

Cocoa and Coconut in the Solomon Islands: A Family Affair

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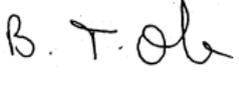
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Table of Contents

Acronyms	i
Executive Summary	iii
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Why this Study	1
1.2 Methodology	2
1.3 Framework	2
1.4 Limitations of the Study	4
1.5 Structure of the Study	4
2.0 Gender Issues and Policies	5
2.1 Gender issues in SI	5
2.1.1 Division of labour	7
2.1.2 Access to and control over Resources	7
2.1.3 Norms and Values	7
2.1.4 Intra-Household Relations	8
2.1.5 Looking at the Interplay	8
3.0 Cocoa Findings	9
3.1 Introduction	9
3.2 Background – Cocoa Sector	9
3.2.1 Facts – SI Cocoa Sector	11
3.2.2 Challenges and Opportunities	11
3.3 Gender Relations in the Cocoa Value Chain	12
3.3.1 Gender Division of Labour	12
3.3.2 Access To and Control over Resources	14
3.3.3 Looking at the Interplay	18
3.4 Clustering of Entry-Points	19
3.4.1 Female Entrepreneurship	22
3.4.2 Service Provision to Women	24
3.4.3 Mainstream Gender in Institutions and Affirmative Action	26
3.4.4 Value Chain Collaboration and PPPs	27
3.4.5 Sensitisation and Education	28
3.4.6 Research and Business Development	28
3.5 Conclusions - Cocoa	29
4.0 Coconut Findings	33
4.1 Introduction	33
4.2 Background - Coconut Sector	33
4.2.1 Facts about Coconut, Copra and VCO	34
4.2.2 Challenges and Opportunities	34
4.3 Gender Relations in the Coconut Value Chain	35
4.3.1 Gender Division of Labour	36
4.3.2 Access to and Control over Resources	39
4.3.3 Looking at the Interplay	40
4.4 Clustering of Entry-Points	41
4.4.1 Value Chain Collaboration and PPP	41
4.4.2 Female Entrepreneurship	43
4.4.3 Service Provision to Women	45
4.4.4 Mainstream Gender in Institutions and Affirmative Action	45
4.4.5 Value Chain Collaboration and PPP	46
4.4.6 Sensitisation and Education	46
4.4.7 Research and Business Development	46
4.5 Conclusions – Coconut	47
5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations	51
5.1 Main Recommendations	51
5.2 Other Recommendations	52
5.3 Building on Recommendations of other Studies	53
5.4 Gender Dynamics are Everywhere	53

6.0	References	54
7.0	Standard Limitation	55
Appendix A		
	Gender-based challenges and opportunities in the cocoa value chain	A
Appendix B		
	Gender-based challenges and opportunities in the coconut value chain	B
Appendix C		
	Gender Concepts	C
Appendix D		
	Program Field Visit	D

List of Plates

Plate 1: Female employee in input shop, Honiara	7
Plate 2: Woman selling her crops in Honiara market	14
Plate 3: New solar drying technique by PHAMA, tested in SI	18
Plate 4: Input Shop in Honiara.	23
Plate 5: Solomon Islands Origin Chocolate	24
Plate 6: Traditional Drying Practices using Fire	26
Plate 7: Woman selling coconut at Honiara market.	37
Plate 8: Woman selling coconut oil in Honiara market.	38
Plate 9: Extension messages in Coconut Technology Centre	39
Plate 10: Soapmaking in Kokonut Pacific.	44

List of Tables

Table 1: Overview of upgrading challenges and opportunities in SI cocoa sector	11
Table 2: Entry-points for addressing gender in training and extension	26
Table 3: matching entry-points with target groups and stakeholders	30
Table 4: Overview of upgrading challenges and opportunities in SI coconut, copra and VCO.	35
Table 5: Different markets for different coconut products	36
Table 6: Matching entry-points with target groups and stakeholders.	48

List of Figures

Figure 1: Gender relations framework	3
Figure 2: The Cocoa Value Chain	20
Figure 3: Clustering Entry-Points	22
Figure 4: The Coconut Fruit and Kernel Value Chain	42
Figure 5: Clustering Entry-Points	43

List of Boxes

Box 1: Why invest in women's economic empowerment?	2
Box 2: Upgrading strategies	3
Box 3: Domestic Violence in SI	6
Box 4: Labour division on a cocoa farm in SI	12
Box 5: Labour division around household activities	13
Box 6: Women set up a canteen with cocoa money!	16
Box 7: Division of labour - coconuts	37

Acronyms

Abbreviation	Description
ACIAR	Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CEMA	Commodity Export Marketing Authority
CLIP	Cocoa Livelihoods Improvement Program
CNO	Coconut Oil
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DME	Direct Micro Expelling
FFS	Farmer Field School
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEWD	Gender Equality and Women's Development
HH	Households
IPDM	Integrate Pest and Disease Management
IWG	Industry Working Group
KGA	Kustom Garden Association
KIT	Royal Tropical Institute (<i>Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen</i>)
MAL	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MWYCFA	Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs
NCID	National Cocoa Industry Development
NCIDP	National Coconut Industry Development Program
NDS	Solomon Islands National Development Strategy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PARDI	Pacific Agriculture Research and Development Initiative
PHAMA	Pacific Horticultural and Agricultural Market Access
PNG	Papua New Guinea

Abbreviation	Description
PPP	Public Private Partnership
RDP	Rural Development Program
SI	Solomon Islands
SIC	Sub-project Implementation Committee
SICIPS	Solomon Islands Cocoa Industry Policy and Strategies
SIG	Solomon Islands Government
SISBEC	Solomon Islands Small Business Economic Centre
SIWIBA	Solomon Islands Women in Business Association
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
STP	Solomon Tropical Products
VC	Value Chain
VCC	Value Chain Collaboration
VCO	Virgin Coconut Oil
WEES	Women's Economic Empowerment Strategy

Executive Summary

Cocoa and Coconut in the Solomon Islands, A Family Affair, is an explorative study that complements and builds upon existing studies of the cocoa and coconut value chains in Solomon Islands. This qualitative study combines an inclusive value chain approach with a gender relations framework. The report is based on both a desk study and interviews with key stakeholders in the Solomon Islands.

This study reveals the active role of women in cocoa and coconut production, processing and trading of (by)products, in addition to their household tasks. It shows that women, despite their contributions, benefit only marginally from their involvement in these economic activities. Reasons for this can be found in existing gender relations.

Understanding gender relations makes it possible to identify gender-based challenges and opportunities for value chain development, and to develop entry-points for programs, projects and public and private stakeholders to start recognizing and improving the participation and outcomes for women involved in the cocoa and coconut value chains.

Gender-based challenges

Specifically for the **cocoa value chain**, quality cocoa and establishing linkages with niche markets is challenging. In the Solomon Islands (SI), women are constrained in contributing to quality production in several ways:

- Women are less visible (and involved) in post-harvest practices that determine quality, and are usually not the ones involved in selling the processed beans. Consequently women have little say on how money that is generated through processing is being spent. This potentially creates disincentives for women to invest more time in post-harvesting practices.
- Women lack access to training on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and quality production, and lack access to new technologies, like the solar drying strategies. Women lack financial skills and sometimes also a business mind-set. Women also face serious time constraints to invest more in quality cocoa production and there is no reward system in place.
- Women lack representation higher up in the value chain, which constraints their involvement in quality control and in the development, testing and monitoring of new technologies.

When it comes to the expansion of cocoa production and productivity, a serious challenge is land availability. For women, there is even an additional constraint; women lack decision-making power over the use of land. Women, like men, lack access to (gender-sensitive) services, for example GAP training, and face time constraints to apply labour-intensive practices.

There is potential to increase productivity, especially through new planting materials, but women lack access to these materials and do not receive training on rehabilitation.

In the **coconut value chain** we find some similar gender-based challenges. For example, women lack control over the land where the trees are planted, even while the replanting of coconut is seen as the responsibility of women. In copra production, women are less visible than men. Women are often mentioned when it comes to improving the quality of copra production. It is argued that women, for example, are more patient, which would make them well equipped for safeguarding quality. This while it is known that copra production in itself is a hazardous task. Particularly, women lack access to information of alternative coconut products, like virgin coconut oil (VCO), and/or face constraints to access these markets (for example women who live in more remote areas).

Domestic trade of oils and other by-products (like soap) was overlooked by the recent coconut value chain study, even though this market is of interest to women and the entry-barriers are low (e.g. no need for land). Lack of working capital and information hinders this domestic trade and pushes women into copra production, as this brings in direct money.

Gender-based opportunities and entry-points

In this study we distinguish six main strategies that address gender inequalities and women's economic empowerment in the cocoa and coconut value chain:

- i. Support female entrepreneurship.
- ii. Improve services to women.

- iii. Mainstream gender in institutions and affirmative action.
- iv. Value chain collaboration and public-private partnerships (PPP).
- v. Sensitisation and education.
- vi. Research and business development.

Female entrepreneurship

We have identified a number of business ideas for (educated) women in the cocoa and coconut value chains. Most business ideas respond to needs in both sectors that were identified during this study, such as the need for rehabilitation of farms with high quality seedlings (*e.g. set up nurseries*) and the need to access equipment (*e.g. female run input selling points*), and existing gender-based challenges. Some ideas anticipate opportunities for women, for example to add more value to the produce (*e.g. processing*) and generate (other) income that they themselves can control. By promoting women as entrepreneurs and employees of these business ideas, setting up these businesses could impact significantly on women's economic empowerment.

For all start-ups, business training for the involved women is essential, as well as providing them with professional management skills. The start-ups will also require some seed money, and for most ideas a market study is recommended as well as an interested (female) entrepreneur. To improve outreach to women, the Rural Development Program (RDP) could consider setting up Matching Grant funds for female businesses (or favouring businesses run by women and/or generating employment for (young) women) and organizing challenge grants for female entrepreneurs. Financial institutions like the Pacific Financial Inclusion Program and commercial banks are relevant partners.

Services to women

Both men and women in SI are constrained in accessing services like training, finance and technologies. Women turn out to be even more disadvantaged than men. This constrains them in being productive and in reaching quality standards. The capacity of public extension services to provide GAP training to cocoa and coconut farmers is currently weak, and the hope is set on a more systematic involvement of (and collaboration with) the private sector. This would require clear incentives for companies, showing them the business case and scaling opportunities. In the coconut value chain we see more private sector engagement in extension and training than in the cocoa sector. It is recommended to build on these practices, and support companies in improving outreach to women by mainstreaming gender in their curricula and training methods. Besides the companies, RDP in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAL) are main stakeholders that can play a role in further shaping and implementing this strategy

Financial services are weakly developed in SI, particularly for farmers and small and medium-sized enterprises (SME). It is worthwhile to learn from experiences with saving groups, both in SI and in other Pacific Countries on how to develop financial products that are tailored to needs of women, and use lessons for developing an upscaling strategy. Non-governmental organisations (NGO) like Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) can support this process, and financial institutions.

Women lack access to new (labour-saving) technologies. We recommend involving women in the testing and validation of new technologies, like the drying trials introduced by PHAMA.

Gender mainstreaming

Women in SI are systematically underrepresented in any decision-making function that occurs in the cocoa and coconut value chains, even though it is known that female representation (diversity) contributes to better project outcomes. More involvement of women in representative positions will not happen by itself and requires affirmative action in three areas: i) introduce female and male role models; ii) train staff on gender issues; and iii) recruit more women in decision-making bodies using set quotas.

We see a major role for gender experts and organisations like the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs (MWYCFA), Solomon Islands Women in Business Association (SIWIBA), the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and RDP.

Value chain collaboration and PPP

Involving the private sector in inclusive value chain development requires showing the business case (e.g. higher returns), providing clear incentives (e.g. creating loyalty), and room for scaling. Other entry-points for addressing gender inequalities and generating opportunities for women's economic empowerment through collaboration include: i) provide space for innovation that prioritizes gender (e.g. matching grants for innovations that contribute to female entrepreneurship); ii) female representation in organisations that collaborate in PPPs; iii) integrate gender in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks used to evaluate and learn from the partnership; and iv) support the private sector with capacity building to understand and address gender inequalities. The RDP and the cocoa and coconut industry working groups can facilitate setting up PPPs with the private sector.

Sensitisation & Education

The norms and values that are dominant in SI make sensitisation and education an important part of the different entry-points that can help to address gender inequalities and contribute to women's economic empowerment. We identified a number of topics that require sensitisation, including: domestic violence and the use of alcohol, family labour, reproductive health, promoting women's rights (including land use rights), women's contribution to cocoa farming based on the division of labour, and thinking of farming as a business.

Changing people's mind-set and behaviour can be stimulated through education, and the role models you encounter. Key implementers of this strategy are for example RDP and MWYCFA, with the support of organizations such as SIWIBA, Kustom Garden Association (KGA), and gender experts.

Research & Business Development

During this fieldwork a number of topics came up for which there is a need to do more research. The proposed business opportunities need further study, for example through feasibility studies, market research and /or business plan development.

For both cocoa and coconut, relevant research areas are: land-rights and land-use, incentive structures and loyalty, family labour, empowerment and domestic violence, and upscaling of women's saving clubs. For cocoa, farmer organisations came up as a specific research area, while for coconut, community organisations need to be better understood. For coconut, three additional research areas were mentioned: i) quality copra production; ii) financial services for women involved in coconut business; and iii) women's empowerment through village based industries.

Organisations like the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) and the Pacific Agriculture Research and Development Initiative (PARDI) can play a key role in developing a research agenda that can contribute to women's economic empowerment. Collaboration with other research institutes and partners is recommended. For business plan development, RDP could collaborate with financial institutions and businesses and combine challenge grants with capacity building of the involved entrepreneurs.

1.0 Introduction

In 2014, The Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) commissioned two value chain studies: “Solomon Islands Cocoa Value Chain Analysis” (ref. Vadjnal and Pelomo, 2014) and “Solomon Islands Coconut Value Chain Analysis” (ref. Young and Pelomo, 2014). These are comprehensive documents, but it was recommended to enhance these studies through further investigation on the role of women in both value chains.

The Pacific Horticultural and Agricultural Market Access (PHAMA) Program, which is a regional program promoting exports of primary industry produce from the Pacific to countries such as Australia and New Zealand, commissioned the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) to conduct a gender analysis as part of updating and strengthening the DFAT-funded value chain analyses of two important value chains in the Solomon Islands (SI): cocoa and coconut.

KIT’s Sustainable Economic Development and Gender Unit is well positioned to conduct this type of analysis, being an independent knowledge institute with a strong track record on gender and agriculture.¹

The analysis consists of two main elements:

- i. Understanding gender relations in Solomon Islands.
- ii. Identifying entry-points for programs such as PHAMA, RDP and PARDI/ACIAR and private stakeholders to better recognise and improve the participation and outcomes for women involved in the cocoa and coconut value chains.

1.1 Why this Study

Improving the participation and outcomes for women involved in the cocoa and coconut value chains is important for various reasons. In existing analysis, the role of women is often overlooked and overall there is a lack of sex-disaggregated data. Consequently, there is a knowledge gap, with the risk that interventions are based on assumptions on gender roles and preferences, and potentially are ineffective or, even worse, do harm.

“Best farmers are ladies” (interview cocoa exporter)

If we look at agriculture in the Solomon Islands, it is known that agriculture plays an important role: 75% of the population are engaged in agriculture, and 52% of GDP is derived from agriculture. Main export earnings are from commodities, including cocoa and coconuts (copra and oil). Coconut is also an important tree crop that contributes to food security. Women play a major role in these two value chains, and are important contributors to production and value adding activities. But, in both value chains, women are disadvantaged. Understanding the role of women and strengthening their contributions would not only support both sectors, but also would benefit the women, their families, SI communities and society at large (see Box 1).

¹ See for more information on KIT, www.kit.nl.

Box 1: Why invest in women's economic empowerment?**Rationale for investing in Women's Economic Empowerment:**

- Economic empowerment is one of the most powerful routes for women to achieve their potential and advance their rights;
- Since women make up the majority of the world's poor, meeting poverty reduction goals requires addressing women and their economic empowerment;
- Discrimination against women is economically inefficient. National economies lose out when half of the population cannot compete equitably or realize their full potential;
- Working with women makes good business sense. When women have the right skills and opportunities, they can help businesses and markets grow;
- Women who are economically empowered contribute more to their families, societies and national economies. It has been shown that women invest extra income in their children, providing a route to sustainable development.

Source: SI Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs (MWYCFA)

1.2 Methodology

This analysis builds heavily on a number of key documents, including the two value chain studies commissioned by DFAT and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) study on Solomon Islands Family Health and Safety (2009). It also builds on experiences with gender and agriculture in Papua New Guinea (PNG), which are documented in a study commissioned by the World Bank in 2014, and is inspired by DFAT's operational guidance note on gender equality and women's economic empowerment in agriculture (2015).

Next to a desk study, a short fieldtrip to Guadalcanal took place (see Appendix D for details of the program and respondents). During this field trip, interviews were conducted with different individual value chain actors (often on location), including cocoa and coconut growers and their families, processors, domestic traders and exporters. Interviews were also held among service providers, NGOs and government representatives. Sometimes the interviews involved a group of farmers (gender-mixed, or women-only) or a number of staff representatives. One large group discussion with cocoa and coconut growers was organized with the support of the NGO ADRA. Furthermore, visits and observations were made on farms, food markets, input-shops, laboratory (CEMA), and in processing and drying facilities. Also in SI, two validation sessions were organized to assess the preliminary findings and give the consultant feedback and guidance. The first validation session involved mainly staff of DFAT and PHAMA, the second validation session included Moses Pelomo (cocoa expert), Dalcy Tekuru (SIWIBA/Purple Investment) and Lucy Kasimwane (female cocoa/coconut farmer and exporter).

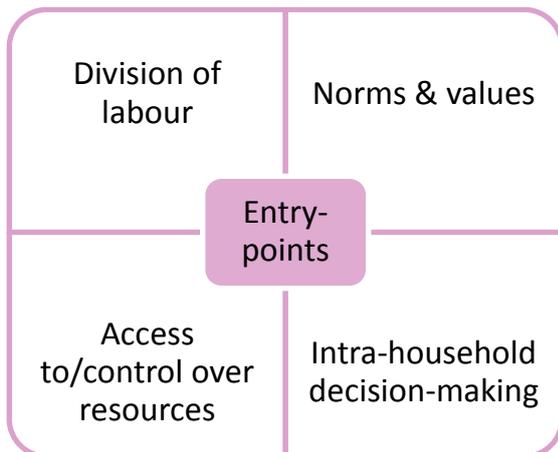
The field trip wrapped-up with a Masterclass on women's economic empowerment and cocoa value chains, in Brisbane, Australia. This Masterclass was also used to validate preliminary findings.²

1.3 Framework

To understand and identify entry-points for women's empowerment in the cocoa and coconut value chains, a gender relations framework (Figure 1) was used. This allowed analysis of the interplay between the division of labour, access to/control over resources, norms and values and intra-household dynamics (based on van Eerdewijk and Danielsen, 2015).

² <http://foodsystemsinnovation.org.au/event/masterclass-gender-cocoa-value-chains-anna-laven>

Figure 1: Gender relations framework



In using this framework, key-questions were:

Division of labour

- Who does what on the farm/chain?
- Who does what in the household?

Access and control over resources

- What are key resources in the cocoa and coconut value chain?
- Who has access to and control over these resources?

Norms & Values

- What are key norms & values in Solomon Islands?

Intra-household decision-making

- Who makes the decision in households?
- What different types of households can be distinguished?

Key to understanding gender dynamics is looking at the way these separate dimensions and factors influence each other and interlock (Eerdewijk and Danielsen, 2015).

For this study, we combined this gender framework with an inclusive value chain approach, building on already identified upgrading strategies (e.g. in previous DFAT Value Chain (VC) studies), and potential new strategies, targeting women. Box 2 explains some different types of upgrading strategies.

Box 2: Upgrading strategies

Upgrading strategies

- Product upgrading: add value by improving the quality of the product.
- Process upgrading: add value by improving the production process.
- Functional upgrading: add value by taking up other functions in a chain.

In this study, 'inclusive' refers to both the **process** of upgrading (involvement of women in design and decision-making) and the (potential) **impact** of upgrading (outreach to women and sustainability).

1.4 Limitations of the Study

It was recommended to visit at least one of the main producing provinces of cocoa and coconut: Guadalcanal, Malaita and Makira. All field visits took place in the province of Guadalcanal. We did meet one female farmer/trader from Makira in Guadalcanal. Both the scope and the length of the study put limitations to the extent to which our findings are representative for Solomon Islands and to which our findings are evidence-based. The scope of the research also has practical limitations: for coconut we focussed on the (processed) nut and kernel, and did not look into options around husk utilization, shell utilization, charcoal and activated carbon, and higher value coconut milk for export.

In this study suggestions are made for opportunity areas where more research needs to be done.

1.5 Structure of the Study

The study consists of two parts related to the commodities (cocoa and coconut). It begins by providing background on gender relations in the Solomon Islands context. Section 3.0 concentrates on cocoa: presenting background information on cocoa, findings, entry-points and conclusions while Section 4.0 concentrates on coconut, and is structured in a similar way. This document concludes with general recommendations, references and appendices. Appendices A and B respectively cover an overview of gender-based challenges and opportunities in the cocoa and coconut value chains. Appendix C explains the main gender concepts used. Appendix D contains the program of the field visit.

2.0 Gender Issues and Policies

This chapter provides general background information as to gender in the Solomon Islands context. The chapters that follow delve into gender relations in the context of the cocoa and coconut value chains.

Identifying entry-points for women's economic empowerment in the cocoa and coconut value chains in the SI, requires an understanding of the institutional environment in the SI and how it can support (or constrain) women's empowerment, including (informal) norms and values. To come up with meaningful entry-points, it is also important to acknowledge the main gender-based constraints in the Solomon Island's context, and the policies in place that impact on gender relations.

Solomon Islands has ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1993) and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (2002), which are international treaties obliging governments to take action in the areas of violence, and women's and children's rights (Secretariat of the Pacific Community - SPC 2009).

Recently, the Solomon Islands Government (SIG) adopted a National Strategy for the Economic Empowerment of Women and Girls or the Women's Economic Empowerment Strategy (WEES). The Minister for Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs (MWYCFA) declared improving the status of women as a policy priority. According to the MWYCFA, existing government strategies and initiatives related to economic growth and development, do not specifically include women's empowerment and a gender perspective.

Women's Economic Empowerment Strategy (WEES)

Ensuring women are economically empowered will enable women to contribute more to improving their children and families, work to strengthen their communities, participate in sustainable development, create more stable, just and equitable societies and importantly, in nation building. When women thrive, so do their families and societies.

Source: MWYCFA (no date)

The SI National strategy is closely aligned with the Gender Equality and Women's Development (GEWD) Policy giving a vision of a SI where gender equality is at the heart of social and economic progress.

2.1 Gender issues in SI

The 2012 Women's Economic Index included the SI for the first time in its global comparison of women's economic opportunities but the overall score for SI rated a disturbing 124th position out of 128 countries. This paragraph aims to clarify why women's economic opportunities in SI are constrained. It also provides a summary of evidence on the violence against women and children in the SI (Box 3). This is important, as gender-based violence constitutes a real constraint to gender equality and the realisation of women's economic (or other kinds of) empowerment, including participation in commodity markets.

Box 3: Domestic Violence in SI**Facts about violence against women and children in Solomon Islands
(n = 2,618) (Adapted from SPC 2009)**

- The majority of women (73%) in Solomon Islands believe that a man is justified in beating his wife under some circumstances (in particular, for infidelity and disobedience).
- 64% of women aged 15 to 49 who have ever been in a relationship reported experiencing physical and/or sexual violence from an intimate partner. This violence was often severe.
- 37% of women aged 15–49 had been sexually abused before the age of 15. The data show that girls are at greatest risk of sexual abuse by male acquaintances and male family members.
- Women who reported violence by an intimate partner were significantly more likely to report that their general health was fair, poor or very poor than women who had not experienced partner violence.
- Of women who had experienced physical or sexual partner violence, or both, 70% reported that they had not told anyone about the violence.
- The majority, 82%, of abused women reported that they had never sought help from formal services (health services, legal advice, shelters) or from people in positions of authority (police, NGOs, religious or local leaders). The majority of women reported that they did not seek help because they believed that the violence was ‘normal’ or ‘not serious’.
- The fact that the law does not define partner violence, particularly marital rape, as a crime and the lack of formal support services, which makes it difficult for women to seek help.
- It is likely that children in violent homes learn to use violence rather than other more constructive methods to resolve conflicts (Lee 2007). It may also lead to permissive attitudes towards violence (cycle of violence).
- Men mentioned four main reasons for partner violence: bride price, alcohol, acceptability of violence as a form of discipline and gender inequality.
- Male perpetrators reported that they most often got angry with their wife when, in their eyes, she did not live up to the gender roles that society imposes on women. For example, men reported that they became angry for the following reasons: their wife did not prepare food on time, she did not complete the housework, he was jealous because she spoke with other men, or she left the house.
- The most common reason given by men for hitting their wives was disobedience and almost all said that they hit their wives as a form of discipline. Furthermore, when asked what a wife should do to improve the situation, the overwhelming response was that she should learn to obey him and do what he asked.
- Alcohol contributes to violence through enhancing the likelihood of conflict, reducing inhibitions, and providing a social space for punishment.
- The research clearly shows that violence against women and children generally, and levels of intimate partner violence were higher in Honiara than in the provinces. These higher levels could relate to the wider availability of alcohol and social problems such as unemployment, overcrowding and the high cost of living in the capital city, which may make women more vulnerable to abuse.

Gender-based violence, while significant, is not the only factor that constrains women in the economic sphere. Based on the desk-study, we present an overview of other factors that potentially constrain women from accessing and benefitting from economic opportunities. We have organized these findings around the dimensions mentioned in the gender relations framework: division of labour, access to and control over resources, norms and values, and intra-household dynamics.

2.1.1 Division of labour

- Women are **over-represented in informal employment** and business. In SI, the number of women in formal employment is half the number of men. Women are over-represented in low paid, low-skilled jobs and face serious obstacles when they attempt to enter the (formal) labour market (Krushelnytska 2015).
- **Under-representation of women in decision-making** functions and organisations, such as supervisory and management positions (Krushelnytska 2015).
- **Unequal pay.** Women tend to earn less than men: different pay for similar work (ibid).
- **Lack of recognition in formal business**, but this is slowly changing (SIWIBA Interview 2015).
- In SI, both men and women (and children) are involved in agriculture, but when it comes to **cash crops, like cocoa, women tend to be less visible than men** (MWYCFA Group interview 2015).
- Due to men leaving rural areas “**feminization of agriculture**” occurs. This increases women’s roles and responsibilities on farms and in households.
- **Household (hh) responsibilities** are perceived as the domain of women. Women spend more time on household responsibilities and reproductive tasks than men. These responsibilities are not considered or valued as ‘work’.

Plate 1: Female employee in input shop, Honiara



2.1.2 Access to and control over Resources

- **Men take decisions on land use.** Even though several provincial areas are based on a matrilineal society where land rights are inherited through the female lineage, it is common that men make the decisions related to land use and ownership (Georgeou et al. 2015).
- **Women have limited access to finance.** Linked to the fact that men make decisions related to land, women having limited access to financial services that fit their needs (e.g. small amounts are often needed by women entrepreneurs) (MWYCFA no date).
- **Women have lower levels of education, and fewer training and promotional opportunities.**
- **Women lack business knowledge and do not speak English sufficiently.** Most women have not received training in financial areas such as saving, financial management and investment. Because of women’s lack of financial literacy and English communication skills they are less likely to use electronic payment, mobile phones, etc. (Georgeou et al. 2015).
- **Women lack technical skills,** which limit their ability to start and expand businesses.

2.1.3 Norms and Values

- **Norms and values vary by province and/or language group.** In SI there are 70 different languages. Consequently rules and laws can be explained and interpreted differently, such as the laws around land inheritance and interference of family in marriages. Language is important, also for dealing with resistance.
- **Lack of long-term planning,** people only think about what is happening tomorrow. In SI, “there is no word for planning”.
- **‘Gender’ is perceived as promoting women.** Pushing for gender equality can be sensitive.
- **Men predominate in leadership positions.** Socio-cultural norms enable men to hold positions of authority and restrict women from attaining leadership or management roles.
- **Household unit/family unit is central.**
- Some work is women’s work. **Entrenched gender norms** around family responsibility; the kinds of work suitable for women.
- **Violence is normal.** Violence against women is perceived as normal, and not serious (also by women). Men blame women’s behaviour for the violence that occurs. The law does not define partner violence as a crime. Victims of domestic violence do not report this crime (SPC 2009).

“You disgrace your family members if you go to court” (Interview Kustom Garden Association (KGA) 2015). Women’s rights are often seriously violated in SI.

- **Women are perceived as better money keepers.** “Women know how to budget – a man, if he wants to go six [buy a six pack of beer], he does it” (quote of male farmer in Georgeou et al 2015). Linked to this is that men are more accepting of women taking the lead in small businesses (SIWIBA Interview 2015).
- **Social obligations discourage business.** Men tend to overspend money on social obligations. This behaviour creates disincentives to invest and making money: “if you make money, your family members expect their share”. This lack of a business and planning mind-set also effects women’s access to resources, and the way they ultimately benefit from these resources.

2.1.4 Intra-Household Relations

- Men are seen as the decision-makers in the household. The most common reason given by men for domestic violence was disobedience (SPC 2009).
- **Bride price gives men ‘ownership’ over his wife.** Many people view bride price as giving a man ownership over his wife and the right to beat her and treat her as he wishes. It is believed by some, including many women, that if bride price is paid, a woman cannot leave her husband (SPC 2009). Girls marry very young. Arranged marriages still happen a lot.
- **Women have restricted mobility.**

2.1.5 Looking at the Interplay

These four dimensions of gender relations do not play out in isolation. Interplay between these dimensions illustrates how addressing gender relations in one domain can influence other domains (or be influenced by other domains). For example, supporting women to access land - the *access to and control over resources* dimension – may not benefit women if men take the decisions over land-use – the *household decision-making* dimension. Considering the interplay between dimensions of gender relations can help to avoid that certain interventions do harm. For example, if it is acknowledged that violence against women is perceived as normal, interventions that are expected to cause resistance from men, run the risk of contributing to increased domestic violence.

3.0 Cocoa Findings

3.1 Introduction

In this section we present first the background information on cocoa in SI. We use the value chain (VC) study by Vadjnal and Pelomo as the main resource (2014). Second, we present the findings from the field study, using the gender relations framework as a way to organize the data and to identify emerging entry-points. To facilitate discussion as to possible entry-points, we have clustered them around six strategies:

- i. Support female entrepreneurship in the cocoa sector.
- ii. Improve services to women involved in cocoa.
- iii. Mainstream gender in institutions and affirmative action.
- iv. Value chain collaboration and public-private partnerships.
- v. Sensitisation and education.
- vi. Research and business development.

The conclusions focus on matchmaking between entry-points, target groups and stakeholders. In Appendix A we revisit the constraints and opportunities for the cocoa sector, as identified by Vadjnal and Pelomo 2014, and complement these findings with a reflection on gender-based challenges and opportunities. This exercise illustrates different entry-points for addressing gender inequalities and women's economic empowerment in the cocoa value chain that formed the starting point for the clustering.

3.2 Background – Cocoa Sector

The cocoa industry is a significant contributor to smallholder livelihoods and national export earnings. There are large numbers of institutions and donors involved in development of the cocoa sector, and there are several relevant programs, projects and strategies.

Relevant for this study are, in particular³:

- **PHAMA.** PHAMA's focus for cocoa in SI has been to improve returns from cocoa exports by improving quality and supporting traceability and certification systems that add market value. PHAMA has established a Cocoa Industry Working Group (IWG) to promote co-ordination in the industry and identify strategic initiatives to support the industry's development. PHAMA has funded the re-establishment of a functional laboratory for the Government's Cocoa Export Marketing Authority (CEMA) so that it can test cocoa beans to recognised international standards. The Program is currently trialling new solar drying technology (not solar driers, but similar to green-houses) to improve the taste/quality of SI cocoa, as the wide-spread use of heat based driers often causes smoke taint in beans, adversely affecting quality and export prices. PHAMA is also looking to address the lack of trade finance and working capital in the industry, which prevents players from being able to deal direct with markets and to invest in the supply chain, by promoting the emergence of commercial bank trade finance facilities [in co-operation with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Rural Development Program (RDP)].
- The **Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR)** is an Australian government research organisation, which provides support to developing countries. It has provided support for the cocoa industry in various countries in the Pacific via its **Pacific Agriculture Research and Development Initiative (PARDI)**. PARDI has made efforts to link cocoa exporters to premium overseas markets, and has conducted research into improving cocoa tree yields. ACIAR has a forthcoming project on cocoa covering five Pacific Islands Countries including SI, which will include marketing, exchange of genetic resources, methods for intensifying cocoa production and improvements to post harvest treatment.

³ Based on Vadjnal and Pelomo, 2014

- **Cocoa Livelihoods Improvement Program (CLIP).** DFAT funded this significant program of assistance to the cocoa industry in SI, which ran from 2009-2012. CLIP had a strong focus on increasing the volume of production. It conducted a range of training, hardware provision, information gathering and other activities, and invested significantly in the roll-out of heat and combination driers across the country. CLIP was also instrumental in the development of the **National Cocoa Industry Policy and Strategy 2012-20.**
- Together with the World Bank, DFAT also funds the **Rural Development Program (RDP).** The **RDP was** launched in 2008 and will end this year but preparations are underway for a follow up phase. The development objective is to increase access of rural households to high priority, small-scale economic and social infrastructure, agriculture and financial services: local infrastructure and service delivery; improved agriculture services; rural business development; and program management. RDP has a broad mandate for rural development in SI. It is providing support to the cocoa and coconut industries, including through the provision of grants to smallholders and SMEs looking to improve their equipment and infrastructure. **PHAMA** works closely with RDP and indeed ACIAR and PARDI.
- **Solomon Islands National Development Strategy (NDS) 2011-2020** which stresses the need to create an enabling environment for private sector led growth in general and promoting commercial export crops including cocoa in particular.
- **Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAL).** The Ministry has nominal responsibility for providing agricultural extension to farmers, but struggles to do this effectively due to inadequate funding. This Ministry has the objective to develop into the premier provider of information, research, extension, education, regulatory and other services to improve the agriculture sector. The MAL corporate plan involves 10 key outcome areas, among them: poverty alleviation, enhanced food security and rural livelihoods.
- MAL developed the **National Cocoa Industry Development (NCID) 2014-2020** program. The main outputs are a national cocoa participatory action research program comprising Integrated Pest and Disease Management (IPDM); improved planting material and new technologies made available to farmers; establishment of a Cocoa Secretariat; and establishment of an M&E system.
- Part of **Participatory Action Research and IPDM** is organizing smallholders in small groups to conduct pruning on 1 ha blocks (1,000 cocoa trees) for which they are paid SBD 750/year over three years (referred to as First stage). Second stage (3-7 years) involves identifying and removing 80% of poor genetic material and replacing these with 20% elite local materials through grafting. This program is also about field-testing improved hybrid seeds.
- **Solomon Islands Cocoa Industry Policy and Strategies (SICIPS)** has 10 policy directives, among them: land-use and environmental sustainability; production increase in cocoa to 20,000 metric tonnes by 2020 through: productivity gains, increased total area planted and use of improved genetic material; processing and storage; marketing, including market information; extension and training (including value chain collaboration (VCC)); down-stream processing and adding value; resource mobilization; monitoring and evaluation. SICIPS 2012-2020 identifies the need for foreign investments and support from development partners.
- **Commodity Export Marketing Authority (CEMA).** CEMA is working towards approved standard processing units and quality control. CEMA has an extension role however it has limited capacity. As a result, the main exporters tend to fulfil this role, providing inputs and advice to cocoa farmers.
- **Private sector.** Exporters deliver some services to traders, processors and farmers, generally aimed at improving both the quantity and quality of beans they receive. Example of services to farmers are second-hand bags and hand tools, including pruning equipment and seedlings. "Loyalty" is important with 'loyal' smallholders providing a regular supply of good quality beans. Exporters estimate that around 50-60% of smallholders from whom they receive beans, are loyal.

3.2.1 Facts – SI Cocoa Sector

There are more than 24,000 smallholders comprising around 133,000 family members (or 26% percent of the Solomon Island population engaged in cocoa production).

Average family size is 5.5 members.

Smallholders include those with access to 1-3 hectares containing less than 3,000 trees. Current yields are around 340 kg/ha.

Cocoa is an important source of earnings for the national economy.

Cocoa growers are concentrated mainly in Guadalcanal, Malaita and Makira provinces.

Smallholders typically use family labour rather than hired labour.

In 2012 cocoa production was around 4,500 metric tonnes (6,500 metric tonnes in 2011).

Smallholders receive around 77% of gross margins from cocoa (according to estimations).

3.2.2 Challenges and Opportunities

The SI cocoa value chain study already identified a number of challenges and opportunities for upgrading strategies. The next table gives an overview.

Table 1: Overview of upgrading challenges and opportunities in SI cocoa sector⁴

	Strategy	Challenges	Opportunities
Product upgrading	Quality	There are serious problems with the driers, smokiness of beans and under-fermentation of beans, all major barriers to selling to quality niche markets.	Solar drying strategies to address smokiness of beans. Technical training, assessment of quality testing capacity. Training on cocoa quality control and chocolate.
	Access to niche markets	Adequate drying and fermentation of the cocoa beans.	Establish business linkages with niche markets with Australian and US based chocolate manufacturers. Cocoa exporter training. Establish market linkages to chocolate retail outlets.

⁴ Based on findings in Vadjnal and Pelomo, 2014

Process upgrading	Production & Productivity	Land availability is a challenge, particularly in Guadalcanal and Malaita, as well as soil suitability in Malaita. Low productivity levels. Poor access to knowledge, tools, equipment, finance. Poor infrastructure	Potential to increase production through improving processing and handling and improve services. There is potential to increase productivity, especially through new planting materials. Strengthen the capacity of producer associations (and cocoa exporters) to provide services to farmers. Develop direct purchasing relationships between chocolate companies, buyers and growers/processors for systematic support to growers and processors. Invest in Public Private Partnerships (PPPs)
	Trading & transport	There is no infrastructure. Transport costs are high.	Exporters provide support services through the value chain to traders, processors and smallholders, generally aimed at improving both the quantity and quality of beans they receive. "Loyalty" is important. Exporters estimate that around 50-60% of smallholders are loyal.
Functional upgrading	Chocolate making	Currently no local chocolate making in SI. No infrastructure and high investment cost.	Chocolate making training, assessment of quality testing capacity, chocolate tasting sessions for grower groups and training on cocoa quality control.

3.3 Gender Relations in the Cocoa Value Chain

In this sub-chapter we organize our data around the different dimensions that comprise the gender relations framework: gender division of labour, access to and control over resources, intra household decision-making and norms & values.

3.3.1 Gender Division of Labour

In this section we will look both at gender division of labour on the cocoa farm and in the household. We will start with looking at the division of labour on the cocoa farm. In SI both male and female family members are involved in cocoa production, but females tend to be less visible than men: "*cocoa is a men's crop, a big crop*" (MWYCFA group discussion 2015). Most families combine cocoa with coconut trees and produce food crops.

Box 4: Labour division on a cocoa farm in SI

Activity on farm	Who is doing what
Land establishment	
Planting and weeding	  
Pruning	

Harvesting	
Breaking pods	
Selling wet beans	
Fermentation	
Drying	
Selling dry beans	

It was not difficult to get a sense of who is doing what on a cocoa farm (see Box 4). Various respondents indicated that male farmers are mainly involved in ‘hard physical work’, such as land establishment for clearing, setting up the nurseries, pruning, and carrying the bags for loading. Male farmers tend to be more involved than women in adding value activities (fermentation and drying) and in the trading of the processed beans (women are also involved, but to a lesser extent). This enhances their control over the money that is being earned.

On the cocoa farm, women are predominantly involved in the nursery and taking care of young plants. Women are perceived to be suited for

these type of activities: “women are good in grafting”. Other tasks where women are dominant are: harvesting, breaking pods and selling the wet beans (men were also involved in these activities, but to a lesser extent). The wet beans have significantly less value than dried beans (see Vadjnal and Pelomo, 2014).

Children often join their mothers in the fields and help with planting, weeding, harvesting and breaking the pods. This is perceived as normal practice, but should be looked at more carefully. For children (and women) there are safety issues on the plantation. Also the violence against women, affects children (MWYCFA Group interview 2015). Another concern has to do with enrolment of children in school. Although it is normal to send your children to school, recent data show that the percentage of ‘out of school’⁵ children for SI is 19% of children of official primary school age: approximately 18% of boys of primary school age are out of school compared to 21% of girls of the same age⁶. This percentage is worrisome. This study did not look further into reasons why children do not attend school⁷.

During interviews it was mentioned that rural migration, of particularly the men (who search for jobs in Honiara), leaves the women and older people on the farm. It has been suggested that with men migrating, access to labour becomes more of a problem. It is not known if there is a correlation between migration (shortage of labour) and children not attending school.

Box 5: Labour division around household activities

Activity in household	Who is doing what
Preparing the land for food production	
Gardening	
Trade of food surplus	
Cooking	
Fetching firewood	

5 The proportion of children that are not currently participating in the education system and who are, therefore, missing out on the benefits of school.

6 Source: http://www.epdc.org/sites/default/files/documents/EPDC%20NEP_Solomon%20Islands.pdf. Access 25 October 2015.

7 The RDA impact report (2013) presents data, showing that a reduction in travel time to primary school is statistically associated with improved primary school attendance.

Fetching water	
Cleaning	
Washing	
Childcare	

Most activities in the household are considered, by both men and women, to be the women's domain. Quotes like "women are better in household activities" or "men cannot do it [washing clothes]" illustrate that seeing household tasks as women's work is generally the norm. This reality increases the workload for women significantly. Box 5 gives an idea of the division of workload when it comes to household activities.

Except for preparing the land for food production and the fetching and cutting of the firewood, women are responsible for all household tasks. Some men indicated they also help in gardening (food production), but the women are the ones who garden on a daily basis. Children join their mother in this activity. When the women trade the food surplus in the markets, they often bring their youngest children.

According to Georgeou et al (2015) men tend to make the decision about who is going to the market to trade the products. Most often you see female vendors; you only see some males. It has been argued that men do play a role in food marketing, namely by providing the supply of fresh produce to the wife in the market place.⁸

Selling food crops in markets generates income for women. This cash is mainly used to meet daily expenses and community costs. According to a female farmer selling on Honiara market: "usually it is the women who sell the produce at the market because the men are not brave enough to do it. Most men are not used to do the marketing" (quote in Georgeou et al. 2015).

Women are perceived as being better at managing the money earned at the market. Men (and youth) recognised that women are better at saving the money from the sales (and bringing back the money to the village), rather than spending it in Honiara on for example alcohol and gambling (Georgeou et al. 2015).

For women, being responsible for selling food crops at the market, there are some concerns:

- Hygiene and sanitation and personal security; in the Honiara market, women and their children are perceived to be particularly vulnerable to violence, sexual harassment, theft and intimidation.
- Selling of produce at market requires long absences from villages. Women are especially affected because they are required to spend up to a week in the market, paying fees and other expenses. If children join their mother, they miss out on school.
- Time spent in the market adds up on other tasks. This labour burden constrains women from engaging in other economic activities and/or further education (Georgeou et al. 2015).

Plate 2: Woman selling her crops in Honiara market



3.3.2 Access To and Control over Resources

Land and finance were mentioned as key resources for cocoa production. Other important resources mentioned are knowledge, technologies and infrastructure.

(a) Land

In SI land holding is generally customary, which means that the land is owned by the tribe/clan; families own small plots. There are different arrangements; land inheritance can be both matrilineal and patrilineal. In the case of matrilineal inheritance, the men are still perceived as being the decision-

⁸Feedback of Grant Vinning, referring to a previous seminar on women in the market place in Brisbane in 2010, showing that the male Selling food crops on markets generates income for women.

makers. So, while the right to access to land in some provinces belongs to women, still the control over land belongs to the men (Georgeou et al. 2015). The interviews confirmed this reality for Guadalcanal (e.g. MWYCFA group interview 2015).

It came up during the interviews that available (and suitable) land is becoming scarce. An often-used mechanism for families to acquire land is by growing cash crops (permanent crops), like cocoa trees: “the moment you plant trees on the land, you marque a block [normally 1 hectare], so that it is yours” [...] “As long you have trees on the land, the land is yours”. Land scarcity is expected to become a more stringent problem for the cocoa sector.

During the fieldwork, two interesting new developments were observed with regard to land allocation:

- Families start allocating (small) plots of land to their children, which is regarded as a way to empower the youth (Purple Investment Interview 2015).
- Private sector involvement in land allocation for cocoa production. A cocoa exporter (Interview 2015) shared the experience of his company, owning a 100 hectare plantation: they make small plots of land (1 hectare) available for 90 families to grow cocoa and other productive (shade) trees (like sandalwood). 10 hectares is for nurseries. In exchange for the land and some services, the families are expected to sell the produce to the company.

It will be interesting to explore how women (and girls) can benefit from these new developments; this would require giving them, besides access to land, skills to make productive use of the land and decision-making power over the use of land, and the benefits that potentially result from this.

(b) Finance

“you need money to buy products from the farmers” (Interview with female cocoa farmer and exporter 2015)

Lack of access to finance came forward as serious constraint for cocoa production, processing and trade. Access to finance is key for all value chain actors. For farmers and processors, both savings and working capital came up as key, for example to buy basic tools and equipment (e.g for drying and fermentation). For farmers who are involved in aggregating (wet) cocoa beans, processing and trading, pre-finance is needed, as well as some working capital that is used as investment to create a sense of loyalty. For example, the farmers involved in aggregating the cocoa provide small services to their suppliers, including small loans.

The financial infrastructure in SI is weak. We encountered a number of (potential) financial arrangements that potentially can benefit women (banks are not included in this, as they were not mentioned as a financial service provider by any of the respondents):

- For smallholders and (female) small-scale rural entrepreneurs – **Saving and micro-credit schemes.**
- For processors, exporters and SMEs – **Matching Grants.**
- **Taxes.** Taxes affect small business. Tax incentives are recommended, that stimulate for example investments in equipment (Solomon Islands Small Business Economic Centre (SISBEC) Interview 2015).

We will briefly discuss how these different arrangements have contributed to giving women access and control over resources, or have constrained them.

Saving and micro-credit schemes have been introduced by NGOs. See Box 6, where we give an example of ADRA. In this example the saving scheme supported a proposal from women for setting up a canteen. The savings were generated through cocoa processing. So, in this example, adding value to wet cocoa beans generated money for investing in other business. Through saving schemes, women managed both to get access and control over the income they generated.

Box 6: Women set up a canteen with cocoa money!**Saving scheme for women, how does it work?**

The NGO ADRA uses a saving scheme to co-finance business proposals. Savings are being used as a buffer, the loan comes from a seed fund.

How does it work?

- Women are encouraged to save money and meet a savings target.
- When they reach the target (buffer) they can get a loan for a proposal.
- The proposal is developed in a group, but it can involve different activities of individuals. ADRA encourages men and women to be in same groups. But some groups are only women. ADRA promotes proposals with joint activities (not only individual activities).
- The savings are between SI\$3,000 and SI\$5,000. The total amount of money in seed funds is SI\$200,000.

An example: Women agreed that by aggregating wet beans from farmers, and processing the beans they could earn additional money. They agreed to invest this money in a business: a canteen. They divided the work: some of the women were involved in the cocoa, while other women ran the canteen. They shared the money.

Although perceived as important and generally successful, we also heard some criticism from women who participated in saving and credit schemes. During a group discussion (2015) some women who joined a savings group, indicated “it was not really working, we have not been able to save money”. In asking them for what they were saving, they mentioned school fees, medicines and a house (so savings were not oriented towards any investment in businesses). We also heard a worrisome story of a man misusing his wife’s participation in a credit scheme (for making investments in a vegetable farm and baking cakes): he took credit in her name and spent it on alcohol. For her, a key lesson was: “I will say ‘no’ to credit and ‘no’ to my husband” (Women in group discussion in Bubutoga Community Kustom Garden Association 2015).

To involve (and incentivize) private sector partners, RDP has put in place a **Matching Grant**. So far, 29 companies have expressed their interest. The majority of the applicants are active in cocoa and coconut oil. The private sector has to contribute 20% of the overall budget. In the official guidelines that RDP uses, women are being favoured. But, so far, only a few proposals have come from female entrepreneurs. Women are involved in the selection committees (sub-committees); normally 30% of members of such committees are female. Women are often involved as treasurers, “as they tend to perform better” (RDP Interview 2015).

The incentive structure for investing in cocoa business is weak. Different respondents, particularly the SMEs, complained about the lack of mechanisms that stimulate a more entrepreneurial climate, such as a favourable **tax** regime that would make it attractive for registered business to invest in infrastructure, business relations, etc. A favourable tax regime would be beneficial for all entrepreneurs (both male and female).

It was stressed by different respondents that access to finance should always go hand-in-hand with financial literacy and management training, involving both men and women (e.g. RDP Interview 2015).

(c) Knowledge

“We own land and a plantation. But there is nobody to run it. There were other family members who tried, but [they have] no background [in cocoa and coconut] so they failed” (Interview with female cocoa and coconut grower/exporter).

Both public sector, private sector and civil society actors are active in providing knowledge to cocoa farmers. The public sector is still the most active in providing extension services and training, but their resources have been reduced. More systematic extension is expected to come from the private sector.

Public extension

In discussing training on cocoa practices in SI, it became clear that particularly for the public sector, the Cocoa Livelihoods Improvement Program (CLIP) is still an important reference point (e.g. for MAL, CEMA, RDP, PHAMA). Key elements of extension are currently: training of trainers, using demonstration plots, working with lead farmers, rehabilitation, and the Farmer Field School (FFS) approach. The outreach of public extension is small. It is more and more recognised that training on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Integrated Pest and Disease Management (IPDM) is not enough. You need a package of services, like a productivity package for 1 hectare (CEMA Interview 2015).

Private extension

Because public resources for extension and training have been reduced, more emphasis has been put on involving the private sector in knowledge provision. It is argued that access to well-trained suppliers is in the interest of buyers of cocoa, as this would support them in getting access to better quality and higher volumes of cocoa, and contribute to a sense of loyalty. It is also believed that the private sector is better equipped to deliver training systemically, which came up as a need.

Training on financial literacy and financial management is part of the 'package of services'. The SI Small Business Economic Centre (SISBEC) already provides these types of trainings.

Civil society extension

Besides public and private actors, NGOs like World Vision and ADRA, are actively involved in training cocoa growers and processors on pruning, fermentation, drying practices and chocolate making. Although these types of training were highly appreciated, the lack of a systematic approach and low frequency of the training came up as a concern.

Main challenges that were raised in discussions around training and extension were:

- Only small number of farmers are being reached.
- Training is not given in a systematic way and has high costs.
- Location of training: training is often organized outside the communities.
- Lack of public resources for training and extension; private sector need to become more involved.
- Training on financial literacy and financial management both for women and men is prioritized.
- Farmers need tools and equipment, available closer to the farm (to apply what they have learned)
- Lack of business mind-set among farmers. Farmers do not plan. Joining a training session is not seen as good investment of time (SISBEC Interview 2015).

With regards to the lack of business mind-set, different respondents argued that there is a need to understand better the incentives for farmers (female and male) to invest in cocoa and how to change their mind-set. It came up several times that a lot of farmers are not committed (e.g. David and his Sisters Interview 2015). Respondents gave different possible reasons, from a lack of financial literacy to the tradition to 'wasting' money on social obligations, and the lack of planning.

There are a number of other gender dynamics:

- Most trainers (e.g. extension agents) are not trained on how to address gender issues.
- Training is often targeting men (being the head of the household), with the result that less women are involved.
- The location of the training, if far from the community, affects women's involvement.
- The majority of trainers and extension agents are currently male ("out of 148 officers, 32 are female" -Interview MAL 2015). The same goes for lead farmers. The result is that there are few female role models.

- Training of a diverse population of farmers requires exploring different extension techniques, as not all extension techniques are equally applicable and effective irrespective of local social and cultural norms⁹

In an interview it came up that recruiting women for training/extension positions is challenging; “we put out an advertisement, but only one women came” (MAL Interview 2015). According to MAL representatives, a possible explanation for this lack of interest was that “women are not seen in these jobs. Dealing with cash crops is seen as a heavy job. It is still traditional for women to be more involved with vegetables and food” (Interview MAL 2015).

(d) Technologies

Besides the need for basic tools and equipment, as expressed by the farmers during our interactions, there is also a need for new technologies that are less on farmers’ radar. To improve quality and export prices of cocoa, PHAMA has set up trials for solar drying of cocoa (see Plate 3). CEMA is running a lab to control the quality of cocoa, to guarantee it meets international standards.

Currently few farmers are benefiting from these tests. Because women are often not involved in post-harvest processes, women will not automatically benefit from these innovations, unless you take deliberate action to encourage women to engage.

Plate 3: New solar drying technique by PHAMA, tested in SI



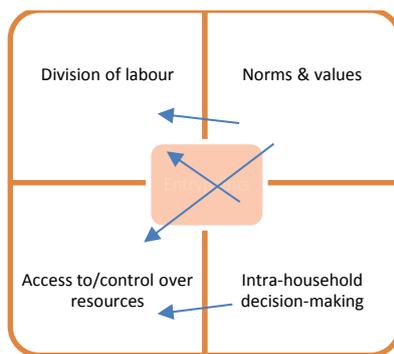
(e) Infrastructure

“The training doesn’t come to us, we are only 40 minutes from Honiara, and that is already seen as remote.” (KGA Interview 2015)

During the late 1990s and early 2000s the Solomon Islands faced a period of civil tensions. The public infrastructure is poorly developed in SI, and much of what was destroyed during the tensions, has not been repaired or replaced. Only 50 kilometres of road is paved (out of 1,500 kilometres of road).

There is no dedicated cocoa industry infrastructure or transport service. Less than 20% of the population has access to electricity. One of the consequences of this poor infrastructure is that people easily experience a sense of remoteness, even if you live relatively close to Honiara. For women, in addition, the lack of electricity contributes to a lack of safety and constrains women in setting up businesses close to their homes that require electricity.

3.3.3 Looking at the Interplay



In this section we revisit the gender relations framework as presented in the introduction. We briefly reflect on how norms and values and intra-household dynamics interrelate with the division of labour and access to and control over resources.

In general, it is important to recognise that norms and values are not fixed but change over time, as do intra-household dynamics. For example, SIWIBA experiences indicate that men are more and more accepting women taking the lead in small businesses (SIWIBA Interview 2015).

⁹ Thanks to Grant Vinning, who makes reference to a Papua New Guinea cocoa project he is involved in that is exploring this issue by trying different extension techniques in different groups.

Another general comment is that because family and household is often taken as a starting point, it becomes easy to overlook 'single women' and women who do not live in a stable marital relationship. Depending on your situation you will have different needs, and you will be driven by different incentives. The heterogeneity of women has to be taken into account in developing interventions.

In relation to **division of labour**, it is important to notice that perceptions like "women are better in household tasks", and "cocoa is for men" have contributed to a situation where women are less visible in cocoa production, particularly as processors (drying and fermentation). Another consequence is that women have a lot of daily household responsibilities; the labour burden for women is considered to be very high. What we have also seen is that on a farm, women are sometimes pushed into certain roles, like grafting ("women are more patient"), even without having in place a reward system that incentivises women to take up this role. We have also seen that women tend to be excluded from certain roles, like the selling of the processed beans. The result is that women have little say on how the money coming from fermented and dried cocoa is being used. This is not only related to traditional gender roles and intra-household decision-making, but also to factors like having only a few trees or needing fast cash, no access to the right equipment (or lack of finance to buy it), or lacking financial literacy and/or time.

In SI it is common for girls to marry young (age 15) and have children. Teenage pregnancy and child birth can affect a woman's reproductive health and create obstacles for her schooling and job training. If a bride price is paid, the girls become their husbands' 'possession', giving them very little voice and decision-making power. If young girls, become wives and mothers, this gives them a lot of responsibilities and tasks already from a young age.

The fact that men are seen as the main decision-makers in the household is also reflected when it comes to **access and control over resources**. We have seen that in cases where women have access to land, men still make the decision. The same goes for money-keeping; women are perceived as better money keepers, but when it comes to decisions over how the money is being spent, the men decide.

It has been widely documented in the literature that men and women spend money differently: also in the SI context this was emphasized; men are more inclined to spend money on social obligations, alcohol and gambling, while women spend it more for the benefit of the household.

"We expect that someone will help you if you need it. This is what we mean with social obligation. We can call this a loss (or mis-management) because the money is not well spent." (Validation session 2015)

The pressure to spend money on social obligations and a serious lack of commitment to cocoa farming manifests itself in many ways. For example, training is often not seen as an investment that will have any return. Also people forget about maintaining their farm: "they don't see it as an ending crop".

It has been stressed by SISBEC (Interview 2015) that commitment and a business mind set are essential for the future. "Maybe our environment is more relaxing now, but people cannot sit back, as there will be future challenges".

3.4 Clustering of Entry-Points

There are various entry-points for addressing gender inequalities and increasing women's economic empowerment in the SI cocoa value chain. We will take the upgrading strategies presented in the VC study as a starting point:

(a) Quality and Access to niche markets

- New varieties
- Good fermentation and drying practices
- Meet overseas quality standards
- Linkages with overseas buyers/chocolate makers

(b) Production and productivity

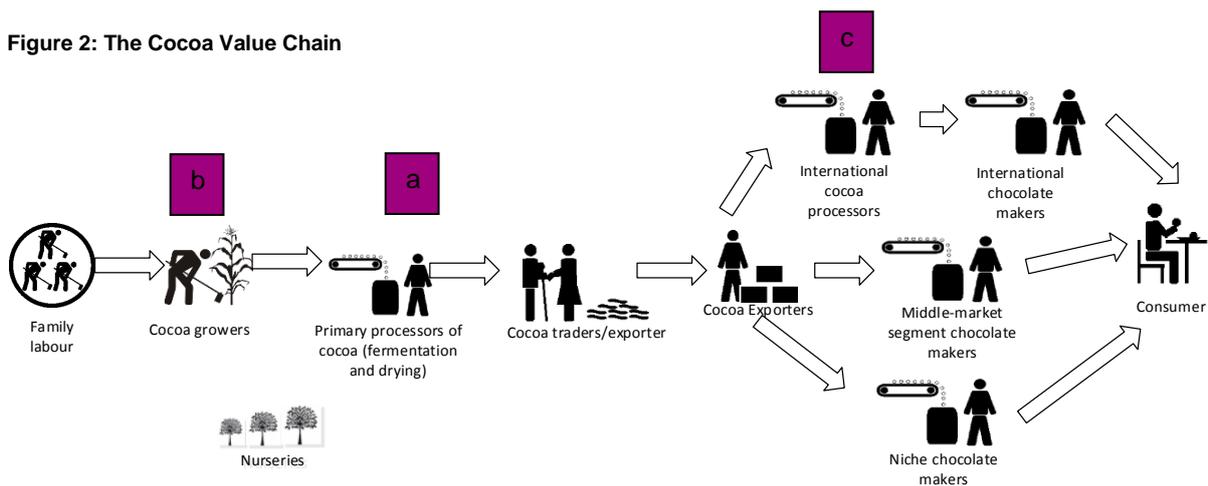
- Expand production
- Increase productivity
- Trading & Transport

(c) Chocolate (drinks) making

- Local consumption of cocoa products
- Adding value

These strategies are oriented towards improvements in different parts of the value chain, as indicated in Figure 2.

Figure 2: The Cocoa Value Chain



Specifically for the cocoa value chain, quality cocoa and establishing linkages with niche markets is challenging. Serious problems with the driers, smokiness of beans and under-fermentation of beans, are all major barriers to selling to quality niche markets. Solar drying strategies are currently being tested to address the smokiness of beans.

In PNG (and also in other cocoa producing regions, like West-Africa) there is growing recognition of women being key for quality cocoa production (World Bank 2014). In SI, women are constrained in contributing to quality production in several ways:

- Women are less visible (and involved) in post-harvest practices that determine quality, and are usually not the ones involved in selling the processed beans. Consequently women have little say on how money that is generated through processing is being spent. This potentially creates disincentives for women to invest more time in post-harvesting practices.
- Women lack access to training on GAP and quality production, and lack access to new technologies. Women lack financial skills and sometimes also a business mind-set (which constraints them in making the calculations, and therefore from making an informed decision). Women also face serious time constraints to invest more time in quality cocoa production and there is no reward system in place.
- Women lack representation higher up in the value chain, which constraints their involvement in quality control and in the development, testing and monitoring of new technologies.

What also potentially constrains links with international (niche) markets, next to existing gender inequalities, is the occurrence of domestic violence and the use of family labour on cocoa farms in the SI. Gender is a topic that is high on the agenda of international cocoa buyers, particularly those buyers

that are committed to sustainable cocoa production (e.g. buyers that come together under the World Cocoa Foundation and Cocoa Action)¹⁰.

When it comes to the expansion of cocoa production and productivity, a serious challenge is land availability. For women there is even an additional constraint; women lack decision-making power over the use of land, even though they are involved in cocoa production (but not fully recognised) and responsible for food production. Women, like men, lack access to services, like extension and training on good agricultural practices, and face time constraints to apply labour-intensive practices. Moreover, existing services are poor and not gender sensitive in their design.

There is potential to increase productivity, especially through new planting materials, but women lack access to these materials and do not receive training on rehabilitation.

Currently there is no local chocolate making in SI; the necessary infrastructure is missing. There have been some trials with chocolate making training and chocolate tasting sessions for grower groups. So far, women lack access to these trials. If SI, chooses to position women as key in quality cocoa and chocolate production and build their capacity to play this (new) role, it could consider training women in new roles, as facilitators of tasting sessions and quality control. Women are traditionally the ones held responsible for food production, food marketing, cooking and catering. Processing local cocoa products as food ingredient (including chocolate) could provide business opportunities for women, and generate employment for young women.

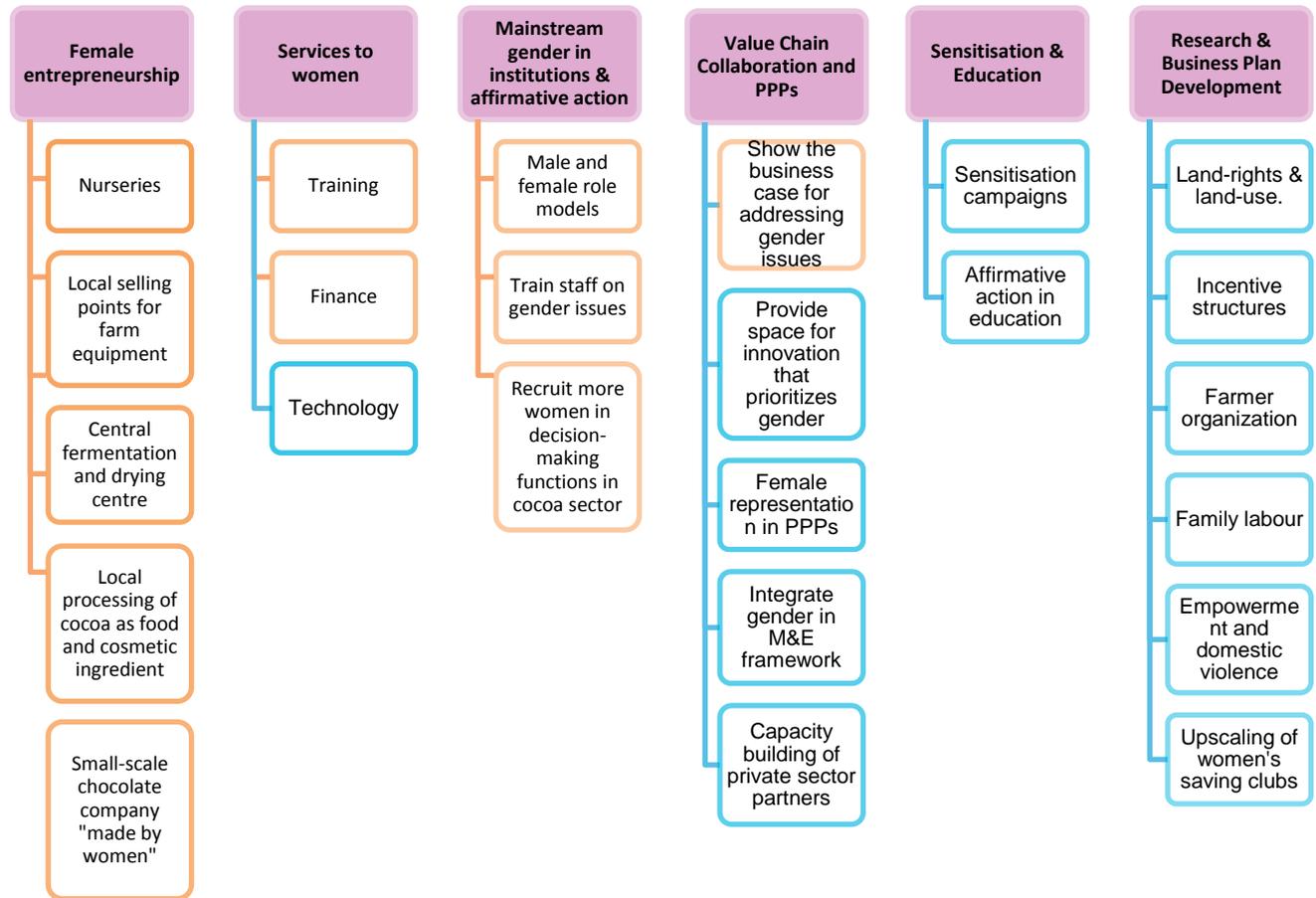
In Appendix A, for each strategy we:

- Highlight the current challenges and opportunities as formulated by Vadjnal and Pelomo 2014.
- Identify gender-based challenges and opportunities for women's economic empowerment.

The gender-based challenges and opportunities that we found in relation to the identified upgrading strategies, together with other findings of this study, have led to a new clustering of entry-points addressing gender inequalities and contributing to women's economic empowerment. We elaborate on the different entry-points below.

¹⁰ Source: <http://www.worldcocoafoundation.org/about-wcf/cocoaaction/>

Figure 3: Clustering Entry-Points



3.4.1 Female Entrepreneurship

Female entrepreneurship is an entry point for women’s economic empowerment. We identified a number of business opportunities for women that can contribute to professionalization of the cocoa value chain in SI. Because the business ideas reflect women’s traditional roles, the risks of men taking over control or resisting women’s participation in the activity, are being mitigated (see also World Bank 2014). This is important in a setting where domestic violence rates are high and men are still the main decision-makers in the households and communities.

The five business ideas respond to needs and opportunities in the cocoa sector identified during this study. By promoting women as entrepreneurs and employees of these business ideas, setting up these businesses will impact significantly on women’s economic empowerment.

For all start-ups, business training for the involved women is essential, as well as providing them with professional management skills (SIBISCO Interview 2015). The start-ups will also require some seed money. Because women are disadvantaged in accessing finance it is recommended to consider setting up **Matching Grant funds for female businesses** (or favouring businesses run by women and/or generating employment for (young) women) and organizing **challenge grants for female entrepreneurs**.

Idea 1. Set-up women run nurseries with quality seedlings (hybrids or fine flavour), combining cocoa trees and other trees (e.g. coconut or shade trees) and food crops (e.g. banana).

This business opportunity contributes to rehabilitation of cocoa farmers, and helps to establish linkages with international (quality) markets. By planting and selling both cocoa and other (shade) trees and crops, this contributes to diversification of income and food security. A potential challenge will be the commercial viability of a nursery.

Women can become involved as owners, managers and workers. For women employed in the nursery this offers a possible career path toward training and employment as extension agents in the sector (see also World Bank 2014).

Idea 2. Set up local selling points of tools and equipment for cocoa and other crops, run by women.

Farmers, both male and female, complained that they didn't have easy access to tools and equipment. This constrains them in applying GAP and IPDM on their farms.

Input supply in SI is done through wholesale and retail outlets, mostly located in provincial capitals. Basic tools are hardly available locally (like pruners, bush knives, drying equipment). We propose to set up local selling points, giving farmers access to tools and equipment close to their farms (see also World Bank 2014). By making sales of tools/equipment part of the assortment of small rural shops that are already run by women, women can become managers of these sales. This supports women in generating some additional income. Because you build on already existing roles of women, the level of resistance among men is expected to be low. These local points can serve also farmers involved in other tree and food crops.

Plate 4: Input Shop in Honiara.



Idea 3. Promote central fermentation and drying centre, run by women.

In SI, PARDI is focusing on niche marketing of quality cocoa to specialty chocolate manufacturers. Quality assessment of SI beans by the Malaysian Cocoa Board shows that beans have been defective plus having the smoke-off flavour which has resulted in lower prices. In other cocoa growing countries, women are already recognised for their role in quality cocoa production (World Bank 2014). In SI, this could be much more stimulated.

Access to quality markets does not only require meeting quality standards, but to interest a buyer you also need to supply sufficient volumes of similar quality beans. Through central fermentation and drying it becomes easier to produce somewhat larger volumes of quality beans. Aggregation of wet cocoa beans is already practiced in SI. PHAMA is currently testing new solar drying techniques in SI (see Plate 3). These driers could facilitate central drying.

This idea of central fermentation has already been tried (in Bougainville); here it didn't work (ADRA Interview 2015). Before a similar strategy is piloted, lessons should be drawn from this previous experience and a feasibility study might be considered. In SI women are involved in processing of the beans, but less than men. By involving women in these types of activities, and adding value to the wet beans, their income can be increased¹¹. By stimulating female management of such enterprises women become role-models for other women involved in cocoa production.

Idea 4. Start-up of local processing of cocoa into local cocoa drinks ("SILO") and produce and trade other cocoa products for local consumption (e.g. soap), run by women.

Currently, cocoa is sold as a primary processed commodity to exporters of cocoa. While it is the strategy of SI government to invest in export, a stronger local culture of consumption of cocoa could in the longer term contribute to the local commitment to cocoa production (based on KIT's earlier experiences with cocoa in West-Africa). Currently, local consumption of cocoa as a 'food' or 'health' product is minimal, also little is done with cocoa waste products. But the potential is recognised.

"It is possible!" was an often heard reaction when asking about the use of cocoa as a local food ingredient. For

Recipe Moses Pelomo SILO*

- Get rid of shell
- Roast beans
- Roast on slow fire (20 minutes)
- At village level we pound it until it melts/liquid
- You put it in tray/blocks
- You leave it cool/small cups
- You put it in a cup, add hot water or milk & sugar.

¹¹ Through training of women on improved drying and fermentation practices, they can add more value to their product. The average price-difference between wet and dry beans (in 2012) was SBD 8/kg. Price for fermented and dried beans was around SBD 13/kg (Vadjnal and Pelomo 2014).

example, chocolate drinks (e.g. Milo) have already found their way to the Solomon Islands Markets, but Milo is considered as expensive. One of the respondents (Interview M. Pelomo 2015) shared his local recipe for cheaper, tastier and healthier chocolate drinks than MILO, using the whole bean as the basic ingredient (and not only the cocoa powder). Cocoa is also an important ingredient for ice-cream and bakeries.

Women are currently dominating the food business: women are the main vendors in markets, they are traditionally the ones who cook, and are already active in catering. In setting up any “cocoa food business”, the women are best equipped to run such businesses.

Cosmetics

In West-Africa many women make some money from processing burned cocoa pods (without the fruit) into potassium (an ingredient for soap). In SI cocoa waste is not (yet) used as an ingredient for cosmetics. In SI, there are some women active in trading oils in the market (primarily by women). Cocoa soap could become part of their assortment. Potassium could also be sold to processors of VCO (by)products.

Idea 5. Invest in a chocolate company with prominent roles for women: e.g. SI quality chocolate “made by women”.

Making chocolate in the SI has been mentioned by a number of respondents as a dream. Some, like the NGO ADRA, are already making some steps in this direction. For example, ADRA have established linkages with the Hawaiian market, and invited chocolate makers to give training on quality, tasting and chocolate production to farmers.

In theory, the Solomon Islands are well-positioned to market their chocolate as “origin chocolate”, fetching a somewhat higher price on the international market. This would require first of all dealing with the smoky flavour of the beans, and improving post-harvest practices. It would also require investments in processing equipment, the marketing and branding of the products.

In the light of this study, in such a (small) chocolate making factory, women could play a prominent role, as managers, but also as employees and suppliers, and in the future potentially as owners. Stimulating women’s role in chocolate making can be seen as an activity where male control is not likely to occur (See World Bank 2014). A linkage could be made with the ‘women’s nursery’ and the ‘central fermentation and drying centre’, if these opportunities would be part of the larger business plan.

Selling SI female-owned quality chocolate could give a boost to the reputation of the country (both in terms of producing **quality** cocoa, and prioritizing **women’s empowerment**).

Chocolate making is not necessarily done in a large factory. For SI chocolate making, we recommend starting with a small processing facility.

3.4.2 Service Provision to Women

(a) Extension Services and Training

It has been mentioned by different respondents that women are even more constrained than men in accessing extension services and training, and in benefiting from these services (see World Bank 2014). This constrains women in being productive and reaching quality standards. Also the lack of women being involved in service provision is illustrative of gender inequalities.

With regards to training there are a large number of entry-points for addressing gender: for example, around the choice of training topics, the selection (and capacity) of trainers, training methods and around the way access to training is arranged. Table 2 gives an overview.

Upscaling of extension could be facilitated by establishing and strengthening farmer associations. Provision of services to groups of farmers can be time-efficient and reduce transaction costs.

Plate 5: Solomon Islands Origin Chocolate



However, ADRA indicated that cooperatives do not work in SI (ADRA Interview 2015). We need to understand more about farmer organizations in the SI.

What has been mentioned a lot during interviews, particularly with representatives of the public sector in SI, is the need for private sector to become engaged in the provision of extension and training. Their participation could contribute to a more systemic approach. It is important that private sector builds on experiences with CLIP and FFS, and mainstreams gender in their interventions. This can be best achieved through PPP on extension.

(b) Finance

Besides training and equipment, a key service that women (and men) need to increase productivity levels is finance. We have seen arrangements that potentially work for women, like the women's saving and micro-credit clubs. We have no evidence that money that is being saved is invested in the cocoa farm. Instead, what we have seen is that income from cocoa production has been put aside by women as savings, for investments in other businesses. We have also heard some negative experiences with micro-credit. What we have learned from this is that in supporting women to get access to finance, it is necessary that women also have control over the way they would like to use these resources (SIWIBA Interview 2015). We have also seen the potential of mobile banking facilities, which are perceived as being safer and contributing to better financial management, particularly in the household. The use of such financial schemes could be stimulated, if this goes hand in hand with financial literacy training.

In the report by the World Bank (2014) on PNG they highlighted that there is a need to improve women's access to financial services, including bank accounts, payment systems and financial products that address gender-specific constraints, by

- Developing products and services which enable women to open bank accounts in their own name.
- Providing women with the opportunity to obtain non-cash payment for products sold to buyers.
- Giving women access to financial services in markets where fresh products are being sold.
- Providing women with access to a broader range of financial services, including credit and insurance (World Bank 2014).

An analysis of the lessons that can be drawn from women's saving clubs, combined with lessons drawn from other credit schemes (e.g. micro credit) or countries, can provide evidence based recommendations for expanding and improving financial services to women.

Table 2: Entry-points for addressing gender in training and extension

Training topics	Trainers	Training methods	Access to training
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •GAP (cash and food crops), including fermentation & drying, rehabilitation. •Financial literacy and financial management . •English. •Leadership. •Include other, non-agricultural topics, like gender module, domestic violence, food security, nutrition, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Both male and female researchers, extension agents, trainers & lead farmers. •Build capacity of female researchers, extension agents etc. •Improving the overall climate for security and safety for (female) extension agents. •Adapt gender recruitment strategy (gender-sensitive recruitment policy, with women in recruitment committee). •Insert incentives for female graduates in the agricultural sciences for careers in both extension and training (world Bank 2014) •Train trainers on gender issues (NGOs, Public and Private agents involved in training/extension) •Train lead farmers on gender issues. •Train trainers on other topics (life-skills). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Mainstream gender in curriculum of training. •Use gender-sensitive training methods (e.g. participatory approach). •Use gender disaggregated data to monitor impact. •Consider video as way to convey messages. •Demonstration farm. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Invite both women and men to the training. For financial training it was stressed to invite couples, involving both husband and wife, and singles. Consider adoption of a specific target of female participation (World Bank 2014). •Select location close to communities. •Timing of trainings, not conflicting with other household responsibilities. •Demonstration farm on female plot. •Regular training (systematic). •Trainings can also be combined with community meetings where information is shared.

With regard to another financial services, like the matching grants, more effort can be made to attract and favour female entrepreneurship. For example, RDP could consider setting up **Matching Grant funds for female businesses** (or favouring businesses run by women and/or generating employment for (young) women) and organizing challenge grants for female entrepreneurs. The identified business could be a starting point for such a challenge grant.

(c) Technology

Considering the work load of women, combining tasks on the farm with tasks in the household, it is recommended to invest in labour-saving technologies, not only for cocoa production related activities but also to reduce the labour intensity of household tasks (see World Bank 2014). In assessing the impact of current and new technologies (for example related to drier trials introduced by PHAMA), it is key to include gender-sensitive indicators that help you to measure impact on both women and men.

In testing of new technologies it is recommended to involve female farmers in the trials. Access to equipment/materials/technology and skills training supports women to improve the quality of the cocoa and eventually get better prices.

3.4.3 Mainstream Gender in Institutions and Affirmative Action

A recent evaluation of SI Rural Development Program (RDP) indicates that female memberships and engagement in RDP was found to have positive correlations with project outcomes; in RDP's sub-

Plate 6: Traditional Drying Practices using Fire

project implementation committee (SIC), 30% of members were female. These correlations, showing the benefits of having female participation in decision-making bodies and diversity in management, are widely known. Nevertheless, women in SI are still systematically under-represented in any decision-making functions that occur in the cocoa value chain. Women are absent (or only with few) when we consider for example lead farmers, trainers and extension agents and larger cocoa exporters. Also if we consider the different institutions involved in the cocoa sector, like PHAMA, MAL, the Cocoa Industry Working Group, we hardly encounter women. Even the research done on cocoa is dominated by male consultants. More involvement of women in positions where decisions are being made will not happen by itself and requires affirmative action.

We distinguish three entry-points:

- (i) **Male and female role models:** Recognise potential role models (both male and female). For example, identify *male champions* or ‘agents for change’ who for example publically denounce domestic violence and support their wives in household tasks (see also recommendations - SCP 2009). Successful rural business women could be examples for female students and rural youth, and give them incentives to commit to a career in cocoa.
- (ii) **Train staff on gender issues:** With gender higher on the political agenda, staff involved in policy development, policy implementation and monitoring of policy need to be trained to understand and respond to gender issues. Training on gender in agriculture could be standardized as part of staff’s skill development.
- (iii) **Recruit more women in decision-making bodies in cocoa and set a quota:** If you want to recruit women in a male dominated sector, just putting an advertisement in a newspaper is not likely to be successful. If you want to attract female candidates, consider alternative recruitment strategies, like using women’s networks for distribution of the vacancy, state clearly that preference is given to female candidates, incentivize women through attractive working conditions, make sure you have both men and women in the recruitment committee and set a quota for female representation.

3.4.4 Value Chain Collaboration and PPPs

Increasing the private sector involvement in development of the cocoa sector in SI is high on the agenda. Companies are expected to contribute to service delivery to farmers and other value chain actors. We have seen some examples of VCC in the cocoa chain, ranging from a more formal arrangement (e.g. land allocation project) to informal/ad hoc support. We have not seen VCC with specific gender objectives. A cocoa exporter argued that this would require showing that there is a clear business case for such an intervention: “I just want my return” (Cocoa Exporter Interview 2015). Another way of involving the private sector in providing services to farmers is by setting up public-private partnerships (PPP), for example on gender sensitive extension services. This could involve public partners like MAL, Women in Agriculture, and for example private larger-scale exporters of cocoa, or even chocolate manufacturers outside SI, interested in buying SI cocoa. Such an arrangement can incentivize private partners to invest in the capacity building of farmers and in gender mainstreaming. For the private sector it will be of interest to participate in a PPP because it will contribute to farmers being trained and apply GAP and IPDM, and the PPP can contribute to creating a sense of loyalty between the trained farmers and the buyers. Another key advantage for the private sector is that it gives them access to finance a new strategy, which reduces the potential risks involved. For public extension services it can help reach out to more farmers, and control to some extent, private extension messages being in line with the public (engendered) approach towards extension.

We have not encountered examples of PPPs in the cocoa sector, although the initiative of RDP, with their call for matching grant proposals can be regarded as a step in that direction. According to RDP (interview 2015), they integrated gender in their procedure by giving preference to female applicants and making sure 30% of the members of the sub-committee involved in assessing the proposals were female.

We see a number of entry-points for addressing gender inequalities and generating opportunities for women’s economic empowerment through collaboration:

- Show the business case for addressing gender issues (e.g. higher returns, contributing to reputation of the business). Start with collecting sex-disaggregated data in monitoring impact of interventions in cocoa sector.
- Provide space for innovation that prioritizes gender (e.g. matching grants for innovations that contribute to female entrepreneurship).
- Female representations in PPPs.
- Integrate gender in M&E framework used to evaluate and learn from the partnership.
- Support private sector with capacity building to understand and address gender inequalities.

3.4.5 Sensitisation and Education

The norms and values that are dominant in SI make sensitisation and education an important part of the different entry-points that can help to address gender inequalities and contribute to women's economic empowerment.

Sensitisation is key for the following topics:

- **Domestic Violence and the use of alcohol:** Continuous sensitisation is needed to fight domestic violence and reduce the consumption of alcohol. This reality is not only affecting women, children and communities but also affect SI's reputation for selling quality origin cocoa (or chocolate) and constrains other economic opportunities.
- **Family Labour:** Access to international markets and to certification is potentially constrained by children's involvement in work on the farm combined with low enrolment rates at school. Any connotation with child labour is perceived to be a high risk for international companies. Sensitisation on the importance of getting children to school and on avoiding children being involved in tasks that potentially can harm them, is key.
- **Reproductive health:** Women bear children when they are very young – teenagers – which affects their health and their opportunities for the future. Women and girls as well as men and boys need to be sensitized to realise a cultural shift away from teen pregnancies.
- **Promoting women's rights, including user rights of land:** Sensitisation of community leaders and members for the promotion of women's user-rights of land is recommended.
- **Women's contribution to cocoa farming and division of labour:** World Bank study (2014) on PNG, identified a gender-based opportunity to sensitize both men and women to women's contribution to cocoa (quality) and to greater sharing of the crop benefit.
- **Business mind-set:** A lack of business mind-set and commitment of farmers was often mentioned by respondents. In this regard the PNG study made an interesting distinction between farming and 'foraging' (seeing cocoa as quick money).
- **Sensitisation of communities:** An important request from the field was that information and knowledge (such as that being gathered in this study) should find its way back to the local communities and local stakeholders, so that women and men are better informed.

Sensitisation goes hand-in-hand with **education**. For example training on **financial literacy** has the potential to open farmers' eyes on how to get a higher return on investment. In addition, changing people's mind-set and behaviour can to a high extent be stimulated through education, and the role models you encounter. In an educational system it is also possible to take affirmative action, for example:

- Giving scholarships to women to stimulate them to take up certain courses and/or follow a certain career path.
- Make gender part of the curriculum, and mainstream gender.
- Recruit female teachers for subjects that are non-traditional for women.

3.4.6 Research and Business Development

During this fieldwork a number of topics came up for which there is a need to do more research.

- a) **Land-rights and land-use:** A better understanding of land-rights and land use, and how that links with gender relations came up as important. Particularly because as land becomes scarce in the SI and plots shared among families become smaller, this will make it more difficult to make a living out of cocoa.
- b) **Incentive structures and loyalty:** Understand better the possible incentive structures (for female and male farmers) that promote intensification, processing, quality production and other on-farm investment. Understand better how loyalty is linked to gender relations and intra-household decision-making.
- c) **Farmer organization:** Understand better how farmers organize themselves, what (dis)incentivises them and how women's participation and leadership in organisations can be strengthened. Understand how women currently work together, and explore ways of building on these already existing structures.
- d) **Family labour:** Understand better the relation between feminization of agriculture in SI, the involvement of children in work on farm, and enrolment rates in schools. Or put differently, between migration (shortage of labour) and children not attending school.
- e) **Empowerment and domestic violence:** Understanding more about these relations is still a grey area. If we work towards women's economic empowerment this should be better understood.
- f) **Upscaling of women's saving clubs:** Document lessons with women's saving clubs and micro-credit (based on both positive and negative experiences), disseminate learning (also at the community level).

The proposed business opportunities need to be studied better, for example through feasibility studies, market research and/or business plan development.

3.5 Conclusions - Cocoa

During the course of this short study many entry-points for interventions that address gender inequalities in the cocoa value chain and contribute to women's economic empowerment have been identified. It is important to acknowledge that the entry-points, and the interventions that might result from this, are not easy solutions or quick fixes.

The entry-points are diverse and target different stakeholders and may be relevant at different moments in time (e.g. some rely on others to happen first). In the last part of this section, we make suggestions on how to follow up on these different entry-points, and who could potentially play a leading role in moving forward with these findings. For each entry-point, we listed the main target groups, potential stakeholders involved, immediate needs and suggestions for next steps (Table 3).

In the recommendations of the report, there are suggestions for prioritization of actions.

Table 3: matching entry-points with target groups and stakeholders

Entry-points	Main target groups	Potential stakeholders/programs involved	What is needed?	Next steps
Female entrepreneurship	Educated women as entrepreneurs Young women as employees	Private sector: the buyers of quality cocoa could be potentially investors, or the chocolate makers. Support could also come from financial partners like Pacific Financial Inclusion Program and the commercial banks. Public sector, for example RDP and organisations like SIWIBA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seed-money • Market studies • Business plan development • Training on business skills 	Matching Grant funds for female businesses (or favouring businesses run by women and/or generating employment for (young) women) and organizing challenge grants for female entrepreneurs.
<i>Nurseries</i>	Educated women as nursery managers, who are supported by their family, to set-up a business → <i>role models</i> Young women can be hired as employees.	Private sector: the buyers of quality cocoa could be potentially investors and financial institutions. Public sector, like SICIPS, RDP, PARDI, MAL, NCID, SIWIBA	Access to (high quality) seedlings/pods, access and decision-making over land, link with market, training and financial literacy/business management, seed money.	Assess the commercial viability of nurseries, possibly in combination with other crops/activities/services → <i>nursery as rural service centre</i> . Assess the interest/needs of women that you would like to engage.
<i>Local selling points for farm equipment</i>	Rural female shop keepers, interested in expanding their sales.	Traders/transporters of cocoa beans → <i>empty trucks can distribute the tools/equipment</i> Retailers of tools/equipment → <i>negotiate pre-finance arrangements and discounts</i> Public sector, like RDP and financial institutions	Access to finance to buy tools (or pre-finance arrangement with retailers), mobile banking facilities (to avoid women having to deal with too much cash). Financial management skills.	Conduct a small market study (including the willingness to pay). Provide women that run rural shops with information on this business opportunity.

Entry-points	Main target groups	Potential stakeholders/programs involved	What is needed?	Next steps
<i>Central fermentation and drying centre</i>	Committed female cocoa farmers and young women (and men), supported by their families	Private buyers/traders. They might want to invest in part of the operations. If quality standards are high and consistent, the private sector might consider paying higher prices for the cocoa. Private sector partners can “sell” this type of investments as part of their social procurement story. Public sector, like PHAMA, PARDI and RDP.	Training on management, fermentation and drying. Access to equipment, finance (working capital and investment capital), land.	Draw lessons from previous experiences with central fermentation/drying. Short feasibility study. Business plan development.
<i>Local cocoa processing as food/cosmetic ingredient (alternative way of generating income out of cocoa)</i>	Women already involved in food production/business and/or cosmetics. Particularly women without access to (or control over) land.	SIWIBA, SISBEC, ACIAR, RDP and market researchers	Market research and the development of a business plan (e.g. franchise model).	Market study, involving female entrepreneurs.
<i>Small-scale chocolate company – chocolate made by women</i>	Educated women as managers, business women. Young women as employees.	ADRA, SIWIBA, Banks, PARDI, PHAMA, distributors of specialty chocolate, marketers, product designers	Business plan development and access to finance. Training on quality, tasting and processing.	Feasibility study and development of business plan.
Services to women	Committed female and male farmers, lead farmers, trainers, extension agents, financial service providers, NGOs	Private buyers (exporters/traders/ chocolate makers) interested in quality and volumes of cocoa Public sector: Cocoa Industry Working Group, RDP in collaboration with MAL & Women in Agriculture, ACAIR, PHAMA (drying trials),	Coordination and collaboration between different service providers, efficiency Resources for systematic approach and regular training, package of services (training in combination with access to equipment, tools, planting	Provide incentives to the private sector (e.g. branding/pricing) Capacity building of providers to deliver services (tailored to different types of women) Increase gender awareness among staff, including their extension

Entry-points	Main target groups	Potential stakeholders/programs involved	What is needed?	Next steps
		NGOs, Financial institutions.	materials, credit and markets).Involving women in designing, testing and monitoring new technologies, like drying trials.	agents. This can be achieved by giving a gender training, followed by a gender strategy and action plan.
Mainstream gender in institutions & affirmative action	Educated women, business women, emancipated men (male champions), staff of organizations involved in development of the SI cocoa sector.	All public bodies, like MWYCFA, PHAMA, DFAT, MAL, Women in Development, Government, CEMA. Traditional leaders, Gender experts. Programs like RDP, SICIPS, NCIPS, NCID.	Make improving the status of women as a policy priority. Coordination among public bodies to put this ambition into practice.	Gender training, followed by gender strategy, involving HR, communication strategy, gender-sensitive recruitment policy, etc.
Value Chain Collaboration & PPP	Private and public sector partners, sharing an interest in developing the cocoa sector in SI, female entrepreneurs, social enterprises.	Private exporters in collaboration with relevant public bodies, like DFAT, RDP, PHAMA. Cocoa Industry Working Group.	Put in place arrangements that stimulate PPPs and VCC (like the Matching Grants) and learn from other PPPs how gender is integrated.	Create multi-stakeholder dialogue and present outcomes of this study
Sensitisation & education	Community members (male and female)	Public sector like RDP, MWYCFA, with support of organisations like SIWIBA, SISBEC, KGA, and gender experts.	Identify organisation who can organize sensitisation sessions Affirmative action to enrol more women in relevant courses/career paths (e.g. scholarships)	Sensitisation sessions with communities, and as part of courses
Research & Business Plan Development	Research institutes and female entrepreneurs.	For research, public institutions like ACAIR and PARDI (research) in collaboration with research institutions that participated in the Masterclass. For business plan development, RDP together with financial institutions and businesses and combine challenge grants with capacity building of the involved entrepreneurs. SISBEC is another possible partner.	Coordination of research agenda with relevant partners, and sharing research results. Develop infrastructure to support start-ups.	Explore opportunities to collaborate with participants of Masterclass that share some of these questions and/or can contribute to research. Combine grants with capacity building.

4.0 Coconut Findings

4.1 Introduction

In this section we present first the background information on coconuts in SI. We use the VC study by Young and Pelomo (2014) as the main resource. Second, we present the findings from the field study, using the gender relations framework as a way to organize the data. The entry-points for addressing gender inequalities and women's economic empowerment in the coconut value chain are clustered around six strategies:

- i. Support female entrepreneurship in the coconut sector.
- ii. Improve services to women involved in coconut.
- iii. Mainstream gender in institutions and affirmative action.
- iv. Value Chain Collaboration and PPPs.
- v. Sensitisation and education.
- vi. Research and Business Development.

We end this section with conclusions, with a focus on suggestions for how different institutions, companies and donors can build on these entry-points in their programs, strategies and collaboration.

4.2 Background - Coconut Sector

Coconuts are the most widely distributed crop in the Solomon Islands and form a key part of almost all farming systems in all provinces. Some 40,000 rural households produce coconuts for their own consumption, to produce fuel and building materials, and to generate cash income. Copra is the most important coconut product and is a vital source of cash income for rural households, especially those in the more remote areas.

However, copra is hard work and doesn't pay much. Its capacity to contribute to rural poverty reduction is limited, also because of the volatility in the value of copra export. The lack of other income-generating activities has meant that copra remained relatively attractive for smallholders. SI has growing global importance in the global copra trade and Virgin Coconut Oil (VCO) is seen as a high potential emerging market.

Copra marketing has evolved from a highly regulated parastatal-managed system (CEMA monopoly) to one where there is minimal institutional and regulatory intervention. This explains, at least partly, why the coconut sector has had less specific donor related assistance than the cocoa sector. Relevant programs and initiatives are¹²:

- **PHAMA's** support for coconut exports has been limited. PHAMA has provided support to both the private sector and government agencies to enable three processing mills (two copra and one palm oil processor) to secure export accreditation to Australia. To assist industry in monitoring coconut oil quality, PHAMA has also established a degree of capacity for quality testing within CEMA. PHAMA has also established a coconut industry working group (IWG) to promote co-ordination in the industry and identify strategic initiatives to support the industry's development, and to establish a Coconut Secretariat. The secretariat is not yet up and running.
- In 2009 a **Coconut Sector Strategy** was developed with funding from the European Union. Part of this strategy involves coconut as a fuel for the electrification of rural areas
- There is a **national program for rehabilitation** of coconut plantings; however government funding is limited for implementation.
- **National Coconut Industry Development Program (NCIDP)** prepared by MAL sees the essential role of coconuts in food and nutrition as well as cash income generation, especially for the poorer segments of the population. The NCIDP aimed at five outputs: rehabilitation of seed gardens in the provinces; rehabilitation and establishment of coconut-based farming

¹² Based on SI Coconut Value Chain Study by Young and Pelomo, 2014

systems; establishment of processing and value adding activities; improved surveillance for possible introduction of Bogia disease; and a fully resourced and operational coconut secretariat within MAL.

- **Private sector involvement.** Various companies processing coconuts into crude or VCO have received small scale assistance such as equipment and finance support from various programs however there have been no large scale interventions. The second phase of RDP intends to work at a range of levels in the value chain through partnerships with private sector, including the provision of funding and grant finance. Examples of copra exporters and how they invest in VCC/growers/clients include: working capital, drier spare parts, copra sacks, subsidizing freight, higher prices for large volumes, and personal assistance.

4.2.1 Facts about Coconut, Copra and VCO¹³

Coconut is a smallholder crop. Smallholder households use coconuts to finance basic needs and very little is re-invested in the crop, or in adding value.

Coconut is a low maintenance, low technology crop. The coconut sector is an important generator of cash income in rural and remote areas.

40,000 rural households are estimated to be involved in coconut growing.

Average yields for smallholder growers are 200-300 kg of copra per hectare. About 5,000 to 6,000 nuts are required to produce one tonne of copra.

The majority of growers are household units with 5-6 family members growing coconuts on customary land.

Global trade in coconut products is dominated by copra and coconut oil.

27.2% of total copra production between 2004-2012 took place in Guadalcanal; Western, Central and Malaita are other significant producers of copra.

There are around 200 SME rural copra traders, and 11 SME millers. Most are informal family enterprises. There is only one VCO exporter and one coconut exporter. There are 5 medium/large copra exporters and 4 large copra millers.

VCO is seen as a high potential emerging market. Increasing amounts of nuts are being sold to VCO operators but this still represents less than 1% of coconut production.

4.2.2 Challenges and Opportunities

The SI coconut value chain already identified a number of challenges and opportunities for upgrading strategies. The next table gives an overview.

¹³ The Coconut Sector Strategy estimated that total production in the Solomon Islands is about 370 million nuts of which around 70 million (worth about SBD 140 million) are consumed. Copra exports account for 150-200 million nuts worth some SBD 110-150 million depending on prices. Coconut oil (crude and virgin) exports generate a further SBD 40-50 million. By-products such as copra meal, charcoal, coir, coconut wood etc. may contribute a further SBD 20-40 million in the value of coconut products, giving a total gross value of some SBD 300-400 million (USD 40-50 million).

Table 4: Overview of upgrading challenges and opportunities in SI coconut, copra and VCO¹⁴.

	Strategy	Challenges	Opportunities
Product upgrading	Quality	Quality of Copra is perceived as a challenge; quality is not monitored. Incentives to invest in quality production are lacking (lack of reward structure for quality products).	There are few (if any) formal relationships between the various value chain actors, and PPPs have not been developed. The potential role of PPPs in addressing copra quality concerns is acknowledged.
	Access to niche markets and certification	Focus of growers is limited to copra production and very little understanding of alternative coconut products. There is little awareness about improved copra quality and product diversification.	Niche markets for certified organic and fair trade VCO. Domestic and internationally traded coconut products. Increasing amounts of nuts are being sold to VCO operators. There are around 40 communal or family owned VCO units. Almost all are linked to nucleus operators, which provide the equipment and technical support and purchase the oil, most of which is certified organic.
Process-upgrading & Functional upgrading	Adding value and processing	The margins for copra production are low, better revenues are being made by selling nuts in local markets or for use in VCO extraction. However, most growers, especially in remote areas, do not have alternative outlets for coconuts: copra remains the only viable option. Copra is very labour intensive/hard work (open fires). Lack of cash advances.	Create incentives (e.g. subsidies) for reinvestment in coconut and coconut products. Strengthening the local processing sector: crude coconut oil for export sales, cooking oil and biodiesel; VCO and coconut flour. VCO is perceived as the biggest opportunity. This industry should be encouraged, for example by introducing milling machines to communities. Sell immature nuts for dinking or dry nuts to rural copra traders, mills, exporters.
	Trading	Irregular shipping and high transport costs.	In the early 1990s there were 30 buying points of copra (and cocoa). Although these fell into disuse following CEMA's withdrawal from trading activities, they still have the potential to be used by private traders.

4.3 Gender Relations in the Coconut Value Chain

It takes 4 to 5 years to bring a coconut tree into production. Most coconut farming families, also farm other crops, like cocoa and food crops. The coconut value chain identifies different products and waste products, being sold at domestic and international markets (Table 5). Due to time constraints, in this study we focussed only the (processed) fruit (whole nut) and kernel, looking both at the domestic and

¹⁴ Based on findings in Young and Pelomo, 2014

international markets. The domestic market is particularly of interest for women, as they are involved in the production, trading and consumption of domestic products and by-products.

Table 5: Different markets for different coconut products

Item	Domestic Market	International Markets
Fruit – Whole nut	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immature drinking nuts at market and street stalls • Mature dry - urban and village markets • Mature dry - sold to VCO Direct Micro Expelling (DME) operators • Mature dry - exchanged with trade-store consumer goods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drinking nuts to NZ and Australia supermarkets • De-husked dry nuts to NZ and Australia
Kernel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dried for copra and sold to copra buyers for export • Dried copra sold to local copra millers for coconut oil and copra cake for export or local livestock feed • VCO-DME operators used grated and dried kernel from mature nuts to produce VCO sold locally as health food and cosmetic lotions and soaps • CNO used locally as biofuel • CNO used to manufacture soaps and detergents • Kitchen produced coconut oil mixed with imported perfume or diffused with local natural scents and sold locally as hair or massage lotions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copra imported by overseas copra millers for coconut oil and copra cake • Local millers export Coconut Oil (CNO) and copra cake • VCO exported as organic product • Packaged VCO exported as health food and cosmetic lotions

Source: Extracted from table presented in Young and Pelomo 2014

We now discuss the data around the four dimensions of gender relations that compose the gender framework. There are a lot of similarities with the findings presented in Section 3.0 on cocoa. Particularly when it comes to the production phase; most smallholders in SI produce both cocoa and coconut. To avoid too much overlap, we will refer to the findings in Section 3.0 where possible and relevant.

4.3.1 Gender Division of Labour

In this section we will focus on the division of labour in the production of coconut, copra, oils and biofuel. For information on the division of labour in coconut farming households we refer to Section 3.0.

Fruit (whole nut)

Women are heavily involved in coconut growing, and are responsible for replanting. Like cocoa farming, the division of work on a coconut farm is organized around the physical part of the work. We see mainly the men involved in land establishment and pruning. Women, accompanied by their children, are involved in the planting, weeding and harvesting of the nut. Collecting the nuts is done by the whole family. Some smallholder households do not grow commercial quantities of nuts but have 10-20 palms for their own food consumption and to feed their pigs (Young and Pelomo 2014).

Trading whole nuts is mainly done by women, selling the immature drinking nuts close to town. Going to the market and selling the nuts can be a time consuming activity; *“if the market is not good you stay till you have sold”*.

Box 7: Division of labour - coconuts

Activity on farm	Who is doing what
Land establishment	
Planting and weeding	
Pruning	
Harvesting	
Dehusk the nut	
Trade the whole nut	
Replanting	

For women, being responsible for selling coconut (and other food crops) at the market, there are, besides time constraints, also other concerns, particularly related to safety issues both for the women and for the young children who often join them (see Section 3.0 for details).

Kernel

Kernel refers to the white 'meat' within the coconut. The kernel is used for copra production and oil production. The global trade in coconut is dominated by copra and oil.

Plate 7: Woman selling coconut at Honiara market.



Copra is the dried meat, or dried kernel, of the coconut used to extract coconut oil. Copra is known to be one of the most volatile commodity markets in the world and producers often work for little return. In a recent news item on copra production it was said that copra production is hard and dirty work¹⁵. However, copra is still relatively attractive for smallholders, as they have very few alternatives (Young and Pelomo 2014). It came up during our field study that copra production is seen as "native ATM machine": "you sell copra for a bucket of rice". Another reason to continue investing in copra production is the lack of alternative market options, particularly for producers living in the more remote areas (islands). Copra is expected to remain a feature of the landscape for the foreseeable future.

Copra production starts with nut collection, which is done by the whole family. The nuts are de-husked and dried¹⁶. The drying normally takes place on a basic stove. For the drying, firewood needs to be collected. This is primarily seen as a male task, as is the transport of the copra. We have also seen examples of sun-drying at the company Kokonut Pacific (**Error! Reference source not found.**). The dried copra is normally sold to traders, exporters and millers.

A week in the life of a woman selling coconuts

- I wake up very early, to collect the nuts.
- I de-husk the nuts
- I wait for transport to take me to the market.
- If the market is not good I stay till I have sold- sometimes that can take up to 7 days.

The research did not reveal a clear picture of who is doing exactly what in the production of copra. Findings of previous research (Georgeou et al 2015) indicate that men and boys do the bulk of the work involved in copra, and prepare it for sale, including taking it to Honiara. The very heavy weight of the bags of copra (between 70-100kg) is cited as the main reason for men being responsible for the copra trade. However, our short fieldwork indicates that women are also active in copra production and trade, and seem to be overlooked.

¹⁵ Source <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-07-18/coconut-oil-has-positive-impact-on-solomon-islands-economy/6630008>. Access date 30 October 2015.

¹⁶ There are different ways of producing copra: split the nut, remove the kernel and dry it, or first de-husk, split in half and dry the half nuts.

During an interview with KGA (2015) it came up that women involved in copra production suffer due to the intensity of the labour involved and the lack of tools available to reduce their work load, for example wheel barrows to carry the copra. Especially for single women, copra production was claimed to be hard work, and difficult to combine with taking care of young children (it was mentioned that they sometimes have to leave their babies behind to do the necessary work).

The quality of copra is perceived as a challenge, like cocoa this is related to drying practices. During the study it came up that women play a role in safeguarding quality production. This would be an interesting entry-point for further research. It is obvious, you would only like to encourage women to invest in quality copra production if the working conditions would also improve.

Instead of selling the copra, copra can also be further processed into crude oil (for domestic trading or export). In the domestic retailing and trading of coconut oil (CNO), a lot of women are involved. Interviews with female retailers and intermediate traders of CNO indicate that the entry-barriers for trading are relatively low. The trading can be combined with other activities. But working hours tend to be long.

Increasing amounts of nuts are being sold to Virgin Coconut Oil (VCO) operators. VCO is premium quality oil. According to CEMA (interview 2015) sundried copra will get you close to the quality of VCO.

The processing of copra into crude oil is done in small-scale processing facilities, often at a village level. These facilities are family run businesses and men tend to be the owners. Value chain analysis shows that selling nuts for VCO extraction creates more revenue than copra production. But, because most growers live in remote areas, they do not have these alternative market outlets and dry their nuts into copra themselves (Young and Pelomo 2014).

“VCO earns at least five times more income than copra and retains the coconut flesh or meal after the oil is cold pressed”.

A day in the life of an oil trader

- I wake up at 4am, and do activities
- 7am I am at the market
- I stay on the market till 4.30
- Cooking/making dinner
- In the evening I prepare business for next day

A company actively involved in VCO production is *Kokonut Pacific*. Around 10 years ago this company developed Direct Micro Expelling (DME) for producing virgin coconut oil at village level. In the DME system, the coconut flesh is ground and dried and then pressed with a simple low-tech device. This system helps to produce oil faster and gets a higher price.

For female coconut growers, DME offers an interesting market channel: they can sell the whole nut, without having to go to the market or do the hard labour involved in copra production. DME also offers

the possibility for women to become involved as employees or managers of these facilities.

For female entrepreneurs, the trading of CNO and VCO and other by-products like soap and residual meal (for animal food) offers interesting business opportunities. In a group discussion with a female retailer and two female intermediate traders in CNO, they discussed how they added value by re-packaging (*re-bottling*) the oil and adding flavours and labels to the oils.

CNO is also used to as biofuel. To stimulate the use of CNO as fuel for generators and biofuel as an export product, is part of Coconut Sector Strategy (Young and Pelomo 2014) and will contribute to the

Plate 8: Woman selling coconut oil in Honiara market.



electrification of rural areas. This potentially contributes to women's and children's safety in rural areas and rural entrepreneurship.

In Section 3.0 we already presented findings around the **labour division in the household**.

4.3.2 Access to and Control over Resources

For coconut growing you need access to and control over different resources, compared to the resources you need for processing the kernel.

The fruit

For growing the fruit, the main resources you need, besides labour, are access to (and control over) land. The majority of coconut growing takes place on customary land. We know that in SI even when land is in women's names, the men make the decisions on how the land is to be used (see also Section 3.0). Most coconut plantations are over 40 years old and are often registered in the names of the women. Replanting of coconut trees is seen as the responsibility of women.

Coconut is a tree crop with different options for further processing and marketing. Farmers indicated to be interested in knowing more about these options, particularly VCO, but they lack information and access to DME. Women were disadvantaged over men, when it comes to access to information. Travelling was mentioned as the main way to access market information; normally, it was said, the men are the ones travelling. Besides market information, farmers need training on GAP, replanting, financial literacy and time-management. These skills are important for coconut growers to make informed choices. There are some NGOs, like World Vision, that support farmers with services and training, for example on financial literacy. As we have seen for the cocoa sector, this type of training is often not done systematically.

Other needs (and constraints) were access to tools and equipment. For coconut growing there is no public or private extension service in place, like we have seen for cocoa production.

Another constraint for female coconut growers is transport. Transport for shipping the coconut is expensive. And travelling by canoe takes time. Men are in control of transport. It was indicated during the study that shipping oil will be easier than shipping coconuts or copra.

The kernel

Key resources that came up during our fieldwork as being needed for copra, CNO and VCO production included:

(a) Access to information and advice

Private extension

In contrast to cocoa there is no public extension infrastructure in place that supports copra, CNO or VCO production. Private sector companies are to some extent active in service provision.

Coconut growers that are linked to Kokonut Pacific, through the DME, have access to training and extension from their private partner. For this purpose Kokonut Pacific has established a **Coconut Technology Centre**. In this centre they also conduct research. The Technology Centre sometimes also operates for charity.

Besides extension, Kokonut Pacific also provides other support to the DMEs, like working capital, generators, second-hand pick-up, DME infrastructure. Currently, there are 45 DMEs in operation (out

Plate 9: Extension messages in Coconut Technology Centre



Kokonut Pacific - Coconut Technology Centre

The Coconut Technology Centre is located in Honiara. In this centre, coconut growers that are linked to DME can learn from the demonstrations that are given on VCO production, and can access training and extension services.

Kokonut Pacific has 5 extension workers that go to the field, of whom 2 are women. These extension agents do individual farm visits and group meetings.

of 80). The DMEs are owned by the villagers. In exchange for the services, the company buys the oil. The oil is sold as organic certified, for which they obtain a fixed price.

Besides Kokonut Pacific, other private sector partners also support their suppliers with advice or other small services. Young and Pelomo (2014) give a number of examples of the kind of services copra exporters provide to their suppliers: working capital, drier spare parts, copra sacks, subsidized freight, transport, higher prices for large volumes and personal assistance.

(b) Financial literacy and Finance

One of the major obstacles for VCO production is that banks aren't able to lend money to people in villages as they don't have security or financial records.

"The DME systems are worth \$23,000, which is a fortune in a country where 85 per cent of the population still live from their own gardens and what they catch in the sea". (Bob Pollard - Kokonut Pacific).

Besides entry-costs for starting a processing facility there is also a need for working capital for the purpose of trading. We have encountered some financial arrangements in the coconut value chain, to stimulate CNO and VCO businesses with a potential to benefit women:

- Matching grants were offered by RDP; a number of proposals were coming from entrepreneurs active in coconut. Already some action was taken to favour proposals coming from female entrepreneurs. This could be further encouraged.
- Pre-finance and credit was provided by processors (e.g. Chottu's Coconut Products) to female retailers and traders in their oil. *"By selling on credit to the retailer, the business can start"*.
- Mobile phone banking is being rolled out, particularly to rural women. Mobile phone banking is perceived to be safer and you don't immediately spend your money (this is especially important for poorer women). You do need some confidence for mobile banking (female Oil Retailer Interview 2015).
- Saving clubs and micro-finance schemes (see also the findings in Section 3.0).
- The Coconut Technology Centre helped Kokonut Pacific to attract resources (Kokonut Pacific Interview 2015).

(c) Need for tools

As already mentioned, copra production is very labour intensive and involves heavy work. It was suggested that "tools that make women's life easier" should become available, like the wheel barrow for carrying copra (KGA Interview 2015). Other farm tools needed are ladders, pruners, drying equipment, but also scales and bush knives (data gathered by Georgeou et al 2015). There was a general complaint that tools were not available close to the farms. There used to be buying points in place for coconut and if these are still in place, or could be re-vitalized, then these could contribute to the distribution of tools (CEMA, Interview 2015).

(d) Infrastructure

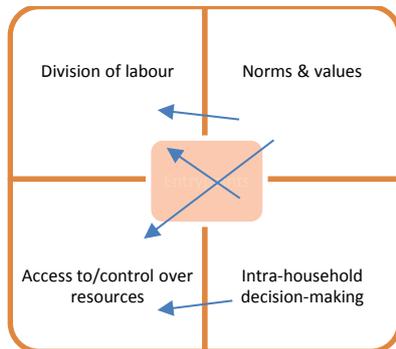
Transport and electricity came up as important challenges for coconut growers, particularly for women. In Section 3.0 we already indicated that transport is in the hands of men. Furthermore, transport is expensive. To meet farmers' constraints, there are companies, like Solomon Tropical Products (STP) that use their own vessel to collect the copra from farmers.

The lack of electricity affects safety in rural areas, both of women and children. It also affects the running of the mills, and constrains women in doing other income-generating activities that require electricity.

4.3.3 Looking at the Interplay

In this chapter, we don't look at intra-household dynamics and norms and values specifically for the coconut sector (as this is not very much different than what already presented earlier on this in Section

3.0). Instead we immediately look at the interplay between the different dimensions of the gender relations framework and how that works out for the coconut sector.



Like for women and men involved in cocoa, gender relations are not fixed. For example, it came up that men are more and more accepting of women taking the lead in small businesses (SIWIBA Interview 2015). Within the household men normally take the decisions. This is very much true for the production phase, but when we take a closer look at women positioned somewhat higher in the chain, involved in for example retailing of coconut oil, making their own money, women seem more confident and empowered.

In relation to **division of labour**, it is important to notice that women are less visible in copra production, and the production of CNO and VCO.

For women involved in both growing coconut and trading the immature fruit for drinking, and for women involved in copra production, we know the daily working hours are long. Especially, women combine their farm and trading tasks with household tasks. For copra production the work is hazardous.

What we have also seen is that on a farm, women are sometimes pushed into certain roles, like dealing with the quality of copra production and the replanting of trees. This is without having in place a reward system that incentivizes women to do this (especially if prices are low).

Trading in oil is perceived as a women's job. For women who don't have access to land, trading is an alternative option to make a living (e.g. alternative to vegetable selling). This type of work is also seen (by women) as fitting well with their household tasks.

The fact that men are seen as the main decision-makers in the household is reflected when it comes to **access and control over resources**, particularly for coconut growing. Due to mobility constraints, women have less access to information. Also in accessing training, women tend to be under-represented. It came out very strongly that for women it is important to earn your own money. It was also stressed that for a women to flourish in business, it is important that her husband is supportive.

4.4 Clustering of Entry-Points

4.4.1 Value Chain Collaboration and PPP

There are various entry-points for addressing gender inequalities and increasing women's economic empowerment in the SI coconut value chain. We will take the identified upgrading strategies by Young and Pelomo (2014) as starting point:

(a) Quality and access to niche markets and certification:

- Improve quality of copra.
- Increase knowledge about product diversification.
- Access to niche markets for certified organic and fair trade VCO.

(b) Adding value and processing:

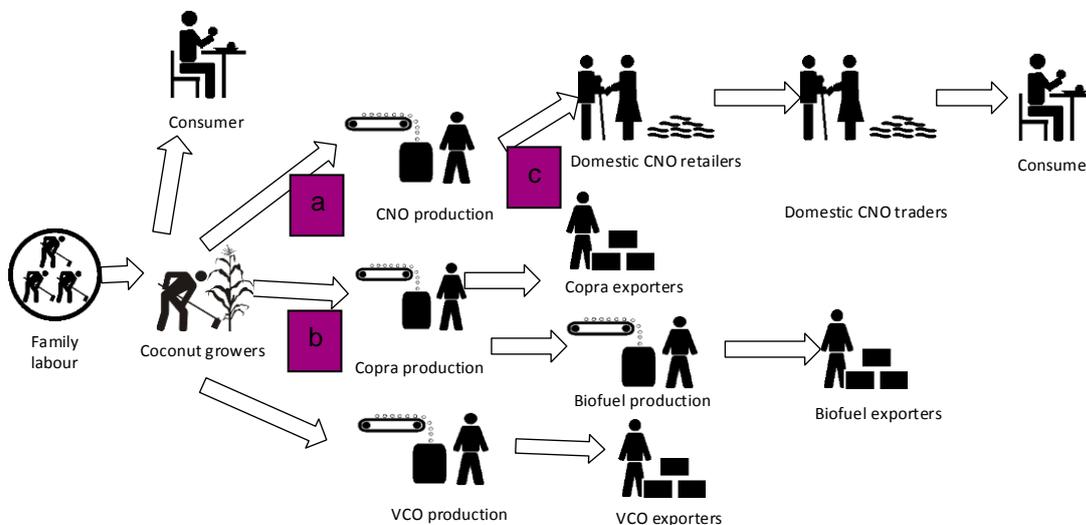
- Strengthening local processing sector.
- Encourage VCO.
- Encourage selling immature nuts and dry nuts.

(c) Trading:

- Improve infrastructure for trading and transport.

These strategies are oriented towards improvements in different parts of the value chain, as indicated in Figure 4.

Figure 4: The Coconut Fruit and Kernel Value Chain



In the coconut value chain we find some similar gender-based challenges and opportunities as in the cocoa value chain. For example, women lack control over the land where the trees are planted. This while replanting of coconut is seen as a responsibility of women.

Women in copra production are less visible than men. Also, like in cocoa, the quality of copra is perceived as a challenge; quality is not monitored and incentives to invest in quality production are lacking. Women are often mentioned when it comes to improving the quality of copra production. It is argued that women, for example, are more patient, which would make them well equipped for safeguarding quality. This while we know that copra production in itself is a hazardous task.

There seems to be little awareness about improved copra quality and product diversification. Particularly women lack access to information of alternative coconut products, like VCO, and/or face constraints to access markets (for example women who live in more remote locations). There is no training/extension program for coconut growers.

There are also gender-based constraints in domestic and internationally traded coconut products. Women are not visible and there is a lack of information, services and market access that would support developing alternative products. This domestic trade of oils and other by-products (like soap) is of interest to women because it has relatively low entry-barriers (e.g. you don't need land) and better working conditions, compared to copra production. Trade is relatively easy to combine with other household tasks, and generates income that women control. Lack of cash hinders domestic trade of coconut-products and pushes women into copra production, as this brings in direct money.

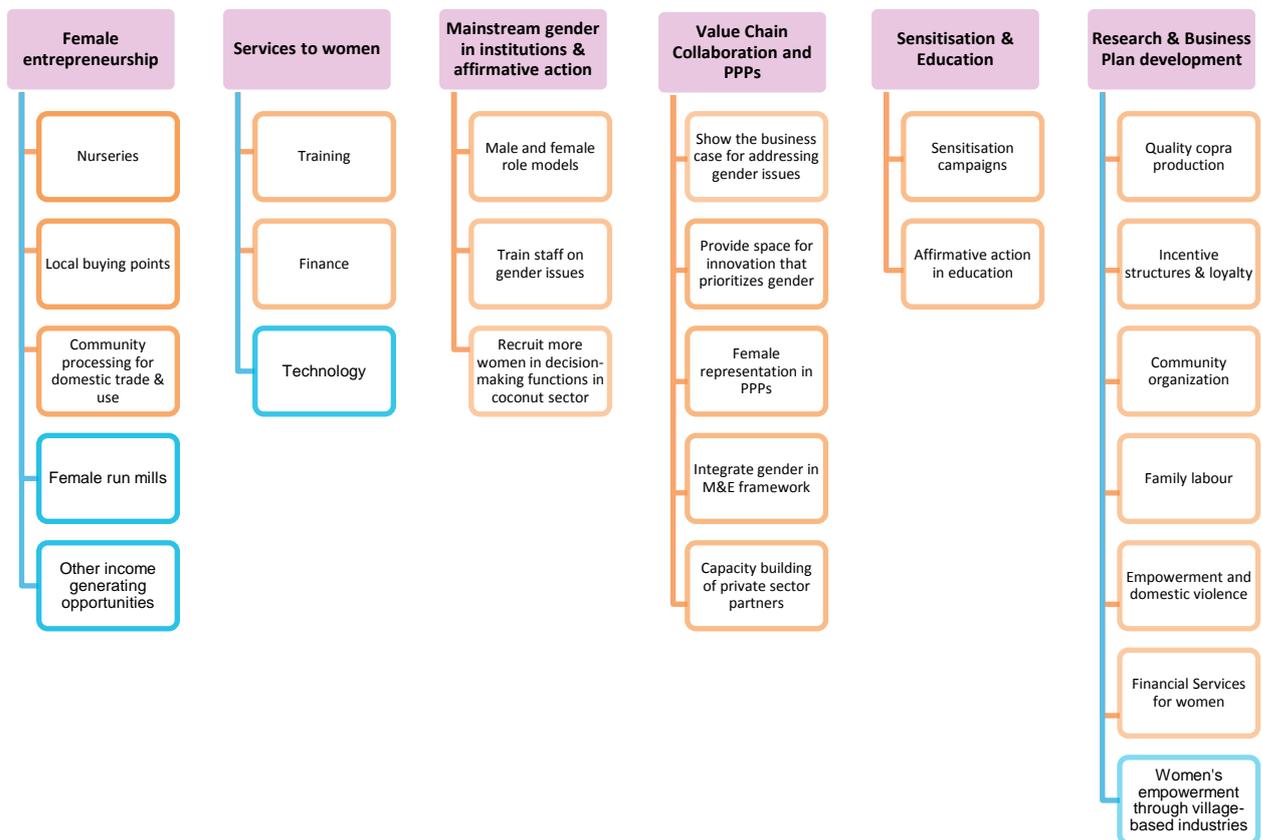
Poor roads and lack of electricity, affect the safety of women and children. Women do not have their own means of transport. Therefore it is important to invest in infrastructure and electricity.

In Appendix B, for each strategy we:

- Highlight the current challenges and opportunities (Young and Pelomo 2014).
- Identify gender-based challenges and opportunities for women's economic empowerment.

The gender-based challenges and opportunities that we found in relation to the identified upgrading strategies, together with other findings of this study, have led to a new clustering of entry-points addressing gender inequalities and contributing to women's economic empowerment in the coconut value chain. We elaborate on the different entry-points below. For some entry-points there is overlap with Section 3.0.

Figure 5: Clustering Entry-Points



4.4.2 Female Entrepreneurship

Female entrepreneurship is an entry point for women's economic empowerment. We identified a number of business opportunities for women that can contribute to professionalization of the coconut value chain in SI. The four entrepreneurial opportunities for addressing gender inequalities and promoting women's economic empowerment through stimulating female entrepreneurship in the coconut value chain are:

- respect or stay close to women's traditional roles, so the risks of males taking over control or male resistance are being mitigated.
- respond to needs and opportunities in the coconut sector identified during this study.
- provide capacity building.
- provide seed money.

Because women are disadvantaged in accessing finance it is recommended to consider setting up Matching Grant funds for female businesses (or favouring businesses run by women and/or generating employment for (young) women) and organizing challenge grants for female entrepreneurs.

Idea 1. Set-up women run nurseries with seedlings for both coconut, cocoa and food crops.

Coconut trees are getting old, and replanting is needed. Replanting of coconut trees is seen as the responsibility of women.

Setting up nurseries/seed gardens with different types of quality seedlings, including coconut seedlings, will stimulate replanting of trees. These mixed seed gardens support farmers in diversifying their income and their food security and nutrition. A potential challenge will be the commercial viability of a nursery (see also Section 3.0 on cocoa). What may help to become commercially viable, is to

combine nurseries with offering other services. Women can become involved as owners, managers and workers.

Idea 2. Reactivate local buying points and set up (new) local buying points in (remote) communities

Women, particularly in remote areas, lack access to nearby markets for selling their whole nuts.

There used to be 30 local buying points for copra (and cocoa) and these could be revitalized as female-run businesses. These buying points can serve to aggregate the whole fruits (next to the copra), and can potentially also serve as information points and selling points for tools. They could also serve as information point for other crops, like cocoa and food crops. To make these points economically viable they could be linked to already existing small rural shops (see Section 3.0), also transport arrangements with for example retailers of farm equipment or coconut buyers will be helpful. By making sales of tools/equipment part of the assortment of shops that are already run by women, women can become managers of these sales. This supports women in generating some additional income. Because you build on already existing roles of women, the level of resistance among men is expected to be low.

Idea 3. Stimulate local processing of CNO and VCO (by)products for domestic trade, such as soap or locally branded oils

While it is the strategy of the SI government to invest in export of coconut products, these products also have their value locally, particularly for women. Women are currently dominating the food business and trading of cosmetic products: in SI, there are quite a number of women active in trading (and branding) oils in the market.

Entrepreneurship can be stimulated through capacity building (e.g. soap making), access to finance (upscaling of trading business) and value chain collaboration.

Women already involved in this trade face constraints in accessing finance needed for the expansion of their business.

Plate 10: Soap-making in Kokonut Pacific.



Idea 4 Set up female-run mills

Women can become involved as managers and owners of mills (CNO, VCO and copra for biofuel).

This potentially does not only benefit the women, but also the community. Running a mill does not have to be heavy work.

Idea 5 Stimulating other income generating opportunities

One of the most straightforward ways of empowering women in SI is by supporting them to earn some money that they can control and diversify their income generating activities. This can be through their involvement in coconut production, cocoa production or trading food crops, but also by setting up a small business like a canteen, sowing, or making banana chips. The lack of power constrains women to run such small businesses.

Entry-points to stimulate local entrepreneurship include:

- Stimulate use of oil as fuel for generators; this contributes to the electrification of rural areas.
- Support women in getting access to savings and finance, together with training on business management.
- Support women in getting access to mobile banking facilities.

4.4.3 Service Provision to Women

(a) Extension services and training

Coconut growers and community processors lack access to systematic training, not only on technical skills, but also on financial skills. With regards to training we have already discussed in Section 3.0, that there are a large number of entry-points for addressing gender in extension services and training: around the choice of training topics, the selection (and capacity) of trainers, training methods, and around the way access to training is being arranged. See Table 2 for the overview.

In the coconut value chain, there is no infrastructure for public extension services and training. The private sector partners are the actors who are actively investing in capacity building of their suppliers. Our entry points focus therefore on training staff involved in private extension services, and integrating gender in their interventions, for example by recruiting male and female extension staff, by inviting both men and women to the training, by giving the training in the communities, etc. Going this route would require also collecting gender-disaggregated data, and gender sensitive monitoring and evaluation.

(b) Finance

Besides training and equipment, a key service that women (and men) need to access and benefit more from opportunities in the coconut value chain is finance. We have seen arrangements (also in Section 3.0) that potentially work for coconut growers, like the women's savings and micro-credit clubs. What we have learned from this is that in supporting women to get access to finance, it is necessary that women also have control over the way they would like to use these resources (SIWIBA Interview 2015). We have also seen the potential of mobile banking facilities. The use of such financial schemes could be stimulated, if this goes hand in hand with financially literacy training. In remote areas we also came across examples where coconut was used as a means of trade to access other products.

Women involved in processing or trading of CNO/VCO products need access to other types of financial products that help them set-up, run or scale-up their business.

An analysis of the lessons that can be drawn from women's saving clubs, combined with lessons drawn from other credit schemes (e.g. micro credit) or countries and other types of financial products that have worked for women, can provide evidence-based recommendations for expanding financial services to women.

(c) Technology

As long as copra production is an important economic activity for women, there is a need to invest in clean, safe and less labour-intensive technologies that support both the quality of the product and the life of the women (and men) involved in copra production. These technologies should be made available to copra producers and affordable.

Current technologies and new technologies should be assessed, making use of gender-sensitive indicators. Women should be involved in the design, testing and evaluation of the technology.

4.4.4 Mainstream Gender in Institutions and Affirmative Action

The benefits of female participation in decision-making bodies are widely known. Nevertheless, women in SI are still systematically underrepresented in decision-making functions (including management of processing facilities) that occur in the coconut value chain. More involvement of women in positions where decisions are being made will not happen by itself: it requires affirmative action.

We distinguish three entry-points:

- i. Male and female role models.
 - ii. Train staff on gender dynamics, gender sensitivity and sexual harassment.
 - iii. Recruit more women in decision-making bodies associated with the coconut value chain.
- There should be affirmative action to involve women as managers and employees of CNO,

VCO and biofuel processing facilities and this should go hand-in-hand with capacity building of these women to take up that role.

4.4.5 Value Chain Collaboration and PPP

Copra marketing has evolved from a highly regulated parastatal-managed system (CEMA monopoly) to one where there is minimal institutional and regulatory intervention. This explains, at least partly, why the coconut sector has had less specific donor related assistance than the cocoa sector.

Various companies processing coconuts into crude or VCO have received small scale assistance such as equipment and finance support from various programs however there have been no large scale interventions or partnerships. The second phase of RDP intends to work at a range of levels in the value chain through partnerships with the private sector, including the provision of funding and grant finance. A call for proposals to access matching grants resulted in 29 proposals, most targeted towards investments in coconut and cocoa related businesses.

An easy entry-point is to provide public funding/grants for female entrepreneurs and/or for innovations that contribute to addressing gender inequalities and increase women's economic empowerment. Another example of a PPP is certification. There is an opportunity to review existing certification schemes on their gender component, and relevance for the SI context. In a PPP, public and private actors can help to put mechanisms in place to meet standards and to learn how certification supports Solomon Islands women and their families.

We have seen a number of examples of VCC. Particularly the social enterprises involved see a role for them to invest in their suppliers and support them, both larger ones (like Kokonut Pacific) and smaller ones (like Chottu's Coconut Products). We have also seen tied trade relations between female retailers and other female traders of CNO in the domestic market.

We see a number of entry-points for addressing gender inequalities and generate opportunities for women's economic empowerment through collaboration, which are similar to those identified in the cocoa sector (Section 3.0).

4.4.6 Sensitisation and Education

The norms and values that are dominant in SI make sensitisation and education an important part of the different entry-points that can help to address gender inequalities and contribute to women's economic empowerment.

Sensitisation is key for the following topics:

- Domestic Violence and the use of alcohol.
- Family division of labour.
- Reproductive health.
- Promoting women's rights, including land use rights.
- Women's contribution to coconut farming, trading and processing and division of labour.
- Business mind-set.
- Sensitisation of communities.

See Section 3.0 for more details on these topics and also for more entry-points around education.

4.4.7 Research and Business Development

During this fieldwork, a number of topics came up for which there is a need to do more research. The particular interesting research areas for coconut are:

- a) **Quality copra production (both product and process), impact on women and role of women:** What are available (potential) technologies that contribute both to the quality of the

production process and improve the working conditions for women? What is the role of women in safeguarding this quality copra production?

- b) **Incentive structures and loyalty:** Understand better possible incentive structures (for different types of farmers per household) that promote replanting, coconut growing, copra production, processing, trading and other on-farm investment. Understand better how loyalty is linked to gender relations and intra-household decision-making.
- c) **Community organization:** Understand better how community members can work together in the aggregation of coconut and processing facilities, what (dis)incentivizes them and how women's participation and leadership in communities (and their organisations) can be strengthened.
- d) **Family labour:** Understand better the relationship between feminization of agriculture in SI, the involvement of children in work on farm, and enrolment rates in schools.
- e) **Empowerment and domestic violence:** Understanding more about this relationship is still a grey area. If we work towards women's economic empowerment this should be better understood.
- f) **Financial services for women involved in coconut business:** Document lessons with women's saving clubs and micro-credit (based on both positive and negative experiences) and other financial products, particularly for women involved in trading and setting-up processing facilities, disseminate learning (also on community level).
- g) **Women's empowerment through village based industries:** Study how different village based industries for different types of coconut products have changed the life of women. Bring in case studies of for example VCO (e.g. Kokonut Pacific), CNO (e.g. Chottu's Coconut Products) and Biofuel (STP) and give recommendations for upscaling.

The proposed business opportunities need to be studied better, for example through feasibility studies, market research and/or business plan development.

4.5 Conclusions – Coconut

During the course of this short study, an array of entry-points for interventions that address gender inequalities in the coconut value chain and contribute to women's economic empowerment have been identified. It is important to acknowledge that the entry-points, and the interventions that might result from this, as was the case for cocoa, are not easy solutions or quick fixes.

The entry-points are very diverse and can be taken up by different stakeholders, in different moments in time. In this last section, we make suggestions for the different stakeholders already actively involved in the development of the coconut value chain in SI, and how they can move forward with these findings.

Table 6: Matching entry-points with target groups and stakeholders.

Entry-points	Main target groups	Potential stakeholders/programs involved	What is needed?	Next steps
Female entrepreneurship	Educated women as entrepreneurs Young women as employees	Private sector: the coconut processors could be potentially investors. Support could also come from financial partners like Pacific Financial Inclusion Program and the commercial banks. Public sector, for example RDP and the coconut IWG.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seed-money Market studies Business plan development Training on business skills 	Matching Grant funds for female businesses (or favouring businesses run by women and/or generating employment for (young) women) and organizing challenge grants for female entrepreneurs.
<i>Set-up women run nurseries with seedlings for both coconut, cocoa and food crops.</i>	Educated women as managers, who are supported by their family, to set-up a business. They can become role models for other women. Young women can be hired as employees.	Private sector: coconut processors could be potentially investors. Work together with cocoa exporters. Public sector: National program for rehabilitation, NCIDP, in collaboration with MAL, RDP, PARDI.	Access to seedlings/pods, access and decision-making over land, link with market, training and financial literacy/business management, seed money.	Assess the commercial viability of nurseries, possibly in combination with other activities/services (nursery as rural service centre). Assess the interest/needs of women that you would like to engage.
<i>Reactivate local buying points and set up(new) local buying points in (remote) communities</i>	Rural female shop keepers, interested in expanding their sales and other rural female entrepreneurs	Private sector: processors of coconut (willing to pick up the aggregated nuts, and supply local buying points with tools etc. to supply their stores). Retailers of farm equipment, financial institutions to access mobile banking. Public sector, like CEMA to support reactivating & redesigning buying points.	Transport arrangement with buyers of the nuts. Access to finance to buy tools (or pre-finance arrangement with retailers), mobile banking facilities (to avoid women having to deal with too much cash). If necessary, support the women with training on financial management.	Understand why the local buying points stopped functioning. Feasibility study and business plan development

Entry-points	Main target groups	Potential stakeholders/programs involved	What is needed?	Next steps
<i>Stimulate local processing of CNO and VCO (by) products for domestic trade, such as soap, or locally branded oils</i>	Women involved in food production/business and/or women involved in cosmetics. For women who don't have access to (or control over) land, processing and trade in coconut products are alternative ways of making some money out of coconut. These types of businesses have lower entry-barriers. Women who want to upscale their business.	Private sector partners like Kokonut Pacific (training women on soap making) and SISBEC Others like SIWIBA, RDP, ACIAR and market researchers. Financial institutions.	Capacity building, access to finance, access to markets.	Develop support structure for individual female entrepreneurs, including seed money.
<i>Set up female-run mills</i>	Entrepreneurial women in the community with experience in coconut business	Private sector partners like Solomon Tropical Products, Kokonut Pacific. In collaboration with public sector like RDP. Financial institutions.	Strong female management. Access to finance (working capital). Support from private miller (e.g. STP). Key is to start small.	Develop support structure for individual female entrepreneurs. For example through PPP.
<i>Stimulating other income generating opportunities</i>	Entrepreneurial women living in rural areas. Particularly women who do not have access to (and control over) land. Involved in food production/business and/or women involved in cosmetics (both processing and local).	Private sector partners, like Solomon Tropical Products, Kokonut Pacific (training women on soap making), in collaboration with for example RDP, SIWIBA, SISBEC, ACIAR and market researchers.	Capacity building, access to finance. A gender analysis should be carried out to re-look at the benefits or the impacts of the biofuel production and uses on men, women and children.	Develop support structure for individual female entrepreneurs
Services to women	Women involved in coconut, copra and oil production/trade/processing.	Private sector processors, in collaboration with public partners like MAL, Women in Agriculture and NGOs, producer organizations. Financial institutions like the Pacific Financial Inclusion Program and the commercial banks to provide access to finance and mobile banking.	Resources for systematic approach and regular training, package of services (training in combination with access to equipment, tools, credit and easy accessible markets).	First step is to increase gender awareness among private processors and their extension staff. Develop services based on needs assessment.

Entry-points	Main target groups	Potential stakeholders/programs involved	What is needed?	Next steps
Mainstream gender in institutions & affirmative action	Educated women, business women, emancipated men, staff of organizations involved in development of the SI coconut sector	Private sector partners, like Kokonut Pacific, STP, together with public bodies like MWYCFA, PHAMA, DFAT, IWG on coconut (Coconut Secretariat), MAL, Women in Development, Government, traditional leaders, Gender experts. Programs like the Coconut Sector Strategy, National Program for Rehabilitation, NCIDP.	Make improving the status of women as a policy priority. Coordination among public bodies to put this ambition into practice.	Gender training, followed by gender strategy, involving HR, communication strategy, gender-sensitive recruitment policy, etc.
Value Chain Collaboration & PPP	Private and public sector partners, sharing an interest in developing the coconut sector in SI, female entrepreneurs, social enterprises.	Private processors in collaboration with RDP. Coconut Industry Working group	Put in place arrangements that stimulate PPPs and VCC (like the Matching Grants) and learn from other PPPs how gender is integrated	Create multi-stakeholder dialogue and present outcomes of this study
Sensitisation & education	Community members (male and female)	Public sector, like RDP, MWYCFA, with support of organizations like SIWIBA, KGA, and gender experts. Private sector can challenge public sector to do more sensitisation.	Identify organisation who can organize sensitisation sessions Affirmative action to enrol more women in relevant courses/career paths (e.g. scholarships)	Sensitisation sessions with communities, involving both women and men.
Research & Business Plan Development	Research institutes and female entrepreneurs.	For research, public institutions like ACAIR and PARDI (research). For Business plan development, RDP could collaborate with financial institutions and businesses and combine challenge grants with capacity building of the involved entrepreneurs.	Coordination of research agenda with relevant partners, and sharing research results. Develop infrastructure to support start-ups.	Explore opportunities to collaborate with other researchers, preferably in the Pacific and Australia. Combine grants with capacity building.

5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Main Recommendations

This an explorative study that aims to complement and build upon existing studies of the cocoa and coconut value chains in SI, by conducting a gender analysis. By analysing gender relations it became possible to identify gender-based challenges and opportunities for value chain development, and to develop entry-points for programs, projects and public and private stakeholders to start recognizing and improving the participation and outcomes for women involved in the cocoa and coconut value chains.

In this study we have identified six main strategies that address gender inequalities and women's economic empowerment in both value chains:

- i. Support female entrepreneurship.
- ii. Improve services to women.
- iii. Mainstream gender in institutions and affirmative action.
- iv. Value chain collaboration and public-private partnerships.
- v. Sensitisation and education.
- vi. Research and business development.

Under each strategy, we identified different entry-points for different stakeholders to consider. In the concluding sections we matched entry-points to target groups and stakeholders. In addition we indicated initial requirements to take up ideas and suggested next steps. We recognise that changing gender relations takes time; some entry-points fall beyond the scope of a particular organization.

Based on the findings, we prioritize the following actions:

1. Share and discuss findings

Share relevant findings of this study with relevant partners and stakeholders, including with all participants in Brisbane's Masterclass. We recommend the exchange of experiences with other Pacific Island Countries, like Papua New Guinea (World Bank 2014).

DFAT, PHAMA and RDP could take a leading role in this process, and look for collaboration with MWYCF and for example SIWIBA. Setting up a gender task force, representing different stakeholders, could be considered to further develop an action-plan and coordinate gender strategies and learning.

In this process it is important that stakeholders themselves can indicate where they see they have added value.

2. Recognise the role of women as economic actors

Recognise the role of women in the cocoa and coconut value chains and promote strategies that address gender inequalities and promote women's economic empowerment, covering five Pacific Islands Countries including SI.

For all stakeholders there is a role to play in recognition of the role of women as economic actors. Promoting women's involvement in cocoa and coconut activities should go hand-in-hand with putting in place reward structures that benefit women.

Both in cocoa and coconut, women are well-positioned to play a key role in quality processes. This requires besides recognition, an enabling environment that supports women in accessing and benefiting from relevant services to learn and apply quality practices. For example, when it comes to the production of quality cocoa, we recommend PHAMA to promote involving female farmers in participating in the solar drying trials and giving them access to training.

3. Capacity building of relevant institutions

If we want institutions to change their policies and people to change their mind-set, there is a need to build the capacity of the ones that can change the rules of the game. This requires gender training of staff at different levels in organizations/companies as in communities. Promote the use of sex-disaggregated data collection for purposes of baseline, traceability, certification, M&E and learning activities.

Establish linkages with gender experts and organisations that already invest in women's economic empowerment, like MWYCFA, SIWIBA and NGOs to roll out activities that support this process.

Gender training will not be enough if the organisation involved has limited capacity (or will) to deliver on value chain development and extension. We foresee a role for RDP to partner with organisations, like MAL, to explore what they can do to progress the recommendations.

4. Women in strategic positions

There is an abundant number of organizations engaged in the cocoa and coconut value chains in SI. Among the representatives of the involved organizations there are only few women. Affirmative action is required to close this gender gap. Think about gender-sensitive recruitment strategies when hiring an employee, or setting a quota. These types of actions can generate resistance. Combining affirmative action with sensitisation is therefore recommended. Involving both women and men in sensitisation is key.

5. Engaging the private sector

To engage private sector partners in these activities, incentives need to be explored, like branding, and linkages can be made with (international) companies' sustainable procurement policies.

Promote an enabling and stimulating environment for the private sector to invest in commercial export crops in such a way that it does progress at the cost of food security objectives.

6. Market differentiation and diversification

Addressing gender inequalities and increasing women's economic empowerment requires a dual approach: i) remove women's constraints to participate and benefit from **export** strategies; and ii) recognise and support women's involvement in the **domestic market**, both as producers, traders and consumers.

Recognise that women involved in coconut and cocoa are also involved in multiple other activities, both in the household and income-generating activities. Contributing to women's performance in other activities (than in cocoa and coconut) can indirectly support cocoa and coconut business, and support women's resilience.

7. Package of interventions

Often more actions are needed in parallel to contribute to change. For example, combine facilitating women's access to finance with access to mobile banking facilities and training on financial literacy, involving both women and their husbands. Another example is combining market access with capacity building to meet market requirements.

5.2 Other Recommendations

For all interventions that influence gender relations, we recommend critical reflection as to how the intervention avoids doing harm, undermines women's positions or reproduces or exacerbates gender inequalities. Critical concerns in SI are the risk of domestic violence, further increases in women's labour burden (e.g. additional tasks, women taking over men's tasks, processing larger volumes, time-investments in quality) and loss of control over or access to income and benefits. We also recommend careful consideration of whom the actual target group is (acknowledge that there are differences among women), and know whom you are (perhaps) overlooking.

In developing, implementing and evaluating interventions we recommend to build as much as possible on existing local structures and local organizations already in place. We also recommend to involve the women who are targeted, as they will be best equipped to express their needs and the way they perceive change. Furthermore, we recommend making it normal practice to make use of sex-disaggregated data and to have a gender sensitive M&E framework, avoiding that interventions are based on assumptions on gender roles and preferences, and potentially are ineffective, or even worse, do harm.

We further recommend that activities aiming to address gender inequalities, increase women's economic empowerment and share learnings, be coordinated. This will contribute to include women's economic empowerment and a gender perspective in existing government strategies and initiatives related to economic growth and development.

5.3 Building on Recommendations of other Studies

There are a number of relevant studies that we used as a source of inspiration, like World Bank (2014) and SPC (2009). These studies give powerful recommendations to support younger generations to stop using 'culture' as a reason or excuse for perpetuating violence against women and children, reduce family and sexual violence experienced by women in rural communities, address insecurity of women in households and also in markets and reduce men's access to alcohol and drugs.

5.4 Gender Dynamics are Everywhere

The results of this study may be somewhat overwhelming, especially if you have never actively tried to address gender inequities before. It might seem that a gender lens can overcomplicate things, and slow down processes. Because gender relations are so context specific, addressing gender inequity requires a tailored approach. It also requires awareness and training so that you start to recognise gender relations, and start realizing that gender dynamics are unfolding all around you. You may also realize that it is not always easy to address gender imbalances, but at the same time there are many entry-points. In trying to address gender inequality we recommend an approach of 'safe-fail experimentation'. That is to say, as opposed to an expensive, grand mega-effort, try smaller and multiple entry points and see what works in a given context. The idea of safe-fail experimentation is that not all efforts will succeed, but the investment is small, so it's a part of the process of finding a good fit for the cultural and social context in which you are engaging. Try-out different strategies, evaluate the successes and failures, share your learnings and expand on what works, involving all stakeholders involved, including the women and men in the farming communities in the SI.

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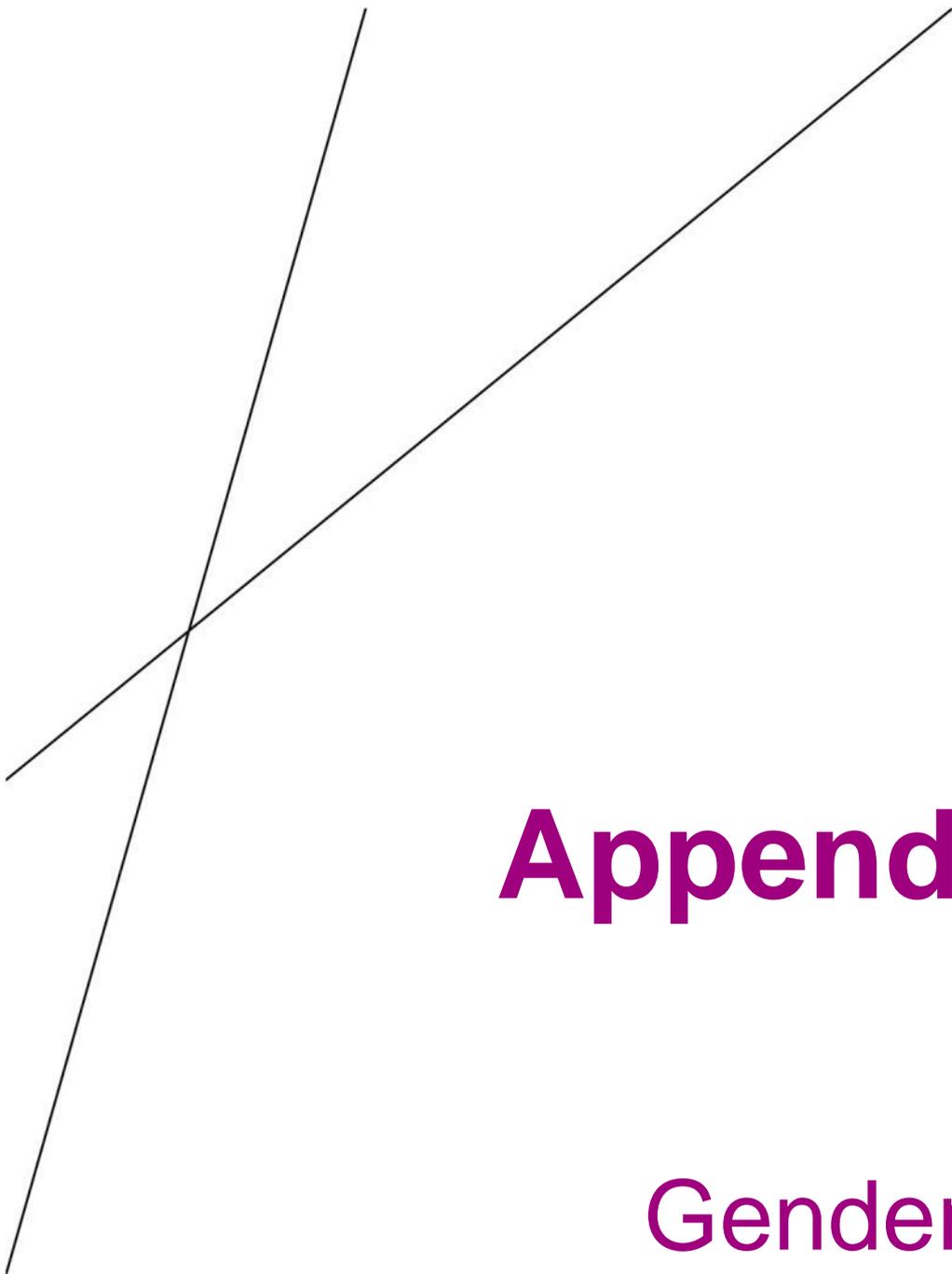
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Appendix A

Gender-based
challenges and
opportunities in the
cocoa value chain

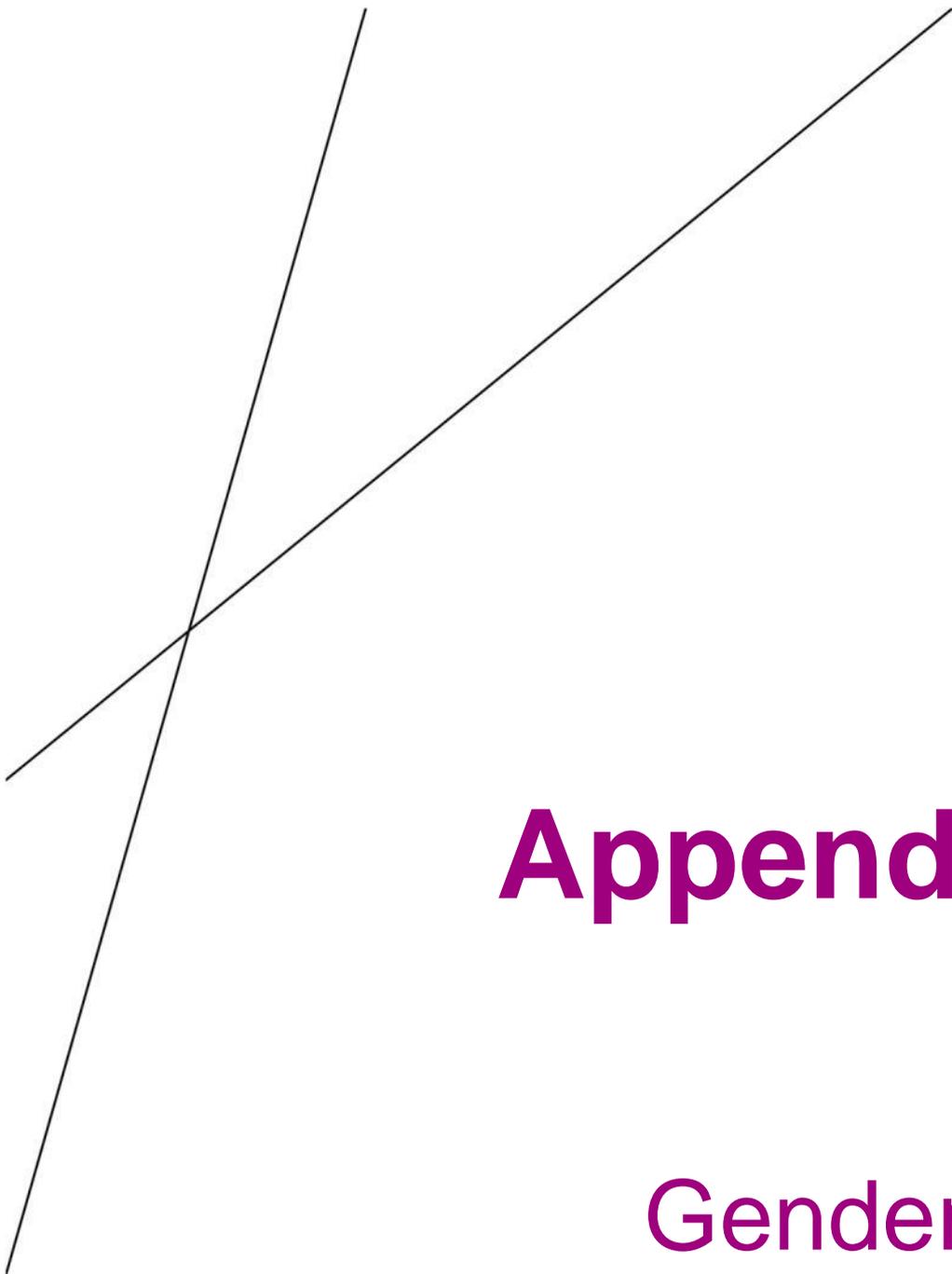
Appendix A Gender-based challenges and opportunities in the cocoa value chain

Strategy	Gender-based challenges	Gender-based opportunities/Entry-points
Strategy 1: Product upgrading - quality and access to niche markets		
<p><i>“There are serious problems with the driers, smokiness of beans and under-fermentation of beans, all major barriers to selling to quality niche market.”</i></p> <p><i>“Adequate drying and fermentation of the cocoa beans.”</i></p> <p><i>“Solar drying strategies to address smokiness of beans. Technical training, assessment of quality testing capacity. Training on cocoa quality control and chocolate.”</i></p>	<p>Women are less visible (and involved) in processing beans, and are usually not the ones involved in selling the processed beans. Consequently women have little say on how money that is generated through processing is being spent. This potentially creates disincentives for women to invest more time on post-harvesting practices.</p> <p>Women lack access to training on post-harvest practices. Women lack financial skills and sometimes also a business mind-set (which constrains them in making the calculations, and on the basis of that an informed decision). Women also face serious time constraints to invest more in quality cocoa production and there is no reward system in place.</p> <p>Women lack representation higher up in the value chain, this constrains their involvement in quality control and in the development and testing of new technologies.</p>	<p>In PNG (and also in other cocoa producing regions like West-Africa) there is growing recognition of women being key for quality cocoa production (World Bank 2014)¹⁷.</p> <p>Mainstream gender in extension provision and training. Increase women's access to training, both on proper fermentation and drying techniques, but also financial literacy training.</p> <p>Involve women in testing new techniques, like the solar drying technique, that contribute to quality cocoa and include gender-sensitive indicators in assessment of the technique (e.g. labour-intensity).</p> <p>There is a potential business opportunity for women, involving them as managers and employees of 'central fermentation and drying centres'.</p>
<p><i>“Establish business linkages with niche markets with Australian and US based chocolate manufacturers, cocoa exporter training, market linkages to chocolate retail outlets.”</i></p>	<p>Most women are involved in selling the wet beans, not the dry beans. This constrains them in establishing direct business linkages with niche markets.</p> <p>Another constraint is the occurrence of domestic violence and the use of family labour on cocoa farms. International companies, particularly chocolate companies, are vulnerable for this reality and will be reluctant to source cocoa that might give consumers 'a bad taste' and affect their reputation.</p>	<p>Gender and child labour are high on the agenda of some of the international buyers, particularly those buyers that are committed to sustainable cocoa production. A serious SI gender-cocoa strategy, active policies to protect children from hazardous work and making sure children are enrolled in schools will facilitate market access to international markets. In the end, selling to a niche market, is about selling the story of Solomon Islands cocoa, involving cocoa farming families.</p>

¹⁷ This study provides an extensive overview of gender-based constraints and gender-based opportunities in their cocoa value chain (Appendix C).

Strategy	Gender-based challenges	Gender-based opportunities/Entry-points
Strategy 2: Process upgrading - expansion of cocoa production, productivity, trading and transport		
<i>“Land availability is a challenge, particularly in Guadalcanal and Malaita, as well as soil suitability in Malaita”.</i>	Women lack decision-making power over the use of land, even though they are involved in cocoa production and responsible for food production.	Strengthen women’s participation in land use decisions (see also World Bank 2014). It came out during this study that there is no good understanding of land-rights and land use, and the role of gender relations (RDP Interview 2015). Understanding this better might open new insights for optimizing land-use for cocoa production in different provinces, in balance with food security goals.
<i>“Potential to increase production through improving processing and handling and improve services.”</i>	Women are less involved in cocoa processing activities. Men tend to sell processed beans, and control the income. Women, being less visible in cocoa production, lack access to services.	Increase women's access to and benefits from training, both on processing and financial literacy.
<i>“Low productivity levels”</i>	Women, being less visible in cocoa production, lack access to services like extension and training on good agricultural practices. We assume that women also participate less in farmer organizations. Women face time constraints, which can hinder them to participate in training, organizations and/or apply labour-intensive practices.	Mainstream gender in extension services and training. This helps to increase outreach to women, increase benefits for women that participate and support women in leadership positions. Considering the domestic workloads for women, the World Bank study on PNG recommended to develop labour-saving technologies not only for cocoa production related activities but also to reduce labour intensity of household tasks.
<i>“There is potential to increase productivity, especially through new planting materials”.</i>	Women lack access to new planting materials. Women lack training on rehabilitation. Women lack financial skills to make calculations on returns on investment and opportunity costs, this constrains them in making informed decisions. Women do not have decision-making power on how to use the family land.	In cocoa production women are already involved in running nurseries, and in activities like grafting. We can build on these traditional roles by setting up nurseries with new variety seedlings, and giving women a prominent role in managing these nurseries. These nurseries can also create employment for young women. A condition is that a reward (and incentive) structure for women is in place, and that nurseries are commercially viable.
<i>“Poor access to knowledge, tools, equipment, finance”.</i>	Women are, compared to men, disadvantaged in access to these services and equipment.	Mainstream gender in training and extension services. Support women in taking up business opportunities that respond to these challenges, for example by setting up local selling points for basic tools and equipment for cocoa farming. Learn from existing financial schemes that seem to work for women, and use lessons for upscaling strategy.
<i>“Strengthen the capacity of producer associations (and cocoa exporters) to provide services to farmers”.</i>	We assume women participate less in producer associations and do not take up leadership positions.	Understand better the functioning of producer organizations, including what could incentivize women to join a producer association and how the participation of women can help strengthening these organizations (and create trust in the functioning of these organizations). Understanding how women currently work together, and if there are possibilities to build on existing women-groups.

Strategy	Gender-based challenges	Gender-based opportunities/Entry-points
<i>“Develop direct purchasing relationships between chocolate companies, buyers and growers/processors for systematic support to growers and processors.”</i>	Women are less visible as cocoa growers and as processors. It is likely that if relationships are being developed between buyers and growers, it will involve the head of the household (male) and the buyer (most likely also male). Support services that are gender-blind can potentially do harm to women, instead of supporting them.	Gender is high on the agenda of some of the international buyers, particularly those buyers that are committed to sustainable cocoa production. A serious gender-cocoa strategy could attract international buyers to establish direct trade relations with (female) producers.
<i>“Invest in Public Private Partnerships (PPPs)”</i>	Women lack representation in decision-making bodies that are active in the cocoa sector. The risk is that also in PPPs, female representation will be low.	Invest in PPPs that have gender high on the agenda. Make it a policy to recruit females in all relevant decision-making bodies that develop, implement or monitor cocoa policies. This requires a gender-sensitive recruitment strategy, as part of a wider gender policy.
<i>“Poor infrastructure” and “There is no infrastructure. Transport costs are high.”</i>	Poor roads and lack of electricity, affect the safety of women and children. Women do not have own means of transport.	Invest in infrastructure and electricity. This will contribute to safety for women and children. It will help to reduce transport costs. Improved access to electricity will also help women to start rural businesses that demand electricity.
<i>“Exporters provide support services through the value chain to traders, processors and smallholders, generally aimed at improving both the quantity and quality of beans they receive. Loyalty is important.”</i>	Women are less visible in cocoa production, processing and trading of the wet beans. This constrains women’s access to support services from the private sector. This is likely to influence their ‘loyalty’ to traders.	Understand better how loyalty is linked to gender relations and intra-household decision-making making.
Strategy 3: Chocolate Making		
<i>“Currently no local chocolate making in SI. No infrastructure, high investment cost”</i>	Women lack access to information and finance.	Women are traditionally the ones held responsible for food production, food marketing, cooking and catering. Processing local cocoa products as a food ingredient (including chocolate) could provide business opportunities for women and generate employment for young women. Because we would build on traditional roles, little resistance is expected from men. Processing local chocolate can be piloted on a small-scale. This requires seed money, and involvement of business women. A market study is recommended.
<i>“Technical training, chocolate making training, assessment of quality testing capacity, facilitate chocolate tasting sessions for grower groups. Training on cocoa quality control and chocolate.”</i>	Women lack access to training, and an incentive structure to invest in cocoa farming.	Position women as key in quality cocoa and chocolate production and build their capacity to play this (new) role, for example train women as facilitators of tasting session and quality control. By building the capacity of women in quality cocoa and chocolate production, the story of origin chocolate from SI becomes a more powerful story, facilitating access to niche markets.



Appendix B

Gender-based
challenges and
opportunities in the
coconut value chain

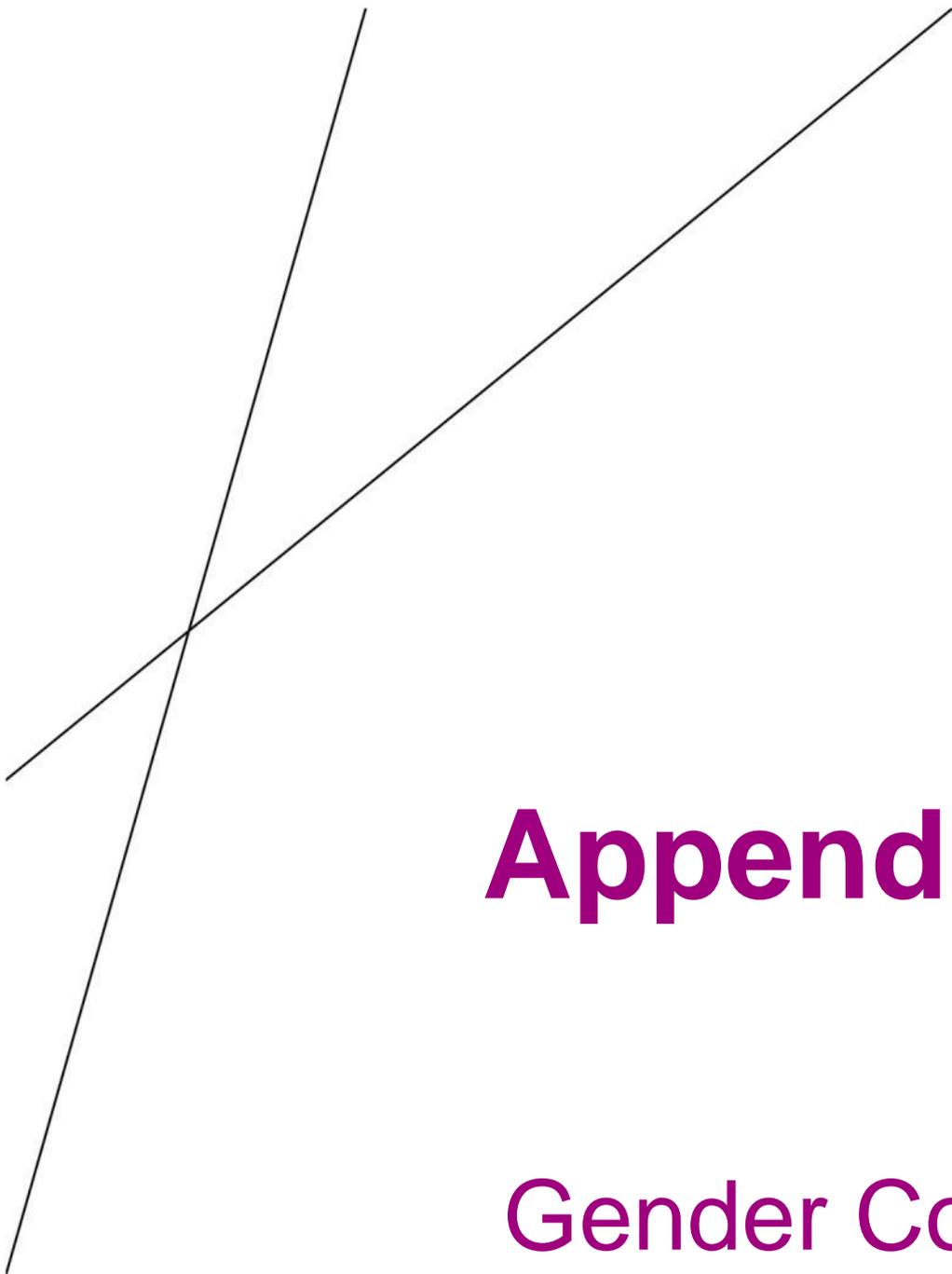
Appendix B Gender-based challenges and opportunities in the coconut value chain

Strategy	Gender-based challenges	Gender-based opportunities/Entry-points
Strategy 1: Quality & Access to niche markets & certification		
<p><i>“Quality of Copra is perceived as a challenge; quality is not monitored. “</i></p> <p><i>“Incentives to invest in quality production are lacking.”</i></p>	<p>Women are less visible in copra production.</p> <p>Women are often mentioned when it comes to quality copra production. It is argued that women, for example, are more patient, which would make them well equipped for safeguarding quality. This while we know that copra production in itself is a hazardous task. Do we really want to promote women’s (or men and boys) involvement in activities that are hard and dirty work?</p>	<p>Promote women to shift from copra production to less hazardous work. This requires giving women access to both information, skills and market outlets for their coconut.</p> <p>Invest in labour-saving and clean technologies that improve the quality of copra and improve the working conditions. Improving the quality requires training of both men and women, and a proper reward structure. In case of monitoring quality, include gender-sensitive indicators.</p>
<p><i>“There are few (if any) formal relationships between the various value chain actors, and PPPs have not been developed. The potential role of PPPs in addressing copra quality concerns is acknowledged.”</i></p>	<p>Investing in PPPs that acknowledge only quality concerns of the product, without quality concerns of the working conditions in place, potentially do harm to copra producers, in particular (single) women.</p>	<p>Make Matching Grants funding conditionally available for stimulating entrepreneurship in the coconut value chain that addresses gender inequalities and contributes to women’s economic empowerment.</p> <p>Promoting PPPs to address copra quality concerns (both product and production process) in combination with mechanization processes that reduce the work load and make work bearable (and rewarding) for everyone involved.</p>
<p><i>“Focus of growers is limited to copra production and very little understanding of alternative coconut products. There is little awareness about improved copra quality and product diversification.”</i></p>	<p>Particularly women lack access to information of alternative coconut products, and/or face constraints to access markets (for example women that live in more remote locations). There is no training/extension program for coconut growers.</p>	<p>Some of the private sector companies involved in VCO and CNO processing position themselves as social entrepreneurs. They are involved in training coconut growers and build the capacity of community members (female and male) involved in processing. The extension-staff of these companies can be sensitized on gender issues, and improve outreach to women. Another opportunity is to create an enabling environment for social enterprises to upscale their business. What should be stimulated is the collection of gender-disaggregated data for M&E and learning purposes.</p>

Strategy	Gender-based challenges	Gender-based opportunities/Entry-points
<i>"Niche markets for certified organic and fair trade VCO"</i>	No awareness on gender standards within current certification schemes, and how they match SI context.	Certification, particularly fair trade certification, includes also gender-related standards. These standards could be reviewed on their gender components, and its relevance for SI. Put in place mechanisms that support meeting these standards. If gender standards are not well integrated in the certification scheme: propose changing standards, in such a way that they coincide with gender-objectives that suit SI reality. The internal control system, used for M&E purposes, should be gender-sensitive.
<i>"Domestic and internationally traded coconut products".</i>	Women are not visible in the trade of processed coconuts into coconut products. There is a lack of information, services and market access that would support developing alternative products.	<p>Domestic trade of oils and other by-products (like soap) is of interest to women: relatively low entry-barriers (e.g. you don't need land) and better working conditions, compared to copra production. Trade is relatively easy to combine with other household tasks, and generates income that women control.</p> <p>Diversification of market channels for coconut products, hand-in-hand with capacity building of female coconut growers, traders and processors, empowers women involved in the coconut value chain.</p> <p>Upscaling the processing of coconut into biofuel is expected to have positive spin-offs on female-run rural businesses.</p>
<i>"Increasing amounts of nuts are being sold to VCO operators. [...] Almost all are linked to nucleus operators, which provide the equipment and technical support and purchases the oil, most of which is certified organic."</i>	<p>Coconut is also an important food crop. In case women do not have decision-making power over the use of the coconut tree and the fruits, the risk is that in villages where a DME is running, all coconut is sold.</p> <p>There is a lack of information on the scale of these types of opportunities, and how to access them.</p>	<p>Selling nuts to the VCO operator is beneficial for women (if the price is rewarding), as this reduces their labour burden considerably. Being connected to DME/VCO gives you access to training and other support.</p> <p>Set up PPP with nucleus operator to invest together in coconut grower families and women's economic empowerment.</p> <p>Document impact of DME/VCO on women's livelihoods and share lessons.</p>

Strategy	Gender-based challenges	Gender-based opportunities/Entry-points
Strategy 2: Adding value and processing		
<p><i>“The margins for copra production are low, better revenues are being made by selling nuts in local markets or for use in VCO extraction. However, most growers, especially in remote areas, do not have alternative outlets for coconuts: copra remains the only viable option.”</i></p> <p><i>“Copra is very labour intensive/hard work (open fires)”</i></p>	<p>Women are less visible in copra production. Women, particularly in remote areas, lack access to information & advice, transport and money. This hinders them to sell the nuts to local markets or for use in VCO extraction. This pushes them in continuing with copra production, which is hazardous, unrewarding work.</p>	<p>Invest in technology that increases both the quality of the copra and improves the quality of the working conditions involved in copra production. Improve female coconut growers’ market access to VCO processors, through buying points, access to information, and/or supporting the expansion of DMEs and other processing facilities (e.g. biofuel).</p> <p>Invest in local buying points of coconuts, also in the more remote areas. These buying points can serve to aggregate the fruits, and can potentially also serve as information points and selling points for tools. To contribute to female entrepreneurship, these local buying points could be run by women.</p>
<p><i>“Lack of cash advances”</i></p>	<p>Lack of cash hinders domestic trade of coconut-products, involving primarily women. Lack of cash also pushes women into copra production, as this brings in direct money.</p>	<p>Increase women’s access to saving clubs and micro-finance. Access to money/credit needs to go hand-in-hand with financial literacy training for both men and women.</p> <p>Document lessons on financial service provision to women.</p>
<p><i>“Create incentives (e.g. subsidies) for reinvestment in coconut and coconut products”</i></p>	<p>A lot of men and women involved in coconut lack a business mind-set.</p> <p>Women are seen as being responsible for replanting, but lack control over the land where the trees are planted.</p>	<p>Giving both men and women access to information, (financial) training and extension.</p> <p>Put reward structures in place. Improve women’s access to saving clubs can support women to reinvest in their farm.</p> <p>On a higher level, Matching Grants can create incentives for female entrepreneurs to innovate and reinvest in their ‘coconut (or oil) business’. Tax incentives could help to create a more entrepreneurial climate. Another opportunity would be through setting up commercial nurseries for coconut seedlings, together with other seedlings (e.g. cocoa and food crops). These nurseries could be run by women.</p>

Strategy	Gender-based challenges	Gender-based opportunities/Entry-points
<p><i>“Strengthening the local processing sector: crude coconut oil for export sales, cooking oil and biodiesel; VCO and coconut flour”.</i></p> <p><i>“VCO is perceived as biggest opportunity. This industry should be encouraged, for example by introducing milling machines to communities.”</i></p>	<p>Women are not (yet) actively involved in processing (as employees and managers).</p> <p>Ownership of community millers lays often with male community members.</p> <p>Access to finance to pay entry-costs is a problem, particularly for women.</p>	<p>Promote women as managers and employees in processing facilities, including community millers.</p> <p>Stimulate financial arrangements for women, in collaboration with financial institutes, for example through Matching Grants favouring female entrepreneurs. Build the capacity of women to take up leadership positions and financial management.</p> <p>Invest in upscaling of community based processing facilities and proper service structure. Having access to this kind of market outlet reduces the necessity for women to be involved in copra-production.</p> <p>Local use of biofuel can support the electrification of rural areas. This is important both for safety reasons and for creating an enabling environment for women to set-up rural business that require power.</p>
<p><i>“Sell immature nuts for dinking or dry nuts to rural copra traders, mills, exporters”</i></p>	<p>Women, particularly in remote areas, lack access to information & advice, transport and money. This hinders them to sell the nuts. There are often no selling points nearby. This pushes them in continuing with copra production, which is hazardous, unrewarding work. The lack of financial literacy hinders women in making the right calculations, and make informed-based decision on what to do best with the coconut.</p>	<p>Invest in local buying points of coconuts, also in the more remote areas. These buying points can serve to aggregate the fruits, and can potentially also serve as information points and selling points for tools (see also above).</p>
Strategy 3: Trading		
<p><i>“Irregular shipping and high transport costs”</i></p>	<p>Women do not control transport. Particularly in remote areas women lack access to nearby markets and information.</p>	<p>Bring markets closer to women: encourage establishment of local buying points. Make it attractive for processors to collect coconuts (e.g. tax incentives that make it interesting to invest in transport). Explore feasibility of collective investments in transport (e.g. women’s group).</p>
<p><i>“In the early 1990s there were 30 buying points of copra (and cocoa). Although these fell into disuse following CEMA’s withdrawal from trading activities they still have the potential to be used by private traders.”</i></p>	<p>Women lack access to nearby markets for whole nuts. This pushes them into copra production.</p>	<p>Bring buying points back into use, and expand trading services with other appropriate services (like market information, mobile banking facilities, selling tools). Encourage women to manage buying points, and build their capacity to play this role.</p>



Appendix C

Gender Concepts

Appendix C Gender Concepts

In reading this study, the following concepts are important to understand:

Gender: The set of socially constructed roles, behaviours, responsibilities, and attributes a society considers appropriate for men and women.

Gender blind: A study or project or policy that lacks awareness of the different roles, responsibilities, resources, or experiences of men and women.

Gender disaggregation: The process of separating information or data into male and female categories.

Gender equality: The concept that both men and women are free to develop their personal abilities, and make choices without limitations set by stereotypes, rigid gender roles or prejudices. Gender equality means that the different behaviours, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favoured equally. It does not mean that women and men have to become the same, but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female.

Gender equity: Gender equity means fairness in treatment for women and men according to their respective needs. This may include equal treatment, but often women and men need to receive different treatment in order to receive the same benefits and to exercise their rights. In the development context, gender equity often requires inbuilt measures to compensate for the historical and social disadvantages of women, such as restrictions on mobility or access to education. Alternatively, it may mean projects target women only.

Women's Empowerment: CARE defines women's empowerment as the sum total of changes needed for a woman to realize her full human rights – the interplay of changes in:

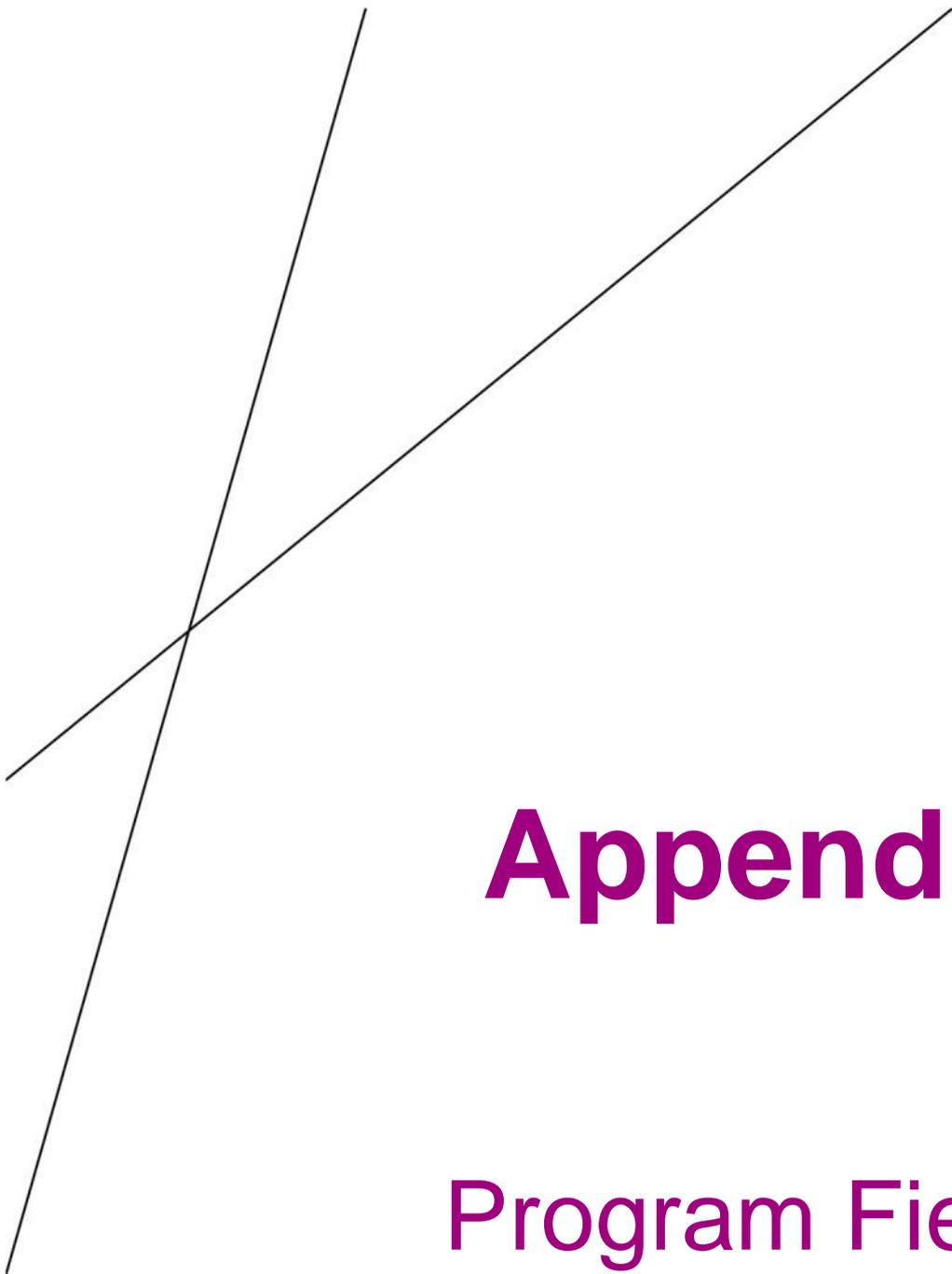
- **Agency**: her own aspirations and capabilities.
- **Structure**: the environment that surrounds and conditions her choices.
- **Relations**: the power relations through which she negotiates her path¹⁸.

Women's Empowerment

CARE views women's empowerment through the lens of poor women's struggles to achieve their full and equal human rights. In these struggles, women strive to balance practical, daily, individual achievements with strategic, collective, long-term work to challenge biased social rules and institutions.

Women's Economic Empowerment draws attention to the importance of the terms on which poor women – and men – engage with market forces, and is about the enhanced ability of poor women to participate in, contribute to and benefit from economic growth (Kabeer 2012).

¹⁸ CARE <http://www.care.org/our-work/womens-empowerment/gender-integration/womens-empowerment-framework>



Appendix D

Program Field Visit

Appendix D Program Field Visit

DATE	ACTIVITY	LOCATION
29 September 2015	Kick off meeting PHAMA, DFAT	DFAT office
29 September 2015	Field visit coconut grower/processor (Chottu's Coconut Products) Group discussion with 3 female retailers/traders in copra oil	Processing facility
30 September 2015	Interviews with: Female cocoa-coconut farmer/trader (Makira Province) (Lucy Kasimwane. Lukasco Group. Member SIWIBA and cocoa trader (Dalcy Tekuru) Purple Investments	PHAMA office
30 September 2015	Interview MAL, Director Extension and Women in Agriculture	MAL
	Group discussion with Ministry of Women, Youth and Children (5 staff)	Ministry of Women, Youth and Children
1 October 2015	Group interview with VCO Coconut Pacific RDP and IWG members	On location PHAMA
2 October 2015	Interview SISBEC (2 staff members). Interview CEMA (Alfred Lamo) including visit Cocoa Lab (Patterson Siliota. Chied producer inspector, responsible for lab)	SISBEC office Honiara CEMA office
	Validation session DFAT, PHAMA	DFAT office
	Group interview ADRA (3 staff members)	ADRA office
3 October 2015	Field visit Cocoa farmers/primary processors/exporters (family business, "David and his Sisters"). Group interview Bubutoga community Kustom Garden Association (KGA) (Betty Lima Gigisi and John Lirma and farmer	Location Farm visit, sun drying facility Location
	Interview with 2 representatives of RDP, and IWG Gabriel Hiele and Mark Johnston	Phama
	Interview Solomon Tropical Products (Bevan Vollrath)	Hotel
5 October	Group discussion farmer group linked to ADRA, including farm visit Interview staff member ADRA /farmer	Location
	Interview Cocoa Exporter (BJS Agency-Sebastian Ilala)	Hotel
	Validation session with SIWIBA/Purple Investment (Dalcy Tekuru), female farmer/exporter (Lucy Kasimwane), Moses Pelomo	
	Visit local market	Honiara
	Visit 2 input shops	Honiara
6 October	Masterclass Brisbane Sharing and discussing preliminary findings.	Office