters. Many children are exposed to various forms of violence, exploitation and abuse, including [sexual abuse and exploitation](#), [armed violence](#), [trafficking](#), [child labour](#), [gender-based violence](#), bullying (see UNICEF, [Too often in silence](#), 2010), cyber-bullying, gang violence, [female genital mutilation/cutting](#), [child marriage](#), physically and emotionally violent child discipline, and other harmful practices.

WHO WE ARE?

The purpose of Women's Health and Education Center (WHEC) is to support and improve the educational opportunities and general health of women and particularly women of the developing countries. Women's health and status is a very complex and challenging issue for the developing and industrialized countries both. Women face enormous obstacles -- prejudice, ostracism, domestic violence, poverty, hunger and virtually no access to medical care and life saving medicines. The Women's Health and Education Center is dedicated to women's health and well being worldwide. Its web site, [WomensHealthSection.com](#) is for educational purposes, between USA and developing countries of: Mutual Benefit and Mutual Respect. We support and help projects / programs in women's health, education and research. We believe: On this path effort never goes to waste, and there is no failure.

Each year more than 500, 000 women die in pregnancy or childbirth and less than 10 million children die before their fifth birthday- nearly 40% of these in the first month of life. But evidence shows that at least 6 million of these lives can be saved each year with proven, cost-effective interventions.

Our Vision: A world where all women and children receive the care they need to live healthy, productive lives.

Our Goal: To invest in, deliver and advance maternal, newborn and child health, and thereby put 50% of the 60 high-burden countries "on track" to achieve MDGs 4 and 5 in 5 years.

WHAT WE DO?

Women's Health and Education Center (WHEC) advocates gender equality in health and education for women and girls around the world. WHEC brings attention to the ways in which biological and socio-cultural factors affect the health of women and men, boys and girls. WHEC aims to increase knowledge and strengthen the health sector response by gathering evidence, strengthening capacity and engaging in advocacy on how gender and gender inequality affect health.

WHEC focuses on the ways that gender, as a social construction, affects the health of both men and women. But we also realize that gender inequality has a higher toll on women's health due to the discrimination they face in nearly every culture. Gender inequality exacerbates the harmful effects of poverty and lack of education on women's health, hampering the ability of millions of women worldwide to access health care and achieve the best possible level of health. WomensHealthSection.com educates health care professionals about conditions that are exclusive to women, more prevalent in women, or are diagnosed or treated differently in women versus men. This publication presents unbiased, comprehensive, concise, and clinically relevant review articles and practical sections. The articles are peer reviewed to maintain the highest quality and to verify clinical relevance, medical accuracy, and clarity of presentation. The most insightful and thought-provoking articles are now available in a single portal. All *WHEC Practice Bulletins* are reviewed 18 to 24 months after publication and are revised, reaffirmed, or withdrawn.

WHY GENDER AND HEALTH?

Both gender differences and gender inequalities can give rise to inequities between men and women in health status and access to health care. For example:

- A woman cannot receive needed health services because norms in her community prevent her from travelling alone to a clinic.
- A teenage boy dies in an accident because of trying to live up to peers' expectations that young men should be "bold" risk-takers.
- A married woman contracts HIV because societal standards encourage her husband's promiscuity while simultaneously preventing her from insisting on condom use.
- A country's lung cancer mortality rate for men far outstrips the corresponding rate for women because smoking is considered an attractive marker of masculinity, while it is frowned upon as unfeminine in women.

In each of these cases, gender norms and values, and resulting behaviors, are negatively affecting health. In fact the gender picture in a given time and place can be one of the major obstacles - sometimes the single most important obstacle - standing between men and women and the achievement of well-being. WHEC has produced a series of information pages on the relevance of gender to several specific health problems. Reading them over is a good way to begin to get a sense of the ways gender and health interact.

WomensHealthSection.com is a global, Web-enabled platform for multiple forms of collaboration. This platform enables individuals, groups, companies, and universities anywhere in the world to collaborate -- for the purposes of innovation, education, research and to advance the causes peace, health and development. We invite you to tap into this platform, and finally, the governance to get the best out of this platform.

Words of Wisdom

Out of the huts of history's shame
I rise
Up from a past that's rooted in pain
I rise
I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.
Leaving behind nights of terror and fear
I rise
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear
I rise
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.
I rise
I rise
I rise.

– Maya Angelou (American Poet)

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

