



THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY



World Health Organization

# What makes communication between Science and Policy so difficult? Knowledge Sharing for Health

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ANSER 2017



ICRH

INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

improving sexual and reproductive health  
through research, training and adapted interventions



# Short bio

- MD, MPH, PhD, OB/GYN
- Academic Ghent University, University of Nairobi,
- Politics: elected Senator Belgian Parliament
- iERG member of EWEC
- WHO Director Reproductive Health and Research
- Aga Khan University, East Africa



# Ghent University

- One of the larger [Flemish](#) universities, consisting of 41,000 students and 9,000 staff members.
- Ghent University consistently rates among the top universities not only in Belgium but also throughout the world.



# Ghent University Hospital

- **Ghent University Hospital** is one of the largest hospitals in [Belgium](#). It is closely linked to [Ghent University](#), the university's [rector](#) also being the hospital's president.
- Teaching hospital, over 1000 beds, 7000 staff





# University of Nairobi 1985- with Prof Peter Piot



# Research agenda

- Can women get infected with the HIV virus?
- If so, can it have an impact on pregnancy and newborns?





# PUMWANI MATERNITY HOSPITAL

*Quality Maternal Care*

WELCOME - KARIBU



# Founding Director International Centre Reproductive Health 1994





HQ Geneva





# World Health Organisation

- Directing and coordinating authority on international health within United Nations
- Produces health guidelines and standards
- Help countries to adress health issues
- Supports and promotes health research

# Reproductive Health and Research thematic areas

- Promoting family planning/contraception
- Adolescent sexual and reproductive health
- Improving maternal and perinatal health
- Prevention of unsafe abortion
- Sexually transmitted and reproductive tract infections
- Linkages between sexual and reproductive health and HIV/AIDS
- Sexual health, gender and reproductive health
- Research capacity strengthening and programme development
- Advocacy and communications for SRH and for HRP/RHR

# Research

- Biomedical
- Clinical
- Epidemiological
- Implementation research
  - Policy research
  - Health systems research
  - Communities research
- Social sciences research
- Demographic





*Quality of Care for pregnant women and newborns- the WHO vision. BJOG 2015*



# Sustainable Development Goals



**Target 3.7** By 2030, ensure *universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services*, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes

**Target 5.6** Ensure *universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights* as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences



# THE GLOBAL STRATEGY FOR WOMEN'S, CHILDREN'S AND ADOLESCENTS' HEALTH (2016-2030)

**SURVIVE**  
**THRIVE**  
**TRANSFORM**

thebmj



Towards a new Global Strategy  
for Women's, Children's and  
Adolescents' Health

# Changing World

- The human race is ageing
- Urbanisation
- Migration
- Noncommunicable diseases are the world's leading causes of illness and death



# Health Security

- Outbreaks, epidemics and pandemics
- Natural disasters
- Civil unrest, internal conflicts and wars
- Use of biological, chemical and radio nuclear agents, material and weapons



# WHO Strategy on Research for Health

*WHO's role in research for health.....*

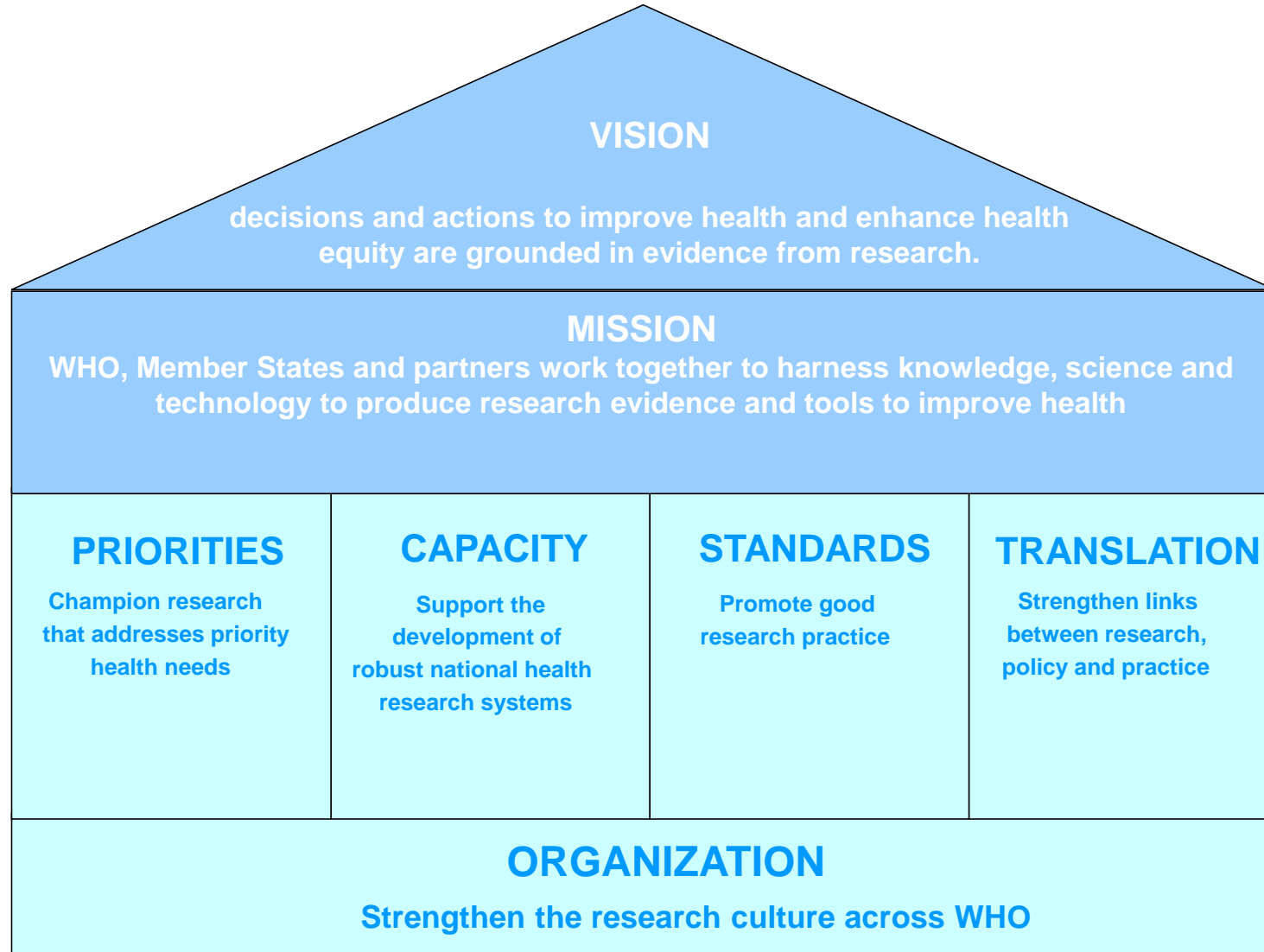
*and the role of research in WHO...*

- Recognizes research as central to progress in global health
- Identifies how WHO can work with **Member States** and **partners** to harness knowledge, science and technology to produce research evidence and tools to improve health outcomes.

# Research for Health

- Conducted according to sound standards and ethical principles
- Well communicated and used locally
- Use a shared, broader definition of research: Application, Implementation and Evaluation.
- WHO to support and guide countries; decision making and accountability is countries' responsibility.
- Evidence-based policy vital in WHO's work and core public health function





5 Goals

# WHO STRATEGY ON RESEARCH FOR HEALTH

# The AKU East-Africa Centre of Excellence for Women and Child Health



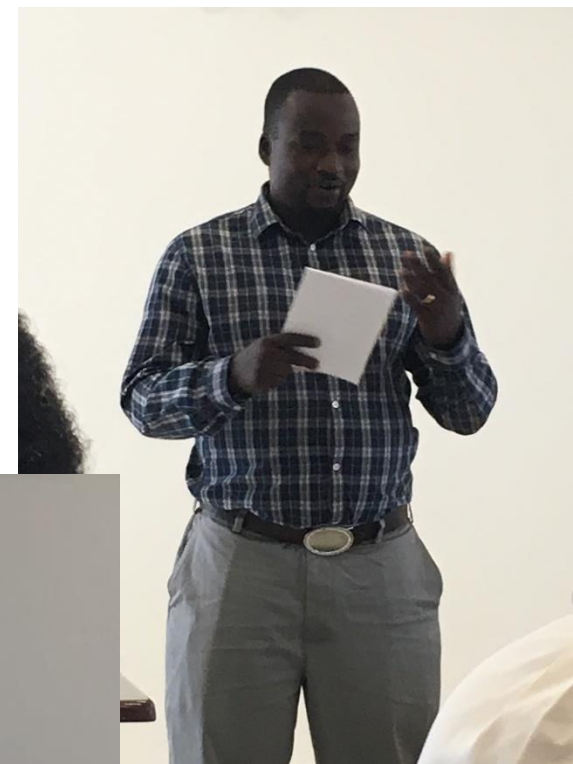


# Centre of Excellence in Women and Child Health, including Adolescent Health

- Training effective and relevant health care professionals, capable of leadership at all levels of the health system.
- Appropriate models for clinical care and planning for national, regional and global policy in RMNCH.
- Appropriate, cutting edge research and advocacy to promote effective interventions in urban and rural settings, as well as probing the frontiers of knowledge.
- Appropriate models for monitoring and evaluation to support progress in RMNCH.



# Opening AKU Research Office Mombasa



# Journal Club Mombasa based research organisations: AKU- ICRH- UoN/UW



# Research and Policy

- Policies are a set of principles guiding decision-making:
- **Public Policy**: policy of governments
- **Health Policy**: health promotion, health protection, health services (plus...)

# Premise

- Decisions must be made, regardless of the quality of the supporting evidence
- Some evidence is better than no evidence
- Research can provide much of good and important evidence
- Evidence has to be communicated clearly to stakeholders and decisionmakers

# The Basis of Policies

- Values
- Ideology
- Politics
- Needs and priorities
- Evidence
  - Not usually the main influence on policy, but worth fighting for
  - The main contribution of epidemiology and research

# Policy Analysis

- The process of predicting the impacts of possible policies and evaluating past policies
- Research can make a major contribution to both steps

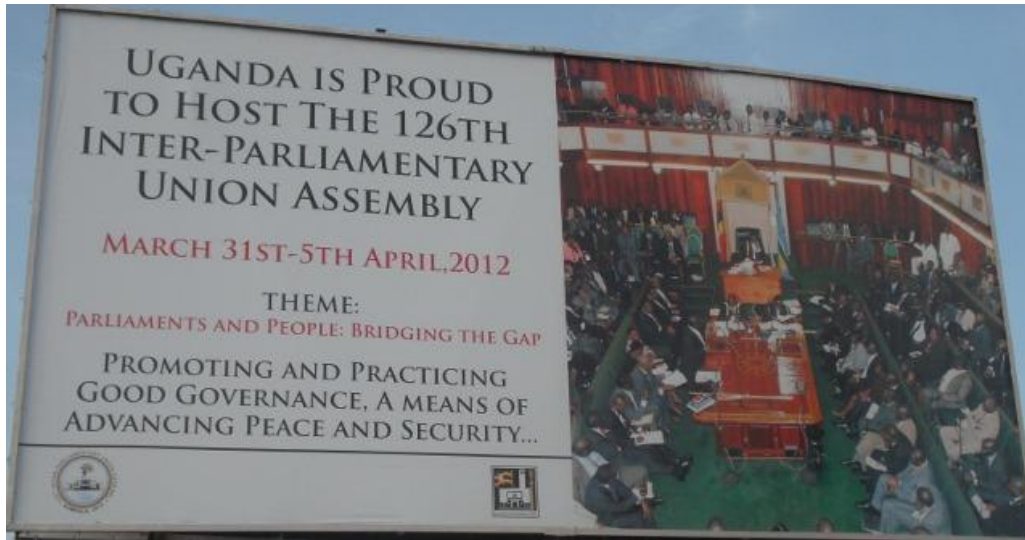
# Research for health – Three principles

- **Quality** - high-quality research that is ethical, expertly reviewed, efficient, effective, accessible to all, and carefully monitored and evaluated.
- **Impact** - priority to research and innovation that has the greatest potential to improve global health security, accelerate health-related development, redress health inequities and help to attain the SDGs.
- **Inclusiveness** - in partnership with stakeholders, to take a multisectoral approach to research for health, and to support and promote the participation of communities and civil society in the research process.

Belgian Parliament- Senator  
2007-12



126th Inter-Parliamentary Union Assembly  
31 MARCH -5 APRIL 2012 | KAMPALA, Uganda  
Parliamentarians vote landmark Resolution on maternal and child health



# Parliamentarian products and tools

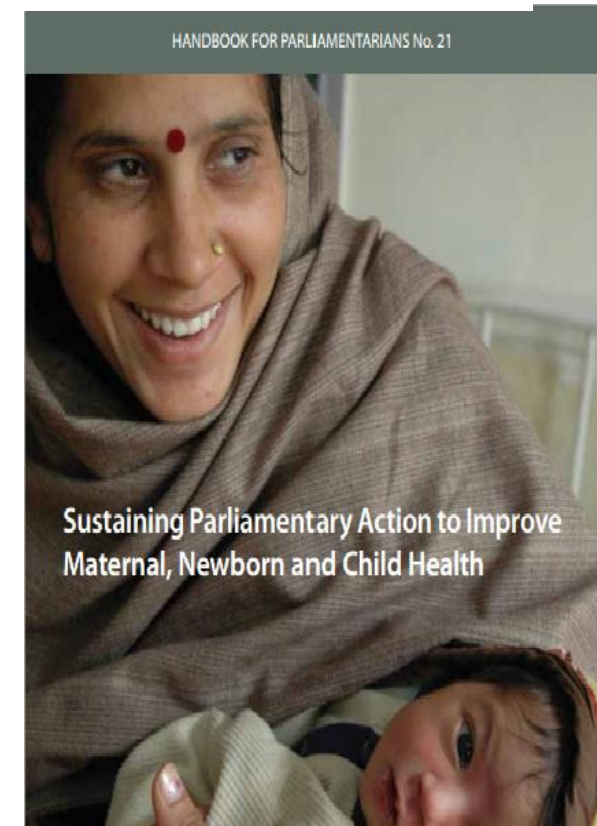
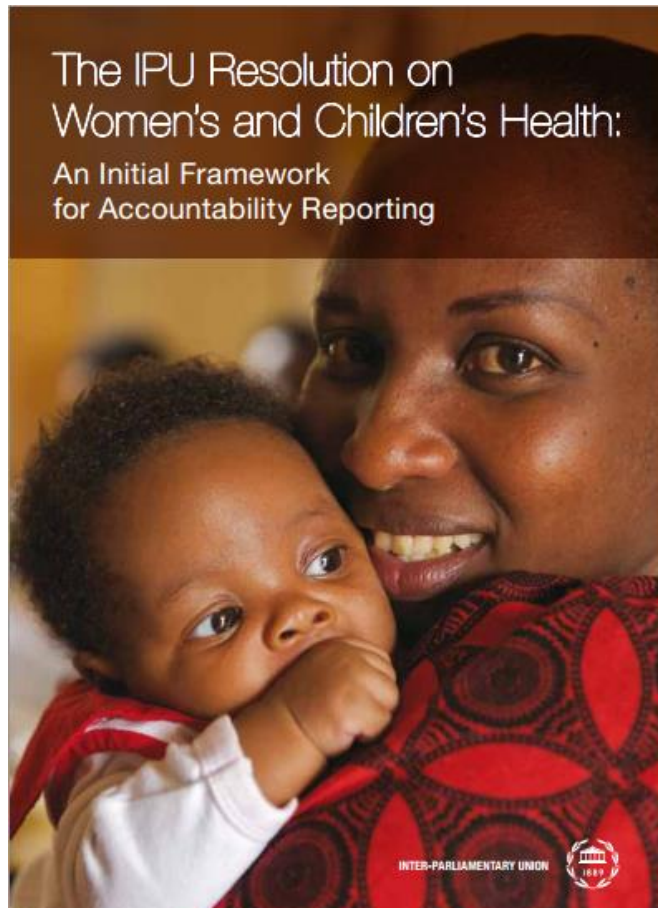


**Inter-Parliamentary Union**

Chemin du Pommier 5, C.P. 330, CH-1218 Le Grand-Saconnex/Geneva, Switzerland

## **ACCESS TO HEALTH AS A BASIC RIGHT: THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENTS IN ADDRESSING KEY CHALLENGES TO SECURING THE HEALTH OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN**

*Resolution adopted unanimously by the 126th IPU Assembly  
(Kampala, 5 April 2012)*



# Role of the Research Community

- Conducting high quality research
- Relevant to the society
- Multisectoral, interdisciplinary, translational, innovative
- Publication and dissemination
- Communication to key decision-makers and stakeholders
- Role in implementation and action
- Partnerships
- Commitment to the SDGs

# Dissemination



# Partnerships



# Bridging gaps between research and politics/policies

