



# **Shrinking Space for SRHR and Civil Society: How Can NGOs Reclaim their Space?**

Organised by the Global Health Centre at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Medicus Mundi International, Medicus Mundi Switzerland and Cordaid

## **Biographies of Speakers**

**24 May 2019  
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## WELCOME & INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

### MICHAELA TOLD

**Executive Director, Global Health Centre, the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies**



Michaela Told is currently Executive Director of the Global Health Centre at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva. Prior to moving into academia, she worked for more than 10 years with the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement at local, regional and international levels in all continents, most recently heading the Principles and Values Department of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Geneva. She was also involved in negotiations and policy-making within the statutory bodies of the RCRC Movement. Earlier in her career, she worked with the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Division of Development Cooperation and later served as Secretary General of an international women's human rights NGO based in Geneva. In her current position as Executive Director of the Global Health Centre at the Graduate Institute, she is responsible for the successful implementation of all activities of the Centre, and she leads and sets the strategic orientation of the Centre, together with the Centre's Director. In her research and teaching, she focuses on global health diplomacy, national global health strategies and health governance, among others. She directs a number of executive courses in global health diplomacy worldwide. She holds a MSW (School of Social Work, Vienna), a MCom (Development Economics, University of Economics and Business Administration, Vienna), and a MA in Development Studies (Women & Development, Institute of Social Studies, The Hague), as well as a PhD (School of Law and Social Sciences, University of East London, UK). You can follow her on twitter @michaelatold\_GH.

### CHRISTINA DE VRIES

**Senior Health Expert, Cordaid**



Christina de Vries is currently working with Cordaid as a Senior Health Expert, based in The Netherlands. She is a former medical doctor with extensive working experience in Africa and Asia. Cordaid is a catholic organization focusing on relief, rehabilitation & development in fragile and conflict settings. Within this framework, her work focuses on Sexual & Reproductive Health & Rights, HIV prevention and strengthening Health Systems. She has a particular interest in gender issues, child protection, youth rights and youth participation, religion & health. Christina serves as a Board member of MMI.

## SPEAKERS

### DEEPA VENKATACHALAM

Director, Sama Resource Group for Women and Health; People's Health Movement



Deepa is with Sama Resource Group for Women and Health, a Delhi based feminist organisation that works at the intersection of public health, gender and justice, including sexual and reproductive health and rights. Deepa has been involved in the SRHR initiatives of the organisation through research, policy advocacy and capacity building. She is working in the areas of strengthening access to sexual and reproductive health care for young people especially from marginalised communities, health system response to gender based violence, in the area of mental wellbeing of young women and other SRHR issues. She is actively involved with the Indian chapter of the People's Health Movement and is currently Co-convenor of the Medico Friend Circle in India.

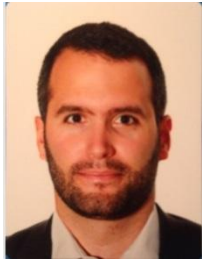
### MURIEL WEYERMANN

Programme Manager Chad, Women's Hope International



Muriel Weyermann has been working in the fields of human rights, gender equality, women's empowerment, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and conflict resolution after receiving her degree from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in International Relations here in Geneva in 2008. In order to satisfy her desire to deepen her knowledge in humanitarian assistance, she enrolled in the joint European Master's Program on International Humanitarian Action at the University of Uppsala in Sweden with the specialization in Peace, Conflict and Religion. Besides a 2-months mission as human rights observer in Mexico, Muriel has been mainly working in Sub-Saharan Africa and in her home country, Switzerland. Prior to joining the Swiss NGO Women's Hope International in the autumn of 2017, she worked 3 years for the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), 2 years as an Evaluation Analyst in the UNFPA's HQ in New York in the Independent Evaluation Office and 1 year in the UNFPA Chad Country Office in the function of M&E Officer. Her first experience with the UN abroad was in Kigali in Rwanda where she worked with UN Women in Rwanda between 2012-2013.

**FELIPE SERE**  
**Public Health Officer, Memisa Belgium**



Felipe Sere was born in Montevideo, Uruguay. He has a background in social sciences with a master in Public Health and one in Development Studies. Felipe worked for ENABEL, in Peru, for their health programme (programme that focused on Universal Health Coverage). His work focussed on financial protection and empowerment of indigenous tribes of the Amazon (the Ashaninkas) as well as the most vulnerable population of Cajamarca, Junín, Huancavelica, Piura and San Martín. He was part of the Emerging Voices 2016 Cohort in Vancouver, in the framework of HSR2016. Afterwards he briefly worked for the Belgian Ministry of Economic Affairs and then joined Memisa, as Public Health Officer. He's in charge of Quality Control, Evaluation & Development; in particular for their activities in the DRC, Burundi and India. He's particularly interested in Health Governance and Health Systems Financing.

**RUBEN PAGES**  
**Youth Programmes Coordinator, Community Support, Social Justice and Inclusion Department, UNAIDS**



With over twelve years of experience in international cooperation for development, Ruben has spent the past nine at UNAIDS, where he has held different positions, including Programme Officer at the UNAIDS country office in Guatemala, UNAIDS Regional Youth Adviser for Latin America, and Programme Officer for Gender Equality and Diversity at UNAIDS Headquarters in Geneva. In 2016 Ruben was appointed UNAIDS Youth Programmes Coordinator at UNAIDS Headquarters, focusing efforts on UNAIDS' support to young people's leadership, participation and youth-led accountability in the HIV response.

**CLOSING REMARKS**

**MARTIN LESCHHORN STREBEL**  
**Director, Network Medicus Mundi Switzerland**



Martin Leschhorn Strebel, historian, is the director of the Network Medicus Mundi Switzerland. He is board member of Medicus Mundi International (MMI) and coordinates the MMI working group on Effective Health Cooperation.