

# CGIAR Collaborative Platform for Gender Research



Collaborative  
Platform for  
Gender Research

## REFLECTING ON THREE YEARS OF CGIAR GENDER RESEARCH

From January 2017 through December 2019, the CGIAR Collaborative Platform for Gender Research (the '*Gender Platform*') built on the system-wide gender network established in 2011 to increase the visibility and impact of CGIAR gender research; to develop capacity for doing better gender research in agriculture and natural resource management domains; to set and support a CGIAR-wide gender research agenda; and to foster strategic partnerships both internally and with key actors in the global gender research community. The Gender Platform was based in the CGIAR Research Program (CRP) on [Policies, Institutions, and Markets](#) (PIM) serving all CGIAR Research Programs and Centers and was coordinated by [KIT Royal Tropical Institute](#). Modest resourcing came through core funding from the Gender Flagship of PIM, with individual CRPs and Centers supporting their researchers' involvement. Additional bilateral support was mobilized through the European Commission, International Development Research Center (IDRC), Integrated Seed Sector Development (ISSD)-Africa and through joint projects with the [CGIAR Platform for Big Data in Agriculture](#).

**CGIAR Collaborative Platform for Gender Research contributed to changing mindsets about gender research and the role of gender scientists in agriculture, aquaculture and natural resource domains. This brochure highlights a selection of outcomes tracing the footprint of the Gender Platform through:**

**RESEARCH AGENDA-SETTING**

annual grants and research programs, scientific conferences, and publications and activities that explore conceptual frontiers;

**ENGAGING**

gender scientists within and beyond CGIAR, and their supporters;

**STRENGTHENING**

capacities of gender researchers and scientists integrating gender into their research; and,

**SHOWCASING**

CGIAR gender research.

**ENGAGING**

**15 centers, 12 CRPs, one community**

While the Gender Platform was hosted by PIM, a concerted and sustained effort was made to nurture, build and develop strong relationships with the entire CGIAR gender community. This happened through: cross-program representation in Gender Platform governance; support and collaboration in research; involvement in capacity development activities; and, profiling gender research and activities through the Gender Platform’s communication channels (e.g. webinars, newsletters, campaigns, blogs). The Gender Platform has been praised for its success in bringing together science and research process, qualitative and quantitative research, crop-focused and landscape- or system-focused centers and programs, and established and up-and-coming scientists. The aim and outcome is the CGIAR system acting together on gender research as *one* community.

**RESEARCH AGENDA-SETTING**

**Advancing high priority cross-cutting gender research themes**

A key objective of the CGIAR Collaborative Platform for Gender Research has been to develop and support a system-wide gender research agenda, which cuts across research programs, Centers and individual projects. Researchers working on such themes come together to build conceptual frameworks for making findings more coherent and relevant: telling a bigger story than the separate projects can do alone.

Each year, the Gender Platform, with inputs from Science Leaders, Gender Research Coordinators and donors,

selected one high priority cross-cutting theme from the system-wide gender research agenda. The Gender Platform developed and led a research program around these themes, including issuing grants for co-funded projects. Three sets of research grants co-funded have been initiated: five projects on [Gender dynamics in seed systems](#) (2017), nine projects on the [‘Feminization’ of agriculture: building evidence to debunk myths on current challenges and opportunities](#) (2018) and six projects on [Gender dynamics in value chains: beyond the production node and single commodity analysis](#) (2019). The grants bring together a community of researchers from across CGIAR to develop conceptual frameworks, stimulate and promote the use of mixed methods, support joint outputs, and strengthen the CGIAR gender research agenda. Finally, the grants develop the capacity of the researchers involved through peer interaction and collective reflection.

Researchers working under the first theme – gender dynamics in seed systems – have convened three times since 2017 to craft joint research questions, and compare tools, methods and findings. Each project has its own publications, but additionally, a special section for the journal [Food Security](#) is in the works, focusing on six cross-cutting issues. To support co-learning, a reference-sharing platform is in place, which also serves the writing team for a chapter for the [upcoming CGIAR-wide gender research report](#). To continue building knowledge on this theme the Gender Platform partnered with Integrated Seed Sector Development (ISSD)-Africa (2019-2022) to lead their gender module. A sixth gender and seed systems grant co-funded by [ISSD-Africa](#) allows another three years of engagement on this critical issue, ensuring that the body of knowledge generated finds its way to key stakeholders in the seed sector.

The nine studies falling under the second grant theme - [‘Feminization’ of agriculture: Building evidence to debunk myths on current challenges and opportunities](#) – are well underway, targeting 2020 outputs. These projects were presented at the [annual scientific conference in Canberra](#) and grantees have convened twice to explore synergies and work on common outputs. A knowledge sharing platform is used for communication across the grants and a reference sharing platform is in place. Again for this theme, [a chapter in the 2020 CGIAR-wide landmark report on gender research is in preparation](#).

The third theme – [Gender dynamics in value chains: beyond the production node and single commodity analysis](#) – has six exciting projects selected, pending resource allocation. In September 2019, the grantees met for the first time to take stock of potential synergies. Parallel to that process, researchers from across CGIAR have been preparing [a chapter for the 2020 CGIAR-wide gender report](#), which both provides an overview of CGIAR gender and value chain work to-date as well as setting a forward-looking research agenda.

To support a European Commission project that aims to embed [Gender Transformative Approaches](#) (GTAs) in policy

dialogue, programs and working modalities of the United Nations Rome-Based Agencies (RBAs), the Gender Platform was commissioned to prepare a [Discussion Paper](#). The paper draws out CGIAR-wide experiences with the implementation of GTAs in agriculture covering: the rationale for GTAs and key concepts; related theories of change; measurement and assessment methodologies; and, implications for implementing GTAs in agriculture. This was presented at an Inception Workshop at the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Rome, in May 2019. The theme is being further developed in a [chapter of an upcoming report on CGIAR gender research](#) (forthcoming 2020).

#### SHOWCASING

## Harvesting the best of the CGIAR gender research

The gateway to CGIAR gender research, [gender.cgiar.org](http://gender.cgiar.org), features [news & job opportunities](#), [events](#), [publications](#) and other [resources](#). The website is updated on a daily basis (featuring over 1000 items over three years) and is the 'go-to' place for the most recent CGIAR gender news and resources, with key pieces mirrored on [www.cgiar.org](http://www.cgiar.org).

Over the past three years, a quarterly [newsletter](#) has been showcasing key CGIAR gender publications and news items that are shared with nearly 800 subscribers. All CGIAR Gender Research Coordinators have been interviewed, in addition to another 30 people active in the wider gender research community. The newsletter has been very well-received by partners and donors. [Patricia van de Velde](#) (Gender Lead, Agriculture Practice, World Bank Group) at a [Policy Seminar](#) organized by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) in October 2019, expressed her appreciation of and excitement about the Gender Platform's quarterly newsletter in relation to the upcoming CGIAR-wide gender research publication: *"the newsletter that we get from the Gender Platform – it's like getting your favorite magazine... and then finding out that there is going to be a book!"*.

#### RESEARCH AGENDA-SETTING

## Synthesizing lessons from CGIAR gender research and informing future priorities

The system-wide gender research agenda backed by the CGIAR Collaborative Platform for Gender Research is now coming together with momentum. Key themes are presented in a forward-looking landmark report on CGIAR gender and agriculture/natural resource research, which will come out in early 2020, with an academic book to follow later next year. This publication takes stock of past and ongoing CGIAR gender research through the lens of progress towards gender equality. It moves beyond common framings of gender and agriculture, and flips the question to ask: *'how can agriculture*

*/NRM advance gender equality in its own right?'* The report brings together CGIAR gender researchers writing on nine cross-cutting themes, namely: gender integration in breeding programs; gender dynamics in seed systems; women's empowerment in value chain development; leveraging nutrition-sensitive agricultural programs for gender equality and women's empowerment; gender, natural resource governance and rights; gender and climate-smart agriculture; from the feminization of agriculture to gender equality; measuring women's empowerment; and, beyond Gender and Development (GAD) – how gender transformative approaches in agriculture and natural resource management can advance equality. Key findings of several chapters were publicly previewed at the IFPRI [Policy Seminar in October 2019](#).

#### STRENGTHENING

## Cultivating specific knowledge, know-how and collaboration in thematic communities

Communities of Practice are natural places for ideas and practices to thrive. The CGIAR Collaborative Platform for Gender Research has hosted and supported thematic communities on gender and: [water](#), [breeding](#), [gender, agriculture and climate change](#), foresight, [big data](#), [GENNOVATE](#). These communities have stimulated exchange during annual scientific conferences and more broadly. New Communities of Practice continue to emerge from the three research programs and the GTA Discussion Paper (see above). These communities of practice sometimes evolve into projects. [Collaboration between the Gender and Big Data Platforms](#), for example, has led to a mini-grant investigating how consistently gender is described, analyzed and reported in data-sets. A co-funded project currently underway combines mobile telephone operator data with CGIAR gender data-sets to investigate the degree of predictability to which one can locate *'empowered women'* around the world.

#### ENGAGING

## Three scientific conferences: refining and redefining engagement and frontiers

To connect gender researchers from across the CGIAR system, the CGIAR Collaborative Platform for Gender Research organized annual scientific conferences at KIT Royal Tropical Institute in Amsterdam, the Netherlands (2017), in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia with the International Livestock Research Institute (2018) and in Canberra, Australia, jointly with the University of Canberra and the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (2019). These conferences showcased over 20 interactive and innovative plenary sessions, 184 presentations of gender research, and involved a total of nearly 450 people. Conferences challenged participants to think systemically about gender research beyond individual

programs or Centers. They featured cutting edge themes such as gender and big data, the feminization of agriculture, measuring and assessing the effects of women's empowerment and exploring the gendered impacts of climate change, amongst many others. The 2019 '[Seeds of Change' conference](#) in Australia was the first jointly convened conference, which aimed for a much wider '#GenderInAg' crowd. It featured renowned scholars such as [Professor Naila Kabeer](#) (London School of Economics) and [Professor Katherine Gibson](#) (Western Sydney University) as keynote speakers. The annual scientific conferences have successfully put CGIAR gender research in agriculture, aquaculture and natural resource management on the map, establishing CGIAR as a leader within the global gender research community.

STRENGTHENING

## Learning across thematic areas: Capacity development workshops

Capacity development workshops held in conjunction to [annual scientific conferences](#) were organized to support the CGIAR gender community to stay fresh and keep learning together. Workshops covered: a) practical topics like communicating to scientific and non-scientific audiences, maximizing publishing opportunities, writing smarter abstracts, getting better at mobilizing resources for gender research; and, b) thematic expertise such as the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) or gender-transformative approaches. The practical, interactive sessions have been highly appreciated and tailored to help up-and-coming gender scientists. The workshops connected established senior scientists with early career scientists looking for practical, experience-based guidance – including, in some cases, individual mentoring.

STRENGTHENING

## Engendering new research data and methods

The [Engendering Data and Methods blog](#) allows researchers to share lessons. Blog posts covered challenges, clever solutions and emerging practices on, for example: using visual data, or complementing the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index with additional methods. These posts showcase key results, questions, suggestions, recommendations from one researcher to another: often the kinds of lessons that are very helpful and insightful but are not suitable as scientific publications. Scientists learn from each other's successes and failures; building capacity, one blog post at a time.

SHOWCASING

## Celebrating and amplifying CGIAR-wide gender research

CGIAR Collaborative Platform for Gender Research led six campaigns to mark International Women's Day on March 8<sup>th</sup> ([2017](#), [2018](#) and [2019](#)) and International Day of Rural Women on October 15<sup>th</sup> ([2017](#), [2018](#) and [2019](#)). Campaigns highlighted relevant CGIAR work and featured research from all CGIAR Research Programs and CGIAR Centers. CGIAR Science Leaders have been prominent in the coverage of International Women's Day, in particular. Campaigns demonstrate the power of CGIAR-wide collaboration to make gender research more visible: the reward has been an impressive outreach (over 110,000 cumulated views). These campaigns embody the spirit of 'One CGIAR' focusing on CGIAR contributions towards gender equality.

