



*Viburnum trilobum* berries. 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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## Contents

### Opportunities and Coming Events

1. Seneca’s Science Communication Executive Certificate Program.....	2
2. Panel Discussion - Fair Trade in Action .....	3
3. Workshop: Advancing Gender-Responsive Nature-Based Climate Solutions .....	3
4. International Day of Rural Women.....	3
5. Call for Abstracts: Association for International Agricultural and Extension Education (AIAEE) .....	4
6. Workshop: The Future is Intersectional .....	4
7. Influential Women in Agriculture Summit 2022.....	4
8. Survey on Sexual and gender-based Violence in the Professional Environment of International Cooperation .....	5

### This Month’s News

1. Manitoba Women in Agriculture and Food Website Launch .....	5
2. Honey Bee Scientist: Dr. Alison McAfee .....	5
3. GEDA: The Gender + Environment Data Alliance .....	6
4. The flower industry has a thorny environmental problem — and plastic is just part of it .....	6
5. Scientists one step closer to a sustainable bale wrap .....	7
6. ‘Grandmothers are our weather app’: new maps and local knowledge power Chad’s climate fightback .....	7
7. Legal empowerment with a gender lens: How women tea farmers in Malawi are claiming their rights .....	7
8. Kenyan farmers look to drought-resistant cassava as grain substitute.....	8
9. Atzin Mexico documentary awards: “Returning to Strength” .....	8
10. The London ‘people’s pantry’ where a week’s shop costs £3.50 .....	8
11. What Does the African Continental Free Trade Agreement Hold for Women?.....	9

12.	Inaugural AfCFTA Conference on Women and Youth in Trade .....	9
13.	Africa Needs More Action, Fewer Words to Secure Food and Nutrition .....	9
14.	Malawian Farmers Reap More from Sunflower, Chillies .....	10
15.	Women in Power’s invitation to fight systemic failings .....	10
16.	Women Advocates for Harvesting Rainwater in Salinity-Affected Coastal Bangladesh.....	11
17.	Horn of Africa drought puts 3.6m children at risk of dropping out of school .....	11
18.	How a social entrepreneur is tackling Kenya’s digital skills gap .....	12
19.	Women’s Financial Inclusion, Empowerment in Kenya.....	12
20.	A World of One Billion Empty Plates .....	13
21.	How Feminists Across the Globe are Leading the Battle for Women’s Land Rights .....	13

## Reports, Publications, Resources

1.	A Lens on the Climate Crisis in Africa.....	13
2.	Gendering post-harvest loss research: responsibilities of women and men to manage maize after harvest in southwestern Ethiopia.....	14
3.	Influential Woman in Canadian Agriculture – Karen Tanino .....	14
4.	Dismal Gates Goalkeepers report centers on women's power, food security .....	15
5.	Food Connects Us All .....	15
6.	Gender-equitable pathways to achieving sustainable agricultural intensification .....	15
7.	Organic Farmer Conversations .....	16
8.	Attitudes towards women improve significantly after implementation of Ujamaa’s GBV educational program .....	16
9.	Policy Brief: Women’s economic empowerment: supporting transformative change .....	16
10.	(Re)introducing...the 60 Decibels Energy Benchmarks.....	17
11.	Impact of gender transformative research.....	17
12.	Gender & Development, Volume 30, Issue 1-2 (2022).....	17
13.	Gender, wheat trait preferences, and innovation uptake: Lessons from Ethiopia and India .....	17

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

## Opportunities and Coming Events

### 1. Seneca’s Science Communication Executive Certificate Program

<https://www.senecacollege.ca/ce/classes/SCN900.html>

Seneca’s Science Communication Executive Certificate program is the only one of its kind in Ontario. It will equip you with the key knowledge and skills you need for effective science communication across a variety of platforms.

This program is for research scientists, managers in science-based fields or for those with a background in research science, regulatory affairs or other science-based fields. It will also be of interest to you if you’re a scientist working at a hospital and want to become a better writer, storyteller or digitally-engaged communicator.

This executive certificate consists of four courses and two workshops spread over **Fall 2022 and Winter 2023**. Courses will run on weeknights and Saturdays.

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

## 2. Panel Discussion - Fair Trade in Action

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/cftn-webinar-series-fair-trade-hand-book-session-2-tickets-402236549347>

Join us as we present the CFTN 2022 Webinar Series and Book Club in Three Parts. Read along with each Section of the Fair Trade Hand Book, as we present a panel of speakers from each Section of the Book. Bring your questions for the speakers and be prepared to also network with your fellow fair-traders during our interactive speed-networking and trivia activities. Reconnect with the Canadian fair trade community. **Thursday, 6 October 2022.** Panelists for this second session include:

- Jennie Coleman, Owner/President Equifruit
- Jennifer Williams, Principal Firefly Insights
- Martin Van Den Borre, Atelier de torrefaction la Forêt
- Andres Gonzalez Aguilera, Cooperativa Manduvira

Simultaneous translation will be available from English to Spanish for those requiring it.

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

## 3. Workshop: Advancing Gender-Responsive Nature-Based Climate Solutions

<https://www.iisd.org/events/advancing-gender-responsive-nature-based-solutions>

On **October 7**, join us online or in person in Ottawa for a special event that will explore how to enhance gender equality in nature-based solutions for climate adaptation and kick off a new community of practice.

Nature-based climate solutions (NBCS) that conserve, restore, and sustainably use biodiversity and ecosystems hold promise in helping people adapt to the impacts of climate change. Join us for two consecutive sessions aimed at helping organizations in Canada to advance gender-responsive NBCS for climate change adaptation

### *Session 1: Implementing Gender-Responsive Nature-Based Climate Solutions*

Join the Aga Khan Foundation Canada (AKFC) and the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) for a capacity-building session on advancing gender equality through rights-based, inclusive approaches to NBCS for climate change adaptation. The session will include case study presentations and breakout group discussions with experienced practitioners.

### *Session 2: Nature-Based Climate Solutions and Biodiversity Community of Practice Meeting*

Global Affairs Canada welcomes organizations to a meeting of the NBCS and Biodiversity Community of Practice to discuss key principles, areas of focus, and objectives, in preparation for the first annual meeting during the 2023 International Development Week.

This event will be offered in English with French interpretation available in the plenary session and designated breakout sessions.

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

## 4. International Day of Rural Women

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/rural-women-day>

The theme for the International Day of Rural Women (**15 October**), “Rural Women Cultivating Good Food for All”, highlights the essential role which rural women and girls play in the food systems of the world.

From production of crops to processing, preparing and distributing foods, women’s labour – paid and unpaid – feeds their families, communities and the world. Yet, they do not wield equal power with men, and as a result, they earn less income and experience higher food insecurity.

Despite our planet’s capacity to provide sufficient and good food for all, hunger, malnourishment, and food insecurity are rising in many parts of the world. The COVID-19 pandemic, along with climate crises, have made matters worse: some 2.37 billion people did not have enough to eat in 2020 –that’s 20 per cent more than the year before.

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

## 5. Call for Abstracts: Association for International Agricultural and Extension Education (AIAEE)

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

The School of Environmental Design and Rural Development and Ontario Agricultural College at the University of Guelph will be hosting the international conference of the Association for International Agricultural and Extension Education (AIAEE) in **Guelph, April 26–29, 2023**. Established in 1984, AIAEE is a leading international professional organization for agricultural and extension educators who share a common goal of strengthening agricultural and extension education programs and institutions worldwide. The organization has members based in USA, Caribbean, Latin America, Europe, Africa and Asia. The deadline to submit abstracts is **October 17, 2022**.

AIAEE Scholarly Activities Committee is requesting proposals for refereed abstracts to be presented at the 39th Annual Conference. The conference theme is “*Technology, Pluralism and Inclusiveness in Agriculture, Food, and Environment*,” however, all submissions will be given full consideration. Research for the conference can be conducted anywhere across the globe, but we encourage submissions to demonstrate global relevance for agricultural and extension education, capacity building, communications, leadership, and international development. The purpose of abstracts is to share:

- Research - reporting on the systematic investigation into and study of materials and sources to establish facts and reach new conclusions.
- Application - documenting a practical and/or field experience of applied extension education and/or agricultural education.
- Theoretical/ Philosophical - proposition to generate new knowledge concerned with or involving the theory of a subject or area of study rather than its practical application.
- Innovative models of educational programming - present a concept or idea that reflects innovative educational approaches for AIAEE-relevant audiences.

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

## 6. Workshop: The Future is Intersectional

<https://hopin.com/events/international-cooperation-futures-festival/registration>

Intersectionality is more than a buzzword, it’s a way of rethinking and reimagining our ways of working to be more mindful, inclusive and intentional of diversity. This workshop, co-designed by the Anti-Racist Cooperation Hub (ARC) and Digna, will give participants a stronger understanding of intersectionality, and how to apply this concept for the collective good.

This workshop will be part of Cooperation Canada's "International Cooperation Futures Festival. Reconnect. Unlearn. Envision. Engage." **October 17-20, 2022. Ottawa.**

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

## 7. Influential Women in Agriculture Summit 2022

<https://www.agwomen.ca/virtual-events/influential-women-in-agriculture-summit/>

Since 2020, the agriculture publications at Annex Business Media have celebrated the achievements of women in Canada's agriculture industry through the Influential Women in Canadian Agriculture (IWCA) program.

This year, seven IWCA honourees were chosen by our team. On **October 18**, they will come together virtually along with other prominent trailblazers in agriculture to share their experiences, life lessons and more for the 2022 IWCA Summit.

Communication panel discussion with Valerie Carney, Christine Noronha and Karen Tanino. Keynote featuring Megz Reynolds, executive director, Do More Ag Foundation. Balance panel discussion with Lisa Mumm, Lana Shaw and Heather Watson. Leadership panel discussion with Mary Ruth McDonald, Rachel Plett and Kate Sanford Mitchell.

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

## 8. Survey on Sexual and gender-based Violence in the Professional Environment of International Cooperation

For more details on the research project: <https://www.chaireclairebonenfant.ca/enquete-vss-en-ci/> [scroll for English]

<https://www.questionnaires.cstip.ulaval.ca/v3/index.php/438424>

If you work or have worked in the professional environment of international cooperation for a Canadian organization (professional, volunteer or study experience), we invite you to participate in the "Survey on Sexual and gender-based Violence in the Professional Environment of International Cooperation: a Contextualized Portrait to Prevent, Raise Awareness and Take Action" by **October 31, 2022**. You do not have to have personally experienced or witnessed these situations to answer the questionnaire. It is important to give a voice to everyone in this sector in order to obtain the most complete picture of the situation and actions to be taken to prevent and counter this violence. The questionnaire is anonymous, and your responses will be kept completely confidential.

This research is partially funded by Digna, the Canadian Centre of Expertise for the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. For any questions, please write to: [secretariat@ccb.ulaval.ca](mailto:secretariat@ccb.ulaval.ca)

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

## This Month's News

### 1. Manitoba Women in Agriculture and Food Website Launch

<https://mwaf.ca/>

MWAF advocates for all women who work in the agriculture and food industry, with a strong focus on those who are underrepresented. Watch the site for jobs on the job board. Over time, we'll upload more information about our services, such as workshops, networking and professional development opportunities. We are excited at all the new features, new logo and new services for companies in ag & food. We have also improved our membership structure.

We are also excited because we have a new writer, April Stewart, author of the Farmer's Survival Guide for Women. She will be a regular contributor on our social media channels.

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

### 2. Honey Bee Scientist: Dr. Alison McAfee

<https://scwist.ca/meet-the-honey-bee-scientist-dr-alison-mcafee/>

<https://alisonmcafeeblogs.wordpress.com/>

Dr. Alison McAfee (she/her) is a postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Applied Ecology at North Carolina State University and the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at the University of British Columbia. She is also a two-time

recipient of prestigious L'Oréal-UNESCO awards — the 2021 Excellence in Research Fellowship and the 2022 Women in Science Rising Talents Award for her work studying honeybee reproductive health.

McAfee didn't always know she was going to research honey bees. In fact, originally, she wasn't sure if she wanted to go to grad school at all. She didn't have many female professors during her undergraduate studies and didn't feel that a career in the sciences was accessible to her as a woman.

However, thanks to the right encouragement, she continued with her studies and has become the award-winning scientist we know today.

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

### **3. GEDA: The Gender + Environment Data Alliance**

<https://wedo.org/wedo-launches-generation-equality-forum-commitments/>

Environmental change has differentiated impacts on different genders, and there is increasing evidence that women and girls disproportionately suffer from climate change and environmental disasters. But a massive shortage of gender-disaggregated data at the gender-environment nexus hinders action and policy to advance both climate action and gender equality. To surface these challenges as well as existing solutions, the newly formed Gender and Environment Data Alliance (GEDA) will host a high-level launch event to discuss how investment and resourcing of gender and environment data is a crucial contributor to gender-responsive climate policy.

To surface these challenges as well as existing solutions, the newly formed Gender and Environment Data Alliance (GEDA) hosted a high-level launch event on September 22, 2022, on the margins of the opening of the 77th session of UN General Assembly, also coinciding with NYC Climate Week. This session will featured high-level speakers from several of GEDA's co-founding members, including UNFCCC, UNFPA, UN Women, Data2X, and the Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO).

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

### **4. The flower industry has a thorny environmental problem — and plastic is just part of it**

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/science/what-on-earth-flower-industry-plastic-1.6591837>

Over the past few weeks, as a tribute to the late Queen Elizabeth, mourners laid hundreds of thousands of bouquets at royal residences and parks across the U.K. As moving as some found it to see Buckingham Palace, Balmoral, Sandringham and Windsor Castle awash in a sea of floral tributes, others saw something else: plastic.

In central London's Green Park last Monday — one of many locations where people left flowers — workers bundled bags of discarded plastic wrappers and cellophane from bouquets left in honour of the Queen. In images posted in the Daily Mail, volunteers were seen cutting wrappers from bouquets, and a large flat-bed truck was stuffed with dozens of bags of the plastic waste.

Becky Feasby, a sustainable florist and owner of Prairie Girl Flowers in Calgary, said she had two thoughts when she saw the royal tributes. First, that the bulk of those flowers was likely imported. Second, she was struck by the "sheer volume of plastic wrapping."

Then there's the packaging, which often includes the green floral foam that flowers are arranged in, and which has been shown to contribute to the world's microplastic pollution. Finally, wrap it all up in a plastic or cellophane sleeve.

Vancouver's MonteCristo magazine reports traditional floristry produces up to 100,000 tonnes of plastic waste each year.

Only nine per cent of plastic waste worldwide is actually recycled, with the bulk winding up in landfills, according to a 2022 OECD report. But the kind of wrapping used to package flowers is also light and flimsy, Chan noted, and thus likely to blow out of a landfill and into a nearby river, lake or ocean.



## 5. Scientists one step closer to a sustainable bale wrap

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/alliance/news/2022/09/scientists-one-step-closer-sustainable-bale-wrap>

University of Guelph researchers have reached the “holy bale” in their quest to create a biodegradable alternative to about 3,500 tonnes of petroleum-based plastic hay bale and silage wrap used in Ontario each year.

Dr. Erica Pensini, an engineering professor in the College of Engineering and Physical Sciences, and Dr. Alejandro Marangoni, a food science professor in the Ontario Agricultural College, have worked with local farmers since 2021 to field-test spray-on and prefabricated silage films they developed from corn proteins.

As those trials continue, the team members are turning their attention to creating a similar product that could replace the low-density polyethylene plastic bale wrap commonly used now.

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

## 6. ‘Grandmothers are our weather app’: new maps and local knowledge power Chad’s climate fightback

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2022/aug/25/new-maps-and-local-knowledge-power-chad-climate-fightback-hindou-oumarou-ibrahim>

It’s a simple idea: where land and river boundaries are disputed, make a map. Putting it into practice, using the unwritten knowledge and oral histories of farmers, nomads and of grandmothers who read bird migration patterns to forecast rain, is a little harder.

To help mitigate tensions, Ibrahim is working with communities to produce maps to enable them to agree on the sharing of natural resources. Using high-resolution satellite images, Ibrahim and representatives from EOS Data Analytics ran workshops with leaders from 23 villages in Mayo-Kebbi Est to map 1,728 sq km. People added features such as rivers, settlements and roads, as well as sacred forests, medicinal trees, water points and corridors for cattle. Laminated copies of the maps were distributed to each community. She is conducting a similar exercise on the shores of Lake Chad.

Ibrahim said it was vital to involve women in the process, not just to ensure their representation, but because of the knowledge they have, such as how to find water in the dry season.

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

## 7. Legal empowerment with a gender lens: How women tea farmers in Malawi are claiming their rights

<https://www.iied.org/legal-empowerment-gender-lens-how-women-tea-farmers-malawi-are-claiming-their-rights>

Guest blogger Kumvana Mtukule describes how the work of a women’s rights organisation in Malawi supported smallholder tea farmers to claim their rights and assert agency.

As part of the Empowering Rural Producers in Commercial Agriculture project, women’s rights organisation Women’s Legal Resources Centre (WOLREC) explored legal empowerment – the process through which people assess and secure their rights – focusing particularly on women smallholder tea farmers and how it could support their agency in their commercial relations.

WOLREC carried out a gender audit to assess the understanding of gender equity among men and women members of the tea association. The findings showed that although women and men understood the concept and importance of gender equity, they did not practice it.

Responding to the gender audit, WOLREC supported the creation of women-only forums where women would gather and were equipped with skills to challenge cultural stereotypes, to not shy away from taking on leadership positions, and to actively contribute to the development of their communities.

Women built skills in public speaking, leadership – nurturing women leaders and instilling the importance of gender-balanced leadership and negotiation – and advocacy. The association as a whole was also supported with gender mainstreaming mentorship sessions where members were supported to develop gender action plans as a tool of assessing how gender could be integrated in their work.

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

## 8. Kenyan farmers look to drought-resistant cassava as grain substitute

<https://www.devex.com/news/kenyan-farmers-look-to-drought-resistant-cassava-as-grain-substitute-103834>

Cassava production in Kenya dropped in the nineties and early 2000s due to diseases, unavailability of clean seeds, poor varieties, and agronomical practices. In a bid to change this, the government, development organizations, and research institutions started addressing these three issues.

Cassava and other roots and tubers have now been recommended to complement maize, wheat, and rice, which have been heavily relied on. Though production is not yet at its peak, farmers in Kenya’s western and coastal regions have started embracing cassava production again after many years.

Self Help Africa, with funding from the European Union, has been running a program to improve the cassava value chain from production to marketing and policy. At the production stage, they are focusing on Kenya’s western and coastal regions, where they work together with the Kenya Agriculture and Livestock Research Organization, or KALRO, which produces clean seeds, and Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service, which certifies the quality of seeds produced.

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

## 9. Atzin Mexico documentary awards: “Returning to Strength”

<https://www.atzin.org/post/atzin-documentary-selected-for-two-more-film-festivals-august-2022>

*Returning to Strength* is a remarkable story of empowerment in a rural village in the south of Mexico. Faced with relentless hardship, frequent illness and a toxic environment, young women in Tlmacazapa are gradually transforming their lives – they are becoming stronger, more resilient, able to respond with greater creativity and assurance to life’s demands. They work with Atzin, a civil association operating in the village since 1997. Filmed during the Covid-19 pandemic, *Returning to Strength* is a story for us all as we struggle globally to regain social and ecological balance.

Atzin documentary, *Returning to Strength* has received three more film festival recognitions. In addition to winning or being selected for five film festivals over the last year, *Returning to Strength* has garnered recognition at the following film festivals:

- Paris Women Festival Semi-Finalist
- Dallas Shorts Semi-Finalist
- Manhattan Film Awards Official Selection

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

## 10. The London ‘people’s pantry’ where a week’s shop costs £3.50

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/sep/11/the-pantry-kings-cross-social-enterprise-community-food-hub>

A new social enterprise, the Pantry is stocked with surplus food. Once a week, customers pay £3.50, and take close to a week’s worth of shopping that may have a value of between £15 and £20. Served by volunteers from the Priory Green estate, shoppers stick around, have a cup of tea or some warming soup, and chat to their fellow residents.



The social enterprise behind it, Cook for Good, also runs team-building events based around food for companies, with all profits ploughed back into the community. Profits from events held in a new kitchen at the heart of the estate go back into the area, and Cook for Good also runs workshops on cooking and life skills for residents.

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

## **11. What Does the African Continental Free Trade Agreement Hold for Women?**

<https://www.ipsnews.net/2022/09/what-does-the-african-continental-free-trade-agreement-hold-for-women>

Women traders have expectations that the Women and Youth in Trade Conference and the adoption of a Women and Youth protocol by the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA), will make it easy for women to trade.

The AfCFTA holds great potential by creating the largest free trade area in the world by number of countries -55 – it connects, bringing together 1.3 billion people and a combined gross domestic product (GDP) valued at US\$3.4 trillion. The Women and Youth in Trade conference, hosted by H.E Samia Suluhu, the President of Tanzania, and the AfCTA secretariat aims at helping the AfCFTA work better for women and youth.

The conference is expected to come up with practical solutions and legislation that governments and other stakeholders must take to implement the protocol, but more importantly, to ensure women can benefit from the AfCTA. This is mission critical. The continent has the highest rate of female entrepreneurs globally with approximately 26% of female adults involved in entrepreneurial activity contributing between US\$250 and US\$300 billion to African economic growth in 2016, equivalent to about 13% of the continent’s GDP.

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

## **12. Inaugural AfCFTA Conference on Women and Youth in Trade**

<https://au-afcfta.org/2022/09/inaugural-afcfta-conference-on-women-and-youth-in-trade/>

<https://au-afcfta.org/>

The AfCFTA is the world’s largest free trade area bringing together the 55 countries of the African Union (AU) and eight (8) Regional Economic Communities (RECs). The AfCFTA Secretariat, under the auspices of the United Republic of Tanzania, convened the Inaugural AfCFTA Conference on Women and Youth in Trade from 12 – 14 September 2022 in Dar es Salaam.

The importance of Women and Youth to the AfCFTA cannot be overstated. For the AfCFTA to be truly successful, businesses, particularly Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in critical sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing (clothing and textiles) and services (especially tourism), informal trading, and professional services in which women and youth are predominantly engaged, must be supported to thrive.

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

## **13. Africa Needs More Action, Fewer Words to Secure Food and Nutrition**

<https://www.ipsnews.net/2022/09/africa-needs-more-action-fewer-words-to-secure-food-and-nutrition>

How Africa can successfully navigate the crises currently affecting the global food supply chain and ensure that African Governments can mobilize investment and accelerate commitments to deliver a food-secure continent dominated discussions at the annual AGRF Summit.

Viable solutions are needed to boost sustainable crop production on the continent, where one in five people faced hunger in 2020. Worse, Africa remains a net food importer, spending nearly \$50 billion on food imports.

In 2021, African leaders agreed on a common position ahead of the UN Food Systems Summit to ensure that Africa was more resilient to unexpected global shocks. However, the continent is off track to achieving agreed targets under the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, the Malabo Declaration, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Leaders noted that the Covid-19 pandemic, the Ukraine-Russia conflict, the global supply chain, and the energy crisis had strained Africa’s food systems.

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

## 14. Malawian Farmers Reap More from Sunflower, Chillies

<https://www.ipsnews.net/2022/09/malawian-farmers-reap-more-from-sunflower-chillies/>

Blantyre, Sep 5 2022 (IPS) - Having harvested and graded their sunflower crop instead of taking it to market, every member of Zikometso Productive and Innovation Centre (IPC) brings their produce to the factory for cooking oil production. The IPC falls under the National Smallholder Farmers Association of Malawi (Nasfarm).

The rising cost of cooking oil in the country and the world, mainly due to the Russia and Ukraine war, means they are fetching more than twice what they could get by selling it to vendors.

Apart from sunflowers, these farmers also grow chillies and take these to the chilli sauce factory in Mulanje district, under the same Zikometso IPC. The two enterprises benefit 3,726 farmer members from Phalombe, Mulanje and Thyolo districts situated in the southern region of Malawi.

Before she became a member, Annie Muchawa of the Phalombe association said she faced challenges with her chilli and sunflower production. The challenges included a lack of access to good seeds making her production low and the quality poor. And if this is not enough, she sold her products at a low price. Now we have access to quality seed, and each and every year, we are assured of good prices, and we are no longer the same. “I am able to pay school fees for my two children, I have managed to construct a modern electrified house, and I have bought livestock for agriculture diversification and nutrition security,” she explained.

At the association, the farmers are trained with better husbandry practices to harvest better yields of high-quality fit for cooking oil and chilli sauce production. Instead of getting less than 1 US dollar per kilogram after selling her chilli to vendors, the same weight fetches Rose Ndalama of the Mulanje association 2.5 US dollars at the factory. “At the association, we also have adult literacy education; we learn about conservation agriculture, composite manure making and gender issues. We are benefiting a lot,” she said.

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

## 15. Women in Power’s invitation to fight systemic failings

<https://thephilanthropist.ca/2022/08/its-not-you-its-them-women-in-powers-invitation-to-fight-systemic-failings/>

Launched in July by Surabhi Jain and Saralyn Hodgkin, Women in Power is an “allyship leadership practice” that urges racialized and white women to turn away from polarization, turn toward discourse, and “stand in our power together” by sharing their lived experiences in the workplace.

If we could create a word cloud from the discourse taking place at the intersection of patriarchy, race, and gender in Canada’s non-profit-sector workplace these days, the results would be alarming: diversity deficit, gender wage gap, systemic anti-Blackness. Alarm bells ring loudest in the sector’s disproportionately male and white uppermost echelons – a paradox in a predominantly female workplace (nearly 80%) in a country where one in five people identify as racialized minorities (and more than half in Toronto). In a dearth of hard data, a 2021 Statistics Canada crowdsourcing initiative provides a glimpse of what’s out there: of the 6,170 board members who responded, only 11% identified as a visible minority.

## 16. Women Advocates for Harvesting Rainwater in Salinity-Affected Coastal Bangladesh

<https://www.ipsnews.net/2022/09/women-advocates-for-harvesting-rainwater-in-salinity-affected-coastal-bangladesh/>

KHULNA, Bangladesh, Sep 23 2022 (IPS) - Like many other women in Bangladesh’s salinity-prone coastal region, Lalita Roy had to travel a long distance every day to collect drinking water as there was no fresh water source nearby her locality. She had to collect water standing in a queue; one water pitcher was not enough to meet her daily household demand.

After getting a rainwater harvesting plant from the Gender-response Climate Adaptation (GCA) Project, which is being implemented by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Roy is now collecting drinking water using the rainwater harvesting plant, which makes her life easier.

Shymoli Boiragi, another beneficiary of Shaheber Abad village under Dakope Upazila, said women in her locality suffered a lot in collecting drinking water in the past because they had to walk one to three kilometers every day to collect water.

With support from the project, rainwater harvesting plants were installed at about 13,300 households under 39 union parishads in Khunla and Satkhira. One *pani apa* (water sister) has been deployed in every union from the beneficiaries. Each plant will store 2,000 liters of rainwater in each tank for the dry season.

The water plants need maintenance, which is why the project has employed *pani apas* for each union parishad (ward or council). They work at a community level on maintenance. The *pani apas* get Taka 20 from every household per month for providing their services, and if they need to replace taps or filters of the water plants, they replace those. The *pani apas* charge for the replacements of equipment of the water plants.

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

## 17. Horn of Africa drought puts 3.6m children at risk of dropping out of school

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2022/sep/22/horn-of-africa-drought-puts-36m-children-at-risk-of-dropping-out-of-school>

More than 3.5 million children are at risk of dropping out of school due to the drought in the Horn of Africa, the United Nations has said, amid warnings the crisis could lead to “a lost generation” that misses out on education. According to new figures shared with the Guardian, UNICEF now estimates that 3.6 million children in Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia are in danger of leaving school as a result of the cumulative pressure on households caused by the unrelenting drought.

In a sign of how acute the situation is becoming in many areas, that number has more than tripled – from 1.1 million – in the past six months. Four consecutive failed rainy seasons have pushed millions of families to the brink, increasing the number of deaths of children from malnutrition and forcing people to flee their homes in search of more resources.

Teachers and activists in Somaliland, an autonomous region of Somalia, say they are already seeing this effect in their classrooms – and it is mainly girls who are leaving. Child marriages often increase in times of drought or disaster as parents seek to raise extra funds through dowries.

UNICEF says factors that increase the chances of a child dropping out include the displacement of the family to other villages with limited educational capacity, a lack of school feeding programmes, and parents’ inability to afford essentials such as books and uniforms.

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

## 18. How a social entrepreneur is tackling Kenya’s digital skills gap

<https://www.devex.com/news/q-a-how-a-social-entrepreneur-is-tackling-kenya-s-digital-skills-gap-104036>

Digital technology carries enormous potential to improve access to education, reduce youth unemployment, and in turn promote socioeconomic development, according to the International Telecommunications Union, or ITU.

Yet, a staggering 2.2 billion — or two-thirds of children and young people aged 25 years or below — do not have internet access at home. In some regions such as eastern and southern Africa, only 5% of youth in rural areas have access to connectivity. Even for those who are connected, many of the young people considered “digital natives” may not actually possess sufficient job-relevant digital skills to find employment.

According to the ITU report “Measuring Digital Development: Facts and Figures 2020,” less than 40% of individuals in 40% of the countries surveyed reported having carried out activities requiring basic digital skills — such as internet research or online communication via email — in the last three months.

Social entrepreneurs have also increasingly started to see the need for filling this digital skills gap, and some are taking matters into their own hands. Devex spoke to Valarie Waswa, a youth envoy for ITU’s Generation Connect initiative, lawyer, and social entrepreneur working to address the barriers to digital inclusion facing young women in rural areas of Kakamega county in western Kenya.

*However, the first challenge facing young rural women between the age of 18-24 is digital illiteracy. Based on the survey I ran with the support of my team from She Goes Digital, 140 out of the 200 women we surveyed in Kakamega lack basic digital literacy skills: from switching on the computer to online browsing and using Microsoft Office.*

*Secondly, our studies show us that 3 out of 5 young women do not have electricity in their homes, and only 70 out of 200 girls own computers. The cost of the internet continues to be prohibitively expensive for young people wishing to go online. Buying bundles of mobile data in Kenya is a significant challenge, especially considering the existing poverty levels.*

*Many of my contemporaries working in low-skilled jobs don’t have the skills needed to grasp the economic potential of digital technologies. In their mind, digital training is reserved for engineers.*

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

## 19. Women’s Financial Inclusion, Empowerment in Kenya

<https://www.ipsnews.net/2022/09/womens-financial-inclusion-empowerment-kenya/>

According to a FinAccess February 2022 report published by Financial Sector Deepening (FSD) Kenya, 87% of the people in this East African nation without ID in 2021 are between 18 and 25, compared to 69% in 2019. There is the highest incidence of lack of national identity cards in Kenya’s rural areas, mostly among women, and that has more than doubled since 2019, says the report.

Many observers believe that women’s financial exclusion in Kenya is not only a matter of having an ID or a chauvinist husband, but it is also about financial institutions’ unfriendliness towards impoverished women. The US-based Center for Financial Inclusion (CFI) says without gender norm transformation, it is unlikely that women’s financial inclusion will lead to meaningful economic empowerment.

The Gender Global Gap Index 2022 published in July, which ranks Sub-Saharan Africa sixth (67.9%) in terms of regions that have closed their gender gap, says it will take the region 98 years to fully close its gender gap. Kenya ranks a distant 57th in the report, which puts Rwanda (6th globally) and Namibia (8th) top in Africa in closing the gender gap. South Africa emerged 20th.

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

## 20. A World of One Billion Empty Plates

<https://www.ipsnews.net/2022/09/food-insecurity-world-one-billion-empty-plates/>

Have you eaten today – or are sure you will? The answer depends on where you were born and where you live now.

There is also a growing gender gap in food insecurity. In 2021, 31.9 percent of women in the world were moderately or severely food insecure compared to 27.6 percent of men – a gap of more than 4 percentage points, compared with 3 percentage points in 2020, according to the report.

The latest estimate for low birthweight revealed that 14.6 percent of newborns (20.5 million) were born with a low birth weight in 2015, a modest decrease from 17.5 percent (22.9 million) in 2000. Optimal breastfeeding practices, including exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life, are critical for child survival and the promotion of health and cognitive development.

Anaemia: The prevalence of anaemia among women aged 15 to 49 years was estimated to be 29.9 percent in 2019. The absolute number of women with anaemia has risen steadily from 493 million in 2000 to 570.8 million in 2019, which has implications for female morbidity and mortality and can lead to adverse pregnancy and newborn outcomes.

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

## 21. How Feminists Across the Globe are Leading the Battle for Women’s Land Rights

<https://views-voices.oxfam.org.uk/2022/07/feminists-land-rights/>

In early 2022, Oxfam joined women’s rights organisations and members of the global Feminist Land Platform in a series of learning workshops. The sessions aimed to deepen our collective analysis and understanding of how change on women’s land rights does – and does not – happen from an intersectional, Southern feminist perspective. We looked at many smart and powerful ways of ensuring women access, own and use the land on which they live and inter-depend.

We heard from activists about the power of deeply gendered social norms on women’s land rights – and how these undermine the implementation of even the best-designed legal frameworks.

But we also heard how things are starting to change. Participants shared their experiences of the creative, patient work now being carried out to challenge discriminatory norms and structures.

Again and again, we talked about the very different significance that “land” has for different people in different parts of the world – recognising what a fundamental impact this has on how land is seen and how decisions about it are made in the economic and political systems that dominate our lives. We also noted how the dominant narrative of land as solely an economic ‘asset’ shapes even the development sector’s best efforts to promote women’s land rights.

An overarching theme that emerged from our discussions was how transformative feminist leadership is already challenging and reclaiming Northern, male-shaped narratives and world views.

Does the development sector really want women to have secure rights to land? After several hundred years of the status quo, the answer to this question clearly remains a resounding “no”. An important part of the road ahead, therefore, will be confronting the resistances within our sector that need some deep and honest examination in order to turn this gloomy reality around.

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

### Reports, Publications, Resources

#### 1. A Lens on the Climate Crisis in Africa

<https://commonwealthfoundation.com/a-lens-on-the-climate-crisis-in-africa/>

'A Lens on the Climate Crisis in Africa' is a digital photography exhibition depicting the devastating impact of climate change on African communities. It features photographs submitted by 24 photographers in 12 Commonwealth African countries, selected after an open call.

This exhibition is an important reminder that climate change is not a problem of the future. Rather, it is an immediate and severe challenge facing communities on the frontline of a global crisis. The destructive effects of extreme weather have left children unable to attend school, crop yields diminished, and homes destroyed. The voices of these communities must be by decision-makers.

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

## **2. Gendering post-harvest loss research: responsibilities of women and men to manage maize after harvest in southwestern Ethiopia**

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12571-022-01259-y>

### *Abstract*

Post-harvest losses are a significant problem worldwide, leading to a waste of resources when they are becoming scarcer. Rather than putting more energy into increasing production volume, addressing post-harvest losses can increase food availability without increasing yields. Using maize in Ethiopia to introduce gendering post-harvest loss research, we analyze the gendered division of labor in post-harvest management and then discuss implications. The study was conducted from 2014–2015 in southwestern Ethiopia as part of a broader research project from 2013–2018. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 208 male and female farmer heads of household. Our results show that although maize post-harvest activities are deemed to be the responsibility of women, the overall management of maize after harvest requires the cooperation of all household members. For example, both women and men contribute to time-sensitive harvest, packing and de-husking activities. Men tend to have the responsibility for ensuring that maize is stored well. Critically, women tend to sell small quantities of maize to pay for everyday household expenses including purchasing other foods to diversify diets. Often recommendations in literature to reduce maize post-harvest losses include building processing centers and formalizing the supply chain. However, as shown in this research, women's role to decide which maize to consume in the home and which to sell is important for access to quality food. Without gendering post-harvest loss research, it is possible that gender harms are enacted when women's livelihoods are impacted in the process of reducing post-harvest losses, and this may compromise food security.

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

## **3. Influential Woman in Canadian Agriculture – Karen Tanino**

<https://www.agwomen.ca/iwca-series-karen-tanino/>

When Karen Tanino was hired by the University of Saskatchewan's college of agriculture and bioresources in 1988, she was only the second female faculty member. Now, Tanino is a professor of plant sciences at the university and leads or is involved in many other projects concerning a variety of crops, environmental conditions, and extension and outreach activities; her self-confidence and drive to figure things out and move forward, as well as the support of her male colleagues, have made her a force to be reckoned with in Canadian agriculture.

In this episode of AgAnnex Talks, Karen Tanino, one of the 2022 Influential Women in Canadian Agriculture, speaks with Fruit and Vegetable and Top Crop Manager East editor Alex Barnard about recognizing our influence on others (and vice versa) and the responsibility that comes with it, the value of a broad knowledge base, and the optimism inherent to agriculture.

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



## 4. Dismal Gates Goalkeepers report centers on women's power, food security

<https://www.devex.com/news/dismal-gates-goalkeepers-report-centers-on-women-s-power-food-security-103938>

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is prioritizing funding for women's economic empowerment and climate-resilient food production in Africa as it seeks to help the world regain ground on achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals following a series of global shocks, including COVID-19 and the war in Ukraine.

The Gates Foundation's sixth annual Goalkeepers report released September 13, 2022 showed the world falling behind on nearly all of the SDGs, which include ending world hunger and ensuring access to clean water and sanitation by 2030. The Gates' report echoes recent findings from the U.N. Development Programme that showed 40% of countries lagging on human development indicators, such as life expectancy and per capita income in both 2021 and 2022.

Globally, just 47% of women participate in the labor force compared to 72% of men, according to data provided by Gates. Data shows the world will not reach gender equality until at least 2108 — a full three generations later than previously projected — Melinda French Gates writes in an essay included in the report.

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

## 5. Food Connects Us All

<https://youtu.be/1wwSS1DemBo>

Dr. Afua Adobea Mante is an Assistant Professor of Soil Physical Processes in the Department of Soil Science at the University of Manitoba. She came to Canada in 2013 to pursue graduate studies, but her agricultural education began much earlier than that on her family's farm in Ghana. Her passion for agricultural research is directly influenced by her life experience. She understands the need to find innovative solutions to the challenges faced by Canadian farmers, while reducing environmental impacts and working towards food security for all. Manitoba farmers, like Roberta Galbraith, share that passion. It's why they support organizations like the Manitoba Canola Growers, a farmer directed industry association, that funds science-based research projects with a goal of continually improving the sustainability of Manitoba canola farms.

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

## 6. Gender-equitable pathways to achieving sustainable agricultural intensification

<https://wle.cgiar.org/solutions/briefs/gender-equitable-pathways-achieving-sustainable-agricultural-intensification>

Women play an increasingly greater role in agriculture. Ensuring that they have opportunities—equal to those of men—to participate in transforming agriculture is a prerequisite for sustainable intensification. Increased gender equity in agriculture is both a practical and a social justice issue: practical because women are responsible for much of the production by smallholders; and social justice because in many cases they currently do not have rights over land and water resources, nor full access to markets, and often they do not even control the crops they produce. Strategies to promote gender equity must be tailored carefully to the social and economic context.

### Recommendations

- When designing and implementing a new policy or intervention, invest in studying the social, economic and agroecological context to understand gender roles, the extent and depth of gender inequality, the main barriers to women's participation, and the opportunities for promoting equality. Use the findings to make necessary adjustments and learn lessons during the implementation process.
- Systematic participatory methodologies can effectively support diagnosis of gender roles and thus enable decision makers to achieve greater gender equity. There is a growing suite of such methods (e.g., the Gender in Irrigation Learning and Improvement Tool), which enable analysis of changing gender roles.

- In societies with very restrictive social and cultural norms that limit women’s independence and participation, and weak government commitment or capacity to promote transformation, identify those areas that are already within women’s sphere and support improving their productivity and benefits.
- In societies where social and cultural norms are less restrictive, or are changing rapidly, and where there is a strong commitment and high level of capacity, work through governments and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to support effective implementation of transformative gender equity policies.
- It is important to ‘think out of the box’ and identify potential livelihood opportunities both off as well as on farm, for both women and men.

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

## 7. Organic Farmer Conversations

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CikuCARgmHs/>

Watch our second Organic Week farmer conversation “The Value of Transitioning Organic” with Allison Squires, COG President and co-owner of Upland Organics moderated by Marla Carlson, Executive Director of SaskOrganics.

Allison and Marla share their thoughts on the value of transitioning organic in our current agricultural landscape, organics in Saskatchewan and what they are excited about for the future of our sector.

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

## 8. Attitudes towards women improve significantly after implementation of Ujamaa’s GBV educational program

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1054139X13005636>

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2013.10.028>

<https://www.ujamaa-africa.org/>

***The Impact of a Six-week School Curriculum on Boys' Attitudes and Behaviors Related to Gender Based Violence (GBV) in Kenya***

A study funded by supported innovator, Ujamaa-Africa, found a standardized six-week school-based Gender-Based Violence educational program for boys reduced negative sexual stereotypes towards girls. Changes in attitudes were sustained six months after completion of the intervention. On follow-up, nearly half the boys reported witnessing a girl or woman being verbally or physically threatened and a third had witnessed a physical or sexual assault. Three-quarters of those witnessing abuse or assault successfully intervened to protect the victim. Such a program is making an impact on the high rates of sexual assault in the urban slums of Nairobi, Kenya.

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

## 9. Policy Brief: Women’s economic empowerment: supporting transformative change

<https://odi.org/en/publications/womens-economic-empowerment-supporting-transformative-change/>

Women’s economic empowerment (WEE) is a critical outcome in itself, with the potential to enhance economic growth and wider development outcomes for women, their families and societies. Evidence is accumulating on its components and how these can be supported in diverse contexts and for different groups of women. Its achievement has become a global policy priority given its potential contribution to Agenda 2030 – notably Goal 5 on gender equality and Goal 8, which strives to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all.

*Summary and key recommendations*

- Women’s economic empowerment (WEE) is a critical outcome in itself and has the potential to enhance economic growth and wider development outcomes for women, their families and societies.
- There is growing evidence of the components of WEE and how these can be supported in diverse contexts and for different groups of women.
- An emerging consensus on best practices for supporting WEE calls for investing in systems-level approaches seeking to address the root causes of gender equality.
- Philanthropic activity should not only focus on components of WEE as conventionally understood but also explore gender-transformative alternatives, including equitable economic models and approaches to ‘green growth’ that tackle the disproportionate effects of environmental degradation on women and girls.

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

## 10. (Re)introducing...the 60 Decibels Energy Benchmarks

<https://pages.60decibels.com/energy-benchmarks>

60 Decibels is launching our new interactive dashboard of the 60 Decibels Energy Benchmarks. So far, we’ve listened to more than 31,000 customers of more than 120 off-grid energy companies in 27 countries. Now, through data visualization, you can see their performance across a bevy of social impact indicators, things like inclusivity, customer experience, female reach, productive use, and much more.

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

## 11. Impact of gender transformative research

<https://bit.ly/3RTvpCR>

The #OnePlanetFellowship equips African researchers to deploy a gender lens to analyze the potential of their research to bridge the gender gap in African agriculture. Read about the impact of gender transformative research and discover some of the leading researchers across the African continent.

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

## 12. Gender & Development, Volume 30, Issue 1-2 (2022)

<https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/cgde20/current>

<https://policy-practice.oxfam.org/>

The latest issue of Oxfam’s Gender and Development journal, now edited by a team at Oxfam India, is available online with a rich mix of articles on the theme of “A Gender-Responsive Recovery: Ensuring Women’s Decent Work and Transforming Care Provision”.

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

## 13. Gender, wheat trait preferences, and innovation uptake: Lessons from Ethiopia and India

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/00307270221122189>

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0030727022112218>

### **Abstract**

During the post-Green Revolution era, numerous improved wheat varieties were released and disseminated to enhance tolerance to biotic and abiotic stresses and increase productivity. Still, in the wheat-based farming systems of the Global South, gender-based and other social inequalities continue to undermine equitable access to improved varieties, especially

for women, poor, and marginalized farmers. Here, we present a case for gender-sensitive technology development, dissemination, and evaluation as part of wheat varietal improvement programs. We take stock of the various challenges that persist in the uptake of modern wheat varieties by male and female smallholders. We focus on Ethiopia and India, two geographies with substantive wheat economies, widespread poverty, and gender inequalities. The socio-economic literature on wheat is relatively thin with limited and dated gender-sensitive evaluation studies on varietal technologies in these countries. Varietal technology evaluations could ideally cover gender differences in relation to wheat varietal trait preferences, technology adoption, and associated decision-making and labor-use changes related to new varieties and complementary technologies, as well as nutritional and economic benefits. The paper calls for a need to change the institutional arrangements in wheat research-and-development (R&D) programs to understand and pursue better paths for wheat improvement to proactively contribute toward gender equity and inclusivity.

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