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## **Online Accountability Breakfast event calls on governments to protect women's, children's and adolescents' health during COVID-19 and beyond**

Up to 2000 delegates from all over the world are expected to participate in a live event being held today alongside the UN General Assembly 2020, which will call on governments, donors, and other key actors in global development to demonstrate greater accountability for supporting and improving women's, children's and adolescents' health (WCAH) and rights during the COVID-19 crisis and beyond.

The Accountability Breakfast, which is being jointly hosted by the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health (PMNCH), White Ribbon Alliance (WRA) and Every Woman Every Child (EWEC), is happening at a pivotal time. Poor and marginalized women, children and adolescents are among those worst affected by COVID-19's indirect consequences, which can compound and exacerbate the many social and health inequalities they face in their daily lives. Yet, they are still excluded from making decisions that inform the design of programs meant to help and support them.

Staging the Accountability Breakfast as a virtual event will increase opportunities for people from a diverse range of backgrounds across the world to participate, who might otherwise have been unable to attend had the event been held in a physical space in New York, as originally proposed.

By bringing high ranking government ministers together with representatives from grassroots organisations, the event provides a platform for those with the power to make changes to hear directly from those calling for fundamental changes to be made.

"This important event will provide a safe and inclusive platform for women and young people, campaigners and health workers involved in improving WCAH outcomes, as well as other citizens with important lived experiences and perspectives, to share their views, speak truth to power, and help forge a new agenda for change," said Helen Clark, former prime minister of New Zealand and Board Chair of PMNCH.

The programming of the Accountability Breakfast includes the presentation of data and evidence for greater equity during Covid-19; a citizen's parliament featuring a panel of women and youth citizen leaders from India, Kenya, Mexico and Nigeria discussing strategies to strengthen accountability and ensure future preparedness; and powerful grassroots testimony with leadership commentary and response. PMNCH, which is marking its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary this month, will also be launching its 2021-2025 Strategy.

The event takes place as the global Every Woman Every Child movement's new [report](#) published last week, warns that a decade of remarkable progress, including under five deaths reaching an all-time low, maternal deaths falling by 35 per cent, 25 million child marriages avoided and one billion children vaccinated is now threatened by conflict, the climate crisis, and increasingly by the health, social and economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Every Woman Every Child has been fighting for the health and well-being of women, children and adolescents worldwide for a decade. The *Protect the Progress* report provides evidence that committed leadership, global cooperation, wise investments, and innovative financing mechanisms can and have changed the trajectory of millions of lives,” said Vivian Lopez, Executive Coordinator of Every Woman Every Child.

“As the triple threat of COVID-19, conflict and the climate crisis threaten this important progress, now more than ever, leaders need to recommit to the EWEC agenda and protect the health and rights of all women, children and adolescents.”

The Accountability Breakfast will also highlight the multi-sectoral dimensions of COVID-19 on the health, wellbeing and broader lives of the world's women and children, through the participation of the world's largest partnerships on education, nutrition, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), as well as leading regional and media partnerships.

The Accountability Breakfast aims to convert talk into action with the launch of PMNCH's Call-to-Action in response to the devastating effects of the pandemic on the health and rights of women, children and adolescents. Partners will join forces to advocate for firm political commitments, as part of a 24-month program of action to reinvigorate WCAH during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

“We are pleased that today's Call to Action reflects many of the top demands from more than one million women and girls who responded the global What Women Want survey about their needs for quality reproductive and maternal health. White Ribbon Alliance strongly believes that when citizens and decision-makers come together, it creates stronger policies that are based on actual needs. Public platforms like the 2020 Accountability Breakfast help to put a spotlight on challenges, hold leaders to account, and in turn, accelerate progress,” says Kristy Kade, Deputy Executive Director, White Ribbon Alliance and Co-Chair of the Global What Women Want Campaign.

COVID-19 not only threatens hard-won gains for women, children and adolescents around the world, it could also push new progress yet further away. Going forward, the moral, political and fiscal choices we take about what, how and who we support, will shape the future direction of our planet for decades.

This Accountability Breakfast will set the agenda and articulate the expectations of the world's women, children and adolescents for a world that respects their contributions, meets their needs and guarantees their inviolable rights.

Register and take part in the Accountability Breakfast [here](#).

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**Organizing Partners:**

The **Partnership for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health (PMNCH, the Partnership)** is the world's largest alliance for women's, children's and adolescents' health (WCAH), bringing together over 1,000 partner organizations across 192 countries. Since its inception, PMNCH has worked to forge and strengthen partnerships and drive momentum towards the attainment of global targets for women's, children's and adolescents' health.

Through its global network of advocates, **White Ribbon Alliance** is activating a movement for the health and rights of all women and girls. We partner with individuals, communities and all sectors of government. Our approaches put citizens at the center so that health policies and practices are responsive to actual needs.

The **Every Woman Every Child** movement, spearheaded by the United Nations Secretary-General, aims to intensify national and international commitment and action by governments, the United Nations, multilaterals, the private sector and civil society to ensure that women, children and adolescents are at the heart of development. As a platform to operationalize the *Every Woman Every Child Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health*, the EWEC movement mobilizes coordinated efforts across sectors to deliver on the promises of a sustainable future for all.

