

BIGMUN 2026

ECOSOC 3: Commission on the status of Women (CSW)

Research Report

Topic 1: Stressing the lack of research surrounding diseases more common in women.



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Introduction

Despite significant medical progress and advances during the 20th century and the first half of the 21st century, multiple gender inequalities and disparities persist in both the medical health and medical research industries. Diseases that unequivocally affect women, such as osteoporosis, endometriosis, and others such as autoimmune diseases, remain both under-researched and under-funded, highlighting the gap that still presides between men and women in the medical industry today. This absence of research and medical development has led to the rise of inefficient and ineffective medical treatments and poses a challenge to the quality of life of women around the globe. This gap also highlights the different cultural, and social barriers imposed on women around the globe, and the mental and physical struggles of being a woman in certain regions of the world. Addressing these issues and developing alternative solutions for women around the world is an utmost priority in achieving both gender equality and health equality.

Key Terms

Sex: either of the two main categories (male and female) into which humans and most other living things are divided on the basis of their reproductive functions.

Gender: the male sex or the female sex, especially when considered with reference to social and cultural differences rather than biological ones, or one of a range of other identities that do not correspond to established ideas of male and female

Reproductive health: a person's health and well-being with regard to fertility, birth control, and childbirth.

Gender bias: favouritism towards or prejudice against a particular gender

Gender inequality: Social process by which people are treated differently and disadvantageously, under similar circumstances, on the basis of gender.

Health equity: A situation in which all people are given the chance to live as healthy a life as

possible regardless of their race, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, disability, education, job, religion, language, where they live, or other factors.

Gender equality: a situation in which access to rights or opportunities is unaffected by gender.

Intersectionality: the interconnected nature of social categorisations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and independent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

Background Information:

Throughout centuries, medical research has always prioritised male bodies and male experimentation, especially those concerning male testing and the use of male subjects in different scientific and medical endeavours.

According to the American Biomedress website, over 800 women die every day from preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth, with 94% of maternal deaths occurring in LMICs. Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death among women worldwide, yet women are less likely than men to be diagnosed or receive appropriate treatment. Conditions like endometriosis affect at least 10% of women and girls of reproductive age globally, often with delayed diagnosis. Nearly 1 in 3 women worldwide have experienced physical or sexual violence—an urgent public health issue. The accumulation of these different factors has dire consequences and pose a threat to global women's health. The issue is one that needs an immediate response, one that provides solutions through initiatives and advances around the world. Women's health data is a cornerstone of global health equity, yet it remains incomplete, fragmented, and systemically overlooked. The consequences of this lack of research weigh heavily on women's health, and are often overlooked or even under-cared for (misdiagnosis, delayed treatments, ineffective public health strategies).¹ According to the World Economic Forum, only 7% of healthcare research focuses on conditions exclusively affecting women. These numbers and statistics highlight the gap in research and

¹ "Medical Conditions That Impact Women More than Men | Banner." *Www.bannerhealth.com*, 12 Apr. 2023, www.bannerhealth.com/healthcareblog/teach-me/medical-conditions-that-impact-women-more-than-men.

medical effort towards women's health, which is often overshadowed by the advances or medical breakthroughs made in the medical field which more than often involves exclusively men. From endometriosis and menopause to cardiovascular disease, autoimmune disorders and dementia, the health challenges women face are broader and more complex than clinical research currently acknowledges. The effects of under-researching women's diseases are overwhelming².

According to the Medical Express website, autoimmune diseases affect approximately around 8% of the population, but within those 8%, around 78% of those affected are women. The combination of the under-representation of women in the medical field and the lack of research and efficiency concerning medically and scientifically backed solutions aiming to beat diseases more commonly found in women pose a threat to the struggle led by populations seeking medical equity between men and women.

Today, despite numerous challenges and barriers that seek to reduce women's access to a just and equitable healthcare for all, some actors have managed to both promote and encourage the active pursuit of health equity and gender equality through healthcare. For example, the global philanthropist Melinda French Gates has agreed to invest 50 million dollars in a women's health fund (which she believes are too often under-funded) to accelerate research in areas with the highest burdens of disease and death, and which often affect women differently or disproportionately when compared to men, including cardiovascular disease, autoimmune conditions, and mental health. Although this initiative is both encouraging and inspiring, it also highlights the lack of funding apparent in the medical sector concerning women. According to Melinda French Gates, it is vital that women deserve the same access to healthcare and medical solutions, wherever they are, in order to close the gap between men and women in both societal and medical sectors of the world.³

2 "The Global Alliance for Women's Health." *Weforum.org*, 2024, initiatives.weforum.org/global-alliance-for-womens-health/home.

3 Rigby, Jennifer. "Melinda French Gates Launches \$100 Million Push for Women's Health Research." *Reuters*, 10 Sept. 2025, www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/melinda-french-gates-launches-100-million-push-womens-health-research-2025-09-10/. Accessed 17 Jan. 2026.

Major Countries and Organisations Involved

United States of America- Advocate for women's health and the search for solutions in order to combat diseases affecting women, through the creation of the Society for Women's Health Research in 1990, a non-profit organisation focusing on the research in biological sex differences in diseases through scientific and educational efforts.

France- Creation of the Inserm foundation, focusing on research with its main objective centred on neglected women's health conditions (hormone disorders, cardiovascular diseases and issues present in Europe).

Kenya and Zambia- partnership with international organisations (Gate Foundation) to improve research concerning cervical and breast cancer and developing initiatives in order to fund local research facilities.

European Union- Supports women's healthcare and research through funding and economical programs such as Horizon Europe and EU4HEALTH, programs focusing on investing into scientific innovation, clinical research and missions aiming to target women's under-researched health issues.

World Health Organisation (WHO)- Global actor in healthcare research and medical advances, through cooperation with NGOs, academic institutions, and world experts in order to tackle healthcare issues and advance the priority and need for a proper access to health for both men and women.

Global Alliance for Women's health- Organisation created in order to mobilise resources worldwide and address women's health issues and challenges through collective funding and cooperation which aims to close the women's health gap.

Relevant UN Resolutions

[*UN General Assembly Resolution 70/1 \(2015\)*](#)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on the 25th of September 2015, aiming to end poverty and hunger, in all their forms and dimensions, and to ensure that all human beings can fulfil their potential in dignity and equality and in a healthy environment and seeking to realise the human rights of all and to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.⁴

General Assembly Resolution 29/3275 (1974)

Resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly recognising 1975 as International Women's Year – a period of intensified action with regard to equal rights and recognition of women. This resolution also included the recognition of the importance of women's increasing contribution to the development of friendly relations and co-operation among States and to the strengthening of world peace, and their role in the total development effort.⁵

General Assembly Resolution 31/136 (United Nations Decade for Women, 1976–1985)

Resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly emphasising a decade for women focusing on numerous and important objectives such as equality, development, and peace. Emphasises the need for governments to take measures to ensure equal and effective participation of women in political, economic, social and cultural life and in policymaking at local, national, regional and international levels, thereby increasing their role in international co-operation and in the strengthening of peace.⁶

Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (GA Resolution 48/104, 1993)

Resolution aiming to underline women's rights and access to security and helps situate health inequities within legislative and rights frameworks.

Political Declaration of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) — 2025 commitment

Conference focusing on the elimination of violence against women and girls, while reaffirming

4 “UN General Assembly Resolution 70/1 (2015) - Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” *European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights*, 30 Apr. 2020, fra.europa.eu/fr/law-reference/un-general-assembly-resolution-701-2015-transforming-our-world-2030-agenda.

5 Library, Dag Hammarskjöld. “Research Guides: UN General Assembly Resolutions Tables: 29th Session (1974-1975).” *Research.un.org*, research.un.org/en/docs/ga/quick/regular/29.

6 “Document Viewer.” *Un.org*, 2026, docs.un.org/en/A/RES/32/137.

the need to accelerate gender equality and close persistent healthcare gaps between men and women.⁷

Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue

Creation of the Advancing Science for the Health of Women Programme in 2019: Aimed to ensure that sex and gender are integrated into biomedical research to improve understanding of conditions affecting women. This included encouraging clinical studies to enrol women and fund projects focused on women's health.

European Commission Funding efforts:

Different funding initiatives aiming to tackle sex-related diseases and women's health issues, while also encouraging the fact that funding proposals need to address sex and gender analysis in research design.⁸

Global Funding Initiatives

Melinda French Gates' investments and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation pledging \$2.5 billion by 2030 in order to expand women's health research, focusing on under-studied conditions such as preeclampsia, menopause, and gynaecological health.

Possible Solutions

- **Cooperation:**

Partnership between international alliances and organisations in order to combat and tackle all barriers hindering the advances and progress made in the minimisation and elimination of all gaps between men and women concerning healthcare and the development of medical

⁷ “CSW69 / Beijing+30 (2025).” *UN Women – Headquarters*, 2023, www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/commission-on-the-status-of-women/csw69-2025.

⁸ “UNCSW69 Concludes with Renewed Commitments for the Future of Gender Equality.” *European Commission*, 24 Mar. 2025, commission.europa.eu/news-and-media/news/uncsw69-concludes-renewed-commitments-future-gender-equality-2025-03-24_en.

solutions addressing diseases affecting women around the globe.⁹

⁹ Rigby, Jennifer. “Melinda French Gates Launches \$100 Million Push for Women’s Health Research.” *Reuters*, 10 Sept. 2025, www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/melinda-french-gates-launches-100-million-push-womens-health-research-2025-09-10/. Accessed 17 Jan. 2026.

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