



**MASTER IN
DEVELOPMENT ECONOMICS AND
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION
(MESCI)**

2025-26 edition

**“GENDER AND
DEVELOPMENT”**

*Syllabus and Reading List*¹

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¹ For each lecture, optional readings are marked with a red asterisk (*) - all other readings are mandatory. For any reading, whenever a particular section is explicitly mentioned (e.g. executive summary, chapter 1 etc.), only that section should be used for reading purposes – when no section is mentioned, the entire publication shall be read.



1. **THE GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT NEXUS:** **Overview, challenges, and solutions**

What are the four dimensions of poverty, and why does gender matter for development? This lecture will present gender, rurality, fragility, and informality as the four lenses through which poverty can be looked. Focus will then shift to gender, especially with regards to a) why it matters for development, b) which areas of gender inequality have experienced most progress so far; and c) what remains to be done. The topic will conclude with a review of the available empirical evidence regarding policy solutions that works for selected gender inequalities, with focus on low- and middle-income countries.

READINGS

- *Bramucci, F. and Boudet, A. M. and Viollaz, M. [2025] - "Promoting Women's Leadership: What Works, What Doesn't, and What's Missing", Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=5676586> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.5676586>
- *Dattani S. and LRodés-Guirao L. [2023] - "Why Do Women Live Longer Than Men?", OurWorldinData.org. <https://archive.ourworldindata.org/20260205-144556/why-do-women-live-longer-than-men.html>
- Duflo, Esther [2012] - "Women Empowerment and Economic Development." Journal of Economic Literature 50 (4): 1051–79. <https://www.aeaweb.org/articles?id=10.1257/jel.50.4.1051>
- *Evans D. K., M. Akmal, and P. Jakiela [2020] - "Gender Gaps in Education: The Long View", Working Paper 523, January 2020, Center for Global Development. <https://www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/gender-gaps-education-long-view-revised-march-2020.pdf>
- Goldin, C. [2024] - "Nobel Lecture: An Evolving Economic Force", American Economic Review 2024, 114(6): 1515–1539. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1257/aer.114.6.1515>
- Goldin, C. [1994] - "The U-Shaped Female Labor Force Function in Economic Development and Economic History", NBER Working Paper 4707. Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research. <https://www.nber.org/papers/w4707>
- World Bank [2024] – "Women, Business and the Law 2024", World Bank, Washington DC, USA. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstreams/9bc44005-2490-41f8-b975-af35cbae8b9a/download>
 - Main messages
 - Executive Summary



- World Bank [2012] - "*Gender Equality and Development - 2012 World Development Report*", World Bank, Washington DC, USA. Available at: <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/entities/publication/51c285f6-0200-590c-97d3-95b937be3271>
 - Overview
 - I.1: A wave of progress
 - I.2: The persistence of gender inequality
 - III.7: Public action for gender equality

- *The Economist [2024] - "*How Motherhood Hurts Careers*" - The Economist, 30 January 2024. Available at: <https://www.economist.com/interactive/graphic-detail/2024/01/30/how-motherhood-hurts-careers> (Note: limited number of free articles accessible every month).

- *World Trade Organization (WTO) and World Bank Group (WBG) [2016] - "*The Role of Trade in Ending Poverty*", World Bank Group, Washington D.C., USA. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/726971467989468997/The-role-of-trade-in-ending-poverty>.
 - Chapter 2 only



2. **THEMATIC DEEP DIVES:**

Social norms, care economy, transport & gender

What are social norms, and how can they be changed? The first part of this lecture will introduce the concept of socio-cultural norms, provide examples of their gendered impacts, and present a framework for countering discriminatory ones, based on latest available evidence. Attention will also be paid to how norms impact legislation and result into discriminatory laws and/or practices.

What is the care economy? And how do norms impact women's employment in male-dominated sectors? In the second part, the lecture will dive deep into the concept of unpaid caregiving, explain its relationship with social norms, and present policy and operational examples of how to build a care economy that works for all. The social norms framework introduced in the first part of the lecture will then be applied to the specific case of transport as a traditionally male-dominated sector, with attention paid to gendered transport challenges and how development interventions can address them.

READINGS

- Ahmed, Tanima; Devercelli, Amanda; Glinskaya, Elena; Nasir, Rudaba; Rawlings, Laura B. [2023] – “*Addressing Care to Accelerate Equality*”, World Bank Group Gender Thematic Policy Notes Series, World Bank, Washington DC. <http://hdl.handle.net/10986/40184>
- Boudet A.M.M., Rahman T., Nasr N. And Dalton A. [2023] - '*Addressing Social And Gender Norms To Promote Gender Equality*', World Bank Group Gender Thematic Policy Notes Series, World Bank Group, July 2023, Washington DC, US. https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/entities/publication/a3b37beb-8086-4ddd-82b6-e378754e83f7?cid=gen_tt_genderwb_en_ext
- Dominguez Gonzalez, Karla; Gonzalez Carvajal, Karla; Kurshitashvili, Nato; Laurie Pickup [2023] - "*Closing Gender Gaps in Transport* (English)". World Bank Gender Thematic Policy Notes Series Washington, D.C., World Bank Group. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/099512412082314620>
- Kleven, H. J., C. Landais, and J. E. Sjøgaard [2018] - “*Children and Gender Inequality: Evidence from Denmark.*” NBER Working Paper 24219. <https://www.nber.org/papers/w24219>
- *United Nations [2024] – “*Transforming Care Systems in the Context of the Sustainable Development Goals and Our Common Agenda*”, UN System Policy Paper. <https://unsdg.un.org/resources/transforming-care-systems-un-system-policy-paper>
- *World Economic Forum [2024] - "*We Must Move Towards Gender Equity When It Comes to Care - Here's Why*", World Economic Forum, 14 June 2024, Geneva, Switzerland. <https://www.weforum.org/stories/2024/06/gender-men-women-care-equality/>



3. INCLUSIVE RURAL LIVELIHOODS:

Gender, trade, and related interventions

Is trade good or bad for women? The first part of this lecture will introduce a theoretical framework to understand the gendered impact of trade liberalization, and review some of the benefits and challenges associated with trade and entrepreneurship that specifically affect women.

How do women, men and youth make a living in remote rural locations? The second part of the lecture will review key facts, patterns, opportunities, and challenges of small-scale cross-border trade, a key source of livelihoods for many in rural areas in the developing world. Geographical focus will be primarily on selected countries in East, West and Southern Africa.

How can international development support (female) small-scale traders in rural areas? In the third part of this lecture, concrete examples will be presented of analytical, operational, and policy interventions on (gender-sensitive) small-scale trade facilitation, based on real World Bank projects from selected countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. International best practices and lessons learned will also be covered.

READINGS

- *Brenton, P., Bashinge Bucekuderhwa, C., Hossein, C., Nagaki, S. and Ntagoma, J-B [2011] - *"Risky Business: Poor Women Cross-Border Traders in the Great Lakes Region of Africa"*, Africa Trade Policy Note 11, World Bank, Washington DC, USA.
<https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/zh/742571468007855952/pdf/601120BRI0Afr11public10BOX358310B0.pdf>
- *Brenton P., Dihel N., Hoppe M, and Soprano C. [2014] - *"Improving Behavior at Borders to Promote Trade Formalization: The Charter for Cross-Border Traders"*, Africa Trade Policy Notes - The World Bank Group, Washington DC (USA).
<https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/894601468346146304/pdf/894730BRI0Char0Box0385291B00PUBLIC0.pdf>
- Brenton, Paul; Gamberoni, Elisa; Sear, Catherine [2013] – *"Women and Trade in Africa : Realizing the Potential"*, World Bank, Washington, DC.
<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/16629>
 - Chapter 5, 7, 8
- Brenton P. and Soprano C. [2018] – *"Small-Scale Cross-Border Trade in Africa: Why It Matters and How It Should Be Supported"*, Bridges Africa, vol. 7, issue 4, International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD), June 2018.
<https://www.tralac.org/images/docs/13116/bridges-africa-june-2018-ictsd.pdf>
- World Bank and World Trade Organization [2020] – *"Women and Trade: The Role of Trade in Promoting Gender Equality"*, Washington, DC: World Bank.
<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/34140/9781464815416.pdf>
 - Chapter 1 and 3



- World Bank Group [2015] – “*Great Lakes Trade Facilitation Project*”, Project Appraisal Document (PAD), September 2015, Washington DC, USA.
<http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/348781468188338972/pdf/PAD1254-PAD-P151083-IDA-R2015-0245-1-Box393199B-OUO-9.pdf>
 - Section I, II, III and IV (pp. 1-25).

- *UNCTAD – United Nations Conference on Trade and Development [2015] – “*Trade & Gender, Volume I – Unfolding the Links*”, UNCTAD, Geneva, Switzerland.
https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/gds2014d1_en.pdf
 - Module 1: all chapters (pp. 1-32)
 - Module 2: all chapters (pp. 35-61)

- *UNECA - United Nations Economic Commission for Africa [2021] – “*Towards an estimate of informal cross-border trade in Africa*”, UNECA, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
<https://repository.uneca.org/bitstream/handle/10855/46374/b11996523.pdf?sequence=5&isAllowed=y>
 - Chapter 2-3



4. GENDER, TRADE, AND EMERGENCIES :

The impact of conflict and COVID-19 on women traders/entrepreneurs

Do war or a pandemic affect women and men equally? The first part of this lecture will analyze some of the gendered effects of COVID-19, and will then introduce a theoretical framework to investigate the gender-conflict nexus, based on available empirical evidence. A brief review of contents and impacts of UN S/RES/1325 will also be presented.

Also, how has war in Gaza and in Ukraine impacted food security and gender? The second part of the lecture will review country evidence from specific conflicts, including Ukraine and Gaza. The gendered impacts of war on women involved in trading and entrepreneurship, will also be analyzed.

What development interventions can help support women traders and entrepreneurs, including in fragile and conflict-affected settings? The lecture will conclude with a review of concrete examples of analytical, operational, and policy interventions on gender & trade and on female entrepreneurship, based on real projects funded by the World Bank, UN, and other donors. Primary geographical focus will be on projects in Sub-Saharan Africa, although examples from other regions will be presented. International best practices and key lessons learned will also be covered.

READINGS

- Caprioli M. [2005] - "*Primed for Violence: The Role of Gender Inequality in Predicting Internal Conflict*", *International Studies Quarterly* Vol. 49, No. 2 (June 2005), pp. 161-178.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/3693510>
- De Paz, Carmen; Muller, Miriam; Munoz Boudet, Ana Maria; Gaddis, Isis [2020] – "*Gender Dimensions of the COVID-19 Pandemic*", World Bank, Washington, DC.
<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/33622>
- Muvumba Sellström, Angela; Möhrle, Daike [2025] "*Mobilising new voices for gender equality in war and peace : Time to push the UN Women Peace and Security Agenda beyond 'the usual suspects'*", NAI Policy Notes, 2025:5. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet.
<https://nai.uu.se/stories-and-events/news/2025-09-02-mobilising-new-voices-for-gender-equality-in-war-and-peace.html>
- UNWOMEN [2022] – "*Global Gendered Impacts of the Ukraine Crisis on Energy Access and Food Security and Nutrition*", UNWOMEN, September 2022, New York, USA.
<https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-09/Policy-paper-Global-gendered-impacts-of-the-Ukraine-crisis-en.pdf>
- UN WOMEN [2015] - "*Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325*", UN WOMEN, New York, US. https://wps.unwomen.org/pdf/en/GlobalStudy_EN_Web.pdf
 - Executive Summary



- *FAO [2022] – *“Impact of the Ukraine-Russia conflict on global food security and related matters under the mandate of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)”*, 117th FAO Council session, 13-17 June 2022, CL 170/6, FAO, Rome, Italy.
<https://www.fao.org/3/nj164en/nj164en.pdf>
- *UNWOMEN [2024] – *“Gender Alert: The Gendered Impact of the Crisis in Gaza”*, UNWOMEN, January 2024, New York, USA.
<https://www.un.org/unispal/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Gender-Alert-The-Gendered-Impact-of-the-Crisis-in-Gaza.pdf>