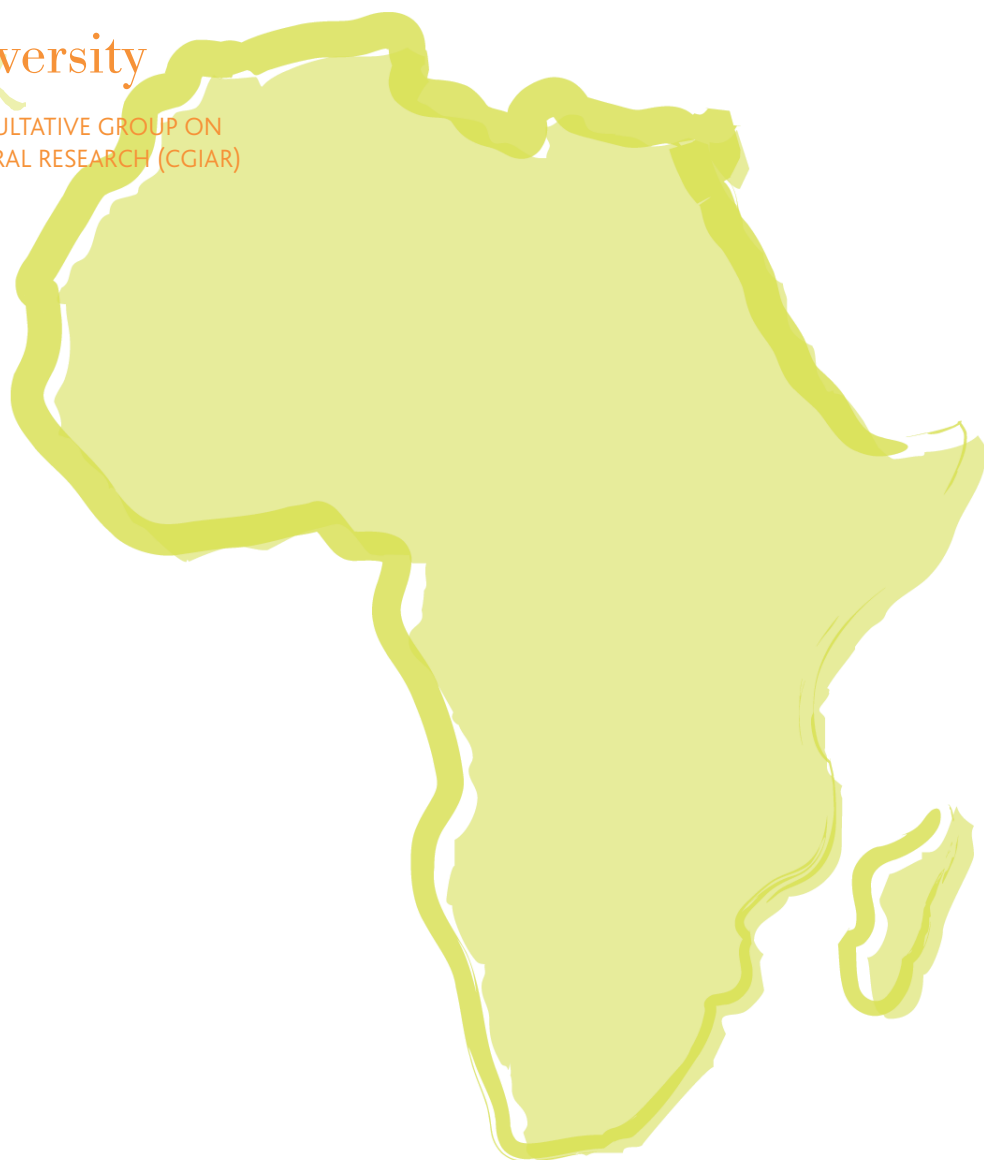




gender & diversity

A PROGRAM OF THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP ON
INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH (CGIAR)



Supporting the women who support Africa

The G&D-Rockefeller Fellowship Program to Enhance the Careers of East African Women Crop Scientists, 2005-2008

OVER 2005-2008, 22 OUTSTANDING AFRICAN WOMEN are participating in an innovative Fellowship Program to Enhance the Careers of East African Women Crop Scientists. The program is supported by The Rockefeller Foundation's Africa Regional Program and The Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture. It is proudly implemented by the Gender & Diversity Program (G&D) of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR).

This innovative fellowship program is aimed at increasing the skills, visibility and contributions to research and development of women who work in critical aspects of crop science and biotechnology in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania.

THE CGIAR GENDER & DIVERSITY PROGRAM (G&D) has designed its pilot fellowship program to be both efficient and holistic in providing repairs to the 'leaky pipeline'. It is efficient in that it taps into existing world-class resources for the career development of women in science, agriculture and development. It is holistic in that it builds up women both as scientists and as leaders. This program contributes directly to the Millennium Development Goal for promoting gender equality and empowering women. It also contributes to building the capacity needed for a Green Revolution in Africa.

THE FELLOWS ARE ALSO SUPPORTED through G&D's active communications and outreach activities including G&D's Global Database of Women Scientists and Professionals that shares news on research job opportunities, G&D News, a global clearinghouse on the latest gender and diversity issues and resources; G&D Funding News with regular updates on grants, scholarships and fellowships; and Mentoring News, featuring success stories and lessons learned in G&D's mentoring programs worldwide. They also receive tailored information about international agricultural conferences relevant to their areas of expertise.

BOX 1

Why Women?

WHO IS BETTER PLACED than women scientists to address the needs of women farmers? Throughout the African continent, women are crucial to food security.

The leaky pipeline: Research clearly shows that while the number of women enrolling in agricultural sciences is steadily increasing in Africa, women researchers tend to drop out as they move up the career ladder. This phenomenon, termed "the leaky pipeline", is generally attributed to traditionally male-dominate organizational dynamics in addition to cultural barriers to women's education and advancement.

Major constraints faced by women in science careers in Africa:

- cultural norms often make women less assertive than men
- family demands tend to make women less mobile than men
- some male managers are uncomfortable with female leaders
- lack of role models and poor access to support networks hinder women
- lack of leadership skills and organizational support affect women's potential for promotion

Our overall goal is to increase the pool of qualified women who apply for research and managerial positions. We aim to enhance the careers of women in science, especially those from developing countries, by providing them with access to information, resources and networks for professional development

VICKI WILDE, LEADER
CGIAR GENDER & DIVERSITY PROGRAM

Equipping African Women Crop Scientists for Leadership

THE PROGRAM OFFERS A PACKAGE aimed at increasing the fellow's skills, visibility and contributions to science and development, including:

- enhanced scientific expertise through a two-year mentoring relationship with a senior scientist in her field, plus funds to present her research at a major scientific conference each year;
- development of team management and leadership skills through participation in the renowned CGIAR's women's leadership and negotiations training;
- improved access to knowledge and support via linkages to regional and global networks of women scientists and researchers; and
- opportunities to practice her newly acquired skills by mentoring a junior woman scientist during the second year of the fellowship, thus expanding the program benefits to at least 22 additional women agricultural scientists.

It is a plain fact that the young woman scientist continues to face a scary and tormenting situation in deciding whether she should pursue her career or resign herself to serving as a lesser mortal than her male counterpart, so that she can maintain her family. I believe it should not be so. I believe that with the right balance, she can succeed in both.

MIRIAM KINYUA
FELLOWSHIP WINNER, KENYA

THIRTEEN SENIOR CROP RESEARCHERS from East African Universities and National Agricultural Research Institutions (NARIs) and six senior CGIAR scientists have shown their dedication by volunteering to mentor fellowship winners. Dr. Usha Zehr, Chair of the CGIAR's Private Sector Committee and Director of Research at the Maharashtra Hybrid Seeds Company in India, is mentoring the sole fellow from the private sector.

THE PILOT FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM enhances broader institutional learning by raising awareness of the constraints women scientists face while increasing the visibility of their contributions to the fight against hunger, poverty and environmental degradation in Africa. G&D hopes to expand the fellowship program to include more African countries and more agriculture disciplines and is actively seeking funding and resources to reach out to more African women scientists.

SUCCESS STORIES ARE ROLLING IN from the fellows and even from the first round of junior mentees. Several of our outstanding women have used their enhanced communication and negotiation skills to achieve career goals, such as receiving a promotion from assistant lecturer to lecturer, assuring a seat in the university senate and negotiating for an important international conference to be held in Kenya against stiff competition from Australia and Russia.

We recognize that many talented women drop out of science as they move up the career ladder, and those who remain are less likely to attain leadership positions. But if we are ever to see progress in the fight against hunger we must repair this leaky pipeline. Solutions will come all the more quickly if we stop this wastage of human talent and bring women's experience to the laboratory.

VICKI WILDE, LEADER
CGIAR GENDER & DIVERSITY PROGRAM

...I want to inspire African women to take up the bold step of entrepreneurship and I want to be a shining example to them...

JOSEPHINE OKOT,
FELLOWSHIP WINNER, UGANDA

Mentoring - How it works

EACH FELLOW IS MATCHED with a senior scientist (mentor) according to her research area and her individual goals. The mentors share their experiences, scientific knowledge and networks with the fellows (mentees) and provide the nurturing support that allows the mentees to grow within their research and their respective institutions. Their relationship is centered around the pursuit of three concrete career development goals. The mentors are exposed to a personal leadership experience and, in turn, benefit from information on the newest trends in science. The mentoring pairs usually meet monthly for two years. They are facilitated by an experienced mentoring coordinator.

PASSING IT ON

During the second year of the program, each fellow shares her newly acquired skills and knowledge by mentoring a junior woman scientist from her institution.

THE GENDER AND DIVERSITY PROGRAM is partnering with USAID and USDA to offer a Women in Science component of USDA's Norman E. Borlaug International Agricultural Science and Technology Fellows Program. Thirty-five women drawn from African research institutions are participating in CGIAR Women's Leadership Courses, developing management skills and expanding their access to networks of women researchers around the globe. With USAID support, the G&D program is also looking at lessons learned from the Borlaug effort as well as from Women in Science activities sponsored by the Rockefeller Foundation and the Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture.



CONTACT INFORMATION:

Vicki Wilde

Leader, CGIAR Gender & Diversity Program

HOSTED BY: WORLD AGROFORESTRY CENTRE

United Nations Avenue, PO Box 30677

00100 Nairobi, Kenya

Tel: +254-20-7224240

Fax: +254-20-7224001

HOUSED BY: IFAD

via del Serafico 200

00142 Rome, Italy

Tel: +39-06-54592731 (direct)

International roaming: +39-347-6217173

EMAIL: v.wilde@cgiar.org

WEBSITE: www.genderdiversity.cgiar.org

...It is so hard for us women scientists to break into a male dominated working area and gain the respect and recognition we deserve. Through this (mentoring) workshop and the information I receive from G&D, I've learned to network and be more assertive. I am prepared...

AGNES NYOMORA,
FELLOWSHIP WINNER, TANZANIA