WOMEN’S HEALTH IS
SOCIETY’S WEALTH

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Medical Women’s International Association
Webinar
Feb 1 2014
Learning Objectives

1. Discuss the link between women’s health and factors influencing their health status during their life span.
2. Discuss why women’s health is society’s wealth with a focus on the economic advantages in the community.
3. Discuss policies and recommendations to promote women’s health across her life span.
4. Highlight Role of Beijingplatform, Cities for CEDAW and Post 2015 in advancing women's health
Introduction

- Globalization has changed the fabric of society, while the health and human rights of women are remaining stagnant or growing worse in many parts of the world. Some of what the statistics document is so ugly as to seem incompatible with the word civilization.

- Women in this day and age are denied their fundamental right to enjoy a complete state of heath as defined by the World Health Organization.
Equality in Society Myth or Reality?

- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UaCwOdNeA7k&feature=em-share_video_user
Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Women’s Health

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations (UN) in 1948, states that “Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family,” and “Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance."
Violence against women represents a significant barrier to human development, as stated in the Cairo Programme of Action.

“In a number of countries, harmful practices meant to control women’s sexuality have led to great suffering. Among them is the practice of female genital mutilation, which is a violation of basic rights and a major lifelong risk to women’s health”²

(para. 7.35)
Health and Human Rights

Examples of the links between Health and Human Rights

- Harmful traditional practices
- Torture
- Slavery
- Violence against women and children

Human rights violations resulting in ill-health

- Right to health
- Right to education
- Right to food & nutrition
- Freedom from discrimination

Reducing vulnerability to ill-health through human rights

Promotion or violation of human rights through health development

Right to participation
- Freedom from discrimination
- Right to information
- Right to privacy
Women's Health A Missing Link?

- Gender, societal roles and women's rights have drastic impact on women's health, especially reproductive health
- This is a missing link in many societies where there is an unmet need for contraception, lack of access to safe motherhood and lack of gender equity.
A Portrait of Women

- Women in developing countries face a number of challenges to their health and well-being.
- Over 300,000 women die each year from complications during pregnancy and childbirth, the vast majority of them in Africa and Asia. ³
- This includes nearly 70,000 deaths from unsafe abortion.
Staggering Statistics

- According to studies, between 10% and 69% of women report having been assaulted by an intimate male partner at some time in their lives. ⁴

- A study conducted by Buvinic, Morrison, and Shifter found that in Latin America the proportion of women who were assaulted by their partners is between 10% and 35%, while in sub-Saharan Africa, it is between 13% and 45%. ⁴
Strategies to address gender based violence

- Male involvement and input when implementing programs to prevent violence against women has shown to be effective.
- Treatment programs for abusers
- Women Police Stations
- Stringent punishment for abusers $^5,6$
Women Worldwide

Distribution of women by major age group and region, 2007

- **Europe**
- **Eastern Mediterranean**
- **Americas**
- **Africa**
- **High-income countries**
- **Western Pacific**
- **South-East Asia**

*High-income countries are excluded from the regional groups.
Differences between High and Low Income Countries

Female life expectancy at birth by country income group and region, 1950–2005

- High-income countries
- Middle-income countries
- Low-income countries
- East and Southern African countries

* Excluding East and Southern African countries.

## 10 Leading Causes of Death for Women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Deaths (000s)</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ischaemic heart disease</td>
<td>3371</td>
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<td>Stroke</td>
<td>3051</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>COPD*</td>
<td>1405</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Diarrhoeal diseases</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>1013</td>
<td>3.7</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Diabetes mellitus</td>
<td>633</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Prematurity and low birth weight</td>
<td>567</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Neonatal infections**</td>
<td>546</td>
<td>2.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Hypertensive heart disease</td>
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Source: World Health Organization

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<td>4</td>
<td>Stroke</td>
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<td>Stomach cancer</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Trachea, bronchus and lung cancers</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Stroke</td>
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<td>11.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Alzheimer and other dementias</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Lower respiratory infections</td>
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<td>Breast cancer</td>
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<td>Trachea, bronchus and lung cancers</td>
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<td>Colon and rectum cancers</td>
<td>130</td>
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<td>COPD*</td>
<td>126</td>
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<td>123</td>
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Source: World Health Organization
FIGURE 4 Labor force participation by gender of the 30 largest developing countries

Source: World Bank staff, based on ILO estimates.
Examples of Gender Based Violence

- **Prebirth**—Sex-selective abortion
- **Infancy**—Female infanticide, physical abuse, neglect, poor nutrition, and lack of immunization and medical care
- **Girlhood**—Child marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM), trafficking, child prostitution, sexual abuse, poor nutrition, lack of immunizations and medical care, and minimal or lack of educational opportunities ⁵,⁶
What can we do to stop violence

WHEN MEN GATHER, IT'S NOT ALWAYS TROUBLE.

TREAT WOMEN WITH RESPECT. MAKE A PROMISE.

RING THE BELL TO 56767 | FOLLOW @BELL_BAJAO, #RINGTHEBELL | FACEBOOK.COM/BELLBAJAO | BELLBAJAO.ORG
Campaigns against VAW using Apps

http://vimeo.com/38802136#
Post 2015 Agenda

- Envisioning a new Global Partnership
  “We agreed on the need for a renewed Global Partnership that enables a transformative, people-centered and planet-sensitive development agenda which is realized through the equal partnership of all stakeholders.”
Post 2015 Agenda

- Such partnership should be based on the principles of equity, sustainability, solidarity, respect for humanity, and shared responsibilities in accordance with respective capabilities.”

From Vision to Reality
Leave no one Behind
Put sustainable Development at the core

Transform Economies for jobs and inclusive growth
Build peace and open and accountable public institutions
Forge a new global partnership (source: United Nations, 2013)
**POST 2015 UNIVERSAL GOALS**

- **Goal 1- End Poverty**

- **Goal 2- Empower Girls and Women and Achieve Gender Equality**

- **Goal 3- Provide Quality Education and Lifelong Learning**

- **Goal 4- Ensure Healthy Lives**

- **Goal 5- Ensure Food Security and Good Nutrition**
POST 2015 UNIVERSAL GOALS

- **Goal 6**- Achieve Universal Access to Water and Sanitation
- **Goal 7**- Secure Sustainable Energy
- **Goal 8**- Create Jobs, Sustainable Livelihoods, and Equitable Growth
- **Goal 9**- Manage Natural Resource Assets Sustainability
Key Players in Post 2015/ Beijing Platform

- National governments
- Local authorities
- International institutions
- Private Sector
- Foundations
- NGOs
- Academia /Scientific community
- Practioners
Cross Cutting Issues

- Peace
- Inequality
- Climate Change
- Cities
- Girls and Women
- Young people
Strategies /Results

- Gender equality leads to better human development outcomes for future generations
- Breaking normative barriers to empower women and girls
- Changing incentives for gender equality
- Impressive gains in women’s rights and investments in education and health services in many countries have made the world a more equal place for men and women.
- Microcredit and micro pension schemes
Beijing Platform

- Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*
- The Fourth World Conference on Women,
- Having met in Beijing from 4 to 15 September 1995,
- 1. Adopts the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which are annexed to the present resolution;
- 2. Recommends to the General Assembly of the United Nations at its fiftieth session that it endorse the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action as adopted by the Conference.( source: United Nations)
Beijing Plus 20

- Beijing Plus 20 in 2015 is a golden opportunity to “scale up and speed up” implementation of the
- Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
- This campaign has four “C”s.
  - Commitments
  - Capacity Building
  - Communications for change
  - Cities for Sustainable Development and Human Rights

(source CoNGO)
Conclusion

• To improve women’s health and society's wealth we must address not only the biological differences but also gender based health inequalities.
• By reforming the legal mechanism and policies
• Creating public policies and programs to address health and education for women
• Provide gender based training for service providers
• Raise the public’s awareness of gender bias and promote change
References


Images from Amnesty International, Google images and UNICRIT