RTB-UNIVERSITY GENDER PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE
The RTB-University Gender Partnership Initiative aims to match students from seven participating universities in the USA and one in Canada with relevant research projects under the CGIAR Research Program on Roots, Tubers and Bananas (RTB) to jointly conduct research on gender related issues.

RTB is one of eight Agri-Food System CGIAR Research Programs (AFS-CRPs). RTB brings together four CGIAR centers (Bioversity, CIAT, CIP and IITA) and CIRAD (also representing the French organizations IRD, INRA and Vitropic) with more than 200 partners for research on banana, cassava, potato, sweetpotato, yam and minor roots and tubers. In Phase I, RTB undertook gender analysis and gender integration research in the prioritized areas and the findings have contributed to integrating gender across the program’s five Flagship Projects in Phase II.
The RTB-University Gender Partnership Initiative is part of RTB’s efforts to integrate gender throughout the program and has been developed in order to:

- facilitate interdisciplinary exchange among faculty, researchers and students as a practical way to integrate gender into agricultural research
- provide regular research opportunities, field sites, networks, technical, logistical, and in some cases, project support for graduate students
- increase gender research in RTB project sites
- raise awareness of CGIAR and RTB work

All prospective students must be enrolled in a MSc, MA or PhD program with universities in the USA and Canada and must have experience on gender analysis and other necessary social science research and cultural skills appropriate for their project of interest, as well as the agreement of a faculty member from their university to supervise the student’s project to assure academic/research excellence.

These are not paid positions, but opportunities to collaborate on gender-responsive, international agricultural field work in a professional setting. Allowances may be provided by the host CGIAR center to support the student’s field research and logistics. In 2014-2015, graduate students from the participating universities listed below undertook field research in various RTB project locations. The RTB-University Gender Partnership Initiative is also open to accepting students from other universities from other parts of the world.

Current participating universities

- Cornell University
- Clark University
- Pennsylvania State University
- University of Florida
- University of Minnesota
- University of Illinois-Chicago
- University of San Francisco
- University of Guelph
How does it work?

1. Potential students and their supporting faculty member contact the RTB Gender Research Coordinator (GRC) to express their interest in applying for a research opportunity.

2. The GRC does a preliminary assessment with the project focal point to ensure the student is an appropriate match for the project.

3. If the student is deemed a good match, the student and supporting faculty member then complete a formal Expression of Interest form to be submitted to the GRC for first review.

4. Applications are reviewed by the selection committee.

5. Confirmation of center hosting arrangement provided to the selected student, along with letter from the host center with clear indication of the research work, timeline and deliverables.

6. During the research period the host Project Leader, GRC and RTB Gender Focal Points provide guidance and logistical support to the student.

7. After completion of the field work, student submits field report along with all the raw data to the Project Leader and GRC, and a summary of their reflections to the GRC.

8. If any findings are published in peer-reviewed journals, RTB and the project must be duly acknowledged.
Student testimonials

“My summer internship with Bioversity International based in Uganda and Tanzania helped to enhance my professional skills for a career in gender mainstreaming and international development. The most beneficial skill I learned this summer was the ability to develop my strengths in qualitative research, especially the design of qualitative tools. Specifically, I independently worked on developing two tools, daily and seasonal calendars, we used in the field this summer… My quantitative research skills were enhanced as well as I was able to closely observe the design, revision and pre-testing of the household survey. Both of these skills will be useful in my future career in international development.”

- Emily Albertson, University of Clark

“I cannot help but marvel at how rewarding the experience has been since I first expressed interest in the project… I have had ample opportunities to lead my own project in northern Ghana, supervise a team of enumerators, manage a budget, collect and analyze data, write a proposal and a research paper, and apply to doctoral programs… I saw the project as a leap forward in my career and the Ghana team saw me as a vital addition to their team.”

- Chinonso Ezenwa Etumnu, University of San Francisco

Further information

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