

Socially Constructed Determinants of Global Health – The Case of Law and Gender

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Law is a critical contributor to health and wellbeing, underpinning the realisation of rights in relation to health, as well as determining risks of exposure to health-reducing environments and access to health-promoting services and interventions. In this way, law shares many similarities with another significant determinant of health: gender – also socially constructed, universal, a driver of both risk and protection in health, and frequently misunderstood and contested. Determinants of health do not act in isolation, however; they interact and intersect to drive health outcomes and life expectancy across and within all societies. In this talk I will look specifically at the intersection of gender, law and global health – examining the extent to which legal frameworks to protect, respect and realise the right to health are gender-responsive and working for everyone. I will focus on the findings of the Lancet Commission on the Legal Determinants of Health and explore ways in which legal frameworks in health can become more gender-responsive, and, conversely, how gender-responsive interventions in health can make better use of global health laws.