

## BEIJING25 SYMPOSIUM THE "TRIPLE DIVIDEND" OF INVESTING IN A GENDER-EQUAL HEALTH WORKFORCE

Generation Equality Forum, July 2020, Paris



Women leaders in global health gathered in Somalia in January 2019 to celebrate the first WGH chapter in Africa.

Women in Global Health (WGH) is proposing to partner with the Government of France to co-host the first-ever Symposium to develop the next generation of policies with the power to achieve gender equality in the health workforce in every country by 2030.

The one day "Investing in a Gender-Equal Health Workforce" Symposium will be part of the **Generation Equality Forum** in Paris from 7 to 10 July 2020 and will draw 100 participants from a representative group of governments, civil society, multilateral organisations, philanthropy and the private sector to draft specific policy recommendations for a gender-equal health workforce. The recommendations will be delivered to Heads of State at the **Beijing+25 UN High Level Meeting** during the 75<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly in September 2020.

The Symposium will focus on the development of a new portfolio of policies that can break down five of the major barriers to gender equality in the health workforce including:

- (a) low levels of pay and the gender pay gap
- (b) scourge of unpaid work
- (c) occupational segregation
- (d) levels of sexual harassment and violence
- (e) the low proportion of women among health leaders

Policies that can reverse these problems, if implemented by governments and embraced by the private sector and civil society, have the potential to deliver a "triple-dividend" - better health, gender equality and economic gains - accelerating achievement of three of the Sustainable Development Goals.

As one of the largest employers of women - women hold 70% of healthcare jobs - the health workforce has enormous influence on social and economic development in every country. Put simply, a health workforce that

can meet the growing demand for healthcare - a massive 18 million more jobs are needed by 2030 according to the United Nations<sup>1</sup> - by offering women well-paid jobs and an equal share of leadership roles will accelerate universal health coverage (UHC), gender equality, and inclusive economic growth. Further, when 50% of health leadership roles are held by women - the current proportion is 25% - it should be possible to make rapid progress on pay, occupational segregation and sexual harassment and violence.

The Symposium would be co-chaired by a leading representative from WGH and the Government of France and the provisional program could run as follows:

### **“Investing in a Gender-Equal Health Workforce” Symposium**

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| 9:00-10:00  | welcome  |
| 10:00-11:00 | plenary discussion   |
| 11:00-1:00  | Five policy drafting sessions<br>breakout 1: pay and the gender pay gap<br>breakout 2: unpaid work<br>breakout 3: occupational segregation<br>breakout 4: sexual harassment and violence<br>breakout 5: leadership gap |
| 1:00-2:00   | working lunch  |
| 2:00-4:00   | drafting policy recommendations plenary  |
| 4:00-5:00   | closing  |

Secretariat support for the event would be provided by the WHO Gender Equity Hub for the global health workforce, which is co-chaired by WHO and WGH and would address many of the issues raised in the 2019 report, *“Delivered by Women, Led by Men: A Gender and Equity Analysis of the Global Health Workforce”*. Further, the Symposium is well positioned to deliver on the 2019 **Political Declaration of the High-level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage**: “Universal health coverage: moving together to build a healthier world” in which governments committed to addressing gender inequity in the health workforce.<sup>2</sup>

Following the Symposium WGH would launch the **“Triple-Dividend” Gender-Equal Health Workforce Campaign** which would petition government leaders to endorse five policy priorities targeting each of the barriers outlined above. WGH would write to 100 health leaders inviting their endorsement of the five policies and execute a social media campaign targeted at health leaders and stakeholders to build support for these policies and to keep the pressure on health decision-makers.

Key performance indicators for the Symposium include:

1. Release of Symposium Declaration with five policy priorities for a Gender-Equal Health Workforce by 2030, in July 2020
2. Launch of the “Triple-Dividend” Gender-Equal Health Workforce Campaign, August 2020
3. Number of health leaders publicly endorsing one or more of the policy priorities by September 2020
4. Number of government adopting one or more of the policy priorities by September 2021
5. Number of social media impressions for the Gender-Equal Health Workforce Campaign, December 2020

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<sup>1</sup> World Health Organization (WHO). Working for health and growth: investing in the health workforce. Report of the High-Level Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth. 2016. <http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/250047/1/9789241511308-eng.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> See <https://www.un.org/pga/73/wp-content/uploads/sites/53/2019/07/FINAL-draft-UHC-Political-Declaration.pdf>