



Women as Positive Agents of Change in Biosecurity

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Participation of Women in NGOs

Report of Online Discussion

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP ROLES

Coordinated by the
Division for the Advancement of Women
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WomenWatch

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- Few data available on women leading NGOs globally
- Anecdotal evidence shows that women tend to be highly active in civil society organizations
 - yet remain underrepresented in leadership positions, except in organizations explicitly working on issues of women and gender

Our Global Biosafety NGO Network

- Today, IFBA's global NGO network has grown to 37 Member Biosafety Associations



Women as Leaders

- Women act as strong leaders in our network of Biosafety Associations



Women on the IFBA Board of Directors

- 7 women, Lela Bakanidze Co-Chair

Women Leading Change

- Cameroon Biosafety Association CamBSA
 - Developed into a successful association by the determination of one woman (Pierrette Mefomdjo)
 - Created partnerships with other national professional associations CAMELS (medical laboratory scientist)
 - Support from African Biosafety Association (led by Tubi Abiola)



Women Leading Change

- Changing the face of biosafety & biosecurity in South East Asia
 - Ai EE Ling, Founding President Asia-Pacific Biosafety Association
 - Credible voice during SARS and strong advocate for biosafety & biosecurity (effective risk communication skills)
 - 2004, first to bring together 10 countries & discuss the issues
 - Spawned many new national biosafety associations

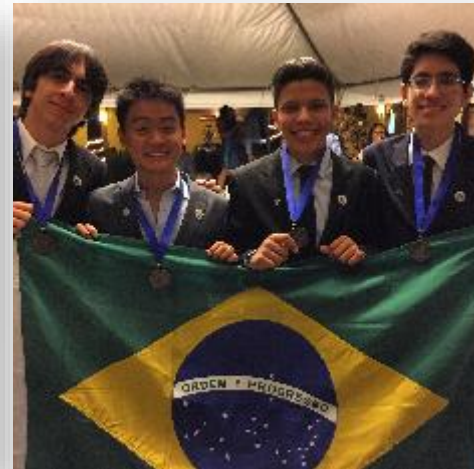


Women Leading Change

- Brazilian Biosafety Association ANBio
 - Leila Macedo, Founding President ANBio, represented Brazil at BWC, Chairman National Biosafety Committee, new biosecurity legislation, tool for biorisk management in healthcare facilities
 - Biosafety capacity building for thousands in Brazil & other countries in Latin America
 - Motivating young scientists to the discipline of biosafety & biosecurity by introducing these concepts into the Brazilian Biology Olympiad



Biosafety Capacity Building ANBio 1999-2011		
Year	Number of Participants	Number of Courses
1999	305	3
2000	277	4
2001	788	5
2002	834	9
2003	792	7
2004	100	2
2005	862	7
2006	359	3
2007	750	5
2008	550	3
2009	1090	9
2010	450	4
2011	315	5
Total	7.472	68



Women Leading Change

- Thailand Biorisk Management Champions
 - Siripan Wongwanich spearheaded new legislation to control use of pathogens
 - Gained support from Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Public Health
 - Participation by Her Royal Highness Princess Chulabhorn
 - Bridge between senior policy level and lab workers



And many more....

Women as Good Leaders

- Able to pull together a diverse group of people and work together towards a common biosafety/biosecurity mission
 - Women are team builders, collaborative, participatory
 - Read situations accurately and look at all sides of the argument
- Take risks, embrace innovation, explore new possibilities
- Work harder to overcome challenges & setbacks



Women Biosafety Champions

- The global community is supporting and championing their efforts
- IFBA Biosafety Heroes
 - Identify and celebrate individuals who make significant contributions to biosafety/biosecurity under challenging conditions often with few resources
- 14 awards have been given since 2011
 - 8 women



Intercultural Competence in Women

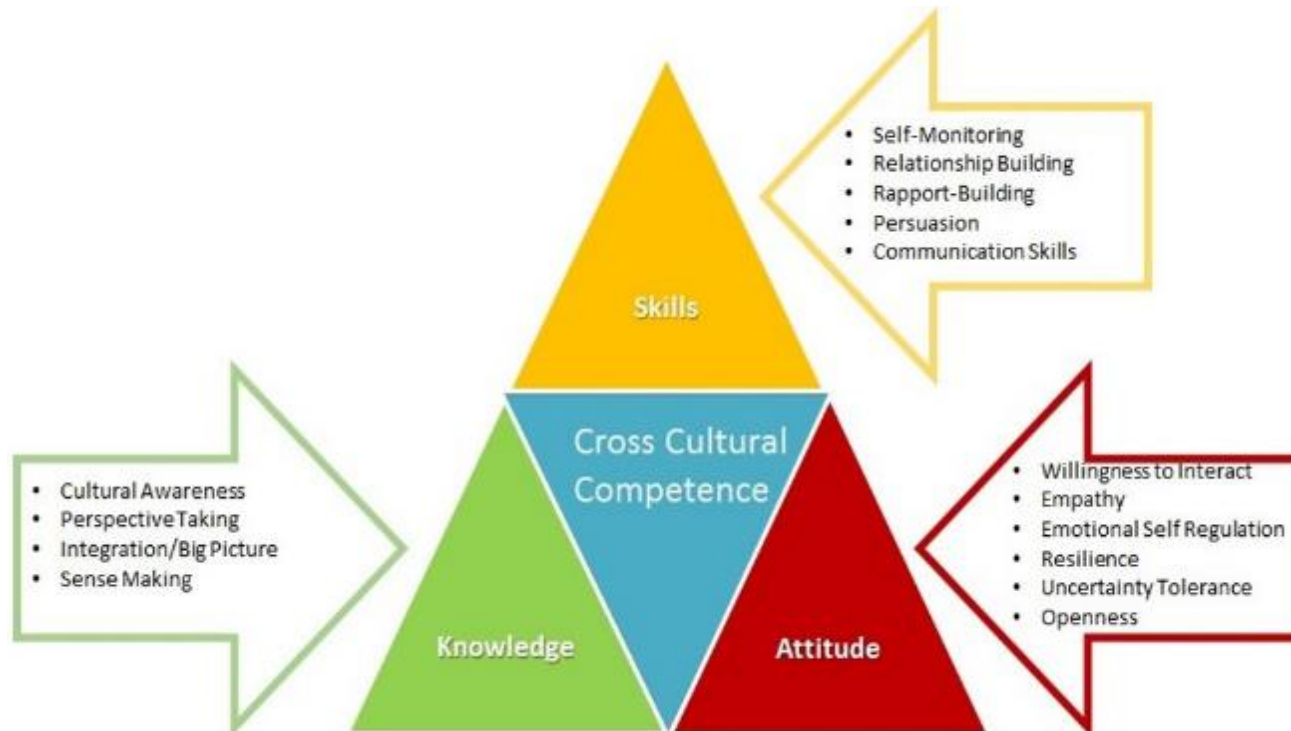
- We are diverse global community and can we see all sides?
- Many women have an intercultural, global mindset
 - Understand culturally-learned differences and embrace cultural diversity
 - Understand how we make assumptions and judgements based on our own point of view



"Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid"
Albert Einstein

Intercultural Competence in Women

- Women have the right skills, attitude and knowledge for intercultural competence



Intercultural Competence in Women

- Creating culturally competent Biosafety Associations
 - Recognize the power and influence of culture within their associations
 - Don't assume that all members share the same approaches or beliefs
 - Promote cultural competence among their leadership and members
- BACAC example
 - Bringing together 10 countries



Intercultural Competence in Women

- BACAC President and other women leaders in organization are creating a culturally competent and inclusive association



Visioning the Future of Biosafety and Biosecurity in Central Asia



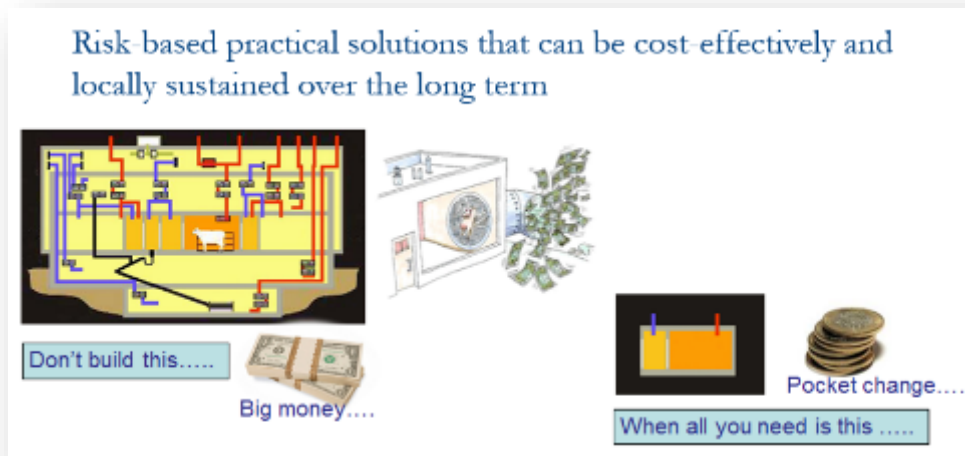
"The conference setting with lots of group work sessions was very useful to coordinate our work and priorities with different people and countries – and we have achieved some really good results!"



"We have done a really creative and good job exchanging our experience, sharing expertise and most importantly, we achieved a common understanding"

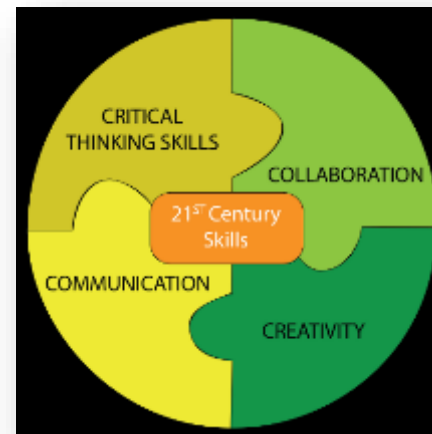
Women as Critical Thinkers

- We've developed **better** approaches to biosafety issues
 - Shift from once dominant knowledge-based profession towards a **risk-based approach** to biosafety
 - Flexibility, ingenuity, critical thinking is leading to affordable & sustainable biosafety solutions



Women as Critical Thinkers

- Risk-based solutions require us to make sound judgements that best meets the local needs of an ever-changing workplace
- Focus on applying knowledge in new situations
 - Higher level of learning, not memorizing and recall of information
- Requires critical thinking skills
 - mindset of inquiry, effective problem-solving, persistence
 - intellectual humility (we are not all knowing & can learn)



Am I a Critical Thinker?

3. Some months have 31 days, how many have 28?

- ☐ One month and that is February
- ☐ February, every 4 years.
- ☐ All months have (at least) 28 days
- ☐ None of the above

5. Why can't a man living in the USA be buried in Canada?

- ☐ The Canadian Government does not allow Americans to be buried in Canada.
- ☐ The man is not dead yet!
- ☐ It is a trick question and the man is a Canadian living in America.
- ☐ The man is living between the border.

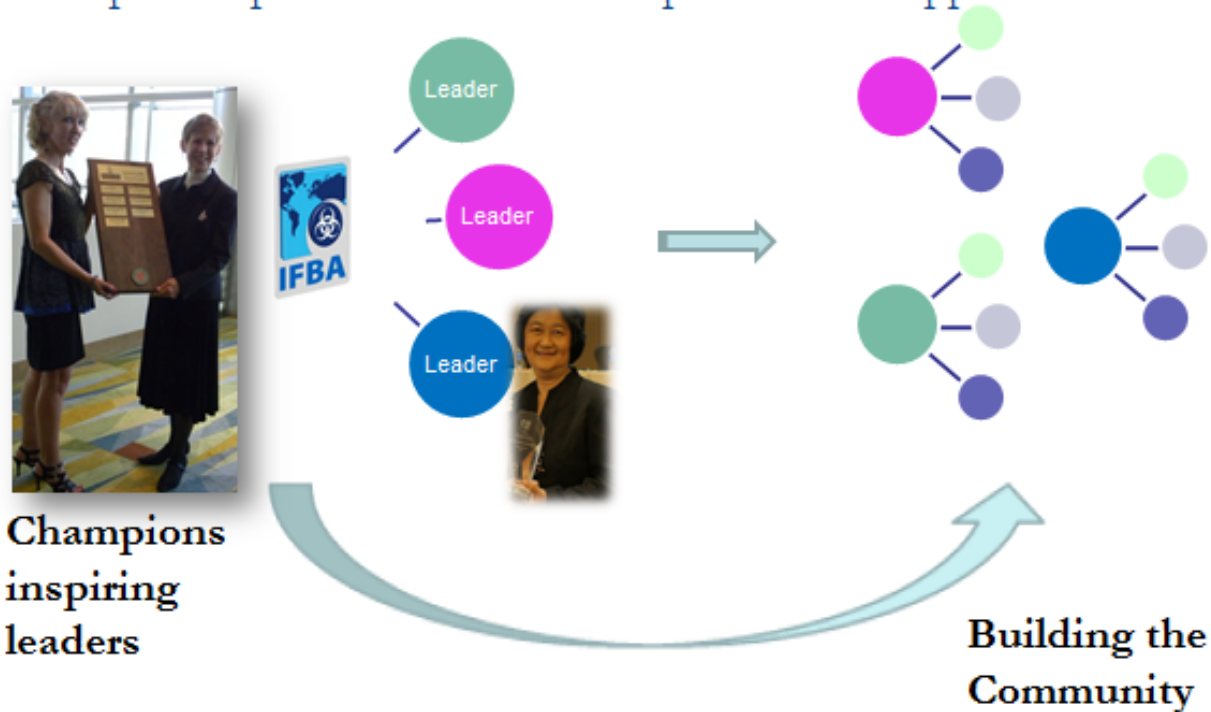
10. A man builds a house rectangular in shape. All sides have southern exposure. A bear walks by the house. What color is the bear? Why? (This one could drive you nuts and should only be attempted by those with high self-esteem. If you are seeing a therapist, DO NOT ATTEMPT THIS QUESTION!)

- ☐ ...black...bears are black
- ☐ ...white...
- ☐ ...brown...the house is on a steep slope
- ☐ There is no answer and this is a stupid question.

Towards A New Era

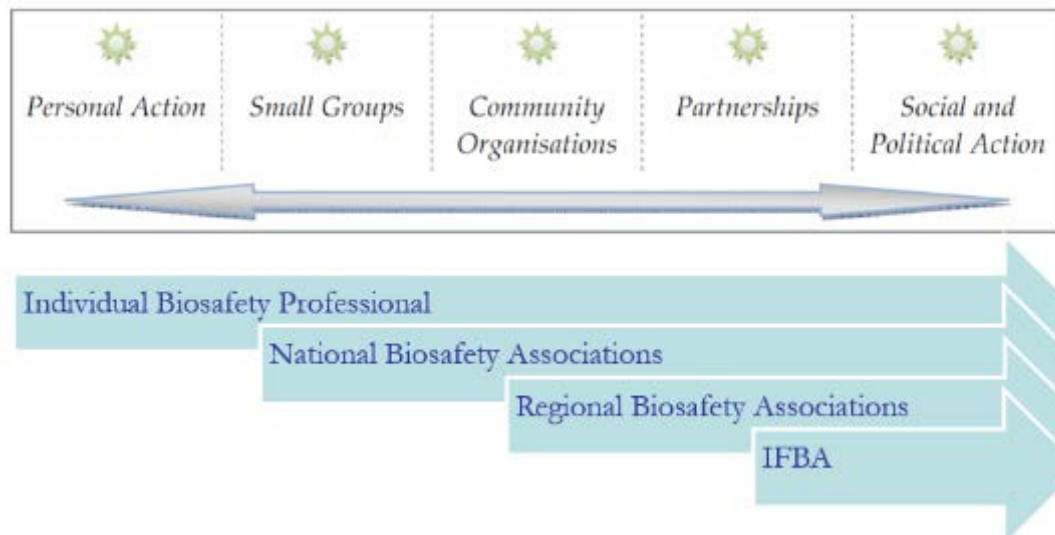
- Continue to seek out and support women leaders

- Perpetual optimism is a force multiplier – “The Ripple Effect”



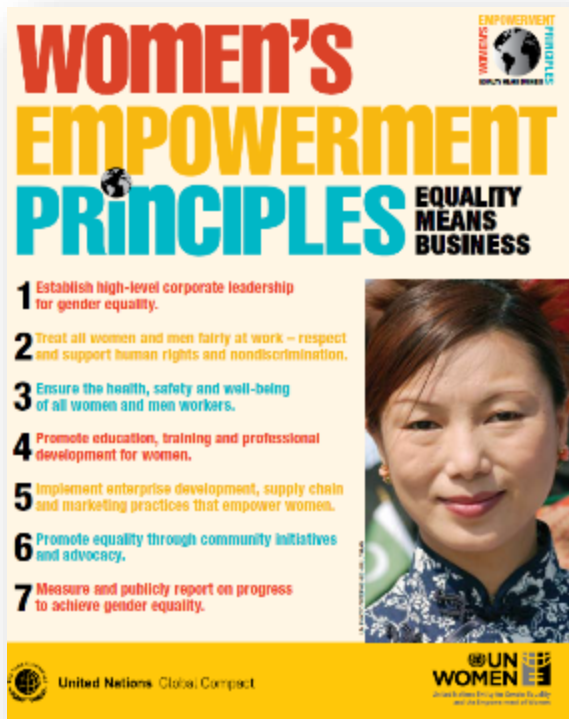
Towards A New Era

- Empowerment of these champion women as leaders in biosafety and biosecurity at all levels
 - It cannot be bestowed by others, but must be gained by those who seek it
 - Those who have the power, and those that want it, must work together to create the conditions to make empowerment of women in this field possible



Towards A New Era

- Incorporate Women's Empowerment Principles into the practice of our Biosafety Associations



- Clearly define and promote the case for advancing gender equality within IFBA and the field of biosafety/biosecurity
- Bring the broadest pool of women talent to our work
- Create strategic partnerships between our associations & women's organizations that support women in civil society
- Platform on new IFBA website to help women in our profession to connect to each other, share information & advice
- Designate a board member to champion women & promote equal opportunities among our associations

Towards A New Era

- Encourage our corporate members to sign onto the Women's Empowerment Principles' CEO Statement of Support

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PRINCIPLES

CEO Statement of Support Engages Business Leaders and Companies

The Women's Empowerment Principles' CEO Statement of Support (see below) enables business leaders to commit publicly to align company policies to advance gender equality. By signing, CEOs signal their intention to integrate and implement the Women's Empowerment Principles from the board room, to the workplace, along the supply chain to the community.

We, business leaders from across the globe, express support for advancing equality between women and men to:

- Bring the broadest pool of talent to our endeavours;
- Further our companies' competitiveness;
- Meet our corporate responsibility and sustainability commitments;
- Model behaviour within our companies that reflects the society we would like for our employees, fellow citizens and families;
- Encourage economic and social conditions that provide opportunities for women and men, girls and boys; and
- Foster sustainable development in the countries in which we operate.

Therefore, we welcome the provisions of the Women's Empowerment Principles – Equality Means Business, produced and disseminated by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and the United Nations

Global Compact. The Principles present seven steps that business and other sectors can take to advance and empower women.

Equal treatment of women and men is not just the right thing to do – it is also good for business.

The full participation of women in our enterprises and in the larger community makes sound business sense now and in the future. A broad concept of sustainability and corporate responsibility that embraces women's empowerment as a key goal will benefit us all. The seven steps of the Women's Empowerment Principles will help us realize these opportunities.

We encourage business leaders to join us and use the Principles as guidance for actions that we can all take in the workplace, marketplace and community to empower women and benefit our companies and societies. We will strive to use sex-disaggregated data in our sustainability reporting to communicate our progress to our own stakeholders.

Please join us.

