

**Women Connect for Health & Education:  
Empowering Women in the Digital Era:**  
*Challenges and Opportunities to Achieve  
MDG 3,4,5,6 and NCDs by 2015*

**FIRST LADIES OFFICIAL  
SIDE EVENT AT THE UN HLM  
ON NCDs 2011**

**New York Waldorf Astoria Hotel,  
9:30am-2:30pm, September 19, 2011**



# Women Connect for Health & Education: Empowering Women in the Digital Era: Challenges and Opportunities to Achieve MDG 3,4,5,6 and NCDs by 2015

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For over a decade, the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) have been the focal point for international efforts aimed at improving the living standards and quality of life of the billions of the world's poorest citizens. At the same time, information and communication technologies (ICT) and access to essential medicines have made enormous inroads in virtually every sector of the developing world. Encouraged by the growth and impact of ICT and renewed efforts by the pharmaceutical community for the delivery of essential medicines, both the public and private sector have identified opportunities to leverage technology and innovation in developing countries to deliver life-enhancing services in the arenas of health, education, financial services, entrepreneurship, democracy and crisis-management.

*Meanwhile, there has also been a growing recognition of the role that women in developing countries play in helping to improve the health and empowerment of their families and of society.*

Focusing on women and ICT is a unique opportunity to help achieve MDGs 3, 4, 5, 6 as well as the NCDs. In the arena of mHealth, for example, mobile phones along with the Internet are helping to address shortages of skilled health workers, introducing low cost technologies that can tackle issues such as women's and children's health care. As the Innovation Working Group (IWG) of UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon's *Global Strategy on Women's and Children's Health: Every Women, Every Child* ([www.everywomaneverychild.org](http://www.everywomaneverychild.org)) has shown, ICT technology is helping to improve access to health services and information, quality of care and health outcomes, and creating efficiencies within health systems.

Additionally, ICT technologies are also generating real-time health data that can be used to improve the overall performance of the health system and enhance disease surveillance efforts in addition to tracking progress across the MDGs. A broad range of applications are now available to improve point-of care support for front-line health workers and provide access to life-saving information for the general population and health professionals when and where they need it most. Furthermore, as “Action Point 6 – Accelerating Broadband Access to Women and Girls” of the report to the UN Secretary-General of the *Broadband Commission for Digital Development* states “Active steps should be taken to accelerate access to broadband infrastructure and the use of broadband enabled services by women and girls, in order to promote gender equality, empowerment and the social and economic development of both men and women” ([www.broadbandcommission.org](http://www.broadbandcommission.org)).

Beyond health ICT and mobile as the first wave of broadband access is also having a radical impact on the inter-linked MDG agenda for poverty reduction. Mobile money, such as the successful M-PESA initiative in Kenya, is leading to higher savings and greater incomes for people with traditional access to banks. In particular, M-PESA has been shown to empower rural women, as the mobile-based remittance product makes it easier for them to solicit and receive money from their husbands and other contacts in Kenyan cities. Remittances through M-PESA relieve many women in rural areas of the burden of traveling by bus to cities to receive money from their husbands, a process that for some could take as long as one week.

Similarly, mAgriculture solutions are offering women in developing countries information on produce prices; governments and civil society are using mobile phones to connect with grants, education, manage crises, and disperse conditional cash transfers, while everyday citizens are leveraging mobile technology to better human rights and democracy. Further, it is clear that women benefit from mobile technology. GSMA research found that:

- Women mobile phone owners of every age, location and socio-economic status cite an increased feeling of safety and security from mobile phone ownership.
- A mobile phone can help foster a sense of independence. Of women mobile owners surveyed, 85% report feeling more independent because of their mobile phone.
- Four in ten women surveyed across low- and middle-income countries report enjoying increased economic or professional opportunities due to owning a mobile phone.

However, the same GSMA research also found that women are not benefitting from mobile equally to men: a woman in a low- to middle-income country is 21% less likely to own a mobile phone than a man, leading to a mobile phone gender gap of approximately 300 million women. Women’s barriers to mobile technology include the total cost of ownership, cultural barriers, and limited technical literacy amongst women at the base of the pyramid.

In turn, there are both many opportunities and challenges to empowering women in the era of digital technologies. The presence of dozens of Heads of State, Heads of Governments and First Ladies at the forthcoming and first High Level Meeting on Non-Communicable diseases 19-20 September in New York preceding the opening of the 65th UN General Assembly, offers all MDG stakeholders a unique opportunity to map and deploy an effective framework governing these new interventions in ICT and pharmaceuticals targeting the achievement of the gender and health-related MDGs and NCDs particularly in Africa, while also promoting the combination between women's empowerment and the widest use of innovation and technology.

Seizing such opportunity, Advanced Development for Africa (ADA) in collaboration with the UN Digital Health Initiative, the ITU Women Network in ICT (WITNET), the GSMA mWomen Programme, and South South News is organizing an official side event in parallel with the UN High Level Meeting at the New York Waldorf Astoria Hotel on September 19, 2010 from 9.30 am-2.30 pm. The event will feature a series of keynotes and high-level roundtables under the theme "Empowering Women in the Era of Digital Technologies" and a First Ladies luncheon on "Fashion for Development" that shall bring together key players to discuss how to empower women and girls.

The proposed agenda will focus on vital issues relating to the use of the Internet and mobile devices for gender empowerment, maternal and child health, HIV/AIDS and NCDs as well as African health systems structural bottlenecks, catalyzing economic growth and how to close the ICT gender gap, and achieving effective leadership and governance, while identifying best practices and case studies, and to prioritize a set of challenges to pursue with various partners towards the achievement of all the MDGs goals for Africa by 2015.

The main objectives of the roundtables will be to:

- Identify the key challenges to achieving MDGs 3, 4, 5, 6 and NCDs
- Discuss specific technology solutions to overcoming barriers to their achievement
- Equip attendees with the knowledge and tools that would lead to developing effective and appropriate policies and partnerships
- Prioritize challenges to pursue in the next 5 years
- Create a forum for future networking and collaborations

After the morning session participants are invited to the first Fashion for Development First Ladies Luncheon across the hall at the Waldorf Astoria. In the afternoon the Digital Health Initiative will be running its annual *CEO Symposium on Digital Health for Digital Development* and in the evening the inaugural *South South Awards: Digital Health for Digital Development Gala Awards* will be staged in the Waldorf Astoria Ballroom.

## AGENDA

### Communicating the Noncommunicable

#### A Call to Action for Advancing the MDG and NCD Agenda

8.00-9.30 Breakfast Publication Launch

Welcome Remarks by **Mrs. Coumba Touré**, Founder and President, Advanced Development for Africa (ADA) and Conference Chairperson

Opening Remarks by Co-Chairs - **Dr. Scott C. Ratzan**, Vice President Global Health, Johnson & Johnson & Co-Chair, Innovation Working Group of the Un Secretary-General for Women's & Children's Health and Dr. Eva Jané-Llopis, Head, Chronic Disease and Well-being, World Economic Forum

Launch: Publications and Communication Tools

Moderated by: **Dr. Franklin Apfel**, Managing Director, World Health Communication Associates and Editor of NCDs: A Health Literacy Action Guide

**Dr. Julian Fisher**, Associate Director FDI World Dental Federation – “**The World Health Professions Alliance (WHPA) “Health Improvement Card”**” -

**Prof. Peter Anderson**, Newcastle University, England and Co-Chair, World Economic Forum Global Agenda Council on NCDs – “**Special NCD Summit Supplement Journal of Health Communication, “Communicating the Non-communicable”**”

**Dr. Denis Gilhooly**, Executive Director, Digital Health Initiative – “**Creating A Digital Health Dynamic for Development”**”

Summary Comments by : **Dr. Pekka Puska** Director General, National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL), Helsinki, Finland and Chair, Governing Council, International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), Lyon, France

### Women Connect for Health & Education: Empowering Women in the Digital Era

#### Challenges and Opportunities to Achieve MDG 3,4,5,6 & NCDs by 2015

9.00-9.30 Registration and Coffee

9.30-9.35 Welcome Remarks by **Mrs. Coumba Touré**, Founder and President Advanced Development for Africa (ADA) and Conference Chairperson

9.35-10.35 Keynote Remarks:

**Ms. Cherie Blair**, Founder and Chairperson, Cherie Blair Foundation for Women

**Ms. Geena Davis**, Founder, Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media

**Mr. Sunil Bharti**, Chairman & CEO, Bharti Enterprises

**Dr. Carole Presern**, Director of The Partnership for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health (PMNCH)

**Dr. Tore Godal**, Special Adviser to the Prime Minister of Norway, Co-Chair, Innovation Working Group of the UN Secretary-General for Women's & Children's Health

**Prof. Mo Ibrahim**, Founder and Chair, Mo Ibrahim Foundation

**Dr. Michel Sidibé**, Executive Director, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)

Short Video

10.40-11.30

Roundtable 1: **Women Connect for Health-Connecting the Dots for the health MDGs and NCDs**

Chair: Prof. Dr Klaus Leisinger, President & Managing Director, Novartis Foundation for Sustainable Development, Co-Chair, Digital He@lth Initiative  
Moderator: Mr. Denis Gilhooly, Executive Director, Digital He@lth Initiative

Opening Remarks by **Dr. Sam Pitroda**, Advisor to the Prime Minister, Public Information Infrastructure & Innovation, India

First Ladies:

**H.E. Jeanette Kagame**, First Lady, Republic of Rwanda

**H.E. Vanda Guiomar Pignato**, First Lady, Republic of El Salvador

**H.E. Sylvia Bongo Ondimba**, First Lady of Gabon

**H.E. Geri Benoit**, Former First Lady of Haiti, Ambassador to Italy for Haiti

Panelists:

**H.E. Jasna Matic**, Minister of ICT, Republic of Serbia

**Dr. Patty Michel**, Executive Director, mHealth Alliance

**Mr. Denis O'Brian**, Chairman, Digicel

**Dr. Ann Keeling**, President, NCD Alliance & International Diabetes Federation

Short Video

11.40-12.25

Roundtable 2 – **Creating a Global Partnership for Development for Gender Empowerment & Education**

Chair: Prof. Ellis Rubinstein, President, The New York Academy of Sciences  
Moderator: Dr. Denis Gilhooly, Executive Director, Digital He@lth Initiative  
Opening Remarks - H.E. Melanne Verwee, Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues, State Department, United States

First Ladies:

**H.E. Toure Lobbo Traore**, First Lady, Republic of Mali

**H.E. Margarita Cedeño**, First Lady, Dominican Republic

**H.E. Janet Kataaha Museveni**, First Lady, Republic of Uganda

**H.E. Sandra Saakashvili-Roelofs**, First Lady of Georgia

Panelists:

**Ms. Bisila Bokoko**, Founder and Board Chair, BB African Literacy Foundation

**Ms. Geena Davis**, Founder, Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media

**Ms. Jill Sheffield**, President, Women Deliver

**Mr. Lawrence Yanovitch**, President, GSMA Foundation

Short Video

12.30-2.30

First Ladies Fashion for Development Luncheon

## First Ladies & Fashion 4 Development Official Event "Giving Back is the New Luxury"

Honoring: **Bibi Russell**, founder , Fashion 4 Development and  
**Franca Sozzani**, Ambassador of Goodwill , Fashion 4 Development  
& Editor in Chief , Vogue Italia

Presenting **Fashion-ABLE Haiti** a project of the **Embassy of Haiti in Rome, Italy**

**Featuring special tributes to First Ladies and the launch of the joint initiative of the Advanced Development for Africa and Fashion 4 Development " Shawl to Remember"**

The Premiere First Ladies & Fashion 4 Development Luncheon, in support of the UN Millennium Development Goals, will bring together First Ladies and key players in fashion, diplomacy, media, business and the creative industries to celebrate the power of fashion as a tool to empower women and implement creative strategies for sustainable economic growth and autonomy. First Ladies & Fashion is the premiere campaign of F4D, led by First Ladies from around the globe, supported by individuals and entities in the fashion and related industries worldwide. The purpose of the campaign is to create awareness and raise funds that will be dispersed as grants to organizations and individuals to empower their impoverished communities.

- 3.30-4.00 Digital Health in Action – Partnerships in Practice  
Chair: **Prof. Dr Klaus Leisinger**, President & Managing Director, Novartis Foundation for Sustainable Development, Co-Chair, Digital He@lth Initiative  
Moderator: **Mr. Denis Gilhooly**, Executive Director, Digital He@lth Initiative  
**Mr. Hans Vestberg**, CEO, Ericsson  
**H.E. Dr. Agnes Binagwaho**, Minister of Health, Republic of Rwanda  
**H.E. Dr. Sam Pitroda**, Advisor to the Prime Minister, Public Information Infrastructure & Innovation, India
- 4.00-4.30 **mHealth for NCD Prevention**  
**H.E. Kathleen Sebelius**, US Secretary of Health and Human Services  
**Ms. Kathy Calvin**, CEO, UN Foundation  
**Dr. Alex Gorsky**, Vice Chair, Johnson & Johnson & Co-Chair, Innovation Working Group
- 4.30-5.00 **Next Steps for a Global Digital Partnership for Development**  
**Prof. Jeffrey Sachs**, Director, Earth Institute at Columbia University, Special Adviser on MDGs to UN Secretary-General  
**Dr. Robert Orr**, Assistant Director-General, Strategy, Policy & Plans, United Nations