

VID Colloquium

On the Role of Female Health for Economic Development

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We analyze the economic consequences for less developed countries of investing in female health. In a theoretical framework, where parents trade off the number of children against investments in their education, we show that better female health speeds up the demographic transition and thereby the take-off toward sustained economic growth. In contrast, solely male health improvements delay the transition and take-off because *ceteris paribus* they increase the gender health gap. We illustrate the analytical results numerically for two stylized less developed economies that differ only in the gap between male and female health. According to our results, investing in female health is an important lever for development policies.

About the presenter

Michael Kuhn is a senior researcher at Wittgenstein Centre (IIASA, VID/ ÖAW, WU) and Vienna Institute of Demography since 2008. In 2001, he has received a doctorate in economics from the University of Rostock, Germany. In the meantime he has held positions at the Centre of Health Economics, University of York, UK (1999-2004; lectureship) and at the Max-Planck-Institute for Demographic Research / University of Rostock, Germany (2005-2008; junior professorship). His research interests lie in the area of health and population economics, this research having resulted in publications, *inter alia*, in the *Journal of Health Economics*, *Economics Letters*, *Journal of Mathematical Economics*, *Demographic Research* and *Theoretical Population Biology*. Currently, he holds a 3-year Austrian Science Fund stand-alone grant on “Medical Progress, Health Expenditure and Population Ageing” (03/ 2014-03/ 2017). He is co-organiser of the annual (since 2006) ‘European Workshops on Labour Markets and Demographic Change’.

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