

Millennia2015 "Women and eHealth" International Working Group **WeHealthIWG**

Short Presentation

Started in August 2010, Millennia2015 Women and eHealth (WeHealth) is a network of more than 220 members in 61 countries, involved in a unique research project at the convergence of 3 main areas of investigation; Women Empowerment, Healthcare Improvement and Digital Solidarity (www.millennia2015.org/Women_and_eHealth).

It aims at raising the best evidence from the local women communities of the use by women of ICTs for health, in order to give a stronger voice to isolated women, to contribute to build the Millennia2015 Knowledge Base and Action Plans 2012/2015 and achieve MDGs 4 & 5 by 2015.

As there is scarce formal information such as articles, publications or statistics in this area, WeHealth members are currently collecting all kind of "grey" information as described in the Information Collection Guide posted on WeHealth webpage. They collect and provide local stories, experiences, ideas and wishes to know better the women status in their regions and countries and how far they can access and use ICTs for health.

Their stories, photos and videos will be presented at the upcoming Millennia2015 International Conference at the UNESCO, Paris in December 2011, in order to inform donors of their local situations and raise funds to empower local women to use ICTs for health.

WeHealth Contribution to the ITU Side Event at the Fourth UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries

Istanbul, Turkey, 10 May 2011

Having access to Broadband services is a key issue with respect to Healthcare delivery. It supports Telemedicine, Tele-health, Tele-imagery, mHealth, to make medical consultations from medical specialists located in towns to women living in isolated communities. It improves healthcare delivery in real time and contributes to keep health workers informed and trained to make timely decisions, in particular in obstetric and child care. More broadly, Broadband is perceived as a powerful tool to reduce poverty, ignorance and the gender and digital gaps. Increased women's participation is vital in the success of the MDGs as it ensures that voices of women are included and they are able to influence policies and decisions on issues that impact their lives.

In priority, Broadband should be deployed in areas of conflict, refugee camps, isolated communities, locked lands and places impacted by the consequences of natural disasters. Women face tremendous difficulties to access to basic healthcare for them and their families. Broadband facilitates health information transmission between women and

healthcare workers, early warning and organization of local assistance. Broadband should be implemented in the above mentioned situations to provide maximum medical facilities to the women victims. It should be seen within broader development plans and avail women taking ownership of solutions that could make their situation better.

Women are marginalized in the era of global integration and often denied to access to ICTs. Lack of education and reliable information, poverty, isolation, poor infrastructure and high costs are the main barriers to overcome. Although differences are observed between urban and rural areas, Broadband remains a luxury in number of countries. The main challenge therefore is to ensure that women have equal access to eHealth services by providing the means to do so including investing on physical infrastructure and public services as well as women-led social initiatives that empower them.

Women communities must be involved in the implementation process of building Broadband. They must be trained and educated how to use and operate the Broadband services and should be given them task to train all the women communities around them to reduce the health related issues. Schools and teachers could valuably support the expansion of the use of Broadband and make it popular among young girls and easy to use for all. From local communities to international levels including UN agencies, NGOs and donors, women have a role to play to make broadband accessible to the most in need and contribute to the achievement of the health related MDGs 4 and 5 by 2015.

Millennia2015 Women and eHealth offers a unique network of active members to serve as a powerful platform to support women empowerment, healthcare improvement and reduce the digital gap through universal deployment of Broadband.

WeHealthIWG promotes Women, Health and ICT
To benefit women's health, eHealth for women and women using ICT for Health

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