Women in Global Health: Chapters

Concept note

A global movement with the largest network of women and allies working to challenge power and privilege for gender equity in health.
Women in Global Health (WGH) is an organization built on a global movement with the largest network of women and allies working to challenge power and privilege for gender equity in health. It is a US 501(c)(3) started in 2015, which has grown to include over 70,000 supporters in 90 countries and has 40 official chapters, with a strong presence in low- and middle-income countries. WGH chapters have been established in Australia, Bangladesh, Benin, Bolivia, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Côte D'Ivoire, Egypt, Finland, Germany, Guinea, India, Ireland, Kenya, Malawi, Netherlands, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Philippines, Portugal, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Togo, Uganda, UK, USA, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. WGH also has regional affiliates in Latin America, Europe, and West Africa.

WGH chapters are vibrant multi-sectoral ‘coalitions of coalitions’ with members from governments, non-governmental organizations, women’s associations, academia, and frontline health workers who drive gender-transformative policy change. WGH chapters are deeply engaged in influencing the WGH policy agenda and WGH has in place mechanisms that allow chapters to participate in setting this agenda.

**Why do Women in Global Health chapters exist?**

Four early-career women who met on Twitter in 2015 were brought together by a common goal, to work together to achieve representation of women in global health leadership. That is how WGH was born.
Women make up almost 70% of the healthcare workforce yet occupy less than 25% of the most influential leadership positions. Their contribution to health systems is monumental, yet the majority of their work is either underpaid, unpaid or unrecognized. This creates an inequitable health system that impacts the health of all.

Through its chapters, Women in Global Health is:

A GLOBAL MOVEMENT: We are a network of women and allies from across geographies and backgrounds, fighting for equity in global health for all genders.

A PLATFORM FOR ALL VOICES: We elevate the voices and visibility of those affected by gender inequity in health, bringing to the forefront those who have been heard least.

A CATALYTIC FORCE: We position, connect, and support women and their allies as agents of change, advocating for gender transformative policies and practices and holding leaders accountable to their commitments.

A STRATEGIC DISRUPTER: We challenge power and privilege at all levels to transform the systems, structures, and norms that perpetuate gender inequality in health.

Chapter Highlights

Thought leadership: WGH chapter members continue to take up opportunities to share their experiences and knowledge on different health issues with key stakeholders and decision-makers in health

- WGH chapters joined WGH’s informal delegations to the WHA (35 signups) and GEF (200+ signups) to advocate for gender equality in global health.
- In 2021, 52 WGH chapter members from 19 chapters took up global speaking engagements at different events.
- In 2021, WGH chapters hosted a total of 41 events throughout the year. All these events were platforms to bring together stakeholders, chapter members, and the public to collaborate and discuss different themes relating to gender equity in health.
WGH chapter members have been working collectively to influence their governments’ policy and decision-making.

- The Minister of Health in Burkina Faso signed a letter signifying the Ministry’s commitment to ensuring gender equity in health leadership and systems in Burkina Faso. This was also a commitment to support Women in Global Health to advance women’s leadership.
- WGH Chile convened a group of 150 civil society leaders working with the President of the Senate to support the establishment of “Special COVID-19 Health Emergency Bonus” amounting to 300 USD, paid in a single installment and not subject to taxation.

WGH chapter members have continued to take up leadership roles in different spaces:

- WGH Zambia and WGH India: Apolitical 100 Most Influential Academics in Government.

Chapter Collaboration: WGH Chapters are a safe space to network, collaborate, and collectively organize for change

- There are 4 regional affiliates: Francophone West Africa Initiative, Africa Hub, European Initiative, and Latin America Initiative.
- Ways of collaboration include mentorship to pipeline chapters, events, and joint publications. We also host monthly town hall meetings and bi-annual retreats.

Why join/start a WGH chapter?

Being a WGH Chapter has many benefits, as one becomes a member of an established global organization and movement. These benefits include:

- An opportunity, as part of a vibrant global movement, to influence health decision-making at national and global levels.
- A platform to connect with women in global health in your community and identify opportunities to advance women’s leadership and gender equality.
- An opportunity to bring visibility and recognition to women shaping global health programming, policy, and advocacy in your community.
- New connections across issues and organizations working in global health in your community and globally.
- Raising awareness of global health decision-making about the realities for women in global health from your perspective and having dialogues on gender, diversity, intersectionality, and power relations.
• Advancing gender transformative leadership in global health organizations in your community.
• Fostering the exchange of knowledge and learning across diverse backgrounds of age, geography, race, discipline, and other identities.
• Gaining skills and expertise to practice gender transformative leadership, and apply a power and privilege lens in global health.
• Collaborating with other WGH chapters to build the global WGH movement for collective action to achieve gender equality in global health leadership and therefore, better global health.

JOIN THE MOVEMENT

Learn more: www.womeningh.org
Follow us: @WomeninGH #WomeninGH
Contact us: membership@womeningh.org