



2023 Policy Priorities

Members of the Women in Global Health Community, Supporters, and Allies,

The start of 2023 marks the start of the fourth year of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2023 health will continue to be centre stage at global political level. Heads of state and government will meet in three health-related UN High Level Meetings to agree global action on Universal Health Coverage; Pandemic Preparedness and Response; and Tuberculosis. The pandemic has devastated economies and health systems and deepened the inequality between and within countries, especially gender inequality. 2023 will be an opportunity for the world to regroup, take stock and get global health goals back on track. Women in Global Health will be advocating for investing in gender transformative change as the only way to secure strong health systems and future global health security. There can be no compromise on gender equity in global health. In 2023 Women in Global Health will be focusing on five main priorities:

1 **Gender equal and diverse leadership in global health based on Gender Transformative Leadership**

Equal leadership for women in health is not a luxury, it will drive better health for all.



2 **New social contract for women health and care workers**

Women make up majority of healthcare workforce facing gender-based inequalities and burnout. They need fair pay, safe and decent work and harrasment free workplaces.



3 **Gender responsive Universal Health Coverage (UHC)**

Gender-responsive UHC will transform the health and lives of billions of people, especially women and girls.



4 **Gender Equity in Health Emergency Preparedness and Response**

Gender equity is central to strong preparation and response to health emergencies. We must learn from COVID-19.



5 **Movement and alliance building for gender equity in global health**

We need to resist the backlash on gender equality, and the rights of women and girls, because gender equality in global health creates stronger health systems and global health security.



1 Gender equal and diverse leadership in global health based on Gender Transformative Leadership

At the start of the pandemic women were side-lined in global health decision-making, with women from the Global South particularly underrepresented. Women have lost ground since the pandemic began. In 2023 we will focus on leadership at all levels from CHWs to global governance, issuing two new reports asking women in health what leadership means for them. Equal leadership for women in health is not a luxury, it will drive better health for all.

Sign up for our [newsletter](#), follow our [reports](#), attend our [events](#), and join Women in Global Health to call for gender equal leadership in global health. Campaign with us to ensure all leaders in global health are gender transformative leaders, intentionally addressing gender inequality in health.



2 New social contract for women health and care workers

Women health workers, who make up 70% of the workforce, are burnout and exhausted after three years on the pandemic frontlines. There are estimates that 1 in 5 health workers, especially nurses, are planning to leave the profession in high income countries.

WGH will report on the evidence and advocate for urgent action on gender equity to stem this 'Great Resignation' of women health workers and the subsequent 'Great Migration' as health workers from low-income countries leave to fill vacancies in better resourced countries.



Against the background of a global shortage of more than 10 million health workers, we cannot afford to lose even one health worker from the profession. This year we will continue to convene the international community in the [Gender Equal Health and Care Workforce Initiative \(GEHCWI\)](#), which we co-lead with France, to implement existing global commitments and agree on practical steps to achieve gender equity in the health and care workforce. More than 40 governments and international agencies have joined the Initiative.

Follow GEHCWI, read our reports, attend our events and raise your voice with ours to ensure that the contribution of women health workers to global health is recognized, valued and manifested in a new social contract based on equal leadership and safe and decent work for women.

3 Gender-responsive Universal Health Coverage (UHC)

Gender-responsive UHC will transform the health and lives of billions of people, especially women and girls. In 2023 WGH will campaign to retain the strong commitments to gender equality, equity in leadership, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and gender equity in the health workforce in the 2019 UHC Political Declaration, and build on these to ensure the Political Declaration from the 2023 High-Level Meeting (HLM) puts UHC back on track. Women must have an equal role in leadership of UHC at all levels if it is to succeed.



In 2023 the Women in Global Health network will campaign at national, regional and global levels to ensure gender equality is central in the Political Declaration from the 2023 UHC HLM. We will also campaign as a co-convenor of the Alliance for Gender Equality and UHC and raise our collective voice for gender equality, women's leadership, SRHR and for the rights of women health workers. Join us, join the Alliance, follow our campaign and ask your government to champion gender equity in UHC.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ALLIANCE](#)

4 Gender Equity in Health Emergency Preparedness and Response

This year, WGH is engaging with global processes on preparedness and response to health emergencies - Pandemic Accord, International Health Regulations, Financial Intermediary Fund, High-Level Meeting on Pandemic Preparedness and Response. We are advocating for continuation of essential health services, including SRHR, and the protection of health workers to be central in these political agreements. Gender equity is central to strong preparation and response to health emergencies. We must learn from COVID-19.

Follow our advocacy, campaign with us and ensure your government knows why gender equity and the leadership of women must be central in future pandemic preparedness and response.



5

Movement and alliance building for gender equity in global health

WGH will continue to expand our own global network of 45 WGH chapters and build alliances to push back the global backlash on women's rights in health. Some countries have made impressive progress on the rights of women and girls but others have regressed significantly with growing restrictions on SRHR, including women's access to safe abortion. We will only achieve UHC and other global health goals when we address all areas of health and rights, including SRHR, and treat safe abortion as health care.



Women and girls cannot achieve their full potential and health if they are excluded from wider society and the economy. Women health workers are critical to the delivery of health services for all people, especially women. In 2023, with our partners, we will fiercely resist the backlash on gender equality, and the rights of women and girls.

Join the WGH movement, join our alliances and campaign with us against the backlash. Our voices are louder when we speak together. In 2023 WGH will aim high, challenge power and privilege, and not compromise because gender equality in global health creates stronger health systems and global health security. We are creating a better future, not living in the past.

Sincerely,

Dr. Roopa Dhatt

**Executive Director & Co-Founder
Women in Global Health**

Contact us at info@womeningh.org