



## WHEC Update

### Briefing of worldwide activity of the Women's Health and Education Center (WHEC)

September 2018; Vol. 13. No. 09

### *Shaping the Future*

We live in a world that is more interdependent and interconnected than at any time in humanity's history. Still, international relations and people's lives are defined by laws and norms based on sovereign States and bilateral and multilateral relations between them. In this edition of **WHEC Update** the notion of global citizenship is discussed as offering a possible path to a place where people are concerned not only with problems and challenges in their immediate surroundings, but also with those that transcend geography and political borders.

The creation of the United Nations (UN) in 1945 established a new platform for cooperation and collaboration which aimed to achieve a more peaceful and prosperous world for everyone. While much success has been achieved by the UN System in sustainable development, peace and security, human rights and humanitarian support, new challenges have arisen that are beyond the capacity of any one individual State or organization to resolve on its own. This necessitate a new paradigm of cooperation and collaboration between States and among the peoples of the world.

The idea of global citizenship goes back a long way, but in its current iteration it played its most significant role in the process that began with the UN in 1945 and the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, continuing with the adoption of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement in 2015. This has been a period during which lessons were learned, tragedies were experience and progress was made and during which the idea and the institutions promoting an inherent and universal dignity of the human person gradually matured.

We are optimistic about further progress. Admittedly, much remains to be done but we have a new and vital force – global citizenship. That is why it is crucial for society and decision makers to work together. The partnership will help us to create a global ethic, based on the accountability and universal solidarity of active global citizens. The cooperation must be inclusive, benefiting from regional differences and universal experiences.

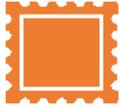
Understanding the concept of global citizenship and education of active global citizens, as an element of positive change for the promotion of Women's Rights and Women's Health is the core of various initiatives. We know that there is still a legal backlog and that much remains to be done to achieve gender equity and women's economic empowerment, and to eradicate abuse and violence against women and girls.

There is also an increased use of the Internet and social media by terrorists and their supporters to recruit and incite young people, as well as their sense of identity and belonging, are often weak and low. Now the orientation of education matters, and not just its quality. Against this backdrop, there has been increased attention placed on **Global Citizenship Education** as a fundamental and long-term approach to tackling rising global challenges. We are currently facing unprecedented challenges, including continued conflicts, increased violent extremism and obstacles to sustainable development. These challenges are global in their scope and interwoven in nature. Let us join our forces!

What does global citizenship mean to you? We invite you to share Your perspectives on the global citizenship. Join the discussion on **WHEC Global Health Line (WGHL)**.

Understanding Global Citizenship

**Rita Luthra, MD**



## Your Questions, Our Reply

Why global citizenship education is essential? How its discourse has been advanced?  
How global citizenship will shape people's attitudes and the world?

**Key Concepts of Global Citizenship:** There is a great need for a holistic and integrated approach comprising all three pillars of the United Nations, which are:

1. Peace and Security;
2. Development; and
3. Human Rights.

Transforming our world and to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, also explicitly emphasizes global citizenship. Global Citizen Education very much focuses on, first, respect for human dignity, human rights and other universal values as its defining purpose and goal. This recognition of the importance of respect for dignity should be present in global citizenship education throughout one's life, turning it into the process defined in the 1996 Delors Report to UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) as "Learning to be." Viewed as a lifelong opportunity to fulfil one's potential, it is crucial for helping people to better develop their personalities and to "be able to act with ever growing autonomy, judgment and personal responsibility."

In this initiative and based on this sense of human dignity and universal values, students will learn these relationships:

- Relationships with people;
- Relationships with people in need; and
- Relationships with the planet.

Moving towards a more peaceful, just and inclusive society and world where youth will be the agent for change and human dignity will be fully preserved is the central of our initiatives with UNESCO and UNICEF. We must promote increased community and societal dialogue. Promoting culture of peace should be reinforced. More approaches that focus on root causes of conflict alongside the concept of sustainable peace and peacebuilding should also be taken into consideration.

Education today has a rare opportunity to contribute sustainability to peace and security. Global citizenship should be promoted as a 'global social movement' or 'global social contract' so that human dignity of all is both restored and preserved. Our current world should positively transform into the world we want. This is certainly possible, particularly if we are determined and work together based on passion and compassion.

Global citizenship should be a sustainable mechanism and strategic process where human dignity will take center stage. It should be a litmus test as an overarching and a goal of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as the United Nations as a whole. The stakes are too high and urgent to lose and now they are firmly in our hands to make the world more peaceful, just, inclusive and sustainable.

**Editors ask: Is Global Citizenship Education an imagined destiny or improbable dream?**

It is increasingly likely that the graduates of American schools and universities either will supervise or be supervised by someone of a different ethnic, national or racial background. It is also likely that the work of their employers and activities of their families will be influenced in profound ways by suppliers, customers, clients and others who are of a different cultural background. In addition, in many parts of the world it is likely that neighbors, or the schoolmates of their children, will be of a different heritage. Thus, we can expect that the lives of school and university graduate will be affected directly by an increasingly diverse society and interdependent world community.

Join the movement!



## United Nations at a Glance

### Permanent Mission of Gabon at the United Nations

Gabon became UN Member State on 20 September 1960



**Gabon**, officially the **Gabonese Republic** is a sovereign state on the west coast of Central Africa. Located on equator, Gabon is bordered by Equatorial Guinea to northwest, Cameroon to the north, the Republic of the Congo on the east and south, and the Gulf of Guinea to the west. It has an area of nearly 270,000 square kilometers (100,000 sq. mil) and its population is estimated at 2 million people. Its capital and the largest city is Libreville.

Since its independence from France in 1960, Gabon has had three presidents. In the early 1990s, Gabon introduced a multi-party system and a new democratic constitution that allowed for more transparent electoral process and reformed many governmental institutions. Gabon was also a temporary member of the United Nations Security Council for the 2010 – 2011 term.

Abundant petroleum and foreign private investment have helped make Gabon one of the most prosperous countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, with the 4<sup>th</sup> highest HDI and the fourth highest GDP per capita, after Mauritius, Equatorial Guinea and Seychelles, in the region. GDP grew by more than 6% per year from 2010 to 2012. However, because of inequality in income distribution, a significant proportion of the proportion of the population remains poor.

### Foreign Relations

Since independence, Gabon has followed a non-aligned policy, advocating dialogue in international affairs and recognizing each side of divided countries. Gabon is a member of the United Nations (UN) and some of its specialized and related agencies, as well as the World Bank; the IMF; the African Union (AU); the Central African Customs Union/Central African Economic and Monetary Community (UDEAC/CEMAC); EU/ACP association under the Lomé Convention; the Communauté Financière Africaine (CFA); the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC); the Nonaligned Movement; and the Economic Community of Central African States; among others. In 1995 Gabon withdrew from the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), rejoining in 2016. Gabon was elected to a non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council for January 2010 through December 2011 and held the rotating presidency in March 2010

UN Data on Gabon: <http://data.un.org/en/iso/ga.html>

## Collaboration with World Health Organization (WHO)

### WHO | Gabon



#### Health Situation

Malaria, premature birth, acute respiratory infections, HIV and diarrheal diseases are the leading causes of death among children under 5. Penta-3 immunization coverage is 79% and measles immunization coverage is 71% (2012). Gabon has fulfilled the standard criteria for certification of polio eradication. Since surveillance was put in place in 1999, only one case of wild poliovirus has been detected. Although progress has been made, Gabon will not achieve SDGs in 2030.

Tuberculosis prevalence is 505 per 100,000 of population, with incidence estimated to be 450 per 100,000. Human African trypanosomiasis (HAT) incidence has risen in recent years. Also noteworthy is the emergence and re-emergence of diseases such as Chikungunya, dengue and Buruli ulcer, which has been responsible for outbreaks since 2007.

### **Health Policies and Systems**

In 2010, a new national health policy was adopted, with the goal of improving public health and well-being by reducing maternal, infant and child mortality and the prevalence of malaria, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, neglected tropical diseases and noncommunicable diseases. In 2011, Gabon adopted a national health policy that would expedite achievement of the health-related MDGs and SDGs.

The health system has several obstacles to contend with: some health departments are not operational, the quality of health care is poor, essential medicines are scarce, information systems are dysfunctional, and the community is not involved in the management of health issues. The principal challenges facing the health system are to reduce maternal and infant mortality, and to control communicable and non-communicable diseases. Issues related to health and the environment are also national priorities, within the scope of the Libreville Declaration.

### **Cooperation for Health**

Only 1.2% of health sector resources came from external sources in 2010. Because of its GDP, Gabon has few bilateral and multilateral partners willing to invest in the health sector. Partner support is very often technical in nature, with some project financing. Most support comes from the specialized agencies of the United Nations system: WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNAIDS, and UNDP. Gabon adheres to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness; accordingly, it collaborates with partners in the Harmonization for Health in Africa mechanism, the World Bank, the African Development Bank, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the French Development Agency and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Other bilateral partners (China, Italy, USA and Canada) and the private sector also provides support.

Details: <http://www.who.int/countries/gab/en/>

## **Bulletin Board**

### **Frequently Asked Questions:**

The website and The Journal <http://www.WomensHealthSection.com> is the publication of the Women's Health and Education Center (WHEC). The information in the various pages of the WHEC website is issued by the WHEC for general distribution. WHEC exercises copyright over its information to make sure that it is used in accordance with Copyright © WHEC <http://www.womenshealthsection.com/content/whec/copyright.php3> Extracts of WHEC information can be used for private study or for educational purposes without permission. Wider use requires permission to be obtained from WHEC.

### **Can I link to the <http://www.WomensHealthSection.com> from my website? How do I request a link from the <http://www.WomensHealthSection.com> to my site?**

Potentially any external website may add a hyperlink to the <http://www.WomensHealthSection.com> without requesting permission. However, this use must not infringe WHEC's intellectual property rights, relating to its name, emblem, copyright or author's rights. WHEC does not normally provide links to external websites unless there is a clear association with WHEC's activities.

### **Links from the WHEC website**

Because a link from <http://www.WomensHealthSection.com> may be interpreted as an endorsement by WHEC of everything on the site to which the link leads, WHEC does not normally provide such links unless there is a clear association with WHEC's activities.

### **Links to WHEC website**

In line with established Internet usage, any external website may provide a hyperlink to <http://www.WomensHealthSection.com>. However, this use must not infringe WHEC's intellectual property rights, relating to its name, emblem, copyright or author's rights. The WHEC emblem may not be used in providing a link.

### **I am doing research. Where should I start looking for information?**

For research on a women's health topic, begin by looking at the health topics list. Each health topic page provides sites of related sites, links and documents. The research tools page lists resources that can be used in research. These include statistical databases and the library databases resources that can be used in research. These include statistical databases and the library databases.

### **Why are countries referred to the way they are?**

The Women's Health and Education Center (WHEC) adheres to UN terminology, and it is based on information received from the United Nations.



## **Collaboration with UN University (UNU)**

*UNU-WIDER (World Institute for Development Economics Research)*

*Expert Series on Health Economics*

### **How Unpopular Policies are Made**

In this paper the authors consider four factors that shaped the development of migration policy intended to protect the rights of vulnerable migrant women. They are: the role players in the policy change proves, the debates that shaped the policy change, the role that research played and the political context in which the policy change took place.

Based on case studies from Bangladesh, South Africa, and Singapore, we trace the drivers of policy change in these contexts and how the gendered vulnerability of the intended beneficiaries impacted the policy proves. Our research showed that policy development is shaped by complex socio-political conditions. Understanding these conditions can help to make change advocacy more effective and contextually relevant.

The three case studies presented in this paper showed that gender and vulnerability were important contextual factors shaping the nature of migration policy in postcolonial countries. The authors have identified four divers of policy change.

Firstly, the nature of the role players showed that international and local actors played a role in policy change even though local activism was given greater impetus by international actors. Coalitions were central to balancing the power relations between NGOs and government. However, the women for whom the policy was developed were largely absent from the policy-making process. In addition, the context of gender and vulnerability shaped the nature of the debate about whether women's work constituted work and whether the state was intervening in private arrangements. Whilst evidence-based policy-making has become a catch phrase in many contexts, in these case studies research had a tenuous and even tangential relationship to policy change. Whilst it was valued it was also heavily contested and debated. Finally, the political context in each country shaped the nature of the policy change. We argue that in taking account of these factors advocates and policy makers can more effectively shift policy.

Publisher: Ingrid Palmary, Thea De Gruchy, Ali Ashraf, Koh Chiu Yee, Kellynn Wee, Charmain Goh, Brenda S.A. Yeoh. Sponsors: funded through income from an endowment

*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)*

### Accountability in Education: Meeting our commitments



#### UNESCO Publishing

There are today 264 million children and youth not going to school – this is a failure that we must tackle together, because education is a shared responsibility and progress can only be sustainable through common efforts. This is essential to meet the ambitions of Sustainable Development Goal on education (SDG4), part of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Governments, schools and teachers have a frontline role to play here, together with students themselves and parents.

Everyone has a role to play in improving education. This starts with citizens, supported by civil society organizations and research institutions, who point out gaps in equality, equitable education. In several countries, student movements have often swayed policies on equitable and affordable education, highlighting the power that we all share and must exercise to advance SDG4. International organizations have been in the lead also in shaping new goals and targets in line with the complex challenges of our times.

Accountability means being able to act when something is going wrong, through policy, legislation and advocacy, including through ombudspersons to protect citizens' rights. We need stronger mechanisms across the board to enshrine and enforce the right to education and hold all Governments to account for their commitments, including donors.

#### Defining accountability and prominent approaches

This report defines accountability as a process to help individuals or institutions meet responsibilities and reach goals. It consists of three elements:

1. Clearly defined responsibilities;
2. An obligation to provide an account of how responsibilities have been met, and
3. A legal, political, social, or moral justification for the obligation to account.

Multiple approaches are commonly used when implementing accountability.

Details: <http://www.ungei.org/resources/files/18.pdf>

*To be continued...*

### Two Articles of Highest Impact, August 2018

*Editors' Choice – Journal Club Discussions*

*Our friendship has no boundaries. We welcome your contributions.*

1. Women's Health and Human Rights;  
<http://www.womenshealthsection.com/content/heal/heal015.php3>  
WHEC Publications. Funding: WHEC Global Initiatives are funded by a grant from an anonymous donor.
2. Psychiatric Disorders During Pregnancy;  
<http://www.womenshealthsection.com/content/obsmd/obsmd017.php3>  
WHEC Publications. Funding: WHEC Global Initiatives are funded by a grant from an anonymous donor.



## From Editor's Desk

*A Perception Change Project*

### Our language, our culture



Why at all would we want to safeguard cultural and linguistic diversity? Is it important in context of Global Citizenship?

Linguistic Diversity in the Context of Global Citizenship is as important today as it was 100 years ago. Article 55 of the United Nations Charter signed 72 years ago, was written with much foresight. By recognizing that international cultural

cooperation, as well as universal respect for human rights without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion, are conditions necessary for well-being for all and friendly relations among nations, the Article laid the groundwork for cultural and linguistic diversity.

Language and culture are indeed key components of our identities and bind communities and nations together. *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* defines language as “a system of conventional spoken, manual, or written symbols by means of which human beings, as members of a social group and participants in its culture, express themselves. The functions of language include communication, the expression of identity, play, imaginative expression, and emotional release.”

Language and culture are intricately related and dependent on each other, shaping and serving as repositories of knowledge. They contribute to how we see ourselves and can determine with what groups we identify.



The wave of decolonization, which changed the face of the planet, was born with the UN and represents the world body's first great success. Because of decolonization many countries became independent and joined the UN. When the UN was founded in 1945, some 750 million people, nearly a third of the world's population, lived in Territories that were dependent of Colonial Powers. Today, fewer than 2 million people live under colonial rule in the 17 remaining non-self-governing territories. We live in a world where 96% of the estimated

6,909 languages recorded are spoken by only 4% of world's population moreover, about 6% of languages have more than 1 million speakers and collectively account for an estimated 94% of the world population. (Source: UNESCO)

Such strong claims for identity and a sense of belonging are signs that we must reverse the decline in cultural and linguistic diversity. This will require, among other things, an environment in which young people are taught and exposed to their mother tongue which at the same time also having the opportunity to learn other local and foreign languages. This typically means favorable national policies which protect minority languages and are supportive of education systems that encourage quality mother tongue instruction.

Humanity has always had to confront evolutionary challenges. It is incumbent on us, however, to lead change with vision, and manage challenges by ensuring that we safeguard the treasure of our cultural identity and linguistic diversity. Our increasingly interconnected world brings about the potential for meaningful intercultural dialogue and exchanges. Let us value, invest in and leverage diversity to serve as a bridge between cultures.

Let us be global citizens capable of harmony because we are enriched by local diversity. The challenge on our shared planet is to create balance between the urgent need to leverage cultural and linguistic

diversity to enhance intercultural dialogue and global understanding, without destroying our identity and our sense of belonging.

This is a task for all of us, from the individual to the community level to civil society, governments and international organization. The Women's Health and Education Center (WHEC) always has and always will stand for forging of partnerships that allow culture and language to flourish and ensure a future of dignity for all.

Join the movement!



## In The News

### UN Model Program



#### Bridging the Education Gap and Creating Global Citizenship

Model United Nations is an authentic simulation of the UN General Assembly, UN Security Council, or other multilateral body, which introduces students to the world of diplomacy, negotiation, and decision-making.

At Model UN, students step into the shoes of ambassadors of countries that are members of the UN, from Argentina to Zimbabwe.

The students, better known as "delegates," debate current issues on the organization's vast agenda. They prepare draft resolutions, plot strategy, negotiate with supporters and adversaries, resolve conflicts, and navigate the UN's rules of procedure – all in the interest of resolving problems that affect the world.

Before playing out their ambassadorial roles in Model UN, students research the global problem to be addressed. The problems are drawn from today's headlines. Model UN delegates learn how the international community acts on its concerns about peace and security, human rights, the environment, food and hunger, economic development, and globalization.

As many states move to implement standards for global citizenship, Model UN is proving to be an innovative resource to prepare students for career and college success.

About Global Classrooms; please visit:

<http://www.unausa.org/global-classrooms-model-un/about-global-classrooms-model-un>



## Words of Wisdom

### My Language

If I forget my native speech,  
And the songs that my people sing  
What use are my eyes and ears?  
What use is my mouth?

If I forget the smell of the earth

And do not serve it well  
What use are my hands?  
Why am I living in the world?

How can I believe the foolish idea  
That my language is weak and poor  
If my mother's last words  
Were in Evenki?

- Alitet N. Nemtushkin ( Siberia 12 November 1939 – 2006) was an Evenk-Russian poet known for writing in and about his Native Evenki language. He has received wide recognition in and outside Russia, and his work is used by UNESCO to cultivate attention to the problem of Language Endangerment. He has published more than 31 books of poetry, most of them in Russian, but some in Evenki.

\*\*\*\*\*

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

<http://www.WomensHealthSection.com>

