



**World Health
Organization**

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR **Europe**

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Technical briefing, Monday, 14 September 2015
12:30, Conference Hall 5.1

Women's health in the WHO European Region

1. Women in the WHO European Region have better health than women in most of the countries of the world; however, inequities still exist among women across and within countries. Inequities are systematic differences that are avoidable, remediable and unfair. Investing in girls and women to reduce health inequities is an integral part of implementing Health 2020 – the European policy framework for health and wellbeing.
2. 2015 is a critical year with important events taking place that will further advance the status of women and women's health in the world, and set a foundation for the successful development of a regional strategy on women's health. These include:
 - the anniversary of Member States commitments during the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995;
 - the transition from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
 - the updated *Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health 2016–2030*.
3. In this technical briefing dedicated to advancing the well-being of women throughout the European Region from a life-course perspective, experts will present preliminary findings to embark on a consultative process to develop a European strategy on women's health. This strategy will be presented to the 66th session of the Regional Committee for Europe in 2016.
4. The identification of regional priorities will be based on the findings of a report being developed by the Regional Office that illustrates the main health issues for women and how these are influenced by gender and social determinants throughout their lives. A summary of the draft report, "Beyond the mortality advantages," will be presented and discussed during the briefing.
5. The briefing will also serve as a platform to introduce the *Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health 2016–2030* as a roadmap for ending all preventable deaths of women, children and adolescents by 2030 and improving their overall health and well-being. The renewed *Global Strategy* will support the achievement of women's health-related post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals

(SDGs), moving beyond reductions in mortality to a vision of a healthy life for all through the life-course.

6. Accountability, leadership, empowerment and intersectoral work are all critical actions identified in the summary report to improve the health of women and girls in the European Region. How to make these actions operational and how to link them with current regional and global strategies would be at the core of the new European strategy. It is proposed that this regional strategy follows a life-course approach, reflecting the exposure to protective and risk factors throughout a woman's life and presenting opportunities to prioritize specific actions.

7. The objectives of the session are:

- to share the main results of the draft report and introduce the *Global Strategy for Children's, Women's and Adolescents' Health*;
- to receive feedback from stakeholders present on the overall findings and directions from a national, regional and global perspective;
- to outline the way forward for the development of a women's health strategy for the WHO European Region.

8. The technical briefing will be chaired by Dr Gauden Galea, Director of the Division of Noncommunicable Diseases and Life-course of the WHO Regional Office for Europe. Ms Robin Gorna, Executive Director of the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health Secretariat hosted by WHO, will introduce the *Global Strategy on Women's Health*. There will be a second presentation on the WHO summary report, "Beyond the Mortality Advantage". The two presentations will be followed by a panel of representatives of Member States and a general discussion.

Questions for discussion

- How can a European strategy on women's health strengthen the response to inequities in health at the country level?
- How do you see the future European strategy on women's health as a vehicle for strengthening the implementation of Health 2020, the *Global Strategy on Women's, Children's and Adolescent's Health* and SDGs at the country level?
- What are your suggestions for involving key sectors, such as those that address the impact of gender and socioeconomic inequalities on women's health, like the education sector and the social sector, in the development of a European strategy?

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