

Women's Empowerment, Population Dynamics, and Socioeconomic Development

Committee

Anita Raj

Co-Chair

is a Tata Chancellor Professor of Society and Health. She is a Professor in both the Departments of Medicine and Education Studies and the Director of the Center on Gender Equity and Health (GEH). Her research, including both epidemiologic and intervention studies, focuses on sexual and reproductive health, maternal and child health, women's economic empowerment, and gender inequalities including gender-based violence and child, early and forced marriage. She created and leads the EMERGE platform, which provides open access to evidence-based measures on gender equality and empowerment (GEE), builds national indicators on GEE in global survey research partners for tracking SDG5, and provides trainings and technical assistance for researchers and implementers on measurement science and empowerment. She also created and leads the CalVEX study which involves state-wide survey research and supportive qualitative data on violence and health in California. Since 2020, she has been leading research and measurement in the area of COVID-19 and gender and secondary impacts of the pandemic in women and socially marginalized groups in the US and globally.

Susan C. Scrimshaw

Co-Chair

was President of Russell Sage College, Troy, NY, President of Simmons College, Boston, Massachusetts, Dean of the School of Public Health at the University of Illinois at Chicago, and Associate Dean of public health at UCLA. She serves on the Board of Directors of the Capital District Physicians' Health Plan (CDPHP), Albany, New York and Speare Memorial Hospital, Plymouth, New Hampshire. She is A.B. Barnard College, Ph.D. in anthropology, Columbia University. Her research includes community participatory research, research methods, reproductive health, health communication, and social determinants of health. She is an NAM member, AAAS Fellow and American Anthropological Association Fellow. She served on the Chicago and Illinois State Boards of Health, the New York State Minority Health Council, as chair of the Association of Schools of Public Health, on the Board and Board President of the US-Mexico Foundation for Science. Honors include the Yarmolinsky Medal (NAM), the Margaret Mead Award (SFAA/AAA), and Hero of Public Health gold medal (Mexico).

Ragui Assaad

Member

is professor at the Humphrey School of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota. He is a Research Fellow at the Economic Research Forum, Cairo, Egypt and a non-resident Research Fellow of the Institute of Labor Economics (IZA), Bonn, Germany. He served as regional director for West Asia and North Africa at the Population Council from 2005 to 2008. Assaad's current research focuses on labor markets and human development in the Arab World, with a focus on youth and gender issues as they relate to education, transition from school-to-work, labor force participation, employment and unemployment, informality, migration, and family formation. Under the auspices of ERF, he led the design and implementation of several nationally-representative longitudinal surveys of labor market conditions in Arab countries. Assaad earned the Outstanding Research Award of the Minnesota Population Center, University of Minnesota in April 2021 and the 2017 Award for Global Engagement for exceptional contributions to global education, research, and engagement at the University of Minnesota. Assaad received a PhD in urban and regional planning from Cornell University in 1991 and a Master of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering from Stanford University in 1981.

Sonalde Desai

Member

is a Professor of Sociology at University of Maryland and the Centre Director of NCAER-National Data Innovation Center, New Delhi. Prior to joining University of Maryland, she was an Associate in Policy Research Division at The Population Council. She is a demographer whose work deals primarily with social transformation and its impact on the lives of individuals with a focus on education, employment, and maternal and child health. She leads the India Human Development Survey of over 40,000 households which is one of the few national panel survey in India providing a rich and free public resource for studying the transformation of the Indian society in the 21st Century. Since April 2020, Desai and her colleagues at NDIC have carried out telephone surveys around COVID-related experiences in Delhi National Capital Region. She has been elected as the President of the Population Association of India for 2022 and has recently been elected President of Population Association of America. She is a member of Committee on Population, National Academy of Sciences. She received a Ph.D. from Stanford University and post-doctoral training at the University of Chicago and RAND Corporation.

Aletheia Donald

Member

is a development economist with over a decade of experience investigating what works to promote gender equality, currently working at the World Bank's Gender Innovation Lab within the Office of the Chief Economist for Africa. Before joining the World Bank, Aletheia was a Research Fellow at Harvard's Evidence for Policy Design and Head of Research for the NGO Empower Dalit Women of Nepal. Her research experience spans the study of poverty, social norms, labor and methodological work on survey data collection. Her current work centers on issues of gender and economic activity, including the effects of marriage, redistributive norms, mechanization, childcare, women's land rights and intra-household cooperation. She is a Non-Residential Fellow at the Center for Global Development. She holds a Master's degree in Economics from Yale University and a PhD in Economics from Sapienza University.

Pascaline Dupas

Member

is Professor of Economics and the Kleinheinz Family Professor of International Studies at Stanford University and the Faculty Director of the Stanford King Center on Global Development. She is a development economist seeking to identify interventions and policies that can help reduce global poverty. Her ongoing research include studies on the gendered impacts of education policy in Ghana, family planning policy in Burkina Faso, digital credit regulation in Malawi, and government subsidized health insurance in India, among others. Dupas joined the Stanford faculty in 2011, after spending two years on the faculty at Dartmouth College and three years at UCLA. She is co-chair of the health sector at the Jameel Poverty Action Lab (JPAL), on the board of directors of the Bureau for Research and Economic Analysis of Development (BREAD), and a Research Associate at the National Bureau for Economic Research (NBER). She is a National Science Foundation CAREER award winner, a Fellow of the Econometric Society, a former Sloan Fellow, and a former Guggenheim Fellow. Dupas studied philosophy and economics as an undergraduate student at the Ecole Normale Supérieure (Ulm) in Paris, France. She obtained a PhD in Economics from the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (Paris, France) in 2006.

Kelli S. Hall

Member

is an Associate Professor in Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health, Heilbrunn Department of Population & Family Health. A social epidemiologist and advanced practice nurse, her research program focuses on the social and structural determinants of maternal-child and reproductive health in the U.S. and globally. She studies the effects of poverty, policies, structural racism, health systems factors, and toxic social stress on disparities in maternal mental health, maternal morbidity, and mortality, and the role of community-driven solutions, multi-level interventions, and integrated models of care. Dr. Hall is currently the MPI of Columbia's NIH U54 Maternal Health Research Center of Excellence and is the former PI and Founding Director of the Center for Reproductive Health Research in the SouthEast at Emory University. She serves on the Editorial Boards of the Maternal Child Health Journal and Contraception; Board of Directors of the Society for Family Planning; and recently on the Executive Committee of the National Medical Committee of Planned Parenthood Federation of America, and as Section Counselor for APHA's Population, Sexual and Reproductive Health Section. In 2020, she was elected as a National Academy of Medicine Emerging Leader in Health and Medicine. She has a Ph.D. from Columbia University in Maternal Child Health (Nursing) and Epidemiology.

Poonam Muttreja

Member

is Executive Director of the Population Foundation of India. For over 40 years, she has been a strong advocate for women's health, reproductive and sexual rights, and rural livelihoods. She has co-conceived the popular transmedia initiative, Main Kuch Bhi Kar Sakti Hoon - I, A Woman, Can Achieve Anything. Before joining PFI, she served as the India Country Director of the John D and Catherine T MacArthur Foundation for 15 years and has also co-founded and led the Ashoka Foundation, Dastkar, and the Society for Rural, Urban and Tribal Initiative (SRUTI). An alumna of Delhi University and Harvard University's John F Kennedy School of Government, Poonam serves on the governing council of several non-governmental organisations, and is a regular commentator in India and globally for television and the print media.

Luca Maria Pesando

Member

is an Associate Professor of Social Research and Public Policy at New York University (AD) and a 2022-2023 Visiting Scholar at the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Harvard University. Before joining NYUAD, he was an Assistant Professor of Sociology and Demography at the Department of Sociology and Centre on Population Dynamics, McGill University. His research lies in the areas of social, economic, and digital demography. He is interested in issues of family poverty, inequality, gender, social stratification, intra- and inter-generational processes, technology adoption, and interactions between life-cycle events and human capital accumulation. His overarching research aim is to produce better knowledge on the link between family change, gender, and educational inequalities in areas where these dynamics are changing rapidly and scant research is available. Most of his work takes an international comparative perspective and focuses on low- and middle-income contexts undergoing economic, social, and demographic transformations, mainly across sub-Saharan Africa. At McGill, he was nominated as William Dawson Scholar (outstanding early-career researcher) and he was recently awarded a 2022-2025 Fellowship from the Jacobs Foundation. He got his Ph.D. in Demography and Sociology from the University of Pennsylvania in 2018 and a BA and MA in Economics and Social Sciences from Bocconi University.

Goleen Samari

Member

is a population health demographer and Assistant Professor in the Heilbrunn Department of Population and Family Health and the Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health. She is a faculty affiliate of the Columbia Population Research Center, faculty in the Columbia Program on Forced Migration and Health and Columbia Program on Global Health Justice and Governance, and a term member with the Council on Foreign Relations. Her research focuses on several dimensions of social inequalities and reproductive and population health. She considers how discrimination, gender inequities, and migration shape population health both domestically and globally with a particular focus on communities in or from the Middle East and North Africa. She is one of a handful of demographers who thinks about the conceptualization and measurement of women's empowerment in the Middle East and among migrant populations, and the first to conceptualize Islamophobia as a global public health issue. She has received several honors for her early career contributions to health equity. Dr. Samari received her PhD in 2015 from the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) in Public Health and Demography and also obtained a Master of Arts in Islamic Studies and Master of Public Health in Community Health Sciences from UCLA in 2010.

Tom S. Vogl

Member

is Associate Professor of Economics at the University of California San Diego. He was previously Assistant Professor of Economics and International Affairs at Princeton University and Associate Professor of Economics at the University of Texas at Austin. A development economist and economic demographer, he studies health and population issues in low- and middle-income countries. His recent research has focused on the co-evolution of fertility and the education of adults and children; the intergenerational persistence of child mortality; and the aggregate consequences of differential fertility. He is a Fellow of the Bureau for Research and Economic Analysis of Development and a Research Associate of the National Bureau of Economic Research, where he serves on the Advisory Board of the Study Group on Gender in the Economy. He received his AB from Princeton University and PhD from Harvard University.

Yohannes D. Wado

Member

is a research scientist at the African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC) based in Nairobi, Kenya. Before joining APHRC, he worked as senior advisor for research and evaluation with Ipas (Ethiopia) and a lecturer in Population Studies at Jimma University in southwest Ethiopia. He is a population health researcher with several years of experience in research and monitoring and evaluation of programs in population and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). He has experiences in leading and implementing large national surveys, longitudinal studies, randomized controlled trials, systematic and scoping reviews, and analysis of large surveys. Currently, he provides technical leadership to research and evaluation projects on population health and SRHR, including on family planning, unsafe abortion and adolescent health. He has a PhD in Public Health and masters of science degrees in Population Studies and Demography.

Kathryn Yount

Member

is Asa Griggs Candler Professor of Global Health (2012) and Professor of Global Health and Sociology (2015) at Emory University. Her research examines the intersections of women's health, empowerment, and exposure to gender-based violence, including mixed-methods randomized controlled trials of social-norms and empowerment-based programs to improve these outcomes in underserved populations. She has been funded since 2002 from U.S. federal agencies, private foundations, and foreign agencies to work in Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa, and underserved communities in Atlanta. She is a recipient of the Women of Excellence Award for Mentoring (2016) and Marion V. Creekmore Award for Internationalization (2022) at Emory.

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