

MEDICAL WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION

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# MWIA



## Update

### No. 79 Sept 2019

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## **MEDICAL WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION**

### **THEME OF THE TRIENNium 2019-2022**

### **Young Women Young Doctors – Our Inspiration Our Future**

## **1. PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

### **Dr Clarissa Fabre UK**

Dr Clarissa Fabre



Dear members

It is hard to believe that it is only 2 months since our Centenary celebrations in New York. It was wonderful to meet so many of you, and to welcome our new members. Our new Executive Committee is settling in, adjusting to our new roles.

I was delighted that so many of you applied to join our Committees and Project/Special Interest Groups. Everyone had an opportunity to apply. The Groups have now been constituted and should soon be ready to start work.

As I said in my inaugural address, I would like MWIA to set ambitious but achievable goals. We should work with the WHO and the UN to achieve universal HPV vaccination for the elimination of cervical cancer in every country, to reduce maternal mortality by preventing and treating post-partum haemorrhage, and to work constructively with partners to reduce unplanned teenage pregnancy. Progress reports will be presented to the Executive, at our Regional meetings, and at our fora at the United Nations in March, and the WHO in May. We must always remember that MWIA is a unique force, with a network of doctors and medical students working on the ground in over 50 countries.

I have been very pleased that members have kept the Executive informed on issues of interest in their regions. For example, there was a public call in Indonesia on the social media platform Facebook, to 'Bring your daughter to "mass circumcision" for \$10'. Facebook was in breach of WHO and UN resolutions for allowing this post to be circulated. MWIA was one of many organisations to express their disapproval on social media, and the post was subsequently withdrawn. Dr Magda Simonis, National Coordinator from Australia has proposed a Resolution for the 2022 General Assembly condemning social media promotion of harmful acts such as FGM.



On Climate Change march

The risks posed by climate change have been very much in the news, promoted very effectively by Greta Thunberg, the 16 year old Swedish environmental activist, and her young supporters all over the world. The impact on women and children is substantial: for example sexual violence

against women increases in displaced populations, and women lose reproductive control (poor access to services, more unplanned pregnancies); environmental toxins can affect pregnancies, resulting in obstetric complications, birth defects, weaker babies and ongoing generational effects. Thank you to our members for bringing these matters to our attention. MWIA will continue to express our concerns via social media.

And finally, some exciting news. Our Secretary-General, Dr Padmini Murthy, Dr Bev Johnson, and I will be attending the Nairobi Summit in Kenya in November. This Summit celebrates the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo in 1994. At the heart of the Summit will be the endorsement of a set of voluntary global commitments, through global consultations with different stakeholders, largely centred on achieving the ‘three zeros’: 1. Zero unmet need for family planning 2. Zero preventable maternal deaths 3. Zero gender-based violence and harmful practices against women, girls and youth. These aims align perfectly with MWIA goals for this triennium.

It has been an exciting start to my presidency. I look forward very much to communicating with many of you, so that we can move forward together to our goals.

**2.Message from the SECRETARY- GENERAL**  
**Dr. Padmini Murthy USA**



Dear Colleagues and global medical sisters,

It was an honor and privilege for us at the American Medical Women's Association to have hosted MWIA's the Centenary Congress in July 2019. As we all know MWIA was founded by pioneer women physicians in New York City 100 years ago and by having the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration in New York City of our beloved MWIA, we have completed a full circle and this was an amazing experience for all of us. The congress would not have been possible without the support and dedication of AMWA members, UN agency and UN Missions staff, sponsors and donors.

I am truly honoured to serve as MWIA as Secretary – General in the new century of our existence. Personally, I look forward by using my experience in global diplomacy and human rights to working with my colleagues on the executive committee and with you esteemed members in advancing MWIA to new heights this triennium.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you on behalf of my colleagues at AMWA for attending the congress and your participation made it a grand success.

We are witnessing rapid advances and mounting challenges globally which affect us as women physicians as we do our best to serve the communities we live and work in.

As we foray into the new century, the social media platforms, MWIA web site and MWIA news update will have a new look which we hope will be more user friendly and have more contributions from the membership.

Last but not least I would like to express my personal thanks to Drs. Satty Gill Keswani, Eliza Chin, Usha Saraiya, Mandakini Megh, Eleanor Nwadinobi and Desiree Yap for their unwavering support and believing in me for the past decade. I would also like to thank profusely and convey my deep appreciation to Dr. Shelley Ross immediate past secretary general for her outstanding service, mentorship of her colleagues and contribution to MWIA for the past 12 years. I have very big shoes to fill as current SG. I would like to conclude by quoting Margaret Mead the famous

American anthropologist “ Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has. We at MWIA are that group !





Photo credit- John Oko / Photos from UN event on July 25<sup>th</sup>

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YMWIA facebook group

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/youngMWIA/>

Twitter [@MedWIA](#) Hashtag [#MWIA100](#)

### **3.Message From President Elect**

#### **Dr Eleanor Ann Nwadinobi**



I bring you greetings as the President Elect of MWIA. It is an honour and privilege to be given the opportunity to serve the Association in this capacity. The new triennium promises to be an exciting one under the President's theme of "young doctors our future".

I returned to Nigeria to a rousing welcome by the Medical Women's Association of Nigeria, during the 21st Biennial meeting. As a plenary speaker on the topic "Eliminating Harmful Widowhood practices". It was an opportunity to emphasise to the members the role that medical women can play in advocating for the enactment and enforcement of laws as well as the valuable place of the Women Rights To Health Information (WORTH) campaign in sensitising traditional leaders and other custodians of culture.

I look forward to participating in meaningful advocacy on behalf of MWIA as the foremost female medical body best positioned to address VAWG, as well as bringing my experience to the VAWG working group, especially in the area of harmful traditional practices.



#### 4.IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Prof. Dr. Dr. Bettina Pfleiderer

##### CELEBRATION OF MWIA’S HISTORY, PRESENCE AND FUTURE IN NEW YORK!

The **unforgettable highlight of our centennial celebration** was certainly the **centennial meeting in New York 25-28<sup>th</sup> of July 2019**. Over 1100 attendants with more than 90 speakers and over 200 poster presenters from all over the world were celebrating female medical doctors’ achievements of the last 100 years bridging the past with the present and moving into the future. **Having been MWIA’s president at this very special congress will always have a special place in my heart!**

The congress started already with a bang – a spectacular **special UN side event to commemorate the 100th anniversary of MWIA** entitled: *Women’s Health: Building blocks for sustainable development Goals*”. I want to thank Dr. Padmini Murthy and Dr. Satty Gill Keswani, our UN representatives for many years, for organizing this event so well! Their hard work over the last years opened many doors usually not available to NGOs.

**MWIA held a 30 minute historic session** directly after the congress opening ceremony co-chaired



by President-elect Clarissa Fabre and myself entitled **“Celebrating 100 years of MWIA in 30 mins”** highlighting 100 years of MWIA’s history. There were three talks given by MWIA’s past President Afua Hesse presenting the first 50 years of MWIA, followed by a talk of MWIA past President Kyung Ah Park presenting the last 50 years and concluded by a short input by the MWIA president at that time Bettina Pfleiderer on the future of MWIA. **After that followed a spectacular slideshow with music based on our centennial publication: “100 years on 100 pages”.** The last part of the session was a **photo shot** with

presidents and other representatives of MWIA national member associations, individual MWIA members as well as national associations who applied for MWIA membership.

Other MWIA activities included the 10 centennial MWIA posters, the MWIA memory stick with the slide show, the centennial recipe book, the centennial teasers, the centennial book as well as Dorothy’s Wards book and last, but not least, the **centennial MWIA fabric collage** which was assembled by Dr. Eleanor Nwadinobi, chair of the PR centennial MWIA committee and her team. Thank you to all associations contributing to this collage as a show MWIA’s unity and sisterhood.

##### Approval of the modernized version of the Statutes and By-laws

I am so pleased to let you all know the revised Statutes and By-laws were approved by MWIA’s members at the General Assembly in July 28, 2019. Thank you to the MWIA Executive 2016-2019, past MWIA presidents and the MWIA ethics & resolution committee and its chair Dr. Helen Goodyear as without their hard work this would have not been possible!



Last but not  
least, a  
personal  
**Thank  
you!** to the  
American  
Medical  
Women's  
Association  
(AMWA)



and the Local Organization Committee for hosting this Centennial Congress and making it a memorable event for all of us!

I am also deeply indebted to the members of our various MWIA committees and the previous Exco for their support, enthusiasm and sisterhood in the 3 years of my presidency 2016-2019.

Let me close with a quote of Helen Keller: **"Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much."**

## **5. Centenary Congress Report**

**Dr. Eliza Chin** was scheduled to give the **highlights of the Centennial Congress** but due to time constraints it was decided to include her remarks in the congress report as follows:



Credit: Digital Film Work

The American Medical Women's Association (AMWA) was honored to host the Centennial Congress of the Medical Women's International Association at the Brooklyn Bridge Marriott. Over 1200 delegates and attendees from more than 50 countries were represented, with more than 140 speakers and more than 270 scientific posters.

The energy, camaraderie, and friendship within this international gathering of medical women was visibly palpable.

### **UN EVENT AND OPENING RECEPTION**

The Congress launched on Thursday, July 25, 2019 with a special United Nations side event, "Women's Health: Building Blocks for Sustainable Development Goals" in sponsorship with the Permanent Mission of Sri Lanka to the United Nations, the Permanent Mission of Trinidad and Tobago to the United Nations, and The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). Distinguished speakers included H.E. Penelope A. Beckles, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to the United Nations; Mr. Satya Rodrigo, Charge'd'affairs a.i. Permanent Mission of Sri Lanka to the United Nations; Dr. Chantal Line Carpentier, head of UNCTAD, Dr. Jillian Farmer, Director of the Division of Healthcare Management and Occupational Safety at the UN; Dr. Vanessa Kerry, CEO of Seed Global



Health; NASA Scientist Dr. Camille Wardrop Alleyne; Carlos Garcia Former Ambassador of El Salvador to the UN; Simone Monesabian, head of UNODC NY office ; activist and writer Ruchira Gupta, and author and philanthropist David Roosevelt (grandson of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt). The event was organized by Dr. Padmini Murthy, MWIA Vice President of North America. View the [video recording](#).



Credit: Africa Photo Communications

Regional meetings and dinner were held at St. Francis College as colleagues from the eight MWIA regions gathered to reconnect and plan for the upcoming triennium.

The Opening Reception featured beautiful performances by Dr. Mary Rorro, who composed the MWIA Centennial Theme Song, and singer, guitarist Tessany Azizi as well as an amazing story slam hosted by Elizabeth Métraux, Founder of Women Writers in Medicine and featuring Dr. Theresa Rohr-Kirchgraber, Dr. Heather Furnas, Dr. Oneeka Williams, and Dr. Arghavan Salles. Music gave way to dancing, and later in the evening, attendees tapped into their creative selves through AMWA's annually hosted paint night.

### **OPENING CEREMONY AND PLENARIES**

The opening ceremony opened with welcomes from MWIA President Dr. Bettina Pfleiderer and AMWA President Dr. Roberta Gebhard. A history panel with MWIA Presidents Dr. Bettina Pfleiderer, Dr. Afua Hesse, and Dr. Kyung Ah Park summarized MWIA's legacy over the past century and recognized on stage over 40 national association leaders from across 6 continents, a powerful display of unity among women physicians from diverse cultural backgrounds.



Credit: Mary Ellen Morrow Photography

Following this presentation was an inspiring fireside chat with prominent leaders in healthcare within the U.S.-- Dr. Danielle Ofri, award-winning physician author; Dr. Darilyn Moyer, EVP

and CEO of the American College of Physicians; and Dr. Helen Burstin, EVP and CEO of the Council of Medical Specialty Societies -- moderated by Laurie Cooke, CEO of the Healthcare Businesswomen's Association.



Credit: Mary Ellen Morrow Photography



Credit: Mary Ellen Morrow Photography

The Linda Brodsky Memorial Lecture was delivered by TIME'S UP Healthcare founding members Dr. Esther Choo and Dr. Dara Kass who spoke on the need to end gender discrimination and harassment within the healthcare sector. They were joined on-stage by the larger group of founding members, all wearing signature black to represent the TIME'S UP movement in a statement of solidarity. The morning session culminated with an unforgettable conversation with renowned activist, author, and feminist, Ms. Gloria Steinem, hosted by AMWA Past President Dr. Gayatri Devi. The privilege of learning "life lessons from Gloria" and hearing firsthand her perspectives on gender, equity, and women's leadership were a highlight of the conference.



Credit: Mary Ellen Morrow Photography

### **BREAKOUT TRACKS**

Three breakout tracks included scientific sessions on global health, gender equity, work-life balance, violence against women, women's health, leadership and professional development, maternal health, healthcare innovation, obesity, sexual harassment, sex and gender specific medicine,





and women physicians as ambassadors of change. Workshops and special sessions allowed a deeper dive into topics on graduate medical education, lesbian and transgender health, professional development, gender bias, presentation skills, social media, Native American healthcare, burnout, work-life balance, and mental health. MWIA was also honored to welcome [Dr. Gigi Osler](#), President of the Canadian Medical Association and great-great grandniece of [Sir William Osler](#).

Credit: Digital Film Work

### **CENTENNIAL GALA**

The Centennial Gala honored women physicians in uniformed service from around the world as well as newly inducted AMWA fellows. Performances included global premieres of Barbara Callandar's play *Women Doctors: Unite to Heal the World!* and Sarah Partridge's song "Courage is a Woman," both of whom told the inspiring story of MWIA's first president, Dr. Esther Pohl Lovejoy. A mesmerizing sand art show by Ha Jun Kim from Korea and dance performances by member associations from around the world concluded a truly remarkable evening.

Credit: Mary Ellen Morrow Photography



### **CLOSING PLENARIES, AWARDS, AND CLOSING CEREMONY**

Closing plenary speakers included Dr. Kate Prior on imposter syndrome, Dr. Florence Manguyu on MWIA's role in global health, Dr. Suzy Feigofsky on physician burnout, and Rebekah Apple on trust and communication in healthcare. The closing Awards Ceremony honored the following luminaries in healthcare (read details about the [MWIA](#) and [AMWA](#) Awardees).

### **CONCLUSION**

MWIA President Dr. Bettina Pleiderer (Germany) concluded her presidential term, and incoming President Dr. Clarissa Fabre (United Kingdom) delivered her inaugural speech, outlining her goals and areas of focus for the next triennium. Dr. Shelley Ross concluded 12 years of exemplary service as MWIA Secretary General and AMWA leader, Dr. Padmini Murthy assumed the position as new Secretary General. The next MWIA Congress will be held in Taiwan in 2022.

The MWIA Centennial Congress was a wonderful opportunity for women physicians across the globe to come together, reflect on shared history, exchange medical knowledge, and build collegial relationships. This Congress also marks the beginning of yet another century of collaboration among medical women around the world.

### **SPECIAL MEETING EXHIBITS**





Map showing countries participating in the Centennial

MWIA Centennial Quilt with  
contributions from national associations

Photos credit: Mary Ellen Morrow Photography



International Teddy Bear Exhibit representing over 12 countries from around the world. Art display inspired by Judy Chicago's The Dinner Party exhibit at the Brooklyn Museum (not pictured).

### **MWIA RECOGNIZED IN THE U.S. CONGRESSIONAL RECORD**

On Friday, August 2, 2019, just after the close of the Congress, [United States Congresswoman Dr. Kim Schrier](#) entered the following remarks in the [United States Congressional Record](#).

*"Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the 100th anniversary of the Medical Women's International Association (MWIA), one of the oldest international professional organizations, representing women doctors worldwide.*

*In 1919 New York City, American physician, Dr. Esther Pohl Lovejoy, along with international colleagues from 16 nations, founded MWIA and became its first President. Over the century, MWIA has grown to encompass over 80 countries as either national associations, like the American Medical Women's Association, or as individual members.*

*One hundred years ago, there were very few women in the medical field. Organizations like MWIA provided support for women in medicine and more importantly provided a community for them to share medical knowledge as well as promote collegiality around the world. At the time of MWIA's founding, a major challenge for women was the accessibility of medical education. Fortunately, this obstacle has been overcome in many nations. The sacrifice of these earlier trailblazing doctors helped pave the way for future ones like me.*

*Yet the number of women in senior leadership positions shows that the work of MWIA is far from over. By investing in women physicians, MWIA provides the network and support system to mentor and advocate for future leaders in the medical field. In addition, MWIA works to improve the health of women worldwide, advocating for gender specific healthcare, promoting equity, and addressing social determinants of health.*

*Congratulations again to the MWIA for their 100 years of important work. Their tireless work to open doors for women in medicine has improved the health of generations of women, men and children around the world, and for that, we all are grateful."*

View Dr. Schrier's remarks in the [United States Congressional Record](#).

## **6. NEWS FROM AROUND THE REGIONS**

### **Central European Region, update, September 2019**

Many members of our region attended the centennial in New York and enjoyed a wonderful and inspiring time with colleagues from all over the world.

There are two upcoming conferences in our region: the centennial of the Austrian Medical Women's Association on the 12th of October in Vienna and the conference of the German Medical Women's Association from the 17th to the 20th of October in Erfurt. The date for the next Central European Conference is going to be fixed until the end of October.

Submitted by Dr . Edith Vecsei MWIA Regional Vice President for Central Europe

### **Report from Near East and Africa Region**

The regional started building momentum towards its Regional Conference and continued with mobilization of National Associations under the leadership of the immediate past Vice President Dr. Mabel Aboah. This show a very impressive participation by the region at the MWIA Centennial Event. During the Event we held a Regional Meeting and the planning for the triennium 2019 -2022 is continuing.

Since the General Assembly, plans are underway to have a meeting of Regional Presidents to conclude the planning as we move to the Regional Conference scheduled to be held in Nigeria in 2020, the dates will be announced later. We are extremely happy with the progress the Mali Medical Women's Association is making under the interim patronage of Dr. Fatoumata Nafo. We are working modalities to reach out to South Africa Medical Association.

Our most pressing concern is to strength most National Associations in the conflict prone countries such as DR- Congo. We have made some progress with a focal point in Egypt, but would like to reach more of our Arabic speaking sisters as we strengthen interaction with both English and French speaking National Associations.

#### **Country Reports:**

Nigeria has held its bi-annual conference and sent the report to Secretariat (Mini please insert)

Zimbabwe: We are extremely proud that despite the difficulties in Zimbabwe the Association has done a great work and continues with the effort. As a newly formed National Association - The Zimbabwe Women Doctors Association (ZWDA) which was formed on April 29, 2019 by a group of female medical colleagues in Zimbabwe: Dr Maitazvenyu Mvere-Chatora, Dr Nonhlanhla Zwangobani, Dr Louisa Chikara, Dr Nomsa Tsikai, Dr Shingai Nyaguse-Chiurunge and Dr Audrey Chivaura continues to galvanise and support women doctors who are experiencing more difficulties than their male counterparts and able to make significant contributions to the promotion of women and children's health in the country.

The power of social media is real, and the association is using it effectively. A social media WhatsApp group for the Association was formed on April 29, 2019 and within 48 hours 256 women doctors had voluntarily joined the group. An interim executive committee was



formed comprised of the founding members and Dr Mvere-Chatora was elected National Chairperson.

Women doctor's in Zimbabwe expressed in a survey that (60.3%) felt that they had been discriminated against in their career because they were women and 57.7% felt that had suffered from sexual harassment and bullying in the workplace. They are focusing in mentorship of women doctors, particularly medical students and those in post-graduate training, help and support of women doctors so that they can achieve a good work-life balance, opportunities for networking and career development.

On 28<sup>th</sup> June 2019, a networking and consultative cocktail dinner was held which was attended by 75 women doctors of different specialties and grades including Dr Monalisa Muchatuta who had travelled from America for the event. Dr Mvere-Chatora gave a presentation on the history of women in medicine, history of the Medical Women's International Association.

Dr Madeline Nyamwanza-Makonese, the first black female doctor in Zimbabwe, first black woman to graduate from the University of Rhodesia Medical School and second black woman on the African continent was the guest of honour at event and all present were inspired and motivated to hear how she challenged the cultural and racial prejudices that prevented black women in Rhodesia from pursuing careers in medicine.

Dr Tsveru Munhutu was very much delighted to attend the MWIA Centennial Congress in New York in July 2019 on behalf of the Zimbabwe Women Doctors Association. It was the first time that Zimbabwe had been represented at MWIA congress. The Association is having impressing future plans which we will share as they report the progress.

**Ethiopia:** We are excited to have received a formal communication from Ethiopia and awaiting report from Dr. Nebiyat Semeredin

**Kenya:** KMWA Board has met twice since the General Assembly to plan on its work nationally. We are saddened to report the demise of Prof. Maryanne Nyamogo who attended the MWIA Centennial Event. She was an ardent advocate for Women's Maternal Health especially Maternal and Neonatal Health, but more concerned about Adolescent Reproductive Health especially Teen Mothers – unplanned pregnancies.

KMWA is now part of the CSO preparing for participation of the ICPD25 and will have a side event.

KMWA has held a very successful National Symposium in September, 2019 together with partners – theme: Working Together to Strengthen HIV Programming for Adolescent Girls and Young Women. The theme also explored the Multipurpose Prevention Technologies and Promising Commodities in Reproductive Health especially Contraceptives, Microbicides and other Prevention Toolkit. The nexus between SGBV, HIV and Hepatitis was found to be a major issue among PUDs especially women.

KMWA is a co-chair of Women for Women Platform which advocates for Social Accountability monitoring Framework for the acceleration of SDGs. Our work on the Well Woman Clinic is being reorganized to include medical management of SGBV and documentation of Forensic evidence. We are partnering with women parliamentarians and likeminded organizations to have Reproductive Health Bill which has a section on Menstrual Health and Hygiene Management. We continue with our high-level advocacy on policies and laws for improved health of women. We are on the table discussing UHC especially Essential Health Package and the escalating NCDs in Kenya. We are happy that the government is embarking on the HPV vaccination in the immunization program.

**Uganda:** Not much has been received from Uganda – we are however aware of plans to regularize activities. Dr. Brenda Kawala who was leading these efforts got selected for Mandela Washington Fellowship (MWF) and has been away for some time. Efforts will be made to reach out to Uganda as we do the same to other National Associations.

Submitted by:

Dr. Christine Sadia – MWIA Regional Vice President for NEA

### **Regional Report from Western Pacific**

Immediately prior to commencing my term as WPR VP I had the pleasure of meeting many of the National members from countries in the Western Pacific Region in New York. Such a fabulous Congress and experience! Since taking over the position from the well organised Dr Cissy Yu, I have been updating our contact lists and experiment with methods of communication. We have traditionally used email. Dr Yu started a Facebook page and a Whats app group for our region. As we have been please to welcome women doctors from the PRChina I have added a We Chat group and started a trial using the platform 'Slack'. We plan to experiment further with Skype and Zoom meetings. All of the members of our region are committed to facilitating the membership of younger medical women (under 40 years of age) and as such we are trialling various platforms to see if we can improve on our communications methodology. I am also looking forward to representing my regional constituents on the MWIA EXCO.

Submitted by: Dr Desiree Yap MWIA Western Pacific Region Vice President

### **MEMBER COUNTRIES**

#### **Australia**

##### **1. AFMW Members**

Australia holds the WPVP position for this next Triennium and we are represented by Dr Desiree Yap, WPVP

Dr Magdalena Simonis, National Coordinator for Australia

Associate Prof Deborah Colville, President AFMW

##### **2. AFMW at MWIA**

AFMW was very strongly represented at the Centennial Congress of MWIA in NYC in July with 42 attendees and had a major representation on the academic program there

\* The Australian members of the E&R Committee , particularly , Prof Deb Colville worked hard at the Conference and by email (Dr Susie Close ) to help finalise the wording and intent of the issues voted on at Congress

\* AFMW awarded money to support 2 Reps from each State to attend MWIA in NYC

\* MWIA Centennial: feedback shared with AFMW members.

##### **3. AFMW Advocacy**

\*Letters have been sent from AFMW Exec to AMA on safe working hours in hospitals and in training

\*and to NSW Premier & Deputy Premier to advocate the issue of Decriminalising Abortion in NSW

\*Dr Marjorie Cross wrote to Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Authority (AHPRA) very well publicised & misogynistic remarks of a doctor on staff there

\*Dr Elysia Robb (Vic) and Dr Magdalena Simonis advocating at national level with RACGP and National GP training organisations for equal pay and for reduced fees for compulsory education for part-time GP trainees. Responses now received from all organisations and discussions are progressing.

\*Dr Magdalena Simonis submitted amendment to MWIA Resolution on FGM in response to FGM advertisement on Facebook

\*Dr Magdalena Simonis submitted recommendation to MWIA for a Resolution on Climate change and its Impact on Women's Health. To be ratified at General Assembly in 2022.

#### 4. AFMW CSW

Significant representation at CSW at UN in 2019: both President & AFMW Vice President, Dr Lydia Pitcher attended that along with other Australian representatives

#### 5. AFMW special projects:

\*Engagement with indigenous artist and producing a scarf, where a percentage of the cost goes to aboriginal women in medicine – The aim of this project is **to increase the number of indigenous doctors, particularly females, in Australia from 400 to 4000.**

Allocation of the funds raised will be determined at our national meeting in November. So far \$1000 has been raised, since July. The AFMW webpage also contains links to the two videos (short, silent 30 second and longer one) These are beautiful videos made on behalf of AFMW for the **about the fabric square of Purple Bush Medicine Leaves painted by Louise Numina Scarf for the MWIA Centennial Collage in New York, July 2019.** In these videos, Louise describes the use of Bush Medicine Leaves in her own language .

As a result of this collaboration, the scarves were made in time for the Centennial and these are on offer via Pia du Pradal, a renowned Australian designer.

We have encouraged those purchasing a scarf to consider a donation to the Project –there is a “donate” button with the online purchasing,

The link to the scarf purchasing and pricing is right down the bottom of the page!.

\*Redevelopment of AFMW website underway

#### 6. Research

ACT MWS has committed \$5000 to a research project, still in discussion stage but probably around providing “ Safe Houses “ for victims within the system with A/Prof Louise Stone & ANU

### **Brazil**

ABMM (Brazilian Association of Medical Women)

#### Scientific Sections:

August 2019: Lifestyle of Modern Women and its Consequences on Health

Sept 2019: Behavior during immunization in children and adolescents

#### Activities and news:

We are very happy .with the election of Prof Magda Carneiro Sampaio, a Professor of Pediatrics at Medical School of University of São Paulo and President Section São Paulo, of ABMM, for VP Latin America, during the Centennial Congress.in July 2019 in NY.. Prof Magda Sampaio, attended the meeting at NIH about Autoinflammatory and Immunodesregulatory Diseases in Augusta 22-24 representing Brazil.

Dr Irene Abramovich, a pediatric neurologist, member of Reginal Council of Medicine of São Paulo, and a director of ABMM was elected in august for the Federal Council of Medicine of Brazil.

Dr Elizabeth Giunco Alexandre , a cardiologist , active member of Brazilian Society of Cardiology and focusing in cardiology for women, director of ABMM and President Elect of ABMM, during the congress of SOCESP (Society of Cardiology of São Paulo, was chair of a round table about Pregnancy and Cardiovascular Disease and did a presentation about “ Impact of Risk Factors in stratification of ischemic heart disease in Women” in June 19. She is co-author of the chapter “Cardiovascular Disease in Women” of the recently published “Compendium of Cardiology” of SOCESP.

Dr Fatima Alves, our President attended the Congress of Foundation of Otorhinolaringology.

Dr Nelci Zanon, a pediatric neurosurgeon, and director of ABMM, published the book “ Pediatric Neurosurgery and she attended in Sept in Beijing the World Congress on Neurosurgery and opened the seminaire on Pediatric Neurosurgery.

Dr Sonia Maria Rolim Rosa Lima, a ginecologist, director of ABMM, published the second edition of her book “Phytopharmaceuticals

Nise Yamagushi, an oncologist and director of ABMM, VP of Brazilian Society of Cancerology was awarded in july , with the prize of World Cancer Alliance in Lyon France, to honor her fight for the control of cancer in under privileged population, in the world.

Considering the Resolution 6 of MWIA during the Centennial:” Implementation and Dissemination of a sex and gender sensitive medicine” with the efforts of the members of Dept of Gender medicine of ABMM there are good news, With the main effort of Dr Marilene Melo, our VP and help of dept of Gender Medicine Dept, in 2018 a law was approved in the state of São Paulo, introducing in the curriculum of medical schools of this important subject. ABMM already presented the subject in several medical schools who intend to introduce the subject. During the Centennial Congress, Dr Anna Maria Martits and Dr Marilene Melo attended the presentation of Dr Janice Werbinski about “Where to go when you want to know about Sex and Gender Based Medicine” and we will use as a part of basis for a curriculum in gender sensitive medicine, for medical students, the site [www.sex](http://www.sex) and gender health, with their permission.

## **Canada**

The FMWC held its annual general meeting and educational session in Ottawa September 20-22nd at the Ottawa Art Gallery. The theme was The Future of Women in Medicine and Healthcare Our Aptitude and Our Influence. The speakers were excellent discussing topics that ranged from Intimate Partner Violence and Child Neglect to leadership and influence by medical women to HPV to Advocacy for Women's Health on various fronts. One highlight was the showing of the film, "Dr. May Cohen ,The Gender Lady" which highlighted May's life of trailblazer in women's health. It was May Cohen and Shelley Ross that wrote the MWIA Manual on Gender Mainstreaming in Health in 2002. Beyond the formal presentations was the invaluable networking with like-minded individuals. The AGM saw Dr. Clover Hemans succeed Dr. Kathee Andrews as President.

FMWC wants to remind all the membership that they are welcome to join the North American Regional Meeting August 17-28, 2020 aboard the Celebrity Edge in the Mediterranean. Also it is not too early to mark your calendars for the 100th anniversary meeting of FMWC in September, 2024.

## **China**

### CMWA Members

Qiao Jie was elected new President of the organization. Chen Zhili, Gu Xiulian, He Luli, Lin Jiamei, and He Jieshen were elected honorary Presidents

### 2. CMWA at MWIA

CMWA was strongly represented at the Centennial Congress of MWIA in NYC in July with 22 attendees and had a major representation on the academic program there.

### 3. CMWA Advocacy

- \*Giving priority to academic research and creating favorable conditions for female medical professionals to stand out.

- \*Increase the scholarly impact of the association internationally and foster female leaders in academic field.

- \*Pave the way for women medical worker's professional growth, contribute to safeguard the lawful right of female medical professionals

- \*Delivering social service

### 4. CMWA special projects:

The CMWA has held events to improve health literacy of the public. For example, in 2003, it launched a nationwide campaign for "caring women and children"; in 2005, an event themed " Journey to China's west, Journey to Health "was held with women medical workers engaged; in 2006, "Deliver Health Service to Guizhou Along the Road of Long March"an event such named was held; in 2009 and 2010, a

health education tour about breast health was conducted. The CMWA, together with China Population Welfare Foundation, initiated a program called “Protecting Children’s Teeth”, inviting medical experts from Beijing, Shanghai, Guangdong and Jingsu , to treat patients in Bazhong, Sichun Province, an old revolutionary base area.

The CMWA donated books, and other things for study and sports to Tibetans. It also launched health education program with the theme of “Sterilization to be Free from Bacteria” by working with Shanghai Health Education Association, National Health Education Program Office, and Reckitt Benckiser. The CMWA and All-China Women Federation jointly launched the program “Mother’s Health and Peace”. Apart from this, the CWMA got involved in compiling textbooks and training doctors working in rural areas. It also launched a campaign on campus for caring for Single-Child families, new-born babies, girls, women ready for pregnancy and people in poverty. In 2015, it initiated a big non-profit event: “Caring for Women’s Health” and worked with China Women Development Foundation for another project: “Wise Mother, Healthy Family”. In 2018, Senior Medical Workers Society took the occasion of “Double Ninth Festival”, engaging members from the CMWA in 28 cities in treating patients for free.

### **Hong Kong**

On 12th July, eleven students attended a one-day visit to the Shenzhen Technology Centres. It was a fruitful experience which included tours to the Tencent Holdings Limited and Southern Medical University Shenzhen Hospital.

Dr LAM Yuk Keung Wallace, a specialist in dermatology and venereology, was our guest speaker for our health seminar held on 19th July. The topic for the CME talk was on eczema and sunscreen.

We held a health check service for ethnic minorities in the Kwai Chung District on 20th July. It included measurement of BMI, blood pressure and blood glucose, and we also provided health consultation for people who were identified as high risk during the screening.

Last but not least, there was the MWIA Centennial Congress held in New York City during the period of 25th to 28 July. Our delegation of 10 included five medical students. It was an exceptional experience to connect with women doctors around the world. Not only did we learn a lot from them, we had a lot of fun too!

## Photos

(1) Students visited Tencent Holdings



Limited

(2) Dr. Wallace Lam delivered a talk on Eczema and Sunscreen



(3) A free health check for ethnic minorities





## India

India has participated in large numbers with 19 delegates in prestigious Centennial Congress MWIA at New York from 25<sup>th</sup> -28<sup>th</sup> July 2019..

In Centennial Congress prestigious Jhirad Oration ceremony recipients who gave their oration, were MWIA past presidents Dr Gabriel Casper & Dr Afua Hesse,. The ceremony was conducted as per Indian customs and this was well appreciated.



Congratulations to Dr Mandakini Megh for being installed as Vice President of MWIA ( Central Asia )on 28<sup>th</sup> July2019 in the Centennial Congress at Newyork.



Congratulations to Dr Usha Saraiya who was awarded the Honorary Member Certificate at Centennial Congress.



Heartiest Congratulations to Dr Padmini Murthy for being installed as Secretary General, MWIA an Indian American, a member of AMWA

Dr Usha Saraiya & Dr Mandakini Megh have directed and produced a short Video, on “**100 years of AMWI**”, featuring glorious & memorable moments last 100 years of AMWI were showcased as well as clips from Centenary Congress at Raj Bhavan on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2006. Delegates from India have participated in various activities. Poster presentations by Dr Nidhi Gandhi, Dr Bakhtawar Vajifdar Dr Pervin Meherji Dr Sharad Rao , Dr Mandakini Megh . The Beautiful collage was made by Dr Vandana Walvekar, and the Teddy Bear was made by Dr Mrudul Chande, Dr Yamini Alsi, Dr Nalini Kurvey, Dr Shobha Potade. Indian recipe, Veg Pulao submitted by Dr Kamal Hazari. Scientific presentations were made by . Dr Usha Saraiya, Dr Mandakini Megh, Dr Vandana Walvekar , and Dr Radhika Joshi.

Indian delegates participated in the vibrant cultural programme wearing traditional costumes. AMWI Mumbai Branch –

The Cytology Clinic held camps on 4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> March 2019 at G.T. Hospital and Cama and Albless Hospitals under the guidance of Dr Usha Saraiya .

Dr. Shirin Mehtaji Competition was held at Nowrosjee Wadia Maternity Hospital, Parel Mumbai convened by Dr. Geetha Balsarkar and Dr. Purnima Satoskar and Dr Sarita Bhalerao.

**AMWI West Bengal Branch** is doing selfless services by managing 50 bedded Hospital for women & Children. All services are provided honorary. Thanks to Dr Sumana Sur, Dr Bulbul Roychoudhury.

#### **FORTHCOMING PROGRAMS—AMWI India**

- **AMWI Mumbai Branch** under the leadership of Dr Usha Saraiya & Dr Mandakini Megh and President Dr Geeta Balsarkar will be conducting Annual Cytology & Colposcopy Training course for Obgyn. An important session on **HPV & Cervical Cancer** will be conducted in the month of November 2019.
- **AMWI Nagpur Branch** will be organizing very **prestigious National Conference of AMWI --- AMWICON 2019 on 14th & 15th December 2019 at Nagpur**. A special session of MWIA will be held under Dr Mandakini Megh, Vice President, Central Asia promoting the YMWIA members.

## Japan

Thirty people from the Japan Medical Women's Association (JMWA) attended the Medical Women's International Association Centennial Congress held in New York and celebrated with female doctors from around the world. There were 2 oral and 9 poster presentations from Japan, and Hisako Sakiyama M.D., who made the poster presentation, was awarded third place. The Golden Jubilee Award given to members over 50 years was awarded by 21 Japanese.

In Japan, the death of overworked doctors has become a problem, and as a preventive measure, a bill to reform the way doctors work will be enforced in 2024. President of JMWA Yoshiko Maeda was asked by the Cabinet Office for opinions on the work style reform of female doctors, and exchanged opinions with Satsuki Katayama, Special Minister for Gender Equality, on August 22.

The life of Ginko Ogino, the first Japanese licensed female doctor, was made into a movie, and the President Yoshiko Maeda was invited to the commemoration preview and commented on the movie pamphlet.

The 65th general meeting of JMWA is scheduled to be held in Tokyo on May 17, 2020.



## **Kenya**

KMWA started the year on a low pace after the vigorous work during the MWIA Regional Conference for Near East and Africa. In the First Quarter – KMWA organized its Annual General Meeting and being election year – new Board of Directors were elected into office on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2019.

This was followed by planning for the MWIA Centennial Event in New York. It was the first time KMWA took a big delegation to the General Assembly comprising women doctors of inter-generational ages including of young doctors/medical students. KMWA would like to express gratitude to the Korean Women Medical Association for providing the scholarship for a medical student who made a poster presentation during the centennial event.

### **IPM SYMPOSIUM HIV BIOMEDICAL PREVENTION AND MICROBICIDES HELD AT ON 28<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2019**

This is the only major event KMWA has done, along side working with partners on a number of advocacy and high level policy issues.

**THEME:** Working together to strengthen HIV programming for adolescent girls and young women

The symposium was organized by KMWA in partnership with INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIP ON MICROBICIDES (IPM).

A total of 60 participants attended the symposium that had a wide range of topics discussed by HIV experts. Panel sessions with adolescent and young Women were held where they gave their views on HIV prevention.

The topics discussed included:

- Overview of HIV among AGYW (statistics) in Kenya
- HIV prevention policy/guidelines specifically targeting AGYW
- Burden of HIV and other co-morbidities and response
- Implementation of HIV prevention programme in Kenya. Examine programs that have worked, and which should be scaled up in both community mobilization and clinical settings.
  - VMMC
  - PrEP (AGYW)
  - U=U (AGYW)
  - Test and treat (AGYW)
- IPM update: Dapivirine Ring
- Discuss Prevention Toolkit appropriate for AGYW and gaps

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Panel discussions were focused on:

What do young women want? How do HCW engage the young women? What do young women need from health providers? What do young women know about HIV prevention? What are their preferences?

#### **Discussion and way forward**

- Development of a national Action Plan for Advocacy and Implementation for AGYW
- Multisectoral approach for HIV and STI prevention and treatment
- Role of medical professionals as change agents or influencers in ensuring the update of the above HIV prevention programs including the ring.
- One stop shop for HIV, STI and family planning services

### **Conclusion:**

It was concluded that key sector players were to have a forum to discuss the way forward in prevention of HIV and STI among adolescents and young women.

### **Some photos from Event:**







## **Republic of Korea**

### **1. The 29th KMWA Board Members Workshop**

The 29th KMWA Board Members Workshop was held at Koreana Hotel Gloria Hall from Saturday, June 11, 2019 to Sunday, June 12, 2019. A plenary lecture titled 'the present and future of KMWA as a competitive nonprofit organization: a report on the current status and future perspective' was given by Jung Hee Lee, the director of the Institute of Competitiveness Development. The members later on had a joyful gathering with a discussion on 'the current status of KMWA'.



Fig.1

### **2. Participation in the 'medical service for foreign workers' organized by the Medical Service Committee, Seoul Medical Association**

The KMWA participated in the 668th medical service for foreign workers by the Medical Service Committee of the Seoul Medical Association on Sunday, July 7, 2019 from 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm. A total of 93 doctors, dentists, nurses, and volunteers (26 medical personnel and 67 general volunteers) participated in the service. The KMWA president, Hyang Ae Lee, served as the director of the medical team composed of internal medicine, family medicine, orthopedics, rehabilitation medicine, gynecology, ophthalmology, ENT, dermatology, urology, and radiology.



Fig 2.

### 3. 33 KMWA members participated in the MWIA Annual Meeting and International Symposium

A total of 33 Korean women doctors participated in the MWIA Annual Meeting at Brooklyn Bridge Marriott Hotel in New York from July 26th to July 28th. 33 KMWA members attended the meeting. A special lecture by previous president of MWIA Kyung Ah Park and two oral presentations were given and 19 posters were presented. We celebrated the 100th anniversary of MWIA by actively participating in special performance with the sand art, Korean performances in dinner party, bazaar, collage and teddy bear collection. Women doctors from around the world enjoyed the time of inspiration and challenge.

### Malaysia

On the 9<sup>th</sup> July 2019, a group of medical doctors headed by Dr Kevin Ng, Chairperson of the Section Concerning House Officers, Medical Officers and Specialist (SCHOMOS) of the Malaysia Medical Association (MMA) sat down for a candid discussion with Dr Helen Goodyear, a Consultant Paediatrician in the United Kingdom, regarding gender advocacy in Malaysia. Dr Goodyear has always been a strong advocate for Women in Medicine,

In an article published in Malaysia news portal “The Star Online”, female doctors accounted for 51.9% of the total doctors in Malaysia in the year of 2016 and 2017 based on data from the Department of Statistics Malaysia. However, there is still marked gender bias within the medical field itself. Women are constantly facing challenges both within the medical faculty as well as family and peer pressure. Realizing the importance and need to empower and support women in medicine, Dr. Lee Yew Fong (Pamela), who is both a member of MMA and an Individual



MWIA Member in Malaysia, is working together with SCHOMOS to advocate for gender equality and equity for Malaysian doctors.

An interview session was conducted by Dr June Lau, a member of MMA, with Dr Goodyear who was kind enough to share her trials and tribulations based on her own experience in empowering and supporting women. Dr Goodyear was very insightful and suggested numerous ideas for future gender advocacy activities. The interview session is available in podcast for sharing upon request (Dr June Lau, email address: june\_lau@hotmail.com)



### **Nigeria**

The Medical Women's Association of Nigeria (MWAN) had her Biennial Conference at the Orchid Hotel, Asaba Delta State from 12th -15th September 2019.

Theme of the Conference was : Male Involvement in Maternal and Child Health.

Subthemes:

- \* Elimination of harmful traditional practices against women.
- \* Maternal and Neonatal tetanus Elimination.
- \* Economic empowerment of women for health.
- \* Overcoming intimate partner's violence.

There was a community outreach and a courtesy visit to the Asagba of Asaba( King makers/ Elders in council) to sensitize them.

There was a preconference event sponsored by the Delta State Ministry of Health, Asaba.

Topics included: Male options for family planning, The role of marriage counselling in building sustainable homes, the role of Agriculture in sustaining the nation's economy, private practice, etc.

This was followed by a Velciane Cocktail.

The opening ceremony had the Hon. Minister of Health Dr E. Osagie Ehanire ( MD, FWACS), the Minister of State for Health, Senator Dr Adeleke Mamora, representative of UNICEF , Women's groups and 345 registered MWAN members from many states of the Federation.

Some highlights of the opening ceremony include the guest lecture which talked on the theme of the conference. In his lecture; he said that 'Men's partnership is clearly essential to achieving all of the SDGs both directly and indirectly. The care and support of an informed husband improves

pregnancy and child health outcomes and can mean the difference between life and death in cases of complications, when women need immediate medical care.

The repercussions of paternal abandonment or neglect range from poor educational performance and school dropout (including early entry into workforce to help families to make ends meet), to teen pregnancy, drug and alcohol abuse

Ministerial Recommendations:

Men should assist in household chores.

Women should be empowered to engage in income generating activities.

Men should speak to other men about:

Creating emergency plans for labour and delivery of wife.

Eliminating female genital mutilation or cutting.

Promoting family planning.

Ending violence against women.

Messages on male involvement in maternal and child health should be shared wherever men gather in large numbers such as barbers shops, bars, brothels, churches, classrooms, games, mosques etc.

Messages can also be shared through bulk sms, comic books, group counsellors, hotlines, theatre productions, etc.

The expected outcome will be decrease in maternal and child mortality.

The IPNP Dr Joyce Barber led the delegation on a tour of the exhibition stands.

The conference ended with a dinner and investiture of Dr M.I Oseji who was sworn in as the 22nd president of the Medical Women's Association of Nigeria.

Other members of the new executives are:

Dr Lilian Otolorin --NPE.

Dr Bobola Agbonle --NC

Dr Uche Okwe--ANC

Dr Ejiro Umuerri--NT

Dr Ngozi Ali--Fin. Sec.

Dr Vivian Omo-Aghoja-PRO.

Dr Onyi Owa- Nwabuzo.

Internal Auditor.

Dr Evo Esievoadje--NYDF. C

Dr Joyce Barber- IPNP

Dr Stella Kokoricha Essiet. IPNC.

Dr A.V. Elumelu--IPNT.

It is worthy of mention that Dr Stella kokoricha Essiet was awarded the MWAN prestigious Ireene Ighodaro's award. She was decorated with the gold pin that comes with it by older recipients who are either members of the board of trustees, past presidents, past national executives. They include Dr Joyce Barber, prof. Angela Okolo, Dr Claribel Abam, Dr Eleanor Nwadinobi and Dr Nnesochi Offor.

There were many more awards to states for outstanding performances.

The conference was brought to a close by NP Dr M.I Oseji giving out MWAN ambassadors awards to people she hope to work with in the 2011- 2021 biennium.

The first meeting of the biennium will be in three months' time.



**Past and current MWANPresidents**



**Biennium executives**



**Dignitaries with health minister in white**



**Photo of 2017-2019 Exco**

## **Philippines**

### **Report from the PMWA**

1. Members attended the MWIA centennial celebration in Brooklyn New York.
2. We had our quarterly travelling seminar and President visitation in Davao City where topics on Menopause and the extended maternity leave were discussed and disseminated to the

members (maternity leave is

Increased from 60 days to 105 days with 7 days Paternity leave).

3. We had our own environmentalists contribution by doing our yearly Mangrove planting Sept 15, 2019

4. Upcoming event on WHO Regional meeting in Manila, the MWIA Will be represented by members of PMWA.

5. upcoming National Annual convention of PMWA on November 16 and 17, 2019 at Marco Polo Hotel in Ortigas. Theme is the “Holistic Approach to the youth of today”

6. We had a visit by Professor Dr. Neena Modi , the President Elect of UK MWIA last September 10 2019 where exchanges of talk took place.

### **Sweden**

The Swedish national organization recently had the annual start-up board meeting where members together over a weekend and plan for the year.

We are, as all of us, battling the inequities in our profession and women’s health. We are planning a seminar on empathy for our members in October

The planning for the Northern European Regional meeting is progressing

### **Taiwan**

TMWA's executive committee was held on 9/7 afternoon. We had a wonderful time and full discussion about LOC of the next MWIA congress.

Sherri Lai has been appointed chair of LOC.

To update our LOC status, LOC members, subcommittee chairs, and advisors invitations are sent. Many have responded positively. Our first LOC meeting was held on September 29.

### **Thailand**

Thai Medical Women’s Association (TMWA)

25-28 July 2019: Eight committee and members from TMWA attended Medical Women’s International Association Centennial Congress in New York, U.S.A. The main interest from the meeting was about Burn-Out Syndrome, Work-Life Balance, and Domestic Violence and also met with other country members. The next step will be the initiation of Young Medical Women’s International Association to support teenage pregnancy problem and other women-child health problems.





24 August 2019- Making Merit to the Monk and Listen to the sermon  
 TMWA encouraged members to Buddhism and made merit to donate for Monk Somkiat Kittiko Supanditr . He also offered the sermon then provided back the donation to support TMWA activities.



30 August 2019- TMWA in collaboration with The National Council for Child and Youth Development arranged the seminar '1000 Miracle days' developed the program of maternal-

child care starting from early pregnant to achieved the quality newborn. In along with the progression of 'TMWA Teenage Pregnancy' Project had expanded the network to north-eastern region



24 September 2019- Dr. Jantra Chennavasin, President of TMWA and committee attended a ceremony that was held at the ceremonial area around the monument of His Royal Highness Prince Mahidol of Songkla located in Siriraj Hospital. The ceremony is held annually to mark Mahidol Day and to express gratitude and respect to His Royal Highness Prince Mahidol of Songkla, who is regarded as a father of Thai medical and public health sciences. The participants articulated the praising and gratitude to His Royal Highness Prince Mahidol of Songkla.



## **United States of America**

The American Medical Women's Association was honored to host the MWIA Centennial Congress at the end of July. Please see the submitted Congress report and the special commemoration in the United States Congressional Report.

Since the Congress, AMWA has been busy with several initiatives:

AMWA is a strategic partner for the #NeedHerScience campaign to raise awareness of the need for gender equity in medical publishing. We invite all of our sister associations in MWIA to participate in taking the pledge to help advance equity within medical publishing. Help us mobilize women in medicine worldwide and show our strength in numbers. [amwa-doc.org/need-her-science](https://amwa-doc.org/need-her-science).

AMWA launched the first annual #Light4Docs campaign for National Physician Suicide Awareness (NPSA) Day (September 17), a day of awareness founded by the Council of Residency Directors in Emergency Medicine. The work of 10 women physicians was highlighted in the #AMWAShineASpotlight campaign. [amwa-doc.org/initiatives/physician-suicide](https://amwa-doc.org/initiatives/physician-suicide)

AMWA's Revolution by Resolution: Advancing Gender Equity in Medical Societies State by State has gained traction in about 1/3 of the states in the U.S. AMWA members around the country are submitting gender equity resolutions within their state medical society. [amwa-doc.org/revolution-by-resolution](https://amwa-doc.org/revolution-by-resolution)

AMWA Celebrated September Women in Medicine Month by highlighting women in medicine who "got their start" in AMWA. #IGotMyStartInAMWA

AMWA helps lead HPV Prevention Week 2020 plans for Jan 25-31. [amwa-doc.org/hpv-week-2020](https://amwa-doc.org/hpv-week-2020)

AMWA's 105th Anniversary Meeting will be held March 26 - 29, 2020 in Indianapolis, Indiana with an agenda focused on women's leadership development and training. [amwa-doc.org/amwa105](https://amwa-doc.org/amwa105)

Many MWIA members will remember Dr. Lila Wallis and enjoy the article, "A Visit with AMWA Past President Dr. Lila Wallis" <https://www.amwa-doc.org/news/a-visit-with-amwa-past-president-dr-lila-wallis-2/>



## **Zimbabwe**

The Zimbabwe Women Doctors Association (ZWDA) is a new organisation formed on April 29, 2019 by a group of female medical colleagues in Zimbabwe: **Dr Maitazvenyu Mvere-Chatora, Dr Nonhlanhla Zwangobani, Dr Louisa Chikara, Dr Nomsa Tsikai, Dr Shingai Nyaguse-Chiurunge and Dr Audrey Chivaura.**

It was felt that women doctors in Zimbabwe face unique challenges compared to their male counterparts and there was great need for an organisation to help tackle these challenges as well as to provide a platform for support, networking and communication. A women doctors' association would also be able to make significant contributions to the promotion of women and children's health in the country.

A social media WhatsApp group for the Association was formed on April 29, 2019 and within 48 hours **256 women doctors** had voluntarily joined the group. There are currently 665 women doctors registered with the Medical and Dental Practitioners Council of Zimbabwe.

An **interim executive committee** was formed comprised of the founding members and Dr Mvere-Chatora was elected chairperson. A **constitution** was drafted with provisional aims and objectives.

A **survey** was carried out from 1<sup>st</sup> May 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2019 gauge the level of interest in forming the association, to find out the specific challenges faced by women doctors in Zimbabwe as well as to get an idea of their expectations regarding the association. There were 116 respondents. One hundred and fifteen respondents (99%) were in favour of the formation of an association of women doctors. Most respondents (60.3%) felt that they had been discriminated against in their career because they were women and 57.7% felt that had suffered from sexual harassment and bullying in the workplace.

According the respondents of the survey, the main issues that would be most important for a women doctors' association to address would be mentorship of women doctors, particularly medical students and those in post-graduate training, help and support of women doctors so that they can achieve a good work-life balance as well as to provide opportunities for networking and career development.

On 28<sup>th</sup> June 2019, a **networking and consultative cocktail dinner** was held which was attended by 75 women doctors of different specialities and grades including **Dr Monalisa Muchatuta** who had travelled from America for the event. **Dr Mvere-Chatora** gave a presentation on the history of women in medicine, history of the Medical Women's International Association and results of the survey of women doctors. **Dr Zwangobani** then facilitated a discussion on the way forward for the Association.

**Dr Madeline Nyamwanza-Makonese**, the first black female doctor in Zimbabwe, first black woman to graduate from the University of Rhodesia Medical School and second black woman on the African continent was the guest of honour at event and all present were inspired and motivated to hear how she challenged the cultural and racial prejudices that prevented black women in Rhodesia from pursuing careers in medicine. The event was very successful, motivating and well received by the participants





**Dr Tsveru Munhutu** was very much delighted to attend the MWIA Centennial Congress in New York in July 2019 on behalf of the Zimbabwe Women Doctors Association. It was the first time that Zimbabwe had been represented at MWIA congress.





The executive committee is currently exploring different pricing models to determine membership fees for association which is challenging given the current economic environment in Zimbabwe. It is anticipated that this process will be completed by the end of the year.

**Future Projects and Activities: -**

**1. St Joseph's Mission Hospital New Maternity Wing**

St Joseph's Mission Hospital, in Mutare, a city in the Eastern part of Zimbabwe is one of 35 mission hospitals in the country. The mission hospital which is presently run by the Dominican Sisters, serves a population of 27 000 people who are mainly from marginalised and poor societies. The hospital was a dedicated tuberculosis hospital until 2010 when it was changed to a general hospital. A new maternity wing was created this year currently averaging about 70 to 100 deliveries per month but is in great need of renovations and functional equipment. Funding from the government and international donors is a major problem. The executive committee has unanimously voted to support this project for the next two years through donations and fundraising initiatives. A list of requirements has been obtained from the lead clinician, Dr Agnes Terera.

**2. Website Development and Logo Design** in progress.

**3. Mentorship Programme**

The executive committee is currently undergoing training facilitated by Dr Walter Mangezi, a Psychiatrist from the Zimbabwe College of Psychiatrists Department on how to establish and run a mentoring program. A mentoring workshop is planned for October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2019. Following the workshop, women doctors (mentors and mentees) will be invited to participate in the program by submitting an application. Mentors and mentees will then be matched based on common interests and skills.

**4. ZWDA Christmas Dinner**

An informal Christmas Dinner for all women doctors is being organised for Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December.

## **5. Inaugural Annual Women's Health Conference, Annual General Meeting and Dinner**

The executive committee is also busy organising the first women's health conference, Annual General Meeting and Dinner which will be held on March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2019. The committee has engaged a conference events company to aid planning of all ZWDA events.

### **Individual Member Reports:**

#### **New Zealand Dr Robyn Hewland:**

My family have just bought me a new laptop, & camera to put on it, voice recorder that inputs voice into laptop, and Dragon that turns voice into text. I have to start using it!

graduated 1962 from Otago University Medical School, was a country/ rural GP 1964-68.

I trained in psychiatry 1968- 74, in Christchurch then on NZ Govt Award on 1972-73 in UK at Maudsley Hosp & Institute Psychiatry, & DPM, & MRCPsych. Then I was Senior Registrar with MRC at Affective Disorders Unit in Surrey in Epsom.

In 1990 in NZ Queens New Year Honours, I received a Q.S.M. for Public Services- Queen's Service Medal

From 1977 to 1992 in Christchurch I was a Clinical & Policy Consultant in Psychiatry, in Govt Depts of Mental Health, Justice (Mens Prisons, Probation, all Courts, Minister of Justice), Social Welfare (Child & Youth, Benefits, reporting to Director General), ACC (Accident Compensation Commission re trauma, sexual abuse), & a month in Ministry of Womens Affairs re Safer Communities project.

In mid- 1980s I persuaded Minister of Justice to establish NZ's first Prison treatment Unit for sexual offenders, against his Govt Dept & Cabinet then

It, Kia Marama, has some of best world outcomes.

I networked widely in 1974-94 when on many Professional & Community Executives- National Council of Women, (1974 -94 as NZMWA delegate), Mayoress of Christchurch ( 1975- 94), NZ Branch of RANZCP, President of NZAP ( NZ Assoc Psychotherapists 1985-87), CHCH Postgraduate Society, NZMA ChCh, President NZMWA 1987-90, etc.

I worked in Queensland Australia 1994-2014, as Clinical Director of Sunshine Coast Mental Health, on Qld Mental Health Review Tribunal 2002-14 (retired 2014). I was VP of Sunshine Coast Local Medical Assoc, & of SC Graduate Womens Branch of Qld of Australia Federation of Graduate Women's & initiated our book of members stories, "An Educated Women" published 2001.

Regards, Robyn

#### **New Zealand Dr Margaret Maxwell:**



Thank you for this request for your information.

As an INDIVIDUAL MEMBER I do not attend any MWIA meetings as none are held in New Zealand. A colleague, Dr Denise Watt (who lives near me in Auckland) is also an Individual Member.

I appreciate getting reports from MWIA, to know what medical colleagues are doing in many countries worldwide.

I am now no longer thinking of doing any overseas travelling.

With just be regards to my colleagues.

## **7. REPORT FROM MWIA'S REPRESENTATIVES TO THE UN** **Dr. Satty Gill Keswani and Dr. Padmini Murthy, USA**

During the month of July UN representatives Drs Keswani and Murthy were busy with the last minute preparations for the successful UN event held on July 25<sup>th</sup> which was sponsored by AMWA along with UN missions and UN agency. Please see photos, posted in the news update. Dr Murthy attended the United Nations Civil Society Conference in Salt Lake City Utah in August. Dr Keswani has been attending the briefings and meeting at the UN along with Dr Murthy in order to maintain MWIAs accreditation and good standing at the United Nations . In September 2019, Dr Murthy was invited to represent academia at the various high-level meetings on Universal Health Coverage, she also attended the high-level political forum on Universal Health Coverage.

The world leaders at the UN have adopted the UHC political declaration (Please refer to the UHC Declaration included in the news update) Drs Keswani and Murthy have made sure to list MWIA and AMWA when they attend meetings which they have been invited to not as AMWA members but as physicians, community leaders and academia members

the upcoming United Nations Department of Global Communications NGO conference.

Drs Keswani and Murthy are also following the Beijing Plus 25 activities and plans for CSW and will keep the membership informed in the next news letter or before on social media as and when they are made available

## **8. REPORT FROM MWIA'S REPRESENTATIVE TO WHO**

### **Dr Clarissa Fabre UK**

This will be my last report as your representative to the WHO.

57 members responded to our recent call for interest in the WHO, and representing MWIA at the World Health Assembly or at WHO Regional meetings. This is a very encouraging outcome and shows the incredibly high level of interest among our membership for the WHO and indirectly also for the UN. Our plan is to form a Special Interest Group, in order to ensure that MWIA is well represented at the 6 annual Regional meetings (Africa, the Americas, South-East Asia, Europe, Eastern Mediterranean and Western Pacific). We shall also discuss how to make our collaboration with the WHO as effective as it can possibly be.

I am delighted that Dr Elizabeth Lichtenstein, our new Vice President for the Northern European Region, was able to represent MWIA in Copenhagen in September for the WHO European regional meeting. She not only attended the meeting but also presented a Statement on Promoting Health Equity. A very valuable achievement.

One of the main priorities of the WHO Director- General Dr Tedros, is to achieve **universal health coverage**. This was recently endorsed by a landmark UN declaration. Melinda Gates, Co-Chair of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation stated 'Donors and country governments need to move beyond business as usual to bolster the primary health care systems that address the vast majority of people's needs over their lifetimes'. Too many women and children continue to die from easily preventable and treatable causes simply because they can't get the care they need to survive. It is not right that a growing proportion of the population is struggling to make ends meet because they are paying too much for their own health, even in advanced economies. All countries need effective, well-funded, and universally accessible healthcare for their populations. It has been an honour to serve as your WHO representative for the last 7 years. I look forward to letting you know my successor(s) after our Executive meeting in early October.

### **Report from WHO's 69th session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe**

#### **Dr Elizabeth Lichtenstein MWIA VP for Northern Europe**

I represented MWIA at this meeting. Prior to the meeting I submitted our Statement on Promoting Health Equity and this was also held orally at the meeting. Thanks to this 7 other NSAs (Non-State Actors) co-signed our document. This has significance in several respects. Not only does it give our document a higher profile but it also sends a signal to the other organizations to take into account the gender perspective in their own organization.

WHO's European region is extremely diverse and the problems that are apparent in the southeastern parts of the region are completely different than those of the northwestern region. Some on the other hand are more universal. WHO has a huge task ahead not least to reach the SDGs by 2030.

The formal programme dealt with the election of the incoming director, committee and with voting through resolutions prepared by the sitting committee. This part was for NGOs such as MWIA more about observing and listening than participating in the discussion once we had given our statement

There are still large health problems. Some were addressed in lunch-time seminars during the session. For example, Digitalization of the Health systems in Europe. These are today very

diverse and there are many problems left to ensure patient security and integrity. As to child and adolescent health there are programmes and interventions that have been very successful. Even though a lot of work has been done in many fields there is still a lot left to do, for example in the prevention of teen-age pregnancies via allowing provision of contraceptive services without the need for parental consent. It is interesting that in some European countries the age of consent for health services (i.e. contraceptive services) is higher than the age of criminal responsibility. When it comes to vaccines WHO has a huge job ahead as we have had in Europe so far in 2019 90,000 cases of measles – in 2018 we had 80,000 and 74 deaths. WHO has an extensive vaccination programme which includes HPV vaccine.

Apart from the formal programme a lot of the work during the conference was about making contacts and talking to people from WHO and other organizations. Thanks to our statement a WHO official responsible for the gender and health programme made contact with me asking for advice and help with facts. Hopefully we will be able to build on these contacts and work together in the future.



## 9. Standing committee on European Doctors (CPME)

MWIA representative: Prof. Dr. Dr. Bettina Pfliegerer

The Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME) represents national medical associations across Europe. They are committed to contributing the medical profession's point of view to EU institutions and European policy-making through pro-active cooperation on a wide range of health and healthcare related issues <https://www.cpme.eu/>

MWIA is an associated member of CPME and MWIA's immediate past President Prof. Dr. Dr. Bettina Pfliegerer is currently a member of two working groups (WG): 1. **WG Refugee Health** and 2. **WG on Healthy Living**. The Refugee Health WG is currently working on a statement on the *Medical Treatment of Refugees and MWIA* was able to give input. The Healthy living committee is drafting two policy papers: one on *air quality and health* and one on *Novel Tobacco and Nicotine Products*. These documents will be presented at the upcoming Board meeting/GA in Helsinki (Finland) in November. CPME will also celebrating their 60<sup>th</sup> birthday. Bettina Pfliegerer will be in attendance.

Their newsletters can be found here: <https://www.cpme.eu/newsletter/>



## 10. EUROPEAN WOMEN'S LOBBY

Representative: Prof. Dr. Dr. Bettina Pfleiderer and  
alternate: Dr. Antonella Vezzani

MWIA's immediate past president Bettina Pfleiderer is representing the European part of MWIA at the EWL board. She is also a member of the membership committee. On request of the EWL General Assembly this committee is working currently on **various membership fee models** with its pro's and con's to be discussed at the next board meeting in Vilnius (Lithuania), mid-February 2020. We identified 7 models used by various organizations so far.

EWL's Week of **Action to end sexual exploitation**, will take place in Brussels from 14 to 17 October **2019**. The week combines meetings of the EWL Observatory on Violence Against Women and the EWL Taskforce on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and sexual exploration, a conference by the Brussels' Call 'Together for a Europe free from prostitution', and a strategy meeting of the Brussels' Call partners. Dr. Vezzani is representation MWIA at this task force and has been providing input from the medical perspective. **We are Together for a Europe free from prostitution!**

More info can be found here: <https://womenlobby.org/WomenObject-Week-of-Action-to-End-Sexual-Exploitation?lang=en>

MWIA will also apply to send an expert to the EWL observatory of violence- hopefully in February 2020 this will be finalized.

The **EWL European Women's Forum/General Assembly** will take place from **3 to 6 July 2020 in Paris (France)** before the Beijing +25 global forum on gender equality, which happens from 7 to 10 July 2010 in Paris. There are exciting activities planned, since EWL will also be celebrating its 30th anniversary.



## 11. CALENDAR OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS MWIA AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS – CONGRESSES AND MEETINGS

**2019-2020**

### **2019**

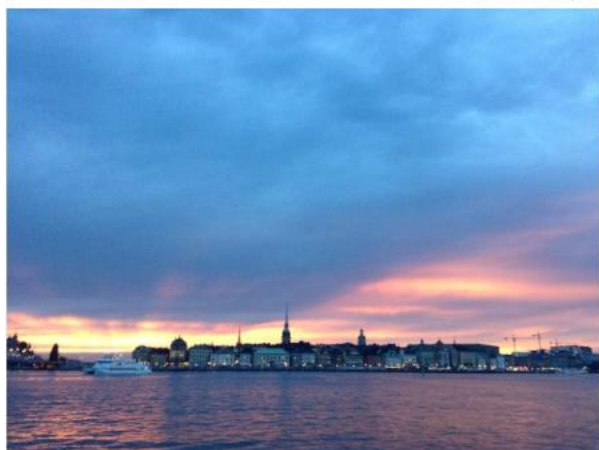
1. **October 12, 2019**, Vienna, Austria  
100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference of the Austrian Medical Women's Association  
<http://aerztinnen-oesterreich.at/>
2. **October 17-20, 2019**, Erfurt, Germany  
Annual meeting of the German Medical Women's Association  
"We interfere - in professional and health policy"  
[https://www.aerztinnenbund.de/downloads/6/Kongress\\_2019\\_Internet.pdf](https://www.aerztinnenbund.de/downloads/6/Kongress_2019_Internet.pdf)
3. **October 27-29, 2019**, Berlin, Germany  
World Health Summit  
[www.worldhealthsummit.org](http://www.worldhealthsummit.org)
4. **November 2-4 , Philadelphia New York** – American Public Health Association Annual Meeting and Expo  
<https://www.apha.org/events-and-meetings/apha-calendar/2019/apha-annual-meeting-and-expo>
5. **November 12- 14 November** Nairobi Kenya ICPD 25 <https://www.nairobisummiticpd.org/>
6. **November 30, 2019**, Brussels, Belgium  
Medical Women's Association of Belgium Congress  
Gender related perception of Pathology  
<http://mwab.be/>

### **2020**

1. **May 15-17, 2020**, cruise from Helsinki to Stockholm and back to Helsinki  
Northern European Regional Meeting

Suomen Naislääkäriyhdistys - Finnish Medical Women's Association in collaboration with Sveriges Kvinnliga Läkares Förening - Swedish Medical Women's Association Invites You to Medical Women's International Association Northern Region Meeting May 15th - May 17th, 2020 Women Doctors – A Source of Inspiration and Resources The meeting will be held on a cruise crossing the Baltic sea. Lectures, workshops and discussions will start on Friday afternoon May 15th as the cruise commences in Helsinki. The program continues on Saturday morning

May 16th before we arrive in Stockholm. During the 5 hours stay in Stockholm there will be time for a walk in the old town, for a sightseeing tour or museum visit. On Saturday afternoon the program will continue on the boat and we cruise back to Helsinki where we arrive on Sunday morning, May 17th. The shipping company is Viking Line which is one of the biggest cruise-liners crossing the Baltic Sea. The cruise includes two dinners and two breakfasts on the boat. This is a unique opportunity to see two of the Nordic Capitals, experience the world's largest archipelago and at the same time interact with medical colleagues from other countries, take part in lectures, discussions and workshops related to our themes, namely: -The wellbeing of women doctors, who takes care of the doctor? -Promoting women's sexual and reproductive health - Women's health from youth to old age, work and life balance -Gender medicine The Finnish Medical Women's Association was founded in 1947 to achieve better opportunities for international connections and to act as a supporting network. The Swedish Medical Women's Association was begun in 1916 as a club for women doctors. In Stockholm we will have the opportunity to visit the intact home of Karolina Widerström, the first woman to graduate from the Karolinska Institute and founder of the Swedish Medical Women's Association. More information about registration and program will be available on <https://mwia.net/events/>



2. **August 17-28, 2020**, Mediterranean cruise – Italy, Malta and Greece  
North American Regional Meeting hosted by the Federation of Medical Women of Canada  
Theme is Women's Health: Aging Well  
\*\*\*please note that in order to participate in the program reservations must be made

**through the host organization, not through the cruise line directly\*\*\***

[www.fmwc.ca](http://www.fmwc.ca)

**3. September 25-27, 2020** AGM of the Federation of Medical Women of Canada in Vancouver.

**4.. October, 8-10 2020**, Seoul, Korea ( please watch for updates)  
Western Pacific Regional Meeting

**5. September 2024** Please mark your calendars 100th anniversary meeting of the Federation of Medical Women of Canada.

## **12. NAMES IN THE NEWS**

1.Dr.Eleanor Nwadinobi President Elects Pod cast or 'FiLiA . The focus of their work is an annual

Women's Rights Conference, which they have hosted since 2013

<https://filia.org.uk/podcasts/2019/6/11/filia-meets-eleanor-nwadinobi-every-woman-treaty>

2. Dr Stella Dr Stella Kokoricha Essiet was awarded the MWAN p - Medical Womens Association of Nigeria Prestigious Ireene Ighodaro's award. Drs Rosemarie Ogu and Padmini Murthy( secretary general ) received awards from Dr Joyce Barber President of Medical Women's Association of Nigeria at their Biennium meeting in Nigeria .

3. Dr. Elizabeth Lichtenstein the regional VP for Northern Europe has authored a chapter in the book ***Gender Equity in the Medical Profession***. Copies can be ordered by clicking the link [www.igi-global.com](http://www.igi-global.com).

4. Dr. Kathleen Gartke of the Federation of Medical Women has been appointed Senior Medical Advisor of the Ottawa Hospital, a facility of 1600 physicians.

5.Dr. Danielle Martin of Women's College Hospital in Toronto was made an honorary member of the Federation of Medical Women of Canada for her work on health care reform.

6.Dr. Anne Niec of the Federation of Medical Women of Canada was awarded the Dr. May Cohen award for her work of putting the vision for women's health into reality.

7.Dr. Amy Gausvik received the Margaret Owen Waite award of the Federation of Medical Women of Canada for her work in Tanzania.

8. Ms. Lily Park received the Student Leadership Award of the Federation of Medical Women of Canada.

## **13. PUBLICATIONS**

### **1. Universal Health Coverage Political Declaration**

<https://www.un.org/pga/73/wp-content/uploads/sites/53/2019/07/FINAL-draft-UHC-Political-Declaration.pdf>

### **2. CIOMS International Ethical Guide Lines for Research Involving Humans**

<https://cioms.ch/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/WEB-CIOMS-EthicalGuidelines.pdf>

3.

## **II. OTHER ORGANIZATIONS**

### **1. World Health Organization (WHO)**

#### **Multilateral agencies launch a joint plan to boost global health goals**

24 September 2019

Joint News Release

New York

Today at the United Nations General Assembly, 12 multilateral agencies launched a joint plan to better support countries over the next 10 years to accelerate progress towards the health-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Developed over 18 months, *Stronger Collaboration, Better Health: Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All* outlines how a dozen multilateral health, development and humanitarian agencies will collaborate to be more efficient and provide more streamlined support to countries to deliver universal health coverage and achieve the health-related SDG targets.

Healthy people are essential for sustainable development and for ending poverty, promoting peaceful and inclusive societies as well as protecting the environment. Over the last few decades, significant gains have been made in key areas of health, but the 2030 targets will not be met without redoubled efforts.

“The plan is called, ‘Stronger Collaboration, Better Health’ for a reason,” said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of WHO. “Although collaboration is the path, impact is the destination. The release of this plan is the beginning, not the end, of that path.”

Universal health coverage is key to meeting the health-related goals and addressing health inequities. If trends continue, only up to 5 billion of the world’s population will be covered by essential health services in 2030, as highlighted in the Universal Health Coverage: Global Monitoring Report, released last week by WHO. To leave no one behind, countries need to address health inequities. Improved collaboration and coordination can help countries tackle complex health challenges and bring innovative solutions.

Together, the 12 agencies contribute nearly one-third of all development assistance to health. Under the Global Action Plan, the agencies commit to strengthening their collaboration to:

- Engage with countries better to identify priorities, plan and implement together;
- Accelerate progress in countries through joint actions under 7 accelerator themes, which represent common challenges for many countries and where the agencies’ mandates, expertise and resources offer solutions, namely: 1) Primary health care 2) Sustainable health financing 3) Community and civil society engagement 4) Determinants of health 5) Innovative programming in fragile and vulnerable settings and for disease outbreak responses 6) Research and development, innovation and access, and 7) Data and digital health. They will also work together to advance gender equality and support the delivery of global public goods;
- Align by harmonizing their operational and financial strategies and policies in support of countries to increase efficiency and reduce the burden on countries; and
- Account, by reviewing progress and learning together to enhance shared accountability.

Governments are setting priorities, developing implementation plans and intensifying efforts to achieve the health-related SDG targets. Demand from countries for the Global Action Plan is growing. “Achieving the health-related SDG goals is key for Nepal. Strengthening primary health care and enhancing data utilization for evidence-based planning and decision-making are two accelerators that will help bring us closer to achieving the SDG goals,” said Deputy Prime Minister of Nepal, Mr Upendra Yadav.

Through the Global Action Plan, the agencies will help countries deliver on international commitments in addition to the SDGs, such as those made in Astana on primary health care and at the UN General Assembly High-level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage this week in New York.

Coordinated by WHO, the *Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All*, is in response to a call from Germany, Ghana and Norway, with support from the United Nations Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, for more effective collaboration and coordination among global health organizations to achieve the health-related SDGs. The 12 signatory agencies to the



plan are [Gavi](#), [The GFF](#), [the Global Fund](#), [UNAIDS](#), [UNDP](#), [UNFPA](#), [UNICEF](#), [UNITAID](#), [UN Women](#), [World Bank Group](#), [WFP](#) and [WHO](#)

## **WHO launches digital app to improve care for older people**

30 September 2019  
News release

GENEVA -- On the [International Day of Older Persons – 1 October](#) – the World Health Organization (WHO) is launching a package of tools, including a digital application to help health and social workers provide better care for older people.

The innovative interactive digital application known as WHO ICOPE Handbook App provides practical guidance to address priority conditions including mobility limitations, malnutrition, vision and hearing loss, cognitive decline, depressive symptoms and social care and support. Used in conjunction with a package of tools including a new handbook, the app will accelerate training of health and social workers to better address the diverse needs of older people.

“It is essential that services for older people are included in universal health care packages. At the same time there needs to be good coordination between the health and social services to provide optimal care when needed. The new package of tools supports healthy ageing with a person-centred and coordinated model of care” says Dr Anshu Banerjee, director of the department of Maternal, new-born, child and adolescent health and ageing at WHO

The world’s population is ageing at a fast pace. By 2050 one in five people will be over 60. [The number of aged over 80 is projected to triple from 143 million in 2019 to 426 million in 2050](#). While every older person is different physical and mental capacity tend to decline with increasing age.

“Such innovation will enable older people to continue doing the things they value and prevent them from social isolation and care dependency. ,” says Dr Islene Araujo de Carvalho, group lead on ageing and integrated care at WHO. “Intervening close to where older people live, with active participation of the community and older persons themselves, is essential for a personalized care plan.”

The Integrated Care for Older People package of tools is the result of two years of extensive consultations with leading experts and stakeholders including civil society representatives.

[The 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals](#) recognize that development will only be achievable if it is inclusive of people of all ages. Empowering older persons and enabling their full participation and social inclusion in good health are ways to reduce inequalities.

## **2.UN Women**

To mark the 25th anniversary of the [Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action](#), considered the blueprint on women's rights and empowerment, UN Women today announced its new multigenerational campaign, “**Generation Equality: Realizing women's rights for an equal future**”.

In 2020, it will be 25 years since world leaders adopted the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which set out how to remove the systemic barriers that hold women back from equal participation in all areas of life, whether in public or in private. Developed at the [Fourth World Conference on Women](#) in Beijing, China, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is a visionary agenda for the empowerment of women and girls, everywhere. It was adopted by 189 governments committed to taking strategic, bold actions in 12 critical areas of concern: poverty, education and training, health, violence, armed conflict, economy, power and decision-making, institutional mechanisms, human rights, media, environment, and the girl child. Nearly 25 years later, the promise of the Beijing Platform for Action remains unfulfilled.

The **Generation Equality** campaign will bring together the next generations of women's rights activists—many of whom may not have been born in 1995—with the gender equality advocates and visionaries who were instrumental in creating the Beijing Platform for Action more than two decades ago, to accelerate efforts to make gender equality and women's rights a lived reality. The campaign will galvanize attention and action on key issues including equal pay, equal sharing of unpaid care and domestic work, an end to sexual harassment and all forms of violence against women and girls, health-care services that respond to their needs, and their equal participation in economic and political life and decision-making in all areas of life.

Speaking about the anniversary and the new campaign, UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka said, “Today, nearly 25 years after the historic Beijing Conference, the reality is that not a single country can claim to have achieved gender equality. Despite some progress, real change has been too slow for most women and girls in the world, and we see significant pushback in many places against their leadership and agency. As a result, women continue to be discriminated against and their contributions undervalued; they work more, earn less and have fewer choices about their bodies, livelihoods and futures than men; and they experience multiple forms of violence at home, at work and in public spaces. Generation Equality is a campaign for swift systemic change, with political will and bold, decisive actions taken on the laws, policies and outdated mindsets that must no longer curtail women's voice, choice and safety.”

The 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 2020 is a unique time in history to rally around finally realizing the human rights of all women and girls and will be organized as a global mobilization. It will also bring together other key moments in the 21<sup>st</sup> century women's rights movement including the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of [UN Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security](#); the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of [UN Women's establishment](#) as the global champion for the empowerment of women and girls; and the 5th anniversary of the global [Sustainable Development Goals](#), which put gender equality at the heart of sustainable development.

UN Women stands at the centre of mobilizing governments and civil society to keep the promises of the Beijing Platform for Action to all. High-profile events, meetings and activities

will mark the **Generation Equality** campaign, including national reports by governments providing a detailed picture of progress made and challenges that remain in achieving women's rights and gender equality, along with regional inter-governmental meetings and high-level forums. In 2020, the 64th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women will assess progress in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. A high-level meeting of the UN General Assembly is expected to be held in September 2020. Plans are also underway for a Global Gender Equality Forum, which will galvanize civil society activists from the world over in the summer of 2020.

- Webpage: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/get-involved/beijing-plus-25>
- See also the [page for the 64<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women](#), which will focus on the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

## **UNFPA**

### **When health workers harm: the medicalization of female genital mutilation in Egypt**

**2 October 2019**

**CAIRO, Egypt** – Female genital mutilation has been outlawed in Egypt for more than a decade, but it remains widespread. Yet rather than helping to eliminate the practice, public campaigns highlighting its dangers may have had an unexpected side effect: pushing the procedure from the home to the very place where staff are meant to “do no harm” – the health facility.

“About 75 per cent of female genital mutilation in the country is performed by doctors,” said Dr. Ayman Sadek, an expert on the subject.

Despite years of efforts by the government and health organizations, female genital mutilation remains deeply entrenched in both Egypt's Muslim and Christian communities. Around 9 in 10 Egyptian women have been subjected to the practice, according to 2015 data. It was once largely performed by traditional birth attendants known as ‘dayas’, but since the ban, families have increasingly turned to trained health professionals.

Medicalized female genital mutilation is harmful and unethical, Dr. Gamal Serour says.

The medicalization of female genital mutilation is alarming to health and human rights experts, as it offers the appearance of legitimacy to a practice with no medical benefits but plenty of serious consequences, including possible haemorrhage, childbirth complications and even death.

#### **Why they do it**

Some health providers perform female genital mutilation because they believe families will resort to the practice no matter what.

"They say that there's little that can be done to stop this practice, so they agree to do it, but with reduced risk of infection and bleeding," said Dr. Wafaa Benjamin Basta, an Egyptian gynaecologist. "They to claim lower pain and trauma by doing a little cut under anaesthesia. It's a harm-reduction approach."

But this is no excuse, said Dr. Gamal Serour, an obstetrician/gynaecologist and Director of the International Islamic Centre at Al Azhar University. "Medicalized female genital mutilation is harmful and unethical," he said.

And medicalization does not guarantee harm reduction.

In Egypt, clitoridectomy and excision are most common forms of female genital mutilation. Both involve the removal of significant parts of the female anatomy.

Furthermore, Dr. Sadek noted, "when doctors get their training, they don't learn how to perform female genital mutilation. Instead, they learn it from the traditional practitioners." Other health staff don't learn the procedure from anyone, making it up as they go.

There is also another incentive, Dr. Sadek noted: Some perform female genital mutilation to supplement their incomes.

"When you make something illegal, it increases the price," he said. "I know of one doctor who does the practice on girls but protects his own daughters from being subjected to it."

Communities are being urged to reject female genital mutilation, and girls are learning about the harms caused by the practice. © Luca Zordan for UNFPA

More than physical harm

Campaigners' focus on the physical harms caused by female genital mutilation means the psychological consequences have been largely overlooked, some experts said.

"We tend to talk only about the medical impact of female genital mutilation, when the social and psychological impact are just as, if not more, important," Dr. Basta told UNFPA. "I have patients who tell me that it has interfered with their ability to have an enjoyable sex life."

The practice also arises out of – and reinforces – gender inequalities. It perpetuates, for instance, the idea that women's bodies are inferior when intact and the idea that women's sexuality must be controlled.

A 2014 household survey showed that more than half of respondents believed men prefer women who have been cut, and more than 40 per cent said the practice prevents adultery.

Support for the practice remains high even though 60 per cent of female survey respondents acknowledged that it can cause complications resulting in death. Less than half of men were aware of such complications.

Attitudes changing

But there has been progress, experts say. Recent increases in the penalties for performing female genital mutilation have contributed to an overall decrease in the practice, Dr. Serour said.

And attitudes are slowly changing, particularly in affluent and urban communities.

“Ten years ago, most of my patients had been subjected to it,” Dr. Basta said, noting that among her own clientele, “only about 10 per cent of my patients on the private sector – particularly women under 30 – have had it done to them.”

UNFPA has worked with the department that oversees licensing for private clinics to discourage the practice. And a UNFPA-supported medical curriculum on the harms of the practice has been approved, but not yet rolled out to universities.

Through the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme to Eliminate FGM, communities are also educated about the harms caused by the practice and encouraged to abandon it.

Still, many people remain convinced that medicalized female genital mutilation is acceptable. “Medicalized female genital mutilation is wrapping a terrible thing in a beautiful package,” Dr. Sadek says.

### **III.ANNOUNCEMENTS**

1.AMWA has anew campaign , please share with your physician colleagues for support. info on this webpage: [amwa-doc.org/need-her-science](http://amwa-doc.org/need-her-science)

Join the #NeedHerScience Campaign to address gender bias in publishing. Learn more <https://tinyurl.com/y2uh2tot>.

Take the pledge (1 min & anonymous) <https://tinyurl.com/y64lq7ne> #BeEthical