

The Discussion Forum: Breakfast Talks Edition

The overarching theme of our initiative is ***Gender-Transformative Change in the Health Sector: Evidence, Impact, and Sustainable Action.***

Following this theme, we would proceed with our pilot Breakfast Talk on the following topic: ***The term "gender-transformative" is increasingly being used in global health research and discourse. How do we distinguish meaningful transformation from aspirational language or rhetorical commitments?***

- *What does gender-transformative change in health mean?*
- *What makes a health intervention truly gender-transformative, and how can we determine whether it leads to meaningful policy, system, and health outcomes for women and gender minorities?*
- *Where do our health systems continue to fail women and gender minorities, and why have these inequities proven so difficult to change?*

Agenda

More than just a collection of interesting opinions, we aim to move further and answer bigger questions such as: *what actually changes power relations and improves health outcomes sustainably?*, but we will do it one step at a time. We aim at achieving that through the following steps:

Step 1: Building a shared understanding

- *What counts as a gender-transformative intervention? How is it different from gender-sensitive or gender-responsive interventions?*
- *What does transformation look like in health?*

Step 2: Taking examples from case studies, evidence, and lived experience

- *Is improving health outcomes enough, or must power relations change?*
- *Who defines transformation? What does success look like?*
- *What is one intervention you've seen succeed? What was the determining factor for its success?*
- *When have your ambitions collided with institutional, cultural or social realities? What compromises became necessary?*
- *What is one thing the field consistently gets wrong?*

Step 3: Leaving with some pressing questions and building blocks for the next talk

- *What is the single biggest obstacle to gender-transformative change in health?*
- *Which gender-transformative strategies have the strongest evidence of producing sustainable improvements in health outcomes, and what prevents them from scaling?*

- *How would each of us recognize transformation if we saw it? What evidence would convince us that genuine transformation had occurred?*

The aim of the Breakfast Talk is not to answer these questions concretely or with certainty, the main idea is to **leave the discussion with better questions that what we started with**. If we are unable to cover all questions in one talk, we will simply cover them in the next one.

The purpose of this series is, therefore, gathering diverse perspectives of researchers, practitioners, professionals, and activists working at the intersection of gender and health, having constructive discourse on key issues, and setting up priority research questions that need to be answered.

Important to note

The questions outlined in this work plan are intended as a guide rather than a fixed agenda. We encourage participants to bring their own questions, perspectives, and approaches to the discussion. Most importantly, we hope you will draw on your research, professional expertise, and lived experience to help shape a thoughtful and engaging conversation.

Time commitment

The talk is intended to be 1.5 hours long and would be held on the weekend, so that everyone is available during breakfast/brunch time (CEST). However, if there is a wide consensus on another day, we would do our best to accommodate the majority.

We are planning a total of three Breakfast Talks, which will subsequently feed into the Research Roundtable. This number was chosen because a single session would not provide sufficient time to explore such a complex and in-depth topic comprehensively.

Next Steps

As discussed in our meetings, this initiative is intended to be an iterative process. The Breakfast Talks will help shape and refine the research questions that will be explored further during the Research Roundtable series. Ultimately, the process will culminate in the development of a Social Action Project.

With this progression in mind, we encourage you to approach the Breakfast Talks not as standalone discussions, but as an opportunity to contribute to the broader direction of the initiative and its subsequent stages.

We understand that committing your valuable time to a process of this length may not always be feasible. Should you wish to withdraw from the initiative at any stage, I would greatly appreciate it if you could let me know as early as possible so that we can plan accordingly.

Disclaimer

Participation in the Breakfast Talks is by invitation only. Attendees have been personally approached to contribute to these discussions, and the sessions will not be open to the general public.

To extend the reach of the conversations, the sessions will be recorded and shared on our website, allowing interested individuals to engage with the discussions and potentially participate in future activities and events.

If you do not consent to being recorded, or if you feel that recording the session may inhibit your ability to express your views openly and freely, please write an email to Warda Batool (batool.warda54@gmail.com). We can then discuss appropriate arrangements to ensure your comfort and participation.