



Vegetables, fruit and dried fish (*dagaa*) for sale at typical outdoor market at Mkolani, Tanzania. Photo courtesy of L. Gross.

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 to compile and re-distribute once a month. Back issues of the GEM Digest are available at <http://www.aic.ca/gender/resources.cfm>.

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Opportunities and Upcoming Events

1. 2014: The International Year of Family Farming

<http://www.fao.org/family-farming-2014/en/>

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations has declared **2014 International Year of Family Farming (IYFF)**. IYFF aims to raise the profile of family farming and smallholder farming by focusing world attention on its significant role in eradicating hunger and poverty, providing food security and nutrition, improving livelihoods, managing natural resources, protecting the environment, and achieving sustainable development, in particular in rural areas.

The goal of the 2014 IYFF is to reposition family farming at the centre of agricultural, environmental and social policies in the national agendas by identifying gaps and opportunities to promote a shift towards a more equal and balanced development.

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2. Online Discussion: Data Gaps on Gender Equality

[http://www.wikigender.org/index.php/Online Discussion: Data Gaps on Gender Equality](http://www.wikigender.org/index.php/Online_Discussion:_Data_Gaps_on_Gender_Equality)

From **January 27th through February 14th, 2014**, an online discussion on data gaps on gender equality is taking place at the **Wiki Gender website**. The outcomes and main findings of the discussion will be synthesized and presented at a side event occurring in March 2014 at the 58th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women. Each of the three weeks of the discussion has a thematic focus, as follows:

- Week 1 starting January 27- The Socioeconomic Empowerment of Women
- Week starting February 3 - Violence Against Women
- Week 3 starting February 10 - The Civic and Political Participation of Women

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3. **Advancing Women – Women in Agriculture Conference**

<http://www.advancingwomenconference.ca/>

Women make a significant contribution to Canadian agriculture, but it requires special skills to be a leader in an industry. Agriculture is rich with successful women. We want to connect those successful women with others. We believe opportunities for women in agriculture have never been better! To help women capitalize on these opportunities, Iris Meck Communications has created a conference where women can sharpen their skills and share their inspirational gifts. On **Monday, April 28 and Tuesday, April 29, 2014**, *Advancing Women* will be held in **Calgary, Alberta**, the first in a series of workshops, conferences and forums. Our goal is to bring together over 300 participants and 10+ powerful speakers to discuss, share and collaborate on women's opportunities.

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4. **Canadian Coalition of Women in Engineering, Science, Trade & Technology conference**

<http://www.cwestt2014.ca/>

Registration for the Canadian Coalition of Women in Engineering, Science, Trade & Technology conference is now open. The CWESTT Conference will be held in **Regina, Saskatchewan** on **May 22-24, 2014** with a conference theme, *Open Opportunities: Mentoring the Future*.

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5. **CSW59/Beijing+20 (2015)**

<http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw59-2015>

The fifty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) will take place at United Nations Headquarters in **New York**, tentatively scheduled for **9-20 March 2015**. Representatives of Member States, UN entities, and ECOSOC-accredited non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from all regions of the world attend the session.

The Commission will undertake a review of progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 20 years after its adoption at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. The review (Beijing+20) will also include the outcomes of the 23rd special session of the General Assembly, the first five-year assessment conducted after the adoption of the Platform for Action, which highlighted further actions and initiatives.

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This Month's News

1. **Agriculture and Hospitality Firms Vulnerable to Human Trafficking**

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2014/01/hospitality-agriculture-firms-vulnerable-human-trafficking/>

WASHINGTON, Jan 3 2014 (IPS) - Shareholders are calling on 15 U.S.-based multinational corporations to ensure that their global supply chains are not facilitating human rights abuses, particularly labour and sex trafficking.

In a new campaign running throughout January, the Interfaith Centre on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR), which represents 300 shareholder organisations managing around 100 billion dollars in assets, is focusing on two sectors in particular,

hospitality and food agriculture. These industries – which include hotels, airlines, restaurant chains, large retailers and agribusiness companies – are seen as particularly at risk for rights violations.

ICCR is now urging 15 U.S.-based corporations in particular to take a series of steps in this regard. These include agribusiness giants (ADM and ConAgra), retailers (Costco, Kroger, Target and Wal-Mart), airlines (Delta, US Airways and Southwest), hotel chains (Hyatt, Starwood, Choice) and others.

The group’s members recently released a new set of principles and recommendations that would lead companies to make specific declarations to ensure that the entities within their supply chain will comply with a host of international agreements aimed at cracking down on various forms of human trafficking, including the U.N. Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, passed in 2011.

Refer to the link for the full article.

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2. Seedpods Worth More than Gold in Argentina’s Arid North

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2014/01/seedpods-worth-gold-argentinas-arid-north/>

GUANACO SOMBRIANA, Argentina, Jan 2 2014 (IPS) - Tired of the drought driving away their men and killing their livestock, the women of Guanaco Sombriana, a town in northern Argentina, have found a new source of income by using the seedpods of native trees that up to now merely provided shade in this arid landscape.

A decade ago the women organised, setting up the Association of Small Farmers of Salinas Atamisqueñas (APPSA Guanaco), which today groups 80 families in this village of 566 people.

APPSA, with support from the Undersecretariat and from the Unit for Rural Change (UCAR), also has a small mill to produce flour from the seedpods of the ‘algarrobo blanco’ (*Prosopis alba*), known in English as the Argentine mesquite or white carob tree, and the ‘algarrobo negro’ (*Prosopis nigra*), the black mesquite or black carob tree – typical native trees that even appear in the Santiago de Estero provincial folk songs.

In the past, the seedpods were only used in Guanaco Sombriana as livestock fodder when times were tough. But the members of the Association took courses on how to produce flour and baked goods using the pods, which are popular now in organic food markets and shops.

“We are seeing that young people who usually go off to find work as migrant farm workers are starting to stay here to work with the harvested pods,” says Farías. “Why go somewhere else to work the land, when they can take advantage of what we have here?”

Refer to the link for the full article.

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3. Keeping the Grass Greener for African Plant Breeders

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2014/01/keeping-grass-greener-african-plant-breeders/>

ACCRA, Ghana, Jan 2 2014 (IPS) - For the few plant breeders in Africa like Vivian Oduro, working for an international research institution is an obvious choice, with prestige and benefits any agricultural scientist would find hard to decline.

But Oduro – a sweet potato breeder – is staying put. She will use her expertise in Africa for the farmers with whom she now shares a special bond because she understands their challenges intimately.

A PhD student at the prestigious West Africa Centre for Crop Improvement (WACCI) in the Ghanaian capital, Oduro is part of a group of new thinkers in crop breeding who see fresh opportunities in Africa.

“Working overseas is attractive, but so is Africa when you understand what needs to be done,” Oduro told IPS.

Established in 2007 to train plant breeders over a 10-year period following a grant from AGRA (Alliance for a Green revolution in Africa), WACCI is aiming to become the foremost centre for the training of plant breeders for Africa. It may not be far from its goal, having made history by graduating eight PhD students in a single discipline – plant breeding – on the same day in July 2013. Currently, 54 students are at various stages of PhD training in plant breeding.

Refer to the link for the full article.

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4. Women Farmers in Chile to Teach the Region Agroecology

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2014/01/women-farmers-chile-teach-region-agroecology/>

SANTIAGO, Jan 4 2014 (IPS) - An organisation that brings together some 10,000 peasant and indigenous women from Chile is launching an agroecology institute for women *campesinos*, or small farmers, in South America.

For years, the National Association of Rural and Indigenous Women (ANAMURI) has been training thousands of people through La Vía Campesina, the international peasant movement, working on the basis of food sovereignty, which asserts the right of people to define their own food systems.

But today it is undertaking its most ambitious project. The Agroecology Institute for Rural Women (IALA) will be the first in Latin America to only target women.

Refer to the link for the full article.

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5. Workplace Salaries

<http://content.time.com/time/business/article/0,8599,2015274,00.html>

The fact that the average American working woman earns only about 80% of what the average American working man earns has been something of a festering sore for at least half the population for several decades. And despite many programs and analyses and hand-wringing and badges and even some legislation, the figure hasn't budged much in the past five years.

Unmarried, childless women under 30 who live in cities like New York City, Los Angeles and San Diego are making 17%, 12% and 15% more than their male peers, respectively. Highly educated women tend to marry and have children later. The rest of working women — even those of the same age, but who are married or don't live in a major metropolitan area — are still on the less scenic side of the wage divide. The figures come from James Chung of Reach Advisors, who has spent more than a year analyzing data from the Census Bureau's American Community Survey.

Refer to the link for the full article.

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6. NSERC CWSE-Prairies Newsletter

<http://cwse-prairies.ca/>

The January issue of the newsletter for the NSERC Chair for Women in Science and Engineering for the Prairies is now available. It includes:

- report about the 2013 Gender Summit held in Washington, D.C., November 13 – 15, 2013.
- report on a workshop on Becoming Leaders: An Introduction to Leadership Skills and Strategies for women in science, engineering, technology, and trades (SETT), held in December 2013 in Winnipeg.

Note also the RSS news feed on *Women in STEM* (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) on the website.

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Reports, Publications and Resources

1. Video: Women in Extension

<http://www.accessagriculture.org/node/515/en>

Food production in women’s fields could easily increase if we paid attention to gender when dealing with these four areas: demand for training and advice; extension methods and content; access to land, inputs and credit; and access to markets. This video targets research and development organisations, as well as agricultural service providers.

This video is available through Access Agriculture. The website features training videos, and related audio files, on a wide range of topics for service providers working with farmers in developing countries. Videos are available in over 40 international and national languages, the selection of which is entirely demand-led.

All video and audio files are freely downloadable after you have registered. By registering you will also be kept informed on a two-monthly basis about new videos made available or other key events related to video-mediated rural learning.

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2. Discussion Paper: Gender Inequalities in Ownership and Control of Land in Africa: Myths versus Reality

<http://www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/ifpridp01308.pdf>

The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) has published a new discussion paper. Over the past decade, stakeholders have made a variety of generalized claims concerning women’s landownership, both globally and in Africa. Typically, these claims include statements with single statistics, such as “women own less than 2 percent of the world’s land” or “women own approximately 15 percent of land in Africa south of the Sahara.” These claims are problematic because they are not substantiated by empirical evidence, do not reflect variations in landownership across or within countries, do not acknowledge differences in landownership regimes, nor address comparative ownership by men in the same contexts. Neither do they address the difference between ownership and control of land. The lack of a clear understanding behind statistics on gender and land also leads to an inability to clearly articulate a policy response to the potential inequalities faced by women and men. The objective of a new paper by Cheryl Doss, Chiara Kovarik, Amber

Peterman, Agnes Quisumbing and Mara van den Bold, *Gender inequalities in ownership and control of land in Africa: Myth versus reality*, is to explore, conceptually and empirically, the levels and relative inequalities in landownership between women and men in African countries.

The review investigates the extent of women’s land ownership in sub Saharan Africa, using nationally representative data sets. The paper highlights the need to clarify what we mean when we provide statistics on women’s land ownership—what do we mean by ownership, and what land are we talking about. Most of the available data is not consistent on these points. Where there is data available, there is a very mixed picture of women’s land ownership, and broad generalizations hide that important variability.

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3. Eldis Guide: Heteronormativity

<http://www.eldis.org/go/topics/resource-guides/gender/key-issues/heteronormativity#.UotxHMTxq7I>

Heteronormativity is considered a very abstract concept by some but it has serious implications for international development. The term heteronormativity is the assumption that heterosexuality is the norm. Within development there has been research, policy and practice which has offered an analysis of the impact of heteronormativity or challenged bad practice. A desire to question and disrupt seemingly ‘common sense’ positions on gender and sexuality have driven, or been prompted by, work on women’s empowerment, sexual rights and HIV.

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4. Skill Sets for Smallholder Farmers

<http://www.crsprogramquality.org/five-skill-sets-for-farmers/>

What skills do smallholder farmers need in order to succeed? The guides listed below explain how to help farmers strengthen five skill sets to successfully engage with markets. The documents are in their first year of beta testing. These skills sets for smallholder farmers have been developed by Catholic Relief Services (CRS) in collaboration with USAID.

- the multiple-skills approach and how to use it in rural development projects.
- the skills farmers need to successfully organize themselves in groups. It also explains how to manage a farmer group.
- a robust methodology for establishing savings and lending communities.
- the theory and concepts of natural resource management
- the theory and concepts of marketing and agro-enterprise development

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5. Discussion Paper: Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture – What Role for Food Security in Bangladesh?

<http://www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/ifpridp01297.pdf>

Women’s low status and persistent gender gaps in health and education in South Asia contribute to chronic child malnutrition (Smith et al. 2003) and food insecurity (von Grebmer et al. 2009), even as other determinants of food security, such as per capita incomes, have improved. This is particularly relevant for Bangladesh, where chronic food insecurity continues to be an important issue despite steady advances in food production. To be able to leverage agriculture as an

engine of inclusive growth, there is a need to develop indicators for measuring women’s empowerment, examine its relationship to various food-security outcomes, and monitor the impact of interventions to empower women.

Using nationally representative survey data from Bangladesh, authors Esha Sraboni, Hazel Malapit, Agnes Quisumbing, and Akhter Ahmed examine the relationship between women’s empowerment in agriculture and two measures of household food security: per adult equivalent calorie availability and dietary diversity. They use the *Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index* to assess the extent of women’s empowerment in agriculture and instrumental variables techniques to correct for the potential endogeneity of empowerment. They find that the overall women’s empowerment score, the number of groups in which women actively participate, women’s control of assets, and a narrowing gap in empowerment between men and women within households are positively associated with calorie availability and dietary diversity.

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6. Eldis Gender and Water Resource Guide

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

In a world where water scarcity, climate change, disasters and conflicts are affecting access to safe and sustainable water resources, women and girls can be especially vulnerable. In many developing countries women and girls are responsible for collecting and using water for purposes including sanitation and health, such as through the production of food, care of animals, cleaning and waste disposal. Even though women often have a wealth of knowledge on the subject, it is often overlooked in the formulation of projects and policies due to their lack of inclusion in water governance processes at both local and national levels.

This guide provides a collection of resources that identify and address key gender issues in the water sector including water supply infrastructure and management, sanitation and hygiene, and climate change. A general recommendation that emerges across the resources is that using a gender analysis is crucial in understanding the differential impact water focused policies, programmes and projects have on women, men, boys and girls. It is vital to incorporate these views in the planning and design stage of any water focused project or policy, and following on from this, for the direct involvement of both women and men at all levels of water governance and management.

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7. UN Commission on the Status of Women

<http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/>

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

The Commission adopts multi-year work programs to appraise progress and make further recommendations to accelerate the implementation of the Platform for Action. These recommendations take the form of negotiated agreed conclusions on a priority theme. Based on the most recent resolution from 2009, priority and review themes are:

2014: Priority theme: Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls. Review theme: Access and participation of women and girls to education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women’s equal access to full employment and decent work, from the 54th session of the CSW.

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