
Dear Scientific Programme Committee of the 2024 World One Health Congress,

On behalf of the Women for One Health network and other groups that voice their concern, we are writing to publicly recognize the substantial gender imbalance and lack of diversity in speakers and moderators at the WOHC 2022 in Singapore and respectfully request you address these concerns. The lack of equitable representation of women and other groups observed in Singapore (Figure 1) contradict fundamental One Health principles and their commitment to the 2030 UN sustainable development goals (SDG 5), and are not in line with international codes of conduct and standards for research meetings and events (see Annex 1).

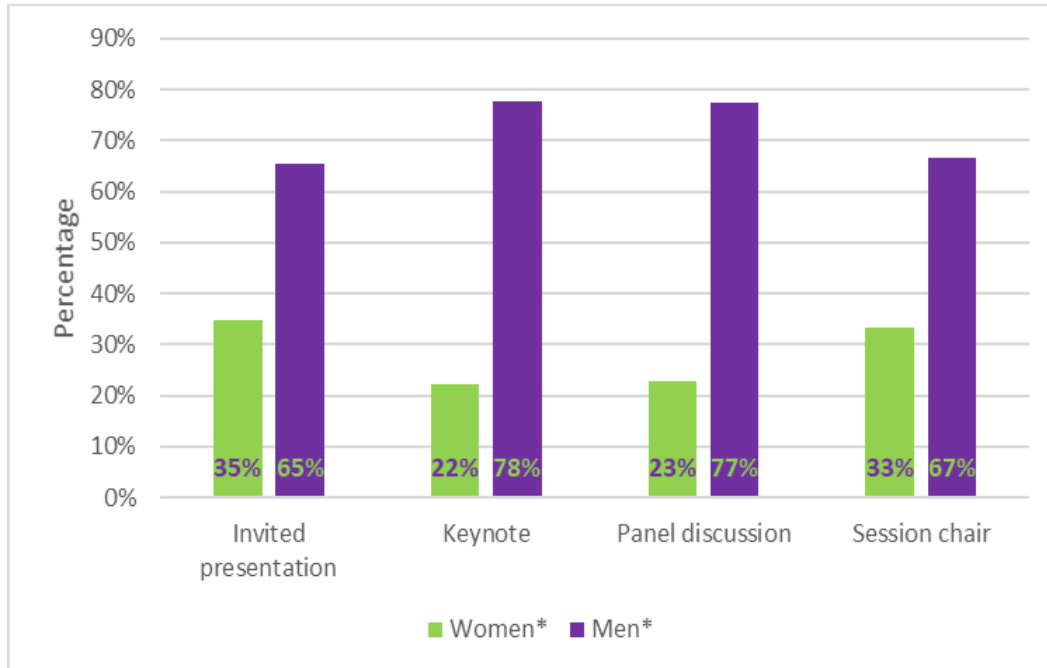


Figure 1: Gender (was assumed on available first name of participants) representation during the World One Health Congress 2022 in Singapore.

This issue was first brought up to the Executive Organization Board more than four years ago after the 5th WOHC in Saskatchewan (see Annex 2). We strongly believe that it is essential to ensure parity across gender and other historically marginalized groups in order to create a more equitable and inclusive scientific and One Health community. The foundational principles of the recently released OHHLEP definition of One Health explicitly mention issues of equity, equal rights and opportunities, and inclusion of marginalized voices. By actively seeking out and promoting the participation of underrepresented groups, we can ensure that the upcoming and future World One Health Congresses truly represent the diversity of voices and perspectives that are necessary to solve the complex global One Health challenges that we face. We would welcome a public commitment to improving diversity and representation from the organizing committee and urge you to take immediate action to ensure and support the representation of the full diversity of the One Health community at the next World One Health Congress.

As Women for One Health network, we are promoting the importance of diversity and equity. We offer our support and assistance to organize a World One Health Congress that sincerely represents the diversity of the One Health community, and we would be pleased to share with you a working list of our network. We offer to collaborate with the Scientific Programme Committee to better understand why any interim efforts aimed at redressing this imbalance since that time have not been as effective as one might anticipate. We hope you share our view that a failure to explicitly address this issue in advance of the next meeting, would be unacceptable for such a prestigious conference which aspires to be world-leading in the field of One Health. Please don't hesitate to contact us if we can be of any assistance towards achieving the goals of gender and ethnic parity.

Thank you for considering this important issue, and we look forward to seeing, engaging and learning from a more diverse and inclusive World One Health Congress in Cape Town in 2024.

Sincerely,

The undersigned

Annexes

Annex 1 – Nature Conferences Code of Conduct Policy (December 11, 2019)

Annex 2 – Letter to the members of the Organizing Executive Board of the 2018 International One Health Congress (September 4, 2018)

Signatories in alphabetical order

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