



WHEC UPDATE

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

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Anniversary Edition

IMAGINE THIS. Coordinating policies, preventing misuse of the Internet and promoting evidence-based medicine worldwide from your office or home – it is one of the goals of our initiative. We are pleased to report, on 12 April 2014, Women's Health and Education Center (WHEC) celebrates its 13th birthday. Our much needed services are available in 226 countries and growing fast. Areas such as cyber-crime (e.g. fraud and child pornography) require coordinated global attention by lawmakers.

To keep pace with the fast-moving threats we face, the world needs a new era of global institution building. Cyberspace differs from the oceans or outer space in that its physical infrastructure is located primarily in sovereign states and in private hands – creating obvious risks of interference by parties pursuing their own interests. Since the dawn of the digital age, the United States (U.S.) has been the premier champion of an open, decentralized, and secure cyberspace that remains largely private. This posture is consistent with the long-standing U.S. belief that the free flow of information and ideas is a core component of a free, just, and open world and an essential bulwark against authoritarianism. But this vision of global governance in cyberspace is now under threat from three directions.

The first is the demand by many developing and authoritarian countries that regulation of the Internet be transferred from ICANN (the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers) – an independent, non-profit corporation based in Los Angeles, loosely supervised by the United States Department of Commerce – to UN's ITU (International Telecommunication Union). The second is growing epidemic of cybercrime, consisting mostly of attempts to steal proprietary information from private-sector actors. Thanks to sophisticated computer viruses, worms, and botnets, what might be termed "cyber public health" has deteriorated dramatically. And there is no cyberspace equivalent to the World Health Organization for dealing with such dangers.

The third major flashpoint is the growing specter of cyber-war among sovereign states. Dozens of nations have begun to develop doctrines and capabilities for conducting so-called information operations, not only to infiltrate but if necessary to disrupt and destroy the critical digital infrastructure (both military and civilian) of their adversaries. Yet there is no range of permissible responses; the normative and legal framework governing cyber-war has lagged behind cyber-weapons' development and use. Traditional forms of deterrence and retaliation are also complicated, given the difficulty of attributing attacks to particular perpetrators.

No single United Nations treaty could simultaneously regulate cyber-warfare, counter cybercrime, and protect the civil liberties of Internet users. Liberal and authoritarian regimes disagree on the definition of "cyber security" and how to achieve it, with the latter generally seeing the free exchange of ideas and information not as a core value but as a potential threat to their stability, and there are various practical hurdles to including cyber-weapons in traditional arms control and non-proliferation negotiations.

Make your voice heard. We have successfully coordinated growth of ***WomensHealthSection.com***; thousands of new networks, new policy procedures, new protocols etc. All of them constantly balance the needs and stability of today's Internet with future demands.

Lost in Cyberspace
Rita Luthra, MD

Your Questions, Our Reply

What steps the United States could take to strengthen good Internet governance and global governance?
What is the best way to provide security for the global commons, and in so doing, bolster world order?

Governing The Contested Commons: The gap between the demand for the supply of global governance is greatest when it comes to the global commons, those spaces no nation controls but on which all rely for security and prosperity. The most important of these are the maritime, outer space, and cyberspace domains, which carry the flows of goods, data, capital, people, and ideas on which globalization rests. Ensuring free and unencumbered access to these realms is therefore a core interest not only of the United States but the most other nations as well. For almost seven decades, the United States has provided security for the global commons, and in so doing, has bolstered world order. Supremacy at sea – and more recently, in outer space and online – has also conferred strategic advantages on the United States, allowing it to project power globally. But as the commons become crowded and cutthroat, that supremacy is fading. Preserving the openness, stability, and resilience of the global commons will require the United States to forge agreement among like-minded nations, rising powers, and private stakeholders on new rules of the road.

Global disorder is here to stay, so the challenge is to make it work as well as possible. “Global governance” is a slippery term. It refers not to world government (which nobody expects or wants anymore) but to something more practical: the collective effort by sovereign states, international organizations, and other non-state actors to address common challenges and seize opportunities that transcend national frontiers. Governance in the international or transnational sphere is more complex and ambiguous.

The history of global governance is the story of adaptation to new technologies. Today, the furious pace of technological change risks leaving global governance in the dust. The growing gap between what technological advances permit and what the international system is prepared to regulate can be seen in multiple areas, from drones and synthetic biology to nanotechnology and geo-engineering.

Rather than try to tackle all problems at once, aid agencies should focus on achieving the minimal institutional requirements for progress. International donors should put their long, well-intentioned checklists aside and focus instead on “good enough governance”. This advice to lower expectations and start with the necessary and possible is even more applicable in the international sphere, given all the obstacles in the way of sweeping institutional reform there. Achieving some measure of “good enough” global governance might be less satisfying, but it would be much better than nothing, and it might even work.

The case for good enough global governance – investing in people.

United Nations At A Glance

United States Mission to the United Nations

The Office of the U.S. Mission to the United Nations in Washington is led by the Deputy to the U.S. Permanent Representative and coordinates closely with the White House, the National Security Council, the State Department, and entities throughout the U.S. Government to advance U.S. policy, security, and political issues related to the United Nations.

Billions of people face threats from poverty, disease, environmental degradation, rampant criminality, extremism, and violence where states and public institutions cannot provide security or essential services to their own citizens. Conflict-ridden and fragile states also can incubate these and other threats that rarely remain confined within national borders. Indeed, some of the world’s most dangerous forces are manifest in or enabled by precisely these contexts.

President Obama has long stressed the importance of working with others to promote sustainable economic development, combat poverty, enhance food and economic security, curb conflict and help strengthen democracy and governing institutions. The Obama Administration is also committed to supporting broad-based and sustainable economic development, including making the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) America's goals. This is a broad but crucial agenda for the United States that will enhance our own security in an interconnected world. It is one that requires engagement from many different elements of the international community but where the United Nations has a unique and critical role to play.

The U.S. Mission's Legal Section provides counsel and service on all matters of an international legal character arising in the course of United States participation in the United Nations. Members of the Legal Section represent the United States in the UN Legal Committee of the General Assembly, the Security Council and its subsidiary bodies, and other UN bodies.

Details: <http://www.usunnewyork.usmission.gov/>

Collaboration with World Health Organization (WHO)

World Health Day 2014: Small bite, big threat

The topic for 2014 is vector-borne diseases



World Health Day is celebrated on 7 April every year to mark the anniversary of the founding of WHO in 1948. Each year a theme is selected that highlights a priority area of public health. The Day provides an opportunity for individuals in every community to get involved in activities that can lead to better health.

The topic for 2014 is vector-borne diseases

What are vectors and vector-borne diseases?

Vectors are organisms that transmit pathogens and parasites from one infected person (or animal) to another. Vector-borne diseases are illnesses caused by these pathogens and parasites in human populations. They are most commonly found in tropical areas and places where access to safe drinking-water and sanitation systems is problematic.

The most deadly vector-borne disease, malaria, caused an estimated 660 000 deaths in 2010. Most of these were African children. However, the world's fastest growing vector-borne disease is dengue, with a 30-fold increase in disease incidence over the last 50 years. Globalization of trade and travel and environmental challenges such as climate change and urbanization are having an impact on transmission of vector-borne diseases, and causing their appearance in countries where they were previously unknown.



In recent years, renewed commitments from ministries of health, regional and global health initiatives – with the support of foundations, nongovernmental organizations, the private sector and the scientific community – have helped to lower the incidence and death rates from some vector-borne diseases.

World Health Day 2014 will spotlight some of the most commonly known

vectors – such as mosquitoes, sandflies, bugs, ticks and snails – responsible for transmitting a wide range of parasites and pathogens that attack humans or animals. Mosquitoes, for example, not only transmit malaria and dengue, but also lymphatic filariasis, chikungunya, Japanese encephalitis and yellow fever.

Vectors are small organisms such as mosquitoes, bugs, ticks and freshwater snails that can carry disease from person to person and place to place. They can put our health at risk, at home and when we travel. The World Health Day 2014 campaign focuses on some of the main vectors and the diseases they cause and what we can all do to protect ourselves. Check the site regularly for tools and materials that will help you prepare for your World Health Day activities.

- [Goals for World Health Day](#)
- [Information about vector-borne diseases](#)

WHO Reproductive Health Update

International Day of Zero Tolerance to female genital mutilation (FGM)

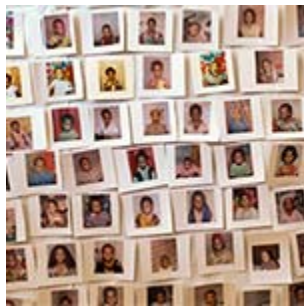


Photo: R. Johnson
Images of girls not subjected to FGM

More than 125 million girls and woman alive today have been cut in the 29 countries in Africa and the Middle East where FGM is concentrated. Furthermore, due to migration, surprising numbers of cases of FGM are coming to light in other parts of the world as well.

As part of the International Day of Zero Tolerance to FGM, we profiled Dr. Jasmine Abdulcadir, a physician in a multidisciplinary group of healthcare providers offering services to women in Geneva who have been subjected to FGM.

[Read the interview](#) | [More on WHO's work on FGM](#)

Bulletin of the World Health Organization; Complete list of [contents](#) for Volume 92, Number 4, April, 229-308

Collaboration with UN University (UNU)

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

Putting it all together: Aggregating impacts of school-feeding programmes on education, health and nutrition: two proposed methodologies

School-feeding is an important intervention to attract children to school and augment their learning. The benefits of school-feeding cover several domains. Key to the overall assessment of these benefits is understanding how different implementation models compare to each other and to other interventions with similar aims and objectives. Herein, we outline two approaches to aggregating outcomes for school-feeding. One involves a discreet choice experiment to derive utility scores combining outcomes into one measure. The other focuses on quality-adjusted school days as a measure that encompasses the varied benefits from school-feeding. The discrete choice experiment offers a robust method to integrate utility for different benefits. However, it necessitates a complex design. The quality-adjusted school days method has greater simplicity. When developed, different interventions that aim to foster learning could be meaningfully compared.

Pros and cons of each approach

The Discrete Choice Experiment (DCE) offers a very robust method (from economic theory) to estimate and integrate utility for different benefits of school-feeding. On the other hand, it necessitates a relatively complex design in which experts and then practitioners have to be interviewed to assess utilities. The quality-adjusted school days method has the advantage of greater simplicity; its modelling stems from existing research and relies on practitioner's opinion to convert gains in learning into school days. However, it is possible that the method used to arrive at an integrated indicator may be less robust than the one offered by DCE. Both approaches could be tried separately, allowing for comparison of results and adjustments. Both methods are subject to the limitation that they do not include the benefits observed at the household level, either those obtained through income transfer due to feeding children at school or income increase through selling merchandises to the programme (in case the family is producing them, i.e. small scale farmer).

Moreover, both approaches are likely to be context and country specific, both in terms of the weightings for the different outcomes and for the standards for learning achievement. Generalizing these context specific parameters is not straightforward. In any case, a new integrated indicator for school-feeding is achievable through the implementation of either method. When developed, they can offer a relatively easy to obtain metrics that will significantly help to compare this and other interventions that aim to foster learning. Thus, the education sector will be able to compare interventions much like the health sector has been doing for many years (Robinson 1993). This, taken together with evidence on outcomes and process from systematic and realist reviews, can inform policy makers who need to make difficult choices about allocation of scarce resources.

Publisher: UNU-WIDER; Authors: Aulo Gelli, Francisco Espejo, Jing Shen, and Elizabeth Kristjansson; Sponsor: 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 ReCom. UNU-WIDER also gratefully acknowledges core financial support to its work programme from the governments of Denmark, Finland, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

*(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)

United States of America: Background

Guided by a commitment to build a world fit for children, the U.S. Fund for UNICEF -- in partnership with individuals, non-governmental organizations, foundations and corporations -- works to advocate for the world's children, increase awareness among the U.S. public of children's needs and raise funds in support of UNICEF's work.

The U.S. Fund for UNICEF was established in 1947 and is the oldest of the 37 national committees that support UNICEF. Since its creation, it has provided more than \$1.3 billion in cash and gifts-in-kind to support UNICEF's worldwide programmes, with special emphasis on immunization, girls' education, HIV/AIDS, nutrition and emergency relief.

The Fund is based in New York and has chapter offices in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Houston and Los Angeles, as well as smaller volunteer committees across the country. Staff and supporters are involved in a wide variety of efforts – from the Campaign to Save Mothers and Babies from Tetanus and the sale of UNICEF greeting cards and gifts, to efforts to secure an annual contribution from the U.S. Government to UNICEF.

Let's Talk! Discussion on 'A Girl's Right to Learn without Fear'

Around the world, there is an estimated 66 million girls who are denied their right to education. To speak more in-depth on this issue, a dynamic panel followed the opening remarks, moderated by Sarah Hendriks, the Global Gender Advisor of Plan International. The discussion touched upon findings from Plan's global report, [A Girl's Right to Learn without Fear: Working to End Gender-Based Violence at School](#) which was also launched at the event. The panelists included: Marcela, a member from the Because I am a Girl Youth Speakers Bureau; Rosemary McCarney, President and CEO of Plan Canada; Seodi White, Lawyer and National Coordinator of Women in Law in Southern Africa; and Robert Prouty, Lead Education Specialist, World Bank.

Details: http://www.ungei.org/infobycountry/usa_1344.html

To be Continued.....

Top Two-Articles Accessed in March 2014

1. Healthy Mother Healthy Infant Through Nutrition;
<http://www.womenshealthsection.com/content/obs/obs029.php3>
WHEC Publications. Special thanks to WHO, CDC, and NIH for the contributions and to our reviewers for helpful suggestions.
2. The Obstetric Fistulae in Developing World;
<http://www.womenshealthsection.com/content/urogvvf/urogvvf009.php3>
WHEC Publications. Special thanks to WHO and UNFPA for contributions. Funding provided by WHEC Initiative for Global Health. We thank our partners for this endeavor. Join our efforts – we welcome everyone.

From Editor's Desk

World health report 2013: Research for universal health coverage



Everyone should have access to the health services they need without being forced into poverty when paying for them. The World health report 2013 "Research for universal health coverage" argues that universal health coverage – with full access to high-quality services for prevention, treatment and financial risk protection – cannot be achieved without the evidence provided by scientific research.

Three key messages from The world health report:

- Universal health coverage, with full access to high-quality services for health promotion, prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, palliation and financial risk protection, cannot be achieved without evidence from research. Research has the power to address a wide range of questions about how we can reach universal coverage, providing answers to improve human health, well-being and development.
- All nations should be producers of research as well as consumers. The creativity and skills of researchers should be used to strengthen investigations not only in academic centres but also in public health programmes, close to the supply of and demand for health services.

- Research for universal health coverage requires national and international backing. To make the best use of limited resources, systems are needed to develop national research agendas, to raise funds, to strengthen research capacity, and to make appropriate and effective use of research findings.

WHO’s role in research for universal health coverage

This report began with the observation that universal health coverage underpins “the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health”, which is a pillar of WHO’s constitution and a guiding force in all the Organization’s work. Throughout the report we have explained why research is vital for achieving universal health coverage, and consequently for improving the health of all people around the world. The WHO Strategy on Research for Health is a mechanism to support health research whereby WHO works alongside governments, funding agencies, partnerships, nongovernmental and civil society organizations, philanthropists and commercial investors, among others. Simply put, the goal of the WHO strategy is to cultivate the highest-quality research that delivers the greatest health benefits to the maximum number of people. In keeping with the essential functions needed to carry out research, WHO’s role is to advance research that addresses the dominant health needs of its Member States, to support national health research systems, to set norms and standards for the proper conduct of research, and to accelerate the translation of research findings into health policy and practice.

As the principal international agency for health, WHO has a key role in promoting and conducting research for universal health coverage. In terms of monitoring, a global research observatory needs wide representation, should be able to develop and apply appropriate standards, and should garner the necessary international support. In terms of coordination, WHO hosts numerous research advisory committees with wide representation. And in terms of financing, TDR and UNITAID, both hosted by WHO, are potential mechanisms for disbursing research funds. As these possibilities are explored further, WHO is working to reinforce core functions. One of these is to ensure that the Organization’s own guidelines reflect the best available evidence from research.

- [Full report: Research for universal health coverage](#)
- [Main messages of the report](#)
- [Video: The many paths towards universal health coverage](#)

Words of Wisdom

Every moment a beginning.
Every moment an end.

– Mark Salzman; American writer (Iron & Silk)

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

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

