



WHEC Update

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Leadership Development Series

Conflict is not necessarily bad. Research tells us that there are three types of conflict: task, relationship, and process. Task conflict relates to the content and goals of the work. Relationship conflict focuses on interpersonal relationships. And process conflict relates to how work gets done. This evidence indicates that while relationship conflicts are almost always dysfunctional in groups or organizations, low levels of process and task conflict are often functional. Since many people seem to have difficulty with thinking of conflict in positive terms, let us make the argument to support the constructive side of conflict.

Conflict is constructive when it improves the quality of decisions, stimulates creativity and innovation, encourages interest and curiosity among group members, provides the medium through which problems can be aired and tensions released, and fosters an environment of self-evaluation and change. The evidence suggests that conflict can improve the quality of decision making by allowing all points, particularly the ones that are unusual or held by a minority, to be weighed in important decisions. Conflict is an antidote for groups that might be tempted to “rubber stamp” decisions that are based on weak assumptions, inadequate consideration of relevant alternatives, or other debilities. Conflict challenges the status quo and therefore furthers the creation of new-ideas, promotes reassessment of group goals and activities, and increases the probability that a group will respond to change.

There is substantial evidence indicating that conflict can be positively related to productivity. For instance, it was demonstrated that, among established group performance tended to improve more when there was conflict among members than when there was fairly close agreement. The investigators observed that when groups analyzed decisions that had been made by the individual members of that group, the average improvement among the high-conflict groups was 73% greater than that of those groups characterized by low-conflict conditions. Others have found similar results. Groups composed of members with different interests tend to produce higher-quality solutions to a variety of problems than do homogeneous groups.

Evidence demonstrates that cultural diversity among group and organization members can increase creativity, improve the quality of decisions, and facilitate change by enhancing member flexibility. For example, researchers compared decision-making groups composed of all-Anglo individuals with groups that also contained members from Asian, Hispanic, and black ethnic groups. The ethnically diverse groups produced more effective and more feasible ideas and the unique ideas they generated tended to be of higher quality than the unique ideas produced by the all-Anglo group.

Similarly, studies of system analysis and research and development scientists support the constructive value of conflict. An investigation of 22 teams of systems analysts found that the more incompatible groups were likely to be more productive. Research and development scientists have been found to be most productive where there is a certain amount of intellectual conflict.

So when you are trying to manage conflicts, take a thoughtful look at their source. It is more likely that the conflict is coming from work-imposed requirements, dissimilar values, or personality differences than it is from poor communication. And that might influence the actions you take to resolve the conflict.

...And Nothing But the Truth about Managing People

Rita Luthra, MD



Your Questions, Our Reply

Does poor communication is the source of most conflicts? Should we be beware of group-thinking? Does group-thinking attack all groups:

Communication and Group-thinking: Most people think that poor communication is the source of most conflicts. But they could be wrong. In a work context, more conflicts come from structural relationships and personal differences than communication per se.

Organizations create job descriptions, specialized work groups, jurisdictional borders, and authority relationships – all with the intent to facilitate coordination. But in so doing, they separate people and create the potential for conflicts. For instance, departments within organizations have diverse goals. Purchasing is concerned with the timely acquisition of materials and supplies at low prices, marketing's goals concentrate on disposing of finished goods and services and increasing revenues, quality control's attention is focused on improving quality and ensuring that the organization's products meet the standards and production units seek efficiency of operations, by maintaining a steady production flow. When groups within an organization seek diverse ends, some of which are inherently at odds, there is increased potential for conflict.

Many of us have to work with people, whose values or personality clash with our own. Today's organization are increasingly diverse in terms of age, gender, race, sexual orientation, and ethnicity. So not surprisingly, employees differ on the importance they place on general values such as honesty, responsibility, equality and ambition. They also differ on job-related values such as the importance of family over work or freedom versus authority. These differences often surface in work-related interactions and create significant interpersonal conflicts.

The above is not meant to mean that communication cannot be a source of conflict. It can. Differing word connotations, jargon, insufficient exchange of information, poor listening skills, and the like create conflicts. But the notion that "we can resolve our differences if we just communicate more" is not necessarily true. The evidence actually demonstrates that the potential for conflict increases when there is too much communication as well as when there is too little. Apparently, an increase in communication is functional up to point, whereupon it is possible to over-communicate. Too much information as well as too little can lay the foundation for conflict.

So when you are trying to manage conflicts, take a thoughtful look at their source. It is more likely that the conflict is coming from work-imposed requirements, dissimilar values, or personality differences than it is from poor communication. And that might influence the actions you take to resolve the conflict.

Beware of group-think. This is a phenomenon that occurs when group members become so focused on achieving concurrence that the search for consensus overrides any realistic assessment of deviant or unpopular views. It represents a deterioration in an individual's mental efficiency and reality testing as a result of group pressure. We have all seen the symptoms of the group-think phenomenon: Members apply direct pressure on those who momentarily express doubts about any of group's shared views or who question the validity of arguments supporting the alternative favored by the majority. Those members who have doubts or hold differing points of view seek to avoid deviating from what appears to be group consensus by keeping silent about misgivings and even minimizing to themselves the importance of their doubts. There appears to be an illusion of unanimity. If someone does not speak, it is assumed that he or she sides with the majority view. In other words, abstention becomes viewed as a "Yes" vote.

Suggestion is to utilize exercises that stimulate active discussion of diverse alternatives without threatening the group and intensifying identity protection.



United Nations at a Glance

Solomon Islands became UN Member State on 19 September 1978



Solomon Islands, also known as **the Solomons**, is an island country of six major islands and over 1000 smaller islands in Melanesia, part of Oceania, to the northeast of Australia. It is directly adjacent to Bougainville, a part of Papua New Guinea to the west, Australia to the southwest, New Caledonia and Vanuatu to the southeast, Fiji, Wallis and Futuna, and Tuvalu to the east, and Nauru and the Federated States of Micronesia to the north. Capital: Honiara; Official language:

English; Ethnic groups: 95.5% Melanesian, 3% Polynesian; Religion: 98% Christianity; Population: 734,887 (2023); Area: total – 28,896 km² (11,157 sq. mi), water 3.2%; Currency: Solomon Islands dollar.

The islands have been settled since at least some time between 30,000 and 28,800 BC, with later waves of migrants, notably the Lapita people, mixing and producing the modern indigenous Solomon Islander population. In 1568, the Spanish navigator Alvaro de Mendana was the first European to visit them. It is believed that the islands were called “the Solomons” by those who later received word of his voyage and mapped his discovery. In June 1893, Captain Herbert Gibson of HMS *Curacoa* declared the southern Solomon Islands a British protectorate.

During World War II, the Solomon Islands campaign (1942 – 1945) saw fierce fighting between the United States, British Imperial forces, and the Empire of Japan, including the Battle of Guadalcanal. The official name of then-British administration was changed from the “British Solomon Islands Protectorate” to “The Solomon Islands” in 1975, and self-government was achieved the following year. Independence was achieved in 1978 and became constitutional monarchy. The King of Solomon Island is Charles III, who is represented in the country by a governor-general appointed on the advice of the prime minister.



By early 2001, the economy had collapsed and government was bankrupt. New election in December 2001 brought Allan Kemakeza into the Prime Minister's chair, with the support of his People's Alliance Party and the Association of Independent Members. Land ownership is reserved by Solomon Islanders. The law provides that resident expatriates, such as the Chinese and Kiribati, may obtain citizenship through naturalization. Land generally is still held on a family or village basis and may be handed down from mother or father according to local custom.

Solomon Islands is a member of the United Nations, Interpol, Commonwealth of Nations, Pacific Islands Forum, Pacific Community, International Monetary Fund, and the African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) countries.

There are human rights concerns and issues to education, water/water security, sanitation, gender equality, and domestic violence, as well as others. Homosexuality is illegal in the Solomon Islands; it is punishable by up to 14 years of imprisonment. The Solomon Island ranks as a Least Developed Country (LDC), and more than 75% of its labor force is engaged in subsistence agriculture and fishing.

Details: <https://www.un.org/en/conferences/small-islands/newyork1999>

Collaboration with World Health Organization (WHO)

WHO | Solomon Islands



Background

Solomon Islands is a double-chain volcanic archipelago comprising more than 900 islands and atolls, with a population of over 720,000 scattered over 9 provinces. While 80% of the population lives in rural areas, the urban population is growing at 5% annually. Solomon Islands is governed by a prime minister chosen by the Parliament, which is elected by popular vote. The economy is based largely on subsistence

agriculture supplemented by cash cropping (cocoa and palm oil), fishing, forestry and mining. The country is prone to cyclones, earthquakes, flood, and political, social and civil instability.

Health System and Health Situation

Solomon Islands has made significant progress in increasing life expectancy and reducing childhood mortality. However, the country faces a rising burden of non-communicable diseases (NDCs), a resurgence of infectious diseases including malaria, and poor access to safe drinking water and sanitation. The COVID-19 pandemic impacted delivery of essential health services, especially for women, children and people with disabilities, and reversed economic, social and environmental gains.



2024 – 2029 Consultation – Country/Area Priorities and Deliverables

Achieve Universal Health Care (UHC) through integrated people-centered quality health services.

- Increase access to essential, quality healthcare services with a particular focus on strengthening primary care systems and reaching the vulnerable and unreached.
 - Optimize health financing to expand healthcare access, quality, and sustainability, including by increasing public funding, reducing out-of-pocket costs for patients, and allocating resources efficiently.
- Build a health workforce with the skills, support and numbers to provide quality care where it is needed.
 - Strengthen integrated health service delivery by promoting coordination across programs, patient-focused services modes and use of technologies such as telemedicine.
 - Strengthen health sector governance and accountability, supported by strengthening health information systems and optimized use of health data.

Strategic Priority

1. Expand support for the health workforce, infrastructure, equipment, supplies.
2. Strengthen quality, standards, governance, financing at all levels of care, prioritizing maternal child health and communicable disease.
3. Improve health information systems and leverage digital health technologies.

Strengthen communication channels and strategies across all levels of the health systems

Details: <https://www.who.int/countries/slb/>



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization *Collaboration with UNESCO*

Solomon Islands are UNESCO Member States since 1993



East Rennell

East Rennell makes up the southern third of Rennell Island, the southernmost island of the Solomon Island group between the western Pacific. Rennell, 86 km long X 15 km wide, is the largest raised coral atoll in the world. The site includes approximately 37,000 ha and a marine area extending 3 nautical miles to sea. A major feature of the island is Lake Tegano, which as the former lagoon on the atoll. The lake, the largest in the insular pacific (15,500 ha), is brackish and contains many rugged limestone islands and endemic species. Rennell is mostly covered with dense forest, with canopy averaging 20 m in height. Combined with the strong climatic effects of frequent cyclones, the site is a true natural laboratory for scientific study. The site is under customary land ownership and management.

Approximately, 1,200 people and the Polynesian origin occupy four villages within the boundaries of the property, living mainly by subsistence gardening, hunting and fishing.



Disaster Risk Platform Project

The Solomon Islands is highly vulnerable to a range of natural hazards, including tropical cyclones, earthquakes, tsunamis and floods. Strengthening disaster risk reduction and early warning systems is a national priority, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the United Nations' Early Warning for All Initiative.

This consultancy aims to strengthen understanding of the Solomon Islands' vulnerability landscape by identifying, collecting and consolidating hazard and socio-economic vulnerability data, as part of supporting

the development of an accessible and sustainable data management system. The development of a national data platform will support disaster preparedness, response planning and the sustainable management of risk-related data.

Strengthening STI Policies for Sustainable Development in Asia-Pacific

In the face of today's social and environmental challenges, we need policies and policy instruments that make science inclusive, transparent, and accessible to all, grounded in the human right to science. The program guides participants through the full process of creating and implementing STI policies, focusing on 4 key areas: 1. Making STI policies in context of SDGs; 2. STI policy instrument design; 3. STI policy instrument implementation; 4. STI policy monitoring and evaluation.

Details: <https://www.unesco.org/en/countries/sb>

Education-for-All and Health-for-all

Bulletin Board

Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Adopted at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit on 25 September 2015

.....Continued The Sustainable Development Goal

Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

Technology

17.6 Enhance North-South, South-South and triangular regional and international cooperation on the access to science, technology and innovation and enhance knowledge sharing on mutually agreed terms, including through improved coordination among existing mechanisms, in particular at the United Nations level, and through a global technology facilitation mechanism.

17.7 Promote the development, transfer, dissemination and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries on favorable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed.

17.8 Fully operationalize the technology bank and science, technology and innovation capacity-building mechanism for least developed countries by 2017 and enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communication technologies.

Capacity-building

17.9 Enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all the sustainable development goals, including through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation.

To be continued



Collaboration with UN University (UNU)

UNU-WIDER (World Institute for Development Economics Research)

Expert Series on Health Economics

A Survey of Growth and Development Issues of the Pacific Islands

This paper is a survey of some key variables with an international dimension and implications for growth and development policies in selected Pacific Island countries. Results from a simple growth accounting exercise show that factor accumulation is the most dominant growth factor and that the contribution of total factor productivity is negligible. Therefore, increasing the investment rate to improve growth rate is a pragmatic medium-term policy option. Further, economic analysis shows that foreign aid has a negligible effect on output and growth in Fiji, Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea.

The Pacific island countries (PICs) share common problems with many developing countries, but there are some special economic problems that are unique to the PICs. These include diseconomies of scale in production and exchange of goods and services, high vulnerability to natural disasters and remoteness from major ports and export markets. Further, these countries concentrate on the production of few primary commodities due to narrow resource bases and limited production facilities. PICs are high dependent on imports of both intermediate and finished goods, while diversification in exports is limited. Most of the PICs have experienced, on average, low growth in output over the past decade and their growth rates have shown large variations.

Some important issues pertaining to migration from the PICs can be noted:

1. The persistent pull and push factors that drive migration are political problems, higher learning opportunities, better standards of living and education in the destination countries.
2. Migration benefits the countries through remittances and absorption of excess labor; and
3. Migration tends to be harmful especially in smaller countries because it is difficult to replace human capital.

Thus, in general, we can say that migration is seen as a hinderance to growth in the countries of origin.

A negative relationship seems to exist between foreign debt and economic growth, and issues of trade arrangement and the bargaining powers of the PICs are important. From our empirical investigations, authors concluded, factor accumulation is the most dominant growth factor in these countries and that the contribution of total factor productivity is small. Overseas development aid has a negligible or negative growth effect in Fiji, Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea. Finally authors claim that their conclusions are definitive because of data limitations and because the survey of limited quantitative and regression results on the effects of aid on output and growth indicated that they have some drawbacks. Nevertheless, authors hope that this paper has provided a few useful methodological guidelines for further work on the growth of PICs.

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

Two Articles of Highest Impact, July 2026

Editor's Choice – Journal Club

Fully open-access with no article-processing charges

Our friendship has no boundaries. We welcome your contributions.

1. **Autism Spectrum Disorder: Part 1.** [AutismSpectrumDisorder-Part-1.pdf](#)
WHEC Publications. Funding: WHEC Global Initiatives are funded by a grant from an anonymous donor. Join us at WHEC Global Health Line for discussion and contributions.
2. **Autism Spectrum Disorder: Part 2.** [Autism-Spectrum-Disorder-Part-2.pdf](#)
WHEC Publications. Funding: WHEC Global Initiatives are funded by a grant from an anonymous donor. Join us at WHEC Global Health Line for discussion and contributions.

Partnership for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health (World Health Organization)
PMNCH Member

Worldwide service is provided by the WHEC Global Health Line



From Editor's Desk

WHEC Projects under Development

Sustainable Solution for A Better World: Cooperatives



Cooperatives (co-ops) - All over the world Cooperatives are driving inclusive and Sustainable solutions for a better future. From health and housing to agriculture, finance, and clean energy, co-ops are delivering real-world solutions that are inclusive, democratic, and sustainable. They are showing how it is possible to build strong communities by putting people, planet, and purpose before profit.

In a time of growing global challenges, this year's theme speaks volumes. Cooperatives – businesses owned and run by and for their members – are showing how it is possible to build strong communities by putting people, planet, and purpose before benefit. From health and housing to agriculture, finance, and clean energy, co-ops are delivering real-world solutions that are inclusive, democratic and sustainable.

Brief History of Co-operative and Movement

The earliest record of a co-operative comes from Scotland in March 14, 1761. In 1844 a group of 28 artisans working in the cotton mills in north of England established the first modern co-operative business. Co-operatives have been acknowledged as associations and enterprises through which citizens can effectively improve their lives while contributing to the economic, social, cultural and political advancement of their community and nation. The co-operative movement has been recognized as a distinct and major stakeholder in both national and international affairs.

Co-operatives' open membership model affords access to wealth creation and poverty elimination. This results from the co-operative principle of members' economic participation: 'Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their co-operative.' Because co-operatives are people centered, no capital centered, they do not perpetuate, nor accelerate capital concentration and they

distribute wealth in more fair way. Co-operatives also foster external equality. As they are community based, they are committed to the sustainable development of their communities – environmentally, socially and economically. This commitment can be seen in their support for community activities, local sourcing of supplies to benefit the local economy, and in decision-making that considers the impact on their communities.

Despite their local community focus, co-operatives also aspire to bring the benefits of their economic and social model to all people in the world. Globalization should be governed by a set of values such as those of the co-operative movement; otherwise, it creates more inequality and excesses that render it unsustainable.

The co-operative movement is highly democratic, locally autonomous, but internationally integrated, and a form of organization of associations and enterprises whereby citizens themselves rely on self-help and their own responsibility to meet goals that include not only economic, but also social and environmental objectives, such as overcoming poverty, securing productive employment and encouraging social integration.

Facts and Figures

- More than 12% of humanity is part of any of the 3 million co-operatives on earth;
- The 300 largest cooperatives or mutual report a total turnover of 2,409.41 billion USD while providing the services and infrastructure society needs to thrive;
- Cooperatives contribute to the sustainable development, economic development and stable, quality employment, providing jobs or work opportunities to 280 million people across the globe – 10% of the world's employed population.
- More than 306 organizations from 105 countries are members of the International Cooperative Alliance.



Cooperative Principles

- Voluntary and Open Membership,
- Democratic Member Control,
- Member Economic Participation,
- Autonomy and Independence,
- Education, Training, and information,
- Cooperation among cooperatives,
- Concern for community.

These guidelines notes give detailed guidance and advice on the practical application of the Principles to cooperative enterprise. They aim to help cooperators run their cooperatives more efficiently and effectively. We also hope that they will be a worldwide resource for educators, learners, regulators, decision makers, public authorities, and for others seeking to understand how the Principles are to be applied in practice.

UN Resolution recognizes the role of cooperatives to accelerate the 2030 Agenda.

The text recommends ways to celebrate and encourages all Member States, the United Nations, and relevant stakeholders to leverage the Cooperatives Day – to promote cooperative's contribution to social and economic development.

Cooperatives build a better future!

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/cooperatives-day>



In The News

Honoring A Timeless Partner



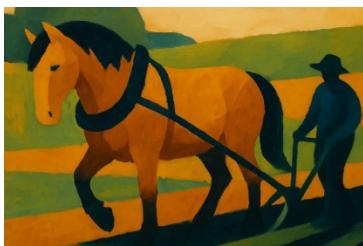
Horses have quietly shaped human history for thousands of years – ploughing fields, carrying armies, connecting cultures, and healing hearts. Today, over 112 million working equids help sustain the livelihood of 600 million people. World Horse Day is for global awareness of the vital roles horses play – and the rising challenges they face.

It is time to celebrate, protect, and stand by these remarkable companions. Through the history and around the world, humans have had a close relationship with horses for transport, for work and for sport.

From ancient nomads on the Eurasian steppes to modern Olympic arenas and backyards barns, horses have carried goods, ploughed fields, won wars and comforted hearts. Even in today's high-tech world, draft horses still work organic farms, mounted rangers protect wildlife, and therapy ponies bring joy to hospitals.

In recognition of this lasting partnership, the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution 79/291, declaring "World Horse Day" – the resolution calls on governments, schools, businesses and individuals to celebrate the role of horses – and to tackle the challenges they face in the modern world.

The numbers speak for themselves: the Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO's) data counted around 60.8 million horses globally in 2023, although they were unevenly distributed. The United States (US) has 2.41 million horses and ponies on over 63,000 farms, while the European Unions (EU) supports a herd of about 7 million equines and 800,000 jobs in breeding, sport and tourism. In Mongolia, horses are still part of the daily life – with 3.4 million horses for 3.3 million people.



Beyond sports and industry, horses, donkeys and mules are vital to rural life: a joint study by the world Organization for Animal Health and FAO estimates that 112 million working equids support the livelihood of around 600 million people in low- and middle-income countries. These animal carry water, transport crops, and support families every day.

But the conditions horses face are getting tougher. According to the World Meteorological Organization, 2024 was first full year with global temperatures exceeding 1.5°C above preindustrial levels. This increases heat stress for working and sport horses alike. From cooling lanes at Olympic events to new global welfare standards, adapting to a changing climate is not essential.

World Horse Day is more than a celebration – it is a call to protect one of the humanity's oldest partnerships, which still helps feed us, support our economies, and lift our spirits.

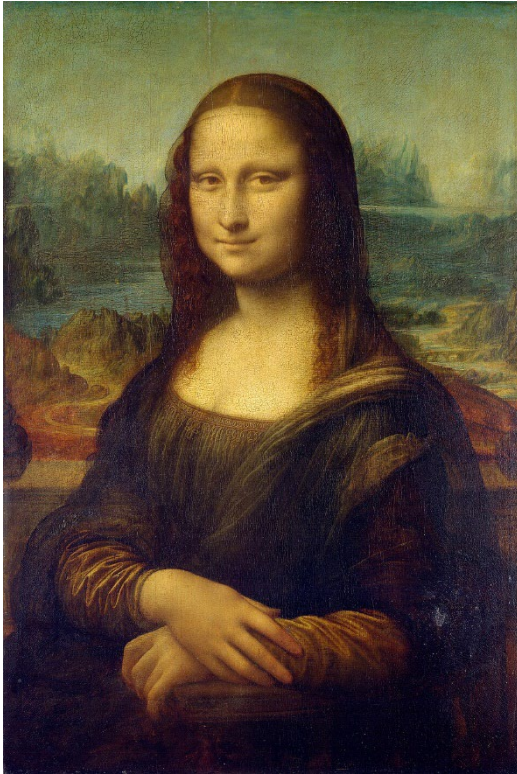
The horse (*Equus ferus caballus*) was domesticated in the Eurasian steppes around 4,000 BC. In early times the horse was an essential form of land transport and traction but also provided meat, hair and leather. Horses still fulfill these traditional roles in many parts of the world – South America, Asia, Africa and Eastern Europe. Elsewhere it is of great economic importance to sport and leisure industries.

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/horse-day>

Art & Science

Art that touches our soul

Mona Lisa by Leonardo da Vinci



Lisa del Giocondo was a member of the Gherardini family of Florence and Tuscany in Italy. Her name was given to *Mona Lisa*, her portrait commissioned by her husband and painted by Leonardo da Vinci during the Italian Renaissance. Little is known about Lisa's life. Married as a teenager to a cloth and silk merchant who later became a local official, she was mother to five children and led what is thought to have been a comfortable and ordinary middle-class life.

Lisa outlived her husband, who was about 20 years her senior. Centuries after Lisa's death, *Mona Lisa* became the world's most famous painting, and took on a life separate from Lisa, the woman.

It has been described as "the best known, the most visited, the most written about, the most sung about, and the most parodied work of art in the world." It is painted in oil on a white poplar pane. Leonardo never gave the painting to the Giocondo family. It was believed to have been painted between 1503 and 1506; however, Leonardo may have continued working on it as late as 1517. King Francis I of France acquired *Mona Lisa* after Leonardo's death in 1519, and it now the property of the French Republic. It has normally been on display at the Louvre in Paris since 1797.

The *Mona Lisa* is one of most valuable paintings in the world. It holds the Guinness World Record for the highest known painting insurance valuation in history at US\$ 100 million in 1962, equivalent to \$1 billion as of 2023.

Dimensions 77 cm X 53 cm (30 in X 21 in);
Location: Louvre, Paris (France)

*Monthly newsletter of WHEC designed to keep you informed on
The latest UN and NGO activity*

<http://www.WomensHealthSection.com>

