

Hillary Clinton, Jessica Biel Close Women Deliver 2016 Conference

Largest gathering of its kind identifies solutions to advance the health, rights and wellbeing of girls and women around the world

Copenhagen, Denmark (19 May 2016) – The fourth Women Deliver Conference came to a close today with a focus on solutions to make sure girls and women are at the center of efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) globally and at the country level.

During the closing ceremony, U.S. Presidential Candidate and former Secretary of State **Hillary Rodham Clinton** delivered a [video address](#) calling for leaders to prioritize the health and rights of girls and women. Secretary Clinton cited progress made since the United Nations 4th World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 and commended Women Deliver for “bringing in new voices and lifting up the next generation of leaders” to help achieve gender equality.

“This is an important moment. As we chart a course to meet the new Sustainable Development Goals, we have to break down the barriers holding back women and girls around the world,” said Secretary Clinton. “Gender equality, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, must be a core priority. To get there, we need greater political will and resources, and we need to continue to invest in more and better data to measure progress.”

American actress **Jessica Biel** also spoke at the closing plenary. She committed to working with partners, including WomanCare Global, to help remove the stigma around sex and sexuality. She stressed that women need to be educated about their bodies to help improve maternal and reproductive health.

“I am here because I want to pull the stigma out of female reproductive health,” said Biel. “[Education] is what’s going to give every woman and every girl the right to make decisions about their own bodies and decide when and if they want to have a baby.”

Conference sessions featured practical discussions on how to move from commitment to action for girls’ and women’s health, rights and wellbeing. There was a major focus on identifying and scaling up vital solutions – from mobile apps to social entrepreneurship – to tackle some of the biggest challenges facing girls and women, such as expanding access to contraceptives so girls and women can achieve their full potential and tackling new challenges like the Zika virus.

Recognizing the importance of innovation, Women Deliver announced yesterday the winner of its [Social Enterprise Challenge](#) and 2016 Global Solution Award, in partnership with [Echoing Green](#) – 20 year-old **Tom Osborn**, founder and CEO of [GreenChar](#). GreenChar is making and distributing affordable charcoal briquettes made from agricultural waste in Kenya. This innovation helps reduce indoor air pollution, curb deforestation and lower carbon emissions. Osborn received a cash prize of \$5,000 from Women Deliver to scale up his innovation.

“I’m so happy and proud that Women Deliver acknowledged my organization, GreenChar, as the winner of the Social Enterprise Challenge,” said Osborn. “Their support will bolster our work to provide environmentally friendly clean charcoal for cook stoves in Kenya, and to make sure that women around the country can protect themselves from the negative health effects of indoor smoke and fuels.”

In all, the Women Deliver 2016 Conference brought more than **5,700** policymakers, researchers, advocates, journalists and young people from more than **2,000 organizations** and **169 countries** to Copenhagen, Denmark. This was the largest Women Deliver Conference to date and the largest gathering of women's health and rights advocates in over a decade.

Through social media and [Women Deliver Live](#), conference messages resonated far beyond the halls of the conference center. Nearly **48,000 individuals** used the #WD2016 hashtag and generated more than **181,000 tweets** about the Conference. These tweets have reached **62 million** Twitter accounts over **1.6 billion** times. Women Deliver Live featured webcasts, new updates and studio interviews with inspiring and influential conference attendees, such as singer/songwriter and activist [Annie Lennox](#), Women Deliver Young Leader [Yemurai Nyoni](#), and former Australian Prime Minister [Julia Gillard](#). This platform helped the conference reach people in **145 countries**.

During the closing ceremony, **Jill Sheffield**, Founder and President of Women Deliver, was awarded Women Deliver's first-ever *Delivering for Women & Girls Lifetime Achievement Award* for the incredible and lasting contributions she has made to the field of girls' and women's health and rights. **Katja Iversen** will now be Women Deliver's President and CEO.

"Jill, you have moved mountains, you have moved governments, and you have moved millions of people and dollars. Your steadfast belief in the power of partnerships to break down silos and bring people together across issues, geographies and hierarchies has been the recipe for success, the power cocktail of progress," said Iversen. "We can look back, we can look forward, but no matter where we look, we will see your mark and the change you have helped to make for girls and women."

The creative solutions discussed here in Copenhagen aim to guarantee that girls and women are central in national and local policies, programs and budgets. Women Deliver will support these efforts through its multi-year [Deliver for Good](#) initiative, which will focus on driving progress through 12 key investment areas in collaboration with partners across sectors and regions.

Following the conference, Sheffield reflected on the week and looked toward the future.

"This week, I have been consistently impressed and inspired by the people I have met, the ideas I have heard, and the enthusiasm for positive change. Never have I been more optimistic about our prospects for the future," said Sheffield. "Now the real work begins to turn our commitments, our ideas and our passion into real change for girls and women everywhere. I may be retiring, but I will not stop fighting until all girls and women have equal opportunities to survive and thrive. That's my commitment, and I plan to deliver."

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About Women Deliver: Women Deliver believes that when the world invests in girls and women, everybody wins. As a leading global advocate for girls' and women's health, rights and wellbeing, [Women Deliver](#) brings together diverse voices and interests to drive progress, particularly in maternal, sexual and reproductive health and rights. It builds capacity, shares solutions and forges partnerships, together creating coalitions, communication and action that spark political commitment and investment in girls and women.

Social Media: To learn more about Women Deliver, follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#). Follow the hashtags: #WD2016 and #WDLive

Women Deliver Live: Register [here](#) to tune into [Women Deliver Live](#) – our online hub for downloadable footage of all Conference plenaries, select concurrent sessions, press conferences, and much more.

Media Resources: Online media resources – including the press program, press releases and 2016 b-roll – are available in the [Women Deliver Virtual Press Room](#). Official photographs can be found on [Flickr](#).

More about Deliver for Good: www.deliverforgood.org

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