



GEM Digest of the Month for September 1, 2016

176 Gloucester Street, Suite 320, Ottawa, Ontario K2P 0A6,
www.aic.ca



Canola field in bloom near Minnedosa, Manitoba, Canada. 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, organizational development and international 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>.

Dinah Ceplis, P.Ag. (Ret.), FGHIH, FAIC
GEM Committee Member (Volunteer)

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Opportunities and Upcoming Events

1. Second Advancing Women Conference-East

<http://www.advancingwomenconference.ca/2016east/index.html>

The Second Advancing Women Conference-East is being held on **October 3 & 4, 2016** in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. AWC is no longer a conference but it has become a community of women in agriculture, a movement of women advancing in agriculture. Advancing Women is created for every woman who wants to achieve success. Whether you are a crop, fruit, vegetable, dairy or livestock producer, own your own small or large ag business or in a career path with an agriculture organization or association - this conference is for you.

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2. Global Symposium and Learning Exchange

<http://ingenaes.illinois.edu/2017symposium/>

The Integrating Gender and Nutrition within Agricultural Extension Services (INGENAES) project is hosting the INGENAES Global Symposium and Learning Exchange **in Lusaka, Zambia in January 23-25, 2017**. The INGENAES team is working very hard on a dynamic agenda designed to help all of us learn about how to apply new knowledge and resources so extension services will provide more equitable support to both men and women farmers and contribute to improved nutrition.

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This Month's News

1. The Diversity Gap Campaign at University of Alberta

<https://uofaawa.wordpress.com/awa-diversity-gap-campaign/>

The Academic Women's Association of the University of Alberta has undertaken an independent comprehensive equity audit of the university. They are currently engaged in three analyses:

1. The Diversity Gap in Canada Excellence Research Chairs and Canada Research Chairs
2. The Diversity Gap in Representation
3. The Diversity Gap in Recognition & Awards

Two decades after the inception of the University of Alberta's equity plan, "Opening Doors" (1994), research by the Academic Women's Association indicates gender parity remains elusive. Over the past decade, the overall percentage of women profs has stalled at about 33-35%. In 2016, women constitute 34% (568/1649) of profs. Only 4.5% (75) are visible minority women, 0.6% (10) Aboriginal women, and 0.7% (11) women with disabilities. Women are 58% of undergrads but only 37.5% (222/592) of postdocs, 44% (231/532) of assistant profs, 26% (220/849) of full profs, 31% (20/64) of chairs, and 26% (5/19) of deans. The AWA urges the university to undertake a bold new equity action plan with transparent accountability mechanisms.

A number of recommendations addressing inequity are found in each summary report. Infographics are available as pdf files.

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2. FAO appoints Dr Joyce Boye as a Special Ambassador for the International Year of Pulses 2016 (IYP)

<http://www.fao.org/pulses-2016/news/news-detail/en/c/421153/>

During an event hosted by FAO's Liaison Office for North America, Dr. Joyce Boye, a distinguished researcher and innovator from Canada, was nominated FAO Special Ambassador for the International Year of Pulses (IYP) 2016.

In her acceptance speech, Dr. Boye shared her vision of a world of opportunities and called the audience to "*imagine a world where the options for food preparation are as diverse as the crops one could choose from*".

The panel discussion held the same day highlighted existing scientific evidence of the benefits of pulses. Because they help fix nitrogen in our soils, they make them healthier, more productive, and less dependent on synthetic fertilizers. The result is a smaller carbon print and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. Pulses have high water efficiency: 50 litres of water are needed to produce 1 kg of lentils, compared to 13'000 litres to produce 1 kg of beef. Pulses are also packed with proteins. When consumed with cereals, pulses increase the protein quality of meals. Pulses are affordable, making them an ideal crop to improve people's diets in poorer parts of the world.

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3. IYP Special Ambassadors

<http://www.fao.org/pulses-2016/about/special-ambassadors/en/>

The FAO welcomed five newly appointed special ambassadors to reinforce and support the work the Organization is doing as part of the International Year of Pulses (IYP). All are prominent figures in their respective regions and will continue to use their expertise to promote the consumption of pulses, advocating the benefits to human health, soils and food security.

Dr. Joyce Boye of Agriculture and Agri-food Canada was named special ambassador for North America. A leading scientist for AAFC, Joyce heads a research study on plant protein and food allergies with a particular focus on peas and pulses. In 2001 Joyce won the Research Partnership Prize of Excellence from AAFC.

The other ambassadors are:

- Elizabeth Mpofu, helped to establish the Zimbabwe Smallholder Organic Farmers Forum (ZIMSOFF), and helped found the Eastern Southern Smallholder Farmers' Forum (ESAFF).
- Magy Habib, former editor of the Food Section of El-Beit Magazine
- Kadambot Siddique, serves as professor of agriculture and chair and director of the Institute of Agriculture at the University of Western Australia.
- Jenny Chandler, a writer and a teacher a regular contributor to a number of food-related blogs, the Borough Market Magazine, and author of three cookbooks.

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4. Can Better Data Lead to More Women in Environmental Leadership Positions?

<https://www.newsecuritybeat.org/2016/04/data-lead-women-environmental-leadership/>

Sex-disaggregated data and gender-sensitive information specific to the environment sector could prove to be vital. Such data can be a powerful tool to advocate for gender equality and women's empowerment in sustainable development.

Collating the best quantitative data available on how countries are realizing their commitments to environmental sustainability and women's empowerment, our EGI [Environment and Gender Information platform] consistently finds that countries that take seriously their commitments to advancing gender equality in environmental arenas are making strides toward long-term wellbeing for all their citizens.

We view this not only as an influential advocacy angle, but an important opportunity to hold governments accountable for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs are seen as an exciting step towards defining an ambitious interdisciplinary approach to tackling global development and environment goals. However, the goals and targets adopted by United Nations member states last year are only the beginning.

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5. Gender CC Newsletter

<http://gendercc.net/gendercc-newsletter-august-2016.html>

In the August 2016 newsletter from Gender CC: *The topic of gender and climate change is far from disappearing off the radar – more and more people around the world are connecting the dots between the issues of gender justice and climate justice.*

This newsletter will feature a range of reports and updates from our network and the gender and climate change community at large. From advocacy at the international climate sessions to waste collection initiatives at the local level – GenderCC members and partners are taking action and are pushing for stronger commitment to tackling gender inequality in climate responses at every level.

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6. Renewable Energy: How women are reaping benefits from Africa's solar revolution

<http://www.eenews.net/stories/1060037965>

Renewable energy deployment in Africa is still very new, and it's still a story told more in anecdotes than statistics. More than 600 million Africans -- or 60 percent of people on the continent -- still have no access to electricity. In countries like Massawe's Tanzania, that number climbs to 80 percent or higher. Even Africans who do have power frequently don't have it 24 hours a day, or don't have enough to maintain the kind of lifestyle the Western world takes for granted, like household wide lighting.

In areas that remain underserved, the gender implications are clear. The World Bank says 70 percent of those suffering from energy poverty are women and girls, who experts say are less likely to migrate to urban centers -- where electricity is more available -- in search of work.

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7. Native Plants Boost Local Diets in El Salvador

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2016/08/native-plants-boost-local-diets-in-el-salvador/>

Maná Ojushte is a women's collective that emerged in San Isidro, El Salvador and began to promote the Maya nut tree [*Brosimum alicastrum*] and its seeds in 2010, an initiative that received a major boost in 2014 when it began to receive support from the Initiative Fund for the Americas El Salvador (FIAES), a U.S.-Salvadoran environmental conservation organisation.

The seeds of the Ojushte or Maya nut tree are beginning to be used in San Isidro and other communities in this Central American nation as an alternative source of nutrients for rural families, as part of projects designed to fight the impacts of climate change. Maná Ojushte, run by a core group of 10 women, sells Maya nuts, toasted, ground and packaged in quarter and half kilo bags.

In the municipalities of Candelaria de la Frontera and Texistepeque, in the eastern department of Santa Ana, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) is backing a similar effort, but involving a spice called chaya, rather than ojushte. Chaya (*Cnidocolus chayamansa*), a bush native to Mexico's Yucatan peninsula, was also used by the ancient Mayans in the pre-Columbian era. As in the case of ojushte, the promotion of chaya emerged as part of environmental conservation plans aimed at combating the impacts of climate change.

Besides chaya bushes, FAO has distributed 26,000 fruit trees, as well as 8,000 moringa trees (*Moringa oleifera*), also known as the drumstick or horseradish tree, whose leaves are also highly nutritious.

Another part of the project will be the creation of 250 family gardens to boost local food production capacity.

Efforts to encourage consumption of ojushte, chaya, moringa and other locally grown plants can make a difference when it comes to lowering malnutrition rates in rural areas

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8. Climate-Smart Agriculture for Drought-Stricken Madagascar

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2016/08/climate-smart-agriculture-for-drought-stricken-madagascar/>

Women and men farmers have participated in climate smart agricultural training in Madagascar. The end goal is for farmers to embrace climate-smart agriculture by diversifying their crops, planting more drought-resistant crops, including cassava and sweet potatoes, and looking for alternative livelihoods such as fishing.

FAO is working with the government to draft the County Programming Framework which is a five-year programme from 2014 to 2019. The framework focuses on three components, which are to intensify, diversify and to make the agricultural sector more resilient. The framework will also push for good governance of natural resources through practical laws and policies since most of the existing ones have been overtaken by events.

The third and overriding component is resilience, which focuses on building the capacity of communities – not just to climate change but other natural hazards such as the cyclone season common in the South.

Since irrigation-fed agriculture is almost non-existent and maize requires a lot of water to grow, various stakeholders continue to call for the building of wells to meet the water deficit, although others have dismissed the exercise as expensive and unfeasible.

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9. The Female Farmer Project

<http://audramulkern.com/the-female-farmer-project/>

The Female Farmer Project documents the rise of women in agriculture. This is a chronicle of stories of female farmers who are tasked with family, farm, often an outside job, and are creating change in our food systems.

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10. Gender and Nutrition within Agricultural Extension Services – Zambia Updates, July 2016

http://ingenaes.illinois.edu/wp-content/uploads/ING-CS-Newsletter-Zambia-2016_07.pdf

INGENAES stands for Integrating Gender and Nutrition within Agricultural Extension Services. We aim to assist partners in Feed the Future countries to build more gender-responsive and nutrition-sensitive extension approaches and tools to improve agricultural livelihoods for women and men and enhance household nutrition.

In this issue

- MoA Nutrition Program Development and New Team Member
- Zambian NAEASS Validation Meeting

- PROFIT+ CAD Survey
- Post-harvest Loss Workshop
- Nutrition and Gender Indicator Workshop: IAPRI
- UNZA Seminar
- MoA Food-based Dietary Guidelines
- UF Food Safety and Groundnut Research

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11. Assessing Agricultural Technologies for their Impacts on Gender Roles and Nutrition

<http://ingenaes.illinois.edu/apply/technology-profiles/>

Description

Designing and disseminating technologies through Agricultural Extension Services in a gender-responsive and nutrition-sensitive way can help extend the benefits of technologies like increased productivity, income, and food availability to both men and women. Join the Integrating Gender and Nutrition within Agricultural Extension Services (INGENAES) webinar on August 24, 2016 to learn about a new methodology to assess the degree to which agricultural technologies are gender-responsive and nutrition-sensitive in terms of their design, use, and dissemination. INGENAES will present the Technology Assessment approach to explain how technology developers and implementers can design agricultural technologies and distribution models to better reach men and women farmers. This discussion will draw on assessments of seven technologies in Bangladesh and Zambia.

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12. Research addresses barriers for Alberta women agri-food entrepreneurs

<http://www.foodincanada.com/research-and-development/research-addresses-barriers-alberta-women-agri-food-entrepreneurs-134770/>

The Needs Assessment Report:

<http://static1.squarespace.com/static/54caa57de4b09cd878bfa0c1/t/57b37dbac534a5fd32ed746d/1471380923282/Needs+Assessment+Report+Final+to+be+released++072416.pdf>

The Agriculture & Food Council (AFC) has released the “Success for Women in Agri-Food (S4WAg) Needs Assessment Report,” which summarizes recent research on the barriers rural Alberta women entrepreneurs face. The findings will be used to develop a pilot program aiming to overcome these barriers, and to support the engagement of women in the growing regional food economy as well as policy discussions to be delivered in five locations in rural Alberta.

“The results of the research identified finance and other business management skills, as well as access to capital, childcare and other responsibilities, lack of networking and mentorship opportunities as significant barriers for many rural women agri-food entrepreneurs...,” says Heather Broughton, S4WAg community animator for AFC.

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13. Smart Technologies Key to Youth Involvement in Agriculture

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2016/08/smart-technologies-key-to-youth-involvement-in-agriculture/>

While it is unanimously agreed that sustainability is about economic viability, socially just and environmentally friendly principles, it is also about the next generation taking over. But according to statistics by the Young Professionals for Agricultural Development (YPARD), agriculture has an image problem amongst youth, with most of them viewing it as older people’s profession.

This is a looming problem, because according to the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR), over 2.5 billion people depend on agriculture for their livelihoods. In addition, for many regions of the world, gross domestic product (GDP) and agriculture are closely aligned and young farmers make considerable contributions to the GDP from this sector.

Apart from increasing productivity, leaders are tasked to find ways of enticing young people into agriculture, especially now that the world’s buzzword is sustainability.

According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), creating new opportunities and incentives for youth to engage in both farm and non-farm rural activities in their own communities and countries is just but one of the important steps to be taken, and promoting rural youth employment and agro-entrepreneurship should be at the core of strategies that aim to addressing the root causes of distress of economic and social mobility.

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14. India’s New Maternity Benefits Act Criticised as Elitist

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2016/08/indias-new-maternity-benefits-act-criticised-as-elitist/>

NEW DELHI, Aug 19 2016 (IPS) - The passage of the landmark Maternity Benefits Act 1961 by the Indian Parliament, which mandates 26 weeks of paid leave for mothers as against the existing 12, has generated more heartburn than hurrahs due to its skewed nature.

However, while the law has brought some cheers on grounds that it at least acknowledges that women are entitled to maternity benefits — crucial in a country notorious for its entrenched discrimination against women and one that routinely features at the bottom of the gender equity index — many are dismissing it as a flawed piece of legislation.

The critics point out that the new law will benefit only a miniscule percentage of women employed in the organised sector while ignoring a large demographic toiling in the country’s unorganised sector such as contractual workers, farmers, casual workers, self-employed women and housewives.

According to Sudeshna Sengupta of the Right to Food Campaign: “Even if the law is fully implemented,” the activist told IPS, “studies show that it will benefit only 1.8 million women in the organised sector leaving out practically 99 percent of the country’s women workforce.

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15. Women Scientists Project

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:WikiProject_Women_scientists

The website, A Mighty Girl, reports on the project of Emily Temple-Wood.

After her project focused on giving female scientists their due recognition on Wikipedia started attracting the attention of sexist online trolls, Emily Temple-Wood decided to fight back in the best possible way -- for every harassing email she receives, the recent Loyola University graduate has vowed to write a Wikipedia article about another female scientist who has been neglected in the history books! For her efforts to expand women's representation on Wikipedia and combat online harassment against women, Temple-Wood was named the 2016 Wikipedian of the Year.

The 22-year-old Chicagoan founded the WikiProject Women Scientists project in 2012 to help improve the representation of female scientists on Wikipedia. It was discovering how few women of the Royal Society -- the UK's centuries-old society of who's who in science -- had Wikipedia articles written about them that first inspired Temple-Wood to act. "However, all of this success led trolls to increasingly target Temple-Wood with sexist and harassing emails; a common tactic used to try silence women's voices online. Refusing to be intimidated, Temple-Wood made a public commitment to write a new Wikipedia on a female scientist in response to each email and, after building up a substantial new backlog of entries to tackle, she even thanked her harassers "for helping to fight against systemic bias on Wikipedia."

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Reports, Publications and Resources

1. UNFCCC Secretariat launches new website on gender and climate change

http://unfccc.int/gender_and_climate_change/items/7516.php

Are you looking for or would you like to share information related to gender and climate? At the SB-[Subsidiary Bodies] sessions in Bonn the UNFCCC [United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change] Secretariat introduced their new gender and climate change page which will provide more transparent and coherent information on programmes and decisions related to gender. Moreover, you can find statistics, news as well as a calendar.

The UNFCCC Secretariat wants to provide a platform and collaboration site for resources and knowledge on gender and climate change. No matter if you are looking for or would like to share materials like tools, case studies, articles and similar you can contact the Secretariat via e-mail at gender-team@unfccc.int

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2. Lessons from Improving a Gender-based Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment

http://pubs.iied.org/10783IIED.html?b=d&utm_source=IIED&utm_campaign=84eaceba4e-IIED_July_newsletter7_28_2016&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_4c206cf0b2-84eaceba4e-75836329

Indonesian cities are increasingly invested in efforts to build urban resilience, and finding means of resisting, absorbing and recovering from climate change hazards. Despite growing evidence that women, especially in underserved populations, suffer disproportionately from climate change hazards, there are inadequate data and methods for taking adequate account of women's perspectives in city-level resiliency initiatives.

The Indonesian civil society organisation Kota Kita conducted a study to examine its methodology for undertaking Climate Change Vulnerability Assessments (CCVAs). It focused on how its CCVA process could better assess women's climate vulnerability for urban planning efforts, the importance of using a gender lens for resiliency planning, and observed several key gender-focused resiliency efforts in Indonesia.

The study found that women’s perspectives were lacking in city-level resilience planning because few women participate in CCVAs. It also found that any data obtained had limitations in terms of its credibility, availability and accessibility, and that institutional capacity for using it was also limited. Finally, it found that gender and resilience development trends could actually reinforce gender discrimination rather than alleviate it.

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3. A Mighty Girl

https://www.facebook.com/amightygirl/?hc_ref=NEWSFEED&fref=nf

For a fantastic new book about 50 trailblazing female scientists, we highly recommend the illustrated biography, "Women in Science: 50 Fearless Pioneers," for ages 9 and up at <http://www.amightygirl.com/women-in-science>

Adult readers will also appreciate "Headstrong: 52 Women Who Changed Science – and The World," at <http://www.amightygirl.com/headstrong-52-women>

For many books for children and teens about female scientists throughout history, check out our blog post, "Science Is For Girls: 25 Books About Female Scientists" at <http://www.amightygirl.com/blog?p=12445>

You can also inspire your kids with fictional stories starring girls who love science with the recommendations in our post, "Ignite Her Curiosity: 25 Books Starring Science-Loving Mighty Girls," at <http://www.amightygirl.com/blog?p=10940>

And, if you'd like to encourage your own aspiring scientist, you can find many hands-on science toys and kits in our blog post, "Top 40 Science Toys for Mighty Girls," at <http://www.amightygirl.com/blog?p=10528>

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4. Females’ Enrollment and Completion in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Massive Open Online Courses

<https://arxiv.org/ftp/arxiv/papers/1608/1608.05131.pdf>

Only about 24% of enrollees in STEM MOOCs were women, suggesting a need to explore ways to make them more gender-inclusive. Data for the study were from the public MOOC dataset provided by HarvardX - MITx.

Abstract: Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) have the potential to democratize education by providing learners with access to rich sources of information. However, evidence supporting this democratization across countries is limited. We explored the question of democratization by investigating whether females from different countries were more likely to enroll in and complete STEM MOOCs compared with males. We found that whereas females were less likely to enroll in STEM MOOCs, they were equally likely to complete them. We found smaller gender gaps in STEM MOOC enrollment in less economically developed countries. Further, females were more likely than males to complete STEM MOOCs in countries identified as having a high potential to become the largest economies in the 21st century.

arXiv is an e-print service in the fields of physics, mathematics, computer science, quantitative biology, quantitative finance and statistics. Submissions to arXiv should conform to Cornell University academic standards. arXiv is owned and operated by Cornell University, a private not-for-profit educational institution.

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5. Case study: Child centered climate change adaptation (4CA) in the Pacific Islands

<http://www.equityforchildren.org/case-study-child-centered-climate-change-adaptation-4ca-in-the-pacific-islands/>

The 4CA program has been highlighted by Equity for Children as one of the few significant initiatives by international child rights organizations to put young people at the centre of climate change adaptation and disaster risk management. While most recognize the growing threat of climate change to children’s wellbeing, efforts to create child-sensitive approaches and programs have been limited.

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6. Online Book: Vulnerability of Pacific Island agriculture and forestry to climate change

<http://www.pacificfarmers.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Vulnerability-of-Pacific-Island-agriculture-and-forestry-to-climate-change.pdf>

Pacific Island countries and territories already face a range of development challenges due to their specific geographic and socio-economic characteristics, and their generally high exposure to natural hazards. The projected changes to the climate of the Pacific Island region over the coming decades present another challenging dimension that the region will need to grapple with. These changes could compromise the very ability of Pacific communities to meet their economic development needs.

This book identifies a range of potential response measures that could be implemented to significantly reduce exposure to climate related risks and enable the Pacific Community to better cope with emerging impacts. Many of these measures would contribute to improving agricultural productivity and livelihood resilience with or without climate change, but others would entail additional investment and changes to production systems.

See the Index for references to gender.

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7. Women's economic empowerment: navigating enablers and constraints

<https://www.odi.org/publications/10483-womens-economic-empowerment-navigating-enablers-and-constraints>

Women's economic empowerment is a global priority and central to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. This new report identifies the top issues holding back progress. This report details how gender equality, poverty eradication and human development require increased investment in women’s economic empowerment. This report brings together new and existing evidence to propose a set of core building blocks for the complex process of women's economic empowerment. No single intervention or actor can address all of its aspects, but we identify 10 key factors that can enable or constrain women’s economic empowerment, and make recommendations for policy and practice for each.

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