



Native Highbush Cranberry [Vaccinium trilobum]. Photo courtesy of D. Ceplis.

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.

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## Opportunities and Coming Events

### 1. All-candidates debate: Science & tech, science-based policy and gender equity

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/billets-debat-electoral-all-candidates-debate-72824493019>

Where do federal parties stand on issues related to the intersection of women, science and technology, and policy? Join us at this non-partisan event to learn about party policies for science, science-based policy, gender equity and unique Quebec issues.

- Be able to make an informed decision that best aligns with your interests on voting day.
- Learn how and when to vote, including how your vote is tallied to pick your member of Parliament and how the prime minister is appointed.

We will host a candidate from each political party running in the Montreal region, including a Liberal, New Democrat, Bloc, Conservative, People’s Party of Canada, Green, Rhinoceros, and Marxist-Leninist candidate.

This event is open to everyone. We particularly encourage **young people and other future voters** to participate.

**Monday, 30 September, 2019, 6:30-8:30 pm. Where: Centre St-Pierre, 1212 Rue Panet, Montréal**

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### 2. New online discussion: Mainstreaming gender for sustainable soil management

<http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/activities/discussions/soil-gender>

Soils are the foundation of agriculture and sustainable soil management contributes to increasing food production, enhancing the nutrient content of food, and adapting to and mitigating climate change. However, women are often precluded from participating fully in soil management by limited land rights and roles in decision making, among others.

This online discussion aims at collecting the views from a wide range of stakeholders about the relations between gender equality, sustainable soil management and food security. The feedback gathered from this consultation will inform and provide inputs to draft the ‘Guide on gender and sustainable soil management’, to be prepared by the Regional Soil Partnerships, the Intergovernmental Technical Panel on Soils (ITPS) together with the Social Policies and Rural Institutions Division of FAO, with inputs from gender and soil management specialists.

The objectives of this guide are to promote the adoption of a gender-responsive approach to support sustainable soil management. The target audience is composed of various stakeholders such as governmental institutions, non-

governmental organizations engaged in gender, land and rural development issues, soil scientists/experts, land and soil professionals, women's and farmers' organizations, researchers and policymakers.

To help with this inclusive process, we invite you to share your experience, views and feedback by replying to the following questions:

1. In your view, what is the relation between sustainable soil use, management and conservation (including soil fertility and health) and gender equality?
2. What are the distinct roles for women, men, boys and girls in sustainable soil management?
3. What are the main gender-based constraints, including unequal gender relations and discriminatory norms that hinder sustainable soil management and contribute to soil degradation? What practical solutions and approaches could help overcoming such barriers?
4. How can the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment contribute to sustainable soil management and conservation? Which interventions at policy and project/field level are of utmost priority? What are some potential entry points for success?

**The deadline is 14 October 2019.**

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### **3. Conference: Canadian Association of International Development Professionals**

<https://www.caidp-rpcdi-conferences.com/>

The Canadian Association of International Development Professionals (CAIDP-RPCDI) is proud to announce that this year's annual conference will be held in collaboration with the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). The event will take place on **October 7-8, 2019 at the IDRC in Ottawa**, where they will explore the theme 'Development Cooperation in the Age of Disruption'.

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### **4. All-Candidates Debate: Science & tech, science-based policy and gender equity**

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/science-tech-science-based-policy-and-gender-equity-tickets-72825566229>

VANCOUVER ALL CANDIDATES DEBATE: Science & tech, science-based policy and gender equity

**Thu, 10 Oct 2019 | 6:00- 9:00 PM PDT at UBC Robson Theatre, 800 Robson St., Vancouver**

Where do federal parties stand on issues related to the intersection of women, science and technology, and policy? The Society for Canadian Women in Science and Technology (SCWIST) and community partners: Vote Science, IEEE- Women in Science Vancouver are sponsoring this event.

Join us at this non-partisan event to learn about party policies for science, science-based policy, gender equity and unique British Columbia issues! Be able to make an informed decision that best aligns with your interests on voting day.

Learn how and when to vote, including how your vote is tallied to pick your member of Parliament and how the prime minister is appointed. We will host a candidate from each political party running in British Columbia, including a Liberal, New Democrat, Conservative, People's Party of Canada, Green, other parties, and Independents.

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## 5. Survey to Gather Information on Equality in Agriculture

<https://www.realagriculture.com/2019/09/new-survey-to-gather-information-on-equality-in-agriculture/>

Alltech, in partnership with AgriBriefing, has launched a global survey to gather information about gender equality within agriculture. The survey is open to women and men across all sectors of the agri-food industry.

Inclusion and diversity are essential to a sustainable workforce, and to make progress, we must first understand the current profession landscape for women in the agri-food industry. We are proud to partner with Alltech, a global company that works alongside farmers and producers to support a Planet of Plenty™, to present an industry-wide survey to gather real-world insights.

This survey and the results will remain fully anonymous (no organisations or individuals will be identified). It will close **Monday, 14th October** and results will be published in an industry-wide report launched at the Women in Food & Agriculture Summit on the 3rd December, Amsterdam.

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## 6. Advancing Women in Agriculture Conference

<https://www.advancingwomenconference.ca/2019east/>

AWC is created for every woman who is passionate about agriculture and food, whether you are a university or college student studying agriculture, producer, rancher, entrepreneur, representative of a grower association or corporate agribusiness. AWC is for women who want to enhance their family life, community, career, and industry.

AWC EAST 2019, **October 27 – 29, 2019** at Sheraton On The Falls in **Niagara Falls, Ontario.**

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## 7. Spur Change 2019 National Conference: Inclusive Governance: Meaningful Participation towards Gender Equality

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/spur-change-national-conference-2019-registration-72711135965>

**Conference Objectives:** Small and Medium Organizations can expect to:

- Learn about and integrate current international and national frameworks and approaches to their development practices, including
  - A feminist approach
  - The framework of the Sustainable Development Goals
- Share expertise, good practices and resources on inclusive governance
- Identify and establish potential partnerships and synergies
- Share experience and knowledge on effectively measuring the quality and impact of their efforts towards meaningful participation and inclusion
- Communicate and celebrate successes and collaborate on finding solutions to identified challenges

**November 20 - 22, 2019, Edmonton, Alberta**

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## 8. Women in Food and Agriculture Summit

<https://www.wfasummit.com/>

The inaugural Woman in Food & Agriculture Summit will unite the prominent players of the industry. It will enable different sectors within the supply chain to learn from each other, build strategic relationships and pin point partnership opportunities that can take your businesses and personal development to the next level. Over the course of the campaign we'll be speaking to some of the most influential leaders in the industry, bringing together your views and business knowledge to help empower women within the sector. **December 3-4, 2019 in Amsterdam**

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## **This Month's News**

### **1. What it will take to make gender equality in agribusiness the new norm?**

<https://agrf.org/news/what-it-will-take-to-make-gender-equality-in-agribusiness-the-new-norm/>

According to recent studies, there are more women entrepreneurs than men entrepreneurs. However, women's businesses are not generating as much profit as men's due to pervasive gender gaps in policy, business training and financial resources.

In line with this year's theme of the African Green Revolution Forum, "Grow Digital: Leveraging Digital Transformation to Drive Sustainable Food Systems in Africa," discussions around supporting women entrepreneurs in the agricultural sector took center stage.

Women can end hunger in Africa by 2025 if gender inequalities in production and post harvest loss meet the right margin. This is why more deliberate efforts are needed in closing profit and gender gaps by providing better access to not just finance, but also labour equipment. Also, while time may be precious to women in particular, they have remained very productive and have grown to become careful strivers.

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### **2. UBC president Santa Ono decries lack of recognition of women, urges influential men to promote gender equality**

<https://www.straight.com/news/1277586/ubc-president-santa-ono-decries-lack-recognition-women-urges-influential-men-promote>

The head of Canada's fourth-largest university has had enough of men taking home most of the prestigious prizes in the world. In a TEDxUBC speech, which was recently posted on YouTube, UBC president Santa Ono went into great detail about how women have been shortchanged in many areas. He noted that of the more than 900 Nobel Prizes awarded, only 50 have gone to women.

He suggested that men have to take the lead, giving women space in the workplace and providing mechanisms for them to re-enter after having children.

In addition, he said that men have to help at home. Then he suggested that men give more thought to mentorship schemes that provide the same opportunities to women as are going to men. Moreover, Ono argued that people need to become more aware of their biases, and attack them. He closed his speech by encouraging greater recognition for women. He's promoting the use of the hashtag #NominateHer to try to level the playing field.

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### **3. Academic Science Rethinks All-Too-White 'Dude Walls' Of Honor**

<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2019/08/25/749886989/academic-science-rethinks-all-too-white-dude-walls-of-honor>

A few years ago, TV celebrity Rachel Maddow was at Rockefeller University to hand out a prize that's given each year to a prominent female scientist. As Maddow entered the auditorium, someone overheard her say, "What is up with the dude wall?" She was referring to a wall covered with portraits of scientists from the university who have won either a Nobel Prize or the Lasker Award, a major medical prize. "One hundred percent of them are men. It's probably 30 headshots of 30 men. So it's imposing," says Leslie Vosshall, a neurobiologist with the university and the Howard Hughes Medical Institute.

Vosshall says Maddow's remark, and the word "dude wall," crystallized something that had been bothering her for years. As she travels around the country to give lectures and attend conferences at scientific institutions, she constantly encounters lobbies, conference rooms, passageways, and lecture halls that are decorated with portraits of white men.

"It just sends the message, every day when you walk by it, that science consists of old white men," says Vosshall. "I think every institution needs to go out into the hallway and ask, 'What kind of message are we sending with these oil portraits and dusty old photographs?'"

At Yale School of Medicine, for example, one main building's hallways feature 55 portraits: three women and 52 men. They're all white.

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#### **4. We Don't Need to "Fix" Women—We Need to Build Systems That Work for Them**

<https://msmagazine.com/2019/08/22/we-dont-need-to-fix-women-we-need-to-build-systems-that-work-for-them/>

This article criticizes the approach of the UN in the climate and agriculture discussion to empower women in order to provide food security and poverty reduction. This means an additional burden for them to fix male-made inequalities. The author asks: "What if instead our approach to gender inequality in these sectors stopped being about "fixing women," but instead became about "fixing the agriculture and food system" so that it better serves women? What would that look like, conceptually and in practice? What if we lifted the burden of changing the world from women and instead created a world that works for them?"

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#### **5. OPINION: Let's Get Climate Action into Traction with Gender Equality**

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2019/09/lets-get-climate-action-traction-gender-equality/>

**UNITED NATIONS, Sep 11 2019 (IPS)** - Climate change is already altering the face of our planet. Research shows that we need to put all our efforts over the coming decade to limit warming to 1.5°C and mitigate the catastrophic risks posed by increased droughts, floods, and extreme weather events. But our actions will not be effective if they do not include measures to ensure social justice, equality and a gender perspective. So, how do we integrate gender equality in climate change actions?

The UN Secretary-General's Climate Action Summit in New York on September 23, 2019 is a unique opportunity to elevate at the highest level the need for substantive participation of women and girls in efforts against climate change.

At the Summit, there will be several initiatives put forth to address climate change, including one focusing on gender equality. The initiative recognizes the differential impact of climate change on women and girls and seeks support for their leadership as a way to make climate actions more effective.

It calls for the rights, differentiated needs and contributions of women and girls to be integrated into all actions, including those related to climate finance, energy, industry and infrastructure. It promotes support for women and girls in developing innovative tools and participating in mitigation and adaptation efforts and calls for accountability by tracking and reporting progress towards achieving these goals.

For climate action to get more traction and be effective, we need a critical mass of Governments and other stakeholders to sign on to the Climate Action Summit's gender-specific initiative. The world cannot afford to keep limiting the potential of women and girls in shaping climate actions, as all evidence points towards the benefits of their involvement.

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## 6. Sister pair empowered by family to be women in ag

<https://www.manitobacooperator.ca/news-opinion/news/ben-martensand-daughters/>

Clare Martens, age 25, and sister Jill, age 22, farm alongside their dad and uncle near Boissevain, Manitoba. They have two sisters and no brothers. Clare and Jill are the fourth generation of their family to farm in Canada. Jill started working full time on the farm in 2016. She has her Class 1 licence, so she does a lot of hauling for the farm. She's also an artificial insemination technician. Clare came back to the farm about a year ago after graduating from the University of Manitoba with a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture.

Jill and Clare said they also were shaped by travelling and seeing women farming in other parts of the world. Jill travelled to Rwanda with the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. Her family is part of a Boissevain-Morton-Whitewater project which plants 300 acres of crops each year to fundraise for the Foodgrains Bank. The trip allowed Jill to see where their donations were going, and to learn about conservation agriculture and food security. Clare travelled with a friend to Guatemala and saw women farming there, often without the same autonomy and freedom she enjoys.

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## 7. From convincing teachers that agriculture was a real career to international honours

<https://www.manitobacooperator.ca/news-opinion/news/from-convincing-teachers-agriculture-was-a-real-career-to-international-honours/>

Dr. Cynthia Grant became a research scientist, just as she dreamed about while growing up on a farm near Minnedosa, but along the way she was also a pioneer.

Her soil and agronomy research at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's (AAFC) Brandon Research Centre has been recognized with numerous Canadian and international awards and honours. The most recent was being selected to join the Canadian Agricultural Hall of Fame — only the 10th woman named to the hall since it was created in 1960. The induction ceremony is Nov. 28 at the Fairmont Le Chateau Frontenac in Quebec City.

One of those prestigious international awards came in January when Grant received the Leo Walsh Soil Fertility Distinguished Lectureship, which she delivered at the Soil Science Society of America's annual meeting in Santiago, Calif. Much to Grant's surprise she was the first woman to receive the honour.

Grant got an even bigger shock a few years ago, when she found out she was the first woman to earn a doctorate in soil science at the University of Manitoba, in 1986.

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## Reports, Publications, Resources

### 1. Gender and language use in scientific grant writing

<https://www.facetsjournal.com/doi/10.1139/facets-2018-0039>

DOI <https://doi.org/10.1139/facets-2018-0039>

*Abstract*

Women in science, technology, engineering, and math are not equally represented across tenure-track career stages, and this extends to grant funding, where women applicants often have lower success rates compared with men. While gender bias in reviewers has been documented, it is currently unknown whether written language in grant applications varies predictably with gender to elicit bias against women. Here we analyse the text of ~2000 public research summaries from the 2016 Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) individual Discovery Grant (DG) program. We explore the relationship between language variables, inferred gender and career stage, and funding levels. We also analyse aggregated data from the 2012–2018 NSERC DG competitions to determine whether gender impacted the probability of receiving a grant for early-career researchers. We document a marginally significant gender difference in funding levels for successful grants, with women receiving \$1756 less than men, and a large and significant difference in rejection rates among early-career applicants (women: 40.4% rejection; men: 33.0% rejection rate). Language variables had little ability to predict gender or funding level using predictive modelling. Our results indicate that NSERC funding levels and success rates differ between men and women, but we find no evidence that gendered language use affected funding outcomes.

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## **2. Research Report: A stronger voice for women in local land governance: effective approaches in Tanzania, Ghana and Senegal**

<https://pubs.iied.org/17653IIED/>

In many rural areas across sub-Saharan Africa, the way land is accessed is shaped by long-standing norms, often characterised by patrilineal inheritance systems that exclude women from decision-making processes. Lack of tenure security for women has been exacerbated by rising commercial pressure on land, and further aggravated by climate change, urbanisation and population growth. As a result, rural livelihoods are being undermined, with potentially dire consequences for communities' economic development and food security.

Since 2016, IIED has been working with partners in Ghana, Senegal and Tanzania to engage with rural communities. While the initiatives have been tailored to the local context, all three share a common vision – that of strengthening rural women's voices in issues of local land governance. This report presents in clear and concise detail the approach used in each case, as well as the key outcomes and lessons learned. From this, recommendations for replication and upscaling are made, providing a much-needed pathway for improving rural women's access to land, as well as the control they exert over their livelihood options.

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## **3. Making Their Voices Count: African Women Protecting Their Land Rights**

<https://www.iied.org/making-their-voices-count>

Women's access to land in sub-Saharan Africa has long been fragile. In Tanzania, Ghana and Senegal, where IIED has been working, land was historically governed through a variety of unwritten customary arrangements. Land was considered a collective good to be used for a number of purposes, including subsistence and spiritual practices. Women predominantly accessed land indirectly through their affiliation to a family or clan and were largely excluded from decision-making. Today land governance systems have evolved, following multiple socioeconomic and political processes: written laws have been introduced in most African countries alongside the concept of private and individual ownership.

In recent years, women's access to land has become even more uncertain, in part due to an increasing appetite for land investments. A wave of large-scale land deals for agribusiness has combined with population growth to increase competition for land across sub-Saharan Africa. Natural resource investments have the potential to benefit local communities, but can also harm them. Vulnerable groups, in particular women, tend to lose out the most, due to their fragile tenure security.

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## 4. Transforming gender relations: Insights from IDRC Research

[ow.ly/XvS530pzMle](https://ow.ly/XvS530pzMle)

[https://issuu.com/idrc\\_crdi/docs/wd\\_13\\_000\\_gender\\_e-file\\_en](https://issuu.com/idrc_crdi/docs/wd_13_000_gender_e-file_en)

Why does gender-transformative research matter? This paper describes IDRC’s experience supporting gender-transformative research over the last decade and provides lessons for researchers and practitioners. It asks:

- What has been learned from the most promising practices of gender-transformative research at IDRC, particularly in terms of scale and influence, and what are the challenges?
- What are the key lessons to better inform and support gender-transformative research, and what are the related key recommendations?

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## 5. Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: The gender snapshot 2019

<https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2019/progress-on-the-sdgs-the-gender-snapshot-2019-two-page-spreads-en.pdf?la=en&vs=5814>

Are we on track to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls? This newly released publication brings together the latest available evidence on gender equality across all 17 Goals, underscoring the progress made as well as the action still needed to accelerate progress. A concise 22 pages in length, the publication take a spotlight approach, selecting one indicator per goal to illustrate progress, gaps and challenges to date. The exception to this approach is SDG 5, which is covered at the target level using corresponding indicators with available data and presented in a two-page infographic style spread. In the case of the environmental goals, data gaps are a serious challenge. Women and men differ in their vulnerability to environmental challenges but data gaps hamper deeper understanding of the gender-environment nexus. The publication presents what information is available in the form of an infographic and emphasizes the lack of data and need to address this gap. On Leave No One Behind the report makes clear: an analysis on leaving no one behind is inherently an analysis of women and girls from poor, rural and marginalized groups.

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## 6. CBC Radio’s Women in science special — How science has done women wrong

<https://www.cbc.ca/radio/quirks/sep-21-2019-women-in-science-special-how-science-has-done-women-wrong-1.5291077>

Listen to the full 54-minute episode. It's 2019 and women are still significantly underrepresented in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics). Women hold about one-third of the academic positions in science, though that number is much lower in fields like math and engineering. In all, women are fewer than a quarter of the science and technology workers in Canada.

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## 7. Book: 'Onion Skins and Peach Fuzz - Memories of Ontario Farmerettes'

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/london/farmerettes-ontario-wwii-book-1.5275476>

During the Second World War when farms were short of labourers, a group of young women kept Ontario farms afloat. These women, known as Farmerettes, planted, hoed and hand-weeded fruit and vegetable crops for long hours. It was part of a provincial program to replace male labour in the agricultural sector.

A single photo labelled "Farmerettes about 1946" led Bonnie Sitter of Exeter on a history search that has culminated in a new book; one that reveals a little-known aspect of Canada's war history.

'Onion Skins and Peach Fuzz - Memories of Ontario Farmerettes' recounts the adventures of the city girls who were sent to area farms to help with labour during and after the World War 2.

Sitter's search led her to Shirleyan English of London who had been a farmerette in Thedford. The meeting turned into a partnership that has resulted in this week's launch of the unprecedented book.

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## **8. Greta Thunberg's full speech to world leaders at UN Climate Action Summit**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KAJsdgTPJpU>

Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg chastised world leaders Monday, Sep. 23, for failing younger generations by not taking sufficient steps to stop climate change. "You have stolen my childhood and my dreams with your empty words," Thunberg said at the United Nations Climate Action Summit in New York. "You're failing us, but young people are starting to understand your betrayal. The eyes of all future generations are upon you. And if you choose to fail us, I say we will never forgive you," she added. Thunberg traveled to the U.S. by sailboat last month so she could appear at the summit. She and other youth activists led international climate strikes on Friday in an attempt to garner awareness ahead of the UN's meeting of political and business leaders.

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## **9. Blockchain 101: What Is It and How Can It Empower Women? - Webinar**

<https://seepnetwork.org/Webinar-Post/Blockchain-101-What-Is-It-and-How-Can-It-Empower-Women-Webinar>

The promise — and potential — of blockchain to drive social impact is massive. From financial services, through supply chains, land and identity registries, blockchain is set to become the next transformative technology in development and humanitarian relief. Some of the initial blockchain use cases also showcase potential for how it can drive women's economic empowerment — by enabling women to access financial services, manage payments and keep business and personal records.

This webinar explored this topic in more detail, providing participants with an overview of what blockchain is and how it can be applied within women's economic empowerment programming. The webinar also showcased two practical use cases for how blockchain has been applied to financial services and supply chain management to empower female-owned MSMEs in Sub-Saharan Africa.

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