

October 1, 2023

GEM Digest of the Month

Published monthly since December 2009



Virginia Creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*) showing fall colour and toxic 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 to compile and re-distribute once a month.

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

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Opportunities and Coming Events

1. How gender-responsive climate adaptation solutions can accelerate resilient food systems in Africa

<https://awardfellowships.org/events/award-at-the-7th-adaptation-futures-conference-montreal-canada/>

African Women in Agricultural Research and Development (AWARD) will host a panel session at the upcoming 7th Adaptation Futures Conference in Montreal, Canada. Hybrid event. **Wednesday, October 4, 2023.**

This session will spotlight gender-responsive climate research’s role in fostering equitable food systems and present lessons from initiatives in the global south that address gendered knowledge gaps in climate services. We will showcase some of the gender-responsive adaptation solutions and the potential of transformative initiatives that focus on African researchers to develop gender-responsive, context-specific scalable solutions for African smallholders.

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2. STEM Moms: Navigating your career with purpose

<https://www.mothersinscience.com/scimomchats>

Join us on **October 4th** to learn how to navigate your STEM career while enjoying motherhood- without burnout.

This active learning workshop is designed to help STEM moms focus on exploring their true career aspirations and learning practical tools to get into the right mindset and take the necessary steps to secure their dream job- without burnout. In this event, you will press pause and reflect about what you really want, so you can plan your career instead of jumping into job opportunities that aren't right for you. The new skill set learned in this workshop will also be useful for mentoring others as you progress into leadership.

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3. "Global Solidarity in the Digital Era" Webinar Series

<https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/global-solidarity-la-solidarite-mondiale-2419699>

This two-part series on digital technologies and international solidarity brought to you by the Inter-Council Network of Provincial and Regional Councils for International Cooperation explores the effects of rapidly evolving digital technologies on international solidarity. Global solidarity is fundamentally important at a time of precarity and crises. In an increasingly networked world, technologies play an immense role in global solidarity. They provide the tools to organize and advocate around decolonization, anti-racism, feminisms, and other equity-seeking projects. Paradoxically, these tools can both facilitate and threaten this work. **October 5 and October 11.**

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4. Girls and STEM Challenge with Unique Ice Cream Flavour

<https://clubhouse.girlsinscience.ca/Ice-Cream-Challenge/>

The Canadian Association of Girls in Science CAGIS has set the challenge to create a perfect scoop of ice cream featuring a unique flavour. This STEM challenge is for girls aged 7-17 (as of October 7, 2023), residing in Canada, outside of the province of Québec. Two winners will win a prize pack from Chapman's. Click the link for a homemade ice cream recipe, challenge specs, and details on how to submit an entry. Deadline to submit entries is 11:59 PM PT on **October 7, 2023.**

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

<https://www.aiae.org/2024-Conference>

The Association for International Agricultural and Extension Education (AIAEE) Scholarly Activities Committee is requesting proposals for refereed abstracts to be presented at the 40th Annual Conference. The conference theme is "Looking Back. Focusing Forward." 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.

Submitted proposals must have at least one author who is a current AIAEE member. The deadline for submitting proposals is **Friday, October 13, 2023**, by 11:59 PM EST. The **conference will be held in Orlando, Florida, USA from April 22 to 25.**

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6. International Grandmothers Gathering

<https://stephenlewisfoundation.org/IGG2023/>

Grandmother activists are coming together across 11 countries for the first-ever hybrid — online and in person — International Grandmothers Gathering (IGG) this **October 24–26.**

In Canada, Ethiopia, Eswatini, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, grandmothers will be developing national plans of action and making new international connections.

These gatherings come at a critical time. Since COVID-19, many grandmothers have seen a major backslide in gains made toward ending the HIV epidemic, and in the protection of their human rights. Faced with discrimination based on gender, age, and HIV status, grandmothers are courageous advocates for their families and communities.

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7. This is the Future of Farming - A Conversation with the Next Generation of Farmers

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/7816926397926/WN_W4ZYKdlnTcyfW5R9imGHVA

October 25 | 12:00pm ET. What do a banana farmer, a cocoa farmer, a coffee farmer, and an American eco-communicator all have in common? The next generation of agricultural stewardship is here, and they're hopeful for the future. Join us for a candid conversation with Ana Polo Aguilar, a banana farmer from Ecuador, Felix Tetteh, a cocoa farmer from Ghana, and Zuly Granados, a coffee farmer from Guatemala. Three different farmers, three different realities, one vision: a future where people and planet are respected. With an aging population of farmers and a younger generation increasingly abandoning the family farm for more lucrative opportunities, these young farmers are dedicated to advocating for the wellbeing of farmers, working towards equality in supply chains, training the next generation, and protecting the environment. This session is open to all and will be presented in English, French, and Spanish.

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8. Workshop: Culturally Responsive and Equitable Evaluation

<https://evaluationbc.ca/event-5384676>

The Canadian Evaluation Society – British Columbia chapter CESBC Conference Committee is excited to introduce Dr. Chandria D. Jones, a trailblazing force in the world of research and evaluation, passionately championing culturally responsive and equitable evaluation. **Friday, October 26, 2023, Vancouver, BC.**

Dr. Jones is celebrated as the editor of the book, "Culturally Responsive and Equitable Evaluation: Visions and Voices of Emerging Scholars." As part of this training, participants will:

- Examine the concept of equity science as the foundation for inclusive and equitable evaluation methods like culturally responsive and equitable evaluation.
- Discuss the history (and theoretical foundations) of culturally responsive and equitable evaluation.
- Identify the steps to conduct culturally responsive and equitable evaluation.
- Apply culturally responsive and equitable evaluation concepts to an evaluation case study.

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9. Career Development Fellowship in the UK

<https://royalsociety.org/grants-schemes-awards/grants/career-development-fellowship/>

Officially there are no black chemistry or physics professors in the UK, which many scientists say is all the data needed to conclude that UK science is institutionally racist. The Royal Society, the world's oldest scientific academy, which aims to promote excellence in science, has set out its mission to change this with a new funding scheme to help black PhD students make the leap into careers in academic research and hopefully, eventually, become professors.

The Career Development Fellowship **will open to applications on 7 November 2023.** It (CDF) is a four-year, postdoctoral research fellowship that aims to support the retention in STEM of researchers from underrepresented backgrounds. The scheme will initially run as a pilot with researchers from Black heritage.

According to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (Hesa) here are a total of 520 chemistry professors, and 825 in physics. The situation is (a little) better in biosciences where there are five black professors among 1,345, and engineering, which has about 20 black professors out of 1,730.

Among all the sciences, there are a total 70 black professors (0.6% of the total). Of those 70, just 10 are women. Black people make up 4.2% of the population in England and Wales, according to the latest census.

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This Month's News

1. Face of agriculture in Canada changing as farm population declines

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/business/2023/09/02/face-of-agriculture-changing-as-farm-population-continues-decline>

The agriculture industry [in Canada] has undergone dramatic changes over the past century to stay on the cutting edge of innovation with new technology and practices. However, one dimension that hasn't kept pace with the changing times is the profile of people operating the farms.

When federal statisticians overlaid the 2021 Census of Agriculture against the Census of Population, the socioeconomic image of Canada's farm population that emerges is very much tied to the past. Canada's farmers are predominantly white, male, wealthier than other Canadians, hard-working, older, and Christian. There's nothing wrong with these qualities, but they don't mirror how the rest of Canada's population is evolving.

The face of Canadian agriculture is changing, and the pace of that change is picking up, but much of it has to with attrition.

Overall, the farm population continues to shrink and now represents 1.6 per cent of the total Canadian population. Like other Canadian households, farm families are becoming smaller, but that shrinkage is happening faster than the rest of Canada.

The number of female farm operators increased by 2.3 per cent in the 2021 census, which is the first increase since 1991. Women now make up 30.4 per cent of the farm operators in Canada and just under 15 per cent of the one-operator farms.

While newcomers to Canada are gaining a toehold in the industry, they make up less than seven per cent of the farm population, compared to 23.1 per cent for all of Canada.

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2. Canada's new farm team

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-climate-change-young-farmers-canada/>

Many are turning for support to peer-to-peer groups such as Young Agrarians. It was founded in British Columbia in 2012 to connect young farmers with workshops, networking, and even land-sharing programs, which allow them to lease smaller plots of land from established producers. By 2020, Young Agrarians had grown to include Manitoba and Saskatchewan, and the organization continues to expand both its staff and its programming.

The growth in peer-support organizations, some farmers say, is driven by a demand for knowledge-sharing, especially about regenerative farming, which aims to replenish soil quality and help withstand the effects of climate change.

By 2033, 40 per cent of Canadian farm operators will retire, according to a report co-authored by Mr. Yaghi and released by RBC last April. This will coincide with a shortfall of 24,000 general farm, nursery and greenhouse workers.

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3. The Gender Pay Gap

<https://scwist.ca/closing-the-gender-pay-gap/>

The World Economic Forum predicts that it will take over 151 years to achieve gender parity in North America. Closing the gender pay gap is a large factor in achieving gender parity, and yet progress has stalled.

A report by the Canadian Labour Market Information Council shows the women are paid less than men immediately upon graduation from post secondary and that gap widens over the next 5 years – across all fields of study:

- For STEM roles, the gender pay gap starts at 17% and widens to 21%
- For business, health, arts, social sciences & education (BPHASE), the pay gap starts at 9% and widens to 24%.

A recent report funded by Women & Gender Equality Canada – shows that on average – women earned over 13% LESS than men for people aged 25 – 54. The research identified the effects of education, job attributes, industry and demographics – and found that over 63% of the wage gap was unexplained and due to other factors.

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4. Africa's inaugural climate summit ends with mixed reviews

<https://www.devex.com/news/africa-s-inaugural-climate-summit-ends-with-mixed-reviews-106157>

Africa’s first climate summit ended with the adoption of the Nairobi Declaration, which calls for new global taxes to fund climate change action, an increase in Africa’s renewable generation capacity, and a new debt relief architecture.

The three-day summit co-hosted by the Kenyan government and the African Union was the first time the AU had summoned its leaders for a conversation on climate change. It brought together over 20,000 participants including over a dozen heads of state and multilateral organizations.

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5. Africa Climate Summit 2023: Women, Youths Lead The Way To A Green Future

<https://aicra.cgiar.org/news/news-africa-climate-summit-2023-women-youths-lead-way-green-future>

<https://glimafrika.com/africa-climate-summit-2023-women-youths-lead-the-way-to-a-green-future/>

70 Women and youths were selected to showcase their innovations at the Climate Action Innovation Hub, hosted by the African Union Commission. The initiative serves as a platform for innovators whose climate solutions align and operationalise specific ambitions and goals of the Africa Climate Change Strategy.

According to Oxfam’s ‘Climate Finance Shadow Report 2023,’ climate-related development financing is largely gender-blind. Only 2.9 percent of all funding identified gender equality as worth prioritizing. Only one-third of climate finance projects in 2019-2020 mainstreamed gender, meaning that they took into account both women and men’s specific needs, experiences, and concerns.

According to Wambui Muchaba, a pioneering research, awareness, and advocacy expert in Gender and Climate Change, and Programs Director at the Inclusive Climate Change Adaptation for a Sustainable Africa (ICCASA), there are more gaps yet to be filled. She outlines key areas of focus, saying, “We would like to see women have equitable access to land, water, and other critical resources needed for farming and adaptation efforts. We must establish training and capacity-building programs to enhance the skills and knowledge of women in climate resilience and sustainable agriculture. It is crucial to improve data collection on the contributions of women to climate adaptation and resilience. This data can help advocate for increased support and recognition of their efforts. Finally, inclusivity and representation are essential. We must include women in decision-making processes related to climate adaptation and resilience at all levels of governance.”

6. Hunger and hope: Africans tell of desperation and innovation as climate summit meets

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2023/sep/06/from-desperation-to-innovation-africans-on-the-ground-tell-their-stories-as-climate-summit-leaders-meet>

As delegates in Nairobi debate the havoc that climate crisis has wreaked on the continent, we speak to people finding new ways to feed themselves in Kenya, Uganda and South Africa.

African heads of state, ministers, leaders and campaigners are meeting this week in Nairobi for the first climate summit held on the continent. An estimated 30,000 delegates are in the Kenyan capital to debate and lobby governments to keep their commitments to support the people suffering the worst consequences of the climate crisis while contributing the least to its causes.

Africa has been hard hit by climate-related extreme weather, fuelling a severe hunger crisis affecting millions. We speak to people about living on the frontline of the crisis in three African countries, and what can be done to mitigate some of the problems.

7. USA Announces \$15 Million to Support Food Systems in Africa

<https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/press-releases/sep-05-2023-united-states-announces-15-million-support-food-systems-africa>

USAID Deputy Administrator Isobel Coleman and Assistant to the Administrator for the Bureau for Resilience and Food Security Dina Esposito announced new investments to support inclusive and resilient food systems in Africa, including \$15 million to provide targeted support to women, smallholder farmers, and small- and medium-sized businesses in food systems across the continent.

Deputy Administrator Coleman announced a \$4 million investment in VALUE4HER, Africa’s first agribusiness digital marketplace specifically for women. Seventy percent of women-owned small- and medium-sized businesses in developing countries cannot access financial services that meet their needs – a finance gap that drives gender inequality. VALUE4HER, implemented by AGRA, will help women-led agribusiness overcome these barriers by enabling them to build business networks, raise capital, and connect with buyers, financiers, and other service providers.

Sustain Africa is an initiative that coordinates public and private sector partners to help smallholder farmers access affordable fertilizer, strengthen resilience to future fertilizer shocks, and ensure a stable and nutritious food supply. With USAID’s support, the program will expand and improve its ability to track fertilizer price trends and signal when help is needed. This investment enables USAID and its private sector partners to help six million farmers in sub-Saharan Africa successfully grow crops, even in the face of shocks.

Nutritious Foods Financing Facility (N3F): The first of its kind, N3F is an investment fund focused explicitly on improving diet quality and nutrition in sub-Saharan Africa through financing to small- and medium-enterprises involved in the provision of affordable, safe, and nutritious local food. The fund also prioritizes investments that advance gender equality and provide at least 30 percent of all loans to woman-owned or led small- and medium-sized businesses.

8. Why Root Crops Are the Future of Food Security in Africa

<https://www.ipsnews.net/2023/09/root-crops-future-food-security-africa/>

Over the next three decades, the remarkable yet humble yam, sweet potato, cassava and other roots are forecast to create \$140 billion in additional market value. This compares to \$41 billion for rice, millet and maize, and \$70 billion for meat. Meanwhile, banana and plantain are set to add another \$50 billion to this balance sheet.

These hardy, locally suited and cost-effective crops are already staple ingredients across the entire continent, accounting for more than 40 per cent of total food production. Their importance is only growing as farmers, particularly female ones, face more challenging growing conditions and weather extremes.

Yet, despite their affordability and resilience, the starring role of roots, tubers and bananas in Africa’s climate-smart food systems of the future is not guaranteed and relies on the kind of united but agile approach on display at the first Africa Climate Summit recently held in Nairobi, Kenya.

When it comes to adapting to the already inevitable impacts of climate change, root crops can naturally withstand heat and drought better than cereals, legumes and vegetables. Cassava, in particular, is an unusual example of a food crop that may even benefit from rising temperatures, with research suggesting increases in climate suitability of up to 17.5 per cent.

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9. African Women’s Reproductive Rights under Threat

<https://www.ipsnews.net/2023/09/african-womens-reproductive-rights-threat-global-pushback-puts-lives-risk/>

Women’s bodies should not be held captive to choices made by governments or individuals, the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) said, as it launched its flagship State of the World’s Population Report for 2023, released April 2023. According to the UN, more than half of global population growth between now and 2050 is expected to occur in Africa. Africa has the highest rate of population growth among major areas. The population of sub-Saharan Africa is projected to double by 2050. A rapid population increase in Africa is anticipated even if there is a substantial reduction of fertility levels in the near future.

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10. Simplified sewerage systems: Lessons from Dar es Salaam

<https://www.iied.org/simplified-sewerage-systems-lessons-dar-es-salaam>

Recent research conducted with residents of an informal settlement demonstrates how a low-cost solution to pressing sanitation issues can transform lives – and importantly could transform other communities as well.

Mji Mpya, an informal settlement located close to the city centre of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania with a population of approximately 17,000, has a sloped terrain that makes it well suited to a simplified sewerage system SSS. Most residents used pit latrines – simple pits dug between buildings covered with a piece of wood with some very basic covering for privacy. Residents described a wide range of challenges associated with their condition, conflicts around waste disposal and the high cost of maintenance. And access could be hazardous, particularly for elderly or disabled residents – and of course for children.

Simplified sewerage systems (SSSs) have been lauded as an affordable way to provide good quality urban sanitation. These systems use smaller diameter pipes, laid at a shallower depth and with a flatter gradient than conventional sewers, which means lower costs and more flexibility in design. And household toilets are usually part of the installation.

SSSs have been successfully implemented in Brazil and Pakistan, with significant impacts on the health outcomes of connected households, as well as lower costs.

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11. Growing Chilis and Communities in Indonesia

<https://postharvestinstitute.illinois.edu/growing-chilis-and-communities-in-indonesia/>

A farmers' group benefitted from the Rural Empowerment and Agricultural Development Scaling up Initiative (READSI), a large project co-funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the Government of Indonesia. Every month farmers meet with other members of a group based on their main crop. Home gardening is a popular theme for the women's groups, as it allows them to provide organic produce for their families, contribute to household expenses, and stay close to home.

The ADMI blog features a firsthand view of meeting home gardeners in Indonesia, as reported by Anna Snider while on a trip funded by ADM Cares. Anna Snider is an International Agricultural Development Specialist for AgReach and Associate Director of the ADM Institute for the Prevention of Postharvest Loss.

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12. Record number of migrant children in Latin America and Caribbean, UN warns

<https://edition.cnn.com/2023/09/07/americas/unicef-report-latin-america-caribbean-migrant-children-intl-hnk/index.html>

Children are migrating through Latin America and the Caribbean in record numbers, driven by gang violence, poverty, instability and climate change, the United Nations reported Wednesday.

In the first seven months of 2023, more than 60,000 children crossed the Darien Gap, a major migration route and treacherous stretch of jungle that connects South and Central America, more than any other year on record, said the UN's Children Fund, UNICEF. Younger children were making these dangerous journeys at an increasing rate, UNICEF added, with those under 11 years old now accounting for up to 91% of all children moving through key transit points in the region.

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13. 'I want to see the first African woman in space': the Kenyan stargazer bringing astronomy to the people

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2023/sep/18/i-want-to-see-the-first-african-woman-in-space-the-kenyan-stargazer-bringing-astronomy-to-the-people>

Susan Murabana's passion for astronomy was only sparked in her 20s as science was just 'for boys'. Now she tours Kenya with a telescope on a mission to reveal the cosmos to all children. Inspired by the Cosmos Education session, she joined the organisation as a volunteer; five years later she was invited to join Global Hands-On Universe, an educational programme set up by the International Astronomical Union. In 2011, she completed an online master's degree in astronomy with the James Cook University in Australia.

In 2021, Murabana was selected as a Space4Women mentor, a UN programme that pairs women in the space sector with young girls aspiring to careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

"The challenge is that most children, especially in Kenya, have not had a chance to look through a telescope or visit a planetarium, and we are trying to change that. We hope these experiences can widen their views about the world and the opportunities beyond Kenya," says Murabana who also runs kids' space camps in Nairobi.

She estimates that she has shown the wonders of the night sky to 400,000 people since the launch of the Travelling Telescope. They primarily targets schools in remote areas because of the quality of the night sky and because of her mission to give children an opportunity that she wishes had been available to her.

Murabana's passion for astronomy began in her early 20s when her uncle invited her to join a similar outreach session at a school in Mumias, the small rural town in west Kenya where she was living. It was facilitated by Cosmos Education, a charity dedicated to improving science education in developing countries.

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14. Why fighting for gender equality will help save the food system

<https://www.devex.com/news/why-fighting-for-gender-equality-will-help-save-the-food-system-105903>

For Jemimah Njuki, chief of economic empowerment at UN Women, the intersection between agriculture and women’s empowerment has been ever-present. Agriculture is certainly a sector where Njuki feels women are “taken for granted” and are often not benefiting from the labor they put in. She spoke to Devex about why investing in women and prioritizing their power within food production is key to helping food systems improve.

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15. States that Have Passed Universal Free School Meals (So Far)

<https://www.nycfoodpolicy.org/states-that-have-passed-universal-free-school-meals/>

Most American school children do not learn in a school district that offers universal free school lunches. Multiple states have begun to provide free school meals to all students, regardless of income, and many more are considering making the move as per proposed legislation. Many other states are currently planning, drafting, discussing, or negotiating expanded free school meal legislation for the 2023-2024 school year and beyond.

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16. Kenya’s Population Growth Decreases as More Women Embrace Modern Family Planning

<https://www.ipsnews.net/2023/08/kenyas-population-growth-decreases-as-more-women-embrace-modern-family-planning/>

Kenya was ranked among the sub-Saharan nations that had effectively managed to tame the population growth rate by educating and empowering women and young girls through family planning initiatives.

Some of the common family planning methods being used today include sterilization, condoms use, implants, injectable drugs, and pills. The use of these modern contraceptives, however, varies by region.

From the report, more women in rural areas were also opting to limit the number of children they were having as opposed to the past, where the decision was not easy for them to make due to factors like lack of education, traditions, and limited access to health facilities.

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Reports, Publications, Resources

1. Gender, climate finance and inclusive low-carbon transitions

<https://www.iied.org/21601iied>

Climate change will have significant long-term impacts on people, ecosystems, and the global economy. To avoid catastrophic impacts, the world must mobilise finance at scale to deliver rapid and substantial low-carbon transitions across sectors and regions. Evidence shows that climate finance is not reaching those who need it most. Despite the significant climate risks faced by women and girls, only 2.3% of climate finance intends to principally support gender equality. Low-carbon transitions must be designed with proper understanding of contextual gender inequalities.

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2. Preventing sexual exploitation and abuse: A guide for Canadian organizations on basic legal concepts

<https://digna.ca/psea-a-guide-for-canadian-organizations-on-basic-legal-concepts/>

The guide addresses legal frameworks regulating prevention of and responses to sexual misconduct. In particular, the LWG provides information about:

- Duty of care required by organizations to ensure that their volunteers, employees, and program participants are protected from sexual abuse, harassment, and exploitation;
- Basic principles organizations should consider when developing policy and conducting internal investigations;
- Criminal law responses in Canada and abroad.

Finally, the LWG provides a brief overview of intentional consideration to protect traditionally equity-seeking groups who are LGBTQ2I, Indigenous, ethnic and religious minorities, and disabled persons, among others.

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3. Animal Rearer Award for Women appreciate farmer-training videos on herbal medicines in animal healthcare

<https://www.accessagriculture.org/news/winners-animal-rearer-award-women-appreciate-farmer-training-videos-herbal-medicines-animal>

Women livestock rearers, who attended the 'Animal Rearer Award for Women' ceremony organised by the NGO Anthra in Pune, Maharashtra, India, greatly appreciated the farmer-training videos on herbal medicines in animal healthcare, that were jointly developed by Anthra and Access Agriculture.

Men and women involved in animal husbandry from various districts of Maharashtra state attended the event, which recognised and honoured 10 exceptional women livestock rearers.

Atul Pagar, a key partner of Access Agriculture, took the initiative to show to the participants the videos, 'Herbal medicine against fever in livestock' and 'Natural ways to manage bloat in livestock'.

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4. Book review: STEM Moms

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

Cassie Leonard is an aerospace engineer, founder & CEO of ELMM Coaching and a mother of two boys. *STEM Moms: Design, Build, and Test to Create the Work-Life of Your Dreams* is a workbook with practical advice for caregivers who want to thrive in their STEM career- without burnout. Co-founder/CEO of Mothers in Science, Isabel Torres, read the book and says "STEM Moms is a transformative guide that empowers mothers and caregivers in STEM fields to unlock their potential while maintaining a healthy work-life balance. By sharing her own journey and wisdom with honesty and humour, Cassie makes this book feel like having a supportive mentor by your side. [...] This concise, engaging book is a must-have for mothers navigating a STEM career, nurturing their success and ensuring they thrive, not just survive."

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5. Market analysis and development: building sustainable forest and farm-based smallholder businesses

<https://www.iied.org/market-analysis-development-building-sustainable-forest-farm-based-smallholder-businesses>

<https://youtu.be/o2dJlBrF4jY?list=PL1iUHL94bWo7bwxpqjOgt7N3r38qiREME>

In March 2023 the Forest and Farm Facility (FFF) ran refresher training on the market analysis and development (MA&D) approach designed to enable local forest and farm producers to develop sustainable income-generating enterprises.

The FFF is committed to increasing entrepreneurship as well as access to markets and finance through business development services within forest and farm producer organisations (FFPOs), and FFPO members took part in a four-day online course about the MA&D approach.

This approach empowers local producers, manufacturers and traders to be primary actors in planning and developing equitable and sustainable enterprises. The MA&D methodology is based on participatory principles and empowerment rather than on direct intervention in people’s livelihoods. It uses a facilitative approach to help ‘entrepreneurs’ rather than ‘beneficiaries’ know and control all elements of their enterprises.

The fully participatory training course ran over four 2.5-hour sessions.

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6. Four Ways Women Can Help to End the Middle East’s Water Crisis

<https://views-voices.oxfam.org.uk/2023/07/four-ways-women-end-middle-east-water-crisis/>

Women In the Middle East and North Africa are too often seen as simply water consumers or as water managers just of their own households. They are not given the voice and agency to control water at wider community or institutional levels. Far too often, they are prevented from negotiating access to water – then left to manage the burden of scarcity.

Yet we know we must put women at the heart of water policy and interventions for these to be successful and meet the needs of all users. In this blog, Sally Abi Khalil looks at four key principles of feminist water management that can deliver water equitably and effectively.

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7. Taking care of you on the farm

<https://www.fcc-fac.ca/en/knowledge/taking-care-of-you-on-the-farm.html>

In an attempt to juggle the different roles and responsibilities thrust upon us by culture, society and even industry, our enoughness may come into question more often than we would like.

Women tend to experience times of ‘should-ing ourselves,’ where we seriously wonder who we should be, what we should look like, how we should spend our time, etc. It’s no different for women in the agriculture industry, except there’s the added pressure of how we fit into the farm business.

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8. Girls in Science – Ice Cream Factory

<https://youtu.be/cn0t7blGxs8>

The Canadian Association of Girls in Science was created in 1992 by Dr. Larissa Vingilis-Jaremko when she was only 9 years old. The goal of the program is to support young women who are interested in getting involved in Science Technology, Trades, Engineering and Mathematics.

Chapman Ice Cream has partnered with CAGIS for the season two premiere of their behind-the-scenes series, Off Limits. Join Dr. Larissa and our very own Research & Development Manager, Tammy, as they experiment with some wacky and wonderful ice cream flavours.

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9. The Enslaved Teen Who Cracked Vanilla’s Secret

<https://www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-23-ideas/clip/16009458-the-enslaved-teen-who-cracked-vanillas-secret>

<https://www.cbc.ca/radio/ideas/history-vanilla-slavery-jhi-lecture-eric-jennings-1.6964317>

Vanilla may well be the world’s most popular flavour. Its history is intertwined with the institution of slavery, scientific discovery, geopolitics and one individual’s breathtaking resilience. Scholar Eric Jennings shares the troubled, yet inspiring, history of vanilla, in his June 2023 lecture for the Jackman Humanities Institute.

In 1841, Edmond Albius, an enslaved 12-year-old, was living and working on Île Bourbon (now Île de la Réunion) — a small island in the Indian Ocean (some 900 km east of Madagascar).

"Like many brilliant inventions, Edmond's appears disarmingly simple, but only after the fact. What he did was discover a straight-forward and efficient way of artificially pollinating the vanilla orchid in just a matter of seconds, using only a toothpick or a needle. Equally astonishing is the fact that he actually received credit for his method, despite several other botanists who tried to rob him of it," Jennings explained in his talk.

"Edmond's 1841 discovery changed everything. *Vanilla planifolia*, the main species of edible vanilla, could now be grown outside of the range of vanilla's natural pollinator, the Central American Melipona bee. French settlers introduced the Edmond Albius technique to Mexico. The world soon experienced a vanilla craze."

It was the simplicity of his method that made it so appealing, as it enabled the rapid pollinating of a vanilla orchid with the help of only a needle.

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10. Addressing gender in climate information production and communication in West Africa: are we on track?

<https://aicra.cgiar.org/publications/addressing-gender-climate-information-production-and-communication-west-africa-are-we>

Abstract

West African women, youth and marginalized people are particularly exposed to the adverse effects of climate change and variability, because of their very limited access to climate services and information. These disadvantaged people must be extensively involved in training and capacity building on understanding climate risks and response options to cope with these hazards. It is imperative to mainstream the opinions of women, youth and marginalized people in the production, dissemination, communication and use of climate services and information in West Africa.

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11. Designing for change through “reflecting and doing”: the CGIAR Community of Practice on Gender-Transformative Research Methodologies

<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fsufs.2023.1179503/full>

Gender-transformative change requires a commitment from everyone involved in agricultural research for development (AR4D) including organizations at international and national level, individual researchers and practitioners, farmers, development agencies, policy-makers and consumers, to transform the existing values, practices and priorities that (re)produce and perpetuate gender biases and inequities in agrifood systems. However, the adoption of a gender transformative agenda can be challenging, especially for AR4D organizations whose primary focus is not necessarily the attainment of gender equality. This paper looks at a collective, bottom-up, transformative effort within the AR4D organization of CGIAR. It advances the emerging CGIAR Community of Practice on Gender Transformative Research

Methodologies (GTRM-CoP) as a case study to explore the potential of CoPs as social learning systems that create the conditions for transformation-oriented learning. Driven by an ethos of reflecting and doing anchored in critical and feminist principles and social learning praxis, the GTRM-CoP aims to be a safe space to spur reflexivity, creativity and collaboration to support existing work on gender transformation in CGIAR while re-imagining how gender in AR4D is conceptualized, negotiated and advanced. The paper focuses on the process leading to the development of the CoP, that is, designing for change, which is crucial for sustained transformation.

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12. Are wheat-based farming systems in South Asia feminizing?

<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fsufs.2023.1174280/full>

This article pulls together the state of knowledge on the degree to which wheat-based systems in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Pakistan, are feminizing. It is not yet possible to make definitive statements. However, it is clear that wheat-based systems are undergoing far-reaching changes in relation to “who does what” and “who decides.” There are some commonalities across all four countries. Intersectionalities shape women’s identities and abilities to exert their agency. Purdah is a cultural norm in many locations. Nevertheless, each country displays different meta-trends. In Nepal managerial feminization is increasing unlike in Pakistan. Women in Bangladesh spend the least time in field work whereas in other countries they are often strongly engaged. There are strong local variations within countries as well which we explore. Establishing the extent of feminization is challenging because studies ask different questions, operate at different levels, and are rarely longitudinal. Researchers often construct men as primary farmers, leading to a failure to find out what men and women really do and decide. This diminishes the value of many studies. Cultural perceptions of honor can make men respondents reluctant to report on women’s agency and women can be reluctant to claim agency openly. We provide suggestions for better research and urge support to women as workers and decision-makers.

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13. Unlocking the potential of climate-smart sorghum in Ethiopia

<https://idrc-crddi.ca/en/research-in-action/unlocking-potential-climate-smart-sorghum-ethiopia>

By developing and deploying key technologies, researchers from the Climate-smart interventions for smallholder farmers in Ethiopia project are working to reduce the risk of crop failure, increase productivity and create new economic opportunities for women-led businesses. The technologies include drought-tolerant sorghum varieties, improved management practices, small-scale threshers, farm-scale grain storage systems, value-added sorghum products and linkages with new markets.

Research highlights

- More than 8,800 sorghum farmers reached with climate-smart technologies.
- Threshing time for 0.5 ha of sorghum grain reduced from one day to four hours.
- Improved varieties increased average yields by more than 40%.

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