

June 1, 2023

GEM Digest of the Month

Published monthly since December 2009



Forsythia blossoms in spring. 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 to compile and re-distribute once a month.

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

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Opportunities and Coming Events

1. Canadian Association for the Study of International Development (CASID) conference

<https://www.conftool.org/casid2023/sessions.php>

The Canadian Association for the Study of International Development (CASID) is a national, bilingual, interdisciplinary and pluralistic association devoted to the promotion of new knowledge in the broad field of international development. CASID is a membership-based organization. The CASID 2023 Conference will take place **in person and virtually at York University, Toronto** from **29 – 31 May** as a part of the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences Annual Congress

The theme ‘Reckonings and Re-Imaginations’, echoes CASID’s ongoing focus on struggles for social justice (including racial justice), decolonization, and planetary survival in the context of concurrent crises: a persistent pandemic, climate emergency, intensifying economic uncertainty and proliferating conflict. Some sessions:

- Session 1.2.4. Conceptualizing Care as Agroecology: A Roundtable discussion on agroecological farming as care work with women’s rights and food justice advocates in East Africa.
- Session 1.3.4. Perspectives féministes pour réimaginer le secteur de la coopération internationale exempt de violences sexistes et sexuelles (hybride)
- Session 3.1.1: International Development, Gender and Feminism. Connections and Paradoxes

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2. Gender in Humanitarian Assistance Training

<https://form.jotform.com/231365526394258>

The Humanitarian Response Network (HRN) is hosting training sessions in the coming weeks. The two suggested webinars will cover basic concepts of Gender in Humanitarian Assistance, including Why is Gender Equality Essential to Humanitarian Action (day 1) and Integrating Gender into the Humanitarian Program Cycle (Day 2). The webinars aim to ensure that all participants understand these basic concepts prior to considering joining the 3-days comprehensive GiHA training which will be offered by HRN in September 2023.

Last Registration Day - June 2nd, 2023 (for HRN members), **June 7th (for non-members)**

Training Dates (Webinars): Thursdays, June 8th and 22nd, 2023

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3. Together | Ensemble 2023 - tracking progress on the United Nations SDGs

<https://togetherensemble.ca/>

Together | Ensemble is Canada’s national conference devoted to tracking progress on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), bringing together the private sector, academia, government, and civil society. This year’s conference theme focuses on how to accelerate Canada’s SDGs progress and what needs to be done differently to achieve them. **University of Waterloo/online. June 7 to 9.**

This year marks the half-way point of the SDGs mandate to 2030. Unfortunately, no country in the world is on track to achieve them completely, with Canada ranking 29th in the world on SDGs implementation. The 2023 conference theme will focus on how we can accelerate Canada’s SDGs progress and what needs to be done differently to achieve them.

- Day 1 & 2 (online and in-person) – “main stage” programming like keynote speakers, panel discussions, and workshops
- Day 3 (online) – side-events by Canada’s SDGs community, including workshops, announcements, and launches.

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4. The Catalytic Climate Finance Facility

<https://www.climatepolicyinitiative.org/press-release/cc-facility-launches/>

On May 9, the Catalytic Climate Finance Facility (CC Facility) launched an open call for early-stage and market-ready blended climate finance vehicles seeking grant funding and technical support for scaling up. With an initial size of USD 12 million, the CC Facility has plans to increase its funding up to USD 100 million. The CC Facility is a partnership between Convergence and Climate Policy Initiative (CPI), two global leaders in blended and climate finance.

The CC Facility will select promising solutions to launch and scale through grant funding and dedicated acceleration services to severely under-financed sectors in developing countries. There is a special call for ideas targeting climate adaptation for agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

With funding from three anchor donors, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Global Affairs Canada, and Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the CC Facility targets one of the main barriers in the development process of a climate blended finance idea: the acceleration stage, when solutions face a critical valley of death, taking longer to resume operations due to a lack of support.

Applications must be submitted on Convergence's website by **June 9** and will be reviewed on a rolling basis.

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5. Communications Coordinator

<https://www.farmfoodcareon.org/about-us/jobs/>

Farm & Food Care Ontario is a coalition representing tens of thousands of livestock, crop and horticulture farmers and related businesses with a mandate to provide credible information on food and farming. Farm & Food Care Ontario is seeking a full-time Communications Coordinator. The deadline to apply is **June 9, 2023**.

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6. Panel discussion on AI and gender at Conference of Montreal

<https://www.laconferencedemontreal.com/TheConferenceofMontreal2023-ThrivinginaWorldinTransition-Development>

Artificial intelligence is already growing at speed and promises to gain considerable importance in the future, however it is important to raise awareness and measure its impact on gender inequality in our economy as this technology becomes more prevalent. How can businesses come out on top in terms of diversity and inclusion with AI? How can we implement artificial intelligence in a way that does not contribute to increased inequality? How do we ensure that women are involved in the decisions and implementation of this technology? **Wed, Jun 14, 2023, 03:00 PM - 04:00 PM (EDT)**

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7. Introducing the 2023 Influential Women in Canadian Agriculture

<https://www.agwomen.ca/introducing-your-2023-influential-women-in-canadian-agriculture>

Influential Women in Canadian Agriculture (IWCA) is a recognition program designed to honour, highlight and celebrate the work women are doing across Canada's agriculture industry. Now in its fourth year, IWCA is proud to present the six women chosen as the 2023 Influential Women in Canadian Agriculture. Please join us in congratulating:

- Ana Badea, research scientist, barley breeding and genetics, AAFC
- Della Karen Campbell, farm manager, Everdale
- Kelly Daynard, executive director, Farm and Food Care Ontario
- Judith Nyiraneza, research scientist, AAFC
- Darby McGrath, VP, research and development, Vineland Research and Development Centre
- Heather Wilson, research scientist, adjunct professor, University of Saskatchewan

These six women will share their stories, wisdom and insights in the IWCA podcast series on AgAnnex Talks, a podcast channel presented by Top Crop Manager, Potatoes in Canada, Canadian Poultry, Fruit & Vegetable, Drainage Contractor,

The Trough and Manure Manager magazines. **The first episode will air on June 14, and new episodes will follow biweekly** after that. Subscribe today wherever you listen to podcasts. This year's IWCA program will culminate with an event this November, bringing together women from across the industry to share in their experiences, offer guidance and advice in an interactive setting. Stay tuned to agwomen.ca for more details.

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8. Dialogue on PSEA with Global Affairs Canada (GAC) and Cooperation Canada

<https://digna.ca/>

DIGNA announces that on **June 19**, Global Affairs Canada (GAC) and Cooperation Canada will virtually host the third dialogue on PSEA. The objective of the 2023 dialogue is to reinforce our sector's collective action by regaining momentum toward the prevention and response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) and Sexual Harassment (SH) in the Canadian international development and humanitarian sector.

The GAC dialogue is a key convening opportunity to engage with GAC on PSEA and hear some of their latest updates. We will also provide moments of brainstorming and interactive discussions in order to for us to strategize collaboratively to strengthen our sector's capacity to prevent SEAH. This year's agenda will focus on:

- The presentation of the State of Safeguarding report
- News and updates from GAC
- The presentation of Digna's Three-Year Study
- A workshop on safe programming.

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9. Train-the-trainers course on preventing sexual exploitation and abuse.

https://cooperation.app.neoncrm.com/np/clients/cooperation/event.jsp?event=288&mc_cid=1559aa3e05&mc_eid=f0d315c026

Digna is pleased to hold a train-the-trainers course on preventing sexual exploitation and abuse. This training is designed for PSEA focal points in Canada to enable them to train their organization's staff, volunteers, and partners effectively and promote PSEA. The sessions will be conducted virtually over Zoom.

Divided into two sessions of three hours each, the training will be interactive, providing opportunities for self-reflection, peer exchange, and asking questions. It will use intersectional feminist and decolonial approaches to PSEA. The training will cover the following key elements of training on PSEA:

- Why is PSEA important?
- How to identify SEA in your work context?
- What to do as a bystander to SEA?
- Understanding the Code of Conduct, policies and complaints procedure of your organization.

EN: Wednesday July 5 & Thursday July 6, 2023. 1:00 to 4:00 pm (ET)

FR: Wednesday July 12 & Thursday July 13, 2023. 1:00 to 4:00 pm (ET)

Please direct any inquiries about this training to digna.info@cooperation.ca

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10. STEM Streams

<https://scwist.ca/programs/stem-streams/>

Are you interested in (re)entering a career in STEM and don't know where to start? You're in the right place. STEM Streams by SCWIST is a free program that provides online courses, coaching, mentorship, and much more to help you find your place in STEM. This program is for women who identify as racialized, Indigenous, 2SLGBTQ+, living with disabilities and/or had a prolonged detachment from the labour force. Enrolment is open to Canadian Residents and Permanent Residents of Canada. We offer 8 virtual, live courses designed to help you get your next job and connect with others in STEM. On-demand (recorded) classes are also available. Courses run on the following days and times:

- Wednesdays: 9am-12pm EDT, 8am-11am CDT, 6am-9am PDT
- Thursdays: 12pm-3pm EDT, 11am-2pm CDT, 9am-12pm PDT

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This Month's News

1. Stop praising women's strength. We need a world where we don't have to fight to be valued.

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2023/may/03/stop-praising-womens-strength-we-need-a-world-where-we-dont-have-to-fight-to-be-valued>

Romanticising survival distracts from the need for radical change. Strength alone can't overcome pay gaps, gendered harassment or protect victims of violence.

Women continue to be strong in a world where they consistently have fewer resources, less power and less influence than men. Additionally, the spotlight tends to shine on the few already uplifted women, with multiple societal privileges, such as belonging to dominant races, socioeconomic classes, religions and citizenships of global north countries. On the rare occasions it illuminates women without racial privilege, power or class, it demands even greater strength to have overcome these extra barriers.

But no amount of "strength" can overcome gender pay gaps, limited career growth opportunities, the motherhood penalty, extremely inadequate ways to deal with gendered harassment and violence in the workplace, at home or even using legal means, and more. Praising women's strength, without analysing why women's strength is a burden, is to wilfully ignore the direct links between the structural barriers that entrench gender marginalisation and the thwarting of women's full potential.

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2. 'Seeds ensure our survival': the women of Guinea-Bissau who keep vital plants and culture alive

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2023/may/02/women-of-guinea-bissau-who-keep-vital-plants-and-culture-alive>

The crossing to Ilha Formosa, one of the Urok Islands in the Bijagós archipelago, takes four hours. It is home to a unique group of women, "the seed keepers" – farmers who are preserving the ancestral grains of the Bijagós. Agroecological technicians in Urok work with Tiniguena, and support the Women Keepers of Agricultural Biodiversity Seeds project, to conserve creole plants and their precious seeds. The Bijagó ethnic group inhabit several islands of the archipelago, a UNESCO biosphere reserve off the west African Atlantic coast. The Urok Islands have been designated a community marine protected area since 2005. About 3,000 people live there.

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3. Rural Women’s Constant Struggle for Water in Central America

<https://www.ipsnews.net/2023/05/rural-womens-constant-struggle-water-central-america>

The persistent water shortage has led rural women in Central America to organize in recent years in community associations to promote projects that help alleviate the scarcity.

In the villages of Jocote Dulce, rainwater harvesting projects, reforestation and the creation of small poultry farms have the support of local and international organizations and financing from European countries. In some cases, depending on the project and the country, rainwater harvesting is designed only for domestic tasks at home, while in others it includes irrigation of family gardens or providing water for livestock such as cows and chickens.

In other parts of the country and the rest of Central America, institutions such as FAO have developed water collection systems that in some cases have a filtering mechanism, which makes it potable. In El Salvador, FAO has been behind the installation of 1,373 of these systems.

The harsh burden of water scarcity falls disproportionately on rural women, as national and international reports have shown. In this sexist society, women are expected to stay at home, in charge of the domestic chores, which include securing water for the family.

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4. Women’s Cooperatives Work to Sustain the Social Fabric in Argentina

<https://www.ipsnews.net/2023/05/womens-cooperatives-work-sustain-social-fabric-argentina>

In Greater Buenos Aires, home to 11 million people, the poverty rate is 45 percent, compared to a national average of 39.2 percent. La Negra del Norte is just one of the several self-managed enterprises that have come to life on the five hectares that, within the Carlos Arenaza municipal park, are used by the Union of Popular Economy Workers (UTEPA).

Today there are 20,520 popular cooperatives registered with INAES, the government’s National Institute of Associativism and Social Economy (INAES).

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5. Empowering Women is Key to Breaking the Devastating Cycle of Poverty & Food Insecurity in sub-Saharan Africa

<https://www.ipsnews.net/2023/05/empowering-women-key-breaking-devastating-cycle-poverty-food-insecurity-sub-saharan-africa/>

Studies consistently show that women have lower rates of agricultural productivity compared to men in the region, but it’s not because they’re less efficient farmers. Women in sub-Saharan Africa often lead food storage, handling, stocking, processing, and marketing in addition to other household tasks and childcare. Yet they severely lack the resources they need to produce food.

A 2019 United Nations policy brief reports that giving women equal access to agricultural inputs is critical to closing this gender gap in productivity while also raising crop production. And last year, the 17th Tanzania Economic Update showed that bridging the gap could lift about 80,000 Tanzanians out of poverty every year and boost annual gross domestic product growth by 0.86 percent.

This makes a clear economic case for investing in women, but public policies frequently overlook gender-specific needs and equality issues. Instead, organizations across the region have been stepping up to help break down the barriers that have traditionally held sub-Saharan African women back.

The West and Central Africa Council for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF), Africa’s largest sub-regional research organization, runs a database of gender-sensitive technologies, ones that are low-cost and labor-saving for women

across the region. It also developed a series of initiatives to provide training in seed production, distribution, storage, and planting techniques for women. These programs are specifically designed with women’s needs and preferences in mind, such as prioritizing drought resistance or early maturity in crops.

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6. Young Woman Ignites a 3D Printing Revolution in The Gambia

<https://www.ipsnews.net/2023/05/young-woman-ignites-3d-printing-revolution-gambia/>

In the heart of The Gambia, an intrepid young woman called Fatou Juka Darbor is blazing a trail for women fuelled by her fiery passion for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics). Her remarkable journey led her to co-found the country’s first and only 3D printing company – Make 3D Company Limited – in 2019, breaking boundaries and inspiring future generations.

The UN in The Gambia is supporting initiatives to bridge the gender disparity gap in STEM. Through events such as the ‘UN Women and Girls in Science Day,’ the UN raises awareness about the obstacles women and girls face in STEM and offers capacity-building support to women-owned businesses.

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7. Uganda’s first wildlife vet on breaking the mold

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/may/11/ugandas-first-wildlife-vet-on-breaking-the-mould-and-why-gorilla-and-human-health-are-linked>

As a black African woman in a space often dominated by white, western males, the path to becoming a conservation leader didn’t always seem open to Gladys Kalema-Zikusoka. After graduating from the University of London’s Royal Veterinary College in 1996, she established the Uganda Wildlife Authority’s first veterinary department and became the country’s first wildlife vet - unusual because she was a woman.

Tackling poverty is also central to the CTPH mission. “It’s core to protecting wildlife. As long as people are poor and don’t have food, they’re going to want to enter the forest to poach. We found this out during Covid – poaching really increased during the pandemic when there were no tourists.”

Conservationists face many challenges to stop wildlife disappearing in many parts of Africa. “The biggest issue is habitat loss, which we need to deal with by promoting family planning around protected areas,” says Kalema-Zikusoka. “People were having 10 kids per family on average around Bwindi. By implementing family planning, you reduce poverty and disease. Women have more control over their bodies. And it’s very helpful for wildlife because there’s less need to enter the park to poach. Family planning is an issue all conservation NGOs need to take up.”

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8. World Food Prize announcement

<https://www.devex.com/news/humanitarian-restoring-agriculture-to-war-zones-wins-world-food-prize-105442>

The founder of an organization which restores the ability to farm on land devastated by conflict has won the 2023 World Food Prize. The World Food Prize Foundation has selected Heidi Kühn, founder of Roots of Peace, a humanitarian organization that restores land to agriculture after conflict. This seems to be a clear signal of how intertwined food security and conflict are as we see growing instability across the world, and how important ending violence is for ensuring access to food.

Roots of Peace partners with demining organizations to remove land mines and other unexploded weapons from the land. Then, they work with farmers to provide technical assistance and training so they can increase agricultural production and create sustainable livelihoods.

Heidi Kühn says that land mine removal is absolutely central to development — in fact, she thinks it should be the 18th of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

While the organization has continued to pay its employees despite the Taliban takeover, they may soon be forced to stop: In March, the U.S. Agency for International Development told Kühn it would cease providing her organization economic development funding for Afghanistan. Kühn was managing a \$30 million USAID contract for Roots of Peace’s work in the country.

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9. What a lifetime of predicting climate’s impact on food has revealed

<https://www.devex.com/news/what-a-lifetime-of-predicting-climate-s-impact-on-food-has-revealed-105466>

Our knowledge of how global heating disrupts agricultural processes has been developed over 40 years, in part thanks to the pioneering work of agronomist and climatologist, and 2022 World Food Prize laureate Cynthia Rosenzweig.

Modeling the impact of climate change on food systems — as well as developing tools that can help farmers adapt — has been Rosenzweig’s life’s work since she joined NASA’s Climate Impacts Group at the Goddard Institute for Space Studies at Columbia University as a graduate student in the early 1980s, initially researching the impact of the climate on wheat in North America. She co-authored the first study assessing the potential impact of climate change on the world’s food supply in 1994.

Rosenzweig went on to establish a global network of scientists to work together on climate models, making the process more rigorous, in order to predict outcomes and inform decision-makers.

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10. Somaliland women smell success as frankincense business takes off

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/may/17/somaliland-frankincense-industry-women-owned-business>

A new frankincense sorting collective called Beeyo Maal empowers about 280 women to run their own business in the male-dominated frankincense industry. Women in Somaliland rarely own frankincense trees, since traditional law dictates that they be passed down to male heirs. This system has marginalized women to sorting, which is one of the lowest-paid positions in the industry.

Together, the women hope to sell their product more widely online – and even internationally. Being a part of this collective gives them the chance to take control. Things are not perfect, wages are still low, and hours are long, but the women are running their own business.

The company named Asli Maydi supplied frankincense to doTERRA, a major US essential oils company that generates more than \$2bn in annual sales. Since its founding in 2008, doTERRA has built its brand on a promise of ethical sourcing. But a two-year investigation by the Fuller Project found women working for the company’s frankincense supplier Asli Maydi were underpaid and required to work in harsh conditions. Multiple women accused Asli Maydi’s politically powerful owner of sexual harassment and assault. The Fuller Project article led doTERRA to suspend operations with Asli Maydi; several weeks later the women registered their collective.

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11. The third woman – getting trade back on track

<https://www.iied.org/third-woman-getting-trade-back-track>

The World Bank-International Monetary Fund Spring Meetings sent promising signals of the international financial system overhaul, urgently needed to tackle the debt-climate-nature crises – and women are leading the charge.

12. **Opinion: How renewables fight corruption in conflict-affected states**

<https://www.devex.com/news/opinion-how-renewables-fight-corruption-in-conflict-affected-states-105429>

In Abs, a town midway between Sanaa and the Saudi Arabia border, the only source of electricity was from a private generator owner who had a local monopoly and charged extortionate prices. The United Nations Development Programme helped to establish and operate a small solar plant with an all-female crew. Once the plant was built, and with a steady supply of electricity, women were able to electrify their homes and start small businesses like sewing clothing.

International donors should advance renewable technologies in conflict-affected environments to prevent the entrenchment of vested interests that profit from electricity crises. The benefits of solar energy in fragile environments are wide-ranging. As well as advancing climate goals, renewables are more resilient to conflicts, accelerate local economic development, and plant the seeds of better governance. However, donors' window to act is short-lived.

Conflict-affected states in the Middle East show that there is a window to advance sustainable energy during crises. In Yemen, 75% of households with access to electricity now use solar home systems as their primary source of power. And Lebanon's installed rooftop solar capacity is estimated to have increased by more than sevenfold since the onset of its economic collapse in 2019.

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13. **Amid Power Cuts in Zimbabwe, Food Preservation Made Easy by Grannies**

<https://www.ipsnews.net/2023/05/amid-power-cuts-in-zimbabwe-food-preservation-made-easy-by-grannies/>

Amid silent refrigerators spawned by crippling electricity cuts, township grannies are relying on their smarts and traditional preservation: roasting and smoking meat over fires as they attempt not to throw away food. The country's power utility has blamed erratic power supply on the vandalism of electricity infrastructure. Smoking meat over a fire to preserve it has been around for centuries, but Zimbabwe's energy crisis has reminded older generations of the practice at a time when large-scale enterprises such as butcheries are having to rethink how they do business.

While FAO says most food losses in developing countries are during post-harvest and processing levels, in countries such as Zimbabwe, power cuts have only added to the food waste crisis.

Local consumer rights groups say inflation has added to the challenges as those who already cannot afford basics face more headaches with trying to stock the little food available in their homes.

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14. **Why Quality Seeds Are among the Most Valuable Currency in Climate Finance for Africa**

<https://www.ipsnews.net/2023/05/quality-seeds-among-valuable-currency-climate-finance-africa/>

Momentum is growing for an overdue rethink of climate finance and development assistance to support countries on the frontlines of the climate crisis. But while investment, aid and compensation are all much needed, another form of currency is equally valuable for climate-vulnerable countries that are also highly dependent on small-scale agriculture: quality seeds.

The latest generation of seeds offers varieties adapted to specific climatic circumstances to provide more reliable food production, as well as improved incomes and livelihoods for farmers, having boosted productivity by 20 per cent for nine key crops in the European Union over 15 years.

Yet improved varieties of many of the world’s staple cereals, vegetables and pulses are too often inaccessible for farmers in Africa, despite having some of the greatest exposure to climate extremes. For instance, in East Africa, certified quality seed potatoes – which produce higher yields and greater resilience to climatic changes, pests, and diseases – account for just one per cent of all those planted by farmers.

By leveraging the advances and resources of the commercial seed sector – supported and scaled by public and NGO partners – the global community can ensure African farmers receive the tangible, long-term support they need to cope with the impacts of climate change.

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15. New Arrell Family Chair at U of G to Focus on ‘People Side’ of Agri-Economics

<https://news.uoguelph.ca/2023/05/new-arrell-family-chair-at-u-of-g-to-focus-on-people-side-of-agri-economics/>

A new \$1-million research chair in an emerging field at the University of Guelph is intended to make agri-food production more efficient and ensure sustainable food production in Canada and around the world.

The inaugural Arrell Family Chair in Behavioural and Experimental Economics will support students and seed projects and enable the hiring of a lab manager for a growing research lab in the Department of Food, Agricultural and Resource Economics (FARE) within the Ontario Agricultural College (OAC).

Applying behavioural and experimental economics to the agri-food sector, the chair will be appointed as an Arrell Food Institute (AFI) chair on campus. The institute, established in 2016 at U of G with a \$20-million donation from the Arrell Family Foundation, works to improve global food systems to sustainably feed a growing world population.

The new chair will be held for five years by FARE professor Dr. Tongzhe Li, whose field and lab research aims to combine economic theory with sometimes messy and unpredictable human behaviour.

Through projects ranging from farmer incentive programs to agri-food employee retention to vertical farming, Li aims to marry economics with the people side of consumer and producer behaviour. She said her work helps improve decision making by governments, non-governmental organizations and producer groups.

In fall 2022, members of her lab ran an experimental auction along with the Ontario Soil Network at Canada’s Outdoor Farm Show to learn what outreach methods work best for sharing information with farmers about various cover crops.

In another experiment, Li worked with the Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario to study the effects of subsidies on grain farmers’ decisions about diversified cover rotation that can help improve soil fertility and prevent erosion.

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16. Drone innovation by USask researcher comes from family farm roots

<https://news.usask.ca/articles/research/2023/drone-innovation-by-usask-researcher-comes-from-family-farm-roots.php>

Kaylie Kryis is on a mission to bring accurate drone surveillance technology to the forefront of agriculture in Saskatchewan, starting right at home on her family farm and expanding into the province’s vast agricultural landscape.

As a University of Saskatchewan (USask) College of Agriculture and Bioresources graduate student, her research is focused on investigating how unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) – more commonly known as drones – can help farmers count the number of early season canola seedlings in their fields to offer a more solid idea of crop yields and help determine next steps in the growing season.

Krys’s method works by using a drone to obtain images of a crop, and then uploading the images to a computer where a specialized model is trained to recognize canola seedlings. The computer program can provide a seedling count and a percentage of plant ground cover. This information is helpful to farmers as it provides an accurate method for keeping an eye on the growing season while being a relatively low labour-intensive activity. The computer model Krys is assisting in developing can currently count seedlings with 90 per cent accuracy.

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17. Opinion: Disaster risk reduction efforts must center on gender equity

<https://www.devex.com/news/opinion-disaster-risk-reduction-efforts-must-center-on-gender-equity-105508>

Women must be central to discussions on disaster risk reduction as they are often more vulnerable in emergencies due to various social factors, writes Gertrude Kenyangi, executive director of Support for Women in Agriculture and Environment in Uganda, in an op-ed for Devex.

Extreme weather events are becoming both more frequent and more severe, and in Uganda, her community lost all of its crops in 2019 and 2020 due to an unprecedented and long-lasting drought. But women from the community were on the front lines of the response, saving their families from starvation by gathering fruits, mushrooms, and tubers from the government-protected forest.

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18. Iceland- best childcare in the world?

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2023/may/18/the-best-childcare-in-the-world-maybe-so-but-new-parents-in-iceland-are-holding-out-for-better>

Iceland is a country considered to have one of the best childcare policies in the world. As well as six months’ leave for both parents at 80% of pay – with six weeks extra to share between them – childcare is heavily subsidised by the government. Yet parents and policymakers are pushing for more.

Iceland spends 1.7% of its gross domestic product on early-childhood education and care – more than double that of most other countries. That leaves Icelandic families spending only around 5% of their income on childcare. An average full-time, eight-hour-a-day preschool place, including meals, costs about £200 [\$337 Canadian dollars] a month. In 2020, 96% of Icelandic children between the ages of three and five were enrolled in early childhood education programmes, compared with 83% on average across OECD countries.

A growing issue has been a lack of childcare for children between 12 months and two. Both “day-mothers” (childminders) and preschools are in short supply. Covid led to a rise in births, and Iceland saw 16.5% more births than normal in the second quarter of 2021, making that year the fourth highest for number of births in Icelandic history.

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19. The heroes feeding their neighbours

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2023/may/23/why-should-anyone-be-hungry-when-theres-food-that-can-be-given-away-the-heroes-feeding-their-neighbours>

Hunger and deprivation have been rapidly growing in the UK: almost 10 million adults and four million children do not have enough to eat – which is nearly double what it was a year ago. One person has been helping alleviate the financial pressures facing the 4000 people in their communities.

Debbie Caulfield, who lives in Eglinton, helped plant a community orchard of plum, pear and apple trees on a piece of council land. It's important to afford people a level of dignity, she says: "The whole point about it is to not to make people feel as if they're in need. I'd rather people feel as if they're doing us a favour by taking the stuff."

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20. Canada announces \$84.6-million contribution to fight global malnutrition and prevent acute malnutrition

<https://www.canada.ca/en/global-affairs/news/2023/05/canada-announces-846-million-contribution-to-fight-global-malnutrition-and-prevent-acute-malnutrition.html>

Climate change and the rising cost of food have contributed to a rise in malnutrition rates, with the heaviest burden falling on the most vulnerable, especially women and girls.

To mark World Nutrition Day on May 28, the Honourable Harjit S. Sajjan, Minister of International Development and Minister responsible for the Pacific Economic Development Agency of Canada, announced \$84.6 million in funding to support the implementation of four new projects by Canadian partners, including Action Against Hunger, Children Believe, SickKids Centre for Global Child Health and World Vision Canada.

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21. Panel or “Manel”?

<https://youtu.be/dZp44oAcycl>

What was supposed to be a mixed bag of men and women discussing health and climate change during a Devex panel turned into a “manel” of experts when Dr. Maria Neira of the World Health Organization pulled out at the last minute. She sent Dr. Diarmid Campbell-Lendrum – a man – in her place.

That didn't sit well with Dr. Githinji Gitahi, CEO of Amref Health Africa, who staged a walkout after his opening contribution. “I feel very uncomfortable being on this male panel, completely uncomfortable because I have a commitment not to do this,” he said before heading into the audience.

“I would like to ask any woman who has insights on this topic to replace me ... If there is anyone else who wants to comment on this issue, please come forward,” added Gitahi. While Gitahi's objections caused mutterings and some amusement among attendees, Devex has a strict “no manel” policy, so we agreed with his protest completely.

Our moderator Rumbi Chakamba invited Vivianne Ihekweazu, managing director of Nigeria Health Watch, from the audience to balance things out. That brought Gitahi back to the panel. The musical chairs continued when Campbell-Lendrum then swapped with his colleague Amy Savage from WHO's department of public health, environmental and social determinants of health.

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22. Ugandan president signs anti-LGBTQ+ law with death penalty

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2023/may/29/ugandan-president-yoweri-museveni-anti-lgbtq-bill-death-penalty>

Uganda's president, Yoweri Museveni, has signed into law the world's harshest anti-LGBTQ+ bill, which allows the death penalty for homosexual acts.

The move immediately drew condemnation from many Ugandans as well as widespread international outrage. The UK government said it was appalled by the “deeply discriminatory” bill, which it said will “damage Uganda's international reputation”. US President Joe Biden decried the act as “shameful” and “tragic violation of universal human rights”.

In a joint statement, the heads of the Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria, UNAids and the US President’s Emergency Plan for Aids Relief (Pepfar) reacted with “deep concern” and said progress on tackling Aids and HIV was “now in grave jeopardy”.

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23. World Hunger Day: Renewing Our Commitment to Elevating Women as Change Agents for Ending Hunger

<https://www.ipsnews.net/2023/05/world-hunger-day-renewing-commitment-elevating-women-change-agents-ending-hunger/>

This upcoming weekend, on May 28, we are commemorating World Hunger Day. The day serves as a reminder that more than 800 million people around the world are living with hunger and malnutrition. That number is staggering, but there is hope. World Hunger Day also celebrates the fact that hunger can end. We can create sustainable food systems, to ensure that everyone has access to nutritious and affordable food, both now and in the future.

So, what does it take? In my experience, the single greatest change that a community can make to end hunger and improve nutrition is a shift in mindset around gender equality.

In Benin, in West Africa, the government has put in place many policies to improve access to drinking water and sanitation, improve healthcare and increase access to nutritious food. Yet high child mortality and morbidity rates reveal the existence of important underlying factors that catalyze malnutrition but are generally minimized in policymaking. One of these factors is gender inequality.

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24. National Forum on Gender Responsive Budgeting in Mongolia

<https://www.catalystplus.org/our-work/programs/merit/> and <https://youtu.be/xc6DUcqW1E>

Mongolia: Enhancing Resource Management through Institutional Transformation (MERIT). The MERIT team, in collaboration with the World Bank, Mongolia’s Ministry of Finance, the National Committee for Gender Equality and the National Academy of Governance organized the 2023 National Forum on Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB). This conference brought together 510 participants from different levels of government who are dedicated to new gender budgeting initiatives across Mongolia.

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25. A Gender-just Approach to Disaster Risk Reduction

<https://wedo.org/stories-of-gender-just-disaster-risk-reduction> and <https://youtu.be/9AgYCV6KmJY>

Seven years after the adoption of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), governments and stakeholders gathered from 18th to 19th May 2023 at UN Headquarters in New York for a High-Level Meeting to review progress toward the Framework.

The High-Level Meeting was informed by voluntary submissions from more than 60 governments, and a Midterm Review Report—which noted with concern the increasing intensity and cost of disasters, especially to global majority countries.

Women’s Environment and Development Organization WEDO, as a co-convenor of the Women and Gender Stakeholder Group (WGSG) under UNDRR, engaged in the Midterm Review and helped amplify the experiences and roles of women and girls in DRR across the world.

The experiences of diverse members of the WGSG revealed that capacity strengthening for women related to disaster risk reduction is also improving their well-being. In Peru, women who were trained and built their capacities related to DRR carried out important risk mapping that benefited their communities—and in turn, appeared to become more respected. In

Mexico, women are learning best practices in responding to earthquakes via training that incentivizes women to join civil protection activities. And in Uganda, women’s involvement in DRR efforts resulted in a reduction in gender-based violence, as they manifested their agency within their households.

While the Midterm Report references gender and attempts to capture efforts to integrate gender in disaster risk reduction at country and community levels, it notes minimal progress on gender integration in DRR across the board. Speaking on behalf of the WGSC at the opening session of the UN Midterm Review, WEDO Global Policy Lead Mwanahamisi Singano called on leaders to urgently advance an equitable implementation of the Sendai Framework:

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26. UN agencies warn of rising hunger risk in 18 'hotspots'

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/05/1137127>

Hunger is set to worsen in 18 “hotspots” worldwide including Sudan, where fighting is putting people at risk of starvation, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) warned in a report published on May 29.

Additionally, a likely El Niño – a naturally occurring climatic phenomenon that has a warming effect on ocean surface temperatures in the central and east Pacific - is also raising fears of climate extremes in vulnerable nations.

The report calls for urgent humanitarian action to save lives and livelihoods, and to prevent starvation and death. “Business-as-usual pathways are no longer an option in today’s risk landscape if we want to achieve global food security for all, ensuring that no one is left behind,” said Dongyu Qu, the FAO Director-General. He underlined the need for immediate interventions in the agricultural sector “to pull people from the brink of hunger, help them rebuild their lives, and provide long-term solutions to address the root causes of food insecurity.”

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27. With funding support, Africa’s youth can change farming

<https://www.context.news/net-zero/opinion/with-funding-support-africas-youth-can-change-farming>

As pressure grows for climate action, governments, private investors and partner organizations should look to Africa’s young agricultural entrepreneurs for solutions. They are the change agents already harnessing technology and data to adapt food systems to climate change. But they need financing to succeed.

The majority of young people in sub-Saharan Africa work in agriculture and in rural areas. They live the reality of climate change and farming. They know what is needed and pursue innovations that will improve the productivity and profitability of agriculture even as the climate changes.

Africa’s young entrepreneurs envision a new agricultural future: one that embraces high-yielding, climate-smart agriculture powered by alternative energy sources, e-mechanization, data-driven decision-making, and high-performing food processing, packaging and distribution, with every technology harnessed to adapt to climate realities while opening new markets and generating wealth.

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Reports, Publications, Resources

1. CARE International Aggregate Lean Data Report

<https://60decibels.com/insights/care-international-aggregate-lean-data-report/>

This specialized lean impact study across Vietnam, Pakistan, and Peru measures core business themes and captures the impact of the CARE Women’s Entrepreneurship program. CARE International partnered with 60 Decibels and Mission

Measurement – who represented Mastercard Center for Inclusive Growth – to perform a study across Vietnam, Pakistan, and Peru to measure core business themes and capture the impact of the CARE Women’s Entrepreneurship program.

CARE Women’s Entrepreneurship programming aims to reduce barriers that women entrepreneurs face by offering a combination of services – both financial and non-financial – that are essential to creating sustainable growth and empowerment for women entrepreneurs.

This report presents aggregate results based on surveys conducted with clients in 3 different countries. By assessing performance across implementing countries, we can highlight variations that inspire conversations and spur learning between countries to drive deeper impact and satisfaction.

These aggregate results are intended to provide insight into broad impact trends based on country, product type, and gender, and we have noted significant differences throughout the report.

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2. Report on Standards and the Sustainable Development Goals

<https://www.iisd.org/ssi/publications/standards-and-the-sustainable-development-goals/>

This report explores the role that voluntary sustainability standards (VSSs) can play in helping governments advance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and better track and report on their progress toward achieving them. It maps the environmental and social requirements of 13 VSSs against a set of 10 targets from five SDGs. The findings support other studies that indicate a great deal of crossover between VSSs and SDG targets, particularly for SDGs 6, 8, and 12.

It then explores how governments can make the most of work already being done by VSSs when conducting Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs). Countries that have signed the 2030 Agenda are invited to submit VNRs to the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development that outline their progress on advancing the SDGs in their jurisdictions.

These reviews provide governments with an opportunity to share experiences, identify areas that need more attention, and find ways to work together with other stakeholders. However, issues such as a lack of data and information can make such reporting challenging.

The report analyzes the most recent VNRs submitted by India, Tanzania, and Uganda against the work VSSs are doing in these countries to identify areas for potential collaboration between governments and VSSs. It then develops three “reporting examples” that illustrate how the three countries could capitalize on their findings in the next reporting round.

From these reporting examples, the authors distill a series of practical guidelines to help governments work together with VSSs to advance the SDGs and fill the data gaps that many face when tracking their progress.

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3. SDIR Subcommittee Study On The Rights And Freedoms Of Women Globally

SDIR Subcommittee Study On The Rights And Freedoms Of Women Globally, And Of Women In Afghanistan, Iran And Saudi Arabia

<https://www.oxfam.ca/story/sdir-subcommittee-study-on-the-rights-and-freedoms-of-women-globally-and-of-women-in-afghanistan-iran-and-saudi-arabia/>

Oxfam Canada was invited to testify at the Parliamentary Subcommittee on International Human Rights on their study on women’s rights globally. The study will provide recommendations to the Government of Canada on actions they can take to support women human rights defenders worldwide.

At a time when we witness women’s rights activists increasingly under attack and hard-won rights being rolled back, this study is urgent. Based on our experience supporting women’s rights organizations around the world, our Executive Director, Lauren Ravon, shared key recommendations for the government to act upon.

The progress we've made to achieve gender equality has been set back by generations. Canada needs to step up its commitments and actions.

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4. Reporting Mechanisms and Community Engagement - Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH)

<https://digna.ca/docs-category/reporting-mechanisms/>

Having an effective SEAH reporting mechanism is crucial for organizations to prevent sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment. DIGNA developed the Reporting Mechanisms and Community Engagement resource to help you better understand a complaints (or reporting) mechanism structure, design one that allows the participants in your programs to submit their complaints and set clear procedures on how you will follow up on those complaints. You will find in this resource:

- Characteristics of an effective reporting mechanism.
- Steps to setting up an effective reporting mechanism.
- Roles and responsibilities when it comes to reporting.
- Do’s and don’ts to respond to disclosures.
- Tips for receiving reports of SEAH .

The resource is available in English and French.

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5. A Family-Centered Sexual Health Intervention to Promote Cervical Cancer Screening Uptake Among Low-Income Rural Women in India: Protocol for a Community-Based Mixed Methods Pilot Study

<https://www.researchprotocols.org/2022/9/e35093/> and <https://doi.org/10.2196/35093>

Along with innovation partners in Ethiopia and India, Canadian Physicians for Aid and Relief (CPAR) and Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU) participated in a Fund for Innovation and Transformation (FIT) panel event at the CASID 2023 Conference at York University on May 30th.

This was an opportunity for both to present results from their FIT-funded testing projects - focused on improving access to sexual and reproductive healthcare in rural areas – as well as share insights from associated publications.

TMU and Tata Memorial Hospital piloted a family-centered intervention to promote cervical cancer screening in rural India through HPV self-sampling.

Abstract Background:

Human papillomavirus (HPV) is the primary cause of cervical cancer, which is preventable through screening and early treatment. The Papanicolaou (Pap) test and visual inspection with acetic acid (VIA), which are traditionally performed in clinical settings, have been used effectively to screen for cervical cancer and precancerous changes and reduce cervical cancer mortality in high-income countries for many decades. However, these screening methods are not easily accessible to women living in low- and middle-income countries, especially women living in rural areas.

6. Implementation and evaluation of a pilot antenatal ultrasound imaging programme using tele-ultrasound in Ethiopia

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1357633X221115746> and <https://doi.org/10.1177/1357633X221115>

Canadian Physicians for Aid and Relief’s Canadian and Ethiopian offices along with the North Shoa Zonal Health Authority introduced a pilot antenatal ultrasound imaging program to improve access to obstetric care and enhance health training.

Abstract Introduction

Ultrasound imaging is an important aspect of antenatal care, though access to antenatal ultrasound imaging is limited in many developing countries. The objective of this study was to evaluate a pilot programme which aimed to improve access to antenatal ultrasound for rural Ethiopians through enhanced training of healthcare providers (including midwives, nurses and clinical officers) with support remotely provided by obstetricians using a tele-ultrasound platform.

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7. Women and the Mine of the Future

<https://www.igfmining.org/gender-equality/women-and-the-mine-of-the-future/>

Major economic trends are transforming large-scale mining across the globe. These include rapid technological advances, pressure to mine more responsibly from investors and other stakeholders, and rising demand for critical minerals for a low-carbon energy transition. But how will these trends affect women working in the sector and related supply chains? The implications are difficult to understand due to a lack of high-quality, comparable data on women in the mining workforce.

Women and the Mine of the Future is a collaborative project to increase understanding of the status quo for women in mining, so stakeholders can anticipate, assess, and address gendered impacts as mining evolves.

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8. CLASP 2022 Annual Report

<https://www.clasp.ngo/updates/clasp-2022-annual-report/>

CLASP serves at the epicenter of collaborative, ambitious efforts to mitigate climate change and expand access to clean energy, through appliance energy performance and quality.

The escalating climate crisis and other global shocks demand a focus on maximizing the impact of our work, careful consideration of those worst affected, and a drive for innovative solutions. In the newly released CLASP 2022 Annual Report, we highlight stories of human adaptation and the ingenuity that will lead us into a clean energy future.

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9. The status of women in agrifood systems

<https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en>

The status of women in agrifood systems report uses extensive new data and analyses to provide a comprehensive picture of women’s participation, benefits, and challenges they face working in agrifood systems globally. The report shows how increasing women’s empowerment and gender equality in agrifood systems enhances women’s well-being and the well-being of their households, creating opportunities for economic growth, greater incomes, productivity and resilience.

The report comes more than a decade after the publication of the State of food and agriculture (SOFA) 2010–11: Women in agriculture – Closing the gender gap for development. SOFA 2010–11 documented the tremendous costs of gender inequality not only for women but also for agriculture and the broader economy and society, making the business case for closing existing gender gaps in accessing agricultural assets, inputs and services. Moving beyond agriculture, *The status of women in agrifood systems* reflects not only on how gender equality and women’s empowerment are central to the

transition towards sustainable and resilient agrifood systems but also on how the transformation of agrifood systems can contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment.

It provides a comprehensive analysis of the available evidence on gender equality and women's empowerment in agrifood systems that has been produced over the last decade. The report also provides policymakers and development actors with an extensive review of what has worked, highlighting the promise of moving from closing specific gender gaps towards the adoption of gender-transformative approaches that explicitly address the formal and informal structural constraints to equality. It concludes with specific recommendations on the way forward.

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