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Members of *Kazi ni Moyo* agricultural production and craft group at Nyamle, Tanzania. A stack of firewood for cooking is in the background. *Photo courtesy of D. Ceplis.*

The Gender Equality Mainstreaming (GEM) Working Group of the Agricultural Institute of Canada (AIC) gathers information and articles on an ongoing basis on gender equality mainstreaming within agriculture, scientific research, rural development, climate change and organizational development. Information is shared with members, partners, scientific societies and member organizations. The views and opinions presented are not necessarily representative of AIC. If you have information to share, please send it to dinah.ceplis@gmail.com and I will compile it to re-distribute once a month. Back issues of the GEM Digest are available at <http://www.aic.ca/gender/resources.cfm>.

Regards,
Dinah Ceplis, GEM Committee Member (Volunteer)

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This month's issue is particularly long as many organizations released statements and news related to International Women's Day which was March 8.

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Opportunities and Events

1. Webinars: Equity-Focused Evaluations

http://mymande.org/index.php?q=equity_focused_evaluation&x=cl

A series of live webinars on "Equity-focused Evaluations" will address the challenges in evaluating the effects of policies, programmes and projects to enhance equitable development results, with a special focus on the effects to the most excluded, marginalized and deprived groups.

Some upcoming sessions:

- **June 11, 2012: Evaluation of climate change intervention for excluded populations**

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2. Gender Equality: Fact or Fiction? at U of Manitoba

<http://www.umanitoba.ca/about/vc/>

The University of Manitoba has launched a new speaker series. *Visionary Conversations* speaker series will continue throughout the year. Please join President and Vice-Chancellor David T. Barnard and the university community for these themed events:

April 11 – Gender Equality: Fact or Fiction? Note that the live webcast is available at the website link.

June 13 – The Food we Eat

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3. USA Science & Engineering Festival

<http://www.usasciencefestival.org/>

Don't miss the largest celebration of science in the US: the 2nd USA Science & Engineering Festival will feature over 3,000 fun, interactive exhibits, more than 100 stage shows and 33 author presentations. The finale Expo will be held at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in **Washington DC on April 28-29, 2012**. New this year: the USA Science & Engineering Festival Book Fair, and a Career Pavilion for high-school students that includes a College Fair, a Job Fair and a Meet the Scientist/Engineer Networking area.

Major Science Celebrities including Bill Nye the Science Guy, Mayim Bialik from the *Big Bang Theory*, and Adam Savage and Jamie Hyneman from the hit TV Series the *MythBusters* will be performing. The event is open to all ages and free of charge.

The 2010 Festival attracted over 500,000 people of all ages and had strong support from the White House and Congress.

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4. Symposium on Innovation and Transformation in International Development in Toronto

<http://business.humber.ca/idicentresofexcellence/symposium/home.html>

Humber's International Development Institute (IDI) will host a Symposium on NGO Adaptation and Innovation on **June 14 - 15, 2012** in association with the Institute of Public Administration in Canada (IPAC) in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

The two-day Symposium will allow for in-depth coverage of a number of key topics and facilitate participant networking time. The first day will focus on high-level discussion of forces for change, implications for international development organizations and an overview of the transformation processes being employed by International Development organizations in Canada and internationally. It will feature well-known speakers and panelists from Canada and abroad. The second day will focus on more practical matters including changing business models, establishing and managing partnerships and collaboration, adopting modern management techniques, and facilitating organizational culture change.

Symposium topics will include:

- Changing Aid Community Roles and Relationships
- Implications for ID Organizations
- Transformation
- Implications for International Development Professional Career Paths

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5. Female Food Heroes

<http://www.oxfam.ca/grow/female-food-heroes>

From now until **World Food Day 2012 [October 16]**, Oxfam will be sharing the stories of Female Food Heroes from across Canada and around the world. We want to recognize and celebrate the important role women play as food producers and advocates for a better food system.

If you know a Female Food Hero, tell us more about her and share her story.

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6. Launch of the 2012 - 2013 Africa-wide 'Women and Young Professionals in Science' competitions

Call for Abstracts: 'Feeding 1 billion in Africa in a changing world'. Deadline: 14 May 2012.

http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/14983?utm_campaign=newsletterEN&utm_medium=newsletterlink&utm_source=newsletterEN

The CTA/FARA/IFS/ANAFE/RUFORUM consortium, in collaboration with AGRA and NPCA, is pleased to announce the launch of its 2012 - 2013 'Women and Young Professionals in Science' competitions. With a population of approximately 1.03 billion in 2011, and a growth rate of 24 million per annum, Africa's population is expected to double by 2050. The continent needs to increase agricultural productivity in a sustainable manner as well as find endogenous solutions to respond to the challenges. Africa's investment in science and innovation remains low, and only one African university is listed among the top 500 in the world. Women are under-represented in all areas of policy, education and research and many of Africa's youthful population; 70% are aged 30 or younger, do not see a future in agriculture or science. The continent faces acknowledge and skills gap as ageing scientists and academicians retire. The 2012 - 2013 Africa-wide competitions will evaluate, recognize and reward the contributions of women and young professionals who are involved in:

- (i) Pioneering and innovative research;
- (ii) Communicating their research results and technological developments; and
- (iii) Advocating for policy change as well as influencing policy processes through their research.

They will also raise awareness of the need for valuing and sustaining the engagement of women and young professionals and facilitating their contribution to Africa's socio-economic transformation.

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7. G20 Summit

<http://www.g20.org/index.aspx>

On **June 18-19, 2012**, the Group of 20 (G20) Summit of the world's twenty major economies will take place in Los Cabos, Mexico, and will be the first such summit to occur in Latin America. In its G20 Presidency role during 2012, Mexico has prioritized:

- i. economic stability and structural reform for growth and employment;
- ii. strengthening of financial systems and procurement of financial inclusion for economic growth;
- iii. improving international financial architecture in an interconnected global economy;
- iv. *mitigating negative effects on price level and volatility of commodities, in particular those affecting food security;*
and
- v. *promoting sustainable development with a focus on infrastructure, energy efficiency, green growth and financing the fight against climate change.*

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This Month's News

1. 2012 recipients of the FCC Rosemary Davis Awards

http://www.fcc-fac.ca/en/AboutUs/Responsibility/rosemarydavis/12award_winners_e.asp

Farm Credit Canada announced its 2012 recipients of the Rosemary Davis Award which honors women who are active leaders in Canadian agriculture. These women are role models for the rest of us, and give of themselves in their communities and beyond.

- Martine Bourgeois – an agrologist, egg producer and poultry industry leader from Saint-Ours, Quebec
- Katherine Elaine Buckley – a research scientist, green champion and educator from Brandon, Manitoba
- Betty Lou Scott – a cattle producer, 4-H leader and volunteer from Mount Thom, Nova Scotia
- Judy Shaw – an agriculture industry leader, communicator and visionary from Guelph, Ontario

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2. Innovative approaches to gender and food security: Changing attitudes, changing behaviours

<http://www.eldis.org/go/topics/insights/2012/innovative-approaches-to-gender-and-food-security/editorial>

It is a bitter irony that our world currently produces enough food to provide for every woman, man and child, yet a recent estimate by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) suggests that around 925 million people go to bed hungry each night.

The struggle of poor women and men in developing countries to ensure sufficient nutritious food for their families has been regularly reported in the media in Northern and Southern countries over the past four years. The global food price spikes have increased undernourishment by almost seven percent, and have driven at least 100 million more people into poverty. By 2050, the world population will be around 9.3 billion, and feeding everyone will require a potential 70 percent increase in supplies of cereals alone.

Gender justice – that is, the realisation of women's rights as human rights – and ending hunger, are closely entwined, interdependent goals. Solving hunger now and in the future involves challenging the current global development model which permits – and is driven by – inequality. Gender analysis shows us that women literally 'feed the world', as producers, processors, cooks and servers of food. However, women's vast contribution to food production, and their key role as consumers and family carers, is still largely misunderstood and underestimated.

Refer to the link for the complete article.

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3. Gender Empowerment Still Lags Far Behind in Global Village

<http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=107052>

UNITED NATIONS, Mar 13, 2012 (IPS) - When the United Nations concluded a two-week session highlighting the plight of rural women last week, the meetings singled out both the achievements and shortcomings of the ongoing relentless battle

for gender equality in a world still dominated - and overwhelmingly ruled - by men.

The 45-member Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), the global policy-making body fighting for women's rights, focused its priorities on the empowerment of rural women, including ownership rights, gender disparities in land holdings and the unequal access to productive resources in agriculture.

According to U.N. estimates, the international community contributed 7.5 billion dollars in official development assistance (ODA) to rural development during 2008-2009, but only a paltry three percent of that amount was earmarked for programmes where gender equality was the primary object.

Judging by the inherent shortcomings, the corresponding figures for 2010 and 2011 are not expected to be any better.

Refer to the link for the complete article.

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4. Rural Women Are Leading the Way - Will the World Follow? - Part 1

<http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=106882>

ANANTPUR, India/BARIND TRACT, Bangladesh, Feb 25, 2012 (IPS) - Agriculture currently provides a livelihood for roughly 1.3 billion smallholder farmers and landless workers, of which nearly half – close to 560 million – are women.

A vast majority of these women are living on a precipice, where small changes in their environment could result in chronic hunger and abject poverty.

Given the unprecedented scale of climate change, which has already caused massive food insecurity this year, rural women are not only extremely vulnerable, but also woefully overlooked by governments and policy makers who define top-down strategies for hunger and poverty eradication.

In response, the United Nations' 56th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), scheduled to run from Feb. 27-March 9 at U.N. headquarters in New York, listed the empowerment of rural women as one of its priority themes for the year.

"If rural women had equal access to productive resources, agricultural yields could reduce the number of chronically hungry people by between 100 and 150 million," according to a press release issued Thursday by UN Women.

This year's CSW promises to examine the "empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, sustainable development and current challenges (and) will agree on urgent actions needed to make a real difference in the lives of millions of rural women."

But while the U.N. is only just beginning its session on rural women, female farmers around the world are already deep in a struggle to secure their environment against the destabilising impacts of climate change by using their traditional role as community leaders and ingenious farmers to sow the seeds of hope for their future.

Refer to the link for the complete article.

This is the first of a two-part series on rural women, climate change and food security.

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5. Rural Women Are Leading the Way - Will the World Follow? - Part 2

<http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=106905>

MBARARA, Uganda, Feb 29, 2012 (IPS) - The United Nations' 56th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) opened Monday in New York, with the empowerment of rural women high on a list of priorities for this year.

According to a press release issued last week by UN Women, "Rural women constitute one-fourth of the world's population. (They) account for a great proportion of the agricultural labour force, produce the majority of food grown, especially in subsistence farming, and perform most of the unpaid care work in rural areas."

Yet, "the livelihoods and well-being of rural women and girls are directly linked to the environment they live in," Lakshmi Puri, assistant-secretary-general and deputy executive director of UN Women, told IPS.

"In many countries, rural women and girls have been directly impacted by the effects of climate change. (Throughout) the Commission on the Status of Women, UN-Women will be listening to rural women from all continents about the ways they have been impacted by climate change and, together with partners, amplifying their voices so that they are heard by world leaders," Puri added.

While the U.N.'s high-level conference is just getting started, women on the ground in the global South are already in the eye of the storm and are busy deploying a combination of indigenous techniques and adaptive agricultural technologies to ward off the impacts of climate change.

Refer to the link for the complete article.

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6. Africa's Latest Land Rush: The Effect of Land Grabs On Women's Rights

<http://awid.org/News-Analysis/Friday-Files/Africa-s-Latest-Land-Rush-The-Effect-of-Land-Grabs-on-Women-s-Rights>

In Africa land rights are critical to economic power. In recent history, there have been three waves of land grabs: colonization, post-independence and present-day land grabs for commercial and apparently environment preservation purposes. Governments and corporations continue to wield their power to the detriment of women in Africa

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7. EU eyes forced quotas for women on corporate boards

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/international-news/european/eu-eyes-forced-quotas-for-women-on-corporate-boards/article2358723/>

European leaders are eyeing mandatory quotas in their push to get more women on corporate boards, frustrated by projections that show it will take 40 more years to fix the imbalance at the current pace.

The European Commission is studying the measure amid fresh evidence that women remain dramatically underrepresented in boardrooms across the developed world.

The EC's warning Monday turns up the heat on companies to diversify their boards, and escalates the debate over whether such moves should be forced or voluntary.

While Canada ranks ahead of many European countries, such as Germany or Ireland, studies show little progress at home, as well, with women representing 14 per cent.

A study by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development shows women in just one of 10 board seats at listed companies as of 2009.

The EC's announcement follows voluntary measures that failed to make any discernible headway. One year after self-regulatory measures were introduced in Europe, the commission said Monday there has been just limited progress.

"Overall, change remains stubbornly slow," it said in a scathing statement.

Indeed, the number of women chairing major boards is actually falling, to 3.2 per cent in January from 3.4 per cent in 2010.

Refer to the link for more news on this topic.

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8. Following the Money Trail in Gender Financing

<http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=106982>

UNITED NATIONS, March 7, 2012 (IPS) - Promising methods of tracking aid funding intended to improve women's and girls' livelihoods also offer the possibility of revealing whether donors and policymakers are walking the walk when it comes to gender financing. "More consistency between what donors are saying [and] what they are actually doing is needed," Lydia Alpizar, executive director of the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID), told IPS.

Tracing the myriad paths of financial support for gender equality and women's empowerment is no easy task, but nevertheless a necessary one to test whether political commitment is translating into results. "One very concrete way to measure" the effectiveness of support is to check "the actual resources that are being given", Alpizar explained. "Having this data available helps us to push donors to do better, because what they do is not close to what is needed, not close to the minimum," she added.

Refer to the link for the complete article.

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9. The Glass Obstacle Course

<http://genderandset.open.ac.uk/index.php/genderandset/article/viewArticle/205>

The Glass Obstacle Course: Informal and Formal Barriers For Women Ph.D. Students in STEM Fields

From the *International Journal of Gender, Science and Technology*

Abstract

A new metaphor is proposed for understanding the experiences of women pursuing Ph.D.s in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields, based on a study of women in a U.S. Ph.D. program. The notion of the "glass obstacle course" captures the unequal gendered processes at work in women's graduate careers, including exclusion from

the “Old Boys’ Club,” outright sexism, a lack of women role models, and difficult work-life choices. In-depth interviews elucidate the gendered, invisible (glass), and influential aspects of these barriers and the agentic strategies our respondents utilized to navigate them. In this way, career pathways for women scientists and engineers are shaped by ideological and structural constraints, informal and formal biases, and active resistance or accommodation to them. Such accumulated disadvantages can impact women’s attrition from and satisfaction with their chosen STEM fields.

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10. Predictors of Women’s Persistence in STEM

<http://genderandset.open.ac.uk/index.php/genderandset/article/viewArticle/185>

Are the Predictors of Women’s Persistence in STEM Painting the Full Picture? A Series of Comparative Case Studies

From the *International Journal of Gender, Science and Technology*

Abstract

This study provides an in-depth picture of seven college level women all of whom entered university with a declared science/engineering major. Comparative case studies are used to highlight how predictive factors regarding persistence in the current literature do not cover the unique and varying experiences that lead to women’s decisions to stay or leave their science/engineering majors. Specifically this study focuses on the following predictive factors: parental support and education level; pre-college preparation; ability to identify with the culture of science and engineering. By conducting narrative life histories with each of these women I was also able to delve in to the perception that each of these women associated with their experience. This study indicates that more research needs to be done to further explore the varying interpretations made by women in science/engineering majors that affect their persistence.

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11. Mentoring Advice

http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/career_magazine/previous_issues/articles/2012_02_03/caredit.a1200015

Science Careers magazine gives a list of resources and avenues for being mentored, mentoring and joining peers for mutual mentoring.

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12. Sponsoring Women to Succeed

<http://www.catalyst.org/publication/485/sponsoring-women-to-success>

While mentoring is essential for leadership development, it is insufficient for advancing to top levels. Recent research has pointed to a more influential and specific professional relationship: sponsorship. Lately, organizations and the media have given sponsorship widespread attention, but questions abound.

The research report *Sponsoring Women to Success* addresses many of these questions and clarifies what sponsorship is—and isn’t—based on the experiences of people well-positioned to provide answers: executives acting as sponsors and high-performing employees currently being sponsored. The report also presents data, practices, and participant insights that provide actionable advice on how to foster sponsorship within organizations.

Analyses of interviews with 93 women and men participants revealed that sponsorship:

- Is key to advancing high performers and gives them greater opportunities to excel through skill development and increased visibility.
- Acts as a differentiator at the top and a means to overcoming barriers for women.
- Provides valuable benefits to sponsors, including feedback, enhanced skills, increased knowledge of company needs and opportunities, and personal and professional satisfaction.
- Provides direct and indirect benefits to organizations, including better leaders and teams and increased organizational commitment.

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13. Cassava could prove to be Africa’s ticket to food security under a changing climate

[http://ccaafs.cgiar.org/blog/cassava-could-prove-be-africa%E2%80%99s-ticket-food-security-under-changing-climate?utm_source=AgClim+Letters+and+Announcements&utm_campaign=19a0a19dd7-AgClim Letters March 20123 1 2012&utm_medium=email](http://ccaafs.cgiar.org/blog/cassava-could-prove-be-africa%E2%80%99s-ticket-food-security-under-changing-climate?utm_source=AgClim+Letters+and+Announcements&utm_campaign=19a0a19dd7-AgClim+Letters+March+20123+1+2012&utm_medium=email)

Cassava has long been understood as being one of the most resilient crops in the tropics, surviving in a challenging environment that is both hot and dry. Impressive as this is, new research from the CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAafs) and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) points to cassava actually thriving in a warmer climate, making it the “Rambo of food crops”. The newly released research results have been published in a special edition of the scientific journal *Tropical Plant Biology* where it concludes that the cassava root will come to brush off the expected temperature rises of up to 2 degrees Celsius in Africa by 2030 and could even prove to be more productive thanks to the warming climate. Seeing that it very seldom happens, climate change could prove to bring something positive to the region for a change.

Today, cassava stands as the second most important source of carbohydrate in Africa with 500 million consuming it every day. For many, cassava is vital for both food security and income generation. Despite its growing importance in the tropics, investments in cassava research have been dwarfed by a prioritization of research into better-known staples like rice, wheat and maize. This has contributed to an uneven cultivation and processing methods and cassava products that often are of poor quality.

Refer to the link for more background information.

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14. Stony Plain Woman joins MP at UN

<http://www.sprucegroveexaminer.com/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e=3495302>

A Stony Plain woman teamed up with the area MP in a Canadian delegation on the international stage this past week to focus on the rural women’s role in communities across the nation and the world.

Judy Unterschultz, Executive Director of the Heritage Agricultural Society, joined Hon. Rona Ambrose, Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for Status of Women, as part of the Canadian representatives during the 56th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW) in New York this past week.

Headed by Ambrose, the delegation group was chosen based on this year’s UNCSW focus on the empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges.

Ambrose believes that rural women, especially in Canada, play an important role in society that should not be overlooked and is proud to lead the Canadian delegation.

"Women in rural, remote and Northern communities play a key role in Canada's economic prosperity," Ambrose said. "It is an honour to lead the Canadian delegation to this important international event and to champion the role of rural women in Canada and abroad."

Refer to the link for the complete article.

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15. Government of Canada Supporting Women Living in Rural and Remote Communities and Small Urban Centres

<http://www.swc-cfc.gc.ca/med/news-nouvelles/2012/0306-eng.html>

The Honourable Rona Ambrose, Minister of Public Works and Government Services and Minister for Status of Women marked International Women's Week by announcing Government of Canada support for new projects that address issues of violence and economic security affecting women and girls living in rural and remote communities, and small urban centres.

"I am pleased to announce our Government's support for grassroots projects that address issues of violence and economic security affecting women and girls living in rural and remote communities," said Minister Ambrose. "In every region of Canada, particularly in rural and remote regions, women play important roles in their families and communities, and are key to our country's prosperity."

Each year during International Women's Week, Canadians celebrate and reflect on women's participation and leadership in Canada and around the world. This year, Canada's theme for International Women's Day and Week is *Strong Women, Strong Canada – Women in Rural, Remote and Northern Communities: Key to Canada's Economic Prosperity*.

Eligible community-based organizations from across Canada will address the issues of violence and economic security affecting women and girls living in rural and remote communities, and small urban centres with Government of Canada funding of more than \$12 million.

"Through targeted action, the Government of Canada supports the economic security and prosperity of women and girls in rural and remote communities, works to advance their leadership opportunities and forges ahead on ending violence against women," said Minister Ambrose.

The Government of Canada is committed to supporting projects that yield concrete results for women and girls in Canada while strengthening families, communities and the country. Through Status of Women Canada, the government's support for community-based projects has nearly doubled since 2006-2007, from \$10.8 million to close to \$19 million each year, its highest level ever.

The list of organizations receiving funding is available at the link.

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16. Neglecting prominent role of women in agriculture hindering solutions to food security

http://www.eurekaalert.org/pub_releases/2012-03/bc-npr031212.php

NEW DELHI (12 MARCH)—As developing countries battle multiple threats to food security—soaring prices, crop-crushing weather extremes and dramatic population growth—agriculture experts gathering in New Delhi this week warn that efforts to boost food production and reduce malnutrition risk failure if they continue to ignore the important role of women farmers around the world.

"The global sidelining of women farmers puts our food security at great risk," said Mark Holderness, Executive Secretary for the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR), one of the sponsors of the first-ever **Global Conference on Women in Agriculture**, which is part of GFAR's Gender in Agriculture Partnership program. "In holding this meeting, we are spurring collective action from all quarters of the agriculture field, whether from farmers' groups or national agricultural research systems, universities or NGOs, to empower women farmers."

They are driven by the fact that women represent on average 43 percent of the agricultural labour force in developing countries but must contend daily with policies and practices that severely restrain their food production potential. Women face widespread restrictions on their ability to buy, sell or inherit land, open a savings account, borrow money or sell their crops at market. They also are more likely than men to lack access to rudimentary basics of farming such as fertilizers, water, tillers, transportation, improved crop and animal varieties, and extension services.

Experts note that one pervasive problem is that well-intentioned agriculture research and development efforts sponsored by wealthy countries often assume that Western notions of male-dominated farm operations hold true for the rest of the world. Thus they fail to include women in their planning or consider how their work might exacerbate existing gender inequities.

Refer to the link for the complete article.

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17. Cultural Sensitivity Key to Reaching Rural Women in Iraq

<http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=107049>

UNITED NATIONS, Mar 13, 2012 (IPS) - Empowering rural women in the Iraqi marshlands [an area of 20,000 square kilometres], who mostly remain off the radar of international support, must involve local languages and dialects as well as local women trainers, says Mishkat Al Moumin, founder of the Iraqi group Women and the Environment Network (WATEO).

Through training in resources management and environmental design at the village level, WATEO empowers rural women as primary users of environmental resources, particularly water.

Refer to the link for the complete article.

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18. Women Weather Climate Change in the Philippines

<http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=106994>

MANILA, Mar. 8, 2012 (IPS) - As the world commemorates International Women's Day today, women around the globe are speaking out on various issues that affect them. In light of recent natural disasters and calamities in the Philippines, women are increasingly citing climate change as one of their most pressing concerns.

According to the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW)'s executive director Emmeline Versoza, the traditional role played by women makes them one of the most vulnerable populations to climate change. "During disasters, women attend

to the needs of the family and prioritise the safety of family members, especially their children, which makes them more vulnerable," Versoza told IPS.

Refer to the link for the complete article.

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19. U.N. Aims at Major Global Conference on Women in 2015

<http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=106999>

UNITED NATIONS, Mar 8, 2012 (IPS) - As the race towards gender equality moves at an exceedingly slow pace, the United Nations is calling for a major international conference on women in 2015 - 20 years after a landmark meeting in Beijing in 1995. The proposal, made jointly by Secretary-General Ban Ki moon and the President of the General Assembly Ambassador Nassir Abdulaziz Al- Nasser of Qatar, will go before the 193-member General Assembly for final approval.

The U.N.'s highest policy-making body has been asked to take "the necessary steps" to formalise the logistics of the conference, during its current session which concludes mid-September.

This will be the fifth major international conference focusing solely on women. The last one, the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, adopted a Platform of Action which is still in the process of being implemented. The Beijing summit was preceded by three world conferences, beginning in 1975 in Mexico City, and followed by Copenhagen in 1980 and Nairobi in 1985.

The proposed 2015 conference follows in the footsteps of the upcoming international conference on sustainable development, also called Rio Plus-20, scheduled to take place in June in Brazil: 20 years after the Earth Summit in Rio in June 1992. If the General Assembly approves the proposal, the meeting is likely to be informally dubbed Beijing Plus 20.

Refer to the link for the complete article.

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20. Celebrating Women and Agriculture!

Watch Dr. Vandana Shiva on George Stroumboulopoulos' show for International Women's Day on Youtube at http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=q3d9k23UyQQ

New Face of Farming magazine article featuring four Canadian women/new farmers
<http://www.shamelessmag.com/stories/2012/01/new-face-farming/2/>

by Beth McMahon, Executive Director of Canadian Organic Growers

On March 8, International Women's Day was recognized around the globe. To honour this important day, I would like to take this opportunity to celebrate the tremendous contributions of women in the Canadian organic food movement.

Women are contributing an incredible amount of time, energy and expertise to organics in Canada (and around the world)—not for the fame and money—but because they are committed to the value of organics on the ecosystem, farms and communities, and personal health. In fact, in most Canadian organic organizations, women comprise the majority of staff, volunteers and board members, and increasingly, women are the new face of farming.

I was privileged to help host two of Dr. Vandana Shiva's events in the Maritimes in late February. Dr. Shiva, an eco-feminist, asserts that creating a woman-focused agricultural system would change the current global food scheme for the better. "If we are going to have a future, it's going to be a womanly future," says Shiva.

So, where does that leave men? Dr. Shiva told audiences that Gandhi would repeat the daily mantra, "Make me more womanly". Not that he wanted to be a woman, but that he recognized those qualities of love, compassion and care.

The current conventional agricultural system values monoculture and dominance over nature, whereas organic values encourage biodiversity, ecosystem system health, and collaboration (even our Canadian Organic Standards are developed through a consensus based process).

Women are an essential part of the Canadian organic movement—thank each and every one of you for all that you do. Thank you to the men of the organic movement too. Together, we really are changing the food system!

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21. American Society of Plant Biologists honours early career women scientists

http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2012-03/asop-aso032012.php

ROCKVILLE, Maryland, USA . -- Each year the American Society of Plant Biologists (ASPB) awards travel grants to early career women investigators through a competitive process to attend the Plant Biology Annual Meeting. The goal of the Women's Young Investigator Travel Award (WYITA) program is to increase attendance of female investigators in their first five years as an independent scientist in academia, industry, or government at the annual meeting by providing travel funds. Selection is based first on the science and quality of the abstract submitted relative to the amount of time as a young investigator, second on a statement describing why travel should be supported, and third on financial need.

This year seven women were selected and each will receive a \$1000 award to attend the Plant Biology Annual Meeting in Austin, TX. A list of recipients including their abstract titles follows.

- Jane Geisler-Lee, Southern Illinois University Carbondale
Phytotoxicity, Accumulation and Transport of Silver Nanoparticles by Arabidopsis thaliana
- Susanne Hoffmann-Benning, Michigan State University
New Aspects of Phloem-Mediated Long-Distance Lipid Signaling in Plants
- Yan Lu, Western Michigan University
Novel Transcriptional Regulation of Biosynthesis of Aspartate-Derived Amino Acids
- Mautusi Mitra, University of West Georgia
Employing Functional Genomics to Study the Regulation of Tetrapyrrole Metabolism in the Green Microalga Chlamydomonas reinhardtii
- Karolina Mukhtar, University of Alabama at Birmingham
Functions of Secretory Pathways and Endoplasmic Reticulum Stress in Plant Immunity
- Allison Phillips, Wisconsin Lutheran College
Analysis of stunter1, a Maize Mutant with Reduced Gametophyte Size and Maternal Effects on Seed Development

- Rebecca Silady, Southern Connecticut State University
grv2, an Embryo Defective Mutant, Functions in the Late Endocytic Pathway

Congratulations to each of the 2012 WYITA award winners.

ASPB is a professional scientific society, headquartered in Rockville, Maryland, USA devoted to the advancement of the plant sciences worldwide. With a membership of nearly 5,000 plant scientists from throughout the United States and more than 50 other nations, the Society publishes two of the most widely cited plant science journals: The Plant Cell and Plant Physiology. For more information about ASPB, please visit <http://www.aspb.org/>. Also follow ASPB on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/myASPB> and on Twitter @ASPB.

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22. Are Women Better Leaders than Men?

http://blogs.hbr.org/cs/2012/03/a_study_in_leadership_women_do.html?referral=00563&cm_mmc=email-_-newsletter-_-daily_alert-_-alert_date&utm_source=newsletter_daily_alert&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=alert_date&goback=%2Egde_165110_member_101604438

The Harvard Business Review posted a survey of data from 360 evaluations, tracking the judgment of a leader's peers, bosses, and direct reports. The HBR asked these individuals to rate each leader's effectiveness overall and also to judge how strong he or she is on the 16 competencies that our 30 years of research shows are most important to overall leadership effectiveness.

Refer to the link for the complete article and findings.

What should leaders and managers do with these findings?

- As leaders in organizations look hard to find the talent they need to achieve exceptional results, they ought to be aware that many women have impressive leadership skills. Our research shows these leadership skills are strongly correlated to organizational success factors such as retaining talent, customer satisfaction, employee engagement, and profitability.
- As to the constant state of unease we hear women leaders express — clearly, chauvinism or discrimination is an enigma that organizations (and the business culture) should work hard to prevent. However, that said, think of the benefits every leader in every organization would gain from a mind-set that they simply can't afford to make a mistake. Paranoia or extreme risk aversion is clearly detrimental to a rising career. But in today's economic climate, every leader, male or female, would do well to avoid becoming complacent.

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23. Women from Monsanto Canada Running to Help Empower Girls and Women in the Developing World

<http://www.marketwire.com/press-release/women-from-monsanto-canada-running-help-empower-girls-women-developing-world-1636278.htm>

Monsanto Chix Marathon Team to Support Plan International's 'Because I am a Girl' Campaign

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA--(Marketwire - March 26, 2012) - An innovative, passionate, driven group of women who work for Monsanto Canada Inc., and who care about their health and the health of women and girls in the developing world, have committed to complete the More(R) Magazine/Fitness(R) Magazine Women's Half Marathon in New York City on April 15, 2012 and to fundraise for Plan International's 'Because I am a Girl' campaign at the same time.

As a company previously selected as one of Canada's Top 100 Employers, Monsanto has been recognized as a great place to work. A key component of that culture includes the encouragement of work/life balance among all employees. This emphasis is what stemmed the creation of the 'Monsanto Chix' half marathon team of seven women - five of whom work for Monsanto Canada.

"As women in agriculture who care about our health and staying active, we wanted to select an event that shared that vision," explained Trish Meyers, an agronomist with Monsanto based in Saskatoon. "But we also saw this as an opportunity to support other girls and women so that's where the fundraising idea came in. We all thought it would be a great idea to leverage our passion to help other women and girls."

The Monsanto Chix marathon team decided to support Plan International's Because I am a Girl campaign - a program designed to empower girls and women to claim a brighter future in the developing world by helping to provide clean water, food security, health care and education. The team has set a goal to fundraise over \$3,000 for Plan International. Currently the Monsanto Chix team is the No. 2 ranked fundraising team on the Because I am a Girl website.

"We are really inspired about the opportunity to help others," said Jenna Book, a marketing associate who works out of Monsanto Canada's Head office in Winnipeg. "Monsanto has been very supportive of our idea and through the company's Matching Gift Program in Canada, will match any donations we personally make up to a maximum of \$500. We have also received excellent support and encouragement from our friends, family, and coworkers."

The More(R) Magazine/Fitness(R) Magazine Women's Half Marathon is an inspirational and well-organized event that brings many women together in a positive way. The Monsanto group chose this event because some of the team members had participated in the race before and all agreed that it would be both fun and challenging to run a half marathon.

Monsanto Canada team members include: Jenna Book, Arvel Lawson, Trish Meyers, Erin Romeo, and Andrea Webster. To track the progress of the Monsanto Chix efforts or support their cause, search for the Monsanto Chix fundraiser at www.becauseiamagirl.ca

Headquartered in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Monsanto Canada Inc. is part of the larger global Monsanto family. Monsanto Company is an agricultural company and a leading global provider of technology-based solutions and agricultural products that improve farm productivity and food quality. Monsanto remains focused on enabling both small-holder and large-scale farmers to produce more from their land while conserving more of our world's natural resources such as water and energy. Learn more about our business and our commitments at www.monsanto.ca

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24. Gender World Development Report: Limits, Gaps, and Fudges

<http://www.brettonwoodsproject.org/art-569646>

The *2012 World Development Report (WDR)* is a watershed moment: it is the first time that the World Bank, the world's largest and most influential development institution, has devoted its flagship publication to gender. Kate Bedford of the

University of Kent argues that the report leaves the Bank failing to face up to its role in perpetuating policies that harm women, and is seriously limited in its approach to women’s movements, markets, and households.

The 2012 *WDR* aims to establish the relevance of gender to development, given a continuing suspicion – not least among the Bank’s own macroeconomists – that it is a distraction from the serious business of growth. This is accomplished by asserting both the intrinsic and instrumental value of gender equality: it is a development good in its own right, and it is related to other development goods such as increased productivity, improved outcomes for children, and more effective political institutions. We learn that development has closed many gender gaps in education, life expectancy, and labour force participation, but that gaps persist in four areas: excess deaths of women and girls; continuing educational disadvantage; unequal access to economic opportunities; and differences in ‘voice’ in households and formal politics. **These gaps lead to the identification of four priorities:**

- 1. Reducing gender gaps in human capital, especially female mortality and education;**
- 2. Closing gaps in access to economic opportunities, earnings, and productivity;**
- 3. Reducing gender differences in voice and agency; and**
- 4. Limiting the intergenerational reproduction of gender inequality.**

Part three of the report aims to help countries choose the best policies to meet those priorities. The final chapter explains the role of transnational institutions in global gender equality struggles, and provides a succinct “what to do and how to do it” guide (*WDR* 2012, 361).

The article includes an analysis of several themes (*see the link for the complete article*) and concludes with the following questions:

- How will this report influence Bank policy, and where is the money?
- What space (if any) is available to make intersectional, anti-racist, post-colonial perspectives central to the Bank’s understanding of gender and development?
- Given that many gender activists and experts know that free markets do not empower women in the simplistic way portrayed here, how do we best counter the pro-market message of the *WDR*?
- Can the Bank define households without sounding like the Vatican? If it cannot, should households be so central to the definition of gender empowerment used in the report?

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Reports, Publications and Resources

1. 2012 World Development Report

<http://econ.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTDEC/EXTRESEARCH/EXTWDRS/EXTWDR2012/0,,contentMDK:22999750~menuPK:8154981~pagePK:64167689~piPK:64167673~theSitePK:7778063,00.html>

The lives of girls and women have changed dramatically over the past quarter century. The pace of change has been astonishing in some areas, but in others, progress toward gender equality has been limited—even in developed countries.

This year's *World Development Report: Gender Equality and Development* argues that gender equality is a core development objective in its own right. It is also smart economics. Greater gender equality can enhance productivity, improve development outcomes for the next generation, and make institutions more representative.

The Report also focuses on four priority areas for policy going forward: (i) reducing excess female mortality and closing education gaps where they remain, (ii) improving access to economic opportunities for women (iii) increasing women's voice and agency in the household and in society and (iv) limiting the reproduction of gender inequality across generations.

The Report has nine chapters in three parts.

Part I Taking stock of gender equality

Part 1: Taking stock of gender equality—presents the facts that will then provide the foundation for the rest of the Report. It combines existing and new data to document changes in key dimensions of gender equality over the past quarter century and across regions and countries. Its main message is that very rapid and, in some cases, unprecedented progress has been made in some dimensions of gender equality (chapter 1), but that it has not reached all women or been uniform across all dimensions of gender equality (chapter 2).

Part II What has driven progress? What impedes it?

The contrast between the patterns and trends described in the first two chapters of the Report prompts one to ask what explains the progress or lack of it. Part 2—What has driven progress? What impedes it?—constitutes the analytical core of the Report. It presents the conceptual framework and uses it to examine the factors that have fostered change and the constraints that have slowed progress. The analysis focuses on gender differences in education and health (chapter 3), agency (chapter 4), and access to economic opportunities (chapter 5)—discussing the roles of economic growth, households, markets, and institutions in determining outcomes in these three spheres. Part 2 concludes with a discussion of the impact of globalization on gender inequality, paying attention to the opportunities and challenges created by new economic and social trends (chapter 6). The analysis in these four chapters leads to the identification of four priority areas for action: reducing gender gaps in human capital endowments, promoting higher access to economic opportunities among women, closing gender gaps in household and societal voice, and limiting the intergenerational reproduction of gender inequality.

Part III The role of and potential for public action

Part 3—The role and potential for public action—presents policy recommendations, examines the political economy of reforms for gender equality, and proposes a global agenda for action. The discussion starts with a detailed description of policy options addressing the four priority areas, complemented with concrete illustrations of successful interventions in different contexts (chapter 7). An examination of the political economy of gender reforms follows, with an emphasis on the issues that distinguish reform in this area from other types of redistributive or equality-enhancing reforms (chapter 8). Global action on gender equality should focus on complementing country efforts on the four priority areas identified in the Report (chapter 9).

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2. Key Issues Guide to Gender and Climate Change

<http://www.eldis.org/go/topics/resource-guides/climate-change/key-issues/gender-and-climate-change>

Contributing to discussions at the 56th Commission of the Status of Women, a key issues guide on gender and climate change has been produced in collaboration with the BRIDGE programme. The guide advocates for an approach where:

women and men have an equal voice in decision-making on climate change; policymaking institutions and processes are not biased towards men or women; and broad social constraints that limit women's access to strategic and practical resources no longer exist.

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3. A Framework for K-12 Science Education

http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=13165&utm_medium=email&utm_source=National%20Academies%20Press&utm_campaign=NAP+mail+-+Framework+2.24.12&utm_content=&utm_term=

The National Research Council in the USA, the National Science Teachers Association, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and Achieve have embarked on a two-step process to develop the Next Generation Science Standards.

A Framework for K-12 Science Education describes the major practices, crosscutting concepts, and disciplinary core ideas that all students should be familiar with by the end of high school, and it provides an outline of how these practices, concepts, and ideas should be developed across the grade levels.

The book (available as a free download at the website) outlines a broad set of expectations for students in science and engineering in Kindergarten to Grade 12 in the USA. These expectations will inform the development of new standards for K-12 science education and, subsequently, revisions to curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development for educators. This book identifies three dimensions that convey the core ideas and practices around which science and engineering education in these grades should be built. These three dimensions are:

- crosscutting concepts that unify the study of science through their common application across science and engineering;
- scientific and engineering practices; and
- disciplinary core ideas in the physical sciences, life sciences, and earth and space sciences and for engineering, technology, and the applications of science.

The overarching goal is for all high school graduates to have sufficient knowledge of science and engineering to engage in public discussions on science-related issues, be careful consumers of scientific and technical information, and enter the careers of their choice.

The book will guide standards developers, curriculum designers, assessment developers, teacher educators, state and district science administrators, teachers, as well as informal science educators.

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4. Not Your Daddy's Science Classroom!

http://scienceblogs.com/usasciencefestival/2012/02/not_your_daddys_science_classr.php

2nd USA Science & Engineering Festival <http://www.usasciencefestival.org/>

Exciting things are happening in 21st century classrooms all over our country. Teachers and students are using cutting-edge technology, working in teams, and connecting and sharing projects with classrooms all over the world. Innovative groups like the Concord Consortium, Promethean World, Project Lead the Way and Epals are at the forefront of creating the curriculum, software, tools and environment of tomorrow's classroom, today. A rich and exciting mix is brewing, one that combines multimedia, digital simulations, games, computer programming, inquiry and project-based learning, to accelerate our children's skills to think creatively, work collaboratively, and train to tackle 21st century problems.

Can we save the world through science and engineering? We think so! We are inspired by the excellence and passion for science and science education that takes place in innovative classrooms all over the country, every day.

The Kavli Science Video Contest challenges students to investigate how science and engineering saves our world, and answer the central theme creatively. Grades 6-12 students compete for the chance to win \$2000 (first prize) and a travel stipend to Washington DC to attend the USA Science & Engineering Festival.

Building on the success of the inaugural Festival in 2010, the 2nd USA Science & Engineering Festival will inspire the next generation of scientists and engineers with school programs and nationwide contests throughout the 2011/2012 school year and a finale Expo in Washington DC in the Spring of 2012. The Expo is the nation's largest celebration of all things science & engineering and features over 1500 hands-on activities and over 75 performances on multiple stages. The 2010 Festival attracted over 500,000 people of all ages and had strong support from the White House and Congress.

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5. Women in agriculture: Closing the gender gap

<http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i2050e/i2050e.pdf>

The *State of Food and Agriculture 2010-2011*, published by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, focuses on women and their vital – but often underestimated – roles within rural economies. Important messages include:

- Women make essential contributions to agriculture but their roles differ significantly by region and are changing rapidly in some areas.
- Women have one thing in common across regions: they have less access than men to productive resources and opportunities. There is a gender gap for many assets, inputs and services such as land, livestock, labour, education, extension, financial services and technology. This imposes costs on the agriculture sector, the broader economy and society, as well as on the women themselves.
- Closing this gender gap would generate significant gains for the agriculture sector and for society. If women had equal access to productive resources, yields on their farms would increase by 20 to 30 percent. This could raise total agricultural output in developing countries by 2.5 percent, which could reduce the number of hungry people in the world by 12 to 17 percent.
- When women control additional income, they spend more of it than men do on food, health, clothing and educating their children. This has clear benefits for household food security and wellbeing and for longer term economic growth through better health, nutrition and education outcomes.

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6. ELDIS Resource Site on Gender

<http://www.eldis.org/go/topics/resource-guides/gender>

Eldis is one of a family of knowledge services from the Institute of Development Studies, Sussex, UK. Refer to the link for numerous development resources on gender policy, practice and research. The two articles below are a sampling of the latest additions to the website.

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7. Engaging the whole family in food security planning

<http://www.eldis.org/go/topics/insights/2012/innovative-approaches-to-gender-and-food-security/engaging-the-whole-family-in-food-security-planning-in-zambia>

Food security is a challenge in Zambia, where 45 percent of children under five are stunted. Most food production systems are rain-fed and crops are harvested once a year at about the same time. This results in highly seasonal income flows, market gluts, and hungry months for many Zambians. Policies favour maize production even where conditions are unfavourable; other crops suffer from policy, marketing and research neglect. Of particular concern are poor gender relations in many farming households which reduce the effectiveness of decision-making.

Women comprise 85 percent of the total smallholder labour force and are largely responsible for food security at the household level. Men sell the produce (particularly larger volumes), manage most household income and are often responsible for deciding what to plant where. Women, on the other hand, cannot make important decisions in the absence of their male partners. Women in female-headed households are freer in this sense but often lack sufficient assets to create viable livelihoods.

The Agricultural Support Programme (2003-08), largely funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, aimed to stimulate attitudinal change amongst smallholders and to encourage women and men to take responsibility for household food security. The programme did not carry out formal gender awareness-raising activities. Other incentives were used instead, for example, meetings had to have 30 percent female attendance, otherwise they would be cancelled. Women were asked to sit with the men (which traditionally does not happen) at meetings and the facilitators were trained to ensure women felt free to speak.

At a household level, extension workers met regularly with all adult household members and older children. They would discuss and agree a vision for the household and prepare a joint action plan. Farmers were discouraged from selling produce on the market unless they had set aside enough food (maize) for home consumption for the entire year. Farmers were also trained to diversify away from growing just maize to developing mixed crop and livestock production systems

The practice of reserving food grains for household consumption is still going on beyond the life of the programme. Men and women believe that agricultural outputs have increased and that household food security is better. The household approach has started to create a shift in decision-making concerning assets: household members understand that assets belong to the whole household rather than one individual. These attitudinal changes to the cultural norms governing 'male' and 'female' roles and responsibilities are said to have been 'astonishing'.

Furthermore, there are indications that men are not asserting ownership of 'female' crops that have become lucrative, as has happened in other parts of sub-Saharan Africa. Women can market these in their own right, or if men market them, everyone in the household benefits. Intra-household relationships are less tense and more productive and men and women feel empowered as a result.

Empowering women is now seen in positive terms by men, rather than as a threat to their masculinity. Men appear to have developed better relationships with their wives and closer rapports with their children and can speak to them more freely. Working with the entire farming household has increased the resilience and coping strategies of many households: all family members understand their farming system and have been actively involved in shaping it.

Most significantly, the programme showed that there is much to be gained from planning and decision-making processes that involve women and men (of all ages) at the household and community levels. Joint ownership over food production

decisions can both increase food security and be transformative, enabling lasting shifts in gender attitudes, roles and behaviour.

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8. Women's groups versus households: Approaches to achieve food security and gender equality

<http://www.eldis.org/go/topics/insights/2012/innovative-approaches-to-gender-and-food-security/women-s-groups-versus-households-approaches-to-achieve-food-security-and-gender-equality>

How can we achieve food security for women and girls? Should interventions target households, including men, or should they aim to reach women through women's groups? Working with groups is an effective way for development programmes to enable women to increase their control of assets, improve productivity, and enhance their status and wellbeing. The social capital generated by groups is recognised as an important asset in itself.

Programmes working with women's groups in Bangladesh – microfinance programmes for poor women in particular – have developed innovative means to address context-specific constraints, such as the low levels of asset ownership by women and barriers to mobility outside the household. How do group-based approaches compare to targeting households with the aim of improving food security and nutrition within the household?

Research from the International Food Policy Research Institute has investigated the long-term impact of agricultural technologies (vegetable and polyculture fish production) on men's and women's asset accumulation and nutritional status in rural Bangladesh. Household surveys were carried out ten years apart (1996-97 and 2006-07) at three sites where non-government organisations have disseminated these technologies to increase incomes and address micronutrient deficiencies.

The three projects provided credit and training in the following areas:

1. polyculture fish production for households, with a pre-requisite of (sole or shared) pond ownership in central Bangladesh
2. small-scale vegetable growing for women's group members growing vegetables on their families' homesteads in central Bangladesh
3. polyculture fish production for women's groups, for whom long-term leases of ponds were arranged, in south-west Bangladesh.

Project results include:

- In site one, the technology mainly targeted men, who took charge of most production decisions and took the fish to market. This strengthened their ownership of their productive assets, whereas women's ownership of assets weakened.
- In site two, improvements in women's and girls' nutritional status in particular, and a reduction in the gap in asset ownership between men and women were significant.
- In site three, where technologies were disseminated through women's groups in a collective ownership model, women's assets increased more than men's in the same households.

These findings show that the way in which projects are implemented affects their capacity to increase women's and men's assets, and that targeting women's groups rather than the household in general may be a more effective way to achieve gender equity.

Targeting groups may achieve gender equity and nutritional goals more easily, yet this does not necessarily lead to more effective governance or increased income. Some groups in the group fishpond programme (site three) dissolved because of conflicts within the groups and income gains were relatively small due to the need to divide the proceeds among many members. Such programmes can, however, lead to greater cooperation between women and men. Some of the women’s groups, have begun bringing in male members to act as a link between the group and the wider community, and to fulfill specific functions (such as bookkeeping) that the women are not trained in.

A more nuanced approach to group formation and technology diffusion would allow groups to tap both male and female resources within the household and the community – with the clear goal of reducing gender inequities in ownership and control of assets.

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9. Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index

<http://www.ifpri.org/publication/womens-empowerment-agriculture-index>

Developed by the United States Agency for International Development with Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative at the University of Oxford, the Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) is the first-ever measure to directly capture women’s empowerment and inclusion levels in the agricultural sector. The WEAI is a composite measurement tool that indicates women’s control over critical parts of their lives in the household, community, and economy. It allows us to identify women who are disempowered and understand how to increase autonomy and decision-making in key domains.

Women play a critical and potentially transformative role in agricultural growth in developing countries, but they face persistent obstacles and economic constraints limiting further inclusion in agriculture. The Index is a significant innovation in its field and aims to increase understanding of the connections between women’s empowerment, food security, and agricultural growth. It measures the roles and extent of women’s engagement in the agriculture sector in five domains: **(1) decisions about agricultural production, (2) access to and decision-making power over productive resources, (3) control over use of income, (4) leadership in the community, and (5) time use.** It also measures women’s empowerment relative to men within their households.

FIGURE 1. THE FIVE DOMAINS OF EMPOWERMENT IN THE WEAI

Domain	Indicators	Weight
Production	Input in productive decisions	1/10
	Autonomy in production	1/10
Resources	Ownership of assets	1/15
	Purchase, sale, or transfer of assets	1/15
	Access to and decisions on credit	1/15
Income	Control over use of income	1/5
Leadership	Group member	1/10
	Speaking in public	1/10
Time	Workload	1/10
	Leisure	1/10

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10. Agricultural Innovation Systems Sourcebook

<http://www.worldbank.org/ard/ais>

Past efforts to strengthen agricultural research extension and education systems have not increased innovation in agriculture at the pace or the scale required by the intensifying challenges confronting agriculture today. Experience indicates that aside from a strong capacity in R&D, the ability to innovate is often related to collective action and coordination, exchange of knowledge among diverse actors, and incentives and resources available to form partnerships and develop business. The Sourcebook describes the additional and complementary interventions needed for an effective agricultural innovation system (AIS). The Sourcebook contributes to the identification, design, and implementation of investments and interventions most likely to strengthen agricultural innovation systems and to promote innovation and equitable growth. It provides a menu of tools, operational guidance, examples, and good practice lessons.

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11. UNIVERSITAS FORUM: Journal on Human Development and International Cooperation

<http://universitasforum.org/index.php/ojs/issue/view/7>

The KIP Universitas Programme has now published the latest issue of *Universitas Forum*, which addresses **decentralization, local development and women's empowerment**. The material published is the result of a research project in collaboration with the Huairou Commission, the International Development Research Centre of Canada, UN HABITAT and UN Women's MyDEL Programme.

Universitas Forum is an international open access and peer-reviewed journal and the individual articles it contains are available free of charge.

A sampling of articles in this recent issue (Volume 3, No. 1):

- *Crisis to Confidence: Mahila Kisan Sasakthikaran Pariyojana - Programme for Empowerment of Women Farmers - in Vidarbha Region of Maharashtra, India*
- *Income Growth and Women's Empowerment Through Enhancing Local Knowledge on Plants. The Case of Women Herbalists in the Bamako District, Mali*
- *Learning Platform on Seed Resources Between Farmers and the University in Kambila, Mali*

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12. ICT IN AGRICULTURE

http://www.ictinagriculture.org/ictinag/sites/ictinagriculture.org/files/final_book_ict_agriculture.pdf

The World Bank has released *ICT in Agriculture: Connecting Smallholders to Knowledge, Networks, and Institutions* as an e-Sourcebook. The book's 15 modules explore various aspects of information and communication technology (ICT) in agriculture, ranging from gender equity and governance to infrastructure and innovation.

The e-Sourcebook can be downloaded as single PDF or by chapter.

To download individual chapters:

http://www.ictinagriculture.org/ictinag/sites/ictinagriculture.org/files/final_book_ict_agriculture.pdf

SECTION 1: OVERVIEW OF ICT IN AGRICULTURE (Contains modules 1-4)

SECTION 2: ENHANCING PRODUCTIVITY ON THE FARM (Contains modules 5-8)

SECTION 3: ACCESSING MARKETS AND VALUE CHAINS (Contains modules 9-12)

SECTION 4: IMPROVING PUBLIC SERVICE PROVISION (Contains modules 13-15)

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13. No-Nonsense Guide to Equality

<http://shop.newint.org/na/books/no-nonsense-guides/no-nonsense-guide-to-equality.html>

The New Internationalist has just announced the publication of the *No-Nonsense Guide to Equality* which discusses the positive effects that equality can have, using examples and case studies from across the globe. It examines the lessons of history and covers race, gender and ethnicity, age, and wealth. Danny Dorling considers, realistically, just how equal it is possible to be, the challenges we face, and the factors that will lead to greater equality for all.

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14. Agricultural Innovations for Sustainable Development, Volume 3, Issue 2

http://www.fara-africa.org/media/uploads/library/docs/fara_publications/fara_agri_innovations_book_lr.pdf

In 2008, CTA and FARA, in collaboration with several African partners, launched Africa-wide science competitions targeting women and young professionals. The competitions sought to promote excellence and recognize and reward women and young professionals whose scientific contributions and technological innovations have made a positive impact on agricultural development and rural livelihoods in Africa.

The first two series of competitions (2008/2009 and 2009/2010) were successful and drew attention to the challenges faced by women and young professionals and the need for national as well as international investments to support their work. They also highlighted weaknesses and contributed to building capacity, supporting networking and opening doors for the beneficiaries. Top entries in the second series of the competitions were published in 2011.

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15. Young People, Farming & Food Conference Reports

<http://www.future-agricultures.org/events/young-people-farming-a-food>

This international conference, co-hosted by the Future Agricultures Consortium and the Institute of Statistical Social and Economic Research (ISSER), was held from March 19 to 22, 2012 in Accra, Ghana. It critically examined:

- How young people engage with the agri-food sector in Africa as producers, entrepreneurs, employees, consumers and citizens
- Changes in the agri-food sector and what this means for young people

- The implications for young people of alternative policy approaches to the development of the agri-food sector.

Conference papers are posted at the site, including one presented by the Ghana Institute of Horticulturists on behalf of GHIH and CSHS international project committees. See FOSTERING SUSTAINABLE ENGAGEMENT OF YOUTH IN THE AGRIFOOD SECTOR: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN GHANA by A.-H. Abubakari, M.R. McDonald, D. Ceplis, K.G. Mahunu, J. Owen, I.A. Idun, P. Kumah, M. Pritchard, G. Nyarko, and F. Appiah. The paper highlights some of the results achieved in the 2006-2011 International Twinning Partnership Project with the Agricultural Institute of Canada.

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16. Book “Evaluation for equitable development results”

http://www.mymande.org/?q=evaluation_for_equitable_results

UNICEF, in partnership with UNDP, UNWomen, ILO, IDRC, IOCE, IDEAS and CONEVAL, are pleased to inform you that the book "Evaluation for equitable development results" is now available for free download.

This new book complements the manual “How to design and implement Equity-focused evaluations” available at:

<http://www.mymande.org/?q=content/how-design-and-manage-equity-focused-evaluations>

"Evaluation for equitable development results" aims to contribute to the international debate on how the evaluation function can contribute to achieving equitable development results by conceptualizing, designing, implementing and using evaluations focused on human rights and equity. It does so by offering a number of strong contributions from 27 world-level experts and senior officers in institutions and governments dealing with development and evaluation. The authors also presented their contribution in a series of webinar, whose recording are available at:

http://www.mymande.org/?q=equity_focused_evaluation&x=cl

Please find below the table of contents

Part 1: Evaluation and equity

- Evaluation to accelerate progress towards equity, social justice and human rights
- Human rights and gender equality in evaluation.
- When human rights is the starting point for evaluation.
- Strengthening Equity- focused evaluations through insights from feminist theory and approaches.
- Decolonizing evaluation in a developing world. Implications and cautions for Equity-focused evaluations

Part 2: Methodological implications for Equity-focused evaluations

- Methodological issues to design and implement equity-focused evaluations.
- Developmental evaluation for Equity-focused evaluations. Systems thinking and Equity-focused evaluations.
- Methodological challenges in using programme theory to evaluate pro-poor and equity-focused programmes
- Case Study and equity in Evaluation.
- Values-Engaged Evaluations.

Part 3: Examples of Equity-focused evaluations

- Evaluating the contribution of UNDP to equity-focused public policies in Brazil and China.
- Using a human rights approach to evaluate ILO's discrimination strategy.
- CONEVAL experience in evaluating interventions for Indigenous populations in Mexico.
- UNICEF supported evaluations with elements of equity-focused evaluations.

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