



The Exemplar

February 2021

Hi Friend,

Ahead of International Woman's Day on March 8, we're pleased to dedicate this edition of our newsletter to the vital role that women play as health leaders, providers, and advocates for themselves, their children, and their communities in so many Exemplar countries.

Indeed, of the nine countries we've identified as Exemplars in stunting, under-five mortality, or community health workers, five have or have had women serving as health ministers or senior leaders and six feature robust community health worker programs that rely primarily upon women to deliver lifesaving critical healthcare in their own communities.

Exemplars in Global Health seeks to support a world where everyone has access to the healthcare they need to live and grow. We know that isn't the case today, and that women and girls are critical to closing that gap.

Our research on the success of Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Nepal, and Peru in reducing stunting and under-five mortality demonstrates that improving educational and health outcomes for girls and women improves child health. But we also recognize that investing in women's and girls' health is necessary because it is critical to their health and human rights.

I recommend reading our Nepal stunting narrative, which highlights how shifting gender roles—supported by an increase in women's education—helped reduce poverty and childhood stunting. Notably, the literacy rate for girls in Nepal doubled from 1991 to 2011, which helped the country cut stunting from near 70 percent to below 40 percent during the same period.

Peru is another illustrative example of the power of investing in women and girls. From 2000 to 2016, the average height of mothers in Peru increased two centimeters. Why? Because improved nutrition meant women and girls were eating more and healthier foods, and improved education meant girls were staying in school longer, waiting until they were fully grown before starting a family. The result was a reduction in stunting.

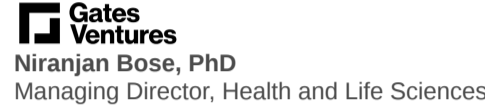
In Bangladesh, the country's transformative CHW program, led largely by rural women, delivers critical primary care to more than 100 million rural residents and helped the country achieve a majority of health-related Millennium Development Goals.

Finally, we feature a Perspective on COVID-19's impact on gender inequality by Raj Panjabi, the former CEO of Last Mile Health, who has recently been appointed U.S. Global Malaria Coordinator for the President's Malaria Initiative. Dr. Panjabi notes that although women make up 70 percent of the world's health workers, they are less likely to have access to routine health services, essential medicines, and vaccines.

This inequality will not resolve itself. We hope the work of Exemplars in Global Health helps illuminate the path for delivering healthcare that serves the needs of women and girls, their families, and their communities.

If you'd like to know more about our research on any of these programs, please ask us how we can help you through our services and research team.

Best wishes,
Niranjan Bose



Want access to even more research and data? Go beyond email and register for the Exemplars in Global Health platform today!

REGISTER TODAY

FEATURE



Why are the Poorest Women on Earth Subsidizing Our Healthcare Systems?

Written by: Raj Panjabi

Low- and middle-income countries often rely on women community health workers (CHWs) to deliver lifesaving healthcare to rural residents who are otherwise beyond the reach of health systems. Most of these CHWs are poor women who serve as volunteers. The healthcare services they provide are valued at US \$1.3 trillion. Still, they do it for free. We explore how the current pandemic is placing an even greater strain on these CHWs.

[Read More >](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

2021 Consortium of Universities for Global Health (CUGH), Friday, March 12 - Sunday, March 14

We're thrilled to be participating in two panel discussions as part of the 2021 Consortium of Universities for Global Health (CUGH), taking place March 12 - 14. One presentation will focus on how countries have employed innovative strategies to maintain essential health services in the context of COVID-19. This panel will feature Exemplar partners Drs. Agnes Binagwaho (University of Global Health Equity), Nadia Akseer (Johns Hopkins School of Public Health), Mushtaque Chowdhury (Columbia University, BRAC University), and Rhoda Wanyenze (Makerere University), moderated by Gloria Ikilezi (Gates Ventures).

The other presentation will discuss transforming research results into policies and implementation strategies, to help decision-makers bridge the gap between evidence and policy. This panel will feature Drs. Agnes Binagwaho (University of Global Health Equity), Kenneth Sherr (University of Washington), Lola Adedokun (Doris Duke Charitable Foundation), and Amy Mayberry (Gates Ventures), moderated by Dr. Lisa Hirschhorn (Northwestern University).

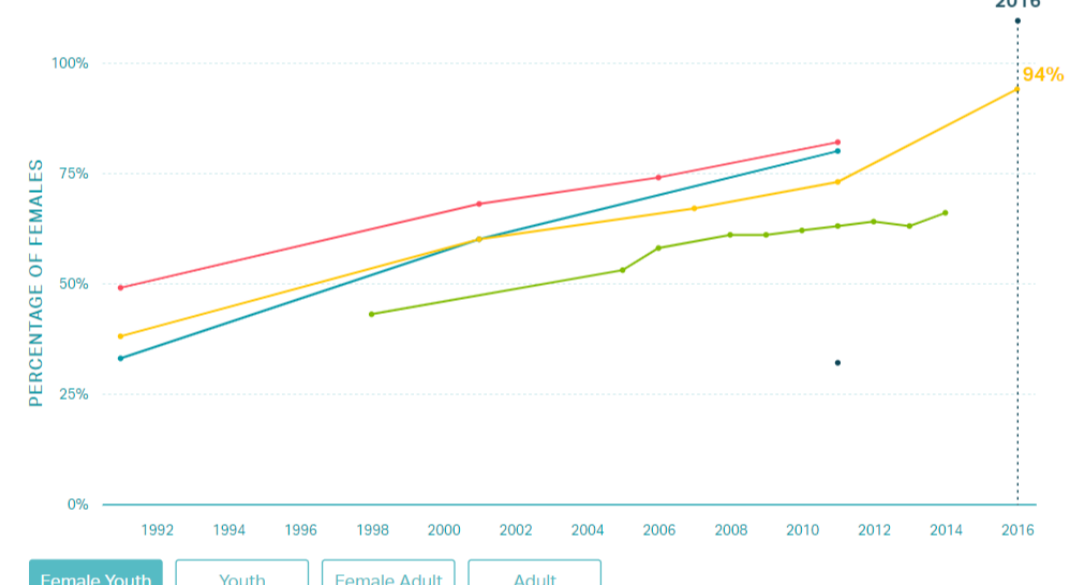
[Register Here >](#)

PLATFORM FEATURES

Female and overall literacy rates among youths and adults

NEPAL INDIYA PAKISTAN BANGLADESH AFGHANISTAN

Click on categories to filter the chart



Data Source: World Bank

Lessons from Nepal: Educating Our Way to Improved Health

Written by: Nadia Akseer, Raj Kumar Subedi, Kaitlin Conway, Jannah Wigle, Muhammad Islam, Raja Ram Dhungana, Anusha Mainali, Dip Narayan Thakur, Basudev Bhattarai, Nikita Pradhan, Hana Tasic, Samanpreet Brar, Aviva Rappaport, Tyler Vaivada, Mahesh Maskey, Zulfiqar A Bhutta

Nepal's Basic Primary Education Program and Education for All initiative improved education outcomes for both boys and girls. Global evidence demonstrates that women's education improves women's earning potential, makes them more likely to immunize their children, access healthcare for their children, and has the added benefit of delaying child bearing and reducing fertility rates. All of this improves both women's health and their children's health. In Nepal, it helped cut stunting by nearly half.

[Read More >](#)



Lessons from Peru: Reducing Teen Pregnancy

Written by: Nadia Akseer, Luis Huicho, Elisa Vidal, Aviva Rappaport, Muhammad Islam, Elisa Juarez Chavez, Tyler Vaivada, Kaitlin Conway, Brendan Sorichetti, Zulfiqar A Bhutta

Peru's investments in education boosted the median years of education for women from 5.6 in 2000 to 10.5 in 2016. Keeping girls in school resulted in better educated mothers and helped reduce the number of adolescent pregnancies, which, in turn, helped reduce stunting in Peru. We examine Peru's investments in girls and women.

[Read More >](#)



Lessons from Bangladesh: Prioritizing Women's Health

Written by: Kaosar Afsana, Mohammad Ariful Alam, Nan Chen, Mushtaque Chowdhury, Kyle Muther, Raj Panjabi, Matt Price. In collaboration with BRAC, BRAC University, and BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health

The Government of Bangladesh launched one of the earliest and largest Community Health Worker programs in the world to address an existential healthcare crisis—a fertility rate and maternal mortality rate that was among the highest in Asia. Bangladesh's CHWs have transformed the country, both through the power of their example—as women leaders in their communities—and through the services they provide.

[Read More >](#)

ASK AN EXPERT

We're Here to Help

Whether you're a global health funder, decision maker, or practitioner, our Ask an Expert feature can help answer your toughest questions. Simply enter your question using the link below and a member of our extensive expert network, which includes prominent academic researchers, global health experts, and in-country program implementation specialists, will provide a detailed response. All questions are kept anonymous and can be answered privately.

[Ask Us >](#)

Follow us on Twitter @ExemplarsHealth for additional updates, resources, and research. Join the conversation with #Exemplars

FOLLOW

ABOUT

Exemplars in Global Health

Exemplars in Global Health is more than just a research platform. We also offer governments, researchers, NGOs, and funders a variety of support services. Our services include conducting desk research, organizing study tours and workshops, and longer-term collaborations to support the design or implementation of evidence-based programming and strategies.

[Visit Exemplars.Health to Learn More >](#)

