



# GrOW Newsletter

Growth and Economic Opportunities for Women Program

This has been an action-packed year for the women's empowerment agenda, full of victories and losses, each reminding us of how important our work is to ensure evidence informs policies and practice. A positive call to action included the launch of the first-ever UN High-Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment (UNHLP) bringing together all sectors to identify evidence on what works to improve women's economic lives in six key areas. How this evidence will be used in the future requires further attention but the call is critical, particularly against new data from the World Economic Forum which highlights that the gender gap could take 170 years to close.

This new edition of the GrOW Newsletter highlights some of the contributions by our program and partners to inform the UNHLP report; shares resources and updates on evidence emerging on gender equality; and showcases upcoming regional and international events on women's empowerment. We also feature researcher Janneke Pieters in our Spotlight section!

## NEWS & EVENTS

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## GrOW Contributes to the UN Report on Women's Economic Empowerment

The first-ever High-Level Panel (UNHLP) for Women's Economic Empowerment presented its findings to the UN Secretary-General on September 22, in the context of the UN General Assembly.

To feed evidence to the report, GrOW developed an [evidential roadmap](#) and partnered with the Urban Institute, the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) and Oxfam to organize three consultations on the themes of women's entrepreneurship and the care economy.

The first one took place at the Urban Institute in Washington, D.C., hosting 25 experts on women's entrepreneurship from the public and private sectors, civil society and multilateral organizations. Participants included Jeni Klugman from Harvard, Henriette Kolb from IFC and Marty Chen from WIEGO, among others. Discussions on what works to promote women-owned businesses are summarized in a [blog](#) by Alejandra Vargas and captured at length in the paper titled, "[Enhancing the productivity of women-owned enterprises: the evidence on what works, and a research agenda](#)", by Arjan de Haan.

The second and third consultations took place online and brought together 70 representatives from all sectors to discuss the care economy. Discussions focused on the need to recognize and value care work as a contribution to development and a valuable skilled activity. Examples were shared of what works to prioritise investment to reduce the burden of and increase the quality of care work. Click on the link for [session 1](#) and [session 2](#) of the series Transforming Care Dynamics.

*Above: The Secretary General delivers remarks at the launch of the UNHLP report at the UN General Assembly*

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## Women's Economic Empowerment: A Review of Evidence on Enablers and Barriers

DFID commissioned the Urban Institute to do an evidence review of the key enablers and barriers to women's economic empowerment to inform the UNHLP. Urban's review summarizes the evidence that women's economic empowerment (WEE) promotes economic growth, firm productivity and human development. Following strict criteria about studies included and noting inconsistencies in the scale and quality of evidence on key questions about WEE, the authors make recommendations for policy interventions and highlight areas for further research.

## Determining Women's Destiny

Canadian Geographic, partnering with IDRC, developed a great article featuring the work of our partners from CBPS and IFMR in India, evaluating the impact of women's action group program Mahila Samakhya (MS). Through the voice of Vibha, a program beneficiary, the article guides you through the work of MS and researchers to assess the efficiency of this large program.

[Read](#) the article.

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## Call for Submissions XXVIII International Population Conference

The 28th International Population Conference to be held in Cape Town, South Africa, is now open for submissions. This international event draws some 2,000 population scholars, policymakers and government officials from around the world to discuss the latest population research and debate pressing global and regional issues. The deadline to submit abstracts is December 15th, 2016. Review the [call for papers](#). For additional information about the Conference click [here](#).

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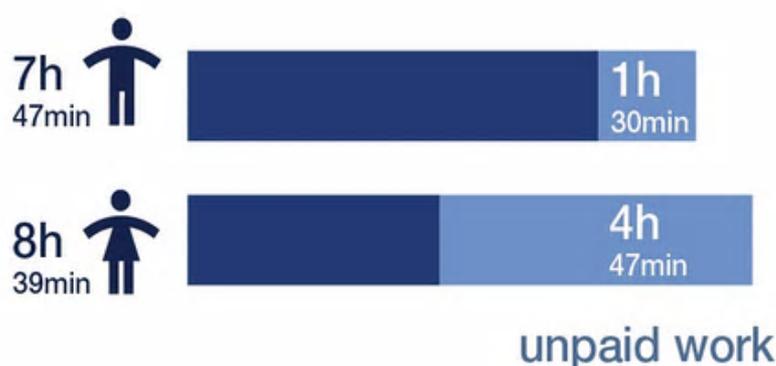
## Call for Submissions IAFFE Conference

The IAFFE conference titled, "Gender Inequalities in a Multipolar World" will bring together feminist economists to discuss the expansion of the care economy, transitions from austerity to growth-promoting policies, sex trafficking and the effects of political instability on civil societies, among other key themes. Abstract submissions for panels, roundtables or individual papers begin in January 2017 through the IAFFE [website](#). The deadline is April 14, 2017. Apply today!

## RESOURCES

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### A working day for men and women



### World Economic Forum Releases 2016 Global Gender Gap Report

Through the Global Gender Gap Report, the World Economic Forum (WEF) quantifies the magnitude of gender-based disparities and

tracks their progress over time. The Global Gender Gap Index presented in the Report seeks to measure the relative gaps between women and men across four key areas: health, education, economy and politics.

Findings from this year's report forecast that it could take 170 years to eradicate the disparity in pay and employment opportunities for men and women. While gaps are closing in key areas like education, economic disparity between men and women continues to rise. When measured in terms of income and employment, the gender gap has widened in the past four years; at 59%. One factor highlighted is the uneven distribution of time allocated to unpaid work between the sexes. Read the report [here](#).

Source: *Global Gender Gap Index 2016, World Economic Forum*



## Leave No One Behind: A Call to Action for Gender Equality and Women's Economic Empowerment

The first report by the UN High Level Panel, funded by DFID, is a global call to achieve the goals set in the 2030

Agenda. Discussions will continue in March for the 61st Commission of the Status of Women. Read the report [here](#).



## Getting Research Across to a Wider Audience: Communication Tools

In an age where many people get their information primarily from social media, it is vital to capitalize on the positives of technology, while ensuring

that complex, vetted and clear information is shared smartly through mixed strategies.

Here are some two tools for effective communication:

- Wonder if your graphs and visuals are clear and impactful? The following [checklist for data visualization](#) provides useful guidelines to help you portray evidence with impact.
- Infographics are concise visual tools that can help you explain your research problem, methods and findings in a concise and engaging way. They can be a point of entry to lure readers to more lengthy and substantive publications. [Piktochart](#) is a user-friendly

platform to start. It offers several free templates to get the ball rolling. The GrOW Uptake Unit did a tutorial on this platform during our program learning event in Germany this past October. Feel free to reach out to [grow@idrc.ca](mailto:grow@idrc.ca) with questions.

## SPOTLIGHT

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### Meet Janneke Pieters

***What is your research about and what does it hope to accomplish?***

My research is about understanding the causes and consequences of inequality in the labour market (between men and women, between low- and high-skilled workers) and in particular how these change as countries develop. For example, how will economic growth and increasing education levels affect the labour force participation of men and women differently? What are the impacts of trade liberalization, given that men and women tend to work in different industries and occupations?

One desired outcome is to identify the key constraints that prevent growth and structural change from promoting women's ability to enter employment at attractive conditions in sectors that match their economic interests. Beyond this knowledge, I hope to contribute to a policy agenda suited to different country contexts that increases the impact of economic growth on women's labour market opportunities.

***What does policy influence mean to you and how will you aim to achieve it?***

Policy influence starts with making information known and then putting issues on the agenda; planting seeds in the minds of policy makers. In our GrOW research, we hope to develop and promote a policy agenda that increases the impact of growth and structural change on women's empowerment through attractive employment opportunities. One important step towards achieving this will be a course we offer to policy makers and members of civil society in low-income countries.

***What are the main knowledge constraints or challenges to women's empowerment and where do you think research has the potential to make a difference?***

Experiences have been different across countries, but one important constraint is the lack of employment growth in sectors and occupations that are attractive to women, combined with social norms and individual preferences that determine what is considered 'attractive'. In our project we aim to learn more about the interplay between gender patterns in labour demand and supply, and how these are affected by growth, structural change and policies such as trade liberalization and promoting girls' education.

***What are 3 books you highly recommend people to read in the upcoming year?***

- V.S. Naipaul, *Among the Believers* (1981). If you wonder about the role of religion in this world, this is great book to learn more about the different branches of Islam and the role it has played in people's lives in different countries in Asia.
- Michela Wrong, *I Didn't Do It for You* (2005). A history of Eritrea that taught me a lot about colonialism and international politics. Plus it reads almost like a good thriller...
- Jan Brokken, *In the House of the Poet* (2008). It tells the life story of Youri Egorov, a Russian pianist who fled to the Netherlands at age 22 for fear his homosexuality would be discovered.

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The GrOW newsletter is meant to encourage learning, knowledge sharing, and network development among partners working on women's empowerment. To make the information contextual and useful, please reach out to [grow@idrc.ca](mailto:grow@idrc.ca) and let us know about your work at the local, regional, and international level. We want to hear from you!

Subscribe to the newsletter [here](#).



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GrOW is a multi-funder partnership with the UK Government's Department for International Development, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and Canada's International Development Research Centre.

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