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WCAPS

Operation 50/50: Citing Lack of Representation in Coronavirus Response, NGOs Release Crowdsourced List of Women Health Security Experts

WASHINGTON, D.c., March 16, 2020 (Newswire.com) - Operation 50/50: Citing lack of representation in Coronavirus response, NGOs release crowdsourced list of women health security experts

WASHINGTON, DC - March 16, 2020 – Women in Global Health (WGH), and Women of Color Advancing Peace and Security (WCAPS) have partnered to crowdsource a list of female health security experts, intended to address the glaring lack of women represented in the global response to the current coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. The list, dubbed “Operation 50/50”, is now available on the WCAPS and WGH websites for organizations seeking leadership for outbreak response efforts, as well as press members seeking outbreak-related commentary. A virtual event celebrating the release, including panel discussion on the value of women’s voices in health security decision-making, will take place today at 2:00 pm EDT.

During outbreaks, women can face greater risks because they make up the majority of frontline health workers, are often the primary family caregivers of the sick, and have a greater socioeconomic vulnerability in general. Yet, when it comes to health security policymaking, few women are at the table. In January 2020, just five women were invited to join the WHO Emergency Committee on COVID-19, making up less than a quarter of the 21-member group. And a recent presidential tweet showed the first newly-convened U.S. Coronavirus Task Force was comprised entirely of men.

For Dr. Roopa Dhatt, Co-Founder and Executive Director of WGH, the last straw was the ratio of women invited to comment on the coronavirus outbreak – for every three men quoted in news stories on the outbreak, only one woman’s views were sought. “I knew we had to do something; there are qualified, credible women, doing excellent work in global health security. Women makeup 70% of the healthcare workforce but occupy less than a quarter of leadership, and it’s critical that their expertise is included in decisions around this and other outbreaks for an effective global response.”
Ambassador Bonnie Jenkins, Founder and Executive Director of WCAPS, has created a platform devoted to women of color, cultivating a strong voice to advance the leadership and professional development of women of color in international peace, security and conflict transformation. “Very often the perspectives of women of color are not included in discussions that affect men and women here in the United States and around the world. On issues of global health and infectious disease, those different viewpoints should be incorporated into all discussions on how the country prevents, detects and responds to such matters.”

About Women in Global Health

Established in 2015, Women in Global Health (WGH) is a rapidly growing global movement to achieve gender equality in global health leadership. We believe that everyone has the right to attain equal levels of participation in leadership and decision-making regardless of gender. WGH creates a platform for discussions and collaborative space for leadership, facilitates specific education and training, garners support and commitment from the global community, and demands change for Gender Transformative Leadership. The global team and local chapters elevate women from diverse backgrounds, especially women working in the health sector in low- and middle-income countries.

About Women of Color Advancing Peace, Security and Conflict Transformation

At Women of Color Advancing Peace and Security (WCAPS), we believe global issues demand a variety of perspectives. That’s why we’re creating a platform devoted to women of color that cultivates a strong voice and network for its members while encouraging dialogue and strategies for engaging in policy discussions on an international scale. Through our dedication to programs and partnerships and our passion for changing the global community landscape, we remain committed to achieving our vision of advancing the leadership and professional development of women of color in the fields of international peace, security and conflict transformation. WCAPS has a Global Health Working Group that organizes programs, highlights its members working on global health issues, publishes articles, and conducts podcasts with a focus on women of color engagements and contributions.

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Additional Links

- WGH Operation 50/50
- WCAPS COVID-19

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