

GEM Digest of the Month for February 2011



Women sowing beans in Tanzania before the rain. *Photo courtesy of Dinah 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 organizations. 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 me at dinah.ceplis@gmail.com and I will compile it to re-distribute once a month.

Regards,
Dinah Ceplis, GEM Committee Member

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Calendar

February 02, World Wetlands Day. http://www.ramsar.org/cda/en/ramsar-activities-wwds-wwd2011index/main/ramsar/1-63-78%5E24770_4000_0. Wetlands and Forests is the theme for World Wetlands Day 2011, especially chosen because 2011 is the UN International Year of Forests.

Coming Up...

- **March 08, International Women’s Day. Widespread increased activity is anticipated globally on 8 March 2011 honouring 100 years of International Women's Day.**

March 22 – World Water Day <http://www.worldwaterday.org/>

March 23 - World Meteorological Day http://www.wmo.int/pages/index_en.html

April 22, Earth Day

May 09 – 10, World Migratory Bird Day

June 05, World Environment Day

June 17, World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought

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Opportunities:

AIC Awards

<http://www.aic.ca/about/awards.cfm>

AIC invites members to help us recognize and celebrate excellence by nominating a deserving individual for our AIC **Fellowship, Sustainable Futures Award, and International Recognition Award.**

- AIC's highest honour, Fellow of the Agricultural Institute of Canada, recognizes an individual AIC member who has made a distinguished contribution to Canadian agriculture through contributions to building scientific capacity for societal good, integration and collaboration between disciplines and sectors, and communications.
- The Sustainable Futures Award recognizes tomorrow’s leaders in agricultural innovation: young women and men who are advancing and applying innovative scientific knowledge on the sustainable use of agricultural resources for societal good. People who believe agricultural resources can answer challenges in human and animal health, food security, climate change, energy demand and environmental health.
- The International Recognition Award honours **individuals and organizations** who have made outstanding contributions to the improvement of agriculture in the Developing World.

Deadline for submission of nominations for each of the awards is **February 15, 2011.**

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Monday Developments Magazine – Call for Articles

<http://www.interaction.org/monday-developments>

Monday Developments is the premiere forum for discussions of international development and humanitarian relief. It features the latest issues, trends, controversies and best practices in the development and humanitarian assistance arena. Monday Developments is read nationally and internationally by development professionals, NGOs, volunteer organizations, students and academics, contractors, think tanks, the World Bank, the United Nations, USAID and other offices within the U.S. government.

Issue 3 scheduled for March 2011 will feature *Gender and Women’s Empowerment*.

Issue 12 scheduled for December 2011 will feature *Innovation in Agriculture*.

See the call for articles for more information.

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This Month’s Articles:

1. Toolkit on Developing Gender Statistics

http://genderassets.files.wordpress.com/2011/01/developing_gender_statistics.pdf

The 182 page manual *Developing Gender Statistics: A Practical Tool* aims to guide statistical organizations in the production and use of gender statistics, building upon the seminal work *Engendering Statistics: A Tool for Change* by Statistics Sweden (Hedman et al., 1996).

- Chapters 1 and 2 of the manual explain the importance of producing and analyzing statistics on gender differences.
- Chapter 3 provides guidance on data production and Chapter 4 looks in detail at selected topics relevant to gender statistics and the implications for data collection.
- Chapter 5 examines methods for improving the use of gender statistics through communication strategies and dissemination platforms such as interactive databases and websites. An important component of any initiative to develop statistics on gender is advocacy and partnership building.
- Chapter 6 provides guidance on ‘making it happen’ through campaigning for top management support, creating legislation and defining a gender statistics program.

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2. Gender equality enhances research quality

<http://eng.kifinfo.no/nyhet/vis.html?tid=74696>

By promoting gender equality in research, we enhance the quality and relevance of research, according to Arvid Hallén, Director General of the Research Council of Norway.

“High-quality research requires a diversity of ideas and perspectives. To ensure this, we must utilise the talent found throughout the entire population. When very few women choose a career in research, this weakens the quality of research. And then there is also the matter of fairness and democracy,” states Hallén.

Hallén has served as the head of the Research Council of Norway since 2004, which makes him one of the most influential individuals in the Norwegian research community. He has no doubt about the role that the leadership plays in promoting gender equality.

“The leadership has the primary responsibility in this area. It is their task to ensure that research institutions are developed in such a way that the researchers enjoy their work, develop their scientific knowledge and skills, and produce good results. To achieve this, we need to focus on research management,” he believes.

“How can the Research Council of Norway help to put gender equality on the agenda?”

“We can play a pivotal role. The most obvious lies in how we design our funding instruments, such as what criteria we set when we announce research funding. For example, we did this when we changed the criteria in the funding announcement for the Outstanding Young Investigators scheme.” These changes yielded positive results. In the next funding round, the number of women granted funding rose to 40 per cent.

Incorporating gender perspectives

Hallén wants to ensure that the Research Council provides funding to gender research and that in general it promotes the incorporation of gender perspectives into Norwegian research. The Research Council’s strategy states that “Gender perspectives must be integrated closely into all of the different areas.”

“We will include gender perspectives in our programmes when relevant. I know that in some programmes this is a matter of course, such as the Research Programme on Welfare, Working Life and Migration (VAM). In other programmes the gender dimension is less apparent and in still others it is absent. There is still a lot we can do better,” says Hallén.

He emphasises that the Research Council has shown good compliance with the “40 per cent rule”, which requires that all appointed committees and panels consist of at least 40 per cent of each gender. Very few exceptions to this rule are made.

“This is actually the easiest of all the gender equality measures to implement, even though it was difficult enough in the beginning,” he says.

“What is harder is to be observant and to successfully include gender perspectives in the substance of the research. The expectations we can bake into the work programmes are one thing; the grant applications that the researchers and the various research communities actually submit may be quite another.”

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3. Asset dynamics in Northern Nigeria

<http://www.ifpri.org/publication/asset-dynamics-northern-nigeria>

This paper examines household asset dynamics and gender-differentiated asset inequality over a 20-year period (1988–2008) in northern Nigeria. We show that the initial endowments of both household capital and livestock holdings are inconsistent with the poverty trap hypothesis but that tracking rules for households in panel surveys may lead to differences in empirical results on poverty traps.

We also investigate whether initial household endowments contributed to gender-differentiated future asset levels and asset inequality. Initial livestock holdings have an effect on women's future livestock holdings but not on their livestock shares within the household, as the effect of initial livestock holdings on men's future livestock levels was much greater than its effect on women's levels. The mechanism through which asset levels differed was related to the relative prices of the assets in gender-differentiated asset portfolios. Men, who primarily held larger livestock with larger unit values, benefited from large price increases in high-value livestock, while women held lower-value livestock. These price fluctuations reinforced gender asset inequality within households for both types of assets considered.

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4. Publication: *Journal of Development Studies* Special Section on Assets and Gender

The issue features articles such as the following examples:

- **Women's Property Rights and Gendered Policies: Implications for Women's Long-term Welfare in Rural Tanzania**

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/content~db=all~content=a932213991~frm=titlelink>

DOI: 10.1080/00220381003600366

Abstract

This paper evaluates effects of community-level women's property and inheritance rights on women's economic outcomes using a 13 year longitudinal panel from rural Tanzania. In the preferred model specification, inverse probability weighting is applied to a woman-level fixed effects model to control for individual-level time invariant heterogeneity and attrition. Results indicate that changes in women's property and inheritance rights are significantly associated with women's employment outside the home, self-employment and earnings. Results are not limited to sub-groups of marginalised women. Findings indicate lack of gender equity in sub-Saharan Africa may inhibit economic development for women and society as a whole.

- **Tenure Insecurity, Gender, Low-cost Land Certification and Land Rental Market Participation in Ethiopia**

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/content~db=all~content=a932215199~frm=titlelink>

DOI: 10.1080/00220381003706460

Abstract

There is a renewed interest in whether land reforms can contribute to market development and poverty reduction in Africa. This paper assesses effects on the allocative efficiency of the land rental market of the low-cost approach to land registration and certification of restricted property rights that was implemented in Ethiopia in the late 1990s. Four rounds of a balanced household panel from 16 villages in northern Ethiopia are analysed, showing that land certification initially enhanced land rental market participation of (potential) tenant and landlord households, especially those that are headed by females.

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5. U.N. Chief Leaves Women out of Year-End Summing Up

<http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=54039>

When Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon wrote a year-end op-ed piece for an Australian newspaper last week, he talked about the future of a world body facing a new generation of threats: climate change, poverty, nuclear disarmament and human rights.

But, wittingly or unwittingly, he left out one of the biggest political success stories of the world body: the creation of a separate body, UN Women, to promote gender empowerment worldwide. The new U.N. agency, armed with a projected 500-million-dollar annual budget and headed by Under-Secretary-General Michelle Bachelet, began functioning at the beginning of the New Year. But there has been no fanfare or political celebration inside the world body - even as the secretary-general is being accused of bypassing the importance of the landmark event. "It would have been a tremendous opportunity to draw attention to UN Women ... after all, the creation of an entirely new agency devoted to half the world's population is something to be noted and celebrated," said Paula Donovan, a co-director of AIDS-Free World, one of the early active campaigners for the new agency. "

Asked to respond to the criticism, deputy U.N. spokesman Farhan Haq told IPS: "The secretary-general has made clear his commitment to women's issues, and he pushed strongly for the establishment of UN Women." His commitment to UN Women can be seen through his efforts to win approval for that entity and his search for a strong leader for UN Women, which he found in Michelle Bachelet, said Haq.

Asked whether Ban was paying lip service to the cause of gender empowerment, Donovan told IPS: "I wish it were a fluke, but sadly, it's been a pattern since he took office." Rather, the entire U.N. under his leadership seems to tolerate rather than promote the new women's agency, she said. At the same time, Donovan noted, Ban seems comfortable pressing donors to fund the U.N.'s work on climate change, humanitarian disasters - and that most popular and least controversial of all women's issues, maternal health.

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6. Resource: Platform Policy Brief on Gender & Agriculture

http://www.donorplatform.org/component/option,com_docman/task,doc_view/gid,1552/Itemid,98/

From **The Global Donor Platform for Rural Development**

The economic empowerment of women farmers, livestock keepers, fisherfolk, processors, and traders is critical to the creation of effective and efficient agricultural programmes and policies. Decades of research demonstrate that women play a major role in food and farming in developing countries. Currently, the proportion of women in production and post-harvest processing ranges from 20% to 70% and their involvement is increasing in many countries. Across the developing world, rural women are important contributors to household welfare and food security, and they supply local, regional and international markets with a wide range of goods.

Although agriculture has the potential to lift people out of poverty, the agricultural sector in general, and support to women in agriculture in particular, has suffered from years of under-investment. In Sub-Saharan Africa for instance, overseas development assistance to agriculture amounts to only 4% of total spending, and public spending on agriculture averages 5-7%. Spending on addressing the specific needs of women within these totals forms a tiny percentage. Yet gender inequalities directly result in poorer agricultural and human development outcomes. A study conducted in four African countries showed that providing women farmers with the same quantity and quality of inputs that men typically receive,

and improving their access to agricultural education, could increase national agricultural output and incomes by an estimated 10–20 per cent. Furthermore, occupational segregation by gender, for instance in value chains and contract farming, can impose significant costs over the long-term. The market’s ability to respond to change is significantly reduced through the under-utilisation of women’s labour, weak human capacity development, and lower levels of output and growth.

Paying attention to gender issues in farming can increase production and productivity, speed up the adoption of innovations, raise household incomes, and ensure significant improvements to child health, nutrition and educational levels, thus contributing to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Investing in women farmers, and increasing their effective participation in rural organisations, enhances the potential of agriculture to become an agent of sustainable social change.

A gender approach addresses the challenges that women and men face in a given situation. It develops opportunities to ensure that both women and men maximize their work potential, can realise their business plans, and benefit equally. As farmers of the future, the needs of boys and girls in farming households need special policy attention in order to encourage them to stay in the sector.

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7. The Global Gender Gap Report 2010

http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GenderGap_Report_2010.pdf

The Global Gender Gap Index was created by the World Economic Forum with the specific purpose of being comparable across time. The 2010 Report aggregates five years of data and seeks to reveal country progress in a transparent manner. By doing this, we hope this Report will serve as a call to action to the international community to pool its knowledge and resources and to leverage the current unique window of opportunity so that faster progress can be achieved. Every moment that we wait entails colossal losses to the global society and economy.

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8. Publication: Climate change and gender: economic empowerment of women through climate mitigation and adaptation?

<http://zunia.org/uploads/media/knowledge/Diskussionspapier-en-layout-GC1294155843.pdf>

The discourse on climate change does not pay adequate attention to women, either at the local project level or in international negotiations. Women are unable to voice their specific requirements even though the impact of climate change affects women and men differently. In several rural areas of the South, although women are responsible for feeding their families and are therefore more dependent on natural resources such as land, wood and water, their access to these resources is limited. They are also denied full access to loans, education and information.

Second, the potential of women as agents of change for climate mitigation and adaptation remains untapped: Their extensive theoretical and practical knowledge of the environment and resource conservation is not given due consideration. In terms of economic participation, they are not paid for the environmental services that they already provide (e.g. reforestation). Their potential contribution to climate mitigation by being part of the economic cycle is not sufficiently exploited.

There are, however, several ways of promoting women’s economic participation while also counteracting climate change. One approach in the field of climate mitigation is the promotion of renewable energies that help avoid greenhouse gas emissions. Not only are jobs created for women who can be engaged in the upkeep and maintenance of solar plants, but solar-powered lamps also extend the productive time available to street vendors. Additionally, pilot experiences in climate adaptation have shown that women, given their vast knowledge, are able to develop and disseminate innovative cultivation methods that are adapted to climate change.

The economic empowerment of women through climate mitigation and adaptation fosters economic growth and socioeconomic development, reduces poverty, keeps environmental problems in check, and increases the potential for adaptation, which is to the benefit of both women and men.

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9. Communicating across the academic divide

<http://www.stanford.edu/group/gender/cgi-bin/wordpressblog/2011/01/communicating-across-the-academic-divide/>

Economists have been much maligned recently for our failure to agree on how to get the economy moving again. Yes, we may disagree on short-term prescriptions, but we speak in a clear, unified voice about at least one issue: Innovation is essential to long-term prosperity. We also agree that research universities are key players in inventing and developing the creative ideas that fuel the economy’s long-term health.

Yet universities neglect an important source of potential innovation: the cross-fertilization of ideas that comes from productive conversations across disciplines. Although people outside of universities seem to think that faculty members talk to one another across their fields of study (after all, they work in the same place, don’t they?), in fact, substantive conversations are infrequent. Particularly at large research universities, scholars and researchers in different disciplines don’t often interact, and when they do—for example, on university committees—they rarely say much about their work.

Many university administrators would like to remedy this situation. Over the past 10 years, numerous research universities’ strategic plans have called for increased interdisciplinary work. Nonetheless, there is little evidence that it is happening.

The three common explanations for a lack of faculty interest in interdisciplinary work are that the academic reward system militates against it (hiring, promotion, salary increases, and most prizes are controlled by single disciplines, not by multiple disciplines), that there is insufficient funding for it, and that evaluating it is fraught with conflict. These are significant barriers.

The author of this article - Myra Strober, is a labour economist and founding director of the Michelle R. Clayman Institute for Gender Research at Stanford University <http://www.stanford.edu/group/gender/About/index.html>. It is one of the USA's most distinguished research organizations devoted to the study of gender. Through a series of workshops, conferences, and fellowships, the Clayman Institute will bring together an intellectually diverse group of scholars to provide new insights into the barriers to women's advancement and to propose novel and workable solutions to advancing gender equality.

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10. State of the World's Minorities & Indigenous Peoples 2010

<http://www.minorityrights.org/10068/state-of-the-worlds-minorities/state-of-the-worlds-minorities-and-indigenous-peoples-2010.html>

In *State of the World's Minorities and Indigenous Peoples 2010*, Minority Rights Group International offers a comprehensive overview of the situation faced by minorities in a world increasingly divided along religious lines. It includes:

- An analysis of government initiatives that contribute to the marginalization of religious minorities, such as religious profiling and registration laws.
- First-hand accounts, from around the world, of the discrimination and exclusion faced by those belonging to minorities who wish to exercise their right to freedom of religion and belief.
- An exploration of grassroots efforts through interfaith dialogue to ease tensions, overcome conflicts, and promote peaceful and equitable development.
- An overview of the human rights situation of minorities and indigenous peoples in every major world region.
- The unique statistical ranking and analysis, *Peoples under Threat 2010*.

The document is promoted as an invaluable reference for policy makers, academics, journalists and everyone who is interested in the human rights situation of minorities and indigenous peoples around the world.

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11. Parents Give Boys Preferential Treatment When There Is a Chronic Food Shortage

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/01/110111132217.htm>

In situations of chronic food shortage, parents are inclined to give boys a preferential treatment, despite the fact that the health of their daughters suffers more from food insecurity. This is shown by research from the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Ethiopia, appearing in the journal *Pediatrics*.

It is self-evident that food shortages are not healthy, but up to now nobody had looked if all children in a family suffer equally, or if there are gender differences. In most studies into the effects of food insecurity, parents were questioned, not their children. Scientists of Jimma University (Ethiopia), assisted by American and Flemish scientists, during five years followed two thousand teenagers in as many households, in urban as well as rural communities.

In food insecurity an average of three girls out of ten reported having been ill during the previous month; against two boys out of ten. In food insecure households, girls were twice more likely to report suffering from illness. The girls even reported seven times more often difficulties with activities due to poor health, or feeling tired.

In situations of food insecurity, aid workers should take this into account, the authors say. A quarter of the girls and 16% of the boys were food insecure.

The difference between boys and girls was more intense in rural areas than in cities. In many cultures, sons are more valued than daughters. Previous research in the Philippines, Ethiopia, Nepal, India and Guatemala showed that sons receive more and better food. But in Ethiopia at any rate this discrimination only leads to health problems when there is not enough food available.

The researchers conclude that aid workers who provide people with more or better food, need to give extra attention to girls when dealing with food insecurity. They suggest a good way to reduce gender disparities is to remove resource constraints. This might be somewhat easier than shifting population-level norms around gender.

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12. Multimedia: UNIFEM releases video series on gender & the MDGs

http://www.youtube.com/view_play_list?p=E0EFE0E969E5F41F

In time for the UN Summit on the Millennium Development Goals 2010, UNIFEM (part of UN Women), in collaboration with UNTV, has produced a series of five videos highlighting select MDGs from a gender perspective. Introduced by internationally renowned TV journalist Daljit Dhaliwal, all videos are now available for download in English, French, Spanish and Russian. For DVDs, please contact Jaya Jiwatram, jaya.jiwatram@unifem.org.

MDG 1: Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger

Eradicating extreme hunger and poverty is a key focus of the Millennium Development Goals set in 2000 by world leaders at the United Nations. Secure employment is critical to overcome poverty, yet worldwide 60 percent of people are working without a formal contract or social security protection. The majority of them are women and too often their labour rights are exploited. But one idea showing promise can be found in the homes of women in Cambodia. We travelled to Phnom Penh to see how the rights of home-based women workers are being protected, providing the women with a ladder out of severe poverty.

MDG 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women

Liberia was a country engulfed in war, its women bearing the brunt of the conflict. While peace finally did come, the legacy of violence against women continues to haunt the country. But Liberia's women are now taking positions of power and filling roles usually dominated by men. We look now at how women in decision-making positions are helping to pave a new path to their country's future.

MDG 6: Combat HIV and AIDS

Botswana, in Southern Africa, reportedly has one of the highest HIV and AIDS prevalence rates in the world. Especially hard hit are the women in rural areas, who cannot access medical care. While there still is a very long way to go, new methods for delivering services and information to hard-to-reach women is starting to make a difference.

MDG 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability

Climate change in parts of the world can lead to an increased struggle to grow food and the displacement of populations. This is the case in Northern Colombia among the indigenous Wayuu people, where desert conditions have been exacerbated in recent years. As in many parts of the world, is the Wayuu women who feed their families and provide water -- and they are struggling to ensure their community's very survival despite dwindling water resources.

The Missing MDG Target: Violence against Women

Tragically, up to three quarters of women and girls worldwide experience physical or sexual violence in their lifetime. And the effect on the millions of girls and women who are abused is devastating — not just on them personally, but also on their ability to fully participate in the development of their countries. Unless violence against women is curbed, meeting all of the eight Millennium Development Goals will be impossible.

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13. How Do Women Weather Economic Shocks? What We Know

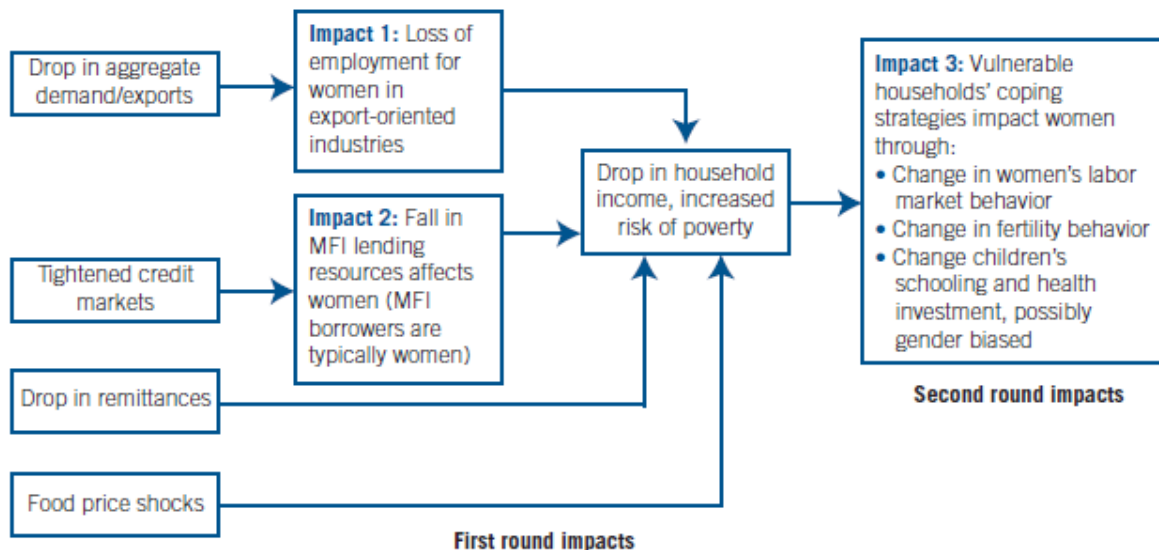
<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPREMNET/Resources/EP46.pdf>

Do women weather economic shocks differently than men?

First-round impacts of economic crises on women’s employment should be more prominent in this recent economic downturn than historically because of women’s increased participation in the globalized workforce.

Second-round impacts result from the strategies that vulnerable households use to cope with declining income, which can vary by gender. In the past, women from low-income households have typically entered the labour force, while women from high-income households have often exited the labour market in response to economic crises. Evidence also suggests that women defer fertility during economic crises and that child schooling and child survival are adversely affected, mainly in low-income countries, with girls suffering more adverse health effects than boys. These impacts underscore the need for providing income to women in poor countries to help households better cope with the effects of economic shocks.

Figure 1. Possible Transmission Channels for Impact of Economic Crises on Women



Source: Author illustration.
Note: MFI = microfinance institution.

Source: Copied from page 2 of *How Do Women Weather Economic Shocks? What We Know*.

<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPREMNET/Resources/EP46.pdf>

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14. Putting Nairobi’s Slums on the Map

http://siteresources.worldbank.org/WBI/Resources/213798-1278955272198/Putting_Nairobi_Slums_on_the_Map.pdf

A mapping team has produced one of the densest maps ever made, labelling "points of interest" throughout Kibera, a 550 acres slum in Nairobi, Kenya which is home to one million people. Publicly available information about Kibera has been minimal, although it is one of the most heavily studied informal settlements in the world. The map is available now through OpenStreetMap (OSM) <http://www.openstreetmap.org>, a volunteer global mapping project.

After the initial success of Map Kibera <http://mapkibera.org>, a recently established company called GroundTruth Initiative is expanding work on mapping and digital citizen media to other regions, using Map Kibera as a pilot. The second phase expands on an evolving concept for GroundTruth: community information development—gathering, reporting, and analyzing local information using digital tools, and using that information for advocacy. A series of community meetings using a paper printout of the map will kick off community discussions on topics such as health, security, education and water, allowing for local feedback by women and men.

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15. Girls Discovered: Global Maps of Adolescent Girls

http://www.girlsdiscovered.org/maps_and_data/

The welfare of adolescent girls is crucial in determining economic and social outcomes for countries today, and in the future. For girls to become healthy mothers, productive citizens and economic contributors, their unique needs must be seen and understood. Yet today, adolescent girls are undercounted and so underserved. Counting them is the first step to increasing their visibility.

Whether you are a researcher, a policymaker, a business or an NGO; interested in the health of adolescent girls or their education; looking for a visually compelling map of data on girls or a spreadsheet of data, Girls Discovered can help you.

- **Find** maps and data on a theme of your interest by clicking on one of the seven categories [e.g. under Economic Opportunities, you can find data on access to land ownership, child labour by agricultural sector]. Where the data exists, you can find data according to gender and age.
- **View** and print the data on global maps, or zoom-in to see data on girls in India in more detail. Click on a country to obtain information about girls in a specific location.
- **Analyze** data by comparing indicators, ages or gender on two maps displayed side-by-side. Identify hotspots of vulnerability for girls by overlaying two different datasets on one global map.
- **Download** spreadsheets of data on indicators or on countries for use in your own statistical analysis or research.

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16. Blackawton bees

<http://rsbl.royalsocietypublishing.org/content/early/2010/12/18/rsbl.2010.1056.full>

doi: 10.1098/rsbl.2010.1056

Abstract

Real science has the potential to not only amaze, but also transform the way one thinks of the world and oneself. This is because the process of science is little different from the deeply resonant, natural processes of play. Play enables humans (and other mammals) to discover (and create) relationships and patterns. When one adds rules to play, a game is created. This is science: *the process of playing with rules that enables one to reveal previously unseen patterns of relationships that extend our collective understanding of nature and human nature*. When thought of in this way, science education becomes a more enlightened and intuitive process of asking questions and devising games to address those questions. But, because the outcome of all game-playing is unpredictable, supporting this ‘messyness’, which is the engine of science, is critical to

good science education (and indeed creative education generally). Indeed, we have learned that doing ‘real’ science in *public spaces* can stimulate tremendous interest in children and adults in understanding the processes by which we make sense of the world.

The present study (on the vision of bumble-bees) goes even further, since it was not only performed outside my laboratory (in a Norman church in the southwest of England), but the ‘games’ were themselves devised in collaboration with 25 8- to 10-year-old children. *They* asked the questions, hypothesized the answers, designed the games (in other words, the experiments) to test these hypotheses and analysed the data. *They* also *drew* the figures (in coloured pencil) and wrote the paper. Their headteacher (Dave Strudwick) and I devised the educational programme (we call ‘i,scientist’), and I trained the bees and transcribed the children’s’ words into text (which was done with smaller groups of children at the school’s local village pub). So what follows is a novel study (scientifically and conceptually) in ‘*kids speak*’ without references to past literature, which is a challenge.

Although the historical context of any study is of course important, including references in this instance would be disingenuous for two reasons. First, given the way scientific data are naturally reported, the relevant information is simply inaccessible to the literate ability of 8- to 10-year-old children, and second, the true motivation for any scientific study (at least one of integrity) is one’s own curiosity, which for the children was not inspired by the scientific literature, but their own observations of the world. This lack of historical, scientific context does not diminish the resulting data, scientific methodology or merit of the discovery for the scientific and ‘non-scientific’ audience. On the contrary, it reveals science in its truest (most naive) form, and in this way makes explicit the commonality between science, art and indeed all creative activities.

Principal finding ‘We discovered that bumble-bees can use a combination of colour and spatial relationships in deciding which colour of flower to forage from. We also discovered that science is cool and fun because you get to do stuff that no one has ever done before. (Children from Blackawton)’.

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17. Eight-year-old children publish bee study in Royal Society journal

<http://blogs.discovermagazine.com/notrocketscience/2010/12/21/eight-year-old-children-publish-bee-study-in-royal-society-journal/>

In response to personal correspondence with the funder of the project, Lottolab Studio, I learned that the group composition of the 8 to 10 year old students was almost 50:50 girls and boys. It is encouraging to see this high interest in science coming from both genders.

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18. Video: Women, Water and Will Power

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-nYf6QsjkDk>

In this YouTube video, Dr. Monique Dube, a Tier 2 Canada Research Chair in Aquatic Ecosystem Health Diagnosis at the University of Saskatchewan discusses the importance of water and how it relates to the influence of women in Canada and in the International community. She also discusses the status of women in science and engineering in Canada, and the lack of women’s presence in the 19 NSERC Research Chairs appointed in 2010.