

MEDICAL WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION

MWIA



Update

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MEDICAL WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION



I. MEDICAL WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION

1. PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dr. Atsuko Heshiki, Japan

Participation, Communication and Visibility in Arab Countries

It is my pleasure and honour to report to you my recent mission to Jordan, Syria and Egypt as President of MWIA, sponsored by the Japanese Government. The project started in 1996 under the agreement between Princess Basma of Jordan and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Japanese government to promote scientific and cultural exchange among Arab and Middle East women. Jordan, Egypt and Palestine were the only member countries since inception, with Syria joining for the first time this year. This was my second time to participate in the mission.

The Japan Medical Women's Association (JMWA) is a member of the host organization, which is the National Women's Committee of UN NGOs of Japan. The delegates consisted of two Board members of JMWA in addition to me, and the theme was "Leadership Achievement and Accomplishment".

In each of the countries, my presentation was well received and many women physicians showed an interest in the 2010 MWIA General Assembly in Germany. The Secretariat was supplied with their names and e-mail addresses. I also referred them to the MWIA website where the congress information is available.

In the Jordan University School of Medicine, where English is the main language of teaching, close to half of the medical students are women. MWIA had lost contact with Jordan after the death of an individual member two years ago, but hopefully new members will communicate with MWIA.

In Syria, close to 80 women participated in the seminar and I had an invitation to revisit the University as a guest speaker in the future.

In Egypt we participated in a year long Japan-Egypt scientific-technical affiliation. The Egyptian Medical Women's Association has been a long-term member country of MWIA and Dr. Shafika Nasser has long been the National Coordinator. The president, Dr. Omayma, was in touch with me and Dr. Nadia Badrawi, active member of EMWA, was an active participant in the seminars. Most of the participants were from Cairo University, School of Medicine, where two Vice Presidents and many women professors are women.

Since this mission was governmental, we were received by many governmental officials, Princess Basma of Jordan and the First Lady of Syria. In every country, the mission and the names of MWIA and JMWA appear widely in the media.

Prior to this mission, I participated in the Western Pacific Regional meeting in Melbourne. Thank you to the Australian Federation of Medical Women for an excellent regional congress on the theme of Bridging Barriers: Health, Human Rights, Gender and Leadership.

I wish you a Happy Holiday Season and a Happy New Year.

2. REQUESTS FROM THE SECRETARY- GENERAL

Dr. Shelley Ross, Canada

As the 2008 year draws to a close, the Secretariat would like to wish everyone a **happy festive season** with time for relaxation and fun with family and friends. Thank you to all of you who work endlessly for MWIA. Your dedication is greatly appreciated.

Our members from Georgia, India, Thailand and Greece have all seen recent unrest in their countries and we are happy that they have stayed safe through these trying times.

MWIA was pleased to help develop a survey about women's and physicians' attitudes to **osteoporosis**. The survey was conducted in France, Germany, Mexico, Switzerland and the UK. Along with actress Ursula Andress, I was pleased to attend the media launch in Brussels in October. Two of the Belgian Medical Women, Dr. Agnes Vermeulen and Dr. Christine Pouliart attended the event. Please visit the website www.fortimelesswomen.com and visit the Newsroom section.

The **Australian Federation of Medical Women** held a most successful regional meeting in Melbourne in October. 2009 will see regional meetings in Central Europe, Near East and Africa and North America. Please be reminded that members from all regions are welcome to attend any of the regional meetings. Living in the North American Region, I personally invite you to join the North Americans on the **cruise from Boston to Montreal** in September, 2009. Registration can be found at www.seacourses.com.

MWIA in collaboration with **Dr. Claudia Garcia Moreno** of WHO developed a survey on **violence against women** which I urge you all to complete. It was initiated for the 16 days of activism to end violence against women. Further details can be found under the Treasurer's report. **I urge every member country and individual members to complete the survey.**

MWIA continues to work with WHO according to our strategic plan. We are working in various ways from advocacy to greater involvement with the following **WHO Strategic Objectives**: number 4 with female genital mutilation and gender based violence, number 6 with cervical cancer, tobacco convention and non-communicable disease, number 7 with gender and number 10 with primary care and safe surgery.

WHO has recently released their publication on the importance of primary care in the health care system. It is entitled, “**Primary Health Care -- Now More Than Ever.**”

The office of the chief public health officer in the UK is interested in how the various countries **treat women in medicine**. Please take a few minutes to reply to the following six questions at secretariat@mwia.net.

1. How does your flexible training work?
2. Do you have innovative ways of providing child-care given the increasing need for unusual hours of child-care with the evolution of shift work ?
3. Do you have special leadership programmes for training women in medicine in leadership?
4. How do you manage the addition barriers faced by women in academic medicine?
5. Do you have good workforce planning databases - if so how do they collect data and where from?
6. Do you provide careers advice and if so when and how tailored is it to individuals?

Please let me know if you wish to be registered for the **Commission on the Status of Women** Meeting the first week of March, 2009, at UN Headquarters in New York. MWIA’s side event this year is **Gender equity and male responsibility - come and learn from the women doctors of the world.**

Drs. Claudia Landerer, Elizabeta Dulic and Elisabeth Bloechlinger represent us well at **WHO in Geneva** and Dr. Iris Habitzel at the UN in Vienna and MWIA is appreciative of their time and efforts.

MWIA remains an active member of the **Framework Alliance Convention on Tobacco Control** and recently voted at the general assembly.

Thank you to one of our American members, Dr. Lucy Candib, for bringing to our attention a short, but moving video on the **importance of the girl child**. Visit <http://girleffect.org>.

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3. GREETINGS FROM THE TREASURER

Dr. Gail Beck, Canada

Preliminary Report on MWIA's Project for the 16 Days of Activism to End Violence Against Women

This year, Medical Women's International Association participated in the 16 Days of Activism to End Violence Against Women. This is an International Campaign originating from the first women's Global Leadership Institute which was held in 1991. The 16 Days extend from November 25 until December 10 every year. November 25 is International Day against Violence against Women. This day and date were selected by the United Nations to commemorate the murder of the Mirabal sisters, political activists in the Dominican, by the then dictator of the Dominican Republic. December 10 is International Human Rights Day. The days were selected so as to be a symbolic reminder that Women's Rights and Human Rights are inextricably linked.

This is MWIA's first year participating in this event and we join over 2,000 organizations from 154 countries that also mark these dates. For this first year, an inventory is being compiled of the work being conducted in MWIA's member organizations to end violence against women.

To date, the following National Associations (alphabetical order) have sent information to the Secretariat regarding their work: Australia, Canada, Germany, Ghana, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Switzerland, Sudan, Taiwan, United Kingdom, and United States of America.

Because there are so many National Associations that have not yet had a chance to send us their data, I will be waiting to compile the final data. There is still time to let us know what your National Association is doing to end violence against women. Please participate in this important MWIA project. The survey lists a number of areas that address violence against women. Please indicate which areas are active in your country.

1. Publicize underreported forms of violence against women.
2. Document successful approaches ending violence against women.
3. End tolerance for domestic violence.
4. Speak up for millions of missing girls and women.
5. Speak out against female genital mutilation.
6. Partner to stop sexual violence in armed conflict & disaster settings.
7. Support young women traumatized during brutal conflicts.
8. Train police to deal with family violence.
9. Treat & support survivors of extreme sexual violence.
10. Provide a safe haven for girls escaping coerced marriage.
11. Highlight the injustice of child marriage & too early pregnancy.
12. Offer alternatives to "survival sex".
13. Call attention to "new forms of slavery".

14. Assist survivors of domestic violence.
15. Address the needs of women in refugee camps.
16. Support efforts to end impunity for perpetrators.
17. Educate the population prior to abuse.
18. Prevention of intimate partner and sexual violence such as working with men and boys to change attitudes that condone violence, decreasing alcohol intake, empowering women
19. Capacity building—how much training have you had to deal with violence against women

4. 2007-2010 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President	Dr. Atsuko Heshiki from Japan
Secretary-General	Dr. Shelley Ross from Canada
Immediate Past President	Dr. Gabrielle Casper, Australia
President-Elect	Dr. Afua Hesse from Ghana
Treasurer	Dr. Gail Beck from Canada
Finance Chair	Dr. Kyung Ah Park from Korea
Vice Presidents:	
Northern Europe	Dr. Olof Sigurdardottir from Iceland
Central Europe	Dr. Waltraud Diekhaus from Germany
Southern Europe	Dr. Gwenaelle Vidal-Trecan from France
North America	Dr. Shirley Hovan from Canada
Latin America	Dr. Ruth Guillen de Maldonado from Bolivia
Central Asia	Dr. Manju Mataliya from India
Near East & Africa	Dr. Frida Kazembe from Zambia
Western Pacific	Dr. Winnie Yang from Taiwan (ROC)
Chair of Finance	Dr. Kyung Ah Park from Korea
Chair Ethics and Resolutions	Dr. Shirley Hovan from Canada

Chair Scientific and Research Dr. Olof Sigurdardottir from Iceland

MWIA's Representatives at the UN and WHO
United Nations and Department of Public Information in New York
Dr. Satty Gill Keswani
Dr. Mini Murty

World Health Organization in Geneva
Dr. Elizabeta Dulic
Dr. Elisabeth Blocklinger
Dr. Claudia Landerer
Dr. Andrea Gilomen

United Nations in Vienna
Dr. Iris Habitzel

5. NEWS FROM THE VPs AND THEIR REGIONS

Northern Europe

Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, The Netherlands, United Kingdom

Dr. Olof Sigurdardottir, Vice President for Northern Europe, Iceland

Finland

The Finnish association had its fourth and final meeting of this year yesterday 4th of December. We discussed the topic of vaccines and should they be partly paid by government, and which could be part of the official programme of free vaccination. We also talked about gender issues and statistics. 1.1.08 the amount of female doctors in Finland was 52% (doctors under age of 30 - 72%).

Iceland

The annual meeting of the Icelandic Medical Womens association was held in November with an attendance of 57 women. There we reflected on the life and work of Dr. Kristín Elísabet Jónsdóttir (Jan. 28th 1927-Sep. 7th 2008), who passed away this autumn. Kristín was the first Icelandic woman physician to specialize in internal medicine. She received her training at the Metropolitan Hospital in New York, U.S.A. and returned to Iceland in 1959 where she worked at first in a clinical position and the later part of her career at the department of infectious disease research at the Landspítali. The IMWA board members have collaborated with other groups of professional women in Iceland (women engineers, women economists and women lawyers, whom each have their own organisations). This group has an annual common meeting on different subjects interesting for all professional women, supporting formation of social networks also. Our most recent meeting was hosted by the women economists just after onset of the banking crisis in Iceland, where we received a timely short course in how to read annual accounts. We are now preparing

for our tenth year of work which will be celebrated with a seminar on gender medicine and women's health.

The Netherlands

Congratulations to the Dutch Medical Women celebrated their 75th anniversary with a meeting in Amsterdam on October 3, 2008.

United Kingdom

National Coordinator Dorothy Ward, Scotland

The Autumn Council Meeting was held on 15/11/08 at the Royal College of Surgeons, London. A well attended and interesting scientific symposium was held on the Friday prior to the meeting of Council. The topic was *Reaching the Work-Life Balance*. The keynote address was given by Allyson Pollock, Director, Centre for International Public Health Policy, Edinburgh University. She spoke on the future of the National Health Service in UK and the need for an enquiry into the privatization initiatives within it. Dr Elizabeth Poskitt, OBE, a pediatrician, gave her views on managing childhood obesity. The final speaker, Professor Katherine Rake, OBE, Director of the Fawcett Society spoke on gender equality and continuing barriers to Woman's careers.

At the Council Meeting, a motion was passed to investigate the inequalities in flexible training between the postgraduate training centres in UK. Also emphasized was the importance of women putting themselves forward to serve on committees and governing bodies if you want to make a difference. Reports were given by MWF representatives serving on BMA, college committees and councils

The Federation has launched its own forum on Doctor's Net and it is hoped that members will use it for general discussion and debate. It will also be used to provide important information for all doctors.

There were two social events associated with this Council Meeting including a visit to the theatre after a meal and the Council dinner held in the Royal College of Surgeons on the Friday evening.

We are still trying to find a young doctor willing to join MWIA discussion group

The next Council meeting will be held in Brighton, 7-8 May, 2009. A debate will be held on the subject *Health is Strengthened by Women Doctors*.

A prize of £100 is now awarded each year on behalf of MWF in every medical school in UK.

MWF now is finalizing the document, *Making Part-time Work*, and have published recommendations on attitudes to part-time working and recommendations on training posts.

Notice was given to Council of future MWIA meetings including the cruise from Boston to Montreal, the congresses in Vienna, Paris and Munster.

Central Europe

Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Switzerland

Dr. Waltraud Diekhaus, Vice President Central Europe, Germany

Austria

The Austrian Medical Women are well into planning the Central European Regional Meeting, which will be held in Vienna from May 15-16, 2009. The topics will include Gender and Oncology, Female Physicians and Politics, Migration and Medicine, Medicine Meets Philosophy and Sociology and a Gender Workshop. Please visit www.aerztinnenbund.at for details.

Another activity in Austria is the announcement of a prize for an excellent paper about gender in medicine for young colleagues. We called the prize 'Lore Antoineprice' after one of our former presidents who was also president of the MWIA!

Germany

One of the key issues for the German Medical Association (GMA) is the ongoing work on improving the family friendliness of working conditions for women and male doctors in hospitals. It is considered essential that employers start to develop effective measures to allow women and male doctors to combine family and profession. The GMA provides three checklists for assessing the family friendliness of hospitals, namely

1. valuing pregnancy and parenthood and physician health as natural life events and not as disruptive factors for the clinical organization
2. improving career opportunities for medical couples
3. attracting young qualified people to hospital departments through good terms of employment

Details of where such hospitals can be found can be found on the website <http://www.aerztinnenbund.de>.

The GMA journal "Die Arztin" discusses such topics as:

- the situation of women doctors in leading positions in hospitals
- supporting traumatized women and girls in war and crisis zones
- GMA is represented by its vice president, Dr. Regine Rapp-Engels, in the group of NGO's which provide information to the official report from the German government for the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
- balance between professional and family life as a criteria for health of women doctors
- a gender conference for women doctors and pharmacists took place in Heidelberg in June, 2008.

Details of the German Medical Women's Association can be found on the webpage <http://www.aerztinnenbund.de>

Switzerland

The Website of the Swiss Medical Women is a good instrument for communication (<http://medicalwomen.ch>). There is information in German and in English. A board for jobs and for mentoring is included as well. Dr. Andrea Gilomen is the National Coordinator.

The next meeting of the Medical Women of Switzerland (MWS) will be the annual assembly in July, 2009, in Basel. Basel is a city with a university and with big pharmaceutical industry like Novartis, Sandoz and Roche. Our topic for the meeting will be about different aspects of "movement" in medicine (in health/body/mind) and about the development of public health in Switzerland through the next years.

MWS will participate on the Wonca Congress (Primary Care) in Switzerland in September 2009 in Basel.

Southern Europe

Belgium, France, Greece, Israel, Italy

Dr. Gwenaëlle M Vidal-Trécan, Vice President Southern Europe, France

Belgium

Dr. Agnes Vermeulen and Dr. Christine Pouliart attended the launch of the osteoporosis survey in Brussels, Belgium, in October.

France

Paris

In the context of our great cause 2007-2009 "Old people cared for in their own home", a meeting has been hold in Paris on the Friday October 17th. The subject was "*Health networks taking care for elderly and/or patients seriously handicapped in their own home*".

Pr Christian Hervé, President of ASDES (network for access, rights and education for health), director of the ethical and legal medicine laboratory- René Descartes University- Paris, opening the session, told that the medical practice needs three simultaneous approaches for improvement: clinical, multidisciplinary research and evaluation. This must be applied to the networks. He thinks that the networks are forming a new sanitary and social tissue with private practitioners and hospital located in a geographical sector. In this way an appropriate care can delay the admission in institution.

Dr Matthieu de Stampa , geriatrician , coordinator and secretary of ANCRAGE spoke about the formation and the management of his network in the XVI^o district of Paris where many old people are living. The main role is hold by the family practitioners.

Dr Marie-France Maugourd, chief of a geriatrics service in Georges Clemenceau Hospital (Assistance Publique-Hôpitaux de Paris-APHP) President of the HIPPOCAMPES network implanted in Essonne, a "département" near Paris, explained how people with Alzheimer's disease are managed at home.

Pr Vincent Meininger, President of SLA (Lateral Amyotrophic Sclerosis) network, demonstrated the benefits of a regional network for the care of the patients affected with this evolutive and very serious neurologic disease. The patient must be considered as the main objective of a multidisciplinary team with a shared medical file and a coordinator always on duty. Information but also training for the members of the team and for the helping members of the family is essential.

Dr Noëlle Vascovali , Director of LE PALLIUM network and President of the « Fédération des Réseaux de Soins Palliatifs d'Ile de France-RESPALIF » spoke about the difficulties found during the care for the end of life at home.

Pr Anne –Sophie Rigaud, chief of a geriatrics service in Broca hospital in Paris (APHP) concluded that the coordination between the different actions for the same patient (the cares are often intricate) was necessary and that the “Federation” of networks will be helpful, specially for geriatrics networks.

Bretagne

Dr Françoise Le Bail, President of the section has organized a meeting in Brest, on October the 16th on “What can we do for the sick elderly living at home?”

The debater was Dr Le Bail, the experts: Doctor Sophie Hervochon-Casson, geriatrician and Mrs. Patricia Boha-Mengant coordinator of the CLIC (Local center of information and coordination).

A majority of Family Doctors was present. Three difficult situations were submitted and answers given by the persons taking part were subject at discussion.

It appeared that the family doctor has a central role but should work in a team with other practitioners in order to develop health networks.

Paca-Ouest

Dr Marie –Noëlle Mayer, President of the section, has organized a meeting in l'Isle sur la Sorgue, near Avignon, on October the 25th.

The subject presented by Dr Patrick Bellet , President of the Milton H.Erikson Institut-Avignon-Provence was “Hypnosis and short therapy”.

Many rheumatologists, psychiatrists, family doctor debated this rather unusual issue.

Hospital for Mother and Child in Kabul

Drs. Marie-Noëlle Mayer of the French Association of Women Doctors (AFFM)

After 30 years of civil war and conflicts, the health situation in Afghanistan is just awful. Infant mortality rate is 15.7% and maternal mortality rate is 1.7%, among the highest in the world. One child in four fails to reach the age of five and one woman in labour dies every 30 minutes.

In November, 2001, Enfants Afghans was created to restore medical services in Afghanistan. In May, 2003, the cornerstone for the Hospital for Mother and Child was laid and in April, 2006, the 56bed facility housing the pediatric surgery and medicine centre was inaugurated.

French physicians signed short and long term contracts to work at this hospital and train local Afghan physicians and other health care workers. Dr. Marie-Noelle Mayer, a member of the French Association of Women Doctors (AFFM), is one such doctor who has been involved since 2004, providing pediatric anesthesia and intensive care.

North America

Canada, United States of America

Dr. Shirley Hovan, Vice President North America, Canada

Canada

Season's Greetings to all of our members! I am thinking of those of you in conflict areas and hope you are all safe during this holiday season. We have recently had elections in each of our countries, whose leaders have been challenged with many problems during this economic downturn. I wish for all of us a better year ahead with peace, success and happiness. If only women could rule the world, violence would not be a tool that is used with such reckless abandon!

Plans for the North American Regional meeting are still progressing. We have secured most of the speakers and I feel that the topic, "Caring for the Caregiver" will be relevant for all of us. I am very much looking forward to a cruise on the Eastern Seaboard in the fall, September 19 – 26, 2009, and I hope that if you can get away at that time you will consider attending. The topics will include Resilience, Nutrition and Exercise, Aesthetic Solutions, The Role of Gender in Care Giving, and Retirement Planning. Please check the website for more details! (<http://www.mwia.net/>)

The Federation of Medical Women plans to have its Annual Board and General meeting at the end of the cruise in Montreal. I am currently planning to go to the Commission on the Status of Women meeting at the UN in New York City in March 2009.

The last week of October was Cervical Cancer Awareness Week. In recognition of this event, the Federation of Medical Women of Canada organized a **Walk-in Pap test Campaign** during Cervical Cancer Awareness Week.

Have a safe and happy holiday season enjoying friends and family!

United States

The American Medical Women's Association is holding its annual meeting in March 27-29, 2009, in Williamsburg, Virginia.

Women have been at the center of the conversation during the election, and **it's our job to make sure that's where we stay**. Along with WomenCount, a non-profit grassroots organization, we are calling on President-elect Obama to create a Presidential Commission on Women in his first 100 day.

AMWA is developing a **permanent exhibit** in the lobby of Drexel University's new building for the Institute for Women's Health and Leadership (Philadelphia, PA). The institute is also the home for the Archives & Special Collections on Women in Medicine, the largest collection of material pertaining to the history of women in medicine, including AMWA's historical documents and photos from the founding meeting in 1915 to the present day.

The **Foundation for the History of Women in Medicine** is housed at Drexel University College of Medicine in Philadelphia. For information, contact fhwim@burkhargroup.com. The website is www.fhwim.org. On October 1, 2008, they celebrated the 10th anniversary of The Foundation for the History of Women in Medicine and launched a year-long tribute to the Foundation's accomplishments. The recipient of the [Alma Dea Morani, MD Renaissance Woman Award](#), which celebrates the accomplishments of outstanding women in medicine, was Ellen R. Gritz, Ph.D. They have started an innovative oral history project that will secure the historically significant personal and professional achievements of the nine living recipients.

Latin America

Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru

Dr. Ruth Guillen de Maldonado, Vice President Latin America, Bolivia

Bolivia

The Alliance Medical Woman of Bolivia held monthly meetings, on the last Saturday of each month. These meetings consisted of scientific discussions as well as supporting colleagues with problems at work

There have been two main congresses. The first was held April 10-12, 2008, with the topic, "Woman as the Main Character in the XXI Century." It was directed at mothers, daughters, wives, workers and families. The second congress was held June 28, 2008, and was about the trajectory of work of the Alliance of Doctors in Bolivia and its main objective intervention in the promotion of the health of our town and of the medical woman in all the fields.

Thirty years ago, I founded a Committee on Adolescence in the Society of Pediatrics. In conjunction with this committee and the Minister of Health, we held training sessions to sensitize personnel that work in five hospitals in the cities of La Paz and el Alto to the rights of the adolescent in health care.

We participated in the November 25th Government celebration of the "International Day against the Violence toward the Woman." A publication was distributed, entitled "For the Right to a Life free of Violence." In addition, one million signatures were gathered to send to the UN Secretary-General, Ban-Ki-Moon.

Near East and Africa

Cameroon, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia

Dr. Frida Kazembe, Vice President Near East and Africa, Zambia

Egypt

Drs. Shafika Nasser, Mervat ElRafie and Salma Galal attended the WHO Regional Meeting on behalf of MWIA for EMRO in Cairo in October. They expressed the concern of medical women that some countries in the EMRO region might not be able to attain the MDG's under the present financial crisis and need help.

The Egyptian Medical Women's Association (EMWA) is collaborating with the National Council of Women and the Medical Syndicate to ensure equal opportunity for women medical doctors in jobs and in training opportunities.

EMWA is involved in a project for peer education by medical students. The project is on HOV/AIDS and the role of medical students. UNICEF and WHO are both involved and EMWA is supervising and monitoring the activities in several medical schools.

EMWA was pleased to receive a visit from Dr. Adetoun Agbe-Davies from Lagos.

EMA is a member of ENNAA (Egyptian Network for NGO's Against AIDS) and acts as vice secretary.

Kenya

The Kenyan Medical Women's Association (KMWA) has established a fully established and functional new Secretariat with qualified employees and a new Administrator. Contact information is kenyamewa@yahoo.com.

KMWA has revived the Well Woman Clinic (WWC) project. It is situated in Nairobi West Kodi Rd. II, away from the Secretariat and is fully running with 3 qualified doctors and a permanent nurse. The clinic offer various methods of family planning, gynecological consultation, initial infertility investigations, cervical screening, breast examinations and general counseling, infection testing, Cancer awareness and all women related issues.

KMWA held its AGM & Elections on 4th April 2008 and Dr Jacqueline W. Kitulu is Chairperson and Dr. Praxy Okutoyi is Administrator. The KMWA membership as at now stands at **330** Members

KMWA has had a number of activities this year.

We held a 2 weeks Medical Camp campaign in August on "*Vesico Virginal Fistulae*" (VVF) Project that we had partnered with Standard Chartered Bank as our sponsor and

had 20 Patients operated on and was successful. Also in partnership are other organizations like AMREF.

We have also partnered with Gertrude's Garden Children's Hospital, a satellite Clinic based at our Premise and works together with our staffs at the Clinic.

There were three Continuing Medical Education sessions in July, August & October on osteoporosis, breast cancer and cervical cancer.

We took a mission of support - care rescue centre in Western part of Kenya, where by we have an Orphanage home for destitute children aged between 1-8 years boys and girls and very young parents. We donated clothing, beddings, footwear, books sanitary towels etc.

We are proud to announce to you that one of our own, a KMWA Founder Member and a Trustee - **Prof. Miriam K. Were** emerged to be the proud winner of an award on the Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize early this year on *Medical Research and Services*. (The prize is given every 5 years and contains 1 Million Doctors.)

KMWA's pride is that His Excellency, President of Kenya, Mwai Kibaki in September, appointment **Dr Jacqueline Wasonga Kitulu**, Medical (Practitioner) and a KMWA Chairperson, through **Registered Professional Bodies** to the expanded National Economic and Social Council for a period of 3 years. This council plays a strategic role in facilitating fostering policy dialogue on social and economic issues in the country.

We are sad to announce the Demise of 2 of our Members, one being the KMWA Founder and Life Member, **Dr. Theresa K'Oduol Olwande** & Ordinary Member a very young lady **Dr Patricia Muange**.

Tanzania

Plans are underway for the Near East and Africa Regional Meeting in July, 2009, in Dar-Es-Salaam. Please see the website for details.

Central Asia

India, Thailand

Dr. Manju Mataliya, Vice President Central Asia, India

India

AMWI completed 100 years in 2007 and celebrations were held throughout the year. Centenary congresses were organized by Mumbai as well as Kolkatta, Nagpur also organized several scientific programmes. In addition, a Golden Jubilee Scholarship for junior members for research work was announced.

The Mumbai Branch runs a cytology and colposcopy clinic at the Cama and Albles Hospital for free. A cytology colposcopy training course was organized by this clinic in August, 2008, and gynecologists and technicians were trained for two weeks.

The Central office holds council meetings annually. The new President is Dr. Urmila Khanna from Kolkatta.

We lost two of our senior members in 2007-2008. Dr. Dinoo Dalal was President of AMWI. She had organized regional conferences and was president of the Centenary congress. She had worked for several years at the Narialwadi slum clinic and a very dedicated and committed member. Dr Tulsi Basu was a Past President of AMWI, Past NCS from West Bengal Branch, and Past Vice President Central Asia. She worked very hard to run the AMWI Mission Hospital at Kolkatta, where she provided anesthesia in addition to administration. She also organized national and regional congresses.

The West Bengal Branch will initiate the Dr. Tulsi Basu memorial oration in her memory from the munificent donation by her son. Plans are underway to renovate AMWI Mission Hospital in Kolkatta. The Nagpur branch is actively organizing scientific meetings and health check up programmes. The Mumbai Branch of Association of Medical Women in India conducted a week long camp on Osteoporosis and Pap Smears in October.

From Dr. Usha Saraiya in Mumbai

The AMWI is in its 102nd year. There are three branches Kolkata, Mumbai & Nagpur. The AMWI journal is published once in a year by Kolkata branch. Dr. Minaxi Ghosh is the Editor. The Kolkata branch runs a "Mission Hospital".

The Mumbai branch has had an active year. The Cytology clinic at Cama & Albles Hospital conducted a successful 34th annual course totaling 72 people. Training was imparted to nurses, paramedical workers & doctors. There were 4 international participants from Bangladesh.

The Shirin Mehtaji Competition for young doctors is held each year. Gold, Silver & Bronze medals are given to the winners. Best papers from Medicines, Surgery, Obst & Gynac & Anesthesiology are selected for presentation.

Dr. Dongaonkar, Mumbai and Dr. Ratna Sanyal, Kolkatta attended the WHO-SEARO meeting which was held in New Delhi on 8th to 11th September as representatives of MWIA.

Mumbai has been in a shocked state since the terrorist attack. We are all safe. The Cama Hospital which Dr. Ross has visited was under the siege of terrorists. We lost 4 of our staff. We are all safe recovering slowly.

Western Pacific

Australia, Japan, Korea, Mongolia, New Zealand, Philippines, Taiwan (ROC)

Dr. Winnie Yang, Vice President Western Pacific, Taiwan (ROC)

Australia

The MWIA Western Pacific Regional meeting was held in Melbourne October 17-19, 2008, at the Sofitel Hotel. The theme was **Bridging Barriers: Health, Human Rights, Gender and Leadership**.

MWIA members were in attendance not only from Australia, but Hong Kong, Italy, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Taiwan, and the USA.

The keynote speech was on the Environment and Health and the Effect of Climate Change. There were many stimulating speakers on such topics as

- Identification and discussion of effective ways in which women doctors bridge barriers through advocacy
- Discussion on overcoming regional issues that adversely affect the health and well-being of women and their children
- Describing innovations and interventions used to promote health and prevent illness
- Exploring global and local environmental issues as determinants of public health and
- Identification of professional issues and discuss solutions for women in medicine.

There was an opportunity to visit the Royal Women's Hospital and the Cabrini Hospital, conducted by the medical students.

The next Western Pacific Regional meeting will be in Japan in 2011.

Leadership Workshop at the MWIA Western Pacific Regional Congress

On Friday October 17, 2008 months of planning and preparation came together at the leadership skills workshop at the Medical Women's International Association Western Pacific Regional Congress. The afternoon sessions on "Difficult Conversations and Negotiation" were attended by medical women from around the world, including 22 Australian medical women who received \$15,000 in AFMW Leadership Scholarships to assist them to attend the Congress. The workshop was part of the 2008-09 AFMW *Bridging Leadership Barriers Project* funded through the Office For Women Leadership and Development Programme.

The afternoon began with a lively presentation by Dr Gabrielle Casper, Immediate Past President of the MWIA on "Lessons Learned During MWIA Leadership Training".

The excellent negotiation workshop was facilitated by NSW-based lawyer and professional mediator Ms Shirli Kirschner and Victorian-based conflict management

coach Mr David Bryson, who developed the sessions specifically for medical women attending the Congress.

Participants were provided with conflict management tools and skills that could be readily applied in their day to day practice.

Points discussed included:

- understand alternatives to gain perspectives
- keep the relationship in mind
- the importance of communication
- know that crucial conversations are characterized by emotion
- work with interests not positions
- expand options
- commit clearly
- centre yourself

At the end of the afternoon Dr Jillian Tomlinson presented details of the AFMW *Bridging Leadership Barriers Project* objectives and achievements. The session was officially closed by Dr Atsuko Heshiki, MWIA President, before Congress attendees proceeded to the Welcome Reception in the Sofitel Promenade.

Korea

Korean Medical Women's Association, since founded in 1956, has been taking various activities in the scope of learning, scholarships, public services, publications, and fund-raising. Here are some events that KMWA has recently promoted with favorable reactions.

On November 15, 2008, Korean Medical Women's Association held "**Female Medical Doctors' Forum**" as a part of the commemorative events for

Left to right: Dr Jillian Tomlinson, Victorian Medical Women's Society Treasurer; Dr Atsuko Heshiki, President Medical Women's International Association; Ms Shirli Kirschner, mediator and lawyer; Dr Gaye Casper, Immediate Past President Medical Women's International Association; Mr David Bryson, mediator and conflict management coach.

the 100th anniversary of the founding of Korean Medical Association. The forum intended to look back on Korean medical women's past courses, to forecast the future, to suggest the possible solutions to the problems related with the education and training of female medical students, interns, and residents who will be responsible for the future, and further to make a contribution to the growth of female medical doctors who play a key role in the Korean medical services. In the first part, there were discussions of the topic of "Korean Female Medical Doctors' Past, Present, and Future". First, Park Kyung-Ah, Vice Chairperson of KMWA, introduced the history of the Association, together with its projects and current status. She said, "Our support will be focused on networking, mentoring, and leadership, and we will take activities, keeping up with the world's trend." Kim Hwa-Sook, chairperson of Doctors' right supporting committee of KMWA, presented the vision of Korean female medical doctors, saying that female medical

doctors are all leaders. Ko Shin-Ok, Professor in the Department of Anesthesiology, the College of Medicine, Yonsei University emphasized, “Female medical doctors need to make continuous efforts to expand their abilities and passion to the field of professional political researches, including international research activities or the development of medical policies, through scientific researches in each area of the society.” The second part was progressed with the discussions of the topic of ‘Education and Training of Female Medical Students, Interns, and Residents’. Any improvement of the environment for the education of female medical students, interns, and residents, and their working was discussed. Ahn Ju-Yeon, Director of Korea Jeil Mental Clinic, pointed out the working environment that is still bad even though some improvement is being made, saying, “Any discrimination or exclusion of female medical doctors is being decreased, but the guideline to female medical doctors’ pregnancy and childbirth is not clear and differs greatly by hospital or medical division.” Jeong Seung-Jin, President of the Korean Intern Resident Association, emphasized interns and residents’ human rights, saying, “The difference between the university hospitals in the Metropolitan area and some regional hospitals is very serious, so continual interest should be given to it.” Choi Ye-Jin, President of the National Students Federation of College of Medicine and Graduate School of Medicine, complained about their difficulties, saying, “Some schools of medicine are short on facilities and places for female medical students.” Baik Hyeon-Wook, chairperson of business division of KMWA said, “To improve the environment for educating and training female medical students, interns, and residents is one of the works that Korean Medical Women’s Association is interested in. We will work for the improvement of the environment for education and training through various formats in the presence of those who are concerned about hospitals and can propose practical improvement plans.”

Women Doctors’ Forum came to an end in big favorable reactions and expectations.

There was a **charity concert** to help single mothers under the management of Korean Medical Women’s Association on November 27th, 2008 in Seoul.

KMWA intended to help improve the welfare and the life quality of single mothers who are isolated in society, and further, it wanted to give love and hope to them. The program of the concert consisted of Chamber Orchestra Performance, Tenor & Alto Saxophone Duet, Doctors String Quartet and Heart Chamber Trio. Performers were all medical doctors and female medical doctors participated in vocal ensembles and piano trio. The concert was a great success.

Taiwan

Dr Joseph Wong, representing the Board of the Chinese Medical Women’s Association (CMWA), worked with the Rotary Club to raise 1.1 million for an AID’s prevention program and rehabilitation program for victims of AID’s and IV Heroin users.

Dr Winnie Yang, President of CMWA, was invited to attend a press conference with other medical NGOs to encourage the government to start the HPV vaccine program as scheduled. Similarly, Dr Winnie Yang in her role as president of CMWA was invited to attend the TV show of health promotion to introduce Pneumococcal vaccine to the public.

The CMWA was invited to the Department of Foreign Affairs, Division of NGO Affairs, to make a short statement of how we are functioning.

Dr Winnie Yan and Dr Siao Lin Huang, a member of CMWA, were invited to make two speeches about Gender Issues in Medical Practice at the Ethical Forum of the Annual Congress Meeting of the Taiwan Pediatric Association and these were well received.

The annual congress meeting of CMWA is scheduled for December 13th in Taipei City. The theme will be HIV infection and AIDS prevention. The new board that will govern for the next three years will be elected at that meeting.

6. INFORMATION ABOUT THE COMMITTEES AND PROJECTS

MWIA has **three standing committees**: Finance, Scientific and Research, and Ethics and Resolutions. Please email the Secretariat if you would like to serve on any of these committees.

The **Chair of the Finance Committee** is **Dr. Kyung Ah Park**. Vice Chairs are Dr. Eleanor Nwadinobi and Dr Caroline Jehu-Appiah. The **Chair of the Scientific & Research Committee** is **Dr. Olof Sigurdardottir**. Vice chairs are Dr. Ruth Guillén de Maldonado, Dr. Gwenaelle Vidal-Trecan and Dr. Winnie Yang. The **Chair of the Ethics & Resolutions Committee** is **Dr. Shirley Hovan**. Vice chairs are Dr. Susanne Close and Dr. Deborah Colville.

PROJECTS

MWIA has decided on a number of projects in addition to the **ongoing work with**:

1. Gender and health to include the gender culture intersect
2. Adolescent sexuality
3. Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission in HIV AIDS Plus
4. Issues for Women Doctors including Leadership, Human Resource Planning, and the Pink Collar Profession

The **new projects for the 2007- 2010 triennium** are:

1. Cervical Cancer including HPV and HPV vaccine
2. Gender based violence including trafficking and female genital mutilation
3. Primary Health Care
4. Gender perspective to Diabetes Mellitus

Please e-mail the Secretariat if you wish to serve on any of the committees or work on any of the projects. Please note that this is volunteer work and there is no financial compensation. A functioning e-mail address is necessary for successful communication for the committee work.

7. CALENDAR OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS

MWIA AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS - CONGRESSES AND MEETINGS



2009

1. **January 31, 2009** Paris, France
Meeting of the French Association of Women Doctors
Theme is Health of the Child and Adolescent
<http://affm.affinitesante.com>
2. **March 27-29, 2009**
American Medical Women's Association Annual Meeting
In conjunction with Women's Health 2009
The Williamsburg Lodge, Williamsburg, Virginia
To register visit
<http://www.bioconferences.com/CONFERENCES/WomensHealth/hotel.aspx>
3. **April 24-25, 2009** – Vancouver, Canada
11th Annual Conference of the Canadian Society of Physician Executives
www.cspexecs.com
4. **April 27-May 1, 2009** Istanbul, Turkey
12th World Congress on Public Health
www.worldpublichealth2009.org
5. **May, 15-16, 2009** – Vienna, Austria
Central European Regional Meeting
For further information visit www.aerztinnenbund.at
6. **July 13-17, 2009** - Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania
MWIA Near East & Africa Regional Meeting
Developing World Towards Achieving Health Related MDG in 1025
Venue: Dar Es Salaam Kunduchi Beach Hotel
Further details can be found at www.mewata.org
7. **September 19-26, 2009** – Cruise from Boston to Montreal
MWIA North American Regional Meeting
Taking Care of the Caregiver: Physician Heal Thyself
Bookings must be through SeaCourses at www.seacourses.com

8. **September 26, 2009** Montreal, Canada
Annual meeting of the Federation of Medical Women of Canada
following the North American Cruise
Further details can be found at www.fmwc.ca
9. **October 21-25, 2009** Washington, DC, USA
Annual Global Meeting of the Bone and Joint Decade.
Visit www.usbjd.org

2010

1. **May 7-9, 2010** – Paris, France
Southern European Regional Meeting
<http://affm.affinitesante.com>
2. **May 23-29, 2010** Sophia, Bulgaria
Sophia Women's World Conference
MDG#3 Gender Equality and Empowerment
www.sophia2010.org
3. **July 28-31, 2010** The Residence in Munster, Germany
28th International Congress of MWIA
Globalization in Medicine: Challenges and Opportunities
www.mwia2010.net

8. NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

With the relocation of the Secretariat, this is an excellent time for all the national associations and individual members to update their contact information. Please send to the Secretariat at secretariat@mwia.net the following:

1. The name of your President and National Coordinator with mailing and email addresses, phone and fax numbers
2. The website of your national association. You will find below a list of websites for the national associations. Please update the information.

Websites of National Associations

Austria	www.aerztinnenbund.at
Australia	http://www.wafmw.org.au
Belgium	http://www.mwab.be

Canada	http://www.fmwc.ca
Denmark	http://www.quindoc.dk
Finland	http://www.suomennaislaakariyhdistys.com
France	http://affm.affinitesante.com
Germany	http://www.aerztinnenbund.de
Iceland	http://www.fkli.is
Italy	http://www.donnemedico.org
Japan	http://www.jade.dti.ne.jp/jmwa
Kenya	kenyamewa@yahoo.com
Korea	http://www.kmwa.org or www.kmwa.or.kr
Mongolia	gerontocenter@mongol.net
Nigeria	www.mwannational.org
Sweden	www.kvinnligalakare.se
Switzerland	http:// www.medicalwomen.ch
Tanzania	www.mewata.org
The Netherlands	vnvemail@vnva.nl
Uganda	http://www.auwmd.org
United Kingdom	http://www.medicalwomensfederation.org.uk
United States of America	http://www.amwa-doc.org

9. Formation of the Special Interest Group for Young Doctors and Medical Students

Please remember that MWIA has a Special Interest Group for Young Doctors and Medical Students. Please nominate a young woman under the age of 40 to represent your country.

The committee contacts are through the Secretariat and are:

Chairperson: Dr. Inke Doench, Germany
 Vice chair: Dr. Adjoa Duker, USA
 Secretary: Dr. Jane Mba, Nigeria.

Find the MWIA Young Doctors and Medical Students Group on **Facebook** by following this link:
<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=38931816104&ref=ts>

10. Donations and Bequests

In addition to paying your dues on time and in full, please consider MWIA at the time of year when you make charitable donations and when you are updating your will. We have had a number of such donations over the years and are happy to publicly acknowledge your contribution if you wish to make a bequest or donation.

**11. 28th MWIA Congress in Munster, Germany
July 27 to 31, 2010. Theme is Networking in Changing Times/World**

In each MWIA Update, the organizing committee of the 2010 MWIA International Congress in Munster, Germany, wants to bring you some information about Munster.

The theme has been changed from Networking in Changing Times/World to **Globalization in Medicine: Challenges and Opportunities.**

The **sub themes** are:

nutrition (lifestyle diseases, over- and under- and mal-nutrition)

addiction (drugs, alcohol, etc., internet and gambling addiction, etc.)

epidemic plagues (both communicable eg. AIDS, Malaria, TB, HPV and non-communicable eg diabetes, heart disease)

gender strategies (leadership, gender mainstreaming, empowerment, gender based violence, adolescent sexuality)

primary health care

The **dates** have been changed from July 27-31, 2010, to July 28-31, 2010.

Please check the website at: www.mwia2010.net

We have been fortunate that **Professor Ilona Kickbusch PhD** accepted our invitation as key note speaker for the upcoming MWIA world congress in Münster, 2010. She is known throughout the world for her contributions to innovation in public health, health promotion and global health. She was a member of the core group that developed the first European Health Policy based on health targets at the WHO Regional Office for Europe which was adopted by the member states in 1984. She was responsible for the section on “lifestyles and health” and has since then advised many countries and organizations on target setting for health particular in relation to health promotion and intersectoral health challenges. Ilona Kickbusch is also the chairperson of the World Ageing & Generations Congress, an annual event in St. Gallen Switzerland. At the global level Ilona Kickbusch has served as the senior advisor on the Millennium Development Goals and Health Targets to the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). She is a faculty member and lecturer on Public Health at the Yale University, USA and Professor at the Graduate Institute for International and Development Studies, Geneva, Switzerland. She now works as an independent global health consultant based in Brienz, Switzerland.

12. Names in the News

Dr. May Cohen of the Federation of Medical Women of Canada has been awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award in Family Medicine Research by the College of Family Physicians of Canada. Also, acknowledged by the College were **Dr. Susan Harris** of Vancouver as British Columbia Family Physician of the Year and **Dr. Joanna Bates** of Vancouver for outstanding leadership in the discipline of Family Medicine.

Dr. Jillian Tomlinson of the Australian Medical Women's Association received an award from the Australian Office for the Status of Women with funding for a Leadership Project and web portal.

Dr. Desiree Yap, an obstetrician and gynecologist from Melbourne, has taken on the position of President of the Australian Federation of Medical Women.

Dr. Jane Hirst of Australia will be presenting a paper at the 2009 AOCOG/RANZCOG conference in Auckland. The topic of the presentation will be an update on the Western Pacific regional progress on achieving MDG5, as was discussed in the recent meeting in Ho Chi Minh City, that Dr. Hirst attended on behalf of MWIA.

Dr. Marie –Noëlle Mayer of the French Association of Women Doctors has been working in Kabul, Afghanistan, at the Hospital for Mother and Child, as a pediatric anesthesiologist.

Dr. Harald zur Hausen was awarded the 2008 Nobel Prize in Medicine for the discovery of HPV and its causal relationship to cervical cancer.

Former American First Lady, Eleanor Roosevelt had a plaque unveiled in her honour at the Place de Nations in Geneva on December 5th. She was the first President of the Commission on Human Rights and led the commission in the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and then its adoption by the UN General Assembly on December 10, 1948.

13. Books

Dr. Eileen Cambon, a Past National coordinator for Canada, has recently written a book entitled: **Uppity Women We Are! 100 Year History of Medical Women of British Columbia (1893 - 1993)**

Dr. Jean Fourcroy, Past Vice President for North America, has edited a book entitled **Pharmacology, Doping and Sports**. It can be ordered from orders@taylorandfrancis.com.

Dr. Mamta Gautam wrote the ever-popular book, **IronDoc**, telling us how to take care of ourselves. She will be the keynote speaker on the North American cruise.

The World Health Organization recently published **Closing the Gap in a Generation**, which is the report from the Commission on the Social Determinants of Health and WHO has recently released their publication on the importance of primary care in the health care system, entitled, **“Now More Than Ever.”**

Dr. Padmini Murthy of the School of Public Health at NY Medical College in Valhalla, NY, will publish February 17, 2009, her book, **Women's Global Health and Human Rights**. ISBN number is 978-0-7637-5631-4.

II. ORGANIZATIONS

1. WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO)



Primary Health Care – Now More Than Ever

The 2008 World Health Report addresses the need to have primary health care as the basis of the health care system. In their press release, WHO states that globalization is putting the social cohesion of many countries under stress, and health systems are clearly not performing as well as they could and should. People are increasingly impatient with the inability of health services to deliver. Few would disagree that health systems need to respond better – and faster – to the challenges of a changing world. Primary Health Care can do that. Visit www.who.int to order a copy.

Social Determinants of Health

The Commission on the Social Determinants of Health was initiated by the late Dr. JW Lee, former Director-General of the World Health Organization. The Commission has published its findings in a book entitled, **Closing the Gap in A Generation**. The Commission feels that reducing health inequities is a matter of social justice. Social injustice is killing people on a grand scale.

The Commission has made three recommendations:

1. Improve the conditions of daily life—the circumstances in which people are born, grow, live, work and age.
2. Tackle the inequitable distribution of power, money and resources—the structural drivers of those conditions of daily life – globally, nationally and locally.
3. Measure the problem, evaluate action, expand the knowledge base, develop a workforce that is trained in the social determinants of health, and raise public awareness about the social determinants of health.

Integrating mental health into primary health care: a global perspective

This report has just been released in December, 2008, and presents the justification and advantages of providing mental health services in primary care. It also provides advice on how to implement and scale up primary care for mental health and cites successful examples

Joint WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA Meeting on improving progress in maternal and newborn mortality reduction

Ho Chi Minh City Vietnam November 2008-11-10

Dr Jane Hirst MBBS (Hons) FRANZCOG

Representative of the Medical Women's International Association

There is only 6 years to go until the target date for attaining the Millennium Development goals (MDGs) for poverty reduction set by the United Nations in 2000. Thus it was timely for the seven priority countries in the in the WHO Western Pacific Region (WPRO) to review their progress in achieving MDG 5: reduction in maternal mortality from the 1990 level by 75% by 2015.

This meeting was convened in Ho Chi Minh City by Dr Nariman Awin, the WHO Regional Advisor for Making Pregnancy Safer, and I was fortunate to attend as an official observer for the MWIA. The Regional Reproductive Health Strategy was endorsed at the WPRO/SEARO joint meeting on reducing maternal mortality in Manila in 2003. This meeting allowed countries to report on their five year progress and compare successes and failures in strategies to reduce MMR. The seven priority countries represented at the meeting were Cambodia, China, Laos PDR, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, The Philippines and Viet Nam.

What became clear from all the country reports is that success or failure to achievement of MDG5 depends on development progress in many areas outside the health sector including transport, education and gender equality. One major focus was understanding the source of the numbers and to develop strategies to improve the capture rate of maternal deaths in countries without vital registration.

The definition of Skilled Birth Attendant (SBA) was discussed, and it soon became apparent that some countries were not using the WHO/FIGO/ICM consensus definition and rather equated facility delivery with delivery by a SBA, a proxy measure that may not reflect the actual 'skill' a woman received during delivery.

The minimal acceptable level of access to emergency obstetric care was discussed, and it was agreed that the WHO minimal standard of 4 basic emergency obstetric care facilities per 500 000 population needed to be adapted to local settings.

Finally each of the seven priority countries was given a chance to reevaluate and update their national strategies to reduce maternal and perinatal mortality. These were considered in terms of political commitment, technical input, human resources training and deployment, information systems, financial and support systems, supervision and monitoring of progress and the role of partnerships. From this the regional strategy for reducing the MMR will be published.

2. UNITED NATIONS

Conference on Legislative Reform to Achieve Human Rights

Dr. Mini Murthy represented MWIA at the Conference on Legislative Reform to Achieve Human Rights, held at the Millennium Hotel in New York on November 19, 2008. Such topics as a human rights based approach to legislative reform, translating the convention on the rights of the child, and gender based discrimination in the area of traditional practices were among topics discussed.

INSTRAW (UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women)

INSTRAW held its first virtual dialogue on the topic of the “**Current Situation in Gender Training**”. It developed a community of practice to discuss the utility of gender training, which has been in effect since the 4th World Congress on Women in Beijing. In 2004.

A community of practice has several components, namely tracking and analysis of gender training over time, production of consolidated resources, examples and templates for key documents that have been successful, a gender training wiki with resources, and a who’s who of community of practice gender experts around the world.

UNFPA

There is a fundraising group for UNFPA called 34 Million Friends of the UN Population Fund. The idea is that each American would donate \$1 to replace the funding not given to UNFPA for family planning. You can watch a 5 minute video on YouTube called 34 Million Friends, which tells of her fundraising.

Commission on the Status of Women

The 53rd session of the Commission on the Status of Women will be held in UN Headquarters in New York from March 2-13, 2009.

The themes that will be considered are the following:

Priority theme: "**The equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS**"

Review theme: "**Equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels.**"

MWIA will be holding a side event entitled, “**Gender equity and male responsibility - come and learn from the women doctors of the world.**”

Millennia 2015 - Global Experts Studies: Developments to Improve the Status of Women

Gender equality and advancement of women is addressed by the Commission on the Status of Women of ECOSOC, and dozens of other governmental and non-governmental organizations. Nevertheless, disparities continue worldwide, from the glass-ceiling in the nations claiming equality principles, to more stringent issues as unequal access to education, health care and decision making positions in many cultures and world regions.

The WFUNA Millennium Project (www.millennium-project.org) proposes a Real Time Delphi to collect your contribution about these issues. This Real Time Delphi aims to identify long term gender-sensitive issues that are not yet sufficiently addressed or resolved, those that are emerging or might grow in importance in the next two decades, as well as policies, strategies, challenges and barriers to improving the status of women worldwide and in specific regions or cultures, and the organizations that exist or should be established to address them.

The results will contribute to building a foresight diagnosis about that question. They will be presented and discussed within the research process of Millennia 2015 international conference about "Women actors of development for the global challenges" (www.millennia2015.org). They should also provide policy makers at international and national levels as well as of the private sector and NGOs with an array of policy suggestions and strategies of global and local significance for improving gender equity.

This study is designed to collect judgments about the answers to a list of questions. You may omit any questions you wish and you do not have to complete this list of questions in one visit. When you return to the questionnaire you will see your previous answers and may add to them or change them if you wish.

Your contribution is important, please take a few minutes to answer:

=> **the questionnaire is at:** < www.realtimedelphi.net >

=> **Code for the Millennia 2015 study:** < **M15** >.

New UN Website

The UN recently launched a new website that will show how and where the world is succeeding or failing in meeting the Millennium Development Goals on ending poverty. The website is <http://www.mdgmonitor.org/>. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said that the site would, for the first time, present all the information on the goals in one place, allowing closer monitoring and helping identify places in need of greater attention. The site gathers statistics from around the world to give a snapshot of how each country is doing in meeting the eight goals, from cutting infant mortality to reducing hunger.

CONGO

Along with the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Committee on NGO's (CONGO) is celebrating its 60th anniversary. To commemorate the event, CONGO Vienna, in partnership with the City of Vienna, held an event with

presentations and discussions under the theme “60 years Human Rights and 60 years CONGO” on December 4, 2008. at the Vienna International Centre.

DPINGO (Department of Public Information NGO section)

While UN Headquarters in New York remain under renovation, for the second consecutive year, the DPINGO conference will be held outside UN Headquarters. Last year, it was held at UNESCO in Paris. MWIA was pleased to have three of our French members: Dr. Marie-Dominique Ghnassia, Dr. Simone Zerah and Dr. Cecile Renson represent us at the conference in Paris.

November 14th was the deadline for nominations for the Conference Chair for the 2009 conference. The 62nd Annual DPI/NGO Conference will be held in Mexico City September 9-11, 2009 on the general theme of disarmament and international peace.

NGO Resources

UN-NGO-IRENE Best Practices Network

www.un.org/esa/coordination/ngo/irene

NGLS 2007 Yearly Review of Civil Society

www.un-ngls.org/site/article.php3?id_article=462

3. GLOBAL CALL TO ACTION TO STOP CERVICAL CANCER

The Medical Women’s International Association (MWIA) took an active part in the formulation of the *Global Call of Action to Stop Cervical Cancer* through participation at the London meeting of partners held in December, 2006. Subsequently, MWIA in collaboration with other partners launched the Global call during the YWCA Global Conference in Nairobi on July 6, 2007, and at the MWIA International Congress in Accra in August 1, 2007. MWIA is one of the initial signatories and is proud to stand beside other organizations who believe that women should not die from cervical cancer.

4. PATH

New online cervical cancer prevention resources

[Evidence of Support for Improved Cervical Cancer Prevention in Developing Countries](#)

Compiled by Cervical Cancer Action, the International Union Against Cancer, and PATH, this electronic dossier includes over 360 letters, video messages, editorials, and declarations in support of improved cervical cancer prevention for women throughout the developing world. In addition to these support documents, the dossier includes the names of over 1,200 individuals, representing nearly 700 organizations, who signed an online “Global Call to Stop Cervical Cancer” in 2007 and 2008.

5. WORLD MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

Dr. Kyung Ah Park represented MWIA at the WMA meeting in Korea and reported on the meeting as follows.

The annual General Assembly of the World Medical Association was held at the Shilla Hotel in Seoul, South Korea from October 15th to 18th, 2008. It's said that this General Assembly in Seoul was the most successful one owing to the establishment of important policies as well as scientific symposium. Delegates from more than 40 national medical associations attended the annual General Assembly of the World Medical Association in Seoul. Acting on behalf of patients and physicians, delegates in Seoul endeavored to achieve the highest possible standards of medical care, ethics, education and health-related human rights for all people. A number of issues were discussed, including the following:

Declaration of Seoul on Professional Autonomy and Clinical Independence

The new Statement declares that the central element of professional autonomy and clinical independence is the assurance that individual physicians have the freedom to exercise their professional judgment in the care and treatment of their patients without undue influence by outside parties or individuals. Patients expected their physicians to be free to make clinically appropriate recommendations.

A revised version of the Declaration of Helsinki

[The Declaration of Helsinki](#) (DoH) is the WMA's best-known policy statement. The first version was adopted in 1964 and has been amended six times since, most recently at the General Assembly in October 2008. Its importance is expected to increase since DoH is ethical principles for medical research involving human subjects.

Statement on reducing the Global Burden of Mercury

The meeting called for the phasing out of mercury use in the health care sector. Delegates said hospitals and medical facilities should switch to non-mercury equivalents. This would involve eliminating mercury-containing products such as thermometers, sphygmomanometers, gastrointestinal tubes, and other laboratory reagents and devices.

Statement on Reducing Dietary Sodium Intake

A fifty percent reduction in the sodium content of processed foods, fast food products and restaurant meals over the next decade was called for. Citing overwhelming evidence that excessive sodium/salt intake is a risk factor for the worsening of hypertension and cardiovascular diseases, delegates urged physicians to advise patients on how to reduce sodium/salt intake, including reducing the amount of salt used in cooking at home.

Resolution on Access of Women To Health Care

In many countries female doctors and nurses had been prevented from exercising their profession, leading to female patients and their children not having access to health care. The WMA urged its members to increase the effective participation of women in the medical profession.

The total number of national medical association members of the WMA is now 94. Dr. Dana Hanson, a dermatologist from New Brunswick in Canada, was elected President for 2009/10. He will take up office in a year's time. The 60th WMA General Assembly will be held from Wednesday 14 October to Saturday 17 October 2009 in Mumbai, India.

6. EUROPEAN WOMEN'S LOBBY (EWL)



The European Women's Lobby is the biggest Coalition of Women's Organizations in Europe

Dr. Waltraud Diekhaus represents MWIA on the EWL.

Editorial

EWL General Assembly elects New Executive Committee and Accepts New Members

In light of the French EU Presidency, this year's General Assembly of the European Women's Lobby was held in Lyon (France) from 24 to 26 October. The meeting gathered more than 150 delegates, representing EWL national co-ordinations and European-wide member organizations, from all over Europe. The EWL General Assembly took place in the Lyon City Hall and was generously hosted by the Lyon City Council with the organizational support of the French Coordination of the EWL (CLEF).

The three-day event started on Friday with a **seminar on 'Local Authorities as Actors Promoting Equality between Women and Men in Europe: Realities and Perspectives'**. The Deputy Mayor of Lyon Ms Rabatel opened the seminar, followed by a welcoming address by Valérie Létard, State Secretary for Solidarity on behalf of the French EU Presidency. The European Commission Vice-President Margot Wallström sent a video message of support. An overview on the essential role of regions in achieving equality between women and men preceded a round table on 'Tools for Gender equality at Local Level'. The main issues discussed during the round table were the action by and for migrant women at the local level and the importance of gender budgeting as a policy instrument. Finally, there were two presentations of concrete regional experiences about urban planning and time management with a gender equality perspective.

The EWL General Assembly itself took place on 25 and 26 October. Amongst the various discussions held by the delegates, **five Issue Groups** were organized by member organizations on a) Women's economic independence, b) European Security Policy: a non-militarist approach, c) Who's afraid of gender budgeting?, d) Sexist discrimination in the media and e) Reproductive Rights: Progress and Threats in Europe.

This General Assembly also saw an historic moment where two new national coordinators, from Cyprus and Poland, and one European-wide organization, Federation of Kalé, Manouch Romany & Sinté Women, became full members of the **European Women's Lobby, which now comprises of national co-ordinations in all 27 EU member states and accession countries and 20 European-wide organizations.**

7. Women Deliver

Following the successful conference in London, UK, in October, 2007, the work of investing in women continues. Visit the website www.womendeliver.org to keep up with developments.

8. American Women's Hospital Service

AMHS was founded in 1917 during World War I by a group of New York physicians and patients who wanted to send an ambulance staffed by women physicians to the front in France. Today, AMHW provides essential services to numerous underserved communities in the US and overseas, including the MWIA Mission Hospital in Calcutta. Should you wish to donate contact info@amwa-doc.org.

9. WONCA Women

Congratulations to WONCA Women for compiling a monograph/literature review of stories of women in family medicine. It can be found at: www.womenandfamilymedicine.com Authored by Drs Cheryl Levitt, Lucy Candib, Barbara Lent and Michelle Howard this web publication is a summary of the key literature on women physicians and family medicines and covers important topics of women physicians in training; in practice; in academic medicine; in organizational medicine; caring for themselves and their families; and women physicians in the doctor-patient relationship

There will be a **meeting in UK** in 2009 (28 June - 3 July 2009) to plan WONCA WOMEN's preparations for Cancun and onwards into the next decade!

WONCA has organized a campaign called "**15 by 2015**" which calls on all major global health donors to allocate 15% of all their grants towards strengthening the primary health care system of the country in which they work. Currently, funding is vertically programmed towards specific diseases. In contrast, more funding needs to be

horizontally programmed towards broad-based improvements in population health, including preventative measures, primary care services, and health workforce development. This 15 by 2015 campaign is aimed at security such funding.

To sign the petition, go to <http://www.15by2015.org/index.php/petition/>.

Dr. Lucy Candib brought a short video to our attention, emphasizing the **importance of the girl child**. Visit <http://girleffect.org>.

10. Sophia Women's World Conference: Women and Wisdom

The purpose of the conference is to illuminate and implement vital UN Living Documents especially MDG#3 Gender Equality and Empowerment.

Of the 12 critical areas of concern in the Beijing Platform of Action, those of most interest to MWIA are;

- Women and Health
- Violence Against Women
- Women in Power and Decision-making
- Human Rights of Women
- Women and the Environment
- The Girl Child

For more information, please visit the website: www.sophia2010.org

11. UNIFEM

Nicole Kidman is the Goodwill Ambassador of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). She announced the results of the very successful campaign called the "Say No to Violence against Women."

12. International Federation of Medical Students (IFMSA)

Please visit the website at www.ifmsa.org for their activities.

13. HPV Vaccine Global Community of Practice

The HPV Vaccine Global Community is an online global network of people who share an interest in preventing cervical cancer and in the role of HPV vaccines in health programs. The purpose is to share and exchange knowledge, ideas and resources to explore the feasibility of introducing HPV vaccines within cervical cancer control programs and thereby ensure that people around the globe have equitable access to the best available health care. For more information and to join, visit <http://hpv-vaccines.net>

14. **CIOMS** (Council for International Associations of Medical Sciences)

As a Vice President on the Executive of CIOMS, Dr. Waltraud Diekhaus attended the executive meeting in Geneva from December 1-3, 2008. She ensured that CIOMS was aware that it needs to incorporate a gender perspective into health and health care in order to improve the health of mankind. In addition, she asked CIOMS to urgently recognize the importance of incorporating a gender perspective in health care delivery and health policy development re HIV/AIDS.

15. **Framework Convention Alliance on Tobacco Control**

The FCATC is holding its general assembly. Voting was taking place for the European Region representative and the Western Pacific Region Representative as well as a member at large. Jonathan Lieberman has stepped down as coordinator.

III. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next Update will be published in March, 2009.

Please send us your reports, comments or any other interesting information by February 28, 2009, at the latest. We are always interested to put your name and your accomplishments in the Update.

Letters to the editor are always welcome.

On behalf of the Executive Committee of MWIA, Greetings of the Season to All and Best Wishes for a Happy, Healthy, Peaceful 2009.

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