



Parkland area of Manitoba, Canada. Photo courtesy of D. Ceplis.

The Gender Equality Mainstreaming (GEM) Digest provides a compilation of information and articles gathered on an ongoing basis on gender equality mainstreaming within agriculture, scientific research, rural development, climate change, organizational development and international development. Information is shared with members, colleagues, scientific societies and diverse organizations.

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

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

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## Opportunities and Coming Events

### 1. 231 Calls for Justice - Fall 2024 Online Course

<https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/mdp/>

This Special Topics course from the University of Winnipeg’s Master’s in Development Practice: Indigenous Development program takes an approach to understand the final report of the National Inquiry into Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA persons – Reclaiming Power and Place and the 231 Calls for Justice. From examining the history of the road to the Inquiry, implementing documents and scope of the Inquiry, and findings. The course will provide an opportunity to develop an Indigenous and community- based responses to the implementation of 231 Calls for Justice.

**Wednesdays starting September 4, 2024 to November 27, 2024, 6 pm to 8:45 pm CST.** For more information, please contact: Tamara Dionne Stout, [ta.stout@uwinnipeg.ca](mailto:ta.stout@uwinnipeg.ca), 204-297-2860

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### 2. STEM Program Coordinator, Wii Chiiwaakanak Learning Centre

**\*Term\***

<https://www.northstarats.com/University-of-Winnipeg/STEM-Program-Coordinator-Wii-Chiiwaakanak-Learning-Centre-Term/84730>

Wii Chiiwaakanak means "partners" in Anishinabemowin and is an outreach initiative through The University of Winnipeg that provides educational, learning and capacity building opportunities in Winnipeg’s inner city. The Wii Chiiwaaknak Learning Centre provides the community with free and open access to computers at the RBC Community Learning Commons, the North West Company Heritage room, free community learning, computer classes, after school homework clubs, and cultural programs.

The Learning Centre is hiring a STEM Program Coordinator for a full-time term position. The successful candidate will be responsible coordinating the growing STEM education and learning programs at the Wii Chiiwaakanak Learning Centre.

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### 3. Webinar: Mobilizing IPCC Evidence on Gender, Equity, and Justice in Climate Change Adaptation

<https://www.iisd.org/events/webinar-mobilizing-ipcc-evidence-gender-equity-and-justice-climate-change-adaptation>

The 6th Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) – Working Group II on Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability includes more references to gender, equity, and justice than any previous IPCC report. This evidence is needed by policy-makers and practitioners working to advance climate change adaptation; however, the length and technical nature of the IPCC reports make it difficult to capture and apply the key messages. In this webinar, IPCC authors, researchers, practitioners, and advocates will discuss the key findings of the IPCC related to gender, equity, and justice and explore how they can be applied, towards more just and effective adaptation.

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## 4. Association for International Agricultural and Extension Education- Call for Proposals

<https://www.aiaee.org/2025aiaeeconference>

The Association for International Agricultural and Extension Education (AIAEE) Scholarly Activities Committee is requesting proposals for refereed abstracts to be presented at the 41st annual conference. The conference theme is *From the Highlands to the Islands: Bridging Community Learning and Development through Extension*. 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, evaluation, and international development. Professionals from academia and applied practice are encouraged to submit their work for consideration. The conference is being held in **Scotland in April 2025. Deadline to submit abstracts: Tuesday, October 1, 2024, by 11:59 PM EDT**

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## 5. From Crop to Cup: Measuring Farmer Wellbeing in the Coffee Supply Chain

[https://60decibels.zoom.us/webinar/register/2017241490148/WN\\_9dPyUFFRTfeBY4FQicrUUQ#/registration](https://60decibels.zoom.us/webinar/register/2017241490148/WN_9dPyUFFRTfeBY4FQicrUUQ#/registration)

Buying a cup of Joe? Wouldn't it be great if you knew how Joe, or José, or Jessica, or Jeremiah the farmer was living thanks to your purchase? Despite all the labels on our food, knowing if farmers are surviving or thriving is nearly impossible, and we want to change that. A first step in that direction: this week we published the 60dB Coffee Farmer Thriving Index in partnership with the Small Foundation and coffee roasters Counter Culture and Thanksgiving Coffee. We listened to more than 3,000 farmers to learn how they're really doing. Here's a taste of what we heard:

- More than 33% of Ugandan coffee farmers reported no profit last year, with 21% experiencing losses.
- Despite this, 73% of growers plan to increase their investment in coffee, showing optimism for the future.

**Webinar on October 8, 2024.** Join us to dig into key insights from the Coffee Farmer Thriving Index, a pioneering tool designed to consistently measure and compare the well-being of coffee farmers. Explore whether farmers in coffee supply chains are thriving, or barely surviving with an expert panel representing the sector.

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## 6. Advancing Women Conference – East, 2024

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

Whether you are in a career with an organization, starting your own business, looking for your dream job, running your own farming operation, operating a company in ag or food, or want to hone our overall life skills, this conference is for you!

**November 17-19, 2024, Niagara Falls, Ontario**

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## **1. What Potential Do Gender Bonds Have For Increasing Financing For Gender Equality?**

<https://www.ipsnews.net/2024/08/potential-gender-bonds-increasing-financing-gender-equality/>

Iceland's gender bond last month caused great excitement in the capital markets community. While gender bonds have been increasing in popularity within the private sector, Iceland is the first country to issue a sovereign gender bond. Many in the development community are however asking, are gender bonds the solution to financing for gender equality?

So, what are gender bonds? Gender bonds are bonds that integrate gender equality objectives or the empowerment of women. Gender bonds follow the Social Bond Principles established by the International Capital Market Association and contribute to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5), and are verified by independent entities, known as second-party opinions.

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## **2. Empowering Women for a Green Future: AFPPD Conference Tackles Climate Change and Gender Equality**

<https://www.ipsnews.net/2024/08/empowering-women-green-future-afppd-conference-tackles-climate-change-gender-equality/>

Robust data collection, integrated policies, and an accelerated push towards a green economy with a gender focus topped the agenda at a conference in Islamabad, Pakistan, that brought together policymakers, experts, and advocates from across the Asia-Pacific region.

The conference, with the theme Gender Empowerment for a Green Economy, focused on critical issues at the intersection of gender equality, climate change, and sustainable development. Held on August 12 and 13, 2024, it was convened by the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD).

Toshiko Abe, MP and State Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology of Japan, emphasized the AFPPD's role. She said the organization plays a crucial role in addressing gender issues, particularly in countries where women's equality is lagging. She commended the collective efforts of Asian countries towards a gendered green economy.

However, Latika Maskey Pradhan, Deputy Representative of UNFPA Pakistan, warned that the full potential of women remains untapped, constrained by social norms, discriminatory practices, and limited access to resources and decision-making spaces.

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## **3. Amid climate change in the Horn of Africa, camels pose an opportunity**

<https://www.devex.com/news/amid-climate-change-in-the-horn-of-africa-camels-pose-an-opportunity-108076>

Some 540,000 pastoralists in Kenya, Somalia, and Ethiopia are part of a regional program to create more sustainable and climate-resilient livelihoods through stronger livestock markets. The 13.7 million Swiss franc (about \$15.9 million) initiative, funded by the Swiss government and implemented by Mercy Corps, also aims to economically empower local women: They comprise half of the participants.

A broader shift underway in this drought-prone region has taken place where pastoralists have long relied on cows for their livelihoods and diets. Years' worth of failed rainy seasons have killed entire herds as water sources dried up and left pastures desiccated so that cows had nothing to eat or drink. Camels, on the other hand, are better adapted to a hotter,

drier climate and can produce more milk. Lately, local people and international funders alike see them as an opportunity and potential saving grace.

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#### **4. Parasites in ponds and rivers cause female genital schistosomiasis**

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/article/2024/aug/02/pain-organ-damage-infertility-the-neglected-disease-that-leaves-millions-of-women-in-agony-female-genital-schistosomiasis-kenya>

Female genital schistosomiasis (FGS) occurs from the small parasitic worms in some of the water bodies that rural families use for all their water. FGS affects an estimated 56 million women and girls, mostly in sub-Saharan Africa, but remains a largely unknown, neglected condition. Easily treated if diagnosed quickly, if left untreated it can lead to reproductive organ damage, infertility, and it now being associated with an increased susceptibility to HIV.

The waterborne parasite infects women and girls who live in rural areas and rely on the open water of rivers and ponds for cooking, cleaning, bathing and washing clothes.

FGS can be treated with praziquantel, a drug that kills parasitic worms and is routinely given to schoolchildren in endemic areas. However, the drug is less effective the longer the disease goes undetected. Low demand for praziquantel suggests low diagnosis of FGS, say medics.

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#### **5. Rural Development Partnership between Canada and Ghana**

<https://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/projects/the-bcdi-2030-scholarship-project/>

Scholarship recipient Akua Afrakoma Osei has a keen interest in the development within rural-urban fringes, a passion that was ignited in 2021 when she was opportune to work as an assistant extension officer in predominantly rural areas in Ghana. With this experience, Akua envisions a future where rural communities would thrive rather than survive. She is eager to further refine her research skills and actively participate in research initiatives aimed at rural economic development.

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#### **6. India needs collective action to combat violence against women**

<https://newint.org/democracy/2024/india-needs-collective-action-combat-violence-against-women>

As reported in May: With the Indian general elections underway, there are two different narratives on women doing the rounds. One is that of women-led development, development that not only benefits women but that is driven by women's leadership.

The second has continued to simmer under political dog whistles. Violence against women in the private, public and online sphere is still rampant in India and limits the extent to which women feel safe to participate in public life.

Concerns about safety limit the movements of too many women – including when they step out to work. It's not surprising that so many are still working in low-paid jobs with fewer prospects for career development, or so-called 'feminine' jobs where they might have more female colleagues or be able to stay closer to home and avoid negotiating public spaces.

*For the world's largest democracy, India's June election results delivered a message to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party, which lost its parliamentary majority.*

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## 7. Dalhousie sociologist receives \$1.9M to cultivate network aimed at reducing emissions in Canadian agriculture

<https://www.dal.ca/news/2024/04/04/agriculture-emissions-dalhousie-karen-foster.html>

Dr. Karen Foster was selected to lead a \$1.9-million initiative supported by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council to develop a new national research network that supports an equitable transition to net-zero in Canadian agriculture and its periphery industries.

“Climate change is a relationship problem, which is a perspective that you mainly get from the social sciences and humanities,” says Dr. Foster. “We need to understand what are the right relationships between urban and rural Canada to facilitate technological change? What are the right relationships between people and food, people and the environment. These relationship issues need to be sorted out in order to advance on net zero.”

Dr. Foster says culture needs to be a key consideration, highlighting that carbon-reduction policies must reflect the needs and rights of equity deserving groups like African Nova Scotians and Indigenous people residing in Canada. “It’s clear that African Nova Scotians and Indigenous people are focused on food sovereignty, food security is not enough,” she says. “It’s not about just making sure people have access to food, it’s about the freedom and the power to control every aspect of the way food is produced, distributed, and consumed.”

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## 8. How UN Women’s coding program is unlocking opportunities for African girls

<https://www.devex.com/news/how-un-women-s-coding-program-is-unlocking-opportunities-for-african-girls-108043>

Access to digital technologies is a gateway to opportunities, yet many women and girls in Africa face significant barriers that hinder their ability to participate fully in the digital world. These barriers limit their educational and economic prospects and expose them to online violence, with studies showing that 16% to 58% of women and girls have been targeted.

The African Girls Can Code Initiative led by UN Women is tackling these challenges head-on, Devex contributor Madalitso Wills Kateta writes. Launched in 2018, this Pan-African program teaches girls aged 15 to 25 with coding and programming skills, positioning them to become future leaders in technology. As the demand for STEM jobs grows — expected to account for 50% of future employment — this initiative is crucial.

Despite progress, challenges remain. Systemic barriers, harmful social norms, and limited access to technology continue to restrict women’s participation in the digital economy. However, efforts such as Rwanda’s collaboration with UN Women, which helps women entrepreneurs adapt to digital platforms, and the Malawi Girls Can Code Too project, which aims to equip 7,500 girls with essential digital skills, show promise.

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## Reports, Publications, Resources

### 1. Why Gender, Equity, and Justice Are Key to Adaptation

<https://napglobalnetwork.org/resource/summarizing-evidence-for-gender-responsive-national-adaptation-plan-nap-processes/>

A growing body of research shows the importance of ensuring that adaptation planning processes are inclusive of all, especially those most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. This includes the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which produces the most comprehensive state-of-the-knowledge reports on climate change, impacts, risks, and adaptation. These assessment reports are foundational documents for evidence-based decision making on climate action. The most recent report, the 6th Assessment Report of the IPCC – Working Group II on Impacts, Adaptation, and

Vulnerability (the WGII report), includes more references to gender, equity, and justice than any previous IPCC report, reflecting the large quantity of scientific literature on the importance of incorporating these considerations into climate change adaptation efforts. However, references to gender, equity, and justice are woven throughout the more than 3,000 pages of the report, which may make it difficult for policy-makers and practitioners to distil the key messages and apply them in their work.

This brief provides a summary of the key messages related to gender, equity, and justice that are found throughout the WGII report, making them more accessible to decision-makers and highlighting the importance of, and future opportunities for, gender-responsive and socially inclusive approaches to adaptation. It is important to note that this policy brief presents a snapshot of the research included in the WGII report. The information presented is strictly based on the content of the IPCC report. Consequently, some issues that are relevant to discussions of gender, equity, and justice in adaptation may not be captured, because they do not feature in the report. We hope that this policy brief will contribute to evidence-based decision making in NAP processes to address the social and gender dimensions of adaptation to climate change.

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## 2. Addressing Rural Youth Unemployment with Green Jobs

<https://efficiencyforaccess.org/publications/green-jobs-for-rural-youth/>

A new report from Efficiency for Access provides the first comprehensive analysis of employment levels and trends in green, agriculture-based jobs in India, Kenya, Nigeria, and Uganda.

Youth unemployment is at an all-time high in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. At the same time, populations are growing rapidly in these regions, increasing the need for meaningful employment opportunities. Decentralized renewable energy (DRE) technologies offer a promising solution by creating sustainable growth and green jobs. DRE technologies generate green electricity near the point of use, reducing reliance on centralized power plants, increasing productivity, and improving sustainability. This creates new and enhanced employment opportunities in rural communities, particularly in agriculture, the largest employer in these regions, with 50% to 85% of the labor force working in the sector. However, high upfront costs, limited product availability, lack of awareness of the benefits, and shortage of local talent hinder the widespread adoption of DRE technologies in emerging economies.

This new research fills many of the data gaps in this sector by analyzing four countries, and quantifying the jobs created by DRE technologies in agriculture. It also provides the first comprehensive estimate of employment levels and trends at the country level.

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## 3. Motherhood penalty and the gender gap in STEM and medicine

<https://academic.oup.com/eurheartj/article/45/31/2800/7688902> and <https://doi.org/10.1093/eurheartj/ehae262>

The representation of women in leadership positions within the STEMM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and medicine) sector remains disappointingly low, even in disciplines where women outnumber men in graduate school. Although discussions about the causes of this so-called STEMM leaky pipeline have long focused on gender biases and stereotypes, in recent years, the motherhood penalty is increasingly being recognized as a major contributing factor. Mothers in Science is a global non-profit organization that advocates for mothers in STEMM and creates evidence-based solutions to promote equity and inclusion of caregivers. Since its launch in 2019, this rapidly growing organization has conducted ground-breaking research and created multiple resources to empower mothers in STEMM across the world and transform the global STEMM landscape into an inclusive system that values diversity and supports work–life balance.

A recent study conducted in the USA found that ~43% of mothers left their full-time STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) positions after becoming parents, with 71% of those moving to an entirely different sector citing ‘family-related’ reasons for their career shift.

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## 4. An interview with pioneering cheese maker, Fabiola della Pria

<https://youtu.be/LFyvoQiam-8>

Discover the inspiring story of Fabiola della Pria, a pioneering female cheese maker who transformed her passion into a successful business. Over the past seven years, she has built her company from the ground up, overcoming numerous obstacles and proving that with hard work and dedication, anything is possible.

Congratulations to Fabiola on winning second place amongst the best cheeses of North America within the Fresh and Unripe Spanish/Portuguese category at the 2024 American Cheese Society Annual conference in Buffalo NY with her Minas Frescal Cheese.

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## 5. Selest Morley – HR Manager with Louis Dreyfus Canada – talks about her career in agriculture

<https://mwaf.ca/selest-morley-hr-manager-with-louis-dreyfus-canada-talks-about-her-career-in-agriculture/>

"In life, sometimes the right door opens when you least expect it. Or when you least plan for it. I was enjoying the sunny days of maternity leave with my small children. But I knew that an HR role with LDC Yorkton was a door that would not re-open in the near future. And by going back to work early from a maternity leave to a job that would provide me with more work-life balance and job satisfaction, I would be a better and happier working mom to my family."

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## 6. Forced to Flee

<https://foodgrainsbank.ca/forced-to-flee/>

The Canadian Foodgrains Bank has developed a new version of Forced to Flee, one of our educational activities to engage Canadians in deeper conversations and learning about how forced migration is a contributor to food insecurity.

Forced to Flee is an experiential activity to learn about the experiences of people forced to flee their homes. During the activity, participants join a "family unit" and make difficult decisions during conflict and forced migration. To maintain their supply of food, money, and health while securing their future post-conflict, participants are presented with real-life scenarios and choices, each accompanied by upfront and/or hidden costs.

Try out the new Forced to Flee simulation designed for individual use. If you would be interested in taking a large group through this experience, contact Canadian Foodgrains Bank at [forcedtoflee@foodgrainsbank.ca](mailto:forcedtoflee@foodgrainsbank.ca) for more information or to request a Foodgrains Bank staff member to attend your event and lead the Forced to Flee simulation.

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## 7. Book - Unrooted: Botany, Motherhood, and the Fight to Save an Old Science

<https://botany.one/2024/06/confronting-the-realities-of-motherhood-in-the-world-of-science/>

*Unrooted: Botany, Motherhood, and the Fight to Save an Old Science*, is a unique combination of personal narrative and botanical history that takes readers through the personal journey of a woman who experienced what many others have or have considered going through at some point in their career.

Zimmerman gives the full scope of the tribulations experienced by a person working in an overlooked field and as a woman in science. Zimmerman discusses her time working in herbaria and collecting plant specimens, while navigating the conflicts



of life as a woman. She reveals her difficulties dealing with creating a functional work-life balance in a field that praises those without one, a common issue for many in academia and science that certainly needs to be addressed.

This book is great for adults just starting out their careers or are looking for a fresh perspective from different experiences, and is relatable to anyone in academia or other intense careers. Her reality will relate to women of all ages who have been or still are in the rigor of academia and open the eyes of those who are not.

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## **8. Clean Energy Boosts Autonomy for Brazilian Women Farmers – VIDEO**

<https://www.ipsnews.net/2024/08/clean-energy-empowers-brazilian-women-farmers-video/>

A community bakery, family production of fruit pulp, and the recovery of water springs are some of the initiatives of the Energy of Women of the Earth, organised since 2017 in the state of Goiás, in central-western Brazil. A common resource is non-conventional renewable energy sources, such as solar and biomass, which are fundamental to the projects' economic viability and environmental sustainability.

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## **9. Resources for Small and Medium Organizations SMOs**

<https://spurchangeresource.ca/en/smo-resource-list/>

Spur Change has prepared a new page with a full list of all trainings, webinars, and resources we've created over the past 5 years. Find resources on project management, results-based management, SMOs sharing their case studies, and more at the link. This includes the following webinars:

- Presented in collaboration with Oxfam Canada, Plan Canada and MEDA this webinar looks at how to apply feminist principles to monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning (MEAL) practice.
- During this webinar, the Fund for Innovation and Transformation shares some gender tools, approaches and lessons learned from their program to better support SMOs seeking to test innovative solutions that advance gender equality.

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