

HRP • RHR news

A periodic newsletter for partners



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Supporting the UN Secretary General's Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health – a global network of academic and research institutions

HRP and partners are proposing to establish a network of academic and research institutions to support the UN Secretary General's *Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health*. This proposal presents an unprecedented opportunity for forging links between research and academic institutions involved in sexual and reproductive health research and policy makers. It highlights the need to ensure there is science and evidence to drive and support the operationalization of the *Global Strategy*. The network will conduct implementation research to define knowledge gaps for action and investment, identify barriers and health system bottlenecks and systematically introduce WHO guidelines or relevant interventions to support the strengthening of technical capacity to improve women's and children's health.

As part of its mandate for research and technical capacity strengthening, HRP has, over the years, created a network of research institutions and a critical mass of scientists in low- and middle-income countries, engaged in research to improve maternal health and accelerate progress in efforts to achieve universal access to reproductive health. It continues to support developing-country institutions in efforts to create national and regional networks of expertise that can serve as a resource for the generation and application of interventions to improve reproductive, maternal, and perinatal health.

It is proposed to work with relevant WHO departments and academic institutions to build on HRP's network of such centres of excellence to accelerate progress to deliver on this aspect of the *Global Strategy*.

Specific objectives

- Establishment of a global collaborative network of academic and research institutions that brings together existing networks consisting of both South–North and North–North institutions, including some centres supported by HRP over the years.
- Definition of a prioritized research agenda in areas critical to reducing maternal and newborn mortality and accelerating universal access to reproductive health (thus advancing Millennium Development Goals 4 and 5).
- Development of country-specific action plans in selected countries, facilitating linkages between academic institutions and ministries of health, with the aim of identifying needs and barriers and implementing necessary interventions to improve maternal, newborn and sexual and reproductive health.

Approach and proposed actions

Within the defined roles for academic and research institutions, the following actions will be undertaken:

- Delivery of a prioritized and coordinated research agenda
- Strengthening of the global network of academics, researchers and trainers
- Building capacity at research institutes, especially in low- and middle-income countries
- Helping policy development by reporting on trends and emerging issues
- Encouragement of an increased budget allocation for research and innovation
- Dissemination of new research findings and best practice.

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PCC 2012

10th World Congress on Maternal and Neonatal Health

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WHO recommendations for prevention and treatment of pre-eclampsia and eclampsia

Beginning with the end in mind: planning pilot projects and other programmatic research for successful scaling up

WHO Reproductive Health Library 2011 CD-ROM

Strengthening country office capacity to support sexual and reproductive health in the new aid environment. Report of a technical consultation meeting

Immediate next steps

- A Technical Consultation of academic networks, partners, ministry of health representatives (12–13 January 2012, Geneva)
- Establishment of the global network
- Defining modalities of work
- Specifying the methods and modalities of research prioritization

Second Regular Session of the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board – statement by Director HRP/RHR

The Second Regular Session of the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board took place in New York, USA, from 6 to 9 September 2011. Many delegates from Member States and development partners attended the Executive Board, which, among other issues, reviewed the UNFPA Mid-term Strategic Plan. Dr Michael Mbizvo, Director, HRP/RHR, attended the Executive Board and made the following statement on behalf of WHO/RHR/HRP:

"Once again, it is with great pleasure that I join distinguished Delegates in thanking the Executive Director for his report and his eloquent elaboration of the Mid-term Strategic Plan. We commend the consultative process in which WHO has been a part. The deliberations of today come at a critical time, as we engage in the home stretch towards achieving the goals of ICPD and those of the MDGs. Madam President, the baton, in this important race, has been passed to us, to accelerate progress in this last lap. With UNFPA, we have been a formidable team. We may not be able to achieve all goals and targets as currently set, or ensure our support to countries culminates in all countries being on track, but we have results which reflect progress, and various input, output and outcome indicators, against which such progress can be measured. With your continued support, we are confident in being able to support countries to deliver on the promise of universal access to sexual and reproductive health. Madam President, what will this mean?

It means we continue to see a decline in the rates of needless deaths associated with pregnancy and childbirth. It means that a woman survives a pregnancy irrespective of her social status, religion, or background. It means those in need of family planning, including the 215 million women with an unmet need for family planning, are able to access and use good-quality services. It means the continuum or chain from evidence on critical interventions, to their application to save lives, is not broken.

Madam President, sexual and reproductive health is a human right, a development and health issue, and yet related morbidity and mortality remain unacceptably high, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. This area of health is characterized by silent epidemics, often not discussed due to politicization, and, at times, insensitivity to the plight of poor women. Lives are lost in pregnancy or childbirth often for two reasons – being a woman and being poor. I think, as society, we can do better and we can capitalize on the renewed impetus through the Secretary General's *Global strategy for women's and children's health*.

By joining hands within the H4+ and with HRP, the UNDP, UNFPA, WHO, World Bank cosponsored Special Programme of Research, Development and Research Training in Human Reproduction, we can attest to progress. There are examples. during the review of the WHO *Global reproductive health strategy* at the 2010 meeting of WHO's Executive Board, Malawi, on behalf of 43 African countries, cited the WHO–UNFPA Strategic Partnership Programme as a model that had made a difference in the introduction of evidence-based guidelines, in particular in the areas of family planning, prevention and control of sexually transmitted and reproductive tract infections, and improving maternal and newborn health. Such positive comments from Member States spur our resolve and are catalytic in forging even closer and innovative partnership models. As HRP, we are happy to continue to be a resource for evidence-based interventions. Your support is critical, as we build on this progress."

– Translations

Nueve pasos para formular una estrategia de ampliación a escala

Prevención y tratamiento de la preeclampsia y la eclampsia

Critères de recevabilité pour l'adoption et l'utilisation continue de méthodes contraceptives

Tendances de la mortalité maternelle sur la période 1990-2008

Prévention et traitement de la prééclampsie et de l'éclampsie

Профилактика и лечение преэклампсии и эклампсии

– Contact us

Safety of using hormonal contraceptives for women at risk of HIV infection

Findings from a prospective cohort study among 3790 heterosexual HIV sero-discordant couples from Heffron and colleagues published on 4 October 2011 in *The Lancet Infectious Diseases* suggest that use of hormonal contraception may increase the risk of acquiring HIV infection two-fold. Additionally, the study reports that HIV-infected women who used hormonal contraception were twice as likely to transmit their infection to their uninfected partner compared with HIV-positive women who did not use hormonal contraception.

Methodological issues and limitations of the data in this study, however, underscore the need for a thorough evaluation of the body of evidence. In light of this, as well as the public health concerns it raises, HRP/RHR is convening a Technical Consultation from 31 January to 1 February 2012 to re-examine the totality of evidence on potential effects of hormonal contraception on HIV acquisition, disease progression, and infectivity/transmission to sexual partners.

The review will build upon the previous meetings of the Medical Eligibility Criteria for Contraceptive Use Guidelines Committee on this subject in 2003 and 2008, as well as the recommendations from a 2007 WHO Technical Consultation that focused on developing a research agenda of key priorities on these issues.

The technical consultation will bring together a multidisciplinary group of experts to evaluate the available scientific evidence in this area. Through a consensus-based process, current WHO recommendations on contraceptive use for women at risk of HIV, women with HIV infection or AIDS, will be assessed to determine whether they remain consistent with the updated body of evidence or whether modifications need to be made. Recommendations from the consultation will be applied to WHO's clinical guidance and guide the development of a consensus on key research priorities for research in this area. WHO will issue a statement on recommendations for contraceptive use in high HIV incidence and prevalence settings after a consensus has been reached at the conclusion of the consultation. The technical consultation will be followed by a stakeholders' meeting, which will review emerging research priorities and funding opportunities.

>> See Statement for more information:

http://whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/2011/WHO_RHR_11.28_eng.pdf

HRP/RHR involvement in Second International Conference on Family Planning: Research and Best Practices

29 November–2 December, Dakar, Senegal.

This conference will bring together participants to share research, best practices, and progress on national strategies to deliver family planning

services, with the ultimate goal being universal access to family planning. RHR/HRP staff will be chairing and presenting in the following sessions.



High-Level Ministerial Meeting Realizing the Demographic Dividend for the Wealth and Health of Nations

29 November, 09:45–10:15, The Flamboyant Room

Opening Statement: Dr Mike Mbitzo, Director HRP/RHR

2 December, 07:30–8:30

African Women Leaders Network for Reproductive Health and Family Planning (AWLN)

Presentation, Dr Mike Mbitzo

Plenary sessions

Opening Plenary – **Family Planning and HIV: Estranged Bedfellows No more**

1 December, 8:30-9:20, Auditorium

Presentation on WHO's Initiatives to reduce the joint risk of unwanted pregnancy and HIV infection, Dr Mike Mbizvo

Special Panel – **Hormonal Contraception and HIV Infection**

Presentation on Future Strategies, Dr Mike Mbizvo

Regular sessions

Wednesday 30 November

Session 1.1.07, Room C12

Delivering Contraceptive Services: Clients and Providers

Chair: Dr Mario Festin

Session 1.3.03, Room B06 14:00–15:30

Promoting family planning for post partum women: current recommendations

Chaired by Mary Lyn Gaffield

Session 1.4.05 Room C06 1600–1730

The use of mobile technology (mhealth) tools in RH and FP, and measuring Impact

Chaired by Dr Garrett Mehl

Session 1.2.12, Room Salon Saint Louis

Meeting Family Planning Needs Among Persons with Disabilities

Chair: Suzanne M. Reier

Auxiliary evening sessions

Global Guidance for Family Planning: New Resources, New Tools, New Media from WHO, USAID, UNFPA and Partners

30 November, 18:00–21:00

This special event will introduce three key resources – *Training Resource Package for Family Planning*, *2011 Family Planning Handbook*, and *The Medical Eligibility Criteria (MEC) for Contraceptive Use* – available in print and electronic formats making it easier than ever for reproductive health professionals to access and use the latest evidence-based family planning guidance. Participants will have the opportunity to learn about these new tools and resources from the developers and key implementing partners, participate in hands-on demonstrations, and strategize with colleagues about introducing and adapting these new resources into programmes. These tools were developed and endorsed through successful collaborations between WHO, USAID, UNFPA, and multiple technical partners.

>> To express interest in attending or to register, please contact Suzanne Reier, email: reiers@who.int

Applying the ExpandNet/WHO Nine Step Methodology for Developing a Scaling-Up Strategy

30 November 30, 18:00–19:30

This hands-on skill-building workshop is intended for programme managers, researchers and other health professionals who seek to ensure that successfully tested health interventions are expanded and benefit more people on a lasting basis. Participants will be exposed briefly to the framework for scaling up and will use a hypothetical family planning case study that is based on actual country experience to practice applying the nine-step methodology for developing a scaling-up strategy. They will become familiar with the ExpandNet/WHO tools for scaling up and acquire skills in diagnosing scaling-up challenges as well as planning and managing a systematic approach to the scaling up of best practices.

>> To express interest in attending or to register, please contact: Laura Ghiron, email: ljghiron@umich.edu

Setting and Prioritizing the Family Planning Research Agenda

1 December, 18:00-21:30

Sponsored by RHR, this session will focus on building consensus among stakeholders on priorities for research to address unmet need in family planning, focusing on research gaps related to new technologies, and research to improve access to and use of existing contraceptives. It is critical to align the global research agenda and allied funding contributions towards efforts that have the greatest impact on reducing unmet need for family planning among men and women of reproductive age living in low- and middle-income countries.

>> To express interest in attending or to register, please contact: Dr Moazzam Ali, email alimoa@who.int

The IBP Initiative: Scaling up What Works in Family Planning and Reproductive Health

1 December, 18:00–20:00

Sponsored by the IBP Secretariat, RHR

For over 10 years, UNFPA, USAID, WHO and over 30 other organizations have been supporting the IBP Initiative (Implementing Best Practices) to work with countries to scale up effective family planning and reproductive health practices. By fostering collaboration, introducing the management of change, and developing methods and tools for sharing knowledge, the partner agencies have created a powerful catalyst for action at the global, regional and country level.

This session will include a panel presentation highlighting how IBP approaches have helped programmes and countries achieve progress in reproductive health and family planning. The panel will also highlight the advantages and opportunities for organizations to become members of IBP.

>> To express interest in attending or to register, please contact: Suzanne Reier, email: reiers@who.int

IBP Knowledge to Action Sessions

1–2 December, Flamboyant Room, ICFP, Dakar.

The Implementing Best Practices (IBP) Initiative, coordinated by RHR, and supported by USAID, UNFPA and over 30 other organizations working in family planning and reproductive health, is sponsoring sessions on each of the five action areas that emerged from the 2009 International Conference on Family Planning: promoting investments in family planning; expanding access to a broader method mix through community involvement; contraceptive supply systems; integration of family planning within and beyond the health system; and involving men and youth. A session on the USAID High Impact Practices will highlight the importance and approach for using an evidence base in defining what practices are “high impact”. All the sessions are designed to share evidence-based and innovative practices, including issues related to scaling up and promoting partnership, through an interactive format. Rotating stations and other approaches will be used to maintain a high level of energy, stimulate exchange of ideas, and generate maximum participation.



Session 2.1.10, 1 December, 9:30–11:00

Engaging Men in Family Planning

Session 2.2.10, 1 December, 11:30–13:00

Supporting Contraceptive Security: Data Visibility and Coordination

Session 2.3.10, 1 December, 14:00-17:30

Effective Approaches for Increasing Access to Family Planning Services and Expanding Contraceptive Choice in Underserved Areas

Session 3.1.10, 2 December 09:30–11:00

Integration of Family Planning within and beyond the Health Sector

Session 3.2.10, 2 December, 11:30–13:00

Promoting Investments in FP: Advocacy for National Policies and Development Plans

Session 3.3.10, 2 December, 14:00–15:30

Getting HIP-ER: High Impact Practices in FP based on Evidence and Research

>> For more information on the conference see: <http://www.fpconference2011.org>

HRP/RHR supporting Reproductive Health Resolve Award – celebrating country progress in accelerating access to reproductive health

In May 2011, the inaugural Geneva Policy Dialogue Series on Reproductive Health event, cosponsored by HRP and the Aspen Institute, saw an exciting announcement from the Global



Leaders Council for Reproductive Health. Comprising 16 world leaders chaired by former President of Ireland Mary Robinson, the Council is committed to advancing reproductive health for lasting development and prosperity by working to mobilize the political will and financial resources necessary to achieve universal access to reproductive health. To this end, Council member Dr Regina Benjamin announced The Global Leaders Council for Reproductive Health Resolve Award, an award celebrating country progress in accelerating access to reproductive health. Winners of the Resolve Award will be honoured by the Council in a special ceremony on 23 May 2012 at the time of the World Health Assembly.

The application period for The Resolve Award is now open until 5 January 2012. This highly competitive, non-monetary award is designed to honour innovative and scalable approaches in accelerating progress towards universal access to reproductive health.

Applications or nominations are welcomed from governments, civil society organizations, and academic institutions nominating specific countries for the development or adoption of best practices that are bold and innovative, and lead the way in advancing access to reproductive health. The Council is looking for countries whose policymakers have implemented:

- Innovative action, or breakthrough approaches that unleash or advance entire fields or systems.
- Scalable solutions, or solutions with the potential to effect large-scale change in-country.
- Solutions that are broad and equitable.

Any individual or organization working at the country level may submit an application describing an innovation in that country for the award. The application may be completed and submitted by a government representative, health practitioner, civil society representative, NGO, etc. Each application should be no longer than five pages and must be supported with a letter from a government official. Nominators may submit more than one application, and countries may be nominated more than one time by different nominators and/or for innovations in each of the three categories:

Financing: Countries will be recognized for identifying or developing new ways to fund reproductive health services. Examples could include: resource pooling; voucher systems; collective health insurance; leveraging the private sector; or allocating at least 15% of the national health budget to the health sector.

Policy Development: Countries adapting, developing or improving the design and implementation of policies that remove barriers or facilitate progress towards universal access will be recognized. Examples could include: adapting or developing a national reproductive health and/or adolescent reproductive health plan; public policy influencing private sector involvement; policies focused on reaching marginalized and/or vulnerable groups.

Expansion of service delivery: Countries will be recognized for expanding access to reproductive health services and information. Examples could include: workforce expansion; integrated services; community-based distribution of contraceptives; task shifting; youth-friendly pharmacies and services; introducing new service delivery protocols, training curricula, and educational approaches.

Up to three countries will ultimately be selected as winners, and will be presented with the 2012 Resolve Award at the second inaugural event of the Geneva Policy Dialogue Series on Reproductive Health to take place on 23 May 2012, cosponsored by HRP/RHR and Aspen Global Health and Development.

>> Information and the application are available from: www.aspeninstitute.org/policy-work/global-health-development/what-we-do/glc/resolve/apply

New European Commission grant for promoting health research and education in Africa through information technology

HRP/RHR, along with seven other partners, has received a new grant from the European Commission to promote health research, education and health-care practice in Africa. The grant will be used to create centres of excellence in Africa and the initial focus will be on the area of HIV/AIDS and sexual and reproductive health. A new feature of this project is that it will use information technology (IT) to deliver e-learning courses and enable knowledge-sharing through web-based virtual communities. Entitled "AFRICA BUILD", the longer-term aim of the project is to create sustainable South-South knowledge-sharing groups of African researchers.

The key objectives of AFRICA BUILD are:

- To evaluate the current status of health research and education in Africa in order to build a roadmap for future European support.
- To establish IT-enabled virtual communities of practice and a professional social network and develop open and collaborative infrastructure for education, training and knowledge-sharing for health researchers.
- To develop and offer in a wide range of disciplines, suitable e-learning courses, validated learning resources, methodologies and supporting evidence for improving the education capacity for health-related centres of excellence in Africa.
- To facilitate researchers' mobility and participation in local and international meetings.
- To validate the AFRICA BUILD impact in pilot research and education initiatives related to reproductive health and HIV/AIDS research.
- To disseminate outcomes of research in scientific conferences and journals, media and workshops and conferences in Africa.

Along with HRP/RHR, the other partners in the consortium are: Institute of Tropical Medicine (ITM), Antwerp, Belgium; University of Yaoundé, Yaoundé, Cameroon; Information Technology Institute, Ministry of Communications & Information Technology, Cairo, Egypt; School of Public Health, University of Ghana, Accra, Ghana; Universidad Politecnica de Madrid (project coordinator), Madrid, Spain; and Faculté de Médecine de Pharmacie et d'OdontoStomatologie, University of Geneva, Geneva, Switzerland.

Clinical and policy guidelines for preventing violence against women – guidelines development group meeting

Geneva, 12–14 September. This three-day meeting was held as part of the process to develop evidence-based "Clinical and policy guidelines for preventing violence against women", with participation from 22 experts covering all WHO regions. The guidelines development group included academics, national policy leads and representatives of NGOs with expertise in this field. WHO Regional Advisers and several methodologists were also part of the group. The meeting achieved its objective of developing recommendations of relevance to low- and middle-income as well as high-income countries that are based on systematic reviews of the evidence but take into account feasibility, harms and human rights. The group also made research recommendations for each of the topics reviewed. The topics covered included: clinical interventions for intimate partner violence; clinical interventions for sexual assault (mental health, emergency contraception, post-exposure prophylaxis for STIs and HIV); as well as models of service delivery, training of health providers on intimate partner violence and sexual violence, and mandatory reporting.



The Guidelines will be produced in early 2012. The evidence which supports the recommendations (summaries of the systematic reviews and GRADE tables) will be available on the web. Discussions are already under way with several regional offices for dissemination and implementation. Several academic publications based on the reviews are anticipated.

>> More on HRP/RHR's work on preventing violence against women:
<http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/topics/violence/en/index.html>

Strategic Assessment on issues related to unintended pregnancy and abortion in the Kyrgyz Republic

August 2011. In 2009 the Kyrgyz Ministry of Health requested technical support and funding from WHO and UNFPA to evaluate access to and quality of abortion care in Kyrgyzstan by conducting a strategic assessment, the first stage of the WHO *Strategic Approach to strengthening sexual and reproductive health policies and programmes*. The main objective of the strategic assessment is to facilitate a multidisciplinary, multisectoral team to identify and prioritize needs and follow-up actions for strengthening policies, programmes, and services related to family planning and abortion in Kyrgyzstan. Following delays caused by political unrest in June 2010, the national planning workshop was held in June 2011, two weeks of field-based data generation were conducted in August, and a national dissemination workshop is planned for November.



During fieldwork, the assessment team found that unsafe abortion in Kyrgyzstan is largely the result of poor clinical practices, lack of knowledge and poor skills of health professionals in counselling and providing family planning and abortion services, and poor availability of public services in rural areas.

The team's draft recommendations included: implementation of evidence-based medical eligibility criteria for contraceptive use; replacing sharp curettage with manual vacuum aspiration for abortions less than 12–14 weeks from the last menstrual period (LMP); replacing instillation with saline with combination mifepristone–misoprostol for abortions more than 12–14 weeks LMP; implementing WHO-recommended pain management practices; and, in order to extend safe abortion to underserved rural areas, designing a pilot programme to train midwives to provide medical abortion up to 9 weeks (63 days) LMP. The draft recommendations will be discussed and endorsed at the national dissemination workshop in November and plans will be made to implement priority interventions.

>> More information on the WHO Strategic Approach to strengthening sexual and reproductive health policies and programmes:
http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/topics/countries/strategic_approach/en/index.html

International Conference on Research, Healthcare and Preventive Measures for Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Nairobi, Kenya, 17–19 October, 2011. This first international conference on research, healthcare and preventive measures related to FGM included a two-day technical seminar on key aspects of FGM research and interventions, followed by a meeting to discuss the establishment of a centre of excellence for research and work on FGM at the University of Nairobi.

More than 90 people attended the scientific conference, including researchers, government officials, UN staff and representatives of NGOs and bilateral agencies from 17 countries. The conference was supported by representatives from several ministries as well as parliamentarians in Kenya. The conference included more than 15 technical presentations and three round-table discussions covering: legal aspects, including human rights; health aspects, including short and long-term complications and their management, the issue of medicalization, and sexual and psychological complications of

FGM; sociocultural factors; abandonment efforts and how these could be improved and key aspects of design, monitoring and evaluation of FGM interventions. A key overall goal was to review knowledge and identify knowledge gaps. Presentations were given by HRP/RHR staff Dr Heli Bathija (Area Manager, Europe and Eastern Mediterranean Regions) and Dr Elise Johansen (Technical Officer) on: the state of the art on research on the health aspects of FGM; global challenges in the elimination of FGM; addressing prevention of medicalization of FGM; and mobilizing international commitment.



HRP/RHR provided technical support and convening support in preparation for the conference and the plans for the centre. The conference and the meeting was organized in collaboration with University of Sydney in Australia, the International Centre for Reproductive Health at Ghent University in Belgium, and the University of Washington, Seattle, USA, UNFPA, and UNICEF.

The conference was followed by a half-day meeting discussing a proposal for establishing an African Centre for Partnership, Capacity Building, Research, and Policy Making for Abandonment of Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting to be based in the University of Nairobi. The vision is to create a centre of excellence for African researchers to develop innovative approaches to increase and deepen understanding on issues relating to FGM and its elimination; for training leaders and champions for promoting and using multidisciplinary actions for eliminating FGM and promote health care for victims.

There was wide interest and expressed commitments from UN agencies, bilateral donor agencies, various universities in Africa, Europe, United States of America and Australia to offer financial and technical support as well as advocacy support for the planned centre. A Steering Committee will prepare an overall 15-year plan, including a detailed proposal for the next 12 months, to be submitted to potential donors.

>> Further information on HRP/RHR's work on female genital mutilation is available from: <http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/topics/fgm/en/index.html>

Development and impact assessment of an mHealth package for rural India focusing on reproductive, maternal and child health

HRP is pleased to announce that the Wellcome Trust is generously providing support for this new project, which is a collaboration between WHO (RHR), Columbia University, The Foundation for Research in Health Systems, and the Wellcome Trust.

India's rural, economically poor populations depend upon health care provided by outreach and facility-based workers. But the current health management information system (HMIS) under the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) is failing to optimize these workers' performance and ability to focus on clients at-risk: significant weaknesses in the predominantly paper-based HMIS are resulting in inefficiencies, inaccuracies, data under-utilization and, crucially, missed opportunities for worker support, motivation and improvement, resulting in poor health outcomes.

Mobile technologies offer the promise of enormous advances in such environments, with the potential to empower health workers through instantaneous communication and feedback, delivery of up-to-date educational content, alerts and reminders, remote



support from experts and performance monitoring. This project, to be piloted in Karnataka state, will develop an “mHealth Package” – a strategic mix of mobile technology applications and support materials – to support NRHM reproductive, maternal and child health (RMCH) services and complement the Government's "Mother and Child Tracking System" health information system. The technology will emphasize ease of use by low-literacy individuals, will be provided free of charge, and is envisaged for scale-up following rigorous pilot testing, impact assessment and revision. The resultant intervention will empower rural health workers and their clients along the continuum of RMCH care, integrating and streamlining data with existing HMIS standards for enhanced provider performance and population health outcomes.

Forthcoming events and announcements

Career opportunity: Director, Department of Reproductive Health and Research

WHO seeks a future director who will continue to advance sexual and reproductive health and rights within the international development agenda. The successor to the current director, who will retire in 2013, will be pivotal in continuing to provide vision and strategic, scientific and operational direction to the Department.

For full description and to apply please see: <http://bit.ly/RHRdirector>

Application deadline: 16 December 2011

HRP Scientific and Technical Advisory Group meeting, 21–23 February 2012

The Scientific and Technical Advisory Group (STAG) will hold its annual meeting at WHO headquarters in February. STAG provides broad strategic technical advice on HRP/RHR's Programme of work. Comprising some 20 full and coopted members and temporary advisers, STAG meets once a year to review the activities of the Department during the past year and to make recommendations on proposed plans of work. The primary focus of the meeting, as for other even years, will be on strategic questions with regard to cross-cutting issues in relation to:

- Knowledge synthesis and exchange + Implementation research
- Universal access to reproductive health + Sexual and reproductive health in primary health care
- Men and sexual and reproductive health
- Innovations to improve sexual and reproductive health
- Advocacy for sexual and reproductive health and for HRP/RHR

STAG reports to HRP's governing board body, the Policy and Coordination Committee (PCC), which meets annually in June.

This year's meeting will include a lunchtime seminar on: *Sexual health and gender: key determinants of health and development*. (Wednesday, 22 February 2012, 12:45–14:00) with presentations by selected STAG members.

PCC 2012

Please remember to save the date in your calendars for the next Policy and Coordination Committee (PCC) meeting to be held in Geneva, Switzerland, at WHO headquarters on **21 and 22 June 2012**. PCC is the Governing Board of the UNDP/UNFPA/WHO/ World Bank Special Programme of Research, Development and Research Training in Human Reproduction (HRP) that meets once yearly to offer guidance, review the programme of work, achievements and challenges, and to approve the overall budget. The PCC Governing Board comprises a leadership circle of global sexual and reproductive health champions. This meeting is an excellent opportunity to come together and network with these leaders in the sexual and reproductive health community and to strengthen our ties around the world. The theme for the technical presentations is on adolescent sexual and reproductive health and that for the panel discussion is on “HRP at 40 – a history of achievement”.

*10th World Congress on Maternal and Neonatal Health, Rome, Italy,
18–20 December*

This three-day congress, supported by HRP/RHR, the European Association of Perinatal Medicine, the World Association of Perinatal Medicine and March of Dimes, aims to cover the following topics:

- Access to maternal and neonatal healthcare
- Maternal-infant care in emergency
- Complications of delivery including post-partum haemorrhage
- Breastfeeding and newborn care
- Nutrition, supplementation and monitoring
- Infections and maternal and infant care
- Prevention of prematurity

Dr Mario Merialdi, Research Evidence and Norms Coordinator, RHR, will present or chair at the following sessions:

18 December, 18.00, **Opening Session**

Co-chair: Dr Mario Merialdi

19 December, Session 2, 08.30–13.30

Complications of pregnancy and delivery including postpartum haemorrhage

Presentation on: **A new device for assisted vaginal delivery**

19 December, Session 3, 14.30–17.99

Access to maternal and neonatal health care

Parallel Round Table: Networking to optimize educational support to underprivileged countries

20 December, Session 6, 14.30–17.30

Prevention of prematurity

Keynote lecture: **The wastage of prematurity: what can we do?**

>> For more information see: www.mcaevents.org/iamaneh2011

New publications

*Prevalence and incidence of selected sexually transmitted infections.
Methods and results used to generate 2005 estimates*

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are a major global cause of acute illness, infertility, long-term disability and death, with serious medical and psychological consequences to millions of men, women and infants. Over 30 bacterial, viral and parasitic pathogens have been identified to date that can be transmitted sexually.

This document presents the methods and results from a WHO-supported exercise to generate global and regional estimates of the prevalence and incidence of four curable STIs, *Chlamydia trachomatis*, *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*, syphilis and *Trichomonas vaginalis*, in adults between 15 and 49 years of age in 2005, building on the approach used to generate estimates in 1995 and 1999.



>> Download publication:

<http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/rtis/9789241502450/en/index.html>



WHO recommendations for prevention and treatment of pre-eclampsia and eclampsia

The majority of deaths due to pre-eclampsia and eclampsia are avoidable through the provision of timely and effective care to the women presenting with these complications. Optimizing health care to prevent and treat women with hypertensive disorders is a necessary step towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. WHO has developed the present evidence-informed recommendations with a view to promoting the best possible clinical practices for the management of pre-eclampsia and eclampsia.

>> Download publication:

http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/maternal_perinatal_health/9789241548335/en/index.html

Beginning with the end in mind: planning pilot projects and other programmatic research for successful scaling up

This guide contains 12 recommendations on how to design pilot projects with scaling up in mind, as well as a checklist that provides a quick overview of the scalability of a project that is being planned, proposed, or in the process of implementation. Based on a combination of a comprehensive review of multiple literatures, field experience and a conceptual framework, the guide is intended for use by researchers, policy-planners, programme managers, technical-assistance providers, donors and others who seek to ensure that pilot or other programmatic research is designed in ways that lead to lasting and larger-scale impact.



>> Download publication:

http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/strategic_approach/9789241502320/en/index.html

WHO Reproductive Health Library 2011 CD-ROM

The WHO Reproductive Health Library (RHL) is an electronic review journal published by the RHR. RHL takes the best available evidence on sexual and reproductive health from Cochrane systematic reviews and presents it as practical actions for clinicians (and policy-makers) to improve health outcomes, especially in developing countries.

Main inclusions in RHL:

- Full text of selected Cochrane systematic reviews
- Independent expert commentaries on single or a collection of related Cochrane reviews – RHL commentaries
- Practical advice on implementation of findings of each Cochrane review – RHL practical aspects
- A complete list of interventions evaluated in RHL, classified by the degree of their effectiveness – Effectiveness summaries
- A set of training videos to help clinicians master details of manual and surgical procedures - RHL videos
- A set of published journal articles and other materials to help understand and practice evidence-based sexual and reproductive health care – Evidence-based medicine resources.



>> CD-ROM versions of RHL are for readers in developing countries who do not have access to the Internet. This electronic review journal is also available online at

www.who.int/rhl

Strengthening country office capacity to support sexual and reproductive health in the new aid environment. Report of a technical consultation meeting



Following the conclusion of the “Strengthening country office capacity to support sexual and reproductive health in the new aid environment” project, a series of four country case-studies were undertaken in Malawi, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Senegal and Tajikistan in early 2011. These provided an opportunity to explore more broadly the changes that have occurred in the 5 years since implementation of the project, and to reflect on the changing roles of United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and WHO country offices, in what continues to evolve as a complex and dynamic context for sexual and reproductive health (SRH). This report provides a summary of key findings, with actions for further collaboration in SRH.

>> Download publication:

http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/health_systems/rhr_11_29/en/index.html

New translations

Nueve pasos para formular una estrategia de ampliación a escala

[Nine steps for developing a scaling-up strategy]

http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/strategic_approach/9789241500319/es/index.html

Prevención y tratamiento de la preeclampsia y la eclampsia

[Prevention and treatment of pre-eclampsia and eclampsia. Summary of recommendations]

http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/maternal_perinatal_health/rhr_11_30/es/index.html

Critères de recevabilité pour l'adoption et l'utilisation continue de méthodes contraceptives

[Medical eligibility criteria for contraceptive use, Fourth edition]

http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/family_planning/9789241563888/fr/index.html

Tendances de la mortalité maternelle sur la période 1990–2008

[Trends in maternal mortality: 1990 to 2008]

<http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/monitoring/9789241500265/fr/index.html>

Prévention et traitement de la prééclampsie et de l'éclampsie

[Prevention and treatment of pre-eclampsia and eclampsia. Summary of recommendations]

http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/maternal_perinatal_health/rhr_11_30/fr/index.html

Профилактика и лечение преэклампсии и эклампсии

[Prevention and treatment of pre-eclampsia and eclampsia. Summary of recommendations]

http://whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/2011/WHO_RHR_11.30_rus.pdf

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With *HRP/RHR News* we aim to strengthen communication with our partners, and, together continue to advocate for improving sexual and reproductive health and the work of HRP. We invite you to send us any contributions, observations or suggestions that you may have in support of this objective. In this regard, we welcome suggestions from members of our advisory bodies, our donors and potential donors. Please note that all HRP's work described herein depends on earmarked or specified voluntary funding to HRP as a cosponsored special programme, and also the support we receive from you to PDRH, the programme development in reproductive health component of RHR. We greatly appreciated your continued financial support.

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