CHALLENGES FOR URBAN HEALTH: PRE-COVID-19, POST-COVID-19 & BEYOND

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WOMEN’S ECONOMIC IMPERATIVE

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Rapid urbanization worldwide is raising new social, economic, public health, environmental, and health systems challenges.

THE CHALLENGE WE FACE

- By the year 2050, 70% of the world’s population will reside in cities, and more than 90% of urban population growth will take place in low- and middle-income countries.
- The statistics speak for themselves.
URBAN HEALTH CHALLENGES

Require interdisciplinary collaboration among a variety of stakeholders

- Researchers
- Educators
- Implementers
- Municipal workers & leaders
- Policymakers – sub-national & national
- Practitioners
- Advocates
- Others
It could not be clearer: cities must be at the forefront of tackling critical global health and development issues

How?

- **MOBILIZE & ENGAGE** a worldwide cadre of cross-sectoral, multi-disciplinary urban health leaders in research, policy, and practice

- **ADVANCE & CATALYZE** the evidence base regarding the determinants, programs, and policies critical for achieving healthy and sustainable urban environments

- **IMPROVE & CATALYZE** cross-sector collaboration to solve urban health challenges

- **ADVOCATE for & IMPLEMENT** evidence-based policies, programs and governance that develop healthy and sustainable urban environments and eliminate health disparities
NEW PARTNERSHIPS PARADIGM – AT SUB-NATIONAL & NATIONAL LEVEL

Cities are remarkably resilient

- Driven by a range of forces
  - People are our greatest asset
    - Youth – youth bulge: dividend or disaster
    - Women & girls
  - Must engage municipal & community leaders in creating solutions
  - Must have public-private collaborative engagement
  - Must mainstream health in all policies
    - Health is an economic value – healthy populations are economically viable
    - Health ministries must be on equal footing with planning & finance
NEEDED CROSS-SECTORAL ACTION

- Engagement of municipal & national leaders and implementers & the private sector
- Support adaptive implementation
- Prioritize localized operational change
Access to adequate, affordable, and safe housing attracts economic investment, a diverse workforce, and increases levels of social and economic development and sense of community.

The new WHO Guidelines present an important opportunity.
Sets norms and standards

New evidence-based recommendations bringing together existing WHO guidance relevant to housing

Focuses on a sector as opposed to a specific health risk, intervention, activity or policy = comprehensive perspective on the topic of housing and health

Enabling the health sector to inform housing, energy, community development, urban development policies at the national, regional and local level

Relevant to policy-makers and implementing actors
HEALTH SECTOR

- Health professionals as conduits for behavior change & awareness of adverse effects key determinants such as indoor air pollution.
COMMUNITY COHESION

- Engagement of communities in the adaptation of planning & policy
- More cohesive communities = less social isolation + higher levels of community decision making + more inclusive governance
Urban planners are key.

Effective urban planning = healthy, equitable, and sustainable cities that promote physical and mental health and well-being.
BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- Sanitation infrastructure
- Management of building density, green space, and transport design to improve urban conditions that help people live healthy lives.
GOVERNANCE

- Strong, effective governance = effective urban health
- Commitment to including health in planning & infrastructure development
- Commitment to assessing health risks and benefits of policies, programs, and investments across all sectors
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Good health supports economic development
- Urban-based economic activities account for up to 55% of GNP in LDICs, 73% in MICs, 85% in UICs.
EDUCATION

- Incentives for increased access to educational resources are critical to sub-national and national development;
- For every additional year of education for women of reproductive age, child mortality decreases by almost 10%.
PRIMARY & SECONDARY CITIES ARE INTEGRAL TO ACHIEVING GLOBAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT GOALS BY 2030 & BEYOND

Leadership in Urban Health Planning & Implementation is Needed to:

- Improve urban health and address the broad determinants of health to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda in this last decade.
- We MUST promote collaboration on advancing the urban health agenda, and advocate for:
  - The importance of health to social and economic development
  - Leadership from all sectors to recognize that their decisions affect the health of people living in cities
  - Public private partnerships to maximize impact in mobilizing resources for capacity building and sustainable development
  - Sustainable, inclusive, and equitable development
Thank you!
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