

Written Statement – STI Session 1 (4 – 5 May 2021)

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Looking back at the year 2020 that changed the world, and moving forward

We started 2020 never being heard of COVID-19. We end 2020 with more than 1.5 million lives lost to the disease, a pandemic that is still accelerating in some parts of the world, and a global population that in some places is growing frustrated and fatigued by the public health responses of the virus. COVID-19 is a crisis, that touches every aspect of every society, and our collective response has had to encompass that broad range of needs and requirements on a global scale. Meeting that challenge has meant bringing all UN Member States together, to coordinate a response that reflects the full spectrum of its capabilities. The world is only as strong as the weakest health system.

To prioritize countries for support during COVID-19, Women's Health and Education Center (WHEC) has used several of the tools and platforms that have been developed and strengthened since 2016 to assess national health emergency preparedness and response capacities in line with the International Health Regulations. Those countries that have been able to reduce transmission and bring outbreaks under control have been able to minimize mortality from COVID-19. The results to date are proof that large international trials are possible in the midst of a pandemic and offer the statistical power to answer critical public health questions quickly and reliably during a health emergency.

The challenges ahead of us in 2021 will pose as stern a test as anything we have faced so far in this pandemic. But if we can meet those challenges the potential rewards are enormous. In 2021, we must carry forward our hard-won knowledge, integrated new tools such as vaccines into the response, and marry them to the political-will, to act in a spirit of multilateralism and solidarity, to ensure that our initiatives are able and empowered to support every country to adapt and deliver their national COVID-19 action plans, on the basis of a new global Strategic Response Plan.

It will be important to ensure that the response protects health and well-being in the broadest sense, including the incorporation of mental health and psychological support as an integral component in many aspects of the COVID-19 response, from case management and risk communication and community engagement to the strengthening of essential health services. A coherent approach to strengthening health systems must be woven into the COVID-19 response that develops inter-dependent and integrated capacities for comprehensive surveillance, data and information systems, regulation, communication and planning/oversight capacities, and risk management within essential health services.

The Women's Health and Education Center (WHEC) with the UN System and the World Health Organization (WHO) are looking closely at the implications of the spread of the virus in those countries – including those that host Special Political Missions – and sounding the alarm. The virus has changed the way we live. The **WHEC Global Health Line (WGHL)**, available @ http://www.womenshealthsection.com/content/cme/WHEC_Global_Health_Line.pdf is freely accessible in 227 countries and territories, It disseminates the knowledge facing international community in public health, sharpen its focus and act more effectively. It is a grand collaboration and available in six official languages of the United Nations.

e-Government and e-Health platforms to attain United Nations' Agenda.

As Governments transition towards e-Government and e-health throughout the world, there is growing acknowledgment of the role that the e-Government and e-Health could play to harness for women's empowerment and gender equality. Recognizing this critical gap, WHEC as a part of gender equality initiatives aims to enhance knowledge awareness of good practices of gender-responsive capacity of Governments to harness this tool towards women's empowerment.

UN Document: E/2020/NGO/1

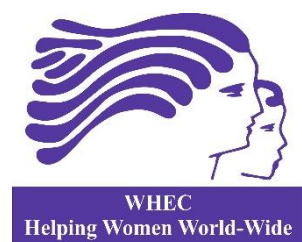
http://www.womenshealthsection.com/content/documents/2020_HLPF_Written_Statement.pdf

The challenges and opportunities are here.

WHEC hopes this inspires us all to build a better world and many meaningful projects / programs for the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda of the United Nations.

International development has moved beyond charity. It has reached a new, globally competitive stage, bringing with it enormous strategic and economic implications for all the nations and citizens of the world in the years ahead.

Join the efforts!



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Women's Health and Education Center (WHEC)
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