

October 1, 2026

GEM Digest of the Month

Published monthly since December 2009



Ornamental perennial flower garden. 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.

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Opportunities and Coming Events

1. Learning series on advancing gender-responsive climate finance

<https://wedo.org/resources/moving-the-money-advancing-gender-responsive-climate-finance>

This learning series, running from September through October 2026 under The Loom: Feminist Advocacy Lab, helps advocates, activists, and movement leaders build knowledge, strengthen strategy, and take action for a more just, gender-responsive climate finance system.

It is designed for several audiences, from feminist climate justice advocates engaging at any level of climate decision-making to climate justice advocates seeking to learn more about demands for gender-responsive climate finance. If you are curious about how gender and climate finance are connected, this series is for you!

The first session began on September 17. The October sessions are scheduled for **October 1, 8 and 15.**

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2. New ICN Course: Towards a Decolonial, Anti-racist and Feminist Public Engagement

<https://learning.icn-rcc.ca/courses/>

The ICN's free, self-paced course, Towards a Decolonial, Anti-racist and Feminist Public Engagement, invites practitioners to critically reflect on how public engagement is designed and delivered. Grounded in ICN research conducted with participants from Canada, South America and Africa, the course explores how traditional approaches can reinforce colonial, patriarchal and racist power dynamics—and how we can move from performative engagement toward meaningful, justice-oriented action. Across three interactive modules, participants will:

- Examine power dynamics and systemic inequalities within public engagement through real-world case studies
- Strengthen inclusive, equitable and community-rooted engagement practices
- Reflect on ways to build more authentic, reciprocal and transformative relationships

The course is designed for those working in public engagement, global citizenship education, international cooperation, education, advocacy and related fields who want to deepen their understanding and strengthen their practice.

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3. Engage: Global Citizens, Global Impact

<https://icn-rcc.ca/engage-global-citizens-global-impact/>

'Engage: Global Citizens, Global Impact' is a five-year initiative funded by Global Affairs Canada (GAC) that will foster collaboration and knowledge exchange through inclusive public engagement, global citizenship education, capacity strengthening, and policy advocacy activities.

Undertaken by the Inter-Council Network of Provincial and Regional Councils for International Cooperation (ICN) and its eight member councils in collaboration with a broad community of members and partners, 'Engage' seeks to catalyze a transformative shift in how people across Canada understand and act upon their roles as global citizens.

Activities will reflect a diversity of approaches and audiences. Stay informed about upcoming activities, learning opportunities and resources.

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4. Webinar: A matter of principles: Leveraging research for food systems transformation

<https://idrc-crld.ca/en/events/matter-principles-launch-webinar>

Join IDRC and the University of Vermont's Institute for Agroecology for a webinar discussion on the recently released report, "A matter of principles: Leveraging research for food systems transformation". **October 5, 2026 | 9:00 ET - 10:30 am ET**

Drawing on ten scoping papers and two regional synthesis reports, "A matter of principles" applies the 13 principles of agroecology to identify where research and investment can have the greatest systemic impact, providing recommendations on key gaps in research that are inhibiting food systems transformation. Overall, the report has identified a significant need for research that goes beyond agricultural production, to tackle wider food systems challenges and opportunities.

The event will be offered in English, with simultaneous interpretation to French and Spanish provided.

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5. Listening to Farmers: Measuring Regenerative Agriculture Through Farmer-Centred Socio-Economic Indicators

<https://saipatform.org/event/listening-to-farmers-measuring-regenerative-agriculture-through-farmer-centred-socio-economic-indicators/>

Coinciding with the release of the public-facing report developed by 60 Decibels, this webinar will share insights and learnings from developing and piloting socio-economic indicators tied to the adoption and implementation of regenerative agriculture practices by farmers, ensuring the support of farmer livelihoods in the transition to regenerative agriculture.

6 Oct 2026. 15.00-16.15 CEST

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6. Improving the United Nations Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

<https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/28293639-37e0-4b1c-adbd-1df99fa887c2@0f9e35db-544f-4f60-bdcc-5ea416e6dc70>

The Office of the Special Coordinator on Improving the UN Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (OSCSEA) invites you to help shape the UN's next PSEA Strategy.

An NGO consultation session is being held on **6 October** to discuss the update of the UN system-wide Strategy on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA). As organisations working closely with affected communities, your experience matters. This is an opportunity to influence what the UN prioritizes and to help ensure the new strategy works in practice, not just on paper. Before the event, please review the draft outline of the strategy.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/16GFHrGBSE4ZS0rx3RgCBUQCMs8m2A_2A/view

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7. Scaling Potential – Strengthening early-stage support for PURE companies

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/HgOE_ZSvQeKV6U6AWLSJ2Q#/registration

<https://efficiencyforaccess.org/publications/scaling-potential-strengthening-early-stage-support-for-pure-companies/>

Early-stage grants and technical assistance are essential for helping Productive Use of Renewable Energy (PURE) companies test new solutions and reach underserved communities. Yet despite USD 46 million in support deployed to 127 companies, only 22% have progressed to raising commercial capital – revealing a major gap between early pilots and long-term viability.

This first webinar will share findings from the recently published Scaling Potential: Strengthening Early-Stage Support for PURE Companies report and explore what they mean for PURE companies, funders, investors, technical assistance providers and other ecosystem stakeholders. Date: **Thursday 8th October 2026. Time: 10:00 am BST / 11:00 CEST / 12:00 EAT**

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8. Where to find IIED and partners at COP17: event listing

<https://www.iied.org/where-find-iied-partners-cop17-event-listing>

The 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP17) will be held from **19-30 October 2026 in Yerevan, Armenia**. IIED researchers and partners will be attending various events, to ensure local priorities help shape decision making. This year in Yerevan, parties will conduct the first global review of collective progress in implementing the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), making this an important test of whether global commitments are translating into implementation. One key event for IIED is:

- Building gender-responsive biodiversity data systems – addressing the gender data gap and women's participation for effective implementation and monitoring of the KM-GBF. **Monday 19 October**

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9. Commonwealth Foundation Grants

<https://commonwealthfoundation.com/grants/annual/>

The Foundation's grants programme supports civil society across the Commonwealth—including grassroots communities and creative actors—to advance meaningful social, cultural and political change. We support projects that seek change through constructive engagement with governments and other decision-makers and/or through creative advocacy: the intentional use of creative practices to influence public discourse, policy, behaviours or decision-making.

This year, we're looking to create new opportunities for civil society networks, coalitions, alliances and collectives, alongside continued support for civil society and creative organisations. We will offer two grant streams:

- Individual Organisation Grants – grants of £15,000-£30,000 per year for up to two years for eligible not-for-profit civil society and creative organisations.
- Collective Action Grants – grants of £15,000-£20,000 per year for up to two years for eligible networks, coalitions, alliances, platforms and creative collectives.

Projects should advance one or more of our three strategic impact areas:

- Climate and environmental justice
- Economic inclusion
- Freedom of expression

The deadline for applications is 12pm GMT on **26 October 2026**.

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10. Call for Applications for the Second Cohort of the Women in Agriculture Leadership Program Fellowship

<https://awardfellowships.org/news/award-opens-call-for-second-cohort-of-women-in-agriculture-leadership-program-fellowship/>

Applications for the second cohort of the Women in Agriculture Leadership Program Fellowship are now open until **November 6, 2026, East Africa Time (GMT+3)**. An Information Webinar for potential applicants will be held on Wednesday, **October 7th, 2026**, at 1500hrs EAT.

The two-year non-residential Fellowship under the Africa-Australia Partnership for Climate Responsive Agriculture seeks to strengthen the confidence and influence of African women scientists to lead and contribute to climate-responsive agricultural research and agrifood systems.

The Fellowship targets African women agricultural scientists working in National Agricultural Research Institutions (NARIs), government ministries, universities, and international research organizations from Egypt, Morocco, Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Senegal.

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11. Manitoba Farm Women's Conference

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

This year, the annual Manitoba Farm Women's Conference is being held in **Winnipeg, Manitoba on November 16th - 18th** at the Victoria Inn Hotel & Convention Centre. It is the 40th anniversary celebration, providing a conference that connects multiple generations and agricultural backgrounds through education, encouragement, and empowerment.

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12. Summit on Clean Cooking in Africa

<https://www.iea.org/events/summit-on-clean-cooking-in-africa-2>

The Governments of Kenya, Norway and the United States, together with the International Energy Agency, will convene the second major international Summit dedicated to advancing clean cooking access for the 1 billion people in Africa who currently lack it. The Summit will build on the momentum generated by the landmark 2024 Paris Summit, where a historic USD 2.2 billion was committed by governments and the private sector. **27 - 28 Jan 2027. Nairobi, Kenya.**

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This Month's News

1. Africa's massive food systems conference zeroes in on youth

<https://www.devex.com/news/special-edition-africa-s-massive-food-systems-conference-zeroes-in-on-youth-113252?>

The Africa Food Systems Forum five-day event drew more than 5,700 people from 118 countries at the Kigali Convention Centre in Rwanda. The theme was "Investing in Africa's Agri-Food Systems: Growing Jobs, Nourishing Nations, Building Resilience." Of paramount importance is job creation. Africa's youth population is expected to double to over 830 million by 2050. This point was ubiquitous throughout the forum, as youth appeared on panels alongside finance executives and heads of state to discuss the future of agribusiness.

There seemed to be a marked shift in rhetoric from describing farming as a subsistence activity to farming as agribusiness. A key theme was that the continent's path to prosperity is tied to the fate of its smallholder farmers, who need quick access to finance and markets, as well as more investment in infrastructure, especially as official development aid declines.

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2. EIB Global and Banco do Brasil unlock €500 million for women entrepreneurs in the Amazon

<https://www.developmentaid.org/news-stream/post/210193/eib-global-and-banco-do-brasil-unlock-e500-million-for-women-entrepreneurs-in-the-amazon>

The European Investment Bank (EIB), has signed a €250 million financing agreement with Banco do Brasil to support women entrepreneurs in Brazil's Legal Amazon region, according to a press release. The financing will help Banco do Brasil unlock a total of €500 million in microcredit for women-led and women-owned microbusinesses. The operation is expected to reach around 50,000 women entrepreneurs. It aims to strengthen women's economic empowerment, job creation, and financial inclusion. The partnership reinforces the EU-Brazil Green Deal and Global Gateway priorities.

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3. 19 Women Agripreneurs from 15 African Countries Named WAYA 2026 Finalists

<https://farmersreviewafrica.com/19-women-agripreneurs-from-15-african-countries-named-waya-2026-finalists/>

Nineteen women agripreneurs from 15 African countries have been named finalists in the 2026 VALUE4HER Women Agripreneurs of the Year Awards (WAYA), emerging from more than 1,000 applications across 35 countries.

The finalists represent businesses operating across agricultural technology, food processing, seed systems, value addition, climate-smart agriculture, market development and rural enterprise, reflecting the increasingly diverse role women-led businesses are playing across Africa's food economy.

The winner of this year's VALUE4HER Women Agripreneurs of the Year Award is Rwandan entrepreneur Marina Kamanzi, founder of the Zambia-based Kagezi Seed Company.

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4. Training women to influence high-stakes international climate talks

<https://www.iied.org/training-women-influence-high-stakes-international-climate-talks>

IIED alongside partners ENDA Energie (ENDA), Prakriti Resources Centre (PRC) and Legal Response International (LRI) are continuing the crucial work to equip climate negotiators from the least developed countries (LDCs) with knowledge, skills and confidence to negotiate for ambitious action to tackle climate change.

With limited financial resources, the LDCs – despite being the countries most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change – struggle to make their voices heard at these global summits. Many attend their first negotiating sessions with little exposure to the complex process. It's often a case of learning on the job.

Women remain underrepresented. And it's about more than uneven numbers: data shows even when women are part of their country delegations, speaking time and decision-making positions are monopolised by men. Women typically take on administrative roles.

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5. UN votes to adopt new world map that shows true size of all countries

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/mercator-map-change-un-africa-b3044531.html>

The UN general assembly has voted to replace the traditional world map with one that more accurately reflects the size of all nations.

The approved resolution calls for the world to move away from the traditional Mercator map, which shrinks the size of Africa and exaggerates northern landmasses. The Mercator projection, which is currently used worldwide, increases distortion the further a region sits from the equator.

As a result, Africa, along with Latin America, India and other equatorial regions, appear much smaller relative to northern countries than their true area. The map, for example, depicts Africa as similar in size to Greenland, despite the continent being 14 times larger than the Danish territory.

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6. Universities Join Hands to Enhance Agroforestry Research for Mitigating Climate Change in Africa

<https://www.ipsnews.net/2026/06/universities-join-hands-to-enhance-agroforestry-research-for-mitigating-climate-change/>

A team of universities, led by Addis Ababa University, has joined forces to implement a four-year Intra-Africa academic mobility project aimed at strengthening agroforestry research and education for climate change mitigation.

The project, dubbed Strengthening Agroforestry Research and Education for Climate Change Mitigation in Africa (SERA), brings together JKUAT (Kenya) and Addis Ababa University (Ethiopia) as coordinators; Chinhoyi University of Technology (Zimbabwe), University of Juba (South Sudan) and National University of Agriculture (Benin) in a joint effort to strengthen agroforestry education, research capacity, and academic collaboration across East, West, and Southern Africa.

The project is expected to see the academic mobility and training of 30 MSc students, 10 PhD students, 14 trainees, and 11 academic staff through degree mobility, short-term credit mobility, joint supervision, and research exchanges. Partner institutions will also collaborate to review and harmonise their curricula on agroforestry.

The first cohort of masters and PhD students at JKUAT is expected to begin in September 2026.

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7. What 30 households in Dar es Salaam taught us about switching to induction cooking

<https://cleancooking.org/news/beneath-the-surface/>

Between August 2025 and April 2026, UIL researchers conducted in-person ethnographic visits with 30 households across urban and peri-urban Dar es Salaam, speaking with customers of three induction stove enterprises: BURN/ECO, Sun King/ATEC, and PositiveCooker. Each household received a 2.5-hour visit. We watched people cook, asked about their week, and noted which meals they cooked over time. Where possible, we also collected data on how often stoves were used, pulling directly from built-in digital meters. The resulting report, Beneath the Surface, tells a complex and layered story about people's cooking experiences and preferences.

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8. The Drylands Dividend: The Smart Investment for Powering a Water-Scarce World

<https://www.ipsnews.net/2026/09/the-drylands-dividend-the-smart-investment-for-powering-a-water-scarce-world/>

Open a can of something fizzy and the reason the sugar doesn't separate immediately is gum arabic, tapped by hand from acacia trees across the Sahel. Spray on perfume and the reason the scent is still there at dinner is frankincense, a resin cut from Boswellia trees on the dry escarpments of the Horn of Africa. The fat that gives a chocolate bar its snap may well be shea, gathered and pressed by women in the parkland belt of West Africa. The cashmere jumper came from goats that can only be raised on cold, dry rangelands.

These are drylands. They cover 44 per cent of the planet's land, hold 44 per cent of the world's cropland and half its livestock, and two billion people live in them.

Mongolia, the host of the recently concluded UN's COP17 talks under the Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), is a case in point. Three quarters of Mongolia's land is already classified as degraded or at risk. However, Mongolian herders supply 40 per cent of the world's raw cashmere, increasingly innovating to shift away from an extractive model to practices that generate diverse value, from wool to grass-fed meat, examples of what a healthy landscape can offer.

In northern Ghana, the Ojoba Women's Shea Cooperative processes shea butter by hand in the arid Upper East Region, using a skill passed down through generations. They now supply international buyers including L'Occitane and Lush.

In both instances, the land already had value, and the skills already existed within the communities. What was missing was a route to the market willing to pay for them. These initiatives demonstrate what is possible when investment is designed around the realities and value in drylands.

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9. Online Gender-Based Violence Is on the Rise. Here's Why Democracy Funders Should Care

<https://www.insidephilanthropy.com/home/online-gender-based-violence-is-on-the-rise-heres-why-democracy-funders-should-care>

Global attention to the need to step up for democracy creates an opportunity for funders to address a problem that has flown under the radar, but could hold back most democracy-building efforts if left unchecked: tech-facilitated gender-based violence. This encompasses any form of gender-based violence — whether physical, sexual or psychological — that uses tools like social media or AI to harm people in digital spaces or real life. And it is on the rise.

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10. **\$15M fund launched to create ‘unstoppable momentum’ to end FGM worldwide**

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2026/sep/11/15m-fund-launched-to-create-unstoppable-momentum-to-end-fgm-worldwide>

Frontline activists and leaders in the fight against female genital mutilation, which has affected more than 230 million women and girls worldwide, have welcomed an unprecedented \$15.5M (£11.4m) fund aimed at creating “unstoppable momentum” to finally end the practice.

FGM is the partial or total removal of female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It has been endured by more than 144 million women and girls in Africa, 80 million in Asia and 6 million in the Middle East. The practice can cause immediate health complications such as severe pain, excessive bleeding and infection, as well as long-term consequences that include complications during childbirth, chronic pain and lasting psychological trauma.

A 2025 study estimated that FGM causes approximately 44,000 deaths each year in the 15 countries examined, making it one of the leading causes of death for women and girls in those countries.

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11. **How South Africa’s weigh-and-pay shops are tackling ‘poverty tax’ head on**

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2026/sep/14/south-africa-weigh-and-pay-shops-food-poverty>

Launched in 2022, the social enterprise now runs six container-based shops across Alexandra, selling food and basic household products by weight. Customers are encouraged to bring their own refillable receptacles.

At the weigh-and-pay shop Gcwalisa – which means “fill up” in isiZulu – designed to tackle malnutrition in one of South Africa’s poorest communities, consumers can buy exactly what they can afford.

Gcwalisa’s weigh-and-pay model is designed to avoid what the founder, Miles Kubheka, calls the “poverty tax”: the fact that poorer families end up paying more for small, pre-packaged quantities because they cannot afford to buy in bulk.

Products are sourced directly from local producers, with a focus on nutritious, high-quality foods. The shops soon expanded their range to other household essentials, such as detergent, painkillers and period pads. They began stocking nappies after a grandmother asked whether she could buy disposable ones individually. One of the shops was recently registered as a medical pickup point, allowing patients to collect their HIV or diabetes medication alongside their groceries.

The country is self-sufficient in food and has adopted policies that succeeded in eliminating stunting in children in other countries, such as child support grants and free primary healthcare. But here, Prof Julian May, who heads the Centre of Excellence in Food Security at Cape Town’s University of the Western Cape, says, they have “failed to budge food insecurity”.

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12. How Sudan is losing its fertile fields and ability to produce food

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2026/sep/11/nile-gold-mining-sudan-environmental-disaster-poverty-public-health-emergency-crops-fail-chemicals>

In Abu Hamad, on the banks of the Nile, verdant orchards, gardens and fields once produced a bounty of dates, citrus fruits, winter grains and cereals for the towns and cities of eastern Sudan, including Khartoum and Port Sudan. Today, the land looks drastically different. Trees have been cut down, agricultural areas cleared, and farms have been replaced by shops and commercial sites.

In 2024, artisanal operations accounted for more than 90% of Sudan's gold production. And Abu Hamad in River Nile state has become one of the largest gold-mining and trade towns in the country. Flood waters carrying runoff from mining sites have caused massive spikes in soil salinity, leading to a catastrophic decline in food production.

As the land dies, the social fabric of Abu Hamad is unravelling. Driven by soaring poverty and the allure of quick profits, young men are abandoning their education to enter high-risk mining operations. For the young men in the pits, survival, not greed, drives their decision.

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13. Women heading households in the occupied West Bank face mounting risks, UN Women reports

<https://www.developmentaid.org/news-stream/post/210641/women-heading-households-in-the-occupied-west-bank-face-mounting-risks-un-women-reports>

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/press-release/2026/09/media-fact-sheet-women-in-the-occupied-west-bank-fear-violence-and-arrest>

Women and girls across the occupied West Bank are enduring escalating suffering as settler violence, military operations, and movement restrictions have reached their highest levels in two decades, according to a press release by United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women). A new analysis reveals that women heading households are disproportionately affected by violence, home demolitions, and mobility constraints.

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14. Gates Foundation and Google to Bring AI resources to 200 Million Farmers Across the Global South

<https://www.gatesfoundation.org/ideas/media-center/press-releases/2026/09/google-ai-farmers>

Google and the Gates Foundation are expanding an AI initiative for 200 million smallholder farmers across sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, backed by \$100 million in combined funding and technical support for climate and agricultural tools.

Smallholder farms account for an estimated 85% of agricultural holdings worldwide, yet their small and irregular plots can be difficult to identify using conventional satellite imagery. This can make it harder for farmers to verify their land and crop cycles when applying for government programs, insurance, or subsidized inputs. The initiative addresses this gap through the Agricultural Understanding Platform, an AI foundation model suite for farmers, government agencies, and companies designed to map field boundaries at sub-meter resolution and monitor crops throughout the growing season.

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1. Inequality Toolkit: A guide to influencing for inequality reduction

<https://policy-practice.oxfam.org/resources/inequality-toolkit-a-guide-to-influencing-for-inequality-reduction-621844/>

Today the fight against inequality is more urgent than ever before. This updated toolkit aims to equip Oxfam staff and allies with the skills necessary to scale up their efforts to tackle inequality at the national level. It enables them to analyze and make demands regarding national inequality levels and how we must see concrete plans to reduce them. It includes details about policies and actions proven to reduce inequality, for example on public services, taxation, climate, workers' rights, debt and gender.

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2. Report: Advancing Gender Equality for Sustainable and Resilient Value Chains

<https://www.iisd.org/publications/report/sustainable-resilient-value-chains-gender-equality>

This report explores how voluntary sustainability standards (VSSs) and private sector actors can advance gender equality and women's economic empowerment in global agricultural supply chains. Key Messages:

Non-discrimination requirements and equal rights provisions are now widely embedded in certification systems and adopted by the private sector. However, these measures often focus on compliance and risk mitigation rather than addressing the underlying structures that perpetuate inequality.

Private sector action is strong on prevention and risk recognition, but transformative, structural approaches remain rare—mostly concentrated among smaller, mission-driven companies. These approaches offer greater potential to address the root causes of inequality.

Requirements addressing care-related policies and upgrading the wages and status of work traditionally performed by women are the least covered categories across the VSSs examined. This points to a gap between non-discrimination and the transformative changes needed for economic empowerment.

No single actor or instrument can deliver women's economic empowerment alone—and women producers themselves are central actors in this process, not passive recipients.

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3. The political battleground on climate and gender equality

<https://odi.org/en/insights/the-political-battleground-on-climate-and-gender-equality/>

Opposition to climate action has been, and is increasingly, mainstream, organised, and well-funded – and this is deeply intertwined with rollbacks on gender equality. Feminist and climate movements must be ready to meet the challenge.

This was one of the clearest messages to emerge at a workshop convened by ODI Global, the International Women's Development Agency (IWDA) and Women's Environmental Leadership Australia (WELA) at Women Deliver in April. Together with feminist activists across the world, we reflected on the implications for collective action.

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4. Blog - Beyond backlash: How the UK can revive G20 gender and climate progress

<https://odi.org/en/insights/beyond-backlash-how-the-uk-can-revive-g20-gender-and-climate-progress/>

Countries that score high on gender equality emit less and roll out clean energy faster. Equal access to jobs, education and financial services also builds resilience to climate shocks. That is why gender equality and climate action make sense together. But not all international conversations are open to making this connection – and where they are, progress is not always being made.

With the UK set to host the G20 in 2027 and G7 in 2028, there is an opportunity to change this. In a new blog, our experts Brianna Craft and Fatlum Zeka explore how the UK can use these presidencies to rebuild momentum on gender and climate, working with a wider coalition of countries to keep both agendas moving forward.

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5. Supporting organizational change for GEI: The missing link in research impact?

<https://idrc-crdi.ca/en/research-in-action/supporting-organizational-change-gei-missing-link-research-impact>

We know that research can change the world. But can it change the organizations that produce it? To explore this question, IDRC conducted Sparking Change, an exploratory study examining how organizations embed gender equality and inclusion (GEI) into their structures and ways of working, and what role IDRC as a funding partner has played in this change.

The study found that meaningful and lasting change occurs when GEI becomes embedded in organizational culture, systems and leadership priorities — and that funders can help this change take root and endure.

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6. What 402 Potato Farmers Told Us About Regenerative Agriculture

<https://60decibels.com/insights/regenerative-agriculture/>

Regenerative agriculture will only scale if it works for the farmers doing it. With SAI Platform and support from The Rockefeller Foundation, 60decibels built and piloted a set of farmer-centred indicators with 402 potato farmers in McCain's and PepsiCo's supply chains in India. The indicators sit alongside environmental metrics, so companies can see whether practices are workable, worth it and likely to last. What farmers tell you can flag friction and drop-off risk long before it shows up in adoption numbers. Join us on **Oct 6** to dig into the findings.

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7. Report: Year Five of the Microfinance Index

<https://60decibels.com/insights/mfi-index-2026/>

Five years of listening to microfinance clients has revealed a consistent pattern: women report stronger outcomes than men, and group borrowers outperform individual borrowers. This year, with 18,709 clients of 65 financial service providers in 35 countries, we dug into what's driving those differences and found something more interesting: those gaps shrink when we compare different types of clients within the same lender.

In other words, some institutions get strong results regardless of who they lend to or how. So, are women inherently “better borrowers,” and is group lending really the secret sauce, or are the standout institutions simply better at doing what they do, for everyone? Our takeaway: who lends may matter more than who borrows. And yes, we have receipts: meet this year's Microfinance Social Impact Award winners <https://60decibels.com/mfi-awards>, then join our English [held on September 23 https://60decibels.zoom.us/webinar/register/4017881876212/WN_fKMNeTwpQICMj-6AoL95A] and **Spanish** [October 7 https://60decibels.zoom.us/webinar/register/4617881876467/WN_LZHDgz8MQduFeUIDAFXb9w] deep dives to see what they're doing differently.

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8. Africa's Future: Youth and the Data Defining Their Lives

<https://www.prb.org/resource/africas-future-youth-and-the-data-defining-their-lives/>

By 2030, young Africans are expected to make up 42 percent of the world's youth and account for 75 percent of the those under age 35 in Africa. With such a large population of young people, supportive policies and programs on inclusive youth development are critical now more than ever. Harnessing the demographic dividend and expanding opportunities for young people—to the benefit of all Africans—will require sound data and evidence on the status of African youth.

Population Reference Bureau PRB has partnered with the African Union Commission (AUC) to create a policy brief focused on regional and continental findings on youth development in Africa to spark discussion among youth advocates and policymakers alike.

The policy brief examines inclusive youth development in Africa through the four pillars and enabling environment of the African Union Demographic Dividend (AUDD) Roadmap, which identifies key areas for increasing investments in youth, driving policy change, and setting member countries on a path towards a prosperous future.

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9. The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2026

<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2026/>

The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2026 shows that since their adoption in 2015, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have delivered results at scale—expanding access to clean water, electricity, health care and digital connectivity for billions of people. With less than five years remaining to achieve the Goals, the report provides a candid assessment of progress: meaningful gains have been made across the SDGs, but they remain uneven and insufficient in the face of serious headwinds— from escalating conflicts, slowing global economic growth, climate change, rising debt burdens and declining official development assistance. Without a decisive push to rapidly scale up proven solutions, the promise of the 2030 Agenda risks slipping out of reach.

The report emphasizes that the SDGs remain the world's shared blueprint for peace, prosperity and sustainability and must be urgently returned to the centre of global decision-making. It identifies the priority actions needed to accelerate progress, including increased investment, strengthened international cooperation, expanded access to technology and data, a faster energy transition, greater gender equality, and renewed commitments to peace. The report underscores that the choices made over the next four years will determine not only whether the Goals are achieved by 2030, but also the well-being of people and the planet for generations to come.

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10. Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: The gender snapshot 2026

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2026/09/progress-on-the-sustainable-development-goals-the-gender-snapshot-2026>

This is the latest edition in an annual series produced by UN Women and the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Covering all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the report spotlights the latest data and evidence on gender equality, tracking trends and revealing progress and gaps.

The latest gender data are clear: gender parity in leadership and decision-making is far from realized. On political leadership alone, parity in national parliaments will not be reached for another 63 years. Of 175 chief justices globally, 144 are men and only 31 are women. A 2026 survey of national gender equality mechanisms reveals that one in three saw an erosion in institutional power over the past two years, among other setbacks. The result is an institutional architecture that exists on paper but has diminishing power in practice. The consequences are visible: reduced funding for gender equality, less accountability for laws and policies that address women's needs, and weaker implementation of existing commitments.

However, the latest data show that when women lead, gender-responsive policies are prioritized, institutions are held accountable, and progress is made across all SDGs, including in education, environmental protection, poverty reduction, and more.

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11. Gender Equality in Canada's Foreign Policy: What is at Stake?

<https://cooperation.ca/news/gender-equality-in-canadas-foreign-policy-what-is-at-stake/>

As Canada redefines its role in a changing world, priorities like trade, economic sovereignty and security are taking on greater prominence. But where does gender equality fit?

A new Cooperation Canada blog explores why maintaining Canada's investments, expertise and partnerships on gender equality matters not only for human rights, but also for the country's economic, security and diplomatic objectives. Drawing on research examining nearly eight years of Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy, the piece looks at what is at stake and how Canada can sustain progress as its foreign policy evolves.

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12. State of the Humanitarian System (SOHS)

<https://alnep.org/help-library/resources/sohs-2026/>

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2026/sep/10/global-humanitarian-aid-crisis-64m-fewer-people-received-help-report>

For almost 20 years, ALNAP's State of the Humanitarian System (SOHS) report has tracked how international humanitarian action is performing. The sixth edition assesses the international humanitarian system during 2022-2025, a period marked by escalating humanitarian needs, major geopolitical shifts and the largest contraction in humanitarian funding in recent history. It examines what is working, what is not, and what today's pressures mean for the future of humanitarian action.

With aid contributions cut by 30% between 2022 and 2025 and thousands of aid workers losing their jobs, the humanitarian system has suffered one of its biggest contractions since being formed in the post-second world war era, according to the State of the Humanitarian System 2026 report.

In 2025, only those whose lives were in immediate danger became the focus, while support for longer-term issues and the ability to recover from crises was drastically scaled back.

Jennifer Doherty, co-author of the report produced by the humanitarian organisation Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance (Alnap), said: "The impacts were not felt equally. The combination of reduced funding and restrictive politics meant women, children, elderly people and displaced people were especially hardest hit."

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13. Dismantling gender pay discrimination in Canada: Current trends and policy responses

<https://www.policyalternatives.ca/news-research/dismantling-gender-pay-discrimination-in-canada-current-trends-and-policy-responses/>

Fifty years after Canada ratified the International Labour Organization (ILO) resolution 100 on equal pay for work of equal value, women are still waiting for economic justice. The average woman earns only 72% of what men earn.

While the gender pay gap has narrowed over the decades, notably in the last few years, it remains unacceptably wide: a woman needed to work an additional 73 days—until the middle of April—to catch up to what the average man earned in 2025. This works out to an overall gender gap in annual earnings of 28 per cent.

In dollar terms, women are making more than \$19,000 less a year, on average, than men—an astronomical \$200 billion collectively in lost wages.

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14. From advisory groups to meaningful participation

<https://odi.org/en/insights/advisory-groups-meaningful-participation-displacement/>

Advisory groups are common across a humanitarian sector that is talking (if not always walking) the talk of meaningful participation. Many UN agencies, donor governments and INGOs now routinely seek advice from panels of people with lived experience.

But, as we are learning first-hand, the initial act of setting up the group is the easy part. The process of building the foundations needed to make these groups meaningful is the hard part. Too often, advisory groups are used as a proxy for participation. Meetings are held, papers are circulated and suggestions are recorded – but there is no clear structure for how expert advice ultimately shapes wider institutional decision-making.

The key question that is rarely asked is: What actually changed because the group existed?

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15. ADM Institute for the Prevention of Postharvest Loss

<https://postharvestinstitute.illinois.edu/resources/>

September 29 was the Seventh International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste (IDAFWL). This year's observance positions the 2026 IDAFWL within the FAO Committee on Forestry (COFO28) and World Forest Week, bridging often siloed discussions through a systems approach under the theme "The transformative potential of reducing Food Loss and Waste – Relevance for the Forestry Sector".

In January 2011, the Archer Daniels Midland Company (ADM) provided a \$10 million gift to the University of Illinois to establish the ADM Institute for the Prevention of Postharvest Loss. The institute was created in response to the rising amounts of staple crops lost each year in food chains around the world. The institute is an international hub for evaluating, creating, adapting, and disseminating economically viable technologies, practices, and systems that reduce postharvest losses of commodities in order to promote food security and environmental sustainability.

While many countries like the U.S. waste large amounts of food at the consumer, restaurant, and retail level, most losses in sub-Saharan Africa occur before products reach consumers. Improved technologies and practices during harvest, threshing, storage, and transport are key to reducing postharvest loss and increasing food security.

Resources are available at the link provided.

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16. Catalyste+ Annual Report

<https://www.catalysteplus.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/09/Annual-Report-2025-2026.pdf>

In the 2025-2026 fiscal year, Catalyste+ has continued to serve as a global hub for development support, supporting the jobs, environments, and opportunities that drive universal economic growth. Over the year, Catalyste+ reports 579 completed assignments and 360 supported partners and clients, with 93,616 people benefited directly and indirectly across Indigenous and international programs.

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17. Clean Cooking Customer Experience Toolkit

<https://cleancooking.org/reports-and-tools/customer-experience-toolkit/>

This toolkit is a practical workbook for clean cooking operators that want to improve how they serve and retain customers. It guides readers through a five-step process, from listening to customers, through targeted action, to measuring whether things have improved.

This toolkit is for any operator in the clean cooking sector with a customer-facing function. It does not require a dedicated customer experience team or specialist tools. The workbook is designed to be used by existing teams with existing resources.

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18. Report: What does fuel stacking tell us about clean cooking customers?

<https://cleancooking.org/news/what-does-fuel-stacking-tell-us-about-clean-cooking-customers/>

The challenge of clean cooking often centers on access: simply put, 2 billion people don't have it, and therefore must rely on polluting fires and inefficient stoves to cook. A separate but related issue is why many people who do have access to clean cooking solutions still choose to use polluting fuels. To find out, CCA's User Insights Lab conducted the largest study to date of fuel stacking in sub-Saharan Africa.

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