



UNU-GEST GRADUATION 2017

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A short piece from
Caroline Kalangala
Kanyago's speech at the
UNU-GEST graduation

"The programme gave us an opportunity to ask questions on multiple problems. While we may have limited knowledge in an area like medicine or engineering, we know questions to ask in a health crisis or in a design of a road in a city. We are a team that will bring the right questions to programmes or policies.

It is no secret that we are all amazingly ambitious and bold individuals who are strongly motivated by the need to change the world. Choosing to be part of this programme alone is a clear indication that we are willing to challenge our own beliefs. And so when given an opportunity, we know the right questions to ask. We have the capacity to influence the crafting of better laws, policies, programmes, budgets, projects, trade agreements, action plans and strategies at the national, regional and international level.

As today we end this chapter of our lives and leave the UNU-GEST programme, we realise that the goal of achieving gender equality in a world where gender inequalities are normalised is like moving against the strong winds. It is going to be tough. It will need new and better strategies. We are going to face resistance and we shall move faster if we work together. But as UNU-GEST graduates, we have a framework that we can work with. We know the questions to ask-and this should help us move forward."



The 2017 cohort of UNU-GEST fellows successfully graduated with a post-graduate diploma in international gender equality studies on 23 May 2017. The diploma programme is hosted at the School of Humanities at the University of Iceland. The participants in the annual diploma programme are professionals from developing countries, conflict and post-conflict societies working for government ministries and agencies, civil society and educational organizations. This year, UNU-GEST graduated 18 fellows from twelve countries attended the programme: Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Iraq, Jamaica, Lebanon, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Palestine, Somalia, Tunisia and Uganda. Congratulations to the UNU-GEST class of 2017!

Dignitaries attended the UNU-GEST graduation ceremony 2017. Mr. Jón Atli Benediktsson, the Rector of the University of Iceland, and Mr. Stefán Haukur Jóhannesson, Permanent Secretary of State at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, addressed the graduates. Mr. Guðmundur Hálfðánarson, Dean of the School of Humanities, together with the Rector, handed out diplomas to all fellows. The First Lady of Iceland, Mrs. Eliza Jean Reid, presented the Vigdís Finnbogadóttir Award of Excellence for the best final assignment to Mr. B. Yeshiwas Degu from Ethiopia. UNU-GEST Director, Dr. Irma Erlingsdottir, staff and teachers together with several other invited guests attended the graduation ceremony, which was held at the ceremonial hall of the University of Iceland. Ms. Caroline Kalangala Kanyago from Uganda gave a speech on behalf of the UNU-GEST graduates.



2017 FELLOWS' ACTIVITIES

Visit to the President of Iceland

UNU-GEST fellows were invited to visit the President of Iceland, Mr. Guðni Th. Jóhannesson and the First Lady, Mrs. Eliza Jean Reid, at [Bessastaðir, the presidential residence in March](#). They were warmly greeted by the distinguished hosts, who listened to three UNU-GEST fellows' talk on behalf of the 2017 cohort: Ms. Haneen Salameh from Palestine reflected on the value of the UNU-GEST programme for the fellows, Mr. Leonard Chimbali emphasized the relevance of the programme for his work as an agricultural extension officer in his native Malawi, and Ms. Bisharo Ali Hussein spoke about the topic of her final assignment - the fight against female genital mutilation in Somalia. The fellows were invited to join President Jóhannesson and Mrs. Reid for light refreshments as well as an opportunity to speak to them and look around the presidential residence.



SNAPSHOTS FROM SOCIAL MEDIA



The Messengers



Several of this year's UNU-GEST fellows - Farah Mnekbi, Wafa Saadeh, B Yeshiwas Degu, Kevin Ogbajie and Harriet Adong - were interviewed by the Icelandic National Broadcasting Service, RÚV. In the programme entitled The Messengers, which aired on Thursday May 25, the fellows shared their diverse backgrounds, experiences of studying and living in Iceland, final projects and future plans. The radio programme is accessible until August 23rd 2017 on [RÚV website](#).

Lida Reca and Bisharo Ali Hussein featured in feminist blog Knuz.is

UNU-GEST fellows Lida Reca from Afghanistan and Bisharo Ali Hussein from Somalia were interviewed and featured in [Knuz.is](#) feminist blog in March where they told their stories and discussed the status of gender equality in their home countries. Both fellows highlighted the cultural differences between Iceland and their home countries, e.g. the percentage of women gaining a higher education and average marrying age. Bisharo and Lida reflected upon their interest in gender equality issues, their life in Iceland and the UNU-GEST programme. The blog is in Icelandic and can be found [here](#).

Ali Alhashemi talks to high school students about the status of women in the Middle East

UNU-GEST fellow Ali Alhashemi from Iraq gave a presentation on the status of women in the Middle East at two high schools in Reykjavik, Kvennaskóli and Borgarholtsskóli. Ali focused his talk on how women are portrayed in mainstream media and the social implications of these images on the perpetuation of misleading gender stereotypes. The audience, mainly students from 16 to 20 years old, participated actively in the discussion with interesting reflections and questions about the status of women in the Persian Gulf countries.



Ekram Osman presents at the Humanities Conference

UNU-GEST fellow Ekram Osman from Ethiopia gave a talk on Niccolò Machiavelli's political philosophy that transcended Medieval times at the seminar titled "Discrimination, Justice and the Role of Humanities" at the Hugvísindafing Humanities' Conference at the University of Iceland in March 2017. UNU-GEST staff members Erla Hlín Hjálmarasdóttir, and Dr. Pétur Waldorff and associated researcher Dr. Giti Chandra also participated in the seminar. The seminar set out to explore the global challenges, such as gender inequality, inadequate education, effects of climate change and access to clean water, from the perspective of humanities and how this perspective can contribute to increasing justice and equality around the world.



Interns, Spring 2017

From January to May 2017 UNU-GEST welcomed three interns

Anne Flaspöler: Peacekeeping Training: "Torn between Complexity and Time"

Dr. Anne Flaspöler is an affiliated researcher with UNU-GEST and the EDDA Center at the University of Iceland. Her blog post published in the UNU-MERIT Blog Series titled [Challenges to Peacekeeping in the 21st Century](#) reflects on several practical aspects of peacekeeping training, more precisely about the [UN Core Pre-Deployment Training Materials](#) and its challenges towards its application on the field.



Flora Tietgen from Germany
MA Political and Social Sciences, Julius-Maximilians Universität Würzburg.

"Left Out to Dry? Gender and Fisheries on Lake Tanganyika" - article by Dr. Pétur Waldorff featured in Our World Magazine of the UNU

Dr. Pétur Waldorff's blog article on his research experience and analysis on the gendered value chain on the shores of Lake Tanganyika, where he and his colleagues from [UNU-FTP](#) worked in close relationship with the local community and the women in particular, featured in [Our World Magazine by the United Nations University](#).

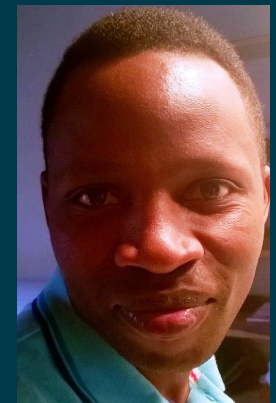


Paula Mata from Spain
MA student in Communications for Development, Malmö University, Sweden.

Gendered Value Chain Analysis: Final Report

Joint research efforts of UNU-GEST, UNU-FTP and the Icelandic Food and Biotech R&D institute ([MATÍS](#)) materialized in the research project "Gendered Value Chain Analysis of Small-scale Fisheries and Fish Processing by Lake Tanganyika". The research uses an applied gender focused socio-economic research methodology, which is currently being developed under development at UNU-GEST.

Gendered Value Chain Analysis of Small-Scale Fisheries in Lake Tanganyika



Micheal Gumisiriza from Uganda,
MA student in Sustainable Territorial Development, University of Leuven, Belgium.

Women in Geothermal: A Visual Ethnography

UNU-GEST teamed up with [Women in Geothermal \(WinG\)](#) and [Bless Bless Productions](#) to create a [documentary](#) about women in the geothermal energy sector. The project covers Iceland, Kenya, Ethiopia, Mexico, New Zealand and Japan. Filming and fieldwork in Ethiopia, Kenya and Iceland took place 2016 and 2017, and the preparations for Japan and New Zealand are underway. Partners are currently [fundraising](#) for a part of documentary production. You can find the promotional video [here](#).





UNU-GEST hosts Nordic Women Mediators (NWM) network annual meeting

NORDIC WOMEN MEDIATORS



The NWM network gathered in Reykjavik in early May 2017 when UNU-GEST and the Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs hosted the NWM annual meeting. The annual meeting was designed with a practical focus to discuss, debate, review and endorse operational mechanisms, roles and responsibilities, while providing a platform and space for network members to connect and get to know each other. For more information about the NWM network, visit our [website](#).



Operation Peace: "Challenges to Peacekeeping in the 21st Century"

Anne Flaspöler, former postdoctoral researcher at EDDA and UNU-GEST affiliated researcher, participated in the Future Force Conference 2017 in The Hague, Netherlands in February 2017, together with fellow researchers from UNU-MERIT (United Nations University – Maastricht Economic and Social Research Institute on Innovation and Technology). On the second day of the conference Anne contributed the breakout panel session "Operation Peace: Challenges to Peacekeeping in the 21st Century".

Seminar on Gender and Energy with UNU-GTP

The UNU-GEST Programme hosted a joint seminar on gender and energy in cooperation with [UNU-GTP Geothermal Training Programme](#) on April 28. Dr. Ellen Morris, an adjunct professor at Columbia School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA) and president and founder of Sustainable Energy Solutions, was the main lecturer. The seminar focused on the energy access situation in developing countries and the impacts on women, the links between gender and energy as it relates to policies, technologies and businesses, and how to address gender inequalities in project planning and implementation. Further details about the seminar can be found on our [website](#).



UNU-GEST Director in Japan

Dr. Irma Erlingsdóttir went to Japan to take part in two high level events dedicated to gender issues. UNU-GEST Director gave a talk on women in the renewable energy sector at the first Nordic Science, Technology and Innovation (NORSTI) [seminar](#) held at the Swedish Embassy in Tokyo and gave a lecture at a [HeForShe](#) talk series at Nagoya University's Graduate School for International Development in early June, where she shared the Icelandic experience of gender equality, the way towards it and the remaining challenges.

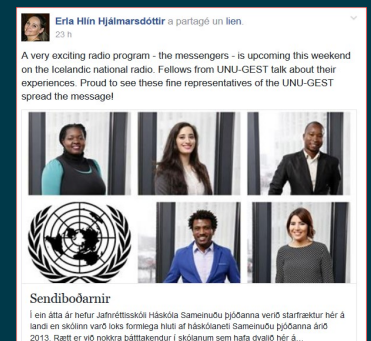
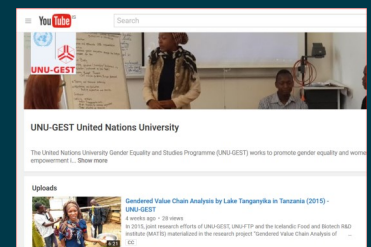
The Icelandic Gender Equality Fund awards UNU-GEST projects

Iceland celebrates women's rights and suffrage on June 19 each year. On this day in 1915, all women over the age of 40 in Iceland were given the right to vote — a right extended to all adult women in 1920. The Icelandic Gender Equality Fund grants are awarded on this day to projects in the area of gender equality. This year, two UNU-GEST projects were awarded Gender Equality Fund grants.

Dr. Pétur Waldorff, a senior researcher at UNU-GEST, received a grant for his applied research project set out to design a value chain for an aquaculture initiative in Gaza district in Mozambique. Erla Hlín Hjálmsdóttir, UNU-GEST Head of Research, accepted a grant for a short course on Gender and Climate Change in Uganda. The short course is based on previous short courses developed and carried out 2011-2013 in collaboration with development partners in Uganda and the Icelandic Development Agency.



SNAPSHOTS FROM SOCIAL MEDIA



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Gender and Sexual Justice in South Africa

Dr. Tamara Shefer, Professor of Women's and Gender Studies at the Faculty of Arts, University of the Western Cape in South Africa, gave a [lecture](#) entitled "Gender and Sexual Justice in South Africa: Young People Making a Change". In her talk, she shared some examples of gender and sexual justice activism among young people in the contemporary South Africa. Prof. Shefer was a visiting lecturer at the UNU-GEST programme funded by Erasmus+. She taught in the modules on gender, peace and security and gender, health, violence and bodily integrity.



Bringing Gender to the Environment Table:

A symposium on UNEP's Global Gender Assessment [was held at the University of Iceland in April](#). It was a cooperation between UNU-GEST, RIKK (Institute for Gender, Equality and Difference) and the interdisciplinary programme in Environment and Natural Resources at the University of Iceland. Joni Seager, Professor in Global Studies at Bentley University, U.S., was the keynote speaker, other panellists were Auður H. Ingólfssdóttir, an Assistant Professor at the University of Bifröst Business School, and Lára Jóhannsdóttir, an Assistant Professor in Environment and Natural Resources at the University of Iceland.



History of Colonial Disease Control in Africa

Fluguhöfingjarnir: Karlmiðaðar frásagnir af landslagi, sjúkdómum og heimsveldi á nýlendutíma Afríku



Kirk Hoppe er dósent í sagnfræði við Illinoisháskóla. Rannsóknarsvið hans eru nútímasaga Afríku og heimssaga nútímans. Í fyrirlesturinum skoðar Hoppe það viðhorf sem ríkjandi var á nýlendutímamum um að Afríka væri „landslag“ og Afrikubúar truflun eða ónæði í landslaginu.

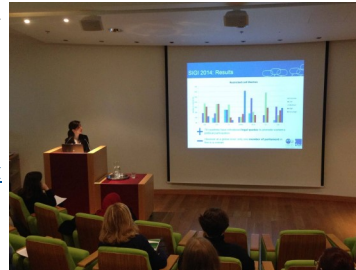


Fyrirlesturinn er haldinn kl. 12.00-13.00, 9. mars í fyrirlestarasal Þjóðmússaftna Íslands

Dr. Kirk Hoppe, an Associate Professor of History at the University of Illinois, Chicago, presented his work and findings on the history of colonial disease control in Africa. In his lecture titled "Lords of the Fly: Masculinist Narratives of Landscape, Disease and Empire in Colonial Africa", he focused on tsetse and sleeping sickness, referring to his book "Lords of the Fly: Sleeping Sickness Control in British East Africa, 1900-1960" (2003).

Achieving Gender Equality the Sustainable Development Goals

In [her talk](#), Dr. Keiko Nowacka discussed the OECD's work in measuring social norms and tracking change over time for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as regards to achieving gender equality. Ms. Nowacka leads the gender and development work at the OECD Development Centre, where she has been working since 2013 on its major flagships, notably the [Social Institutions and Gender Index \(SIGI\)](#) and [Wikigender](#).



A History of Feminist Leadership in Action



"Leaning In ... by Taking a Stand: A History of Feminist Leadership in Action" was the title of the talk given in a packed hall at the National Museum of Iceland by Dr. Tracey Jean Boisseau, the Director and Associate Professor at the Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies Program at Purdue University (USA) and a U.S. Fulbright Scholar to Iceland in Spring 2017. In her lecture, Professor Boisseau critiqued social science perspectives advising women to "lean in" as a solution to persistent gender inequality, offering a micro-historical perspective on the possibilities for women's leadership in the modern era instead.

ARTICLES FEATURED IN
THE JOINT UNU-MERIT
AND UNU-GEST
GENDER FULL
SPECTRUM BLOG
SERIES:

<http://www.merit.unu.edu/gender-full-spectrum/>

[How Migrant Women are Leading Locally in France, Spain & Beyond](#) by Janina Pescinski, [UNU-Institute on Globalization, Culture and Mobility \(GCM\)](#)

How Migrant Women are Leading Locally in France, Spain & Beyond

09 February 2017 by Janina Pescinski gender equality, leadership, migration



Our "Gender Full Spectrum" series is a journey through several UN bodies and UNU institutes. Co-organized by UNU-GEST in Iceland and UNU-MERIT in the Netherlands, it presents research findings from a gender perspective, methodological challenges for researching gender, and topical discussions on gender issues.

Today nearly half of all migrants are women – women migrating not just as partners and dependents but also as independent agents in search of work and opportunities. Yet, once they arrive, they are often marginalised and prevented from enjoying their rights.

[Left Out to Dry? Gender and Fisheries on Lake Tanganyika](#) by Dr. Pétur Waldorff, UNU-GEST



ALUMNI NETWORK



UNU-GEST has been formulating its Alumni Strategy that will be used to boost the UNU-GEST Alumni Network both in individual countries and globally. UNU-GEST aims to establish a sustainable network of alumni as a platform for past and future fellows to exchange knowledge, resources and project ideas for advancement of gender equality in different areas of expertise in their home countries and globally.

The UNU-GEST alumni network intends to allow past fellows to create a platform, in which they can sustain contact between peers, past fellows and those joining the programme as future cohorts. Beyond this, the network hopes to involve alumni with current UNU-GEST projects, act as a bridge for academic integration with partner organizations, and enforce progression towards working for equality in gender-based fields.

External Evaluation of UNU-GEST

Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs has commissioned NIRAS, an international consultancy for development, to carry out an external evaluation of the four UNU programmes in Iceland. Cecilia Magnusson Ljungman, NIRAS gender expert, has led the evaluation of UNU-GEST. She visited former fellows in Malawi and Uganda in March and collected the experiences and success stories from our alumni. She has uncovered some impressive findings - more to come in the next issue of the UNU-GEST newsletter!



UNU-GEST's Head of Research **Erla Hlín Hjálmarsdóttir** represented UNU-GEST at the sixty-first session of the Commission on the Status of Women in New York in March. Also present were the former UNU-GEST fellows **Febe Gomes** and **Sandra Chilengue** of Mozambique, and associated teacher and filmmaker **Susan Muska**.

Call for nominations of fellows for spring semester 2018

UNU-GEST open call for nominations for the post-graduate diploma programme is open until the 1st of July 2017. UNU-GEST seeks nominations of candidates who are avid gender advocates in their home countries, who possess an undergraduate degree, speak good English and are under the age of 35. Nominations of candidates can be done through [our website](#).

"Sex For Grades"

UNU-GEST 2015 fellow **Shaista De Araujo** together with other former UNU-GEST fellows from Mozambique produced a video entitled "Sex For Grades" that was aired on Channel 4. In her own words, "The idea is using international media to raise our voices. I have to say that at least for myself, the UNU-GEST experience gave me a lot of strengths to think outside the box".



Former UNU-GEST Fellow wins the "WEE LEADERSHIP AWARD 2017"

Organized by OXFAM International, the WEE Leadership Award recognizes individuals creating spaces for women and leading initiatives that tackle discrimination and negative social norms that impede women. **Laureen Karayi** won the award for being ambitious and creative in supporting innovative strategies to expand the movements of women in Uganda to recognize all of women's work, and increase public investment to support unpaid care work.



Useful links:

- [UNU-GEST website](#)
- [December 2016 newsletter](#)
- [Overview of the programme](#)



UNU-GEST former fellow **Luis Carlos Alberto Abrantes**, who works for the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Action in Mozambique, attended the signing of a project agreement between the Icelandic Government and the UN Women Mozambique, as part of implementation of the National Action Plan for UN Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

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