

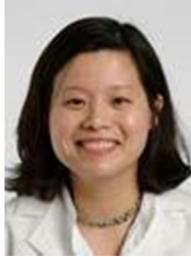


## Preface

# Global Women's Health: Health Equity for Women



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Today we live in a globalized world. International travel is easier than ever, and advances in communications and information technology have resulted in increasing access to cellular communications and the Internet in low- and middle-income countries (LMIC). This has resulted in improved education, training, and learning opportunities through work, in public spaces such as Internet cafes, in schools, and in the home. We also live in times of rapid advances in medical care, but these have not had the same reach into lower-resource areas, which continue to suffer from significant health disparities due to an inadequate number of health care workers and lack of economic resources devoted to health, poverty, and conflict.

In LMIC, as in high-income countries, women are the linchpin of the family and the community. Their health reflects the broader health of society, but in too many instances, health indicators for women, such as maternal mortality, rates of obstetric fistula, and unmet need for contraception, demonstrate the burden of health disparities on women and also reflect the low status of women in many societies. While we have focused the discussion of these women's health topics to LMIC, it is imperative that we keep in mind that these conditions and related health disparities experienced by many women are also present in high-income countries. The COVID-19 pandemic has further underscored the interconnectedness of all people around the world and the globalization of all aspects of life, including health.

The authors in this special issue are experts in the specific topic areas they address and include distinguished colleagues from several LMIC. Notably, we were fortunate to include Nobel Peace Prize winner Dr Denis Mukwege and his colleagues at Panzi Hospital (Bukavu Congo) to present their experience working with women survivors of gender-based violence. Although it is impossible to comprehensively cover all relevant topics, the topics chosen represent a broad survey of critical current health issues and innovations in women's health. We hope that these articles will be thought

provoking and enlightening, demonstrating both how far we have come and how far we still have to go.

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