

March 8, 2012

Dear Friends,

Happy International Women's Day! We would like to acknowledge and celebrate the many amazing women leaders and beneficiaries Firelight supports and who have partnered with us. If you would like to share a quote, story or picture related to this celebration of International Women's Day, please feel free to post something to Firelight's Facebook page. We would love to hear from you! Please visit: <http://www.facebook.com/FirelightFoundation>

We hope you enjoy this week's edition of the Newsflash!

Sincerely,

The Firelight Team

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(Call for Scholarship) Women Deliver Scholarship  
(Call for Nominations) Change Agent Awards  
(Call for Scholarship) 2012 Global Women's Leadership Network Scholarships  
(Call for Nominations) Women's World Summit Foundation – WWSF Next Prize Awards 2012  
(Call for Proposals) Fund for Gender Equality Call for Proposals  
(Resource) International Women's Day: When, Where, What, Why  
(Resource) The Female Face of Farming

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(Call for Scholarship) Women Deliver Scholarship

Women Deliver is a global advocacy organization bringing together voices throughout the world to call for action on sexual, maternal and reproductive health. The organizations work globally to generate political commitment and resource investments to reduce maternal mortality and achieve universal access to reproductive health.

The pioneering conferences in the year 2007 and 2010 were the largest of the decade to emphasize on the health and empowerment of girls and women. The third global conference of the organization will be held between May 28 to 30, 2013 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. It will be even bigger and better, with more than 5,000 public and private sector participants from around the world. The main aim of the organization is to gather together action to improve the health and well-being of girls and women everywhere.

Scholarship winners must:

- Attend the conference in its entirety.

- Be able to communicate in English, both orally and in writing. We will have translation available at plenary sessions, but this will not be possible for all breakout sessions.
- Have regular access to email, as that will be our way of communicating with you about deadlines, registration, hotel and travel arrangements.
- Possess an interest in global development issues.
- Conduct them in a professional manner.

To maximize participation from traditionally under-represented, namely young people and those from the Global South, the organization will be offering full conference support to a select number of participants. This support includes round-trip economy class airfare, conference registration, hotel accommodations, and a fixed stipend for visa fees and other incidentals.

Deadline for Submission: April 15, 2012

For more go to: <http://www.cvent.com/events/women-deliver-2013-scholarship-application/event-summary-1159dc1e19e04089aac9e4c04711c028.aspx?r=E0CA45BC-8257-4A53-9A9F-8BDCE32770E4>

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#### (Call for Nominations) Change Agent Awards

Change Agent Awards celebrate the accomplishments of technical women working in developing countries. These awards are designed to recognize upcoming leaders which impact or advance women's participation in technology.

Three individual Awards will be given to women in computing that:

- Demonstrate leadership within their communities
- Expand opportunities and influence the careers of girls and women in technology
- Demonstrate impact on advancing women's participation in technology
- Establish the desire to attend the conference
- Demonstrate financial need

Each award includes reimbursement of expenses up to \$5,000. This includes travel expenses from the conference, hotel accommodations, full conference registration, the opportunity to participate in a conference session and recognition in the printed program at the 2012 Grace Hopper Celebration of Women in

computing conference. Professional women of all ages and education levels are invited to apply.

The goals of the award are to:

- Continue and build on Anita Borg's vision of women as equal partners in the development and use of computing around the world. For more about Anita Borg, our award namesake, [click here](#).

- Recognize the accomplishments of international change agents\*, increase their visibility, and establish them as role models for others beyond their existing spheres of influence

- Provide a forum – the Grace Hopper Conference – in order to exchange ideas, identify opportunities and areas for improvement, discuss effective practices, and meet hundreds of other women who share in Anita's vision.

Selection Criteria

- A change agent is someone who either deliberately engages in social change, or whose work results in social, cultural or behavioral change. Scholarships will be given to change agents that support women as equal partners in the development and use of computing around the world.

- Women of all ages and education levels are encouraged to apply, provided they can demonstrate their impact on advancing women's participation in technology.

- Applicants must articulate how their participation in the Grace Hopper Celebration of Women will support their work to promote active participation of women in information technology.

- The award recipient will take part in the 2010 Grace Hopper Celebration of Women in Computing Conference's awards celebration on November 2011 in Atlanta, Georgia.

Important Dates:

- 2012 nominations now open – Deadline is April 13, 2012.

- Nominators are notified in July

- Award ceremony in Baltimore, Maryland: October, 2012

Deadline for Submission: April 13, 2012

For more go to: <http://anitaborg.org/initiatives/awards/change-agent-awards/>

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(Call for Scholarship) 2012 Global Women's Leadership Network Scholarships

2012 Global Women's Leadership Network Scholarships will be offered at the fourth annual Global Women's Leadership Forum which will be organized in Gdańsk, Poland from July 14 to 15, 2012. This forum will offer scholarships to a small number of eligible leaders from developing countries by paying their annual

network membership cost. The scholarships also cover registration costs and some travel expenses to the annual Global Women's Leadership Forum organized each year in combination with World Council's World Credit Union Conference.

The forum will open with a networking reception and continue with a full-day peer advisory session on Sunday, July 15. The session will end in time for participants to prepare for opening ceremonies of the 2012 World Credit Union Conference. The main objective of the Global Women's Leadership Network is to form a lasting network of women leaders and offer a forum where these leaders can share business perspectives and learn from each other. The forum is open to women leaders within the international credit union industry.

#### Eligibility/Criteria

- Recipients will be women leaders who live and work in developing credit union movements.
  - Recipients will have made a demonstrated leadership contribution to their community, organization and credit union system.
  - Recipients will have a demonstrated financial need and would not otherwise be able to attend the forum without financial assistance.
  - Preference will be given to recipients from diverse backgrounds who will be able to 1) gain maximum benefit from the networking experience; 2) contribute expertise to the forum; and 3) fully participate in all forum and conference events. Recipients will become active participants of network activities throughout the year. Past scholarship recipients may re-apply.
  - The forum will be held in English. Interpretation will be provided to speakers of other languages if a minimum of 10 participants of a common native language pre-register for the forum by June 1, 2012. Speakers of other languages must provide their own interpreters.
- A qualified selection committee will review applications and offer financial assistance to a limited number of women. Financial assistance will cover registration fees and partial travel expense reimbursement. Successful applicants must accept or decline financial assistance within 15 days of the offer.

#### Tentative Timeline:

March 31: Applications and references due via email

April 30: Assistance offers made to applicants

May 15: Acceptance letters due

Deadline for Submission: March 31, 2012

For more go to: [http://www.cuwomen.org/gwln\\_membership/scholarships](http://www.cuwomen.org/gwln_membership/scholarships)

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## (Call for Nominations) Women's World Summit Foundation – WWSF Next Prize Awards 2012

Awarded since 1994 by WWSF Women's World Summit Foundation, the aim of the Prize is to draw international attention to laureates' contributions to sustainable development, household food security and peace, thus generating recognition and support for their projects. While rural women are vital in providing examples of sound practice in their communities, they still do not have full access to tools needed for development, such as education, credit, land rights and participation in decision making. By highlighting and awarding creative development models, innovations and experiences enhancing the quality of rural life, WWSF participates in addressing the eradication of rural poverty, gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment.

### Eligibility-

- Nominees should be women and women's groups currently active in rural life whose efforts have not yet been acknowledged by other awards. They may not nominate themselves.
- The nominating organization or individual must have direct experience of the nominee's work. The nominator may not nominate a family member, be a member of the nominated organization, nor can an organization nominate its senior officer (i.e. founder, president etc.). No more than 3 nominees may be presented by the same person/organization in the same year. The nominator commits to organize an award ceremony if the candidate is selected for the Prize and invite the media.

Nominations must include the following items:

- Original signed letter of nomination indicating how the nominator knows the nominee and for how long.
- Biographical data on the nominee (full name, age, education, place of work, background) and a detailed history of the nominee's creative project (written by the nominator) including her motivation, innovative aspects, any obstacles overcome, and the impact in the community. Nominations must specify whether the nominee has received or is currently being nominated for other awards.
- Two original and signed endorsement letters from organizations or individuals other than the nominator and, if possible, additional supporting materials such as newspaper articles or publications.
- A few labeled photographs clearly showing the nominee(s) for possible publication

Any of the following elements should be emphasized:

- Exceptional courage and perseverance in improving rural life
- Creativity in the approach
- Preservation of and respect for the environment
- Continuing impact on the community

Laureates are selected by an international Jury composed of WWSF Board of Directors; are announced officially in September and celebrated in their countries on 15 October – International Day of Rural Women. WWSF has a commitment to award annually 5 to 10 creative rural women and women's groups around the world.

Deadline for Submission: April 30, 2012

For more go to: [http://www.woman.ch/index.php?page=nomination-guidelines&hl=en\\_US](http://www.woman.ch/index.php?page=nomination-guidelines&hl=en_US)

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(Call for Proposals) Fund for Gender Equality Call for Proposals

This is the second call for proposals (2011-2012) for the Fund for Gender Equality that aims to provide grants for projects promoting women's economic and/or political empowerment grants with a focus on women in situations of marginalization.

This UN Women's global grantmaking fund was launched with an initial contribution from Spain (USD \$65 million), Norway (USD \$3 million), Mexico (USD \$800,000) and most recently, the Netherlands (USD \$1.18 million). It is currently seeking innovative and impact-oriented proposals from eligible countries in Africa, the Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Central Asia and the Caribbean.

The themes to be covered under this Fund are:

Women's Political Empowerment Grants:

To increase women's political participation, leadership, and influence in the decisions that affect their lives, including through leadership trainings and education and with a focus on youth.

Women's Economic Empowerment Grants:

To increase women's access to and control over resources and assets – including land, water, technology, and viable employment – while also addressing the disproportionate burden of unpaid care work on women and girls, with

particular emphasis on holistic and environmentally sustainable development approaches.

Priority areas cover economic/political empowerment, gender equality, innovation & creativity, fostering dialogues, a rights-based approach, engagement of women in situations of marginalization, matching funds and sustainability. All programmes must articulate how they will achieve tangible results in the lives of specific groups of women and girls.

All grants range from a minimum of US\$200,000 to a maximum of US\$1 million distributed over a period of one to three years.

Proposals have to be submitted through an online application process which will open on March 12, 2012.

Deadline for Submission: March 23, 2012

For more go to: <http://www.unwomen.org/how-we-work/fund-for-gender-equality/>  
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(Resource) International Women's Day: When, Where, What, Why

**When:** Thursday 8 March 2012

**Where:** Everywhere

**What:** International Women's Day (8 March) is a global day celebrating the economic, political and social achievements of women past, present and future. In some places like China, Russia, Vietnam and Bulgaria, International Women's Day is a national holiday.

IWD is now an official holiday in Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, China (for women only), Cuba, Georgia, Guinea-Bissau, Eritrea, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Madagascar (for women only), Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Nepal (for women only), Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Vietnam and Zambia. The tradition sees men honouring their mothers, wives, girlfriends, colleagues, etc with flowers and small gifts. In some countries IWD has the equivalent status of Mother's Day where children give small presents to their mothers and grandmothers.

The new millennium has witnessed a significant change and attitudinal shift in both women's and society's thoughts about women's equality and emancipation. Many from a younger generation feel that 'all the battles have been won for women' while many feminists from the 1970's know only too well the longevity and ingrained complexity of patriarchy. With more women in the boardroom, greater equality in legislative rights, and an increased critical mass of women's

visibility as impressive role models in every aspect of life, one could think that women have gained true equality. The unfortunate fact is that women are still not paid equally to that of their male counterparts, women still are not present in equal numbers in business or politics, and globally women's education, health and the violence against them is worse than that of men.

However, great improvements have been made. We do have female astronauts and prime ministers, school girls are welcomed into university, women can work and have a family, women have real choices. And so the tone and nature of IWD has, for the past few years, moved from being a reminder about the negatives to a celebration of the positives.

**Why:** Suffragettes campaigned for women's right to vote. The word 'Suffragette' is derived from the word "suffrage" meaning the right to vote. International Women's Day honours the work of the Suffragettes, celebrates women's success, and reminds of inequities still to be redressed

Annually on 8 March, thousands of events are held throughout the world to inspire women and celebrate achievements. A global web of rich and diverse local activity connects women from all around the world ranging from political rallies, business conferences, government activities and networking events through to local women's craft markets, theatric performances, fashion parades and more.

Many global corporations have also started to more actively support IWD by running their own internal events and through supporting external ones. For example, on 8 March search engine and media giant Google some years even changes its logo on its global search pages. Year on year IWD is certainly increasing in status. The United States even designates the whole month of March as 'Women's History Month'.

So make a difference, think globally and act locally !! Make everyday International Women's Day. Do your bit to ensure that the future for girls is bright, equal, safe and rewarding.

For more go to: <http://www.internationalwomensday.com/>

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(Resource) The Female Face of Farming

**Farmers. Workers. Entrepreneurs.**

**Care-givers. Bread-winners. Bread-makers.**

**Mothers. Wives. Daughters.**

Women are the backbone of the rural economy, especially in the developing

world. Yet they receive only a fraction of the land, credit, inputs (such as improved seeds and fertilizers), agricultural training and information compared to men.

Empowering and investing in rural women has been shown to significantly increase productivity, reduce hunger and malnutrition and improve rural livelihoods. And not only for women, but for everyone.

Let's take a closer look at the story of women and agriculture.

### **Why Are Women So Important to Agriculture?**

1. **Female Share of the Agricultural Labor Force:** Women, on average, comprise 43% of the agricultural labour force in developing countries and account for an estimated two-thirds of the world's 600 million poor livestock keepers.
2. **Distribution of Male & Female Employment, by Sector:** Of those women in the least developed countries who report being economically active, 79% report agriculture as their primary source of livelihood (48% of economically active women worldwide).
3. **Female-headed Households:** A significant share of households in all regions are headed by women, yet their access to productive resources and services are limited.
4. **Rural Working Hours:** Rural women typically work longer hours than men, when one takes into account both paid productive and unpaid reproductive or domestic and care responsibilities. When these tasks are taken into account, women's total work hours are longer than men's in all regions.
5. **Rural Working Conditions:** Women tend to be employed for labour-intensive tasks, generally earn lower wages than men and are more likely to be paid at piece rate. For example, in the casual agricultural labour market in Africa, women's casual wages (whether in cash or in kind) are usually half of men's wages.
6. **Off-farm Work:** As farming alone often cannot sustain rural families, the off-farm economy is an increasingly important source of household income. Yet rural women do not have equal access to these employment opportunities.
7. **Employment in Selected High-value Agro-industries:** Women wage workers dominate employment in areas of export-oriented high-value agriculture in the developing world. For instance, women represent half or more of employees in countries such as Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala, Kenya and South Africa.

### **Where Does A Gender Gap in Agriculture Exist?**

1. **Land Rights: Share of Male and Female Agricultural Holders in Main Developing Regions:** In many societies, laws, tradition and access bar women from owning and inheriting land.

2. Land Rights: Size of Plots: Moreover, where women hold land, their plots are generally smaller, of an inferior quality, and with less secure rights than those held by men.
3. Access to Inputs and Technologies: The vast majority of studies have found that differences in yields between men and women exist not because women are less skilled but because they have less access to inputs such as improved seeds, fertilizers and equipment.
4. Handweeding: Many fields are not planted to crops because farmers do not have sufficient labour for weeding, nor can they access herbicides.
5. Access to Extension Services: Because of cultural attitudes, discrimination and a lack of recognition for their role in food production, women enjoy limited to no benefits from extension and training in new crop varieties and technologies.
6. Education: Girls who stay in school are more likely to be able to feed themselves and their families when they become adults. One study showed that women's education contributed 43% of the reduction in child malnutrition over time compared to just 26% for improvements in food availability (Smith and Haddad 2000).
7. Opportunities in Higher Education and Research: Gender differences in education reflect a significant and widespread history of bias against girls in education. Women are less represented in higher level research, management and decision-making positions compared with their male colleagues.
8. Access to Credit: In most countries, there is a 5%-10% disparity in the percentage of female-headed households who access credit compared to their male-led counterparts. Without access to credit, women often cannot buy essential inputs, such as seeds, tools and fertilizers, or invest in irrigation and land improvements.
9. Access to Markets: Increasing women's share of household income has broad benefits to improved rural livelihoods. Improving transportation and infrastructure constraints and encouraging rural women's participation in farmer organisations and cooperatives can help both to achieve economies of scale in access to markets as well as reducing isolation and building confidence, leadership and security.

### **What are the impacts of the gender gap in agriculture?**

Gender Yield Gap: Women farmers typically achieve yields that are 20-30% lower than men. However, the vast majority of studies suggest that women are just as efficient as men and would achieve the same yields if they had equal access to productive resources and services. Bridging this gender yield gap would boost food and nutrition security globally.

***Given equal access to resources as men, women would achieve the same yield levels, boosting total agricultural output in developing countries by 2.5-4%. This additional yield could reduce the number of undernourished***

***people in the world by 100-150 million or 12-17%***

For more go to: <http://www.fao.org/gender/gender-home/infographic/en/>

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As part of the Firelight Foundation's Capacity Building Program, Firelight provides "Newsflashes" to share relevant resources and information with our active grantee-partners via weekly emails and via post on a monthly basis. We hope that by facilitating access to information for grassroots, community-focused organizations, programming for children and families, as well as organizational development, is enhanced. Past editions of the Firelight Newsflash can be found on our website: <http://www.firelightfoundation.org/newsflash.php>.

We welcome your comments, feedback and ideas for upcoming Newsflashes at [newsletter@firelightfoundation.org](mailto:newsletter@firelightfoundation.org).