



WomenLift Health Global Conference 2024

RE-IMAGINING LEADERSHIP:
NEW APPROACHES TO NEW CHALLENGES

PARTNERS | COLLABORATORS | ALLIES

CONFERENCE REPORT



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Global health is delivered by women but led by men. We need to help women find their space in leadership and celebrate them for what they have done

Dr. Matshidiso Moeti
WHO Regional Director
for Africa





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A NOTE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR



The last 50 years have seen considerable advances in gender equality. However, women are still drastically underrepresented in global health leadership roles, accounting for over 70 percent of the health workforce but only a quarter of leadership positions.

Persistent inequity in representation not only denies talented, capable women the opportunity to lead, it limits our collective ability to tackle the world's most pressing challenges by excluding a significant portion of the talent pool from key decision-making roles.

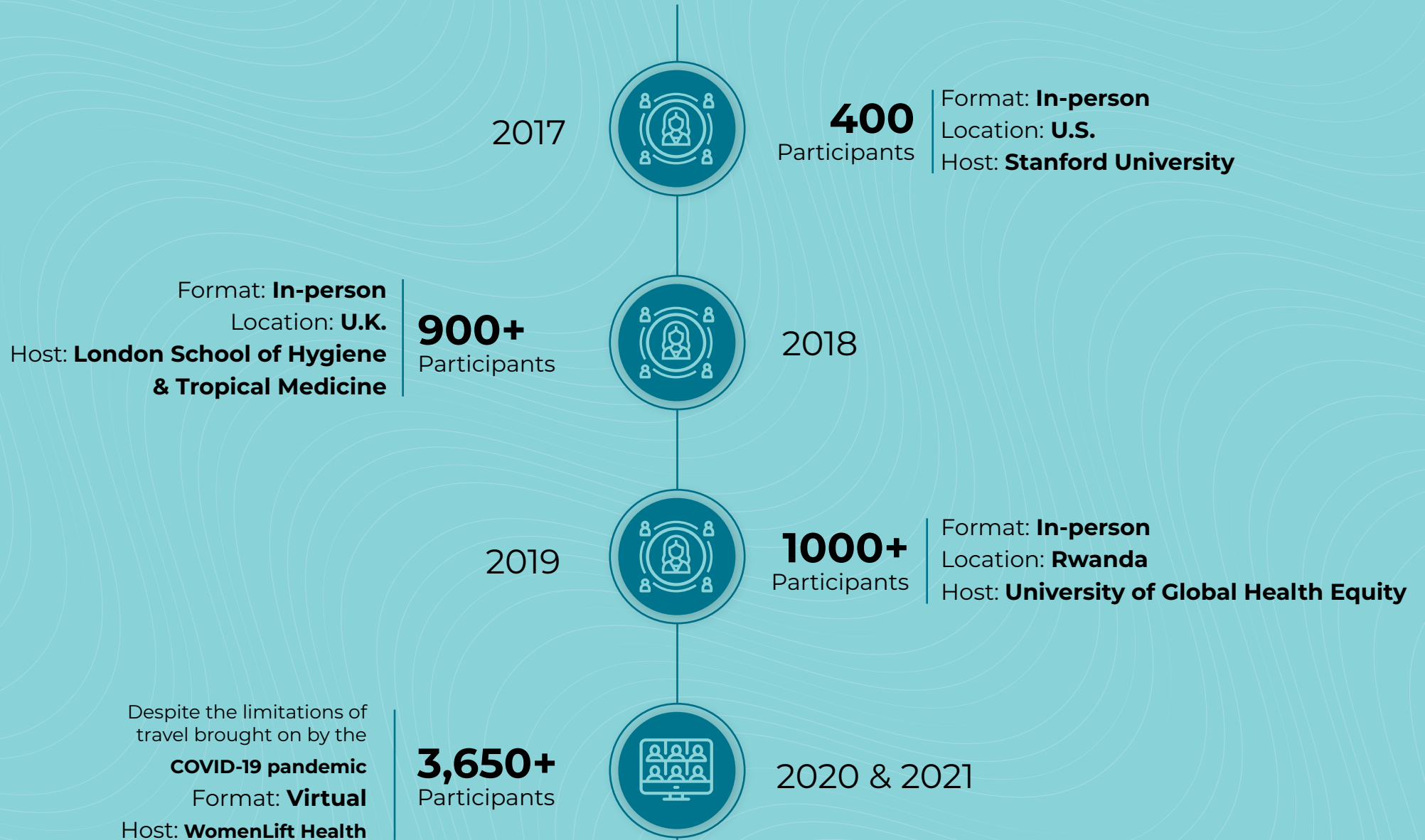
This is what makes WomenLift Health's work so crucial. The power of inclusive leadership goes beyond just gender balance—it is a strategic move that holds the promise of better health outcomes for all. Tapping into the richness of diverse perspectives to design and implement sustainable solutions to the challenges we face today, and those we will face in the years to come, can bring us closer to realizing our vision of a healthier, more prosperous world for present and future generations.

That's why the WomenLift Health Global Conference, a bi-annual convening that brings together a diverse selection of champions for gender equality in global health leadership, is so important. By advocating for diversity, equity and inclusion, tirelessly championing women's leadership, and recognizing the contributions of men allies, WomenLift Health is sowing the seeds of change.

WomenLift Health's work builds on a decades-long gender equality movement that has empowered millions of girls and women around the world. But many more still lack access to equal opportunities to lead. With the continued support of partners, allies, and collaborators, we can reset the balance of power to reimagine the face of global health leadership so that each one of us, no matter who we are or where we come from, has the opportunity to thrive.

Dr. Yasmin Ali Haque
Global Advisory Board Chair
WomenLift Health

The Journey of the WomenLift Health Global Conference



FOREWORD



Last April, in the vibrant heart of Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, over 1,100 women leaders, men allies, partners, and champions from more than 40 countries gathered at the 2024 WomenLift Health Global Conference. I am deeply inspired by the energy, vision, and collaboration that emerged from this convening. Together, we celebrated the power of women’s leadership in health, confronted the complex challenges facing our communities, and fueled a movement that ensures women are empowered as agents of change.

This conference reiterated our commitment to expanding the power and influence of talented women in global health and catalyzing systemic change to achieve gender equality in health leadership. The theme of the conference, “Reimagining Leadership: New Approaches to New Challenges,” could not have been more timely. As the world faces increasingly complex, interconnected health challenges, from pandemics to climate change, having women at the decision-making table is not optional – it is imperative. Women’s leadership brings a different understanding of the issues and challenges faced by half the population, fosters greater collaboration and innovation, and leads to better health outcomes for all.

Traditionally, global health conferences have taken place in high-income countries, creating barriers for those most affected by health crises, especially women from low- and middle-income countries. To address this inequity, the conference was held in Tanzania, reducing travel costs and visa challenges for attendees from the global south. Situating the 2024 conference in Africa allowed for more meaningful engagement and collaboration, and provided a platform for African women leaders to share their experiences, insights, and expertise with a global audience. Diversity in representation is key to improving health outcomes, achieving equality and advancing our vision of a better world for all.

On behalf of the entire WomenLift Health family, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to our host country and Her Excellency President Samia Suluhu Hassan, the first female president of the United Republic of Tanzania. President Hasan’s trailblazing leadership and commitment to driving progress for health and gender equality serves as a powerful example and inspiration to women – and men – everywhere. It was an honor to have President Hasan’s support as we hosted this conference in Tanzania, and to have His Excellency Dr. Philip Isdor Mpango, Vice President of the United Republic of Tanzania, officially open the conference. I also extend my warmest thanks to the conference’s financial sponsors, whose support was critical to the success of the event: the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, RBM Partnership to End Malaria, and Co-Impact. Finally, to all speakers and participants, I thank you for sharing your passion, stories, and insights – your contributions have made this conference a tremendous success.

Amie Batson
President
WomenLift Health

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2024 WomenLift Health Global Conference was the first ever in-person conference following the rebrand from the **“Women Leaders in Global Health Conference”**, which was held from 2017-2021. The first Women Leaders in Global Health Conference was hosted by Stanford University in 2017, followed by the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine in 2018, and the University of Global Health Equity in 2019. In 2020 and 2021, WomenLift Health hosted virtual conferences, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Like all the previous editions, the 2024 conference served as a rallying point for gender equality in global health. It took place between 6-8 April 2024 at the Julius Nyerere International Convention Center in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, bringing together more than 1,100 participants from 41 countries to explore what redefining leadership looks like in action under the theme of Reimagining Leadership: New Approaches to New Challenges.

The convening celebrated women and men who are demonstrating transformative leadership and allyship and pioneering bold approaches to policies and programs that are moving the needle on gender equality in health. Through a carefully curated mix of plenaries, panels, workshops, parallel sessions and networking moments, delegates from across health, gender, climate and other development fields were able to share ideas and gain tangible skills to add impetus to the global movement to transform the face of leadership.

Honest conversations and actionable insights were the hallmark of the three-day conference. Creation and expansion of networks were facilitated through dedicated networking sessions and spaces, while carefully curated workshops encouraged the transfer of skills, with the aim of empowering more women from diverse backgrounds to rise to leadership positions and sit at the decision-making table.

In addition, WomenLift Health leveraged the opportunity to extend its support to Tanzanian businesses by working with local service providers such as Penuel's Investment (event management company) and Hodari Christian School (daycare services), as well as designating spaces for exhibitors to showcase their products and services, including the Doris Mollel Foundation, Uongozi Institute and The Mabinti Centre, an organization that empowers women recovering from fistula with vocational skills and entrepreneurial training to start their own businesses.



1,100+
PARTICIPANTS

41+
COUNTRIES

Theme:
**REIMAGINING LEADERSHIP:
NEW APPROACHES TO NEW CHALLENGES.**

CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES



Reimagine health leadership and what good leaders look, act and sound like.



Highlight the importance of women's leadership and the diversity of experience, perspectives, and expertise it brings toward improving health outcomes for all.



Offer a platform for honest, concrete conversation and actions for individuals to take – with a particular focus on allyship to catalyze gender equality.



Equip emerging and established women leaders and male allies with tangible leadership skills through interactive workshops and trainings.



Catalyze concrete action for change.



Establish the conference as a global platform to share knowledge, inspiration and tangible skills to build active connections to advance every woman's journey to leadership in health.

CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE

1,100+
Participants

03
Days



05
Plenaries

14
Parallel sessions



41
Countries Represented

110
speakers, moderators and facilitators



13
Number of children who accompanied their parents

06 Months
Age of youngest conference attendee



04
Number of babysitters in the crèche

CONFERENCE WEBSITE

6.8k
Users



35k
Page views

WOMENLIFT HEALTH WEBSITE

31k
Users



89k
Page views

MOBILE APP

625
Attendees used the mobile app

397,321
No. of user actions

7,537
No. of messages sent

28,841
No. of views on agenda sessions



71.6%
Engagement rate

SOCIAL MEDIA

MENTIONS

2.7K

Number of times #WLHGC2024 and secondary hashtag(s) were mentioned

ENGAGEMENT

12.4K

Total number of actions such as likes, shares, comments

REACH

43.5M

Number of unique users who saw a post at least once

TRADITIONAL MEDIA

50+

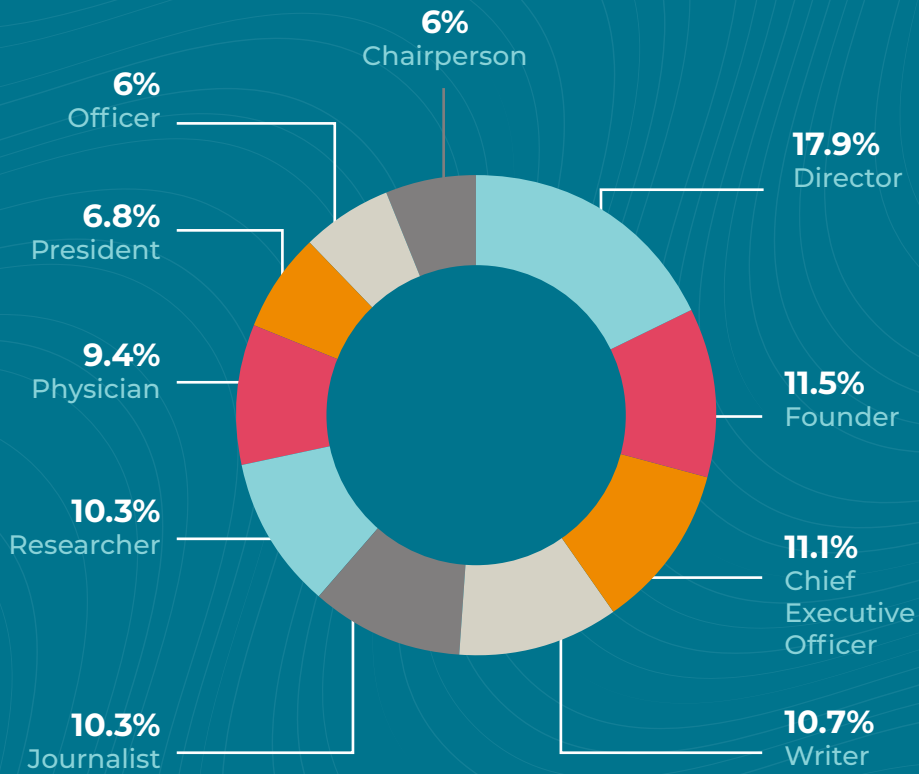
Journalists and bloggers attended

130+

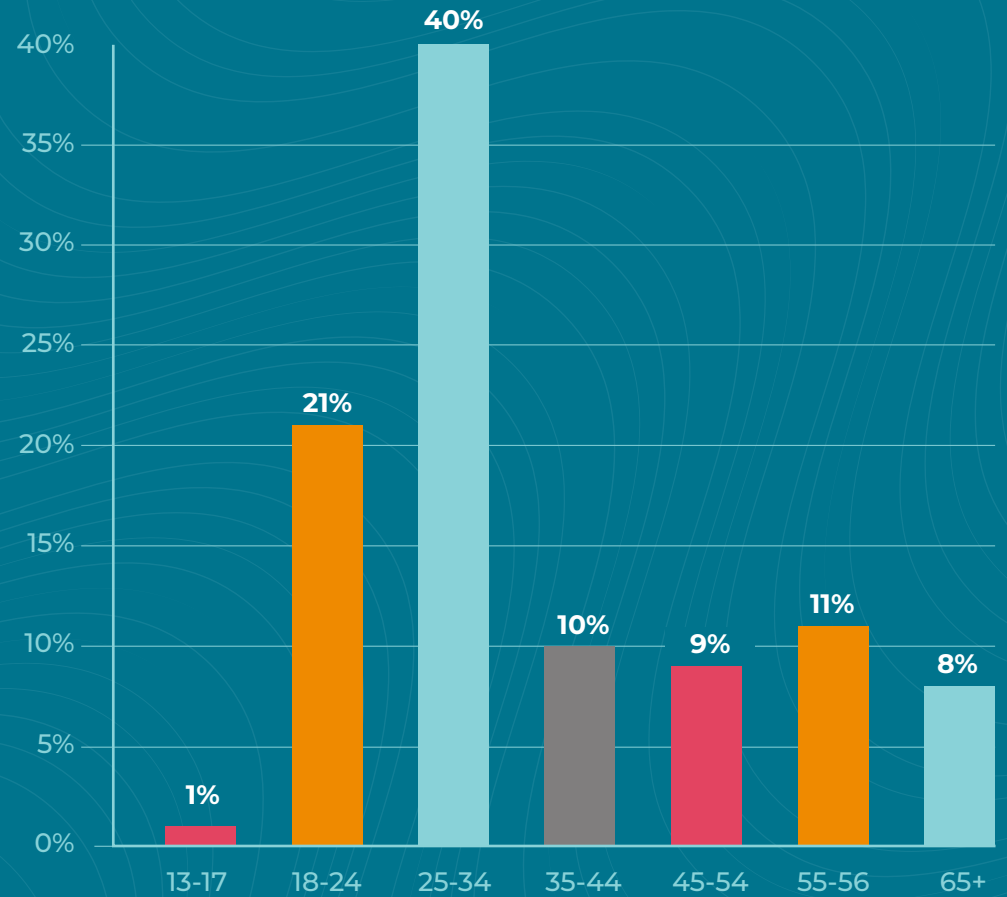
News articles, radio, TV and podcast interviews and mentions

AUDIENCE DEMOGRAPHICS

TOP OCCUPATIONS



AGE BREAKDOWN



OVERVIEW OF SESSIONS

The 2024 WomenLift Health Global Conference brought together **110 speakers, moderators and facilitators** from diverse fields including the public and private sectors, academia, civil society, multilateral organizations, philanthropy, arts, and media. Through well-curated sessions including 5 plenaries, 10 workshops and 14 parallel sessions, speakers sought to redefine transformative leadership through context-specific discussions that fostered a sense of global community, learning and passion.

The event was officially opened by **H.E. Dr. Philip Isdor Mpango, Vice President of the United Republic of Tanzania**, on behalf of H.E. President Samia Suluhu Hassan. Other notable leaders in attendance included **H.E. Dr. Jakaya Kikwete**, former President of Tanzania; **Rt. Hon. Helen Clark**, former Prime Minister of New Zealand; **Dr. Matshidiso Moeti**, Regional Director, WHO AFRO; **Dr. Anita Zaidi**, President, Gender Equality, Gates Foundation; **Hon. Ummu Mwalimu**, Minister for Health, Tanzania; and **Dr. Seif Abdallah Shekalaghe**, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Gender, Tanzania.

Women legislators and policymakers from Kenya and Nigeria were also in attendance, including: Members of Kenya's National Assembly, **Hon. Irene Mayaka**, **Hon. Pauline Lenguris**, and **Hon. Mary Maingi**; delegates from the Women in Leadership Advancement Network (WILAN), who included members of the Nigerian Council on Health **Dr. Salma Ibrahim-Anas**, Special Adviser to the President on Health and Chair of the Presidential Advisory Sub-Committee on Health; **Dr. Adedolapo Fasawe**, Mandate Secretary for Health and Environment in the Federal Capital Territory; **Dr. Ngozi Okoronkwo**, Honourable Commissioner for Health, Abia State, and Special Adviser to the Governor on Healthcare Delivery Services; **Hajiya Umma Kaltume Ahmed**, Honourable Commissioner for Health, Kaduna State; **Dr. Amina Ahmed El-Imam**, Honourable Commissioner for Health, Kwara State; **Dr. Tomi Coker**, Honourable Commissioner for Health, Ogun State; **Dr. Oluwasesimi Ajetunmobi**, Honourable Commissioner for Health, Oyo State; **Dr. Adaeze Oreh**, Honourable Commissioner for Health, Rivers State; **Hajiya Asabe Balarabe**, Honourable Commissioner for Health, Sokoto State; and **Dr. Aisha Mohammed Anka**, Honourable Commissioner for Health, Zamfara State.

110

Speakers, Moderators and Facilitators

05

Plenaries

10

Workshops

14

Parallel Sessions

MAINSTAGE SESSIONS

The five plenaries across the three days underscored the urgent need for gender equity in global health leadership, highlighting the key themes of transformative leadership and allyship while also emphasizing the importance of legislative measures and cultural change to increase women's representation in decision-making roles. Key discussions shone a spotlight on successful strategies, such as Tanzania's gender quotas and educational initiatives, while also addressing challenges like cultural biases and the necessity for collective action to dismantle barriers to women's advancement in leadership.



SPEAKERS

H.E. Dr. Jakaya Kikwete
Former President
of Tanzania

The Rt. Hon. Helen Clark
Former Prime Minister
of New Zealand

MODERATOR

Dr. Adanna Chukwuma
Senior Director
Visa Inc

PLENARY 1 - FIRESIDE CHAT: COLLECTIVE ACTION FOR GENDER EQUITY

This conversation outlined the urgency of centering gender equity in the world's response to emerging health threats. Drawing on their rich experiences and insights, the speakers discussed what it would take to incite collective action to address disparities in representation between men and women to elevate women to leadership positions in health for the benefit of all humanity. The session also highlighted the importance of putting in place legislative measures including gender quotas, addressing cultural norms, and inspiring collective action to advance gender parity.

Key Takeaways

- Urgent collective action is key to accelerating progress toward gender parity. It requires visionary leadership, commitment, accountability, policy advocacy, legislative measures and societal pressure to drive meaningful change.
- Legal frameworks that promote equal rights and opportunities for men and women, including access to property, financial services, and business ownership, play a significant role in dismantling barriers to women's advancement.
- Promoting positive portrayals of women in leadership can help address cultural norms and biases by challenging the harmful gender stereotypes that perpetuate inequality.



SPEAKERS

Dr. Anita Zaidi

President, Gender Equality Division
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Mary Rusimbi

Board Member & Founder Women
Fund Tanzania Trust

Dr. Michael A Charles

CEO
RBM Partnership to End Malaria

Dr. Shekalaghe Seif

Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Gender-Tanzania

MODERATOR

Sia Nowrojee

Senior Director, Girls & Women
Strategy, UN Foundation

PLENARY 2 - LEADERS PANEL: TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERSHIP IN A RAPIDLY EVOLVING WORLD

Now more than ever, the world needs visionary and transformational leaders to help navigate uncharted and complex territories. This means leaders who are willing to question established norms around leadership and do things differently. This panel explored what redefining leadership looks like in action in the health space and beyond, how to cultivate qualities needed, and how new approaches are vital to driving lasting change in organizations and society.

Speakers challenged established leadership norms and explored how they intersect with gender expectations, with a focus on redefining leadership in the health sector and beyond. Discussions covered the meaning of transformative leadership, emphasizing skills such as strategic thinking, empathy, and collaboration, while also highlighting the role of philanthropy and civil society in promoting gender equality. Key challenges identified included cultural norms and underfunding of gender equality efforts. The session concluded with a call for personal commitment and collaboration to reinforce gender equality and foster women's leadership across sectors.

Key Takeaways

- Transformative leadership is people-centered and encompasses excellence, equity, intentionality, collaboration, accountability, trust, empathy, humility and vision.
- Achieving gender equality in leadership requires a paradigm shift that centers gender in mainstream discourse and encourages organizations to be deliberate regarding issues that affect women
- Transformative leadership requires A.C.T.I.O.N:
 - A - Accelerate action toward transformative leadership
 - C - Commit to promote transformative leadership
 - T - Transform societal perceptions of gender equality
 - I - Innovate for gender equality and transformative leadership
 - O - Identify opportunities and seize them
 - N - Build your networks



PLENARY 3 - POLICIES THAT WORK

SPEAKERS

Dr. Rohini Anand
Founder and CEO
Rohini Anand LLC

Dr. Samukeliso Dube
Executive Director
FP 2030

Dr. Maliha Khan
Executive Director and CEO
Women Deliver

MODERATOR

Dr. Iris Mwanza
Deputy Director of Women in
Leadership, Gender Equality Division
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Despite growing public commitment to gender equality in the workplace there continues to be notably few women at the highest levels of leadership. Meaningfully changing existing power imbalances requires concrete actions within institutions, including policies and practices that create inclusive environments, respond to the unique sexual and reproductive health needs of women, address historic inequities around pay, and protect women from gender discrimination and harassment.

This panel shone a spotlight on the policies and practices creating more equitable workplaces and outlined why women's leadership is critical to institutional success. Speakers focused on advancing gender equality and women's leadership through policy advocacy, intersectional approaches, accountability, and allyship. In addition to highlighting the importance of systemic change within organizations, panelists spoke on the importance of engaging male allies and recognizing the intersectionality of gender with other identities such as race and ethnicity. The discussion also emphasized the role of youth leadership, dismantling patriarchal structures, and fostering collaborative efforts across various levels to empower women and promote gender equity in leadership roles.



Key Takeaways

- Organizational change is necessary to address systemic barriers to gender equality. Such change must include comprehensive strategies to challenge patriarchal norms and promote feminist principles, including through policy reforms and gender-sensitive legislation that foster equality.
- Strengthening partnerships and promoting inclusive leadership styles that seek to meaningfully engage youth and men in advocacy efforts are crucial actions for challenging traditional gender roles, disrupting patriarchal norms and promoting gender equality to achieve lasting progress.
- Youth leadership is a promising force for driving change and challenging existing hierarchies. Empowering young people to question traditional gender roles and advocate for equality is key to fostering a more inclusive society.
- Acknowledging the intersectionality of gender with other identities such as race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and ability, and addressing these intersecting identities by designing interventions that are inclusive and equitable, is essential for achieving meaningful progress in gender equality.
- Global forums, regional dialogues and local convenings all offer important platforms to drive gender equality and women's leadership forward. Global spaces like conferences and summits set norms and standards, while local initiatives catalyze change on the ground.

PLENARY 4 - WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP AND HEALTH, GENDER & CLIMATE CHANGE

SPEAKERS

Dr. Debisi Araba
Public policy

Innovation and strategy specialist

Sareen Malik

Executive Secretary
African Civil Society Network for
Water and Sanitation (ANEW)

Dr. Soumya Swaminathan

Chairperson
M S Swaminathan Research
Foundation (MSSRF)

MODERATOR

Dr. Yvonne Maingey-Muriuki

Founder and Technical Advisor
Panim Holdings

In recent years, record-setting temperatures, wildfires, floods, and disease outbreaks worsened by global warming have made clear how urgently action is needed to slow climate change and adapt to the related health impacts. This panel highlighted issues at the nexus of climate, health and gender, delving into the role of women as leaders and active participants in decision-making and implementation, and exploring how collaboration could enable and scale the climate and health solutions our world so desperately needs.

Panelists emphasized the disproportionate impact of climate change on women and children and highlighted the need for women to be centered in climate policies and their implementation. The discussion also addressed the lack of financing for health, gender, and climate change initiatives, and the necessity of a comprehensive climate agenda for Africa. In addition, speakers stressed the importance of monitoring and accountability to ensure effectiveness of laws and called for a cultural shift to put gender and climate change issues at the heart of the development agenda.

Key Takeaways

- Noting the gendered impacts of climate change and the continued exclusion of women from decision-making roles, there must be a concerted effort to center women in climate action to achieve positive outcomes. Without women's meaningful participation in climate action and leadership, there can be no sustainable progress.
- Gender-sensitive policies and cultural shifts work hand-in-hand with inclusive legal frameworks to enshrine the rights of women and children in health, gender and climate action. Leaders must also be held accountable for the enforcement of these laws.
- Transformative plans and sustainable funding for women-led and women-focused health, gender and climate initiatives are enablers of success. By putting these in place, we can support the active and meaningful participation of women in making decisions, innovating, and delivering solutions.



PLENARY 5 - PANEL ON MALE ALLYSHIP: WHAT DO MEN HAVE TO DO WITH IT?

SPEAKERS

Dr. Paulin Basinga
Director Africa

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Dana Hovig

Former Director

William and Flora Hewlett
Foundation and Bill & Melinda
Gates Foundation

Femi Oke

Co-Founder

Moderate The Panel

Dr. Wessel van den Berg

Senior Advocacy Officer

Equimundo: Center for
Masculinities and Social Justice

MODERATOR

Dr. Jacqueline Kitulu

Board Director

HHI BV

People of all genders will need to be engaged on the pathway to reimagining leadership. In the global health field, where women occupy only a quarter of leadership roles despite making up 70 percent of the workforce, men must be active players in generating systemic changes to correct this imbalance.

This panel explored the importance of allyship and provided insights into how to foster allyship at the individual and institutional levels. Discussions centered on the importance of male allies in transforming gender norms, the significance of legislative measures, and the necessity of creating inclusive environments for women to thrive. Speakers also emphasized the need for collective action, intersectional approaches, and accountability in promoting gender parity, particularly in leadership roles within the global health sector, while also sharing interesting insights on the realities of being a male ally and the support required to encourage more men to speak up for women.

Key Takeaways

- Male allyship has great potential to transform gender and culture by challenging patriarchal norms and promoting gender equality in the workplace and beyond.
- Systemic change within organizations is critical. By revising policies to empower women to thrive and engaging male allies to disrupt existing power dynamics, health institutions can help advance gender equality that extends beyond the workplace.
- Emotional intelligence is a powerful building block of male allyship, and while male allies have a responsibility to use their voices and influence to advance equality, they also require support to know how to be more impactful as allies.



PARALLEL SESSIONS

WomenLift and partners hosted 14 parallel sessions focusing on key themes including diversity, equity and inclusion, transformative leadership, allyship, portrayals of women in health in the media, and ethics and equity in innovation, among others.

SESSION	DESCRIPTION	PANELISTS
<p>Driving Ethics & Equity through Digital Innovations: The Future of AI in Global Health</p>	<p>Digital innovations such as AI are rapidly evolving to become crucial components of our everyday lives: from basic technology to revolutionizing primary care, the applications of AI are widespread.</p> <p>This session featured accomplished leaders and experts who are driving equitable and ethical innovation and supporting the next generation of digital health and AI leadership. Together, participants explored steps we could take to build equity and inclusivity into tools, including by diversifying women leadership in the field.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joy Kamunyori, Senior Health Information Systems Advisor, USAID (Moderator) Dr. Muthoni Ntonjira, Managing Director and Health Systems District Leader, Philips East Africa Dr. Olivia Velez, Director of Technical Services, Center of Digital and Data Excellence, PATH Fraiser Kilonzo, Cyber Security Engineering Lead, Cyber Guard Africa Caroline Mbindyo, CEO, Amref Health Innovations
<p>Transforming Health Leadership Through Mid-Level Providers: RHNK's Model in Kenya</p>	<p>For gender transformative leadership by health leaders to be realized, all leaders in health must be intentional in nurturing diverse leadership and promoting gender transformative policies as a basis to strengthen the health system.</p> <p>This session highlighted the significant contributions of mid-level providers, particularly women, in health systems. The session also provided insights into the challenges faced by women-led mid-level providers in attaining leadership roles in the health sector.</p>	<p>Led by the Reproductive Health Network Kenya (RHNK)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Edison Omollo, Program Director, RHNK Nelly Munyasia, Executive Director, RHNK Beverlyn Polet, Board Member, RHNK Prof. Anne-Beatrice Kihara, President, International Federation of Gynaecology and Obstetrics (FIGO) Evelyne Opondo, Africa Director, International Center for Research on Women (ICRW)
<p>Women in Global Health: Defying Backlash and Cultivating Leadership for Gender-Responsive Health Systems</p>	<p>Despite constituting 70% of the overall global health workforce, only 25% of top leadership positions are occupied by women.</p> <p>This panel explored the impact of escalating anti-rights backlash against women's rights; the role of women health workers in the evolving health landscape; why women's leadership is critical to establishing gender-responsive health systems and achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC), and discussed policy initiatives for gender equity in health leadership.</p>	<p>Led by Women in Global Health (WGH)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Shabnum Sarfraz, Deputy Executive Director, WGH (Moderator) Prof. Rhoda Wanyenze, WGH Uganda Dr. Choolwe Jacobs, WGH Zambia Sapna Kedia, WGH India Ruth Ngechu, WGH Kenya Lanice Williams, WGH Washington DC

SESSION	DESCRIPTION	PANELISTS
<p>Championing Youth Leadership in the SRHR/ Family Planning Sector: Lessons from FP2030</p>	<p>The sexual and reproductive health (SRH) needs of adolescents and youth must be met to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Within the 10-29 demographic, there are SRH challenges faced by youth of all genders, but adolescent girls bear unique needs, aspirations, and compounding challenges.</p> <p>This discussion focused on best practices for promoting future women’s and youth leadership as a critical path to the success of the FP2030 partnership.</p>	<p>Led by FP20230</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Sheila Macharia, Managing Director FP2030 ESA Hub (Moderator) • Dr. Samukeliso Dube, Executive Director, FP2030 (opening remarks) • Shalom Mwape, Youth Leader, Zambia • Ninabina Davie Kitururu, Youth Leader, Tanzania • Sesilia Shirima, CSO/YLO
<p>Leading the Change: Shaping the Future of Public Health Policy Through Equitable & Diverse Leadership</p>	<p>This session focused on the pivotal role of women in crafting and implementing public health policies, as well as their vital contributions to strengthening health systems worldwide. Speakers shared compelling examples of the tangible impact of women at the helm of public sector departments and provided insights into how equitable policies are conceptualized and brought to life. Speakers also shared their visions for empowering more women to assume leadership roles in the public health sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Matshidiso Moeti, Regional Director for Africa, World Health Organization (Session Chair) • Dr. Lwazi Manzi, Head of Secretariat, African Union COVID-19 Commission (Moderator) • Dr. Tomi Coker, Commissioner for Health at Ogun State, Nigeria • Hon. Ummu Mwalimu, Minister for Health and Social Welfare, Tanzania
<p>African Women Rising: Investing in Women as Global Health Leaders for Sustainable Development</p>	<p>The leadership potential of African women remains largely untapped, accounting for just a small fraction of the 5% representation of women from low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) at the helm of global health organizations.</p> <p>This session brought together progressive African professionals to explore the critical need for investing in African women’s leadership in global health. Panelists unpacked the realities of African women’s participation in health, shared their own experiences, highlighted the impacts of empowering women as decision-makers, and outlined strategies to accelerate investment in African women as global health leaders for sustainable development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Akhona Tshangela, Southern Africa Director, WomenLift Health (Moderator) • Dr. Norah Obudho, East Africa Director, WomenLift Health • Abosede George-Ogan, Founder, Women in Leadership Advancement Network (WILAN) • Awa Sarr, Program Director, EtriLabs • Klara Michal, Chief Learning Officer, AMP Health
<p>Quiet Quicksand: Caregiving as a Key Determinant of Gender Equal Leadership</p>	<p>While the detriments of dependent and/or elder caregiving are increasingly being documented, including diminished mental and physical health, financial security, career prospects, and overall well-being, the complex dynamics of those outcomes are not well studied.</p> <p>This session explored questions like: What value does caregiving add? What leadership skills does it lend to the workplace? How can these skills be maximized for impact? What novel systems should be built from the ground up to reflect the profile of the workforce now? How can we advocate for the integration and scaling of such novel systems and policies?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brooke Cutler, Gender Equity and Global Health Consultant • Paurvi Bhatt, MPH, President and Chief Impact Officer, Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregivers • Evelyne Opondo, Africa Director, ICRW • Dr. Olivia Velez, Director of Technical Services, Center of Digital and Data Excellence, PATH • “Alison Varco, Program Officer, Women in Leadership, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

SESSION	DESCRIPTION	PANELISTS
<p>Elevating Women's Leadership in Health Media Coverage</p>	<p>Despite progress in gender equity and women's empowerment, there remains a significant gap in the representation of women leaders in health coverage by the media.</p> <p>This session explored the invisibility of women in news coverage and focused on how journalists think about covering health stories, including those related to women's leadership in the health sector. Panelists shared insights, identified gaps, and discussed challenges faced in highlighting the stories and voices of women leading in health, in addition to exploring how women leaders can become key opinion shapers in the news.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lizz Ntonjira, Communications and Engagement Director, WomenLift Health (Moderator) • Dr. Ellen Mkondya-Senkoro, CEO, Benjamin W. Mkapa Foundation • Dorcas Odumbe, Gender & Education Editor, Nation Media Group • Alex Jakana, Senior Program Officer Philanthropic Partnerships, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation • Abraham Mariita, Project Director, Internews
<p>Gender Equity and Inclusivity in Research Mentorship</p>	<p>This parallel session brought together finalists from the crowdsourcing open call to present their mentorship ideas to an expert panel.</p> <p>Speakers also discussed issues around equity, gender, and intersectional perspectives in research and mentorship in LMICs, as well as opportunities and challenges faced by women in science and strategies to advance more women leaders in global health.</p>	<p>Led by London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Eneyi Kpokiri, PhD Clinical Pharmacist and Assistant Professor, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine • Hannah Berrian, Research Fellow for Patient Engagement and Person-Centered Approaches, Reducing the Burden of Severe Stigmatizing Skin Diseases (REDRESS), Liberia • Dr. Mrittika Barua, Assistant Professor and Deputy Director, Centre for Science of Implementation and Scale-up, BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University, Bangladesh • Annabel Steiner, Student, University of North Carolina • Dr. Bethelhem Solomon Woldetsadik, Associate Researcher, Armauer Hansen Research Institute • Dr. Mariam Otmani Del Barrio, Scientist, Gender and Intersectionality Research Lead, The Special Programme on Research and Training in Tropical Diseases, WHO • Dr. Ogechukwu B. Aribodor, Senior Lecturer, Nnamdi Azikiwe University • Dr. Agatha Eileen Wapmuk, Public Health Physician/Research Fellow, Nigerian Institute of Medical Research • Dr. Phyllis Awor, Lecturer, Makerere University School of Public Health • Dr. Wessel van den Berg, Senior Advocacy Officer, Equipundo: Center for Masculinities and Social Justice • Prof. Michele Barry, Senior Associate Dean for Global Health, Stanford University
<p>Moving from Monitoring to Accountability: Upholding Rights & Commitments of Global Health 50/50</p>	<p>For the past 7 years, GH5050 has annually published evidence on equality and diversity in the global health sector. Data trends over time have shown that commitments to equality have increased, but positive changes across many outcome variables (e.g. equitable leadership) remain elusive.</p> <p>This session saw panelists examine issues ranging from board diversity to organizational policies and the actions that need to be taken to realize sexual and reproductive health and rights across the (employee) lifecourse within the global health ecosystem.</p>	<p>Led by Global Health 50/50</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Radhika Uppal, Technical Specialist, Gender & Development, International Center for Research on Women, India (Moderator) • Sarah Hawkes, Co-Founder and Co-CEO, Global Health 50/50 • Sapna Kedia, Assistant Director, Gender and Social Development, International Center for Research on Women (ICRW), India • Dr. Sylvia Musingo, Africa Population and Health Research Centre (APHRC), Kenya

SESSION	DESCRIPTION	PANELISTS
<p>The Power of Voice: Leadership Storytelling Session</p>	<p>For women and other historically marginalized leaders in global health, knowing how to craft your own narrative is a skill that enables the connection between personal experiences and values, and cultivates the ability to mobilize movements.</p> <p>This interactive workshop-style session was designed to introduce participants to the concept of leadership storytelling - the idea that stories can and should be used effectively and powerfully by leaders to motivate and inspire, galvanize, and deliver results.</p> <p>The workshop aimed to push attendees slightly outside of their comfort zone, on a topic closest to them: their authentic voice.</p>	<p>Led by Global Health Corps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitator: Rachel Knopf Shey, Instructional Design Lead, Cross Regional, WomenLift Health
<p>Propelling Women to Power and Influence: The Most Impactful Data and Interventions for Change</p>	<p>The session aimed to dissect the gender equity gap in health organizations by presenting data-driven insights, discussing high-impact interventions, and sharing a real-world example of effective implementation.</p>	<p>Led by Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation & Boston Consulting Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Joan Osoro-Mbui, Chief Operations Officer, MP Shah Hospital Sarah Hawkes, Co-Founder & Co-CEO, Global Health 50/50 Ida Norheim Hatgun, Senior Program Officer, Gender Equality, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Angela Ahadome, Principal, Boston Consulting Group Sarah Chamberlain, Managing Director & Partner, Boston Consulting Group
<p>Women on the Frontlines: An Undervalued and Unprotected Workforce</p>	<p>Women make up 90% of frontline healthcare workers (HCWs), yet they are overburdened, underpaid, unsupported and unprotected in the workplace.</p> <p>This panel brought together alumnae from the WomenLift Health Leadership Journey and women working on the issues of the frontline women workforce. The session focused on the state of women on the frontlines in low-resource countries, with particular emphasis on Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa's community health workforce. Participants discussed the critical need to build leadership among women while simultaneously working to shift gender-based social perceptions and power dynamics and shared specific country examples to illustrate opportunities for donors, advocacy groups, and ministries of health to build an empowered, safe, and fairly paid frontline workforce.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lanice C. Williams, Independent Consultant; Chair, WGH Washington DC Chapter Samara Andrade, VP, Program Strategy and Partnerships, HCP CureBlindness/SightLife international Dr. Sanjana Mohan, Director, Basic Healthcare Services Dr. Choolwe Jacobs, Lead, WGH Zambia Chapter Dr. Priya Nanda, Independent Consultant, Gender, SRHR, and Women's Economic Empowerment
<p>Reimagining Leadership in Global Health: What's Power Got To Do With It?</p>	<p>This session focused on shifting power and creating models of shared leadership with a vision to democratize and achieve higher and sustainable impact.</p> <p>Panelists explored how organizations can restructure and redistribute assets and opportunities to develop shared leadership models; identifying meaningful, contextual objectives for reimagining leadership and allocating resources to achieve these objectives; outcomes of the process of shifting power, and the role of traditional "HQs" in localization processes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benter Owour, IPAS Global Network Advisor Gunjan Veda, Global Secretary, The Movement for Community-led Development Joanna Mbakulo, Uganda Country Coordinator, Movement for Community Led Development (MCLD), Evelyne Opondo, Director, ICRW Africa Dr. Norah Obudho, East Africa Director, WomenLift Health Sia Nowrojee, Senior Director, Girls & Women Strategy, UN Foundation Dr. Nandini Oomman, CEO, Samya Ventures, Dr. Priya Nanda, Global Health Research and Evaluation Specialist

WORKSHOPS

A total of 10 workshops hosted by WomenLift and partners were held during the conference. Participants exchanged skills ranging from building core skills for transformative leadership and values-based leadership, to conflict management, addressing gender biases and navigating imposter syndrome and workplace politics.

SESSION	DESCRIPTION	PARTNER
Disrupting Harmful Narratives: Gender Transformative Leadership Skills	This workshop addressed the harmful narratives that disproportionately disadvantage women and aimed to equip women with skills to dismantle oppressive organizational systems. Participants were tasked with assessing areas for improvement within their organizations and local contexts, and offered a chance to make brief presentations, role play and give practical demonstrations of how relevant strategies could be applied to build gender-transformative leadership skills.	Led by Johns Hopkins University Dr. Anna Kalbarczyk, Associate Scientist, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health Dr. Rosemary Morgan, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health Dr. Mehr Manzoor, Founder & CEO, BeyondParity; DEIA Consultant, EnCompass LLC Dr. Choolwe Nkwemu Jacobs, Country Lead, WGH Zambia Meagan Harrison, Research Associate II, Johns Hopkins Center for Global Health
Navigating Workplace Politics	Developing political competence is an essential leadership skill. Participants reflected on their relationships with organizational politics with a view to acknowledging their burden while also recognizing their value and learning how to navigate them by developing and refining politically savvy mindsets and skill sets.	Neha Dass, Facilitator, India, WomenLift Health Miriam Fugugosh, Senior Faculty, Center for Creative Leadership Rahel Asefa, Program Manager & Faculty, Center for Creative Leadership
Authentic Leadership: Lead From Your Values	This session invited participants to discover the power of authenticity in leadership through a highly participatory, small group workshop where they engaged in self-reflection, intimate dialogue and shared reflections on the meaning of authenticity and how to weave it into leadership. This session was designed to enhance emotional intelligence, identify the core values that anchor, motivate, and guide authentic leadership, and support the mindset shift needed to solve systemic challenges faced by leaders in today's complex and diverse environments.	Dr. Terry Kigundu, Senior Facilitator, East Africa, WomenLift Health Rachel Knopf Shey, Instructional Design Lead, Cross Regional, WomenLift Health
Conflict Dynamics: Build Better Relationships	Conflict is inevitable, unavoidable, complex, and can be mentally, emotionally, and physically draining, and difficult to navigate. This session explored the Conflict Dynamics Model by unpacking the behaviors and actions that influence interpersonal conflict. Attendees were encouraged to reflect on the active, passive, constructive and destructive response pathways, and learned how to identify their own contributions to either escalating or de-escalating conflict.	Zed Xaba, Facilitator, Southern Africa, WomenLift Health Shabari Madappa, Associate Coach and Faculty, Center for Creative Leadership Sandhya Gupta, Alumnae Program Lead, WomenLift Health

SESSION	DESCRIPTION	PARTNER
Allyship in Action: Driving Women's Leadership Collectively	<p>An emerging body of evidence suggests that allies, particularly male allies, have a crucial role in dismantling systems that perpetuate disadvantage towards women leaders. This workshop explored allyship at interpersonal, public and systemic levels and put forward tangible and applicable approaches to fostering allyship for women's leadership in global health.</p>	<p>Led by Johns Hopkins University</p> <p>Dr. Rosemary Morgan, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health Dr. Choolwe Jacobs WGH Zambia Dr. Anna Kalbarczyk, Associate Scientist, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Dr. Wessel van den Berg, Senior Advocacy Officer, Equimundo: Center for Masculinities and Social Justice</p>
Addressing Gender Bias in the Workplace	<p>This interactive workshop focused on small group discussions during which participants engaged in individual reflections, unpacked the concept of gender, unearthed stereotypes that create obstacles for women's advancement at work and at home, and identified practices to enhance organizational culture for women and men alike.</p>	<p>Miriam Fugugosh, Senior Faculty, Center for Creative Leadership Sandhya Gupta, Alumnae Program Lead, WomenLift Health Dr. Terry Kigundu, Senior Facilitator, East Africa, WomenLift Health</p>
Overcoming Imposter Syndrome	<p>Imposter syndrome often manifests as a lack of confidence and a fear of being "found out" as a fraud. While there is a need to collectively hold systems accountable, those who experience imposter syndrome also need strategies to counter it. In this interactive session, attendees explored how imposter syndrome manifests in thoughts and work behaviors, reflected on professional experiences and stories, and identified key takeaways to lead with more confidence and impact.</p>	<p>Neha Dass, Facilitator, India, WomenLift Health Rahel Asefa, Program Manager & Faculty, Center for Creative Leadership</p>
Foster Belonging, Lead Inclusively	<p>Individuals from marginalized groups often don't feel like they belong even when they're included. This session explored factors contributing to presence and perception in the workplace, experiences of exclusion and inclusion, and explored the misalignment between intention and our impact. Participants also delved into the power of fostering inclusion and learned inclusive leadership skills.</p>	<p>Zed Xaba, Facilitator, Southern Africa, WomenLift Health Shabari Madappa, Associate Coach and Faculty, Center for Creative Leadership Rachel Knopf Shey, Instructional Design Lead, Cross Regional, WomenLift Health</p>
AI and Global Health: A Workshop for Leaders Driving Change	<p>AI has the potential to improve health outcomes, enhance health systems, and address health inequities. In this workshop, participants discussed AI and its subfields, their relationship to health, some of the current and emerging use cases of AI for health, and their benefits and limitations. The session explored issues specific to gender and data as well as best practices and principles for ensuring that AI for health is responsible, ethical, and human-centered. Experts from various disciplines and backgrounds, such as AI, digital health, ethics, policy, and education provided information, insights, and guidance on AI for health.</p>	<p>Dr. Olivia Velez, Director of Technical Services, Center of Digital and Data Excellence, PATH Carol Kamasaka, Senior Program Officer, Digital Health, PATH Uganda Lauren Wall, Deputy Director of Capacity Strengthening, Center of Digital & Data Excellence, PATH Dr. Sana Syed, Pediatrics and Data Science, University of Virginia, United States</p>
The Critical Role of Emotional Intelligence in Leading Change	<p>Featuring insights from experts in the field of leadership development and global health, the workshop explored the science and transformational power of Emotional Intelligence (EI) in leading change and shaping a culture of personal and organizational resilience as well as the intersection of EI and change adoption. Through a blend of mini-lectures, real-life anecdotes, and interactive practical exercises attendees gained invaluable insights and actionable strategies for applying EI, developing emotional awareness, enhancing their EI capabilities and building resilience within teams/organizations.</p>	<p>Dr. Aparna Arvind, CEO, Christopher Leah Consulting, Inc. Dr. Kashmiri Date, Johnson and Johnson, Global Health Equity</p>

SUMMARY OF KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Foster gender-inclusive policies that create supportive environments and ensure equal access to rights and opportunities across sectors, including by implementing gender quotas to create room for women to sit at the decision-making table.

Create clear career advancement pathways and invest in education, mentorship and leadership training initiatives to equip girls and women with the skills they need to lead and increase representation of women in leadership.

Adopt an intersectional approach that also engages men as allies and empowers youth to help address cultural norms, challenge stereotypes and dismantle barriers to women's advancement.

Ramp up advocacy for policy changes at global, national, and local levels and invest in research to inform inclusive gender policies and interventions, making sure to encourage accountability and transparency to measure progress.

Foster collaboration for collective action to drive systemic change and advance gender equality across sectors.

Enhance sustainable financing and meaningful collaboration to address gender and climate challenges comprehensively, and increase awareness and participation of women in leadership for better outcomes in health, gender equality, and climate action.

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Transformative leadership is about collaboration and partnerships. The new way of leading means being intentional about bringing women into leadership. It's about putting women in the driver's seat.

Michael Adenkule
CEO
RBM Partnership to End Malaria



CONFERENCE OUTCOMES

The following outcomes reflect the key themes discussed during the 2024 WomenLift Health Global Conference and provide a framework for future actions and initiatives to promote gender equality in leadership, particularly in the global health sector.



Strengthened Collaborations and Partnerships:

The conference fostered new alliances and reinforced existing partnerships among diverse stakeholders, including policymakers, healthcare leaders, and civil society organizations, to advance gender equality in leadership.



Accelerated Movement for Women's Leadership:

Participants committed to concrete actions to accelerate the movement for advancing women's leadership, particularly in the global health sector, through policy advocacy, mentorship programs, and systemic organizational changes.



Enhanced Networking and Human Connections:

The conference provided a platform for powerful human connections and networking opportunities, enabling participants to share experiences, best practices, and innovative strategies for promoting gender equality in leadership.



Localization and Contextualization of the Agenda:

Attendees emphasized the importance of building bridges between global initiatives and local contexts, ensuring that efforts to advance women's leadership are tailored to specific cultural, social, and economic environments.



Recognition of Caregiving as a Key Barrier:

The conference highlighted caregiving responsibilities as a significant barrier to women's career advancement and leadership opportunities, prompting discussions on supportive policies and cultural shifts to address this challenge.



Culture as the Cornerstone of Change:

Participants identified culture as a key factor in both hindering and potentially accelerating progress towards gender equality, emphasizing the need for transformative cultural change to support women's leadership at all levels.



Commitment to Male Allyship:

The conference underscored the critical role of male allies in promoting gender equality and women's leadership, with participants pledging to engage and educate men as active partners in this effort.



Youth Engagement and Empowerment:

The conference highlighted the potential of youth leadership in driving change, with a commitment to empowering young people to challenge traditional gender norms and advocate for equality.



Research and Data-Driven Initiatives:

Participants emphasized the need for continued research and data collection on gender disparities to inform evidence-based policies and interventions for advancing women's leadership.

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One of the things WomenLift Health is doing well is saying 'We can't just talk about things; we have to do some positive things to make change happen.'

The Rt. Hon. Helen Clark,
Former Prime Minister
New Zealand



“

In my experience, three things matter: policy, commitment, and education. What makes a difference in gender responsive policy is commitment from the people in leadership, particularly from the person in the highest office in the land.

H.E. Dr. Jakaya Kikwete
Former President
Tanzania



“

Gender equality should not be a side issue—it should be the main issue, and all women-centered philanthropies and civil societies should focus on it as the central issue.

Dr. Anita Zaidi

President of the Gender Equality Division, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation



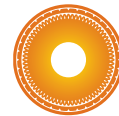


ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

FUNDING PARTNER



PARTNER



Global Health Strategies

MEDIA PARTNER





While allyship is increasingly promoted as a tool to support diversity, equity and inclusion, there is limited guidance on what allyship looks like. Allies have a role in dismantling systems that perpetuate disadvantage towards women leaders.

Dr. Anna Kalbarczyk

Associate Scientist

Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

CONFERENCE RAPPORTEURS

Name	Organization
Martha Muthoni Wanjiku	Aga Khan University (Kenya)
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Bonventura Mtega	Aga Khan University (Kenya)
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Ajumo Mary Goretti	Makerere University (Uganda)
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Abiika Angella	Makerere University (Uganda)
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Shaija Poonj Sharma	Strathmore University (Kenya)
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Yvette Nkurunziza	University of Global Health Equity (Rwanda)
Rosemary Nyariara Njoroje	University of Global Health Equity (Rwanda)
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Dr Felister Moraa Mose	Kakamega County
Stella Mujaya	Palladium
Basiliana Emidi	National Institute for Medical Research, Tanzania

APPENDICES (CONFERENCE OUTPUT)

Check out this series of 10 episodes, featuring insightful conversations from the **2024 WomenLift Health Global Conference** podcast series. The series dived into topics including Transformative Leadership, Allyship, and Action for Advancing Women's Leadership in Health.



Lizz Ntonjira & Rachel Ombaka
Episode 01



Dr. Yasmin Ali Haque
Episode 02



Dr. Michael Charles
Episode 03



Amie Batson
Episode 04



Dr. Samu Dube
Episode 05



Dr. Githinji Gitahi
Episode 06



Dr. Muthoni Ntonjira
Episode 07



Dr. Idyoro Ojukwu
Episode 08



Abosede George-Ogan
Episode 09

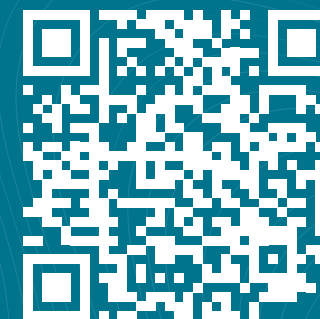


Dr. Soumya Swaminathan
Episode 10

HAVEN'T WATCHED IT YET?

Don't miss out on these powerful discussions – watch the podcast series on our YouTube Channel.

Scan the QR code to watch, and don't forget to subscribe for updates on future series!



The logo features a stylized white figure of a person with arms raised, positioned above the text. The text 'WomenLift' is in a light blue, sans-serif font, and 'Health' is in a white, serif font, stacked below it.

WomenLift
Health