

**GENEVA
GRADUATE
INSTITUTE**

**GLOBAL
HEALTH
CENTRE**



**UNITED NATIONS
FOUNDATION**

INTRODUCTION TO THE 75TH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY:

CHARTING A PATH TO THE TRIPLE BILLION TARGETS IN A PANDEMIC ERA

Organized by the Global Health Centre at the Geneva Graduate Institute
and the United Nations Foundation

Biographies of Speakers

22 May 2022

**Maison de la Paix, Auditorium Ivan Pictet
Geneva Graduate Institute**

11:00 – 11:05 | **Welcome Remarks**

SUERIE MOON

Co-Director, Global Health Centre, Geneva Graduate Institute



Professor Suerie Moon is the Co-Director of the Global Health Centre, IHEID and seeks to combine academically rigorous research and analysis with policy relevance and impact. Her work is broadly concerned with the intersection of global governance and public health. Her current research projects focus on the international sharing of outbreak-prone pathogens and related benefits, and new business models of pharmaceutical R&D. Prior to joining the Graduate Institute in 2016, she was Lecturer on Global Health at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. She was also the Study Director of the Harvard-LSHTM Independent Panel on the Global Response to Ebola and head of Harvard's research team on the Lancet Commission on Global Governance for Health. She received a BA in history from Yale, an MPA in international relations from Princeton, and PhD in public policy from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government.

JOHN E. LANGE

**Ambassador (Ret.); Senior Fellow for Global Health Diplomacy,
United Nations Foundation**



Ambassador John E. Lange, Senior Fellow, Global Health Diplomacy, serves as the UN Foundation's primary focal point for global health diplomacy activities and its wide-ranging work with the World Health Organization. He chairs the Leadership Team of the Measles & Rubella Initiative and earlier served as Co-Chair of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative's Polio Partners Group. Prior to joining the Foundation in July 2013, he spent four years at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation engaging in high-level global health advocacy with international organizations and African governments. Ambassador Lange had a distinguished 28-year career in the Foreign Service at the U.S. Department of State, where he was a pioneer in the field of global health diplomacy.

11:05 – 11:15 | **WHA75 Modalities and Priorities**

STEVEN SOLOMON

Principal Legal Officer, World Health Organization



Steven Solomon is the Principal Legal Officer at the World Health Organization in Geneva, Switzerland, where he heads the Legal Office's unit on international, constitutional, and global health law. He provided legal support for the WHO's response to the COVID-19 outbreak and has served as the WHO legal adviser to the negotiations which led to the Pandemic Influenza Preparedness (PIP) Framework. Prior to joining WHO, Steven served as Deputy Legal Counselor at the United States Mission to United Nations Organizations in Geneva, negotiating a variety of human rights and humanitarian law instruments. He was an attorney with the State Department for several years before that handling multilateral negotiations related to the control of conventional weapons as well as international humanitarian law. Before joining the State Department, Steven was a lawyer in private practice at the Washington, D.C. law firm of Williams & Connolly and has also worked on Capitol Hill. Steven has written widely on matters pertaining to international law, including global health and humanitarian law matters. Solomon attended Georgetown University, where he received his legal training, and received his B.A. degree from Columbia University

11:15 – 11:40 | **Pillar 1: *One billion more people benefitting from universal health coverage***

KATE O'BRIEN

Director for Immunization, Vaccines and Biologicals, World Health Organization



Dr Kate O'Brien is Director of the Immunization, Vaccines and Biologicals Department at the World Health Organization. In this role she is responsible for leading WHO's strategy and implementation to advance the vision of a world where everyone, everywhere, at every age, fully benefits from vaccines for good health and wellbeing. Dr O'Brien also serves as WHO's Technical Lead of the COVID Vaccine Pillar (COVAX), a part of the Access to COVID Tools Accelerator (ACT-A). COVAX aims to support countries to achieve their goals toward the Global COVID-19 Vaccine Strategy for 2022, released by WHO and the UN Secretary General in October 2021. It establishes the health, social and economic goals of the vaccine effort and establishes a target of 70% full vaccine coverage by mid-2022. Dr O'Brien is a Canadian who trained as a pediatric infectious disease physician, epidemiologist and vaccinologist. She earned her BSc in chemistry from University of Toronto (Canada), her MD from McGill University (Canada), and her MPH from Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health (USA).

GITHINJI GITAHI

Global Chief Executive Officer, Amref Health Africa



A passionate advocate for pro-poor Universal Health Coverage, Githinji Gitahi joined Amref Health Africa as the Global Chief Executive Officer in June 2015. Amref Health Africa, founded in 1957, is the largest Africa-led international organization, reaching more than 11 million people each year through 150 health-focused projects across 35 countries.

Until his appointment to Amref Health Africa, Dr Gitahi was the Vice President and Regional Director for Africa, Smile Train International. Prior to that, Dr Gitahi was Managing Director for Monitor Publications in Uganda as well as General Manager for Marketing and Circulation in East Africa for the Nation Media Group. He held progressively senior positions at GlaxoSmithKline and worked at the Avenue Group.

Dr Gitahi is the former Co-Chair of the UHC2030 Steering Committee, a global World Bank and World Health Organization (WHO) initiative for Universal Health Coverage (UHC); and has recently been appointed as the Co-Chair Strategic Advocacy Committee PMNCH and a member of the Unilever Sustainability Advisory Council. He serves on a number of Boards, notably – Board of Directors of The Standard Group in Kenya, Board of Trustees of Safaricom Foundation and Governing Board of the Africa Centres for Disease Control and prevention (Africa CDC). He is also a member of the Commission/Taskforce on Africa's COVID-19 Response. Dr Gitahi holds a bachelor's degree in Medicine from the University of Nairobi, a master's degree in Business Administration from the United States International University, as well as a Certificate for Strategic Perspectives for Nonprofit Management from Harvard University.

In December 2018, Dr. Gitahi was bestowed the 2018 'Moran of the Order of the Burning Spear' (MBS) by the President of Kenya, in recognition of his outstanding contribution and commitment to the health sector.

JENNY LEI RAVELO, *Moderator*

Senior Reporter, Devex



Jenny Lei Ravelo is a Devex Senior Reporter based in Manila. She covers global health, with a particular focus on the World Health Organization, and other big global health institutions such as the Global Fund. Prior to Devex, she wrote for ABS-CBN, one of the largest broadcasting networks in the Philippines.

ABDOU SALAM GUEYE

Regional Emergency Director for Africa, World Health Organization



Dr Abdou Salam Gueye is the Regional Emergency Director, with expertise in health security, emergency outbreak response, epidemiology, use of information technology in global health and health system strengthening. He previously was the WHO Representative for Mauritania.

Dr Gueye came to WHO in 2017 as the lead Incident Manager of major outbreaks in Africa. Prior to joining WHO, he worked for the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for more than a decade in a variety of capacities, including as the Field Response Lead during the West Africa Ebola epidemic, Benin Country Representative, Strategic Information Officer in the Atlanta headquarters, Associate Director for Science in Cote d'Ivoire and Director of the Global Health Protection Program in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

A Fulbright fellowship recipient, Dr Gueye first worked in Senegal as a district chief medical officer before becoming an assistant professor at the University of Dakar. He also served as a United Nations peacekeeping medical officer in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Dr Gueye holds a medical doctorate and master's degree in public health from the University of Dakar in his native Senegal and a PhD in biomedical informatics from the University of Utah in the United States. He is co-founder and editorial board member of the *Pan African Medical Journal* and also founded the Institut Mere Enfant de Kaolack. He has published dozens of peer-reviewed scientific journals. In 2019, he won the US CDC Charles C. Shepard Science Award.

AGNÈS SOUCAT

Director of Health and Social Protection, Agence Française de Développement



Dr Agnès Soucat is the director of health and social protection at Agence Française de Développement. Previously, she was the director for health systems governance and financing at the World Health Organization (WHO) in Geneva, Switzerland. Before joining WHO, she was global lead economist at the World Bank and director for human development for the African Development Bank, where she was responsible for health, education, social protection and jobs for Africa, including fifty-four countries in Africa. She has over thirty years of experience in health and poverty reduction, covering more than seventy countries in Africa, Asia and Europe. She is a pioneer of several innovations in health financing, including community-based financing and performance-based financing. She was a main author of the World Development Report “Making Services Work for Poor People” (2004), the Lancet Commission report [Global Health 2035: a world converging within a generation](#) (2011) and the Lancet Commission on Planetary Health: Safeguarding human health in the Anthropocene epoch (2015) and the [“The labor market for health workers in Africa: a new look at the crisis”](#) published by the World Bank in 2013. Soucat holds an MD and a Masters in Nutrition from the University of Nancy in France, as well as a MPH and PhD in Health Economics from the Johns Hopkins University. She is a member of the France Global Health ThinkTank, SantéMondiale2030.

PRITI PATNAIK, Moderator

Founding Editor, Geneva Health Files



Priti Patnaik is the Founding Editor of the Geneva Health Files, a weekly investigative newsletter that tracks power and politics in global health. In her twenty years in journalism she has reported on global health, international trade, finance and illicit financial flows. She has worked as a reporter in Geneva, New York City and New Delhi. Outside of journalism, she has worked at a UN public health agency. Priti has a master’s degree in Development Studies from the Geneva Graduate Institute and a master’s degree in Business and Economic Reporting from New York University. She has a bachelor’s degree in microbiology, genetics and chemistry from Osmania University, India.

BENN MCGRADY

**Unit Head, Public Health Law and Policies, Department of Health Promotion,
World Health Organization**



Benn McGrady is the Unit Head of the Public Health Law and Policies team in the Department of Health Promotion at WHO HQ. With more than 15 years' experience working as a lawyer on health issues, Benn assists Member States to develop and defend laws relating to risk factors for NCDs. This includes leading WHO's work on international trade and investment disputes concerning tobacco control and supporting other Member States when sued for implementing WHO guidance. Prior to joining WHO, Benn was based at the O'Neill Institute for National and Global Health Law at Georgetown University Law Center. Benn has taught at Georgetown University and Sydney Law School and holds a BA/LLB, LLM (Global Health Law) and a PhD in International Trade Law. His publications include *Trade and Public Health: The WTO, Tobacco, Alcohol and Diet* (Cambridge University Press, 2011).

MOHAMED EISSA

Liaison Officer for Public Health Issues, IFMSA



Mohamed Eissa is a final year medical student from Alexandria, Egypt. During his years of medical school, Mohamed discovered that his passion was not just for clinical medicine only, but also for Public Health. He believes in the importance of Public Health in ensuring healthier communities, built upon health equity and not health disparities. He has been volunteering in the Public Health field for the past 5 years and is currently holding the position of the Liaison Officer for Public Health Issues 21/22 at the International Federation of Medical Students' Associations and Youth Leadership Board Member at the Global Youth Coalition for Road Safety. Mohamed's experience focuses on different global health issues such as NCDs, AMR, Mental Health, Health systems and UHC, Climate Change, Road Safety, and more.

ELAINE FLETCHER, Moderator

Editor in Chief, Health Policy Watch



Elaine is a veteran journalist and foreign correspondent, now leading the open-access "Health Policy Watch" daily news service. During her career as a correspondent for Newhouse News Service and The San Francisco Examiner, she covered the 1st Gulf War, Oslo Peace Process, among other milestone events. She has also worked for many years for the WHO, where she focused on strategic communications in the field of health and the environment.

MAGDA ROBALO

Global Managing Director, Women in Global Health



Dr. Magda Robalo, WGH Global Managing Director, is an accomplished global health leader, trailblazer, and a leading voice for gender equality and social justice. She embodies a rich blend of technical, political, and diplomatic skills and experience, forged over thirty years of work across geographies and cultures, with diverse global, regional and local partners, governments, and communities. She is the co-founder and president of the Institute for Global Health and Development, a private, non-profit foundation, aimed at advancing women's leadership in global health and promoting their empowerment by addressing gender inequality and stimulating financial inclusion and integration into the digital, formal economy. Dr. Magda Robalo is also the former chair of the Ethics and Governance Committee of the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. She is a member of the WHO Global Expert Panel on Health Emergency and Disaster Risk Management and a mentor of the Kofi Annan Global Health Program of the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. She led transformative reforms of the health sector as Minister of Public Health and provided strategic leadership to and effective coordination of the national response to the COVID-19 pandemic as the High Commissioner for COVID-19 in Guinea-Bissau. She was the Director for Communicable Diseases, World Health Organization (WHO) Representative, Malaria Regional Advisor, and held other senior leadership positions throughout her successful two-decade long international career with the WHO. As WHO Representative to Ghana, she played an important role in leading the technical, political, and diplomatic fronts across the UN and beyond on the fight against the Ebola epidemic in West Africa. She is a fierce advocate for equitable and affordable access to quality health care, has a tested and sound track record for building strategic alliances and collaborative partnerships to design and implement transformative, action-oriented policies to improve health care. She led and oversaw the transition from chloroquine to more effective malaria treatment policies in Africa and provided intellectual leadership for improved access to HIV prevention, treatment, and care in West and Central Africa. She has also set up the inaugural hepatitis prevention and control program in the African region, pioneered the establishment of a novel regional program to fight NTDs and contributed to design disaster risk reduction and building back better, cross country approaches in flooded, drought and hunger affected areas and countries of Southern Africa, among others. Dr. Robalo is a medical doctor with a Postgraduate Diploma in Public Health and Tropical Medicine and a Master of sciences degree in Epidemiology. She fluently speaks and writes Portuguese, French and English.

KATE DODSON, Moderator
Vice President, Global Health Strategy, United Nations Foundation



Kate Dodson is the Vice President for Global Health at the United Nations Foundation. In this role, she works to ensure that the UN Foundation delivers on its commitments to address the health-related Sustainable Development Goals and builds synergies with UN agencies and other key multilateral partners. In its global health work, the UN Foundation supports UN agencies and partners that deliver vital health services to people around the world, including campaigns to vaccinate children against measles, polio, and other diseases, family planning services, and millions of anti-malaria bed nets. Increasingly, we focus on supporting the work of the World Health Organization and others to prepare for pandemics, tackle antimicrobial resistance, and strengthen global systems to provide Universal Health Coverage, to ensure we reach the most vulnerable. She is Chair of the Board of Directors for the Global Health Council, member of the Board of Directors of Women in Global Health, and a Steering Committee member of UHC2030.

12:40 – 12:45 | **Closing Reflections**

KATE DODSON
Vice President, Global Health Strategy, United Nations Foundation

SUERIE MOON
Co-Director, Global Health Centre, Geneva Graduate Institute

