

GENDER DIGEST



The Gender Equity Unit's quarterly newsletter



As part of Bloomberg Philanthropies Data for Health Initiative, the Gender Equity Unit is building a health data ecosystem that counts and values the lives of all people.

Gender Digest #12 | July 2025

EVENTS, WORKSHOPS, AND PROGRAMS

Bloomberg Philanthropies: Renewal of Support for Gender Equity Unit

[Bloomberg Philanthropies](#) has renewed its commitment to the [Gender Equity Unit](#) as a partner in its [Data for Health Initiative](#), granting \$2.7 million to support projects through March, 2027.

The Gender Equity Unit (GEU), housed at the [Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health](#), works to support Data for Health in improving national health data systems in over 25 low- and middle-income countries. With renewed and increased funding, the GEU will expand its activities to enhance the integration of gender to strengthen public health data collection, analysis, and use, especially in the Global South.

“We are honored to continue this important work with Bloomberg Philanthropies through the Data for Health Initiative. This renewed support allows us to deepen our efforts to promote gender equity in health data systems worldwide and ensure that the data driving public health decisions better reflect the realities and needs of all people,” said GEU Director [Michelle R. Kaufman](#), PhD. Dr. Kaufman is an Associate Professor in the Department of Health, Behavior & Society at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, with a joint appointment in the Department of International Health.

ADVANCING GENDER EQUITY IN HEALTH DATA

Insights and Learnings from the
Data for Health Initiative



New Gender Equity White Paper: Insights and Learnings from the Data for Health Initiative

The Gender Equity Unit released a new [white paper](#), “Advancing Gender Equity in Health Data: Insights and Learnings from the Data for Health Initiative” in March, 2025.

The white paper examines how health data can address disparities and inequities and finds that accurate, gender-disaggregated health data is fundamental to achieving sustainable, equitable health systems. Despite growing recognition of the importance of gender responsive data, many countries face persistent gaps, limiting their ability to tailor health policies that meet the unique needs of their populations. The paper also provides a framework for countries to improve data systems, enhance policymaking, and track progress toward equitable global health goals.

The transformative impact of integrating a gender lens into health system strengthening is evidenced in the paper’s case studies selected from Fiji, India, South Africa, and Zambia. We uncovered four key drivers that influenced the success of gender integration in Data for Health (D4H) projects: national government prioritization of gender equity, strong interagency coordination and collaboration, access to gender expertise and guidance, and transformative influencers for gender equity. Future in-country projects can cultivate these drivers to propel success in gender integration efforts.

“This white paper marks a pivotal moment in our work to advance gender equity in health systems. By documenting real-world examples from across the D4H Initiative, we highlight how meaningful change is possible when gender is not an afterthought but a central consideration in health data and policy. The insights and framework we offer aim to guide countries toward more inclusive, equitable health systems that truly reflect the needs of all people,” said Michelle R. Kaufman, PhD, Director of the Gender Equity Unit.

Looking ahead, the paper argues achieving successes in gender equity in health data will require sustained collaboration among governments, policymakers, donors, and public health leaders.

“By working together to close gender data gaps, we can ensure that health systems are designed to meet the diverse needs of all people,” said Dr. Kaufman.

[Link to White Paper](#)



Bloomberg Philanthropies Data for Health Partner Meeting

The Gender Equity Unit attended the Bloomberg Philanthropies Data for Health (D4H) Initiative Partner Meeting in New York City from May 6-8, 2025. More than 200 participants from 23 countries attended the global meeting, which assessed the impact of D4H after 10 years of groundbreaking work and lessons learned for the future.

The Gender Equity Unit is part of D4H’s mission to work with governments and partners to strengthen data on births, deaths, and risk factors for noncommunicable diseases, so governments can save and improve more lives in low- and middle-income countries.



Data Collection Training in the Solomon Islands

[Clara Flores](#), MSW, Senior Research Project Coordinator with the Gender Equity Unit (GEU), held a four-day data collection training from May 26-29, 2025 with our partners at Solomon Islands National University (SINU), as part of the Female Death Registration (FDR) expansion project of the Data for Health Initiative.

The training combined theoretical instruction with practical exercises to build local capacity in conducting semi-structured in-depth interviews with both general and key informants; leading focus group discussions; and facilitating community-based social mapping. To better reflect the community context, the GEU team gained valuable insights into local communication styles, which were integrated into data collection tools and approaches. On the third day, participants applied their skills in interactive sessions with SINU students and faculty.

“We are deeply grateful to the SINU team for their warm welcome and enthusiastic engagement throughout the event,” said the GEU’s Associate Director, [Clare Conry-Murray](#), PhD.

The FDR expansion study, led by the GEU’s [Astha Ramaiya](#), DrPH and [Alycia Hancock](#), MBE, is currently underway in Bangladesh (in partnership with the BRAC James P. Grant School of Public Health) and Tanzania (with CREMES International). Additionally, [Kate Wright](#), MPH, and the GEU’s Flores are working with the All India Institute of Medical Sciences in Rajasthan, India, to launch a sister study. The research aims to identify the barriers to FDR, with the goal of advocating for policy changes that reduce gender disparities in Civil Registration and Vital Statistics systems.



“Summer reading, just can’t get enough”: Gender Equity Unit’s 2025 Summer Reading List

Want to win official Gender Equity Unit swag? Are you looking to read more this summer? Look no further!

We recently published our [2025 gender equity summer reading list](#) with recommendations from our faculty and staff. The list includes 10 books, both fiction and nonfiction, about women and gender diverse people across the globe. We'd love to hear from you and what you think about these books.

The first two people to read and write a short review of at least one book on our summer reading list will receive an official GEU swag kit! Items include a GEU-branded travel mug, sticker, stationery set (sticky notes and notepad), and pen.

Please post your book review on social media, and tag us (read down for our social handles). Length is up to you!

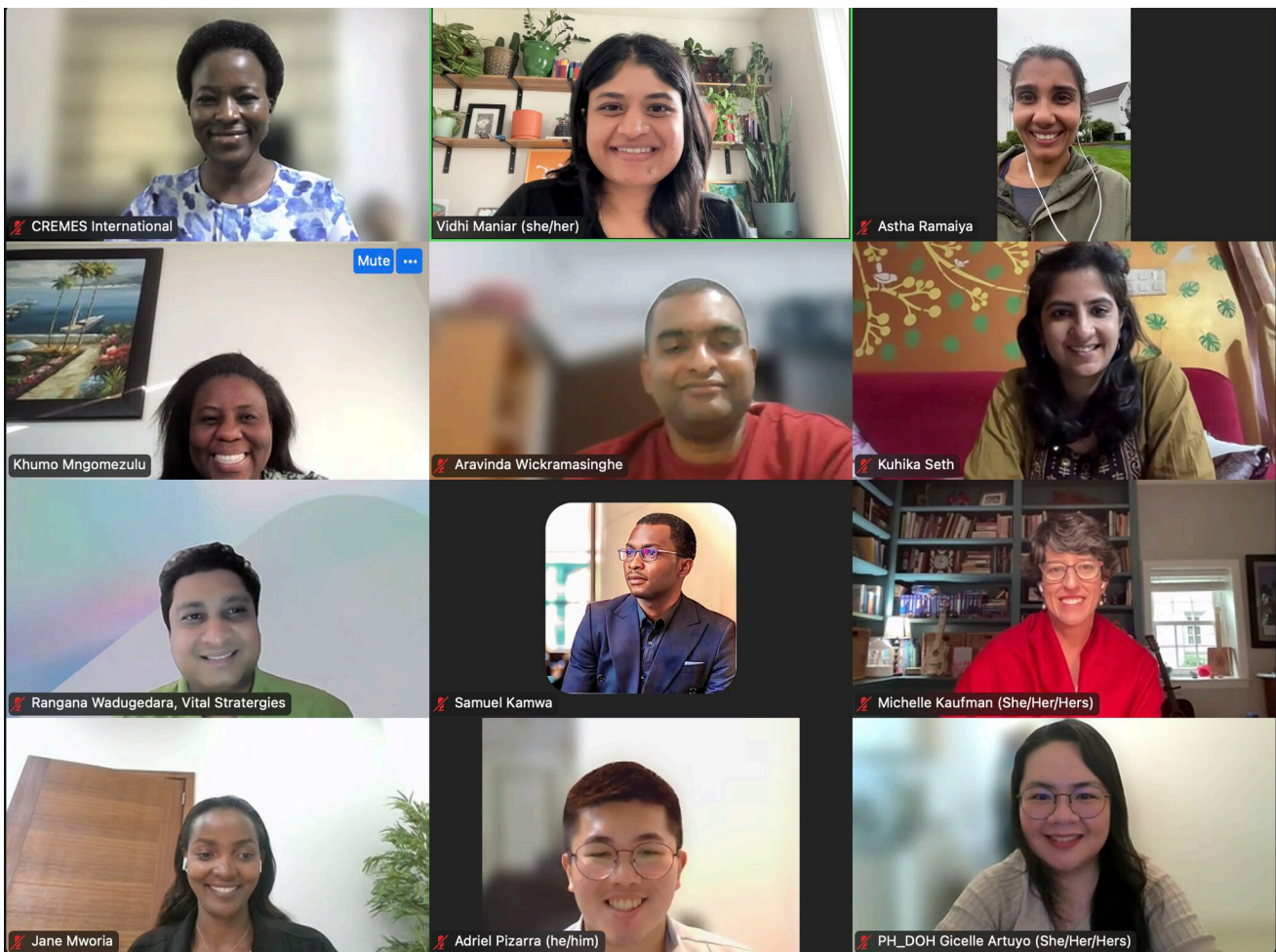
Notes:

- Only the first two reviews submitted will receive a GEU merch kit.
- International participants are welcome! We will ship the prizes globally to wherever you are located.

Our GEU Social Platforms:

- LinkedIn: [Gender Equity Unit](#)
- Instagram: [@jhugenderequity](#)
- Bluesky: [@jhugenderequity.bsky.social](#)

2025 Gender Equity Summer Reading List



Data for Health Gender Equity Mentorship Program, Cohort One

That's a wrap! Round one of our [Data for Health Gender Equity Mentorship Program](#), funded by Bloomberg Philanthropies, has officially closed after a full year of collaboration and learning together.

Congratulations to our program manager, [Vidhi Maniar](#), MS, MPH, PMP, who envisioned, designed, and led this initiative from its inception, and to all of our incredible mentors and mentees who participated in the program's inaugural cohort! It's been a pleasure working with everyone to foster a global community of public health professionals and researchers who are equipped to integrate gender equity into health data systems and practice.

Thank you for a fantastic first year, and we look forward to seeing how this program continues to grow as we begin round two later this year!

Program Testimonials

“Over the past year, I had the privilege of being mentored through the D4H Gender Equity Mentorship Program—a journey that deepened my understanding of how gender equity can be meaningfully integrated into health policy and governance.

With the guidance of my amazing mentor, [Dr. Michelle Kaufman](#), I was



Giceline G. Artuyo, RSW
Department of Health,
Philippines

able to develop an assessment framework integrating gender-responsive tools for the Department of Health’s 20th Congress Health Executive Agenda for Legislation; helped shape inclusive legislative criteria; and reflected on how leadership and policy intersect with lived realities and structural inequalities.

Even more rewarding was the opportunity to pay it forward.”

Read her full testimonial [here](#).



Richard Mwamba Kabuya, MD, MSc
UNECA, Lesotho

"The training program was truly outstanding. As a medical doctor and clinical epidemiologist working in a TB and HIV clinic, contributing to the national cancer registry, and participating in the mentorship initiative with the United Nation Economic Commission for Africa to support the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics system, this program has been a real eye-opener. It deepened my understanding of how to meaningfully integrate gender equity across all aspects of my professional responsibilities. The Gender Equity Mentorship Program has been incredibly valuable, enhancing not only my awareness but also the way I approach patient care, data analysis, and policy advocacy through a more inclusive and equitable lens. It has positively influenced how I identify and address gender-based disparities in health outcomes, making my work more impactful and responsive to diverse community needs."

You can hear more from cohort one’s experiences on our website [here](#).

GENDER, DATA & EQUITY: EXPERT CONVERSATIONS

LISTENING SESSIONS: PART 1 IN A 2-PART SERIES

Men, Masculinities, and Contraception

A conversation on men and gender norms, and family p

DATE **Wednesday, April 23, 2020**

TIME **9:00 a.m. ET | 2:00 p.m. GMT**

Registration is required to attend.




LISTENING SESSIONS: PART 2 IN A 2-PART SERIES

Men and Novel Male Contracepti

DATE **Wednesday, May 14, 2020**

TIME **11:00 a.m. ET | 4:00 p.m. GMT**

Registration is required to attend.




We partnered with the [Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine](#) and [Male Contraceptive Initiative](#) to host the two-part listening session series, “Men, Masculinities, and Contraception.”

The field of family planning and contraception has been embedded in, and often conflated with, women’s health. Any inclusion of men and boys in the field has been geared to male engagement in women’s family planning needs and efforts. The “new masculinities” and modern gender norms have jumpstarted the conversations between couples around the globe as to whether and

when to have children.

With the advent of new male contraceptive products on the horizon, our expert panelists considered how to move the discussion forward on a societal level that considers contraception as part of human health and well-being.

Watch on our YouTube channel

STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS & HIGHLIGHTS



Michelle R. Kaufman, PhD, delivered a talk on “Gender in a Digital World” on May 13 through the Profs and Pints series in Washington D.C. This talk discussed how technology influences our understanding of gender and health.



Congratulations to our team members, **Lisa Lapa** (center) and **Gayatri Malhotra** (not pictured), MPH, who were recognized with departmental awards at the Johns Hopkins Department of Health, Behavior and Society’s end-of-year celebration hosted in May!

GEU IN THE MEDIA

Nature Index | May 22, 2025

Nations urged to ‘pick up the ball’ after DEI research cuts

Michelle R. Kaufman, PhD, GEU Director, is quoted.

PUBLICATIONS

Measuring safe, stable and nurturing relationships among adolescents in China,

Democratic Republic of Congo and Indonesia: Association with peer-violence

experiences *Journal of Child Abuse & Neglect* | Astha Ramaiya, DrPH, Technical Assistant Lead,
Lead Author

Agency and Opportunity in Early Adolescence: Investigating Gender-Specific Patterns in
Developmental Trajectories Using Longitudinal Data *Journal of Adolescence* | Astha Ramaiya,

DrPH, Coauthor

Missing piece: The imperative of gender-disaggregated data in unraveling health inequity

BMJ Global Health | Mahboubeh Shirzad, PhD, Lead Author; Michelle R. Kaufman, PhD,
Coauthor

CONNECT WITH US

You can always reach out to the Gender Equity Unit about a new project, an announcement, a publication, an idea, impactful news, or a question regarding our work:

team@genderhealthdata.org



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