



FOREWORD

From the President of the Board

The year 2025 has underscored, with renewed urgency, why GENDRO's mission matters more than ever. Recognizing sex and gender as fundamental dimensions of research is essential to producing science that is rigorous, relevant and equitable, not only in health, but across the many fields that shape human lives and societies. Progress requires us to continue strengthening the evidence base, building research capacity and ensuring that sex- and gender-responsive approaches become an integral part of how knowledge is generated, funded and translated into policy and practice.

This commitment has been tested in a particularly challenging global environment. Moves to restrict or remove attention to sex and gender from parts of the scientific and policy landscape, while major reductions and disruptions in global health financing have placed additional pressure on institutions, programmes and communities worldwide. These developments remind us that gains we may have considered secure cannot be taken for granted, and that overlooking sex and gender does not make inequalities disappear; it makes them harder to see, understand and address.

Yet 2025 has also given us strong reasons for confidence. Across universities and research institutions, public agencies, civil society, philanthropy and the private sector, we continue to see remarkable commitment to advancing robust, inclusive and sex- and gender-responsive research. GENDRO is proud to be part of this community and to help connect its knowledge, experience and determination. As we look ahead, our task is not simply to preserve what has been achieved, but to deepen the evidence, broaden the partnerships and ensure that attention to sex and gender remains a cornerstone of excellent research and better outcomes for everyone.

Warmly,
Gabrielle Landry Chappuis
PRESIDENT, GENDRO



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- **Gabrielle Landry Chappuis**
PRESIDENT, GENDRO



What we do at GENDRO

OUR MISSION

GENDRO envisions a world where all evidence produced to enhance and progress our society—be it through academic research, policy analysis, or program evaluations—acknowledges the profound impacts of gender and sex. In pursuit of this vision, GENDRO's mission is to promote equity by incorporating sex and gender considerations into interdisciplinary research. We achieve this through the following strategic workstreams:

- **Creating public awareness**
- **Convening and connecting**
- **Building capacity**
- **Advocacy**
- **Generating and disseminating evidence**
- **Publications**

AREAS OF WORK

GENDRO raises **awareness** of the insufficient consideration of sex and gender in research and innovation by engaging with a diverse array of organizations and academic institutions.

Through delivering **capacity-building** opportunities, lectures, interviews, workshops, and presentations at various events, we promote and contribute to a more systematic and effective integration of sex and gender dimensions into research, data collection, analysis, and reporting. Our goal is to shift the mindset within the research ecosystem and ensure that policy and practice are informed by sex- and gender-inclusive and intentional evidence.

GENDRO further mobilizes actors by convening the **Gender, Evidence, and Health (GEH) Network**, offering a think tank for ongoing conversations, joint analyses, and collaborative action to continuously advocate for **gender-responsive health research**, ensuring equitable healthcare prevention, treatment, and care for all.





What we do at GENDRO

EVENTS

In 2025, GENDRO contributed to and co-led multiple events to maximize its impact on key stakeholders and relevant audiences.

CREATING PUBLIC AWARENESS

- **Webinar: Beyond Bikini Medicine — Sex and Gender Differences in Oncology** – 21 March 2025. Organized by Women in Pharma. Dr. Shirin Heidari, director of GENDRO, joined Dr. Berna Özdemir (University Hospital Bern) as a speaker.
- **Meeting: Transformative Change to Close Gender Health Data Gaps: What We Can Achieve by 2030** – 25–27 March 2025, Istanbul, Türkiye. GENDRO participated in this meeting organized by the Gender Equity Unit at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.
- **Meeting: A Gender Perspective on Standards for Artificial Intelligence** – 8 April 2025, Palais des Nations, Geneva. Organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), Team of Specialists on Gender-Responsive Standards, where GENDRO presented on the *Promises and Perils of AI for Health: The Case for Gender-Responsive, Inclusive and Human Rights-Based Guidance*.
- **Partners Meeting on Health Equity and the Right to Health (WHA78)** – 20 May 2025, Campus Biotech Innovation Park, Geneva. Co-organized by the Framework Convention on Global Health (FCGH) Alliance and the Alliance for Health Promotion. GENDRO was a co-sponsor of the event.
- **Panel: Women in Science: A Dialogue Across Ages** – 11 November 2025, Oslo, Norway. Organized by the Sustainable Health Unit (SUSTAINIT) at the University of Oslo, the Centre for Pandemics and One Health Research (P1H), Women in Global Health (WGH) Norway, Women in Life Science Norway, and UiO:LifeScience, where GENDRO took part in the panel.
- **Event: Resilient Voices: How Women in Colombia and Ecuador Face and Heal from Violence** – 2 December 2025. Organized by SWISSAID and Imek, moderated by GENDRO.
- **Panel: Science, Data and Ethics: Strengthening Equity in Research** – 15 December 2025, Basel, Switzerland. Organized by the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute (Swiss TPH). The programme opened with a key note by Shirin Heidari *Reflections on the SAGER guidelines and advancing gender-responsive and inclusive research globally*.





What we do at GENDRO

RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS

- [Beyond COVID-19, the case for collecting, analysing and using sex-disaggregated data and gendered data to inform outbreak response: a scoping review](#) – 19 January 2025 (BMJ Global Health)
- [Intersectionality and diversity, equity, and inclusion in the healthcare and scientific workforces](#) – 26 January 2025 (The Lancet)
- [Intersectional analysis for science and technology](#) – 9 April 2025 (Nature)
- [A proposed framework for monitoring and evaluating progress at the intersection of women, power, and cancer](#) – 15 April 2025 (The Lancet)
- [Guidelines for Intersectional Analysis in Science and Technology: Implementation and Checklist Development](#) – 3 September 2025 (European Science Editing, ESE)
- [Aligning SPIRIT and SAGER guidelines for equity in clinical trials](#) – 15 November 2025 (The Lancet)
- [Safeguarding research integrity: SAGER guidelines, research ethics, and the politics of evidence](#) – 28 November 2025 (The Lancet)

PRESS AND STATEMENTS

- **Press release:** Gender bias in research is an ethical concern: Letter to The Lancet highlights launch of the SAGER-Ethics Working Group – 29 November 2025 (GENDRO)
- **Press release:** Aligning SAGER, SPIRIT, and CONSORT for More Inclusive Clinical Trials – 13 November 2025 (GENDRO and EASE)
- **Press release:** GENDRO Raises Alarm Over Rollback of Diversity and Equity Initiatives in U.S. Research – 27 January 2025 (GENDRO and 22 civil society and academic partners)



What we do at GENDRO

MEDIA

- **Article:** ELLE – "Pain & Prejudice: Inside The Rise (And Rise) Of Medical Misogyny" – 7 March 2025 (ELLE UK) – Shirin Heidari, in representation of GENDRO, was interviewed for the article on the historical exclusion of women from medical research and the push for women's health research to become standard practice.

- **Featured Profile:** GENDRO's founder and director, Dr Shirin Heidari, Executive Director of GENDRO, was profiled by The Lancet, highlighting her career and leadership in advancing gender equity in health research, including her role in developing the SAGER guidelines – 15 March 2025 (The Lancet, Aarathi Prasad)

LIFE + CULTURE > CULTURE

Pain & Prejudice: Inside The Rise (And Rise) Of Medical Misogyny

While we may be discussing conditions like endometriosis and perimenopause more than ever, and being sold products to help symptoms, there is still an entrenched prejudice around women's pain. Naomi May investigates the role of medical misogyny and how to rewrite the prognosis.

BY NAOMI MAY PUBLISHED: 07 MARCH 2025

SAVE ARTICLE

Perspectives

Profile

Shirin Heidari: towards gender equity in health research

Shirin Heidari, the Executive Director of GENDRO and Senior Researcher at the Gender Centre, Geneva Graduate Institute in Switzerland, was born in Tehran 6 years before the 1979 Iranian revolution. Coming from a family with "many strong women as role models, and always a sense of activism", the revolution, which "resulted in a regime oppressing women, men, as well as any dissidents, followed by political oppression and war", left her with "a very strong distaste for injustice", and a profound awareness, "very early on", of the devastating impacts of "a lack of rights, and the lack of a justice system".

Heidari moved with her family to Sweden aged 14 years, later completing an undergraduate degree in biomedical science at Uppsala University, and a PhD in clinical virology and experimental oncology at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm. In parallel, she engaged "with Amnesty International around women's rights, sexual and reproductive rights, and the right to health". It was entering the field of HIV after her PhD, Heidari says, that allowed her to "bring all the passions together, to draw upon my clinical and biomedical knowledge, but also, as a pandemic that really brought to the forefront all the societal issues around gender and sexuality, link it to human rights". Moving to Geneva in 2007 to work for the International AIDS Society, she became the Executive Editor of the *Journal of the International AIDS Society*, where she began noting "a persistent bias in research—so much being published that really doesn't take into account sex and gender differences, or gender dynamics". That, she realised, did both "a disservice to women, and to science".

As an elected council member of the European Association of Science Editors (EASE), in 2012, Heidari established and co-chaired a Gender Policy Committee, hoping to shift the approach taken in research design, implementation, and communication towards a better integration of sex and gender dimensions. That led to the development of the Sex and Gender Equity in Research (SAGER) guidelines. From 2015 to 2018, she became the Executive Director and Editor-in-Chief of *Sexual and Reproductive Health Matters*, based in London, UK. In this role, she contributed to promoting feminist research and evidence-based advocacy.

In 2018, Heidari took that work forward through the founding of GENDRO, a global non-profit organisation with a mission to advance gender-sensitive research and data analysis. As a convening platform for "researchers and individuals working on this topic who felt siloed and unsupported", she explains, "it creates a space where we could connect, learn, and mobilise". GENDRO focuses on specific workstreams "to institutionalise changes into the entire research ecosystem, to really shift the way we do science; it serves as the custodian of the SAGER guidelines after the EASE Gender Policy Committee concluded its mission, and continues to promote their adoption and expansion in partnership with EASE and a broad network of partners and advocates", she says. "We hope to increase its wider uptake and implementation by trying to expand its application, engaging different stakeholders who can really institutionalise the changes into the system." In this way, she hopes the idea of sex and gender equity in research will not be "dependent on one person, or topic or area, but becomes the way we work—rather than an exception, it becomes the norm".

In reaching that goal, part of Heidari's work has been to support WHO to integrate this lens into their technical work and as a critical part of the women's health agenda. "It's really important to the mission and the mandate of WHO of leaving no one behind. Promoting health equity requires paying attention to sex and gender—and their intersections with other dimensions. These are critical in making sure that everybody has access to equally safe, efficacious, and effective interventions, and reliable evidence."

At the Gender Centre, Geneva Graduate Institute, Heidari is also Principal Investigator of the Liminality Research Consortium, examining sexual and reproductive health in forced displacement. One of the projects "specifically focused on the structural vulnerability that creates conditions for transactional sexual activities as a survival mechanism, across gender and sexuality, in forced displacement", Heidari notes, shows that "these are not necessarily always choices". Rather, "migration policies, asylum processes, and humanitarian assistance, and within these, the gendered vulnerabilities that are produced and reproduced, are key drivers". Her research aims to move away from "extractive, conventional methods", towards intersectional feminist methodologies that are "more collaborative and participatory, working very closely with affected communities, UN agencies, and other humanitarian actors, as well as specifically to understand the experiences of queer refugees, and the gendered differences within their different sub-identities".

Heidari's learnings call for "rethinking and revisiting the way we produce knowledge". As she points out, "there's a lot of hierarchy built within research. There's an amazing number of people (and women) in different countries who are not having the same access to funding or getting the same opportunities to publish their work or making their work visible", as well as "inequities in terms of whose knowledge is being produced, and whose voices are being heard." Across the board, Heidari adds, "bias and assumptions within existing research structures, in terms of gender, race, ethnicity, and other aspects really skew our knowledge. And I think we all have a responsibility to change the system."

Aarathi Prasad

www.thelancet.com Vol 405 March 15, 2025

- **Article:** Guidelines, Governance, and Gender – 8 October 2025 (PhD Scientia, Maria Machado)

Guidelines, Governance, and Gender

What are sex and gender? While biologic or physiologic differences are tremendously important, so too are the ways that women and men experience their lives and their work differently. Women often have very different experiences of health care because of bias or prejudice within the system. Equally, men get treated differently and often don't seek health care because of the ways that gender norms encourage them to be resilient and not seek care. So, is gender an ideology? We were lucky to speak with Shirin Heidari, Thomas Babor, and Jocelyn Clark, who helped us navigate the muddy waters of the current climate.

Guidelines

The World Health Organization adopted the SAGER guidelines (Sex and Gender Equity in Research) for their research and health data analysis, acknowledging that failing to account for sex and gender dimensions in research leads to worse health outcomes and perpetuates health inequalities. This was partly as a result of advocacy efforts by Shirin Heidari.

Once elected as a council member of EASE (European Association of Science Editors) in 2012, Heidari cochaired a Gender Policy Committee aimed at shifting the approach taken in research design, implementation, and communication towards a better integration of sex and gender dimensions. As one of the authors of SAGER and the founder and Executive Director of GENDRO, Heidari is still committed to uncovering gender biases in research, bridging evidence gaps, and driving systemic changes in the research ecosystem for tangible real-world impact.

The SAGER guidelines have been accessed more than 12 million times since their publication, and provide researchers and authors with a tool to standardise sex and gender reporting in scientific publications (see box). However, their widespread acceptance by the scientific community has been recently attacked.

GENDRO

Governance

In late January 2025, the current Trump Administration instructed scientists and others employed by US federal agencies to comply with an executive order aimed at "defending women from gender ideology extremism" and "restoring biological truth to the federal government." A Professor Emeritus and former Chairman in the Department of Public Health Sciences, University of Connecticut School of Medicine, USA, Thomas Babor has expressed his concern regarding the pressing gender issues unfolding in the USA nowadays. He stresses that the order's implementation directly attacks the rights of individuals that interact with the healthcare system.

Cite as: PhDScientia/Guidelines, Governance, and Gender / September 2025/16419

What we do at GENDRO

GEH NETWORK

Reached 275 new members in 2025

EVENTS

•Book discussion with **Professor Sophie Harman**, author of *"Sick of It: The Global Fight for Women's Health"* – 4 February 2025

•Reimagining Research: Intersectional Feminist Approaches for Just Evidence – closed panel discussion moderated by **Olabukunola Williams** (Akina Mama wa Afrika), with **Farah Abdi** (TGEU) and **Dr. Derek M. Griffith** (University of Pennsylvania) – 6 May 2025

•Discerning Data: Gender, Power, and the Politics of Evidence – talk by **Beatrice Leong**, Malaysian documentary filmmaker and gender-disability activist – 9 July 2025

•Guidelines for Intersectional Analysis in Science and Technology: Implementation and Checklist Development – presentation by **Professor Londa Schiebinger** (Stanford University), based on her *Nature* publication co-developed with GENDRO – 9 October 2025



GENDRO in 2025: Strengthening Our Global Footprint

In 2025, GENDRO expanded its reach, visibility, and impact in advancing gender-responsive health research.

- **275 members** in the GEH Network by year-end, consolidating it as a key platform for gender-responsive health research globally (Data: January 2026)
- **1.40 million+ article accesses** for the SAGER guidelines (Data: March 2026)
- **Nearly 2,000 citations** across major academic platforms (Data: March 2026)
- Targeted events on **gender-inclusive digital health design** and **people-centered digital health strategies**

Together, these milestones reflect GENDRO's ongoing commitment to equity, rigor, and accountability in global health research.

What we do at GENDRO

PARTNERSHIPS

Throughout 2025, GENDRO continued to cultivate strategic partnerships, build alliances, and participate in initiatives with a diverse range of organizations committed to advancing gender-responsive research and health equity. These partnerships span research institutes, global health consultancies, and multi-stakeholder initiatives working across women's health, cancer care, immunology, forced displacement, and global health advocacy. Together with our partners, we work to close persistent evidence gaps, strengthen the research ecosystem, and turn scientific collaboration into tangible, real-world impact.

IMPACT
The Centre for Post-COVID Research, Innovation and Translation

Swiss TPH
Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute



INITIATIVES GENDRO ENGAGES IN

The Global
Alliance for
Women's Health

Women, power and cancer:
A Lancet Commission



On 15 December 2025, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Swiss TPH and **GENDRO** was signed, formalizing a partnership around inclusive research practices, including **Swiss TPH's** commitment to implement the SAGER guidelines.



MEMBERS

Shirin Heidari: Executive Director

Michela Manna: Gender Expert

Kala Madhav: Webmaster

Sara Achik: Communications and Project Coordinator

Loeïza Jack: Visual Advisor

Barrett Liebermann: Social Media Coordinator

Yalda Matin: Intern

Noor Darwish: Intern

Jasmin Messaoudi: Intern

BOARD

Gabrielle Landry Chappuis: President

Bernard Kadasia: Secretary

Olivia Mettler: Treasurer

Aida Mechkene Chouru, Member

Georgina Caswell, Member

Anthony Flynn, Member

Gonzalo Penacoba, Member

With sincere gratitude

We thank every member, intern, and collaborator for their continued trust, energy, and belief in gender-responsive science.



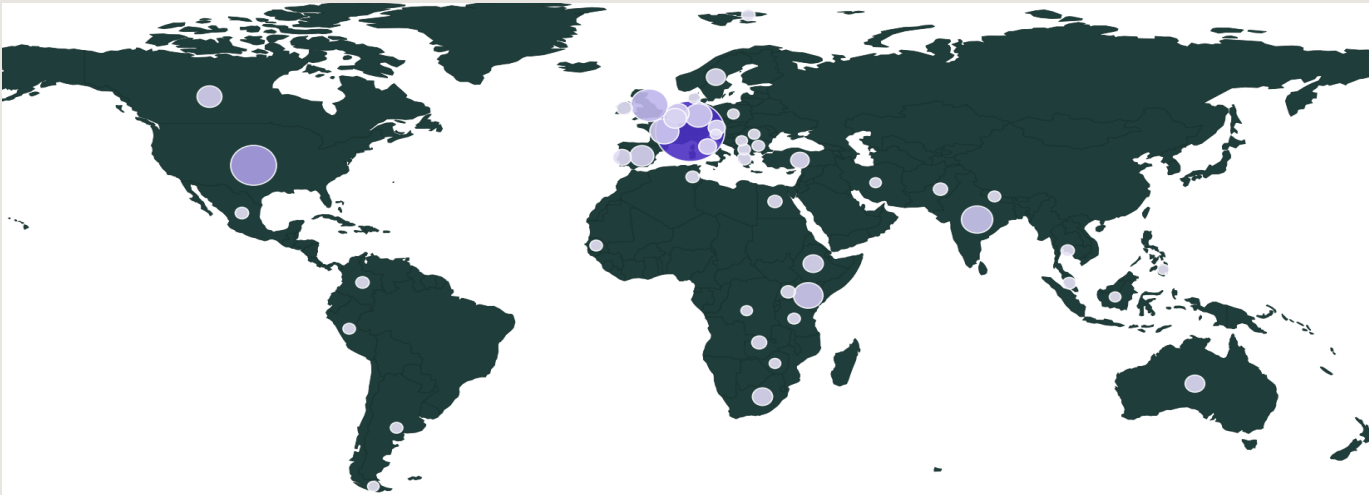
SOCIAL MEDIA



LINKEDIN 2025

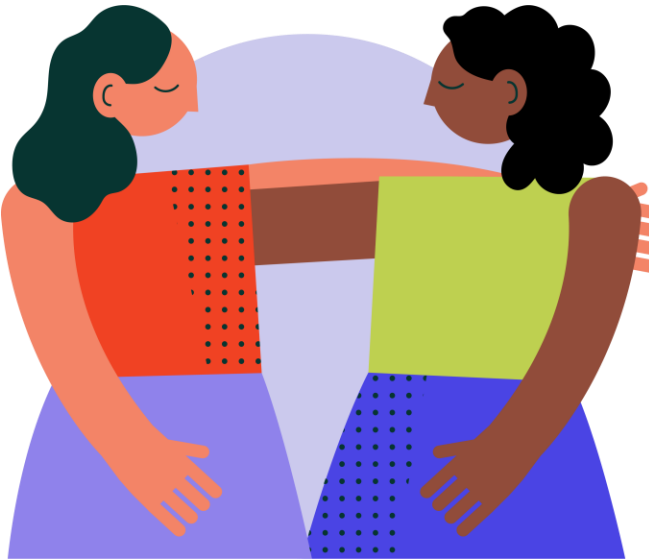
~1,014 followers from **estimated followers at end of 2025**

+133 new followers compared to 2024



Region	Followers	% of total
Europe	458	45.2%
Other countries*	252	24.9%
North America	111	10.9%
Africa	92	9.1%
Asia-Pacific (incl. Middle East & Oceania)	85	8.4%
Latin America & the Caribbean	16	1.6%
	1,014	100%

*Data source: LinkedIn Page followers report. Total followers: 1,014**



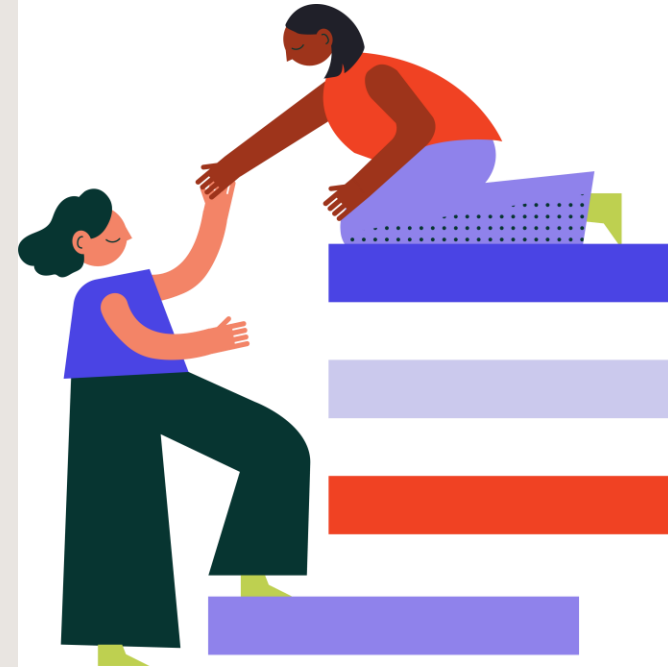
LOOKING AHEAD (2026)

Consolidating growth and collaboration

“Building on the momentum of **2025**, GENDRO will deepen partnerships and advance the institutionalisation of gender-responsive, inclusive and responsible research.

In **2026**, we look forward to marking the 10th anniversary of the SAGER guidelines, while continuing to strengthen the integration of sex, gender and intersectional considerations across research systems. Key priorities include expanding institutional adoption, building capacity and finalizing the SAGER-Ethics guidelines, helping ensure that research, including clinical trials, are conducted in a way that generates equitable and relevant evidence and responsive to all.”

Shirin Heidari
Executive Director



WE COULD NOT HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT YOU!

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our partners, supporters, interns, and volunteers for their invaluable time, dedication, and vital commitment to GENDRO and its Gender, Evidence, and Health (GEH) Network in 2025.

