PMAC PRINCE MAHIDOL AWARD CONFERENCE 2021

WS204

FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION, SOCIAL EXCLUSION WITH SPECIFIC FOCUS ON INEQUITABLE IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC

| BACKGROUND

Almost everywhere in the world, certain groups of people more than others experience severe forms of deprivation and discrimination, violence, abuse and extortion, and even detention and incarceration (including arbitrary arrest) due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender, age, citizenship status, or sexual orientation. Human mobility has increased significantly during the last two decades, as internally displaced or international migrants seek to escape wars, conflicts, ethnic persecution, political instability, armed violence, extreme poverty, income inequality, and, increasingly, climate change impacts. Many of these drivers of population movement originate in corporate practices (e.g., the continuing international arms trade), government policies (e.g., a proliferation of trade and investment agreements compromising livelihoods), and national and global failures to deal effectively with climate change. Extractivism has led to forced displacement and dispossession of indigenous communities all over the world. Many of those most affected by displacement or forced migration are women and children. Others face discrimination within their own countries and may seek migration or refugee status to avoid violence, including members of LGBTQ+ communities, or those discriminated against based on race, religion, ethnicity, or other minority differences. Aggravation

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these existing social exclusion and prejudice. People of color, people in lower-income households, indigenous communities, unauthorized migrants (especially those in detention centers), refugees and asylum seekers, and prisoners (including political prisoners) have experienced a higher burden of the pandemic. These vulnerable populations and socially excluded groups were heavily impacted in terms of higher prevalence of infections, higher severity of the disease, compromised access to healthcare services, and higher rates of deaths. Mental health impacts, and increase in gender-based violence and domestic violence have also been seen.

| OBJECTIVES

- Describe the forms of discrimination and social exclusion and violence against population groups due to their poverty, race, ethnicity, gender, age, citizenship status, and sexual orientation and the impact on people’s health and wellbeing.
- Identify the underlying political, economic, and social drivers of these forms of discrimination, social exclusion, and violence.
- Discuss the role of COVID-19 in exacerbating these forms of discrimination and the socioeconomic determinants that shape the COVID-19 response leading to these inequities.



Panelist

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I am a doctor (cardiology) and a professor of public health practice at AUB. I served, on leave, as Director, Department of Noncommunicable Diseases & Mental Health at WHO EMRO (Egypt) between 2013 and 2015. I am Co-Chair of The Lancet-AUB Commission on Syria and founding chair of the Global Alliance on War, Conflict, and Health. I lead the Public Health in the Arab World initiative (see titular book, Cambridge University Press, 2012) and co-led the Lancet Series 'Health in the Arab world: a view from within,' published in 2014. I completed a medical degree at Aleppo University Faculty of Medicine (Syria) and a Master in Public Health (MPH) degree at Harvard School of Public Health.