



GLOBAL HEALTH 5050

TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY IN GLOBAL HEALTH

New Global Health 50/50 report reveals most leading organisations active in global health actors have a long way to go towards workplace gender equality

Ground-breaking analysis of 198 global organisations active in health, covering an estimated 4.5 million employees worldwide, reveals that the majority are failing to deliver on sexual harassment policies, gender pay gap reporting, and gender parity in leadership positions.

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia, 7 March 2019 – Launched in Ethiopia by the country’s first female president, H.E. Sahle-Work Zewde, the second Global Health 50/50 Report, *Equality Works*, shows that few of the world’s top global organisations active in health are achieving gender equality for their employees. This is despite more than a year’s worth of news headlines detailing widespread gender-based discrimination in workplaces around the world. The report exposes pay gaps; lack of policies on parental leave, sexual harassment and flexible working; and a systematic absence of women in leadership roles.

“Coming to light in the #MeToo era, the findings of this groundbreaking report prove that the fight for gender-equality is far from won. Global health organisations are failing to walk the talk.” said Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister of New Zealand. “If there is one sector that should set precedent, it is global health. The field stands for principles of rights, fairness and universality, and strives to achieve health for all – particularly the most vulnerable.”

Key findings of the report include:

Gender pay gap of 13.5% found - provides stark measure of whose contributions are valued and rewarded

Only 25% of organisations make public their gender pay gap data. Most of these are in one country (UK) with statutory mandatory reporting. Among UK organisations the median salary for women is 13.5% lower than for men, and the median bonus pay gap is 23% lower for women. Evidence collected from the US Internal Revenue Service reveals that among 27 leading global health NGOs, male CEOs are paid \$41,000 more in salaries than female CEOs.

Gender power gap: Men 50% more likely to reach senior management than women

Men continue to lead and govern organisations active in global health: 7 out of 10 executive leaders and board chairs are men. Among senior management, less than 1 in 3 organisations have achieved gender parity, while for boards the parity figure drops to 1 in 4. Ten organisations have no women listed in senior management roles.

“More women in leadership will change global health for the better. Yet we all know you can’t fix a pipe by adding more water. We need to transform the systems that make it nearly impossible for so many women to rise, succeed and lead” said Senait Fisseha, Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, University of Michigan, Chief Advisor to the Director General of the World Health Organization and member of GH5050

Advisory Council. “Transformation starts with a clear understanding of where we are today, and Global Health 50/50 does just that.”

Maternity and paternity leave policies are inadequate, and reinforce gender inequalities

Inequalities in domestic caring responsibilities drive inequalities in career opportunities for women and men. The report argues that both parents benefit from paid leave when a child is born or adopted, since they are then more likely to return to the workforce, thus boosting the economy while helping to close the gender pay gap and promote women’s careers.

Yet of 77 policies reviewed, the range of paid leave available varies drastically from zero to 68 weeks. In addition, flexible working policies were located for only 30% of organisations, which help parents advance in the workplace by balancing caregiving responsibilities.

Increased openness would hold organisations accountable, yet only one quarter publish their gender pay gap data or sexual harassment policies

Transparency pushes organisations toward pay equality, but just 25% of those reviewed make their gender pay gap data public. Of those, only eight published that information voluntarily. The other 42 organisations that do so are in the UK, where reporting on gender pay gap information is mandatory.

One quarter of organisations had sexual harassment policies in the public domain, highlighting the lack of transparency in how organisations tackle this issue. Among the policies reviewed, only 30% met best practice standards.

Catching up: from good intentions to good practice

Employers around the world are updating policies to create gender-equal and respectful workplaces. Among the 140 organisations reviewed by Global Health 50/50 in 2018 and 2019, 20 have in the past year either newly developed or publicly shared their workplace gender equality policies. The global health sector is making progress, and in many ways committed to doing better: over 100 organisations reviewed shared policy information and directly supported the development of the 2019 report.

“We established GH5050 with the expectation that progress could be made for gender equality -- but required a clear view of the data, combined with strategic advocacy for change. Our faith in the power of evidence in bringing issues to the surface has been affirmed: in just one year we saw a 30% increase in the number of organisations committing to gender equality,” said Kent Buse, Chief of Strategic Policy Directions at UNAIDS and co-founder of Global Health 50/50. “We hope this report provides an even more effective catalyst for the equal distribution of power and privilege.”

About Global Health 50/50 and the Equality Works 2019 report

Global Health 50/50 is an independent initiative created to advance accountability and action for gender equality in global health housed by the University College London Centre for Gender and Global Health. The 198 organisations in the study include United Nations bodies, bilateral and multilateral development institutions, philanthropic organisations, non-governmental organisations, faith-based organisations, public-private partnerships, the private sector, and academic journals and their parent companies.

Media contact

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