

May 1, 2020

# GEM Digest of the Month

Published monthly since December 2009

Fully stretch out your arm. When you are about 2 meters\* away from someone, their face fits into your hand roughly like this.\*\*



\*Minimum distance required to prevent person-to-person spread of Covid-19.  
\*\*Based on adult averages.

Physical distancing guideline during Covid-19 pandemic. Source: Oxfam Digital Repository <https://oxfamilibrary.openrepository.com/>.

The Gender Equality Mainstreaming (GEM) Digest provides a compilation of information and articles gathered 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, colleagues, scientific societies and diverse organizations.

The views and opinions presented are not necessarily representative of the editor.

If you have information to share, please send it to [dinah.ceplis@gmail.com](mailto:dinah.ceplis@gmail.com) to compile and re-distribute once a month.

Dinah Ceplis, P.Ag. (Ret.), FGHIH, FAIC, (Volunteer Editor)

## Contents

### Opportunities and Coming Events

- 1. Webinar: Reducing the risk of sexual exploitation & abuse during Covid-19 crisis ..... 2
- 2. Webinaire sur la réduction des risques d’exploitation et d’abus sexuels dans le contexte de la COVID-19 ..... 2
- 3. Conference of Canadian Coalition of Women in Engineering, Science, Trades and Technology (CCWESTT) ..... 3
- 4. COP26 moved to 2021 ..... 3

### This Month’s News

- 1. Bridging the gender gap in the clean energy sector to win the race against climate change..... 3
- 2. Smart stoves: A new business opportunity with environmental benefits ..... 3
- 3. One-size-fits-all policies won’t deliver sustainable farming in Africa..... 4
- 4. New Entrepreneurship Initiative Helps Empower Women Farmers in the Philippines ..... 4
- 5. What Other Sectors Can Show for Women's Leadership in COVID-19 ..... 4

### Reports, Publications, Resources

- 1. Brief: Against the odds: growing producer power in agricultural value chains ..... 5
- 2. Brief: Trade-offs in sustainable agricultural intensification: the farmers’ perspective ..... 5
- 3. Online Resources for Teaching the Sustainable Development Goals - from MCIC ..... 5
- 4. SDG Learning Resources from the UN ..... 6
- 5. Country gender assessment of agriculture and the rural sector in Nepal..... 6
- 6. Gender differentiated small-scale farm mechanization in Nepal hills: An application of exogenous switching treatment regression ..... 6

7.	A Gender-equal Ethiopian Parliament can Improve the Lives of all Women .....	7
8.	Facing climate change in Honduras: The importance of gender equity .....	7
9.	Scaling-out gender transformation for climate change.....	7
10.	Policy Brief: Climate change, food and nutrition policies in Uganda: Are they gender- and nutrition-sensitive?.....	8
11.	Info Note: Further evidence that gender matters for GHG mitigation in the dairy sector .....	8
12.	Gender and gender data as they relate to COVID19 preparedness and response .....	9
13.	Gender and COVID-19: Where Can Research Help?.....	9
14.	Report: Gender Implications of COVID-19 Outbreaks in Development and Humanitarian Settings – March 2020 .....	9
15.	Opinion: COVID-19, Air Pollution, and Cooking: A Deadly Connection .....	10
16.	OPINION: Autonomous Resourcing: The Engine Room of Feminist Work Amid a Global Pandemic.....	10

[Go to Top.](#) ++++++

## Opportunities and Coming Events

### 1. Webinar: Reducing the risk of sexual exploitation & abuse during Covid-19 crisis

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/reducing-the-risk-of-sexual-exploitation-abuse-during-crisis-tickets-102824043482>

MCIC is pleased to present a webinar on “Reducing the risk of sexual exploitation & abuse during crisis.” on **May 6th, 2020 at 12:30pm Central time** in English.

In this session:

- Learn more about Digna, the new Canadian Center for the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) in international cooperation.
- Explore concrete steps your organization can take to limit sexual exploitation and abuse during COVID-19 response and other crises.
- Ask questions about PSEA and implementation in your organization.

### 2. Webinaire sur la réduction des risques d’exploitation et d’abus sexuels dans le contexte de la COVID-19

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/billets-reduire-les-risques-dexploitation-et-dabus-sexuels-en-période-de-crise-103267684424>

**mer., 6 mai 2020, 14:00 – 15:00 HAC**

Dans cette session :

- Vous en saurez davantage au sujet de Digna, le nouveau Centre canadien pour la prévention de l’exploitation et des abus sexuels (PEAS) dans le milieu de la coopération internationale.
- On vous présentera des moyens concrets d’aider votre organisme à limiter l’exploitation et les abus sexuels durant la riposte à la covid-19 et à d’autres crises.
- Vous pourrez poser des questions au sujet de la PEAS et sur sa mise en œuvre dans votre organisme.

[Go to Top.](#) ++++++

### **3. Conference of Canadian Coalition of Women in Engineering, Science, Trades and Technology (CCWESTT)**

<https://ccwesttconference.org/>

The Canadian Coalition of Women in Engineering, Science, Trades and Technology (CCWESTT) is Canada’s premier national, non-profit organization of groups, institutions and industries with a mission to expand the attraction, retention, and promotion of women.

The 18th Biennial Conference of the Canadian Coalition of Women in Engineering, Science, Trades and Technology (CCWESTT) will be held in **Winnipeg on November 12 to 14, 2020 at the RBC Convention Centre.**

The mission of the CCWESTT 2020 conference is to provide keynote speakers, sessions, and workshops that represent all areas of SETT and all stages of career advancement. This year’s conference theme is Future Forward: Engage. Advance. Inspire.

[Go to Top.](#) ++++++

### **4. COP26 moved to 2021**

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-health-coronavirus-climatechange/climate-summit-in-glasgow-postponed-to-2021-due-to-coronavirus-finland-idUKKBN21J6QG>

The UN’s next climate summit—scheduled to take place in Glasgow this November—has been postponed until 2021 amid the coronavirus disruption. 2021 is shaping up to be an important year.

A parallel summit on preserving threatened species, which had been due to take place in Kunming, China, in October, was also being pushed back to next year, a U.N. official said.

[Go to Top.](#) ++++++

## **This Month’s News**

### **1. Bridging the gender gap in the clean energy sector to win the race against climate change**

<https://www.energy4impact.org/news/bridging-gender-gap-clean-energy-sector-win-race-against-climate-change>

In addressing climate change, we must also address gender inequality. To be successful in our responses to climate change, we must fully include girls and women and take into account their experiences and potential. Women’s empowerment, including economic empowerment through clean energy, must be a core part of the transition to a zero-carbon future and climate-resilient societies. Many Energy 4 Impact initiatives are women-focused to promote women’s involvement and ensure they are at the forefront of the clean technology revolution.

[Go to Top.](#) ++++++

### **2. Smart stoves: A new business opportunity with environmental benefits**

<https://www.energy4impact.org/news/smart-stoves-new-business-opportunity-environmental-benefits>

Energy 4 Impact, with the financial support of The Adventure Project, is working with female stove manufacturers to strengthen their production capacity and build a sustainable supply of improved cookstoves. This type of initiative is giving rural communities the chance to replace their traditional stoves with more efficient alternatives that save money on wood fuel and cut CO2 emissions.

[Go to Top.](#) ++++++

### 3. One-size-fits-all policies won't deliver sustainable farming in Africa

<https://www.iied.org/one-size-fits-all-policies-wont-deliver-sustainable-farming-africa>

Governments and development agencies need to give greater consideration to conflicting objectives of different types of smallholder farmers when promoting sustainable agricultural intensification in sub-Saharan Africa, says report.

Smallholders regularly make trade-offs between a range of objectives, many of which may not directly relate to farming. These commonly include: food security, educational opportunities for children, immediate income needs, social harmony and sustainable natural resources.

The paper says policies and programmes seeking to improve agricultural production can avoid undermining farmers' existing strategies by recognising that farming and wider livelihood systems are interconnected.

[Go to Top.](#) ++++++

### 4. New Entrepreneurship Initiative Helps Empower Women Farmers in the Philippines

<https://foodtank.com/news/2020/04/new-entrepreneurship-initiative-helps-empower-women-farmers-in-the-philippines/>

A plant-based ice cream company in Portland, Oregon, USA is empowering the women who farm its coconut supply in the Philippines. Through a new partnership with the Water Agroforestry Nutrition Foundation (WAND), the ice cream company, Coconut Bliss, founded the Coconut-based Women Entrepreneurship Initiative and recently donated US\$20,000 to the program.

Funding for this initiative will support women farmers in selling goods made from the by-products of coconut processing. These small businesses produce valuable commodities, such as charcoal from coconut shell, vinegar from coconut water, coco peat, and organic fertilizer.

[Go to Top.](#) ++++++

### 5. What Other Sectors Can Show for Women's Leadership in COVID-19

<https://www.thinkglobalhealth.org/article/what-other-sectors-can-show-womens-leadership-covid-19>

How can we ensure transformative social changes that will enhance women's representation, in real time, when crisis hits? Public health emergencies, climate shocks, and conflicts of the past have shown how women, who are often central to crisis responses on the ground, tend to be sidelined in the formal institutions of power that follow an emergency.

- Women's leadership on boards has even been linked to greater environmental sustainability and corporate social responsibility.
- Work to reduce gender inequality in business can also provide some lessons for the public health sector. Research from Foreign Policy Analytics recently found that the inclusion of women in senior positions in traditionally male-dominated industries contributed to profitability, reduced environmental impacts, and boosted corporate social responsibility.
- Building a pipeline of skilled women through investing, for example, in girls' education in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), can be critical tools for supporting women in business.

[Go to Top.](#) ++++++

### 1. Brief: Against the odds: growing producer power in agricultural value chains

<https://pubs.iied.org/17744IIED/>

<https://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/17744IIED.pdf>

Commercial agriculture can take different forms and there is great variety in how small-scale farmers engage with it. But despite this diversity, farmers often have little control over trading arrangements and commodity prices. They may be trapped in lopsided agreements that can squeeze incomes and make them liable for risks, such as unpredictable weather. These arrangements destabilise livelihoods but are often difficult to change, because value chain terms may be dictated by powerful forces at local to global levels. Policies and programmes designed to support rural producer agency — their ability to make informed choices, take effective action and influence the world around them — must understand and address these structural factors. Drawing on insights from producer associations, development agencies, government bodies, advocates and businesses, we explore how farmers and their communities are being supported to navigate structural factors.

“All contexts in which farmers operate will be characterised by complex social dynamics that affect opportunities for women and men to engage with agricultural markets (for example, differing agriculture-related decision-making opportunities and work burdens amongst men and women).”

[Go to Top.](#) ++++++

### 2. Brief: Trade-offs in sustainable agricultural intensification: the farmers’ perspective

<https://pubs.iied.org/17743IIED/>

Smallholder farmers in sub-Saharan Africa face a constant challenge: to choose between many, often competing, social, economic and environmental objectives while also meeting expectations to intensify their farming practices sustainably. Farmers manage this situation by making trade-offs; choosing and prioritising goals based on household circumstances and by weighing immediate productivity/financial gains against long-term goals. But at present, several factors combine to deter farmers from prioritising long-term sustainability objectives, including limited resources, agricultural policies promoting short-term productivity that depends on environmentally damaging inputs, and adoption-focused interventions that ignore household diversity. These barriers loom largest for those with limited access to productive resources, including women and young people. This paper summarises a study about how farmers in Ghana, Burkina Faso and Malawi manage trade-offs and suggests what governments, donors and development agencies can do to support more sustainable choices.

[Go to Top.](#) ++++++

### 3. Online Resources for Teaching the Sustainable Development Goals - from MCIC

<http://mcic.ca/sustainable-foundations/learn-at-home>

See SDG#5 on Gender Equality <http://mcic.ca/pdf/17-Days-SDG-Goal-5.pdf>

We have been hard at work creating resources that can be used by students at home, either by themselves or with a parent. Check out MCIC’s lessons for teaching the SDGs at home! These resources, designed around the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), are all suitable for individual students and can be done at home. Each of the 17 lessons includes activities for elementary, middle years, and high school.

[Go to Top.](#) ++++++

## 4. SDG Learning Resources from the UN

<https://www.unsdglearn.org/>

UN SDG:Learn is a United Nations initiative that aims to bring relevant and curated learning solutions on sustainable development topics to individuals and organizations. Through the collaborative efforts of the United Nations, multilateral organizations, and sustainable development partners from universities, civil society, academia, and the private sector, UN SDG:Learn provides a unique gateway that empowers individuals and organizations through an informed decision when selecting among a wealth of SDG-related learning products and services that are currently available.

See **Gender Equality learning materials SDG #5**.

[Go to Top](#). ++++++

## 5. Country gender assessment of agriculture and the rural sector in Nepal

<http://www.fao.org/3/CA3128EN/ca3128en.pdf>

The Country Gender Assessment (CGA or Assessment) for agriculture and rural development in Nepal was undertaken in 2017 primarily to inform the gender-sensitive country-level planning and programming of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and to contribute to the implementation of FAO's Policy on Gender Equality at the country level.

The Assessment highlights gender-biased gaps at policy and legislative levels. For example, at the constitutional level, access to land for agricultural purpose is considered a farmers' fundamental right; however, women's ownership of land is still constrained. Overall, gender equality often only exists in laws and policies, and is not adequately implemented on the ground for the benefit of rural women. Findings of the Assessment indicate that government policy is limited to meeting targets of women's participation in programmes and projects rather than addressing the root causes of gender inequalities in agriculture and the wider rural economy.

The Assessment recommends addressing gaps in policy, legislation and implementation through a set of measures, including lobbying for a greater allocation of direct gender-responsive budgeting, concrete recognition of rural women's contribution to the agricultural sector, addressing root causes of employment inequalities and disparities in rural women's access to and control over resources, the enhancement of women's roles in decision-making positions and their competitiveness in a business environment, as well as for the supply and availability of gender-sensitive agriculture-related technologies, research, education and extension services.

[Go to Top](#). ++++++

## 6. Gender differentiated small-scale farm mechanization in Nepal hills: An application of exogenous switching treatment regression

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techsoc.2020.101250>

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0160791X19306396>

### Abstract

Farm mechanization among smallholder farming systems in developing countries is emerging as a viable option to off-set the effects of labor out-migration and shortages that undermine agricultural productivity. However, there is limited empirical literature on gender and farm mechanization. This study assesses the impacts of the gender of household heads on mini-tiller adoption in the hills of Nepal, using an exogenous switching treatment regression model. Our findings reveal that there is a significant gender gap in mini-tiller adoption between male-headed households (MH-HHs) and female-headed households (FH-HHs). Compared to MH-HHs, the mini-tiller adoption rate is significantly lower among the FH-HHs, and a large amount of unobserved heterogeneity is deriving this difference. Moreover, when MH-HHs and FH-HHs have

similar observed attributes, the mini-tiller adoption rate among the food insecure FH-HHs is higher than in the food secure group. The gender-differentiated mini-tiller adoption rate can be minimized primarily by enhancing market access. Findings suggest that farm mechanization policies and programs targeted to the FH-HHs can reduce the gender-differentiated adoption gap in Nepal and similar hill production agro-ecologies in South Asia, which will enhance the farm yield and profitability.

[Go to Top.](#) ++++++

## **7. A Gender-equal Ethiopian Parliament can Improve the Lives of all Women**

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/04/gender-equal-ethiopian-parliament-can-improve-lives-women/>

In 1991, the share of seats held by women in the Ethiopian parliament was under 3 percent. Today it stands at 38 percent, almost twice the ratio of women in the United States Congress. Experts say when women are better represented in government office, the gains are likely to spill down and improve the lives of all women.

Women in Ethiopia have long faced systemic inequities. The discrepancies begin early and often persist throughout Ethiopian women's lives. Nearly twice as many men than women over age 25 have some secondary education. Women often face more economic constraints than men, including less access to credit and limited market access.

Eighty percent of Ethiopia's population resides in rural areas and women provide much of the agricultural labour in these communities, while shouldering the majority of child-rearing duties. But the contributions of women can go largely unrecognized. Fathers or husbands often restrict access to resources and community participation. One in three women experience physical, emotional or sexual violence, according to USAID.

In 2017, Ethiopia ranked 121 out of 160 countries on a United Nations gender equality index based on various social, health and political factors.

However, it has brought in a new law that annulled previous legal provisions that gave authority to a husband over a couple's assets and whether his wife could work outside of the home. As a result of the legal change, spouses are now equal with regard to the administration of assets, and a husband cannot unilaterally prevent his wife from working. The World Bank estimates that this law has enabled an increase in the participation rate of women in productive sectors.

[Go to Top.](#) ++++++

## **8. Facing climate change in Honduras: The importance of gender equity**

<https://ccafs.cgiar.org/news/facing-climate-change-honduras-importance-gender-equity#.XpciBchKjIU>

The Local Technical Agroclimatic Committee (LTAC) of Honduras allow women to actively participate in the local decision-making processes of rural life. They are a space for dialogue and exchange of knowledge on climate and agriculture between producers and local experts from different participating institutions such as meteorological services, local authorities, academic and scientific centers, among others.

The LTAC allows women to share their knowledge with the rest of the community. It also improves the women's ability to use agro-climatic information to make better-informed decisions about their crops. That is why LTACs, according to the recommendations set out in the LTAC implementation guide (CCAFS, 2019), play a key role in the empowerment of rural women and achieving comprehensive development in communities.

[Go to Top.](#) ++++++

## **9. Scaling-out gender transformation for climate change**

<https://ccafs.cgiar.org/blog/scaling-out-gender-transformation-climate-change#.XpcigshKjIU>

Gender-responsive actions analyze and address gendered differences in opportunities, resources, and information to adapt to and recover from the effects of climate change and redress constraining gender and social inequalities.

Gender transformation addresses the different aspects of inequality. As formulated by CARE, the International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD) and the CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS), gender transformative agricultural adaptation approaches address norms, resources, and power in the context of climate change and agriculture (See Figure 1).

Actions promoting societal gender transformation enable deeper change at both the individual and societal levels, through policy change supported by implementation mechanisms, such as budgeting or programming.

A 2019 workshop stimulated important reflections. This transformation framework was used to encourage participants to assess the transformative potential of their research. Based on project analysis, participants revisited their plans and envisioned a reorientation of their projects for more transformative outcomes. Each group considered how to strengthen their projects' effectiveness. They envisioned their research enhancing women's adaptive capacity by improving access to resources and building capacity to strengthen women's self-confidence, solidarity, and leadership. New strategies include improving collaboration with women's rights organizations, supporting women's participation in policy spaces, and engaging both women and men to reconsider women's priorities and barriers to adaptation.

[Go to Top.](#) ++++++

## **10. Policy Brief: Climate change, food and nutrition policies in Uganda: Are they gender- and nutrition-sensitive?**

<https://cgspace.cgiar.org/bitstream/handle/10568/107812/CCAFS%20Policy%20Brief%2014.pdf>

*Some key messages:*

- Gender and nutrition perspectives are not consistently mainstreamed across critical sections of climate change, food and nutrition policy documents under Uganda's multi-sectoral approach.
- Gaps exist in the hierarchy of guiding documents relating to climate change, food and nutrition. Relevant sectors should systematically develop policies, implementation strategies, guidelines, action plans and budgets to ensure effective implementation of interventions in these areas by actors at different levels of government.
- There is a need to mainstream gender and nutrition across all sections of climate change, food and nutrition policy documents (including the situation analysis; setting of goals objectives, strategies, targets and plans; implementation arrangements; and monitoring and evaluation sections) while ensuring alignment with the national vision, goals, objectives and targets.

[Go to Top.](#) ++++++

## **11. Info Note: Further evidence that gender matters for GHG mitigation in the dairy sector**

<https://ccafs.cgiar.org/publications/further-evidence-gender-matters-ghg-mitigation-dairy-sector-analysis-survey-data#.Xpcm28hKjIU>

*Key messages*

Milk yield and concentrate feeding are key determinants of the GHG intensity of smallholder dairy production in central Kenya.

*Intensification:* Male-headed households are more likely to adopt zero-grazing (i.e. stall-feeding) and dairy breeds, which bring higher yields. Men tend to feed more concentrate, which does not always increase milk yield, but increases GHG emissions.



*Commercialization:* When milk yields are higher, men are more engaged in milk sales. Women prefer to sell to informal markets where prices are higher, even when the household is a cooperative member.

*Formalization:* Selling milk to cooperatives does not weaken women’s participation in decision-making.

*Cooperative membership:* Cooperative membership may be associated with greater female participation in household decision-making. Only women’s decision-making about breeding directly affects milk yields. Female ownership of cooperative payment accounts is associated with higher milk yields. More attention should be paid to potential for cooperatives to support gender-inclusive outcomes in dairy development in Kenya.

[Go to Top.](#) ++++++

## **12. Gender and gender data as they relate to COVID19 preparedness and response**

<https://data2x.org/resource-center/gender-and-data-resources-related-to-covid-19/>

With the help of partners and friends, Data2X has compiled a running list of resources and current reporting on gender and gender data as they relate to COVID19 preparedness and response around the world, including the current and anticipated impacts of the pandemic. This list is not exhaustive and intended for all to use.

[Go to Top.](#) ++++++

## **13. Gender and COVID-19: Where Can Research Help?**

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/04/gender-covid-19-can-research-help/>

While the mortality rates for men are higher, women are disproportionately affected by the social and economic impacts of the pandemic. Indeed, there is evidence that pandemics affect men and women in different ways, and COVID19 is no different.

- Women are facing higher risks of infection compared to men due to their large numbers in the health sector.
- The care work burden which disproportionality falls on women has increased with the pandemic. In addition to women making up most of health-care workers, women are overwhelmingly the primary caretakers in their families.
- As schools have closed, as COVID 19 measures, which require services and activities mainly done by women, such as requirement for water, women have found themselves with a bigger workload.
- Gender based violence has increased as families find themselves in lockdowns with low economic security and feeling of helplessness.
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[Go to Top.](#) ++++++

## **14. Report: Gender Implications of COVID-19 Outbreaks in Development and Humanitarian Settings – March 2020**

<https://care.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Gendered-Implications-of-COVID-19-Full-Paper.pdf>

### **Economic Empowerment and Wellbeing**

Women living in development or humanitarian settings may be employed in informal, low-wage activities that are highly prone to disruption during public health emergencies. During the 2014–16 West Africa EVD outbreak, restrictions on the movement of goods and people hampered women’s trading activities, both cross-border and between communities, as well as their ability to cultivate their land and engage in other agricultural activities. As a result, women were unable to pay back loans from village savings and loan associations, which reduced the capital of the associations and affected women’s longer-

term economic prospects. Coupled with potential loss of income due to the mortality of other household income earners, the economic impact of COVID-19 outbreaks on women and girls could be long-term and widespread.

### **Food Security and Nutrition**

The 2014–16 West Africa EVD outbreak demonstrated the tremendous impact that public health emergencies can have on food systems. Movement restrictions and quarantine measures resulted in less trade of and accessibility to food, sending prices higher at the same time that populations found themselves less able to engage in economic activities. Some households were forced to use negative coping mechanisms, such as reducing food consumption, engaging in transactional sex, or borrowing money or going into debt to pay for food. Surviving EVD and the declared end of the outbreak did not automatically ease food insecurity or malnutrition in affected communities. Stigmatization prevented some EVD survivors from finding or returning to work, while lingering fears prompted some communities to deny access to food or shelter to EVD victims and survivors. The risk of heightened food insecurity and malnourishment during public health emergencies is particularly grave for women and girls because social norms in some contexts dictate that they eat last and least. When food becomes scarce, women and girls—who are already more likely to be malnourished than men and boys - could face additional health complications quickly, including increased susceptibility to COVID-19 infection.

[Go to Top.](#) ++++++

## **15. Opinion: COVID-19, Air Pollution, and Cooking: A Deadly Connection**

<https://news.trust.org/item/20200415095636-jhr36>

People exposed to air pollution are more likely to die from COVID-19 than people living in areas with cleaner air, according to a new study. Though the study’s findings focus on the United States, they align with similar results from Italy.

This research is an ominous sign for many developing countries, where air pollution levels often far exceed World Health Organization guidelines. More worrying still, air quality inside people’s homes can be magnitudes worse than the air they breathe outside, due in large part to how people cook.

Globally, almost three billion people still rely on open fires or inefficient stoves to cook their food, filling their homes with dangerous levels of smoke. It is well documented that household air pollution from cooking increases susceptibility to respiratory infections such as pneumonia and aggravates respiratory illnesses like asthma – which may, in turn, lead to poorer outcomes after a COVID-19 infection.

Governments in developing countries can tackle this issue on two fronts. First, they must make clean cooking part of their pandemic emergency response plans.

Second, governments must not allow short-term responses to the pandemic to undermine long-term health goals.

[Go to Top.](#) ++++++

## **16. OPINION: Autonomous Resourcing: The Engine Room of Feminist Work Amid a Global Pandemic**

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2020/04/autonomous-resourcing-the-engine-room-of-feminist-work-amid-a-global-pandemic/>

BRISBANE, Australia, Apr 23 2020 (IPS) - Feminist responses to COVID-19 have been swift, insightful, and numerous. Most strikingly, feminists have mobilized on a massive scale to generate our own autonomous resources for daily acts of solidarity and survival and to respond politically, collectively, and powerfully to this moment.

Many of these actions are coming from within communities and movements in some of the hardest hit and less privileged places, and especially amongst Black, LGBTQI+, disability, migrant, land & labour movements. Some of the responses are localised, while others are global. This is ALL autonomous resourcing in action.

But how is this even possible? Amongst all of the personal, political and economic hurdles people are facing with COVID-19 (layered upon the multiple challenges feminist organising already faces), how is it that feminist movements have been inspired and able to achieve this incredible response over such a short term?

The constituencies that feminist movements belong to and serve are worst hit by the pandemic, so there is an urgent need for feminist analysis, solidarity actions and responses. As Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) has noted: “The ability to isolate, work from home, homeschool your children, stockpile your shelves, access healthcare, and financially (and psychologically) put your life back together after the pandemic is class, gender, race, age, and geography dependent”.

[Go to Top.](#) ++++++