July 1, 2025

GEM Digest of the Month



White Admiral butterflies, Limenitis arthemis, on cotoneaster shrub and Hazel leaf. Photo courtesy of D. Ceplis.

Published monthly since December 2009 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 <u>dinah.ceplis@gmail.com</u> to compile and re-distribute once a month.

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Opportunities and Coming Events

1. Want to make change happen? Check out this free online course

https://frompoverty.oxfam.org.uk/want-to-make-change-happen-check-out-this-free-online-course/

https://www.open.edu/openlearncreate/course/index.php?categoryid=1457

From understanding power dynamics to getting to grips with systems thinking to designing influencing strategies, the "Make Change Happen" course from Oxfam and the Open University aims to help anyone who wants to make lasting social and political change.

The 12-hour online course from Oxfam is now on a new platform (in partnership with the UK's Open University) and has been revised, updated, and translated. It will now be available in English, French, Spanish, and Arabic.

Rather than having to follow a fixed timetable, learners can now start the course at any time and take the time they need to complete the units with no deadline. Certificates are available on completion.

2. Soils For Our Future 2025 Conference

https://mbsoils.ca/Events/annual-general-meeting/

The SOILS FOR OUR FUTURE 2025 Conference brings together three conference events: 5th Global Soil Security Conference, Canadian Society of Soil Science Annual Meeting, and International Union of Soil Sciences Division 1 – Soils In Space and Time Meeting. July 20-25, 2025. RBC Convention Centre in Winnipeg, Manitoba Canada.

Hosted by the Soil Conservation Council of Canada and the Manitoba Soil Science Society. With over 700 researchers, industry members, leaders of farmer organizations, graduate students and other attendees, the SOILS FOR OUR FUTURE 2025 Conference provides global perspective to today's research to sustain our future.

Spanning five days, the conference provides attendees of the events to meet in plenary/technical sessions with their individual organizations and for all to come together in person for keynote sessions, tradeshow, posters, workshops and field tours. Because of the large number of attendees and concurrent activities, the conference will be held in person only.

3. 1st International Conference on Canadian Agri-food & Rural Advisory, Extension, and Education (CAREE)

https://caree.ca/

Scholarly and policy discussions, both globally and regionally, have long been captivated by a compelling question: Does Canada possess a truly effective agri-food and rural extension and advisory service? While Canada boasts a rich legacy of success in crop production, livestock management, environmental stewardship, and rural support, there remains a conspicuous gap. A Canadian conference focusing on local, provincial/state, regional and international issues related to agriculture & rural advisory, extension and education. A focus on interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral learning from researchers, educators, students, government officials, policymakers, advisory professionals, producer organizations, community-based organizations, technology/input providers, farmer and community leaders.

Conference location: Guelph, Ontario, Canada. 29-31 October 2025. A limited number of seats are available for online/remote participation.

This Month's News

1. Gender equality was sidelined during the Canadian election.

https://www.policyalternatives.ca/news-research/gender-equality-was-sidelined-during-the-election-its-time-for-a-reset/

The decline in the number of female candidates running was one of the most visible signs of the change in the political landscape. Women made up just 36 per cent of the Liberal roster, down from 43 per cent in 2021, and even less (23 per cent) among Conservatives.

At the time of writing, 102 women are on their way to Ottawa pending the outcome of the recounts, one short of the 2021 total. Women will make up a smaller share of MPs than in the last parliament—29.7 per cent vs 30.5 per cent—the first decline since 2004.

This places Canada even further down the league table for representation of women in parliaments worldwide—in 73rd place—behind eight of 10 provincial legislatures. More than half (52.7 per cent) of the legislators in British Columbia are women, just to drive this point home.

The lack of focus on key issues affecting gender equality and impacting women—such as child care, precarious housing, fair wages, and gender-based violence—did not reflect a lack of concern among voters. The very high cost of living, astronomical rents, the state of Canada's care economy all figured at the top of public opinion polls throughout the election.

This election has shown us that we can't be complacent about progress on gender equality. The right has weaponized women's rights and gender equality, and their attack on "woke ideology" is a Trojan horse for regressive policies of all kinds. Our response cannot be silence.

2. AgZero: Using alternative data and advanced technologies to reduce response burden on farmers

https://www.statcan.gc.ca/en/trust/modernization/agzero

Like other data users, farmers want timely, accurate and detailed data, while completing the least number of traditional surveys. That is why in April 2019, Statistics Canada set a goal to move beyond a survey-first approach by replacing survey data with data from administrative sources.

This project, dubbed AgZero, is using alternative data sources and advanced technologies, such as Earth Observation data and machine learning, to reduce the response burden on farmers to as close to zero as possible by 2026.

By 2026, farmers will spend less time answering survey questions.

https://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p2SV.pl?Function=getSurvey&SDDS=3401&utm_source=email&utm_medium=stakehol der&utm_campaign=statcan-statcan-agriculture

As of July 31, 2025, data for the on-farm stocks component of principal field crops will be modelled using survey estimates and administrative data. Modelled estimates for on-farm grain stocks were first introduced back in May 2023 for the March release, replacing direct survey collection. The use of this model will now be implemented for the July release, meaning that as of June 2025, the June Field Crop Survey will no longer be used to collect stock data.

3. Six agriculture leaders named Canadian Agricultural Hall of Fame

https://www.producer.com/daily/six-agriculture-leaders-named-canadian-agricultural-hall-of-fame/

Six prominent figures from across Canada's agricultural sector are set to join the Canadian Agricultural Hall of Fame this fall. The induction ceremony will take place Saturday, Nov. 8, in Victoria, B.C.

The 2025 inductees include John Anderson, Dori Gingera-Beauchemin, Gaétan Desroches, Joe Hudson, Dennis Laycraft and Peter Sikkema, according to a June 16 press release.

4. How women lead with confidence in agriculture

https://www.country-guide.ca/features/how-women-lead-with-confidence-in-agriculture/

Summer Series: While women working in agriculture is certainly not as rare as it used to be, gender biases haven't kept pace with the change. But with the help of peers and industry learning opportunities women are confidently stepping into leadership roles.

Although the number of women working in leadership positions in agriculture is increasing, women are still in the minority and continue to experience gender bias, according to a recent survey by the Canadian Agricultural and Human Resources Council (CAHRC).

In their 2025 survey of agricultural leaders, 40 per cent of the 431 female respondents said that they believed there were barriers to women advancing in agriculture but only 6 per cent of men believed barriers exist. (Women in their twenties and thirties were more likely to report barriers than the average; the proportion of women reporting barriers tended to decrease with age.)

The challenges women reported: breaking into the old boys' club (81 per cent of female respondents), preconceived perception of capability by co-workers and senior management (74 per cent), and balancing careers and family responsibilities (73 per cent).

5. From makeup to menstruation: why "pink tariffs" matter

https://odi.org/en/insights/from-makeup-to-menstruation-why-pink-tariffs-matter/

The relationship between trade and gender economics is multifaceted. It can be analysed through various lenses: from the impact of manufacturing activities on women workers and their experiences as business owners across different economic sectors (the production side); to women as consumers of traded goods (consumption) and the use of gender-specific provisions in trade agreements or national trade policies (policy). While existing literature touches on some of these aspects, this blog introduces a new methodology developed to assess the true cost of often-overlooked "pink tariffs" imposed by countries globally. This methodology identifies applied tariffs on products primarily consumed by women in a society, revealing their hidden burden.

6. Documentary shines light on farmerettes' vital role during Second World War

https://cknxnewstoday.ca/sarnia/news/2025/06/03/documentary-shines-light-on-farmerettes-vital-role-during-secondworld-war

The historical producer involved in a new documentary hopes the film about Ontario farmerettes will highlight the crucial role thousands of young girls played during a time of war, as well as the importance of the agriculture sector.

The film, We Lend A Hand: The Forgotten Story of Ontario Farmerettes, tells the story of approximately 40,000 teenage girls who volunteered to sustain Canada's food supply during and after the Second World War.

Historical producer Bonnie Sitter of Exeter said the idea for this project began with a photograph from her late husband's family farm, near Thedford, that was dated in 1946. Sitter said originally, they planned to interview 10 farmerettes for the documentary and in the end, Field interviewed 20 women who are now in their 90s.

The documentary screened in several Ontario communities in June 2025. An online exhibit is available at the Lambton Heritage Museum website at https://www.lambtonmuseums.ca/en/lambton-heritage-museum/the-farmerettes.aspx.

A podcast from 2021 is available at <u>https://519podcast.blackburnmedia.ca/e/the-farmerettes</u>.

7. New research targets financial gap facing Uganda's young women

https://www.developmentaid.org/news-stream/post/196636/uganda-research-financial-inclusion-young-women-gendergap-fsd

More young women in Uganda are getting access to banking and mobile money services, but a troubling gender gap is actually getting wider despite overall progress, Financial Sector Deepening (FSD) Uganda reported. While Uganda's formal financial inclusion jumped from 52% to 68% between 2013 and 2023—mostly thanks to mobile money—the gap between men and women grew from 1% to 6% during just the last five years. Now a new three-year research project aims to figure out why young women are being left behind and what can be done about it.

8. Land, climate and justice: grassroots women at the Global Land Forum

https://www.iied.org/land-climate-justice-grassroots-women-global-land-forum

Rural and Indigenous women's land rights are being eroded by development pressures, climate change and social inequality. Philippine Sutz reports on a project that examines how grassroots women are meeting these challenges in six countries, and that will bring their voices to the forthcoming Global Land Forum in Bogota.

Each case study is grounded in the knowledge and lived experience of our local partners and the communities they serve. We worked with local organisations defending women's land rights in six countries: UEFA (DRC), PWC (Tanzania), UCOBAC (Uganda), Groots Kenya, ASOM (Colombia) and ONAMIAP (Peru). This collaborative approach ensures that case study findings are relevant and actionable, providing a strong foundation for policy and advocacy at both national and international levels.

Across all six countries, women face particular challenges related to insecure land rights, environmental stress and conflict. However, these same communities are also at the forefront of innovative strategies – using legal strategies, participatory governance and women-led initiatives to assert their rights and adapt to climate and economic pressures.

9. London Climate Action Week (LCAW), 21-29 June

https://www.iied.org/iied-london-climate-action-week-2025

As co-lead of the LCAW theme "Financing inclusive and resilient climate transition", IIED will convene leaders and decisionmakers to mobilise climate finance and drive systems reform – from urban resilience and sustainable food systems to conservation that respects women's rights.

Working with our partners, we will help to inform discussions through co-hosting several in-person and online events at LCAW, which acts as a critical moment on the road to COP30.

10. Gender equality and the climate crisis: where do international commitments stand?

https://odi.org/en/publications/gender-equality-and-the-climate-crisis-where-do-international-commitments-stand/

International commitments and long-term prosperity are increasingly at risk due to the erosion of gender norms and the resurgence of strategies and discourses that delay meaningful climate action. At a critical moment when these setbacks are gaining ground, there is recognition that the full, equal participation of women in climate decision-making is essential to drive real progress.

A new briefing note examines outcomes from 2022 to 2024 across key pledges that link gender equality and climate goals in three forums: the G7, G20 and UNFCCC.

These findings track progress over time and identify both positive developments and emerging forms of norm-spoiling and climate delayism within multilateral processes.

11. US farmers 'about to become roadkill' under Trump food aid cuts, senators warn

https://www.devex.com/news/us-farmers-about-to-become-roadkill-under-trump-food-aid-cuts-senators-warn-110293

The Trump administration's cuts to foreign aid could have devastating implications for U.S. farmers who supply commodities for various aid programs and weaken systems that predict and prevent pests and diseases that know no borders, according to U.S. senators and agricultural experts.

American farmers supply roughly 40% of international food assistance — including nearly \$2 billion annually in commodities and also benefit from aid-funded research led by U.S. universities on disease prevention and climate-resilient agriculture. But recent months have seen grants canceled, programs frozen, and massive staff cuts at the U.S. Agency for International

Development and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, leaving both global partners and U.S. food producers on uncertain ground.

12. Can a 15th-century Indian singing tradition help stop wildfires?

https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2025/jun/03/15th-century-indian-singing-tradition-help-stop-wildfiressankirtan-mandali

For years, the women of Murgapahadi village in eastern India have quietly managed farms and children, collected flowers and firewood in forests, and kept households running while their husbands work away in cities. This year, many are educating too – in song as they work.

Forest officials are enlisting devotional song-and-dance troupes – sankirtan mandalis – to help in the fight against fires in the dry deciduous woods of Odisha state in soaring temperatures. Officials are using technology such as AI cameras and satellite data to track blazes but are also turning to the appeal of song to ask villagers not to burn leaves in the forest, a practice believed to benefit the soil, but which has led to uncontrollable wildfires in recent years.

Sankirtan mandalis date to the 15th century, originally groups of men playing cymbals, drums and singing songs of religious devotion. Women rarely went out alone, let alone sang in public. But two years ago, women from Murgapahadi formed their own troupe to revive the tradition.

There has been a 20-30% drop in fires in some areas since the sankirtan mandalis were enlisted. Ghatagaon forest range, where Murgapahadi is located, is among them.

13. #StandWithHer

https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2025/jun/15/fathers-daughters-pride-malala-ziauddin-yousafzai-ranjitto-kill-a-tiger

Millions of fathers around the world will relate to the joy Ranjit felt, but in deeply patriarchal rural India publicly celebrating the arrival of a girl is an unusual, even defiant, act.

Ranjit's love for and faith in his daughter Kiran is captured in the film To Kill A Tiger, which follows the poor rice farmer as he pursues justice for his daughter after she was gang-raped aged 13. Kiran is determined to see her attackers in court and Ranjit is determined to support her.

After Kiran was assaulted, Ranjit was expected to marry her off to one of her attackers – a common response to sexual violence that insists women and girls can only rid themselves of shame by becoming wives. Ranjit and Kiran refused to accept that shame and instead placed it squarely on the perpetrators. "A real, caring father puts his daughter first," he says.

Ziauddin Yousafzai, better known as Malala's father, spoke about the campaign. It will spread the message that men should be allies, using their privilege to challenge long-held beliefs. "Every father, every brother: all men must stand with women." Resistance and change start at home, he says.

Reports, Publications, Resources

1. Pathways to a Fast and Just Energy Transition: Insights from Clean Energy Case Studies

https://policy-practice.oxfam.org/resources/pathways-to-a-fast-and-just-energy-transition-insights-from-clean-energycase-s-621695/ The clean energy transition continues to gather pace and scale, despite push back from some quarters. The key challenge is therefore not whether it will happen but how to shape it in favour of greater speed, justice, and shared prosperity. This briefing paper draws out insights from just clean energy case studies that seek to help mitigate the climate crisis and simultaneously reduce inequality, generate shared prosperity, and garner public support for the transition. They include examples of policies, business models and projects relating to the switch to renewable energy, the exit from fossil fuels, and the extraction of transition minerals. While none of the cases fully meet all the identified just energy transition principles, taken together they offer a positive vision and compelling reasons why governments, donors, multilateral agencies, business and civil society should put justice and rights at the heart of their energy transition policies and projects.

For a description of energy poverty and gender, see Box 4 on page 19 of the Overview Synthesis Paper.

2. Five ways to back enterprises that drive climate and gender justice

https://views-voices.oxfam.org.uk/2025/05/five-ways-to-back-enterprises-climate-gender-justice/

Women are already leading innovations in clean energy, sustainable agriculture, and climate adaptation. Here's how to support their enterprises and ensure that climate-friendly businesses also boost gender justice.

- 1) Support women's leadership in climate action
- 2) Promote innovative financial tools
- 3) Support enterprises that embed gender equity in what they do
- 4) Centre entrepreneurs in measuring the things that matter to them
- 5) Align financial and non-financial support

3. Gender equality and the climate crisis: where do international commitments stand?

https://odi.org/en/publications/gender-equality-and-the-climate-crisis-where-do-international-commitments-stand/

International commitments and long-term prosperity are increasingly at risk due to the erosion of gender norms and the resurgence of strategies and discourses that delay meaningful climate action. At a critical moment when these setbacks are gaining ground, there is recognition that the full, equal participation of women in climate decision-making is essential to drive real progress.

A new briefing note examines outcomes from 2022 to 2024 across key pledges that link gender equality and climate goals in three forums: the G7, G20 and UNFCCC.

These findings track progress over time and identify both positive developments and emerging forms of norm-spoiling and climate delayism within multilateral processes.

4. Gender & Development, Volume 33, Issue 1 (2025)

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

The latest issue of the Oxfam-edited Gender & Development journal was published in May, with a wide range of articles on the theme of "transforming land rights, improving rural livelihoods, and carving just responses to the climate crisis". You can read all the articles free by searching for the title on our Policy & Practice knowledge hub. <u>https://policy-practice.oxfam.org/resources/</u>

5. Digital Farmer Services in Nigeria: The Farmer Perspective

https://60decibels.com/insights/digital-farmer-services-nigeria/

This report presents insights from 1,374 farmers across Nigeria during the 2023-24 agricultural season. Forty-two percent are female farmers. We spoke to 1,374 farmers across Nigeria to understand if/how digital ag tools are making a difference. Two in five farmers reported using a digital service last season, with advisory tools being the most common entry point. But satisfaction levels remain low, and most farmers still aren't using digital tools to sell produce or access financial services.

Page 27: We found no significant differences in the usage, access, or awareness of digital agricultural services between men and women overall. However, we did observe that a higher proportion of female farmers use digital credit services compared to male farmers. This is not the case for non-digital credit, where there is no gender difference. The higher use of digital credit by women could be attributed to projects targeting women, which help overcome barriers such as limited access to traditional credit (e.g., from banks), social norms, and lack of collateral.

Register at the link to access the full report.

6. Webinar: Demand-Side View of Digital Farmer Services in Nigeria

https://youtu.be/4bqmKST61nc

Join us for a webinar sharing insights from the Nigeria Digital Farmer Services (DFS) National Pilot Study. Based on interviews with farmers across the country, we'll explore what drives uptake and satisfaction with digital services (<u>https://busara.60decibels.com/</u>).

7. Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction

https://wedo.org/demands-for-the-global-platform-for-disaster-risk-reduction-2025/

The Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (GPDRR) is the main global forum to assess and discuss progress on the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. The Sendai Framework was adopted on 18 March 2015. Its goal is to prevent new disasters and reduce existing disaster risk. This requires an all-of-society engagement and partnership. The Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (GPDRR) began on Monday, June 2, in Geneva, Switzerland.

What is the link between gender, climate change, and disaster risk reduction (DRR)?

Women, girls, and gender-diverse people are disproportionately affected by disasters and compounding risks, including those driven by climate change, biodiversity loss, and conflict. These impacts are not accidental; they are the result of systemic gender inequalities that persist across all sectors and levels of governance. From higher mortality rates during disasters to longer recovery periods and deepening poverty, women and girls continue to bear the brunt of risk, with the effects compounded for those facing intersecting forms of marginalization, such as Indigenous women, women working in informal economy, rural women, women with disabilities, older women, and women in displacement or conflict settings.

8. Envisioning Resilience: The Rwandan women shaping adaptation plans

https://napglobalnetwork.org/stories/my-photos-are-giving-a-voice-to-the-people-the-rwandan-women-shapingadaptation-plans/

In the rolling hills of Rwanda, the future of climate change adaptation is being envisioned through the lens of those who experience climate risks first-hand. Envisioning Resilience is an initiative aimed at ensuring that adaptation priorities are

informed by the lived experiences of those most impacted by climate change by amplifying the voices of women—those who are often left out of adaptation planning—at both the local and national levels.

In 2023, Envisioning Resilience came to Rwanda in a partnership involving the NAP Global Network, Lensational, and the Rwanda's Women's Network. The initiative aimed to harness the power of visual storytelling to enhance the inclusiveness of engagement embedded in Rwanda's adaptation planning. At the heart of the program is the belief that women, especially those who are marginalized, are not just victims of climate change but powerful agents of resilience.

Through the initiative, a group of Rwandan women from rural communities in seven distinct districts learned to use photography to document their realities, struggles, and most importantly, their resilient outlooks.

9. Why Gender Matters for Adaptation Indicators

https://www.iisd.org/articles/policy-analysis/gender-adaptation-indicators-bonn-uae-belem

Under the UAE-Belém work programme, experts are developing a set of indicators to help track progress in climate change adaptation. Our experts review the recently released "long shortlist" of indicators and analyze how well gender responsiveness has been integrated. They also share recommendations ahead of critical talks in Bonn.

10. How Rwandan Coffee Co-ops Are Promoting Women's Economic Empowerment

https://www.iisd.org/ssi/publications/rwanda-women-cooperative-associations/

Our new case study explores how women's coffee farming groups and cooperatives in Rwanda are helping to improve women's economic opportunities by offering suggestions for governments, sustainability standards groups, and coffee buyers on how they can better support these organizations.

11. Combatting Menstrual Stigma Through a Female-Centred Permaculture Garden

https://www.fit-fit.ca/resources/249/combatting-menstrual-stigma-through-a-female-centred-permaculture-garden

FIT's Community of Practice shares knowledge and lessons learned from their testing work to build collective capacity and avoid duplicating testing failures.

This report document outlines how as part of their FIT-funded project in rural Uganda, Girls of Tomorrow Foundation and their partner tested an innovative permaculture education tool to reduce menstrual stigma amongst girls and boys.

At baseline, 82% of girls reported experiencing menstrual stigma in school which decreased to just 20% at endline. School absenteeism due to girls having their period also dropped significantly, from 66% to 18%. As well, The percentage of girls experiencing bullying related to menstruation dropped from 20% to just 0.8% by endline.

12. Integrating a Gender Approach in Short-Term Testing Projects

https://www.fit-fit.ca/resources/307/integrating-a-gender-approach-in-short-term-testing-projects

FIT's March 2025 Community of Practice (CoP) event facilitated by Dr. Roxana Dulón Gonzáles — a local partner of Royal Roads University who are working in Bolivia — offered a clear and engaging explanation of the different ways to integrate

gender into testing projects. SMOs and local partners who participated in the session also shared valuable insights into how they have or are applying this in their own work.

"A project by women or with women does not automatically make it a gender project. Transformation requires intention, reflection, and a challenge to the status quo."

13. The Autobiography of a Transgender Scientist by Ben A. Barres

https://mitpress.mit.edu/9780262539548/the-autobiography-of-a-transgender-scientist/

Barres describes a life full of remarkable accomplishments—from his childhood as a precocious math and science whiz to his experiences as a female student at MIT in the 1970s to his female-to-male transition in his forties, to his scientific work and role as teacher and mentor at Stanford.

As an undergraduate at MIT, Barres experienced discrimination, but it was after transitioning that he realized how differently male and female scientists are treated. He became an advocate for gender equality in science, and later in life responded pointedly to Larry Summers's speculation that women were innately unsuited to be scientists. Privileged white men, Barres writes, "miss the basic point that in the face of negative stereotyping, talented women will not be recognized." At Stanford, Barres made important discoveries about glia, the most numerous cells in the brain, and he describes some of his work. "The most rewarding part of his job," however, was mentoring young scientists. That, and his advocacy for women and transgender scientists, ensures his legacy.

14. Tariff burden of women's goods in trade

https://odi.org/en/publications/tariff-burden-of-womens-goods-in-trade/

Key messages

- Women's goods often face higher tariffs compared to a general consumer basket, eroding women's savings and exacerbating existing economic inequalities.
- The analysis uncovers a concerning correlation between high tariffs on women's goods and higher instances of gender inequality, especially in regions like Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.
- The lack of sex-disaggregated data is a major hurdle, but this research paves the way for more inclusive and equitable trade policies.

15. Small and Medium Organization Resource List

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

The SMO Resource List has all of our trainings, webinars, and reports from over the years in one place–the perfect spot to look for some independent summer learning. You'll find training courses, resource packages, webinar series and more, all designed to help small and medium-sized organizations achieve sustainable results more effectively.