

April 1, 2026

GEM Digest of the Month

Published monthly since December 2009



Cultivated crocus species in spring. Photo courtesy of D. Ceplis.

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

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

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

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

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Opportunities and Coming Events

1. Agriculture and Agri-food Canada - Youth Employment and Skills Program

<https://agriculture.canada.ca/en/programs/youth-employment-and-skills>

In March 2026, the Government of Canada announced an investment of up to \$13.47 million in funding for 2026-27 through Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Youth Employment and Skills Program, as part of the Government of Canada's broader \$307.9 million investment in the Youth Employment and Skills Strategy. The program provides non-repayable contributions to agriculture and agri-food related employers to: hire youth, ages 15 to 30, and provide work experience and skill development opportunities in Canada's agriculture and agri-food sector. **Apply from March 5, 2026 to May 4, 2026.**

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2. Canada Lifts Program

<https://icn-rcc.ca/lift-description/>

Designed to support transformative, community-led international cooperation by small and medium-sized organizations (SMOs) based in Canada and their partners, Canada LIFTs is a new, purpose-driven funding and learning program.

By combining access to funding with practical resources, learning, and peer connection, the explicit intention of Canada LIFTs is to reduce barriers, shift power, and strengthen the broader ecosystem in which SMOs operate.

- Catalyst Fund registration deadline is **March 30, 2026, 1 pm Central Time.**
- Momentum Fund registration deadline is **June 30, 2026.**
- Together Fund registration deadline is **June 30, 2026.**

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3. Course: Understanding Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility

<https://umanitoba.ca/extended-education/programs-and-courses/courses/understanding-equity-diversity-inclusion-and-accessibility-in-practice>

Prepare to do the important work of ensuring equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility in your workplace so everyone can thrive. Challenge unfair systems and practices to identify and remove barriers for all with this new University of Manitoba Extended Education course.

Understanding Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility (EDIA 0108) is recognized as professional development for several organizations. Diving deeper than a workshop, this learning opportunity allows all participants to critically reflect on their strengths and areas for further growth and develop an action plan to contribute towards a more equitable, diverse, inclusive, and accessible workplace environment. **The course starts April 13, 2026 and ends June 19, 2026.**

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4. Women Deliver: A Declaration for the international development sector

<https://womendeliver.org/about/declaration-international-development-sector/>

Women Deliver and partners around the world are co-creating a Declaration for the international development sector (formerly the “Feminist Playbook”) — a bold, collective declaration that defines our shared vision and sets the course to achieve it. It will articulate the world girls, women, and gender-diverse people need and the actions the international development sector will take to get there.

Launching at the **Women Deliver 2026 Conference (WD2026) in April 2026**, the Declaration will outline a feminist vision for action: a unifying roadmap for the sector toward gender equality, rooted in care, solidarity, and intersectional justice. How are we building it? Through global consultations, plenaries, workshops, and strategy sessions. The shared commitment of all involved will be expressed through concrete pledges — real, actionable steps toward change.

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5. Women in Agriculture Leadership Program Fellowship for the Africa-Australia Partnership for Climate Responsive Agriculture

<https://awardfellowships.org/news/call-to-apply-for-the-women-in-agriculture-leadership-program-fellowship-for-the-africa-australia-partnership-for-climate-responsive-agriculture/>

The call to apply for the Women in Agriculture Leadership Program Fellowship for the Africa-Australia Partnership for Climate Responsive Agriculture is now open. The Fellowship is a career development initiative that seeks to strengthen the capability, confidence, and influence of African women scientists to lead and participate in climate-resilient agricultural research. It combines leadership development, mentoring partnerships, and technical excellence to enhance the Fellows’ capabilities and position them as influential actors in agrifood systems.

The Fellowship targets African women agricultural scientists working in National Agricultural Research Institutions (NARIs), government ministries, universities, and international research organizations from across six African countries, including **Egypt, Morocco, Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Senegal**. Closes on **April 26, 2026**, at 23:59 East Africa Time.

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6. Canada Seeks Agriculture Champions for Hall of Fame

<https://www.farms.com/ag-industry-news/canada-seeks-agriculture-champions-for-hall-of-fame-507.aspx>

The Canadian Agricultural Hall of Fame Association is inviting nominations for individuals who have made lasting and meaningful contributions to the agriculture and food industry in Canada. The organization is seeking candidates for the 2026 class of inductees, with **nominations accepted until May 1**.

Each year, the Hall of Fame recognizes Canadians who have dedicated their careers to advancing agriculture. The program celebrates individuals whose leadership, innovation, and service have helped shape the growth and development of the industry across Canada and beyond.

Nominees are evaluated based on their career achievements, volunteer involvement, and overall impact on agriculture and the food sector. The selection process focuses on individuals whose vision and dedication have created positive changes for farmers, industry organizations, and rural communities.

Candidates must be nominated by an individual or corporate member of the Canadian Agricultural Hall of Fame Association.

The individuals selected for the 2026 class will be honoured during the Canadian Agricultural Hall of Fame induction ceremony scheduled for **November 7 in Laval, Quebec.**

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7. Canada’s 11th National Fair Trade Conference

<https://www.fairtrade.net/ca-en/get-involved/2026-national-fair-trade-conference.html>

Join the fair trade movement at Canada’s 11th National Fair Trade Conference hosted at the **University of Winnipeg and the Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg, Manitoba on May 1st and 2nd, 2026.**

Under the theme “Where Rights Take Root”, participants will explore the role of fair trade in defending human rights and democracy, elevating farmers’ voices, and shaping a trade system grounded in equity, justice, and human dignity. This theme invites attendees to imagine—and help cultivate—a world where fairness is foundational, and rights are nurtured from the ground up.

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This Month’s News

1. Manitoba Consortium for Digital Agriculture

<https://news.uwinnipeg.ca/a-new-home-for-digital-agriculture/>

Researchers in the University of Winnipeg’s are spearheading the creation of a provincial hub for applied research in digital agriculture that will bring together academics, farmers, government, and industry partners to further cement Manitoba’s reputation as a leading agricultural province.

A \$460,000 grant from two commodity groups, and , has already enabled the Manitoba Consortium for Digital Agriculture (MCDA) to hire its first staff member. Elena GomezHaro is the MCDA’s Industry and Funding Partner Liaison. She brings 20 years of experience to the role, which she began in January.

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2. Fields of Influence: the power of women in agriculture

<https://www.pelhamtoday.ca/local-news/fields-of-influence-eileen-pillitteri-smith-and-the-power-of-women-in-agriculture-11951509>

This is number two in a seven-part series. Across vineyards, orchards, greenhouses and fields in Niagara, Ontario, women are helping shape the future of agriculture. In recognition of the United Nation’s designation of 2026 as the year of the Female Farmer, and in celebration of International Women’s Day, this seven-part series highlights local women whose work sustains traditions, drives innovation and strengthens the region’s agricultural community.

Eileen Pillitteri-Smith, owner-operator of Seaway Farms, oversees all major decisions while working alongside her husband, who manages the field and farm production side. Together, they operate close to 200 acres of peaches, plums and

nectarines across several properties surrounding their home farm. But Seaway is more than fruit. It is also a retail and wholesale garden centre and flower operation, supplying produce to major retailers across Ontario and Quebec.

During peak season, Seaway Farms employs about 100 workers. About a dozen are full-time year-round staff. Others include students, temporary packing crews and seasonal agricultural workers from Mexico.

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3. Soil health lecture examines agronomic gains in a changing climate

<https://umtoday.ca/stories/soil-health-lecture-examines-agronomic-gains-changing-climate>

Dr. Joann Whalen of McGill University, on March 4, 2026, provided a lecture entitled “Soil Health for Monitoring Agronomic Gain: Perspectives from West Africa and the Sahel”. Dr. Whalen is a Professor and James McGill Professor at McGill University and an Affiliate Professor at the Mohammed VI Polytechnic University (UM6P) in Morocco. Her internationally recognized research focuses on soil biology, soil health, and agricultural nutrient management, with particular emphasis on developing field-based tools that link soil health to agronomic performance across diverse agroecosystems.

In her lecture, Dr. Whalen explored how soil health can be used to monitor agronomic gain in West Africa and the Sahel, a region facing rapid population growth alongside significant challenges from soil degradation, erosion, and declining fertility. Dr. Whalen also discussed how these efforts align with broader international commitments, including the African Union’s Nairobi Declaration (May 2024), which calls for improved soil health as a foundation for enhancing agricultural productivity across Africa.

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4. New federal funding helps P.E.I. farmers hire students, says agriculture group

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/prince-edward-island/pei-agriculture-youth-employment-funding-yesp-9.7119847>

New funding aimed at getting more young Canadians employed in the agriculture industry is good news for Prince Edward Island [P.E.I.] farmers, says the P.E.I. Agriculture Sector Council. The federal government announced it is spending up to \$27 million over two years to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada’s youth employment and skills program — or YESP. There are also incentives to hire Indigenous youth, people with disabilities or anyone living in rural areas.

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5. How women lead with confidence in agriculture

<https://www.country-guide.ca/special-coverage/how-women-lead-with-confidence-in-agriculture-2/>

Gender bias is complicated. And it often goes unseen by those who don’t experience it themselves. Although the number of women in leadership positions in agriculture is increasing, they are still in the minority and continue to experience gender bias, according to a 2025 survey by the Canadian Agricultural and Human Resources Council (CAHRC).

In their survey of agricultural leaders, 40 per cent of the 431 female respondents said 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 challenges: 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).

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6. From token to trusted: Women’s increasing role in ag organizations

<https://farmtario.com/news/from-token-to-trusted-womens-increasing-role-in-ag-organizations/>

For many industry leaders, increasing women’s representation is not about quotas, it’s about strengthening decision-making and drawing from the full talent pool. Research consistently shows that diverse leadership teams improve organizational performance, decision quality and risk management.

The growth of women in leadership has been especially pronounced in the association sector, even as other parts of agriculture continue to lag. For instance, CAHRC’s 2025 report *From the Field to the Boardroom: Women Driving Change in Canadian Agriculture* shows that over the past three decades, more women have entered the workforce full time and have made up a growing share of students graduating from agricultural and veterinary programs across Canada. At the same time, hiring practices have evolved.

CAHRC’s latest research shows measurable gains across the sector. In 2025, women accounted for 42 per cent of key decision-makers in agricultural workplaces, up from 34.8 per cent in 2015. Among organizations with boards of directors, 26 per cent of board chairs were women, compared with 21 per cent a decade earlier.

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7. Italy and FAO unveil silver coin in tribute to the world's women farmers

<https://www.developmentaid.org/news-stream/post/205051/italy-and-fao-launch-commemorative-coin-for-international-year-of-the-woman-farmer-2026>

Italy and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) unveiled a 5-euro silver coin at FAO headquarters in Rome to mark the International Year of the Woman Farmer 2026, paying tribute to the essential — and too often overlooked — role women play in global food and agriculture systems. Developed with Italy’s State Mint and Coldiretti, Italy’s largest farmers’ organisation, the coin is Italy’s national contribution to the global observance led by FAO.

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8. Rome's UN food agencies champion women farmers on IWD 2026

<https://www.developmentaid.org/news-stream/post/205097/fao-ifad-wfp-mark-international-womens-day-2026-women-farmers>

Three Rome-based United Nations agencies marked International Women’s Day this year with a joint event squarely focused on expanding women farmers’ access to justice, rights, and economic opportunity, as detailed in an official statement published by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). Held at FAO Headquarters in Rome and livestreamed globally, the event brought together the FAO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) under the banner of this year’s theme: “Rights. Justice. Action. For ALL Women and Girls.” The occasion also falls within the global International Year of the Woman Farmer 2026, a yearlong push by the three agencies to drive real policy and investment change for women in agriculture.

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9. European Investment Bank

<https://www.devex.com/news/eib-says-it-s-carrying-the-flag-of-development-111991>

The European Investment Bank will maintain its investment in climate, gender, and health despite its increased focus on defense and competitiveness within the European Union. On gender, EIB announced its third Gender Action Plan, which aims to improve accessibility to jobs, health care, and security with a fivefold increase in financing.

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10. Gender toolkit targets Caribbean finance gaps

<https://www.developmentaid.org/news-stream/post/205315/gender-toolkit-targets-caribbean-finance-gaps>

The Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) has partnered with 2X Global, a leading group pushing gender lens investing worldwide, to create a tailored toolkit and build skills for weaving gender into investment decisions across the Caribbean, according to a press release from March 16. Signed on March 5 ahead of International Women’s Day, this effort tackles finance gaps for women entrepreneurs hit by structural hurdles and cultural barriers. The core aim: equip investors with practical tools to support women-owned businesses and drive inclusive growth.

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11. UN Women vows to stay in Afghanistan "no matter what" amid deepening rights crisis

<https://www.developmentaid.org/news-stream/post/205408/un-women-vows-to-stay-in-afghanistan>

UN Women reaffirmed its commitment to Afghan women and girls on March 17, 2026, pledging to continue operations despite sweeping restrictions and ongoing instability, according to a press release by UN News. Susan Ferguson, UN Women’s country representative, made the pledge as the agency described Afghanistan as the world’s most severe women’s rights crisis. Women in Afghanistan are nearly four times less likely than men to access formal justice. Yet UN Women’s programmes remain active, reaching hundreds of thousands of people in need.

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12. UN women's conference rejects US resolution on gender

<https://www.devex.com/news/un-women-s-conference-rejects-us-resolution-on-gender-112115>

The United States closed out a bruising two weeks at the Commission on the Status of Women — the world’s largest gathering on gender equality — much like it began: in lonely diplomatic defeat.

On CSW’s first day, the country cast the single vote against a political declaration on the world’s commitments to women. On the last, delegates declined to consider a U.S. resolution on gender, one that sought to define the term across the United Nations as “referring to men and women.”

The effort was part of a broader campaign to influence debates on the topic — and to do so not just at the U.N., but worldwide. While ultimately, the country’s twin pushes at CSW failed, U.S. officials have made it clear that the fight on gender, women’s rights, and “family values” is far from over.

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13. New ways of fortifying staple foods could save lives

<https://www.devex.com/news/new-ways-of-fortifying-staple-foods-could-save-lives-here-s-how-109309>

While food fortification is already popular, micronutrient deficiencies persist. The World Food Programme estimated 2 billion people suffer from hidden hunger, including every other preschool-aged child and two of every three women of reproductive age.

In its flagship annual Goalkeepers report last year, the Gates Foundation identified large-scale food fortification as a proven tool that is helping reduce malnutrition, build people’s resilience to climate change, and reduce child deaths.

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14. International Collaboration Advances Gender Equity in Agricultural Sciences

<https://news.uoguelph.ca/2026/03/international-collaboration-advances-gender-equity-in-agricultural-sciences/>

Like many STEM disciplines, the agricultural sciences remain male-dominated, from faculty to students to the curriculum. To advance gender equity, University of Guelph researchers have been looking to the Global South as part of a unique four-year project using knowledge exchange and farmer-led research to shift the dynamic at the institutional level.

This project built on Dr. Erin Nelson’s relationship with the National Institute of Agricultural Sciences in Cuba. The organization’s longstanding work to promote gender equity in farmer-led research inspired the project.

Taking a participatory action research approach created opportunities to learn directly from Cuban growers. The goal has been to develop skills, programs, policies and structures that make research in the agricultural sciences more inclusive and gender sensitive.

The team created a toolkit to assist institutions in systemic change that includes a gender-based violence protocol and a methodology for how to conduct gender analysis across projects or departments.

They created a curriculum to help integrate gender into agricultural education programs. It explores such topics as the relationship between seeds and gender and the role of women in food security and environmental sciences.

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15. EMILI celebrates women producers during International Year of the Woman Farmer

<https://emilicanada.com/news/emili-celebrates-women-producers-during-international-year-of-the-woman-farmer/>

EMILI (Enterprise Machine Intelligence Learning Initiative), based in Manitoba, is an industry-led non-profit that works collaboratively with producers, industry, investors, and innovators who share our vision of Canadian agriculture leading the world through transformative innovation.

2026 is International Year of the Woman Farmer, celebrating the essential, and often unrecognized roles that women play across the agrifood system. This International Women’s Day, EMILI is spotlighting six women producers who play an integral role in Canadian agriculture.

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16. How rural communities are rewriting the story of AI

<https://www.iied.org/how-rural-communities-are-rewriting-story-ai>

CRISP-M is a different kind of AI. It is a decision support tool that turns complex climate and landscape data into clear, map-based information that communities use to plan water harvesting, conserve soil and protect their livelihoods.

Unlike generative AI, which relies on heavy computing and consumes vast amounts of energy, CRISP-M functions offline on ordinary smartphones, keeping its carbon footprint modest while delivering high-impact results. What this looks like in practice is best understood through the experiences of people who use CRISP-M in their daily lives.

CRISP-M enables this by allowing villagers in Madhya Pradesh state, India, to visualise how water flows across slopes, fields and drainage lines. Standing on a slope, a user can drop a pin on the map, review the likely water yield and explore site-appropriate structure options. Over time, this builds a comprehensive village-wide plan to conserve and store water across the entire landscape, strengthening long-term drought resilience.

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17. Tanzanian School Launches Energy Club to Promote Clean Cooking

<https://www.ipsnews.net/2026/03/tanzanian-school-launches-energy-club-to-promote-clean-cooking/>

As part of its broader push to promote clean cooking energy, Bunge Girls Secondary School in Dodoma, Tanzania has launched a student-led Energy and Clean Cooking Club, placing teenage girls at the centre of a national transition away from polluting fuels. The initiative links lived experience with policy reform, aligning closely with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). What makes the club distinctive is that it moves the clean cooking debate from ministerial boardrooms into teenage hands.

The turning point came under the government’s clean cooking initiative. Through a public–private partnership supported by the Ministry of Energy, the school secured a liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) system. One tonne of gas now lasts two months.

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18. How Child Labour Persists Along Zanzibar’s Blue Economy

<https://www.ipsnews.net/2026/03/how-child-labour-persists-along-zanzibars-blue-economy/>

Along Zanzibar’s west coast, children are keeping the island’s blue economy running. But a recent study titled “Situational Analysis of Child Labour in Coastal and Marine Activities in Zanzibar”, conducted by the University of Dar es Salaam found that fishing and related marine activities are the most dangerous forms of child labour in the archipelago.

According to the researchers, the study avoided blaming parents, noting the close link between poverty and cultural practices.

Under Tanzanian law, children under 14 are not allowed to work, while those aged 15 to 17 may do light work that does not harm their health or affect schooling. Hazardous work—including fishing, diving, and hauling heavy nets—is banned for anyone under 18, with penalties ranging from fines to imprisonment. Despite this legal framework and Tanzania’s commitments to international labour conventions, enforcement remains patchy, especially in informal sectors such as fishing and domestic work, where child labour persists.

Zanzibar has positioned itself as a champion of the blue economy, attracting donor support for marine conservation, ecotourism, coral restoration and climate adaptation. Policy papers speak of sustainability and inclusion. Child labour is rarely mentioned.

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19. Dairy Farming: A driver of innovation and resilience led by women in Senegal

<https://aiccra.cgiar.org/news/dairy-farming-driver-innovation-and-resilience-led-women-senegal>

In Senegal's pastoral areas, local dairy farming is much more than just an agricultural activity: it is a pillar of nutrition, income, and autonomy. It is in this context that AICCRA and partners launched the Gender-Smart Livestock Accelerator (GSLA) to support 30 mini-dairies in improving milk quality, herd productivity, and overall climate resilience.

By linking technology, management, finance, and climate information, Senegal's Gender-Smart Livestock Accelerator sets in motion a common thread: a more competitive, inclusive, and resilient dairy sector, driven by women who are better trained, better informed, and better financed to feed their families and communities, and to inspire an entire ecosystem.

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20. 80 Percent of Rural Households Without Direct Water Access – World Water Report

<https://www.ipsnews.net/2026/03/80-percent-of-rural-households-without-direct-water-access-world-water-report/>

A new United Nations report has warned that global water inequality remains one of the most pressing development challenges of the decade, with billions still lacking safe drinking water and sanitation – while women and girls continue to bear the heaviest burden of water insecurity.

The United Nations World Water Development Report 2026, titled Water for All People: Equal Rights and Opportunities, was released March 19, 2026 by UNESCO in New York. The report has highlighted how unequal access to water resources intersects with gender inequality, poverty, and climate change. The report argues that achieving water security is inseparable from advancing gender equality and inclusive governance.

According to the report, access to safe water and sanitation remains far from universal. As of 2024, around 2.1 billion people still lack safely managed drinking water services, while 3.4 billion people lack safely managed sanitation and 1.7 billion people lack basic hygiene services at home.

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21. Challenging Global Patriarchy this World Water Day

<https://www.ipsnews.net/2026/03/where-water-doesnt-flow-equality-doesnt-grow-challenging-global-patriarchy-this-world-water-day/>

The 2026 campaign on World Water Day’s focuses on Water and Gender – ‘where water flows, equality grows’ . While substantial progress has been achieved across a range of gender indicators spanning education, health and public participation, the situation around WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) is still marked by deep inequalities with women and girls disproportionately affected – and this reflects the persistence of global patriarchy.

More than 2 billion people still lack access to safely managed drinking water. In households without piped water, women and girls are made to be responsible for about 70–80% of water collection trips worldwide, taking anything from 30 minutes to four hours daily. This time can instead usefully be spent on education, productive activities or even leisure and rest, but they don’t have the choice.

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22. Canadian Innovation Elevates Women’s Leadership in Water Governance

<https://www.fit-fit.ca/news/120/media-release-canadian-innovation-elevates-women-s-leadership-in-water-governance>

What if strengthening women’s voices could transform entire communities’ access to safe water, sanitation, and dignity? Across the Charneca and Córrego do Morcego neighbourhoods of Cabo de Santo Agostinho, in Pernambuco, Northeastern Brazil, a Canadian innovation is doing exactly that.

Água Delas, which means Their Water, is a community-led initiative created by Waterlution, a Canadian non-profit that advances innovative water education, leadership development, and collaborative governance models.

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23. The missing link in water stewardship: why gender equity is not an add-on

<https://www.iied.org/missing-link-water-stewardship-why-gender-equity-not-add>

As water scarcity intensifies, businesses must rethink not only how much water they use but who is most affected by its depletion. This article explores why gender equality, disability and social inclusion are essential to effective corporate water stewardship, helping companies reduce operational risks, strengthen community trust and build more resilient, equitable water management strategies.

A recent briefing highlights a critical blind spot in many water stewardship efforts: a failure to consider how water scarcity and governance affect different people unevenly, especially women and other marginalised groups. Applying a gender equality, disability and social inclusion (GEDSI) lens isn't just a matter of social justice; it is essential to effective operational risk management and community resilience.

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24. Himalayan girls – education is the only bridge they need out of their isolation

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2026/mar/04/kashmir-tulail-dard-shin-girls-education-equality-children-isolation>

For six months of the year, snow seals the Tulail valley. When the first frost bites, the men of Tulail pack their frayed bags and leave for the construction sites in Shimla or the apple orchards of Himachal Pradesh. A woman's fingers are stained by wood smoke. "We trek for hours with axes in hand to beg the trees for warmth. We cook over open fires in rooms so thick with smoke that our children's coughs become the rhythm of our winters. Our lungs burn as much as the wood we scavenge."

"My father wants every daughter of Tulail to have the right to dream without the fear of the snow. I can hear him on the phone now, his voice a steady bridge across the mountains as he talks to the men back in Tulail. He explains why they must keep their daughters in school. He tells them why a book is as vital as the harvest, and how an educated girl can change the fate of the village. When he looks at the young girls in the valley, he sees future leaders who just need a path. His life's work has become a message to our people: that our daughters are not burdens to be married off, but torches that can light up the entire valley."

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25. The disaster of women's status under the return of the Taliban

<https://aqoci.gc.ca/the-disaster-of-womens-status-under-the-return-of-the-taliban/>

The fall of Kabul in 2021 marked a devastating rupture. The Taliban's return led to the systematic dismantling of women's rights: schools and universities were closed to girls, women were barred from employment, media freedoms collapsed, and women were erased from public life. Decades of progress were undone within months.

The exclusion of women from education, work, and public expression constitutes a clear violation of international human rights law, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Despite international commitments to gender equality, Afghan women remain without meaningful protection or accountability mechanisms.

One of the most devastating consequences of this repression is the loss of hope among girls. Education, a fundamental right and a pathway to independence, has been denied. Economic pressures and early or forced marriages have intensified, deepening cycles of poverty and gender-based violence.

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26. Most scientific research is done on men. It's a big problem for women

https://www.uniondemocrat.com/lifestyle/article_8f17db2b-00e8-41a8-9285-3e378d795007.html

Women make up half the world's population, yet they remain underrepresented not only in research and in top positions in politics and business, but also in studies used for scientific and medical standards, says Nigina Muntean of the UN Population Fund.

For decades, scientific and medical standards were based on the male body — "more precisely on the average white man," Muntean says. She heads the innovation department at the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations' organization for sexual and reproductive health.

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27. Built with US aid, Egypt's elite science academies now face collapse

<https://www.devex.com/news/built-with-us-aid-egypt-s-elite-science-academies-now-face-collapse-112104>

A network of STEM academies once held up as a model for modern education is unraveling after the abrupt withdrawal of U.S. support, exposing the fragility of reforms built on external expertise.

The Egyptian government launched a pilot STEM school west of Cairo in 2011, marking a departure from the rote memorization that defines standard Egyptian schooling. These were designed as elite boarding schools for the top-performing graduates of the national preparatory certificate, intended to produce a new generation of scientists.

The United States Agency for International Development provided the foundational support. The investment initially yielded high returns. For a decade, Egyptian STEM students were fixtures on the podiums of the Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair, or ISEF, one of the most prestigious pre-university scientific and engineering research competitions in the world. They secured full-ride scholarships to Ivy League U.S. universities, while some graduates joined research collaborations linked to NASA.

However, as the core U.S. support contracts expired in 2023, the responsibility for maintaining the model shifted entirely to the Egyptian Ministry of Education. Teachers say that without USAID engineers, they are now facing a closed technological system — one built and controlled by American vendors contracted through the program.

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Reports, Publications, Resources

1. International Year of the Woman Farmer highlights women in agriculture.

<https://globalnews.ca/video/11724571/international-year-of-the-woman-farmer-highlights-women-in-agriculture>

Global TV highlights women in agriculture living in southern Alberta in this video.

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2. Report: Recognition of women-led biodiversity data vital to advance gender justice

<https://www.iied.org/new-report-recognition-women-led-biodiversity-data-vital-advance-gender-justice>

<https://cbd.womenscaucus.org/initiatives/gender-and-biodiversity-data/>

A new report has highlighted the ways in which women-led and community-based organisations are generating vital, gender-responsive biodiversity data through their everyday engagement with ecosystems and governance processes.

But formal decision-making spaces, such as the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD), are failing to use this data when setting policies.

There is also limited evidence on how the women-led and community-based organisations engage with data, including the capacities they hold, the constraints they face and the kinds of support that would most strengthen their work.

IIED, together with the CBD Women’s Caucus, conducted a global assessment to better understand how women’s organisations engaged in biodiversity conservation currently collect, manage, analyse, use and share data. The survey covered 70 women-led organisations across 33 countries, working at local, national and regional levels.

The results are compiled into a report (PDF) that calls for recognition and partnership with women’s organisations as key contributors to the global biodiversity framework implementation and accountability.

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3. Empowering women for climate-resilient agriculture: Four case studies from India

<https://ricetoday.irri.org/empowering-women-for-climate-resilient-agriculture-four-case-studies-from-india/>

A new study ,conducted by a team of researchers from the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) and published in Frontiers in Sustainable Food Systems, argues that if we want to build true climate resilience, we must stop handing out isolated technologies and start delivering “innovation bundles”.

The research suggests that the traditional top-down model of agricultural extension—where experts simply transfer a finished technology to a farmer—is failing women. Instead, the study advocates for a socio-technical approach. This means recognizing that a seed or a tractor is not just a neutral technology; its success depends on the social relations, cultural norms, and institutional power dynamics of the community where it is planted.

To demonstrate this, the study analyzed four distinct case studies across India, revealing how the strategic bundling of technical, social, and institutional support can enable the effective and sustainable transformation of women farmers towards climate resilience.

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4. Women, intertwined crises and gender-just futures

<https://www.iied.org/collection/women-intertwined-crises-gender-just-futures>

This series of case studies examines how intertwined pressures from economic development, climate change and patriarchal gender norms are reshaping land and natural resources governance for Indigenous, pastoralist and Afro-descendant women across Africa and Latin America. The case studies were selected in collaboration with the Rights and Resources Initiative and the International Land Coalition Africa.

They were developed collaboratively with in-country partners who work closely with the affected communities. In each country, the partners facilitated workshops and focus group discussions with women, men and community elders to document how these pressures are eroding women’s land and resource rights, undermining customary governance systems and threatening livelihoods, wellbeing and cultural identity.

The case studies also highlight how women are responding to these challenges, including by working with community groups to take legal action, challenging social norms, implementing fairer community governance mechanisms, and mobilising at local, national and international levels to defend their rights and livelihoods.

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5. Guide for small-scale producer engagement

<https://isealalliance.org/get-involved/resources/guide-small-scale-producer-engagement>

This guide offers practical support for sustainability systems and their partners to strengthen how they listen to, work with, and learn from producers across different contexts.

Co-developed with the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), it brings together tools and approaches developed in the past ten years. It focuses on helping organisations better understand producer priorities, build trust, and support more meaningful participation in decisions.

The guide is structured around 5 core strategic objectives essential for scaling reach and impact:

- Identifying who to engage: understanding the full landscape of actors, including household members, youth, and marginalised producers typically excluded from formal networks.
- Understanding priorities and constraints: Grounding initiatives in the lived realities and capacities of producers to ensure support programmes create enabling conditions rather than additional burdens.
- Gathering input and building trust: Implementing transparent, accessible, and responsive avenues for input that strengthen accountability between producers and market actors.
- Supporting meaningful influence: Creating opportunities for producers to co-design initiatives and shape decisions that affect their lives.
- Sustaining relationships: Moving toward long-term collaboration and learning, supported by frameworks for data equity and sovereignty.

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6. Corporate water stewardship: Ensuring companies have a fair water footprint

<https://www.iied.org/22696iied>

Water is a hugely strategic resource for most companies, and its increasing scarcity creates significant business risk. To manage this risk, many companies adopt water stewardship strategies – including consulting with communities in their supply chains – especially around water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) issues. But few consider the differentiated impacts of their water use on marginalised groups.

This briefing outlines why companies should apply a gender equality, disability and social inclusion (GEDSI) lens to their water stewardship practices and, drawing on a case study from leading beverage producer Diageo, offers practical tips on how companies can embed GEDSI principles in community engagement around shared water use.

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7. Interview: Embedding gender in the multilateral climate funds

<https://www.iied.org/interview-embedding-gender-multilateral-climate-funds>

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) Observer Network of Civil Society Organizations (CSO), Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities brings together organisations from developing and developed countries to inform and influence the fund’s policy and decision-making processes.

Tara Daniel leads gender-responsive climate finance work for the Women’s Environment & Development Organization (WEDO). Tara also serves as one of the CSO active observers, voicing observer network positions in the GCF boardroom. Here, Tara discusses what gender-responsive climate change projects look like in practice, and how the GCF is being held to account on its commitment to gender equality.

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8. Report: Towards Economic and Climate Justice: A Feminist Analysis of Critical Trends

<https://2025.economicstrends.wedo.org/>

Across seven interrelated thematic areas building from longstanding demands of feminist and people’s movements, this 2025 Critical Trends Report details the continued failures to advance feminist economic and ecological justice.

But this report also highlights possibilities of urgent change and local sites of struggle, led by people’s movements, feminists, and Global South governments advancing global ecological and economic justice.

The report finds:

- Accelerated by the electoral advance of ultra-right-wing and other fundamentalist forces, 2025 saw one of the most significant rollbacks of human rights, gender equality, and civic space in recent decades, by both governments and corporations. The myth of a partnership- and rules-based multilateral order has unravelled, as evidenced by the Global North’s blatant exercises of power and economic coercion.
- Public and grant-based financing for climate, development, and gender justice is decreasing even below previous shortfalls — directly driven by corporate capture, wealth hoarding, militarization, tax abuse, punitive debt regimes, and other forms of structural exploitation.
- Across all seven focus areas [tax, trade, debt, corporate capture, global economic governance, feminist climate finance, and the systems change], the consequences of neoliberalism fall disproportionately on women, communities in the Global South, and those most marginalized, but there are powerful movements and proposals pushing back.

You can download PDF versions of the report in Arabic, English, French, and Spanish.

Watch the **Launch Webinar** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rdn1f9mxxpTg&blm_aid=26134 which features an overview presentation by lead author Arimbi Wahono (Shared Planet), followed by an in-depth discussion with Global South feminist activists, and download the webinar slides featuring key messages and stats from the report. The webinar is also available in Arabic, French, and Spanish.

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9. Powering Change: Women Entrepreneurs at the Heart of the Energy Transition

<https://60decibels.com/insights/women-energy-transition/>

60decibels spoke with 1,166 women entrepreneurs participating in ENERGIA’s Phase 7 Women’s Economic Empowerment Programme across Asia and Africa to understand how access to clean energy opportunities is shaping their businesses, households, and communities.

Through direct feedback from participants, the study explores changes in women’s decision-making power, business performance, financial resilience, and social standing. It also assesses how women perceive the relevance and quality of the support delivered by ENERGIA’s partner organisations. The findings will inform the broader external evaluation of ENERGIA’s Phase 7 strategy.

Specifically, the study focuses on three core areas:

- Economic empowerment: How has ENERGIA’s support enabled women to start, grow, or strengthen their income-generating activities, improve their economic standing, and build resilience within the clean energy sector?
- Social empowerment: How has participation influenced women’s roles within their households and communities, including their confidence and decision-making power?
- Quality of support: How do entrepreneurs experience the programme’s support in terms of relevance, responsiveness, and overall quality?

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10. Gender Environment Hub

<https://www.iied.org/collection/gender-environment-hub>

The gender-climate-environment nexus highlights the complex links between gender inequalities and the impacts of climate and environmental change. With women, girls, gender-diverse and traditionally marginalised groups disproportionately affected due to existing social and economic disparities, this hub explores how these interconnected challenges affect communities globally. We showcase women’s vital roles in climate action and emphasise the importance of gender equality for effective climate-environment solutions.

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11. Farmer-driven assessment of climate-resilient crop varieties and downstream impacts for improved food systems in Madagascar and Togo

<https://idrc-crdd.ca/en/what-we-do/projects-we-support/project/farmer-driven-assessment-climate-resilient-crop-varieties>

This 3-year project is ending March 31, 2026. Based on experience in farmer participatory crop breeding and seed-delivery systems in Africa, this project will support national public crop-breeding teams to conduct crop-variety trials of a range of food crops on-station and on-farm, allowing for the best-suited crop varieties to be officially released for seed production and supply to farmers. The hypothesis is that properly introduced improved varieties will trigger a series of positive and sustainable changes in the existing farming systems. The project aims to both contribute to these changes and assess their trade-offs and implications at the socio-economic level among men and women farmers. The expected result of these activities is a scalable and replicable seed-system development model appropriate for meeting the needs of women and men farmers in Madagascar and Togo with strong buy-in from public institutions, farmers and the private sector.

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12. How to Measure Mindset Shifts on Gender and Social Inclusion

<https://www.iisd.org/articles/explainer/how-to-measure-mindset-shifts-gender-social-inclusion>

The Scaling Urban Nature-based Solutions for Climate Adaptation in Sub-Saharan Africa (SUNCASA) project tackles the difficult task of measuring changes in gender equality and social inclusion norms while delivering nature-based solutions (NbS) to climate change. SUNCASA is a 3-year project enhancing resilience, gender equality, social inclusion, and biodiversity protection in urban communities in Ethiopia, Rwanda, and South Africa. It is delivered by the International Institute for Sustainable Development and the World Resources Institute, funded by the Government of Canada, and implemented with a wide range of local organizations and communities.

Greater gender equality and social inclusion (GESI). To help a community adapt to climate change meaningfully and equitably, NbS must be delivered in a GESI-informed way. This also means the project’s monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) framework must report on outcomes that are GESI-informed—e.g., how many women received meaningful work, how many members of typically marginalized communities were involved in decisions over local natural resources—to know if the project is succeeding.

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13. The Rwandan women shaping adaptation plans

<https://napglobalnetwork.org/stories/my-photos-are-giving-a-voice-to-the-people-the-rwandan-women-shaping-adaptation-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.

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.

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14. The case of women's cooperative associations in Rwanda

<https://www.iisd.org/publications/report/rwanda-women-cooperative-associations>

This case study explores the contribution of Rwandan women coffee farmers' associations and cooperatives to women's economic empowerment and offers recommendations to government, voluntary sustainability standard-setting organizations, and coffee buyers on how to support these associations.

As a group, the women have achieved peer-to-peer training, income diversification, direct links to buyers, women-made marketing, and community reinvestment, adopting sustainable agricultural practices, adding value to coffee production, and securing access to high-value markets. As a result, they have strengthened both their livelihoods and their communities.

Our insights are drawn from open-ended interviews with cooperative members and Angelique Karakezi, managing director of Rwashoscco, a farmer-owned company that produces and exports Rwandan coffee, including the women-produced brand Angelique's Finest.

In our conversations, we explored the groups' primary goals, the key factors contributing to their success, and the disparities in access to training in sustainable agriculture and market opportunities.

See also **Elevating Women in Rwanda's Coffee Sector** <https://www.iisd.org/ssi/events/elevating-women-rwanda-coffee-sector/>

See also <https://www.iisd.org/ssi/publications/rwanda-women-cooperative-associations/>. In January, IISD joined Sustainable Growers Rwanda and the National Agricultural Export Development Board (NAEB) in Kigali for a strategic workshop.

The session focused on helping women coffee producers learning about sustainability market requirements, both mandatory and voluntary, and ways to comply with them, while strengthening market links with international buyers. The workshop also helped to raise the voice of women to influence national policy for market inclusion and export development.

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15. Apiculture Mini Series: Building a New Generation of Environmental Leaders

<https://www.catalystplus.org/our-impact/>

The Asociación de Apicultores Biológicos del Municipio de San Carlos (AFRICOLMENAS) was formed in 2013 as part of this recovery process, just prior to the signing of the peace agreement. As experienced beekeepers, AFRICOLMENAS in Colombia had developed extensive knowledge in apiculture, climate change, and conservation, however, turning that expertise into age-appropriate lessons for children required a very different skill set. That's when AFRICOLMENAS connected with Catalyste+.

Through their partnership with Catalyste+, AFRICOLMENAS turned a moment of crisis into an opportunity to grow stronger together. What began as a response to environmental and economic setbacks has become an inspiring educational initiative that connects children with nature and equips community leaders like Carolina with new tools to share their knowledge. By engaging both women and youth, Catalyste+ and AFRICOLMENAS are fostering a more inclusive and sustainable future for rural Colombia.

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16. Apiculture Mini Series: Empowering Rural Women Beekeepers Across Bolivia

<https://www.catalysteplus.org/our-impact/>

In 2015 Miel Maya Honing MMH (Association Sans But Lucratif) Program Bolivia (MMH), a non-governmental organization focused on improving the living conditions of marginalized rural communities, launched a beekeeping pilot program in Bolivia. The initiative quickly grew into a multi-year program, establishing partnerships with producers across the Cochabamba, Santa Cruz, and Tarija departments. Working alongside local producers, MMH quickly identified several key challenges facing the sector. Beekeeping had high entry costs and was largely male dominated. The few women involved were typically confined to honey production, with limited knowledge of how to market or sell their products, restricting their access to the more profitable parts of the value chain. Beyond these gender barriers, most producers worked independently, lacking access to training, formal markets, and support systems. In response, MMH partnered with Catalyste+ to begin addressing these gaps.

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17. Images show long-term ‘starvation strategy’ in Sudan

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/ng-interactive/2026/mar/10/extraordinary-cruelty-images-show-longterm-starvation-strategy-in-sudan>

Experts argue sensor and satellite data reveal targeted attacks on farming communities by the Rapid Support Forces were intended to prevent villages producing food.

Ammar Jadid is a village in Darfur, Sudan. The fields surrounding it once fed an entire region – then militiamen came and burned everything down. Between March and June 2024, they attacked seven times. New evidence suggests these attacks were calculated to destroy the region’s food system, leading experts to call for them to be treated as a war crime intended to starve civilians, and warn it could happen again.

The families of Ammar Jadid lived off their farms, growing staples such as corn and millet that fed themselves as well as the city of El Fasher, 20 miles away.

By September 2024, villages that remained despite decades of tension with pastoralist communities have been abandoned and farming has ceased. Satellite images show green vegetation has grown uncontrolled over abandoned homes and farmland.

The destruction of the villages, farming equipment and infrastructure all provide strong evidence of a “starvation strategy” against a population already struggling with food insecurity because of the war, says Tom Dannenbaum, a professor at Stanford Law School and a leading expert on the use of starvation in war.

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18. Climate Smart Soil Moisture Monitoring Tools for Water use Efficiency in Uganda

<https://youtu.be/QNV0jY9FGI>

After decades of low irrigation coverage across East and Southern Africa, farmers in Uganda’s Kasese District are earning up to ten times the national average annual income for a smallholder farmer (USD 8,276/yr versus USD 795/yr) after joining Virtual Irrigation Academies (VIA) and using the climate-smart tools and tech.

VIA is a farmer-friendly approach to science-based irrigation that works because it is intuitive - using colours to guide farmers, and is affordable and durable so works well in low-resource contexts. The tools have an option for online integration with support from extension workers for real-time monitoring and water management.

Building on the original success of VIA, in 2024, Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA) started a regional scaling effort with support from AICCRA.

We focused on using VIA tools in Uganda, training 70 participants, including 24 women, on the use of moisture and nutrient monitoring tools at the Mubuku Irrigation Scheme. One year after deploying the tools to farmers in the region, the benefits are evident in improved skills, yields and incomes.

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19. Analysis: Will UN plans to transform the way it works ‘throw equality under the bus’?

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2026/mar/08/un-plans-merge-women-unfpa-equality-reform>

But as senior UN figures urge countries to intensify their efforts to achieve gender equality, many of the delegates at the United Nation’s annual Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) will be asking whether the UN is at risk of diluting its own commitment to women and girls.

The question centres on a plan to merge UN Women, the agency dedicated to gender equality and women’s empowerment, with the UN’s sexual and reproductive health agency, the UNFPA. The aim of the merger is to improve efficiency, strengthen impact, reduce duplication and create a single body for governments and partners to work with.

But since it was first proposed last year as part of UN80 – an initiative to reform the entire organisation – voices expressing concern over the idea have grown louder and more urgent.

Women’s rights groups and a significant number of member states fear that restructuring the two agencies at a time of multiple global crises, plummeting levels of aid and a fierce rollback of rights is a high-risk strategy.

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20. Podcast - Inside CSW: What is at stake for gender equality?

<https://www.devex.com/news/inside-csw-what-is-at-stake-for-gender-equality-112049>

Devex is reporting from the Commission on the Status of Women — the world’s largest gathering on gender equality, which is taking place at the United Nations headquarters in New York. We discuss the key talking points at the conference, including what’s at stake amid a global regression in women’s rights, as well as the conversations taking place on the sidelines of the main summit.

Staying on the topic of gender equality and the U.N., we also explore the potential merger of two agencies — UN Women and UNFPA — and explore the latest updates on the race for the next U.N. secretary-general.

To dig into these stories, and others, Adva Saldinger sits down with Colum Lynch and Elissa Miolene for the latest episode of our weekly podcast series.

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21. Podcast: Workplaces Were Not Built for Mothers

<https://imaginecanada.ca/en/360/lets-imagine-podcast-episode-39-workplaces-were-not-built-mothers-allison-venditti>

For decades, workplace structures were built around outdated assumptions: that caregiving would happen quietly, outside the workday, and without disrupting professional life. While change has come, many of those foundations remain. Mothers continue to face discrimination, stalled advancement, pay gaps, and workplace cultures that treat caregiving as a complication rather than a contribution. In Canada’s nonprofit sector - where 77% of workers are women - these challenges are especially urgent.

In this episode of Let’s Imagine, host Bruce MacDonald is joined by Allison Venditti, Founder and CEO of Moms at Work, Canada’s largest community for working mothers and a leading voice on pay equity, caregiving, and workplace transformation.

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22. Designing Gender-Responsive Climate Information Services: Insights from Evidence

<https://hdl.handle.net/10568/181376>

Abstract/Description

The CGIAR Gender Equality and Inclusion (GEI) Accelerator enables transformative research on gender in agriculture and food systems, promoting equitable, sustainable, productive and climate-resilient outcomes. The Accelerator prioritizes the generation of high-quality evidence, development of innovative methods and tools, and creation of strategic alliances that drive systemic change toward inclusive food systems within planetary boundaries. Within the Accelerator, the Sub-Area of Work (AoW) on “Evidence to Policy”, led by the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), focuses on leveraging evidence, strategic communication and engagement to inform policy and practice. It synthesizes and disseminates robust evidence, identifies gaps and addresses emerging questions related to gender in agriculture and food systems. In this context, two complementary studies and a multi-stakeholder workshop were conducted in 2024 to strengthen the evidence base on the gender responsiveness of climate information services (CIS) in agrifood systems and to distil lessons from relevant experiences across low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). Reliable and timely access to climate information can significantly enhance adaptation and mitigation efforts in response to climate change (Coulibaly et al. 2015; UNDP 2019; Warner et al. 2022). However, many farmers—especially women and those from socially or economically marginalized groups—face structural barriers that limit their ability to access, interpret, and act on CIS (McOmer et al. 2013). Gender-specific differences in access, needs, preferences, and use of CIS are frequently overlooked in service design and delivery (Ngigi & Muange 2022; Bryan et al. 2024). Women often require distinct communication channels, trusted social networks, and tailored capacity support to fully benefit from CIS (Raj et al. 2020). Failing to consider these gendered dimensions can exacerbate inequalities and increase women’s vulnerability to climate risks within agrifood systems. This report consolidates findings from the three-part study that builds sequentially across complementary evidence streams:

Landscape mapping: This component maps the CIS provision landscape in agrifood systems across LMICs. It examines the state of climate data infrastructure; the types and content of agrometeorological information and advisories (e.g., meteorological variables, forecast horizons, sectoral focus); the communication channels and formats used; and the institutional actors involved in CIS production and dissemination.

Scoping review: The second component synthesizes existing evidence on gendered access to and usability of CIS, with a focus on the barriers faced by women farmers and the design and delivery features that make CIS more gender-responsive.

Stakeholder consultation workshop: The third component engaged researchers, practitioners and service providers in reflecting on the study findings and identifying strategies for closing evidence and implementation gaps. Together, these components aim to inform the design of gender-responsive CIS that can better reach, serv, and benefit women farmers through tailored information, participatory design and complementary support services.

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23. Briefing: Can agroecology-based food system transitions work in humanitarian crises?

<https://www.danchurchaid.org/climate/climate-resilient-food-production-in-humanitarian-contexts>

There is a growing international body of research on the positive effects of applying climate resilient and sustainable farming approaches, including agroecology, at small and large scale to enhance productivity, strengthen the resilience of food production and enhance socio-economic equity. But while the gains of transitioning to agroecology are well described in relatively stable development settings, the potentials of integrating agroecology approaches in humanitarian response and recovery approaches in at-risk or crisis situations are less understood.

A new learning report finds that there is indeed potential for initiating agroecological food systems transitions for increased food security and resilience in anticipation of, during or in the recovery from a humanitarian situation.

You can find food assessment reports developed at country level in Nepal, Lebanon and Kenya and additionally a Flood and Drought Hazard Risk Assessment from Nepal.

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24. AI for agriculture: How a chat app is empowering smallholder farmers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yoeVcRlj1WI>

At the India AI Impact Summit in February, Vineet Singh, chief technology officer at Digital Green, discussed how generative AI is transforming the agricultural sector in the global south. The organization's flagship app, FarmerChat, is an AI-driven tool designed for low-literacy users. Having surpassed over 1 million downloads, the app is delivering actionable, real-world solutions to marginalized agricultural populations.

To overcome low digital literacy, FarmerChat allows farmers to ask questions via voice, text, or crop images in over 15 local languages and dialects. Behind the scenes, AI structures messy agricultural data and normalizes thousands of local crop names from over 10 million queries into a standardized vocabulary to enable global interoperability.

This accessible approach is driving real adoption. Internal and third-party surveys show approximately 70% of active monthly users apply the AI's agricultural advice in their fields, leading to tangible livelihood improvements across India and sub-Saharan Africa.

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25. Catalyste+ Partner Testimonial: Joy Joseph in tanzania

<https://youtu.be/yFQWt3Yt1L8>

Joy's Yard Products was founded in 2018 by entrepreneur Joy Joseph with a mission to empower women and youth through dairy farming and processing. Today, the company produces several high-quality dairy products, including Mtindi (a Tanzanian dairy product), milk, yogurt, butter, and ghee.

In January 2024, Joy's Yard Products joined the AWE project. Since then, Joy and her team have completed five assignments with us, gaining valuable skills in production processes, animal husbandry, financial and accounting management, and digital marketing. Through the AWE Innovation Microfund, they also received new dairy-processing equipment.

With support from Catalyste+, Joy has more than doubled her production, increased product shelf life, expanded her customer base, and raised incomes for herself and her staff, most of whom are women. Profits from sales are reinvested into the business, helping to improve working conditions and stimulate the local economy. The new equipment from the AIMf has also reduced the physical workload, creating a safer and more efficient environment for Joy and her team. Together, these advancements have had a significant impact on Joy's economic and social well-being.

Watch Joy’s full testimonial on our YouTube channel.

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26. Canada’s Census of Environment – new tool and year in review

<https://www.statcan.gc.ca/en/census-environment>

Census of Environment Ecosystem Profile Explorer <https://gaia.statcan.gc.ca/csge/codr-mapper/app/index-profile-en.html>

Statistics Canada launched a new ecosystem profile explorer tool designed to help Canadians better understand the ecosystems they interact with every day. This is the latest release in the Census of Environment program, which has provided more than thirty products over the past year, including data tables, articles, infographics, fact sheets, and geospatial files. Each data release acts as a building block, constructing greater understanding of the connections between ecosystems, human well-being, and the economy.

A key finding from Census of Environment:

- Three-quarters of Canada’s cropland is concentrated in the Nelson River major drainage area (MDA). This MDA was estimated to have accounted for more than one-third of the national gross domestic product generated by the crop and animal production industry. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/16-508-x/16-508-x2025002-eng.htm>

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27. World Bank Group Water Strategy Implementation Plan

<https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/099122425094016453>

With the aim of scaling up and replicating proven solutions to address water security and aligned with the Fast Track Water Security and Climate Adaptation on Global Challenge Program (GCP), the World Bank Group (WBG) developed a new Water Sector Strategy, which was discussed with the Executive Directors in July 2024, and which outlined three core pillars to build a water-secure world – Water for People, Water for Food, and Water for Planet

This note lays out the WBG’s Water Strategy Implementation Plan (WSIP) to improve water security for 400 million people by 2030 through seven scalable solutions, as follows:

- Solution # 1: Urban Water and Sanitation Service Optimization
- Solution # 2: Bankable Investments for Water, Wastewater, Reuse, and Desalination
- Solution # 3: Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Provision
- Solution # 4: Farmer-Led Sustainable Irrigation - Decentralized Irrigation Services
- Solution # 5: Increased Water and Energy Efficiency - Centralized Irrigation Services
- Solution # 6: Reduction of Flood and Drought Risk
- Solution # 7: Restoration and Protection of Rivers and Aquifers

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28. IIED launches the Food Security Index

<https://www.iied.org/any-country-truly-food-secure-climate-change-era>

Climate change is steadily weakening the foundations of food security by reducing food availability, making food less accessible, worsening malnutrition and undermining the long-term resilience needed for communities to recover from repeated shocks.

The world’s most comprehensive assessment of food security, the index covers 162 countries and measures data across four ‘pillars’ of food security: availability, access, nutrition and resilience; now and under 1.5, 2 and 4°C of global warming.

The data reveals a stark climate injustice: the nations least responsible for emissions face the most severe collapse in their ability to cope. One of the key findings is that food insecurity is not evenly spread.

The new IIED Food Security Index gives ministers and officials the granular data they need to identify weaknesses in their systems of food supply, making them fit to withstand increasingly unpredictable and extreme weather.

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29. The invisible burden: heat amplifies gender inequality in Zimbabwe

<https://www.iied.org/invisible-burden-heat-amplifies-gender-inequality-zimbabwe>

This case study examines the intersection of gender, extreme urban heat and water insecurity in informal settlements in Kariba, Zimbabwe. It forms part of a broader study aimed at advancing gender-responsive climate data collection and knowledge and evidence-generation, and its ownership by grassroots movements.

Researchers used a mixed-methods approach, engaging community members in discussions and providing householders with 'iButton' heat sensors to gather evidence and insights on women's chronic heat exposure.

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30. Redefining sustainable use of wild species in a post-pandemic world: a five-dimensional assessment tool

<https://www.iied.org/22652iied>

Billions of people across the world use wild species for a wide variety of reasons and the sustainable use of wild species is an essential part of sustainable development.

Yet some doubt whether the regulatory frameworks governing such use are strong enough. There are also concerns about the human and animal health and welfare implications of some forms of wild species use.

This briefing outlines a novel, five-dimensional framework for assessing the sustainability of wild species use that takes these concerns into account. This includes a tool for assessing progress towards targets 5 and 9 under the global biodiversity framework in ensuring that use of wild species is not just sustainable but also legal and safe.

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