**Gender and Health Hub Virtual Forum**

**Evidence. Voice. Action: Catalysing Change for Gender Equality in Health**

**5th-7th December 2023**

Concept Note

**Background**

Polycrises have highlighted and exacerbated existing vulnerabilities in our health systems and further widened gender inequalities. As countries and communities continue to navigate ways forward, we must prevent complacency, ensuring the global health community makes good on its commitment to center gender and intersectional issues within health dialogues, decisions and investments. This requires filling knowledge gaps, advancing evidence-based practices and policies, and fostering collaborations and collective action.

The United Nations University International Institute for Global Health (UNU-IIGH) Gender and Health Hub (GHH) was established with the aim to bridge the gap between people, evidence, policy, and action and contribute to more evidence-based and better-resourced integration of gender in health policies and programmes. Since its Launch at the UN Commission on the Status of Women (UN CSW) in March 2021, the GHH has been dedicated to uniting technical expertise with political leadership and consolidating evidence-based solutions, amplifying lived experience and evidence from the global south to advance gender equality in the realm of health.

The inaugural 2021 Gender and Health Hub Forum provided a crucial platform for reflection, partnership building, and setting growth priorities. Over the past two years, we’ve made significant strides in the face of the evolving political landscapes, rapid technological advancements, and the emergence of complex crises impinging the equal rights for all. The focus of the 2023 Gender and Health Hub Forum is to spotlight advancements in the face of pushback and shrinking spaces, foster knowledge sharing, and showcase evidence and lived experience in advancing gender equality in health. In doing so, we will highlight collective action to navigate the changing landscapes and accelerate progress towards gender equality and universal health coverage.

**Objectives**

1. To drive transformative change in health through evidence-informed insights on gender and intersectional issues by sharing evidence, lessons, and fostering insights and dialogue to advance evidence translation to policy and practices for gender and health equality.
2. To galvanize collective voices for change by strengthening cross sectoral and regional networks within the gender and global health community while actively promoting feminist and intersectional approaches for meaningful collaboration.
3. To shape future actions for gender responsive research, policy and investments by actively engaging the global health community in identifying specific actions, establishing priorities, and exploring potential opportunities to inform decision-making.

**Event Outline**

In line with the objectives, the Forum will host 3 – 90 minute webinar events over 3 days to provide a platform for diverse actors and partners working to advance gender equality for health to spotlight evidence-based practices, engage in interactive and critical discussions, and strategize ways to amplify our collective voice, form new partnerships, strengthen current allyships and take action**.**

1. **Enhancing Gender Integration at Scale in Health: Promising Practices from Africa, South Asia and Southeast Asia [Case Study Series Launch|]**

**Objective:** Provide a snapshot of and reflect on health programs led by or with substantial engagement with government to highlight gender integration in practice and at scale. To stimulate critical conversation around what works to integrate gender into government health programmes at policy, institutional and community levels.

**Take away for audience:** Gained understanding and insight on practices to effectively integrate gender into health initiatives that are scaled and sustained, as well as factors that catalyse such gender-responsive healthcare policies and practices.

**Co-host:** School of Public Health (SOPH) at the University of Western Cape in South Africa and Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI).

1. **Digital Justice and Sexual and Reproductive health and rights**

**Objective:** To bring evidence and policy considerations for a strong call for the adoption of social justice and rights-based framework related to the development, adoption, and implementation of digital technologies for the advancement of SRHR.

**Take away for audience:** Build a common understanding and way forward on integrating digital justice and rights to address intersecting issues related to SRHR, health, and inequalities in light of evolving technology and digital spaces.

**Co-host**:SRHM

1. **Reflections on Gender Equality and Health in the Time of Polycrises – Breaking Silos, Collective Action**

**Objective:** To reflect on the gendered and overlapping impact of polycrises – pandemic, climate change, environmental degradation, political instability and war-on women, girls and gender diverse individuals and the measures being taken to address the disproportionate impact.

**Take away for audience:** An understanding of intersections of gender equality and polycrises, the challenges and opportunities to address these disproportionate impacts.

**Co-host**: People’s Vaccine Alliance, African Community of Practice (The African Union Commission on COVID-19 Gender and Stigmatisation Working Group, and the University of the Western Cape School of Public Health).