



Women's,
Children's and
Adolescents'
Health

20 Avenue Appia
1211 Geneva 27, Switzerland
E: pmnch@who.int
www.pmnch.org

PMNCH Board Meeting 8 July 2021, 12:00-13:45 CET Agenda

Background

The direct and indirect effects of the COVID-19 pandemic threaten much of the progress made in women's, children's and adolescents' health (WCAH) and wellbeing. Many low and middle-income countries (LMICs), where the needs are greatest and health systems the most fragile, have experienced the most severe effects.

In addition to the ongoing and catastrophic direct impact of COVID-19 in many parts of the world, women, children, and adolescents are affected indirectly because of widespread disruptions to essential health, nutrition, and social services under lockdown conditions. This increases the risk of mortality and morbidity, including from treatable and preventable causes, denying the right to protection and care. UNFPA estimates that, in 2020, twelve million women experienced disruptions in family planning services due to the pandemic, with an estimated 1.4 million unintended pregnancies across 115 LMICs. A UNICEF survey in March and April 2021 notes that 39% of 124 countries surveyed reported a drop compared with the previous year in the coverage of family planning services, with 23 of them (19%) reporting a decline in coverage of more than 10%. Additionally, a recent [Global Financing Facility review](#) of 36 partner countries showed there has been up to a 25 percent drop in coverage of essential health interventions, hitting women and children the hardest. For example, one-third of countries report interruptions to routine immunization services due to lockdown conditions. These gaps in access to services have resulted in increased mortality and morbidity.

Yet the needs of women and children are too often invisible in policy responses to COVID-19. [Global Health 50/50](#) reports that more than 80 per cent of all COVID-19 health-related activities implemented by assessed global health institutions have failed to take gender into account in programme design. Women, who according to WHO, make up [70 per cent of the global health workforce](#) and bear the largest share of COVID-19 infections among health workers, hold only 25 per cent of senior positions in national COVID-19 response leadership teams.

Without immediate action by all partners, we will miss our chance to save lives, protect hard-earned progress and help countries recover from the pandemic and build the human capital needed for a resilient recovery. To galvanize this effort, PMNCH launched in July 2020 a Call to Action on COVID-19 that outlines 7 asks to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on women, children and adolescents. These asks are highlighted in a global advocacy campaign led by PMNCH to mobilize financial and policy commitments in the context of national COVID-19 responses. To date, 15 countries have committed to prioritizing women, children and adolescents' health in line with the Call to Action.

Objectives

The 8 July PMNCH Board meeting will be the first Board meeting following the extensive Governance Reform. Following its new mandate, the Board has been reduced in size and will unite high-level champions and energize



20 Avenue Appia
1211 Geneva 27, Switzerland
E: pmnch@who.int
www.pmnch.org

collective advocacy efforts. Board members are expected to broaden the pool of champions for WCAH by reaching out to their contacts, and to leverage their networks and institutions to advocate for WCAH.

The 8 July Board will focus on the strategic shifts required to make the PMNCH COVID-19 Call to Action Campaign more impactful, including concrete steps that champions can take to support this advocacy. Against the backdrop of the latest evidence on WCAH in the context of COVID-19, summarized in the action brief *Rise, Respond and Recover*, and reflections from the [IPPPR](#) and [GPMB](#) on pandemic preparedness and response, board members will be asked to consider how PMNCH advocacy targets and goals can address the effects of the pandemic, and how PMNCH constituencies and champions can help deliver high impact, targeted interventions.

The Board meeting will be chaired by the Rt Hon Helen Clark. Participants and Board members are listed in Annex 1.

Session outputs:

Specifically, the Board will seek to obtain guidance from Board members on

- Strategic shifts/priorities (within the scope of the PMNCH 2021-2025 Strategy and Results Framework) in PMNCH advocacy to strengthen impact;
- How each Board champion can undertake this advocacy in an effective and highly visible manner;
- How PMNCH can mobilize additional multi-stakeholder champions and networks in support of WCAH.

Board agenda



Women's,
Children's and
Adolescents'
Health

20 Avenue Appia
1211 Geneva 27, Switzerland
E: pmnch@who.int
www.pmnch.org

Time	Agenda Item	Document
12.00-12:15	Opening remarks, Rt Hon. Helen Clark, PMNCH Board Chair Invited champion contributions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>H.E. Mia Amor Mottley, Prime Minister, Barbados</i> • <i>H.E. Kersti Kaljulaid, President of the Republic of Estonia and UN Global Advocate for Every Woman Every Child</i> 	Rise, respond and recover <i>Renewing progress on women's, children's and adolescents' health in the era of COVID-19</i> List of Participants
12:15-12:25	PMNCH – A platform for action to protect and advance the health and well-being of women, children and adolescents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Rajesh Bhushan, PMNCH vice-Chair, Government of India</i> • <i>Darren Welch, PMNCH vice-Chair, Government of UK</i> 	PMNCH 2021 -2025 Strategy
12:25-13:25	Strategic Dialogue: Priorities for action to rise, respond and recover <i>Moderator: Helen Clark</i> Invited champion contributions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>HE Petra de Sutter, Deputy Prime Minister, Belgium</i> • <i>Dr Agnes Soucat, Director, Global Health and Development, France</i> Contribution and dialogue with PMNCH Board members Reflections from PMNCH board members and standing committee chairs on strategic priorities and action for PMNCH.	Rise, respond and recover <i>Renewing progress on women's, children's and adolescents' health in the era of COVID-19</i>
13:25-13:45	Summary: Actions agreed and next meeting <i>Helen Clark</i>	