



WHEC UPDATE

Briefings of worldwide activity of Women's Health and Education Center (WHEC)
December 2013; Vol. 8, No. 12

A Grand Collaboration

Happy Holidays from all of us @ Women's Health and Education Center (WHEC)

It has been a great year! We seek out the bold ones, the visionaries, the dreamers and the doers. We live in a world of diverse policy priorities based on deep-seated value dispositions that invite different interpretations of concepts such as democracy, human rights, justice, equality and health care. Recognizing such differences, we explored which policy approaches have emerged in response to today's changing realities; which seem to hold promise in different contexts; and what lessons can be drawn from these experiences for realizing policy goals. Our observation revealed the changing conditions of governance occur in the wake of growing and deepening interdependencies among countries. Financial markets, global supply chains, and the Internet are as much indications of this deepening interdependence as are environmental issues, migration, and issues of health and social policies. Such interdependencies have opened up many opportunities but they also involve risk; they invite competition and cooperation as well as free-riding and domineering – and not only among states but also among business corporations, public agencies, and civil society institutions.

The current state of the world in terms of “good governance”, that is, the effective, efficient, and reliable set of legitimate institutions and actors dedicated to dealing with matters of public concern, is lacking. For governments in particular the scale and scope of interdependence means that conventional notions of sovereignty are fast becoming obsolete; they are often based on zero-sum thinking in terms of national interest when positive-sum policies are called for, and they assume independence where countries are part of a dense and complex web of connections with others. While the creation of powerful new international organizations or the delegation of further authority to existing ones might strengthen the effectiveness of financial regulation and supervision, they would also present a direct challenge to national sovereignty (as conventionally understood) and democratic accountability. Furthermore, even if such solutions adequately resolved in the trade-offs, not many national or local governments have the administrative capacity in place to implement and monitor the often highly technical measures needed for fiscal and monetary reform. This is a clear governance weakness requiring the urgent attention of policymakers.

In future editions of *WHEC Update* / ***WomensHealthSection.com***, we will track governance innovations. These are novel rules, regulations and approaches that, compared to the current state of affairs, address a public problem in more efficacious and effective ways, and we hope this leads to better policy outcomes, and enhance legitimacy. Attempts to quantify governance have grown in scale and scope in recent years. By and large they rarely measure outcomes, generally fail to capture the multi-level, multi-actor nature of governance, and remain silent on the overall fit between today's governance requirements and the arrangements in place. There are no quick fixes in the form of some technocratic solution or another can solve key public problems, be it in global finance, sovereign debt, environment or health sector. Nevertheless, at various governance levels and across many places, innovations are taking place that seek new ways to handle trade-offs and to improve existing systems and policy outcomes. A review of many ideas, proposals and approaches that seek to improve governance, itself a core task of our Initiatives, also revealed that there seems, at present, no overarching plan or vision guiding them. Especially given this void, advancing the notion of responsible sovereignty appears as a reasonable and achievable way forward. Good Governance is the core of our initiatives.

Help us to establish high-level commission on responsible sovereignty... Underwriting the future

Seeking Governance Innovations

Rita Luthra, MD

Your Questions, Our Reply

Does civil society contribute to public problem solving and good governance? Do national and local governments respond adequately to healthcare? Do corporate leaders manage businesses in economically and socially responsible ways to advance universal health coverage?

Good Governance Overview and Recommendations: Good Governance about how well those who are legitimately entrusted to do so manage public problems. A system of good governance is one that deals with these and other matters of public concern – be they education or health care, national security or infrastructure policies, the environment or labor markets – in effective, efficient ways. Our initiatives are about the changing conditions of governance, the challenges and opportunities involved, and implications and recommendations that present themselves to analysts and policy-makers in terms of good governance – and with emphasis on managing interdependencies among countries. Clearly, the demands put on existing governance systems have changed – and continue to change – as the early 21st century seems to enter a period of profound uncertainty. The aftermath of the 2007-8 financial crisis – a focal issue of our new initiatives – is a case in point, as is the inability of the international community to reach agreement on major issues such as the environment, freedom of information, arms trade and health care. With established systems under pressure, and no realistic, visionary grand solutions to guide, the world is nonetheless alive with a seeming cacophony of approaches on how to improve governance, and ultimately policy outcomes. While not all innovations are well grounded, let alone well guided, some do harbor potential for seeking better ways and means of governing the world's affairs.

The experts in our network suggest a new, conceptually grounded system of governance indicators that can be developed over time. Such a system measures indicators for three essential components:

- Governance readiness in relation to governance requirements to gauge the gap between what is in place currently and what would be required given current and future governance conditions;
- Governance performance in relation to policy outcomes and welfare effects, as seen in the interplay between legitimacy, efficacy and effectiveness; and
- Innovativeness to assess the degree to which actors generate new ideas and approaches for governance.

Voting at the UN General Assembly is a clear case of how countries are exercising “old style” sovereignty are caught in a self-inflicted stalemate that built up over decades and now may well threaten the long-term viability of the institution. At the same time, there are also positive signs, and indications that responsible sovereignty at the international level is not only possible and feasible, but that it ultimately pays off as the examples of the World Trade Organization and UN Peacekeeping contributions showed.

We believe, there is a great need for policy makers and analysts to identify positive-sum solutions to public good problems. The search for such solutions has languished for too long, and it is time to put it on at least equal footing with those advocating the pursuit of narrow national or corporate interests.

Join our initiatives; we welcome everyone – underwriting lifelong relationships.

United Nations At A Glance

Cameroon and the United Nations

Permanent Mission of the Republic of Cameroon to the United Nations

New York, 30 April 2010

No. 345/DCN

The Permanent Mission of Cameroon to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and, pursuant to the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolution A/64/117 adopted on 16 December 2009, has the honor to

transmit to him herewith the observations of the Government of Cameroon on the scope and application of the principle of universal jurisdiction.

The Permanent Mission of Cameroon takes this opportunity to convey to the Secretary-General of the United Nations the assurances of its highest consideration.

Details: <http://delecam.us/PermanentMission/PermanentMissionActivities/tabid/96/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

Collaboration with World Health Organization (WHO)

WHO | Cameroon

Commitment - Every Woman Every Child

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 pediatric HIV/AIDS; strengthen health information systems management and integrated disease surveillance. Accountability for Women's and Children's Health:

http://www.who.int/woman_child_accountability/countries/cmr/en/index2.html

WHO Reproductive Health Update

International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence campaign



WHO is marking this day with the launch of a new programming tool “16 ideas for addressing violence against women in the context of the HIV epidemic”. According to WHO estimates, 1 in 3 women, globally, will experience intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence in their lifetime. This tool provides evidence-summaries for 16 approaches for preventing and responding to violence against women in the context of the HIV epidemic.

[Download publication](#) | [More on WHO's work on violence against women](#)

[Data from the Global Health Observatory](#)

Bulletin of the World Health Organization; Complete list of [contents](#) for Volume 91, Number 12, December, 897-972

Collaboration with UN University (UNU)

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

Taxation in Developing Countries: Case Study of Cameroon

In the beginning of the 1980s, Cameroon witnessed a sustained rate of growth, associated essentially with the boom in the oil sector. Increased budgetary and extra-budgetary resources generated by this sector helped to raise the investment rate in the economy, and to maintain a reasonable level of external indebtedness. But after this period of expansion, the country experienced unfavorable economic development caused by a successive decline in the terms of trade, leading to profound imbalances, notably in public finance and the external account. The government subsequently initiated a series of measures to reform its tax system and to adapt it to national economic realities. An efficient and equitable taxation encourages production and the accumulation of national wealth stimulates saving and investments and hence job creation. Such a tax system could, therefore, ensure sustainable growth and development in Cameroon.

The study aims to contribute to a better understanding of the evolution of the tax system in Cameroon. In particular, the paper reviews the chronology of the main tax reforms and the evidence on the distributional aspect of taxation. Investigating the issues involved with tax administration and decentralization in the country and local government finances, it also attempts to explore the problems and successes associated with the implementation of tax reforms.

The conventional approach may also use detailed data by incorporating micro-simulation models of large taxpayer samples. A micro-simulation model is a computer programme comprising a tax calculator which processes data from each household, computes incomes and taxes, and then adds up the taxes thus calculated to obtain the tax burden for each income group. The conventional tax incidence analysis we are proposing for Cameroon can be supplemented with a regulatory tax incidence analysis, which involves determining who must pay which taxes, and by the analysis of the functioning of the tax collection process.

Publisher: UNU-WIDER; Author: Samuel Fambon; sponsors: The governments of Denmark (Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs), Finland (Ministry for Foreign Affairs), Norway (Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs), Sweden (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency-Sida) and the United Kingdom (Department for International Development).

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

United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI)

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

Cameroon

Cameroon is a country afflicted by pervasive poverty and rising infant and under-five mortality rates. Some 51 per cent of the population lives below the poverty line and poverty has an increasingly feminine face as it affects women more than men.

Barriers to Girls' Education

- Poverty of parents
- Early marriage and pregnancy
- Low status of women in Society

UNGEI in Action

UNGEI has been initiated and there is an ongoing process of creating a country specific initiative known as CAMGEN (Cameroon Girls' Education Network).

The aim of the partnership is to sensitize parents and the communities of the importance of girls' education, purchase and distribute learning materials/equipment to support schools and train teachers.

The partnership's priorities will include strong advocacy, social mobilization and provision of essential learning materials and equipment.

Partnership

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), World Bank, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Ministry of Education.

UNGEI within other National and International Frameworks

Cameroon is one of the "25 by 2005" acceleration countries and Sector Wide Approaches (SWAPs), Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), Common country Assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework (CCA/UNDAF) process exists at the national level.

[New education initiative targets hard to reach girls in Cameroon](#)

Cameroon's national efforts in accelerating progress in girls' education got a major boost with the launch of the "My Education, My Future" initiative on 4 May.

[Read More >](#)

Top Two-Articles Accessed in November 2013

1. Exercise During Pregnancy and Postpartum Period;
<http://www.womenshealthsection.com/content/obs/obs031.php3>
WHEC Publications. Special thanks to our writers, editors and reviewers for compiling the review. We thank our partners in Global Health for the support and funding.
2. Thyroid Storm: Critical Care in Obstetrics;
<http://www.womenshealthsection.com/content/obsmd/obsmd015.php3>
WHEC Publications. Special thanks to the reviewers for helpful suggestions and expert opinions.

From Editor's Desk

The Women's Health and Education Organization, Inc.
A Partner to Promote Global Health

The Women's Health and Education Organization, Inc. (WHEO, Inc.) is not for profit institution promoting maternal and child health worldwide. Established on 1 December 1992 in *Commonwealth of Massachusetts* (USA), the organization has been actively working to advance the causes of peace, health and development. It has vision to build infrastructure in developing countries and to create meaningful opportunities for girls and women to participate in global philanthropy. We embrace the tremendous diversity of people, religions, and cultures around the world. In support of this belief, we have established academic and cultural focus at iconic institutions around the globe, to nurture our common interests and potential. By supporting reproductive health and research, open dialogue and objective analysis, we lay the ground work for mutual understanding among nations.

The research and educational efforts of the WHEO, Inc. are sponsored by unrestricted grant provided by Dr. Rita Luthra / Women's Health and Education Center (WHEC) in memory of Mrs. Santosh B. Luthra – the best mother anyone can hope for. To be with her was a gift of love and joy, courage and generosity. The Organization's birth and my mother's birthday happen to fall on the same day – 1st December (lucky coincidence). Let me take this opportunity to brief you on some positive developments that have taken place in the past few years in our program (Continuing Medical Education) development cluster. Meet our network – circling the globe everyday – for health and education.

The purpose of the Continuing Medical Education (CME) is to provide challenging curricula to assist healthcare professionals to raise their levels of expertise while fulfilling their continuing education requirements, thereby improving the quality of healthcare.

The philosophy behind this purpose is based on the belief that continuing education is a life-time commitment requiring knowledge of current trends and developments in the science, technology and economics of healthcare.

We invite you to enjoy these courses for your personal development or share this publication with other healthcare providers. We welcome everyone.

[WHEO Working Group \(PDF\)](#)

On the road to [WomensHealthSection.com 2.0](#)

Words of Wisdom

Right or wrong are the two principles that have stood face to face from the beginning of time and will ever continue to struggle.

– Abraham Lincoln, 16th President of the United States (1809-1865),
Message to Congress, December 6, 1864

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

<http://www.womenshealthsection.com/>



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