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Considering gender: Practical guidance for rural development initiatives in Solomon Islands

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Authors

Sarah Lawless^{1,2}, Kate Doyle³, Philippa Cohen^{1,2}, Hampus Eriksson^{1,4}, Anne-Maree Schwarz⁵, Helen Teioli¹, Agnetha Vavekaramui⁶, Elsie Wickham⁷, Rosalie Masu⁵, Ronnelle Panda⁵ and Cynthia McDougall¹

Affiliation

¹ WorldFish

² ARC Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies, James Cook University

³ Promundo

⁴ Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security (ANCORS), University of Wollongong

⁵ Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources

⁶ Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology

⁷ Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs

Citation

Lawless S, Doyle K, Cohen P, Eriksson H, Schwarz AM, Teioli H, Vavekaramui A, Wickham E, Masu R, Panda R and McDougall C. 2017. Considering gender: Practical guidance for rural development initiatives in Solomon Islands. Penang, Malaysia: WorldFish. Program Brief: 2017-22.

Acknowledgments

This work was undertaken as part of the CGIAR Research Program on Fish Agri-Food Systems (FISH). Funding support was provided by SwedBio, a programme at Stockholm Resilience Centre, and the Australian Government through the project FIS-2012-074 Improving Community-based Fisheries Management in Pacific Island countries, and the CGIAR Research Program on Aquatic Agricultural Systems. We would like to acknowledge the contributions of all workshop attendees whose experiences have guided the development of this document. We would also like to acknowledge the efforts of all past and present researchers and development practitioners who have sought to advance gender and social equity in Solomon Islands.

Overview

The majority of Solomon Islanders live in rural communities and are dependent on natural resources for their livelihoods. For many people, ways of generating income or producing food outside of small-scale fishing and agriculture are limited. Many development actors (e.g. government agencies and nongovernmental organizations) work with people in rural communities to develop and improve livelihoods, food security and environmental sustainability. However, development initiatives are often challenged to improve the lives of all people due to the presence of gender inequalities, which limit the abilities of certain individuals, mainly women (but also youth, and in some situations men), to participate in and benefit from development opportunities [1, 11, 5]. This challenge has been recognized at the national level in Solomon Islands [9, 10], and an increasing number of development actors now wish to consider gender throughout their initiatives. However, many feel overwhelmed or confused about how to plan and implement initiatives that seek to reduce gender inequality to maximize the benefits that development initiatives bring for everyone.

This resource draws together the knowledge of over 60 Solomon Islands development practitioners who shared their years of experience during two workshops.¹ We combined these insights with findings from a WorldFish study [2, 7] to help illustrate how development initiatives can:

- identify and understand gender considerations for Solomon Islands contexts, including the gender roles, norms and relations that contribute to gender inequality;
- acknowledge and account for gender inequalities within development activities conducted with rural communities;
- actively effect change to reduce gender inequalities by addressing their underlying causes.

This is referred to as a gender-transformative approach, where development actors and communities closely work together to identify, examine, question and attempt to shift, in locally appropriate ways, harmful or inequitable gender norms and power imbalances between women and men [3, 4].

¹ The workshops were held between 2015 and 2016 with representatives from national and provincial governments, and nongovernmental organizations. The workshops prompted discussions about gender inequalities affecting the sustainable delivery of development initiatives to Solomon Islands communities.



Photo credit: Filip Milosavljevic/WorldFish

A woman tending to her garden in Western Province, Solomon Islands.

What is gender and why is it important?

Gender refers to the social expectations and opportunities associated with being female or male, and the relationships between women and men, girls and boys. These gender “norms” shape what society expects of a “good woman,” or a “good man.” For example, these expectations may influence what women or men should say (or not say), do or not do, where they should go or not go. Gender norms and relations also shape what happens when women or men do not conform to these expectations and may include ridicule from neighbors, punishment or even violence. These gender expectations and relations vary between cultures, and they change over time.

There is an assumption that focusing on gender in development means only addressing differences between women and men. In fact, effectively addressing gender also means understanding and being sensitive and responsive to other socioeconomic differences (e.g. wealth, age, religion, ethnicity and migration status). These differences may mean certain men or women have more, fewer or different opportunities than other women or men. Additionally, while it is sometimes assumed that gender development initiatives should just work with women, development practice that seeks to challenge inequalities frequently works with both women and men. In Solomon Islands, this can be challenging because of misconceptions about gender and equality.

However, addressing gender inequalities through development initiatives can bring about benefits to all members of a community for the following reasons:

- All community members—not only dominant groups—can participate in shaping development priorities and opportunities and have equal opportunity to determine the changes they want to see in their lives.
- All community members—not only dominant groups—are able to benefit from (and are not further disadvantaged by) an initiative.
- The outcomes development can bring to communities are greater because the barriers for less powerful groups are removed. Improved outcomes may include increased economic and other livelihood benefits (because greater gender equality can increase decisions that favor household wellbeing).

Pursuing gender equitable development is the focus of one of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 5) which aims to “achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.” Gender equality is achieved when all women and men have equal rights, status and opportunities. Working toward this point requires development initiatives to consider the diversity of women’s and men’s interests, needs and priorities, and address the various barriers preventing people’s abilities to participate in and benefit throughout the development process [15].

Past research conducted in Solomon Islands [2, 3, 14] suggests that men are better positioned to participate in, and benefit from, development opportunities. This is because they tend to have better access and control of productive assets (i.e. income, land, equipment, technology) and resources (i.e. education, information, extension services), and experience greater freedom to make important life decisions. To ensure that men, women and youth community members benefit from a development initiative, it is important to consider these differences in the way initiatives are designed and implemented and the way outcomes are measured.

Although this document provides guidance for considering gender at the community scale, it is also important that gender equality is prioritized by national policies and within development organizations themselves. Gender-sensitive policies and gender-aware organizations can help to

“*In a community when gender is mentioned, people automatically think of women, therefore we often use the term ‘inclusivity,’ meaning everyone.*”
- Duta Kauhiona, MFMR, pers. comm., 2016

“*Due to the common belief that ‘gender’ is only associated with women’s development in Solomon Islands, some people may resist efforts to reduce gender inequalities because it is viewed as challenging customary practices and cultural beliefs, and others may believe it will undermine men’s power and status.*”
- Elsie Wickham, MWYCFA, pers. comm., 2017

accelerate the pace at which positive outcomes are experienced by society. This means that development organizations need to think about how their policies and activities align with the national and international gender policies such as the Solomon Islands National Policy on Gender Equality and Women's Development.

This also requires development organizations to work toward addressing gender inequalities within their internal operations (see Box 1 for examples). Gender equality in communities can be mirrored, reinforced by and/or even influence inequality within government agencies and nongovernmental organizations.

Box 1. Examples of how organizations in Solomon Islands are considering gender within their internal operations

- While in the early stages, Agnetha Vavekaramui from the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology (MECDM) reflected on MECDM's progress in recognizing how gender equality supports the achievement of development outcomes. She stated, "We've been supporting gender mainstreaming policies and strategies by the Ministry of Women and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community ... Our question is how do we integrate gender into this kind of sector? At the national level, we need to have some guidelines on what the government really wants out of gender, what is our message around gender, what are the national indicators and targets we want to reach? ... It's stating a case for why considering gender is useful for the ministry to achieve its overall outcomes" (pers. comm. 2017).
- Rosalie Masu, Deputy Director for the Inshore Fisheries Division of the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR), reflected on how MFMR recognizes the need to promote gender. She stated, "Our future MFMR overarching policy, which is to be developed soon, must capture gender and other crosscutting themes such as climate change that are not directly related to fisheries but are imperative." Rosalie also emphasized the importance of addressing gender imbalances within government ministries, saying, "I think it's more difficult for women [to gain employment] because we need to prove we are more educated [than men], we are knowledgeable and have the right papers, qualifications and so on," whereas for men this may not be necessary. However, restructuring within MFMR has "encouraged the recruitment of more women. It is changing now. More women are coming in [to the ministry]" (pers. comm. 2017).
- Ronnelle Panda, Gender Focal Point for MFMR, claims, "The government has historically had low numbers of women in decision-making positions. In 2005, only five women were employed in MFMR, and prior to 2012 there were no women working at the management level. Now two of the nine senior managers are women and females account for 15 out of the 65 fisheries officers. A broader representation of perspectives in decision-making in MFMR is another step on the way to moving toward gender-equitable development" (pers. comm. 2017).
- Alex Carlos, one of the longest serving officers in MFMR, expressed the increasing need to support gender-balanced staffing. In the past, MFMR's focus was on technical skills to enhance fisheries management practice, which only supported recruitment of men. He stated, "Now we don't have enough technical women staff posted in the rural areas." He acknowledged that many of MFMR's activities could also be undertaken by female officers. "We are also doing things like fish preservation, fish handling and CBRM, and need skills like writing project proposals [and recognize that] women can do these things" (pers. comm. 2017).
- Ledley Diudi, the principal field officer for the Malaita Provincial Agriculture Department, expressed the importance of gender-balanced staffing to improve agricultural outcomes. He reported that cultural beliefs make it difficult for male agricultural extension officers to work directly with female farmers. To ensure women can access agricultural information and training, the Provincial Agriculture Department recently established the Women Agriculture Extension Services with the intention to deploy female officers to work with community women's groups to work with female farmers to improve crop production, livestock and local poultry management (pers. comm. 2017).

How do development initiatives consider gender in their approach?

At the broadest level, development initiatives can be considered on a spectrum from gender-reinforcing, to gender-accommodative, to gender-transformative (Figure 1). Development experience has shown that gender-reinforcing approaches can lead not only to weak development outcomes, but perpetuate existing inequalities. For this reason, development initiatives are best to, and are increasingly appearing to, avoid operating at this end of the spectrum.

Further along the spectrum are gender-accommodative and gender-transformative

approaches. Together these cover initiatives designed to understand, take into account and respond to existing gender norms and power relations. As described below, best practice involves ensuring, as much as possible, that initiatives are structured toward at least the accommodative and, ideally, the transformative end of this spectrum. This is because development experience has shown that operating in this portion of the gender spectrum enhances development outcomes, not only for gender equality and women's empowerment, but also in relation to poverty and food security.



Figure 1. The way in which organizations and initiatives consider and work with gender can be viewed on a spectrum (adapted from the Gender Equality Continuum [5]) and highlights there are opportunities and actions that organizations and initiatives can take to move toward more accommodating and transformative approaches.

Gender-reinforcing approaches

Development initiatives may intentionally or unintentionally reinforce, sustain or take advantage of inequitable gender norms and power imbalances to achieve their objectives. Gender-reinforcing approaches can result in harmful consequences for certain people and undermine an initiative's intended objective [4].

Box 2 highlights examples of how development initiatives may exclude or disadvantage women (or youth or other groups) by intentionally or unintentionally targeting activities toward men (or

more dominant groups). In some cases, initiatives may make assumptions about who should be involved in consultation processes (e.g. only consulting men), undertaking activities based on stereotypes (e.g. "only men fish"), or believing that women's interests can be represented by male leaders or relatives. Development initiatives may also exclude women from opportunities and their benefits by holding training sessions or workshops in locations or at times where women cannot attend. Ignoring these factors may even result in negative consequences, such as increased overall workloads for women.

Box 2. Examples of gender-reinforcing activities

- Development initiatives might hold community consultation meetings in settings where men's voices may dominate, and therefore minimize or not capture the voices of women or youth. This can further marginalize people who have migrated to a village for marriage (and do not have primary rights to land) as their perspectives may not be prioritized (Helen Teioli, WorldFish, pers. comm., 2017).
- The marine management plans that MFMR have implemented in the past have sometimes overlooked the role of women or only seen fish species as important for men (Duta Kauhiona, MFMR, pers. comm., 2016).
- In Solomon Islands, development initiatives working with communities have sometimes only introduced new agricultural technologies to men, overlooking the fact that most women are also involved in subsistence farming work. This is made worse if all the agricultural extension officers are men because certain cultural beliefs may restrict women from attending these training sessions or working closely with male trainers if their husbands are not present [13].
- When development initiatives hold training sessions in locations that may require travel outside of a village, women may face difficulties attending due to their household and child care responsibilities, which are less of a constraint for men. Consequently, only very few women may have the opportunity to attend training sessions and build their skills [7].



A trainer explains organic farming techniques to women, Malaita, Solomon Islands.

Gender-accommodating approaches

Many development initiatives take a gender-accommodating approach, where they acknowledge and aim to account for gender norms and inequalities, but do not actively attempt to change them. These initiatives “work around” inequitable gender norms by designing activities that adjust to and compensate for them [4]. Gender-accommodating approaches can be an important first step toward promoting gender equality.

The examples in Box 3 demonstrate how gender-accommodating approaches may work around gender differences and inequalities to enable more inclusive development processes. Development initiatives may choose to pursue this approach to meet short-term gender-related objectives (i.e. increasing the number of women attending meetings). However, a key limitation of this approach is that it does not actively work toward addressing the underlying norms that perpetuate women’s and other social groups’ limited voices or marginalization in development opportunities.

Box 3. Examples of gender-accommodating activities

- “Because men tend to dominate decision-making processes within communities, we deliberately separate women, men and youth into groups for discussions when planning livelihood projects to gain equal perspectives from all community members” (Helen Teioli, WorldFish, pers. comm. 2017).
- “Committees that are set up in community-based management initiatives must always have women representatives. This is widely practiced in MFMR engagements to provide a platform to have women’s voices heard in decision-making and be involved in training opportunities” (Rosalie Masu, MFMR, pers. comm. 2017).
- Some development initiatives encourage equal numbers of women and men in leadership positions (e.g. within management groups or committees such as those established to manage marine areas) to ensure equitable participation. While stronger representation of women in leadership is important, this approach does not contribute to addressing imbalances in decision-making power. Women tend to be confined to secretarial or administrative roles and, in these cases, this does not translate into a greater voice or influence for women [7].
- Focusing on development initiatives such as homestead aquaculture ponds or women’s savings clubs “works with” the fact that women are often responsible for household work and caregiving by having the opportunity close to home. While women may benefit from these kinds of development, their overall workload may increase or household tensions could arise as their attention is pulled to this new task.



Photo credit: Kristen Abernethy/WorldFish

A facilitated discussion with women about local knowledge of fisheries and marine resources, Central Province, Solomon Islands.

Gender-transformative approaches

Gender-transformative initiatives seek to transform harmful or inequitable gender and social norms and power imbalances between women and men. Gender-transformative initiatives will identify and examine, question and attempt to change—in locally appropriate ways—harmful or inequitable gender norms and power imbalances between women and men. Gender-transformative approaches seek to understand gender-based differences, and transform gender and social norms to promote equal access to, and control of, the benefits from development opportunities (see Box 4 for examples) [6, 8].

A gender-transformative approach is more likely to result in long-term, permanent changes, where benefits are equitable within society (i.e. they benefit families and the broader community—not just women), and ongoing growth and development is promoted [4]. There is no exact formula for applying a gender-transformative approach. However, guiding principles are emerging, including that it is important to involve both men and women, boys and girls, and that transformation is rooted in engaging people in reflecting and critically questioning gender norms and their influence [12].

Box 4. WorldFish examples of gender-transformative activities in different contexts

The heart of the way WorldFish implements a gender-transformative approach is that we seek to engage women and men in safe and inclusive opportunities: to critically reflect on gender norms and behaviors and how these influence women and men, and, in particular, how these influence a household's (family's) ability to meet its goals; to come up with locally appropriate shifts or alternatives; and to try out these new ways of thinking or being, and reflect again on those. This can look very different in different contexts and initiatives.

- In Solomon Islands, gender-transformative strategies were applied to an aquaculture project to develop homestead ponds in Malaita Province. The facilitators made conscious efforts to engage married couples in a farmer workshop. They used tools that encouraged participation of both women and men, such as separately drawing a farming systems diagram that demonstrated that although men were the “face” of fish, women and children played a significant role. One couple shared their story of how they work together and share the workload, and this encouraged open discussions in the group and promoted the idea that other couples could benefit from working as a team. Since this workshop, women have attained greater confidence to attend other workshops and have shown increased confidence to speak in front of men. Men now recognize the importance of women's roles in this livelihood work [8].
- In a savings program in Zambia, a series of sessions on gender-transformation were facilitated within a savings group using a participatory action research approach. Women and men were able to go home, test, report back and reflect on how their “new ways” worked.
- In a different fishing community in Zambia, gender-transformative activities involved fishers watching interactive community theater (drama) and videos of real Zambian women and men who had worked together to transform their households, followed by reflection in participatory action groups.
- In an aquaculture extension program in Bangladesh, the gender-transformative approach meant involving women and men farmers—and sometimes powerful household members such as mothers-in-law—in facilitated sessions over a period of weeks, using participatory exercises to encourage surfacing of norms and reflection on these. Another initiative in Bangladesh is also running similar sessions just for community leaders [8].

Considerations for gender-transformative initiatives: Insights from development practitioners in Solomon Islands

Discussions by experts participating in the workshops, as well as findings from a WorldFish study [2,7], have guided the development of this publication and

highlighted the importance of considering gender norms. These considerations have been grouped into four main areas:



Differences in women's and men's opportunities to participate in development



Differences in women's and men's access to and control over resources



Differences in women's and men's divisions of labor



Differences in women's and men's decision-making power



Photo credit: Filip Wilbaa/WorldFish

A community meeting to discuss marine resource management, Western Province, Solomon Islands.



Opportunities to participate in development

This refers to gender norms and relations that affect an individual's ability to participate, and the level of their participation, in

development opportunities (e.g. training, workshops or pilot programs). Key considerations may include restrictions on women's mobility, time and labor allocation, and perceptions of risk in participating (see Box 5 for examples).

Box 5. Practitioner insights into participation in development activities

- Women are often unable to participate in development opportunities located outside their communities due to social and cultural beliefs that women should not leave their communities. Some community members believe “there is no reason for a woman to go out [of the community], she is supposed to be staying at home with the kids” (male community member, Malaita).
- Women tend to carry the responsibility of being the main food providers. Initiatives that promoted changes to their livelihood practices (e.g. changes in farming techniques) were perceived as too risky by women, and they were hesitant to participate. It was found that people's willingness to adopt new practices would be higher with prior evidence of success. “[P]eople in the village want to see results first before they try new things” (female community member, Malaita).
- Women may not have the confidence to participate in initiatives if they have not previously been exposed to other development opportunities. However, if women have been supported to attend training and work with organizations, then this may have flow on benefits. One woman explained, “Before, I just stayed in the village... People didn't know who I was, but now [an outside organization] has chosen me to attend training... Now I join most workshops that come into the community. That's how I've changed” (female community member, Western Province). Women's increased participation in development opportunities can result in positive benefits, including increased access to financial capital, increased influence in community and household decision-making, and increased confidence and willingness to trial new innovations [2].



Division of labor

This refers to the norms and relations that shape the division of roles and responsibilities between individuals (women, men and youth) based on social expectations and the allocation of time spent on specific activities. This includes the roles and activities performed within

the household as well as within livelihood activities or the community. A key consideration is to know whether women's time spent on unpaid care or domestic work limits their ability to participate in livelihoods activities, or whether their participation in livelihood activities will further their burden of time spent on paid and unpaid work (see Box 6 for examples).

Box 6. Practitioner insights into division of labor

- There can be distinct differences in women's and men's roles and responsibilities within the household and community. In one community, women said, “Gardening is our work” and felt this was one of the only choices they had, stating, “Some of us women only have our garden for our livelihoods.” Whereas when men were asked about their responsibilities, they reported a diversity of livelihoods in addition to gardening, such as building hand-carved dugout canoes, cutting firewood, building houses and small-scale fishing. They also demonstrated a greater capacity to explore new opportunities than women [2].
- As development initiatives bring about change, women might experience increased demands on their time. In one example, women had become less willing to participate in agricultural development initiatives because in the past this meant they had to spend more time at markets to sell the surplus. Women's participation in development opportunities can bring benefits to the entire household (e.g. increased cash or food)—and this is more likely to be achieved if men are more willing to take on traditional “women's work” to alleviate some of the labor burden from their wives [7].



Access to and control over resources

This refers to norms and relations influencing an individual's ability to access (i.e. gain or use) physical assets, such as equipment, technology, cash and natural resources, as well as social resources, such as information and support (e.g. through agricultural extension services).

It also refers to an individual's ability to control or make decisions about the use of these different resources. A key consideration is to know whether women (and men or other groups) are constrained in gaining access to resources or in their ability to decide how or when to use that resource (see Box 7 for examples).

Box 7. Practitioner insights into resource access and control

- Women may have had less access to formal schooling than men. This can influence women's confidence in engaging with or seeking out development opportunities. One woman reported, "If I were able to read and write, I would go and see those people [holding formal positions] in the [government or NGO] office, but I can't read or write so it's hard for me to go" [2].
- The MECDM office has found that most of the community members seeking advice or reporting issues are men. "Women may not have the access or the confidence to come into our office, or maybe they don't have access to a mobile phone, or they don't know who the contacts are" (Agentha Vavekaramui, MECDM, pers. comm. 2017).



Decision-making power

This refers to the norms and relations that shape people's agency or ability to make decisions that affect their own lives and their household, as well as their voice and influence in decision-making processes at the community-scale.

A key consideration is to know whether a woman (or other individual) has the ability to decide if, when or how to participate in a livelihood activity, such as marketing, and whether she has the power to make or participate in decisions about how to use the benefits or profits from livelihood activities (see Box 8 for examples).

Box 8. Practitioner insights into decision-making power

- Men tend to hold the majority of leadership positions at the community level due to local and traditional governance structures that promote men as leaders, which can marginalize women from decision-making processes taking place in public forums [2].
- The absence of women from community decision-making can limit their abilities to benefit from development. Elsie Wickham (MWYCFA) shared a story of a group of village women who decided to pool their money and buy products from Honiara to sell in their village for a small profit. This small income-generating project was building up to be a profitable venture when the village leaders told them they could not continue until they paid them a hawker's license fee (approx. SBD 1000, or USD 128). The women did not have the money to pay for the license and were forced to abandon their business venture. If there were a greater representation of women on the village committee, there may have been more support for women as entrepreneurs (pers. comm., 2017).
- Women are able to make some small decisions in the household, such as how many crops to sell at market. However, men tend to have the final say on household decisions. A community member reported, "If she [the wife] respects her husband, she must ask him so he can make the final decision" [7].
- In some cases, women and men will need their spouse's support, or even permission, to participate in a development initiative [7].

Guidance for planning and implementing gender-accommodating and gender-transformative initiatives in rural Solomon Islands communities

A tool (Table 1) has been developed to assist development initiatives working in rural communities to consider gender and provide guidance for the planning and implementation of gender-accommodating and gender-transformative initiatives in Solomon Islands.

Using the tool

The first column of the tool proposes a desired outcome. The second column indicates key questions and considerations for designing and implementing development initiatives that accommodate for or transform gender inequalities. The third and fourth columns provide factors or key criteria for

gender-accommodating and gender-transformative development initiatives, respectively.

Although the tool is oriented toward community-based initiatives, the points raised may also be useful to apply to organizational initiatives (e.g. within government and nongovernment agencies) that seek to consider gender at this scale. Gender inequalities differ depending on the context in which development initiatives are implemented. Therefore, this tool serves only as a guide for the types of gender considerations initiatives may need to integrate.



Women attend a workshop to discuss marine resource management issues, Maluu, Solomon Islands.

A tool providing guidance for planning and implementing gender-accommodating and gender-transformative initiatives in rural Solomon Islands communities

	Questions to assist in identifying gender differences and inequalities during planning and implementation:	Gender-accommodating initiatives will seek to ensure the following:	In addition, gender-transformative initiatives will seek to achieve one or more of the following:
 <p>Opportunities to participate in development</p> <p>Desired outcome: Women and men can participate equally and each have a voice in development opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do development initiatives seek to include both women and men and, where relevant, marginalized groups? • How do women's, men's or marginalized groups' participation in development initiatives differ? • What types of development initiatives or activities do women, men or marginalized groups want to participate in or undertake? • What factors support or hinder women's, men's or marginalized groups' participation in development initiatives or activities (e.g. do men and other community members not support women's participation)? • Are there any social or gender norms that restrict women's or marginalized groups' mobility or participation in development initiatives? • Are women or marginalized groups able to and do they participate in leadership positions within development initiatives (and not just within women's groups)? • Are women or marginalized groups able to voice their opinions within development initiatives, and are their voices being heard? • Do development initiatives actively promote leadership opportunities for women or marginalized groups, or encourage their voice or influence in development activities? • Do women's, men's or marginalized groups' perceptions of risk associated with participating in development initiatives or adopting new practices differ (i.e. do they have different things at stake)? • Are there opportunities within development initiatives to ensure that all voices are heard and have influence? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities are designed for and tailored to the specific interests of women, men or marginalized groups. This may be through separate interventions for women and men, or through mixed groups (as appropriate). • Women's, men's and marginalized groups' participation is encouraged through direct outreach to them (e.g. women are invited directly to attend, not through their husband, or opportunities are advertised in spaces or sources that women access). • Support for women's or marginalized groups' participation in the initiative is promoted among family members and the wider community. • Existing time and labor requirements do not hinder or exclude women, men or marginalized groups from being able to participate (e.g. activities are planned at appropriate times and consider women's time constraints). • Women's, men's and marginalized groups' voices are represented and reflected within decisions related to the initiative. This may involve opening spaces for both women and men to share their views, interests and needs. • Women, men and marginalized groups have an equal opportunity to participate in the leadership of the initiative (e.g. opportunities for women's leadership are promoted or guaranteed through quotas or other mechanisms). • Gender differences in risk perception are acknowledged (i.e. based on differing interests, needs and dependency on natural resources), and actions are taken to reduce this risk (i.e. through providing evidence of the potential success of participating in an initiative). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build personal and shared understandings of how gender norms and relations affect women, men and the ability of households to achieve their aspirations. • Promote locally led shifts in the social and gender norms that restrict women's ability and willingness to participate in development opportunities. • Empower and build the confidence and self-efficacy of women, men and marginalized groups to take part in and benefit from current and future development opportunities. • Increase the abilities and positions of women and marginalized groups in leadership.

Questions to assist in identifying gender differences and inequalities during planning and implementation:

Gender-accommodating initiatives will seek to ensure the following:

In addition, gender-transformative initiatives will seek to achieve one or more of the following:



Division of labor

Desired outcome:

Women and men have a more equitable division of labor, resulting in more time for women to participate in development opportunities.

- How do women, men and marginalized groups currently spend their time? Consider time spent on both paid and unpaid activities, such as care work.
- How much time do women, men and marginalized groups currently spend on livelihood or agricultural activities?
- How do current roles and responsibilities within livelihoods or agricultural activities differ for women, men and marginalized groups?
- What types of roles or responsibilities do development initiatives promote for women in livelihoods or agriculture (e.g. do they promote the same opportunities for women as for men)?
- Do development initiatives account for existing time and labor responsibilities of women, men and marginalized groups (e.g. women's unpaid care work, including childcare and household tasks)?
- Will women's workload (including paid and unpaid work) increase as a result of their involvement in a given development initiative or adoption of a new practice (e.g. women needing to spend more time selling crops or fish at market as a result of increased production)?
- How will a development initiative impact the ability of women, men or marginalized groups to carry out their existing roles and responsibilities (e.g. will an activity, such as a marine closure, reduce or alter their access to resources)?
- If so, how can a development initiative minimize any negative impact on labor opportunities for women, men and marginalized groups?
- Are there opportunities within a development initiative to challenge rather than reinforce gender-appropriate roles for women and men to undertake?

- Activities consider time constraints for women and work around their existing workloads, by planning activities at times that ensure women are able to participate.
- Wherever possible, women's care responsibilities are addressed by providing childcare support to enable women to participate.
- Activities consider how participation in an activity or adoption of a new practice may increase women's workload and attempt to minimize them (e.g. by introducing timesaving techniques or technologies, or limiting the amount of time required of participants).
- Roles and activities promoted for women or marginalized groups do not reinforce existing stereotypes (e.g. women as food preparers or caregivers) and include opportunities at different levels or stages of production or the value chain.

- Build personal and shared understandings of how gender norms and relations affect women, men and the ability of households to achieve their aspirations.
- Increase the value ascribed to unpaid care work, by raising the visibility and importance of caregiving for families, communities and the economy.
- Redistribute the burden of unpaid care work, including increasing men's participation in caregiving and household tasks.
- Promote locally led shifts in social and cultural attitudes toward appropriate work for women and men, including greater (paid) roles for women in agriculture or livelihoods activities.
- Identify champions (local men and women who display more equitable gender relations and behaviors) to act as role models in the community and within the development initiative.



Access to and control over resources

Desired outcome:

Women, men and marginalized groups have equitable access to, and control over, physical and social resources required for development.

<p>Questions to assist in identifying gender differences and inequalities during planning and implementation:</p>	<p>Gender-accommodating initiatives will seek to ensure the following:</p>	<p>In addition, gender-transformative initiatives will seek to achieve one or more of the following:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do access to and control over physical resources (e.g. equipment, tools, cash, natural resources) differ for women, men and marginalized groups? • How do access to and control over social resources (e.g. information and support) differ for women, men and marginalized groups? • What factors restrict women (or marginalized groups) from obtaining or using these resources (e.g. are women not targeted by development initiatives, or are they unable to travel to reach them)? • Are there any laws, or social or gender norms that restrict ownership or use of certain resources for women, men or marginalized groups (e.g. laws that restrict women's land rights or inheritance, or norms that limit the use of certain equipment)? • Are there any physical or social restrictions on the mobility of women or marginalized groups that will limit their ability to obtain or use these resources (e.g. beliefs that women should not travel outside of the home, or fears for women's safety and security)? • Are there differences in the ability of women, men or marginalized groups to comprehend the information required for the initiative (e.g. are literacy rates lower for women)? • Are there differences in preferred ways of accessing information or resources for women, men or marginalized groups? • What factors restrict women or marginalized groups from deciding when or how to use resources (e.g. does a woman need her husband's permission)? • What factors hinder or support women's, men's or marginalized groups' adoption of new practices promoted by development initiatives (e.g. is evidence of success required before they are willing or able to participate)? • Do development initiatives currently create opportunities for women, men and marginalized groups to more equitably access and control resources? • Are women and marginalized groups likely to be able to access or control any benefits derived from their participation in a development initiative or adoption of a new practice? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location and timing of workshops and opportunities do not hinder or exclude women, men or marginalized groups from being able to access physical or social resources. Women and men may require activities at different locations/ times of day. • Restrictions on women's mobility (i.e. ability to travel to the market or attend a workshop) do not hinder their ability to access or obtain information or support offered by the development initiative. • Information is disseminated in ways that account for differences in literacy levels or preferences (e.g. practical vs. theoretical information) among women, men or marginalized groups. • The resources required to participate in an initiative do not exclude women or marginalized groups from being able to participate. • The tools and equipment required to participate in an initiative are socially and culturally appropriate for women and men to use. • Women, men and marginalized groups are informed of existing laws and rights of ownership or access to resources. • Mechanisms are in place to ensure that both women and men are able to access and benefit from the resources provided. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build personal and shared understandings of how gender norms and relations affect women, men and the ability of households to achieve their aspirations. • Increase women's access to, ownership and control over resources, including advocating for legal and policy changes in support of women's land and inheritance rights. • Promote locally led shifts in social and gender norms that allocate greater decision-making power to men. • Promote locally led shifts in social and gender norms that restrict women's mobility, such as men's control over women's movements and violence against women. • Increase women's literacy and access to education, including challenging norms that prioritize men's education.


	Questions to assist in identifying gender differences and inequalities during planning and implementation:	Gender-accommodating initiatives will seek to ensure the following:	In addition, gender-transformative initiatives will seek to achieve one or more of the following:
 <p>Decision-making power</p> <p>Desired outcome: Women and men have equitable decision-making power within households and communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do influence and power in decision-making differ for women, men and marginalized groups within the community (e.g. about the use or management of natural resources)? • How do influence and power in decision-making differ for women and men within the household (e.g. about how to spend household income, or the activities they participate in)? • What factors restrict the ability of women or marginalized groups to influence or make decisions within the community, development initiatives or the household? • Are there any customary rules, social or gender norms that limit the decision-making power of women or marginalized groups (e.g. customs that make men the head of the household, patriarchal norms of male authority or beliefs that men are better decision-makers)? • Are women or marginalized groups likely to be able make decisions about how to use or invest the benefits they derive from participation in a development initiative (e.g. to be able to decide what to do with cash earned or increased crop production)? • Do the decision-making processes of current development initiatives account for the interests and needs of all stakeholders? • Do development initiatives promote equal voice and power for women, men and marginalized groups in decision-making at different stages, including planning and implementation? • Are there opportunities within development initiatives to transform imbalances in decision-making power (i.e. that create more space for women to participate and have influence in decision-making processes)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women, men and marginalized groups participate in decisions about the design and planning of development initiatives. • Spaces and opportunities are created for women and marginalized groups to be decision-makers within natural resource management processes and development initiatives (e.g. by reserving spaces for women in leadership or on decision-making committees). • Activities acknowledge women's often limited power within household decision-making and mitigate risks that may accompany greater decision-making or earning power (e.g. risk of domestic violence). • Activities respect local customs, but do not reinforce inequitable decision-making norms or practices (e.g. by gaining support from households and the community for women's participation). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build personal and shared understandings of how gender norms and relations affect women, men and the ability of households to achieve their aspirations. • Promote locally led shifts in social and gender norms that allocate greater decision-making power to men within the community. • Increase women's power in household decision-making by working with women and men to challenge norms that limit women's decision-making power. • Empower women with the skills and confidence to communicate their opinions and participate in household and community decisions, while challenging inequitable norms and promoting opportunities for women to practice these skills.

Table 1. A tool providing guidance for planning and implementing gender-accommodating and gender-transformative initiatives in rural Solomon Islands communities.

Gender-transformative tools and resources

Solomon Islands resources

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Guidance for gender-transformative practice

- McDougall C, Cole SM, Rajaratnam S and Teioli H. 2015. Implementing a gender-transformative research approach: Early lessons. In Douthwaite B, Apgar JM, Schwarz A, McDougall C, Attwod S, Senaratna Sellamuttu S and Clayton T, eds. *Research in Development: Learning from the CGIAR Research Program on Aquatic Agricultural Systems*. Working Paper: AAS-2015-16. Penang, Malaysia: CGIAR Research Program on Aquatic Agricultural Systems. 48–52.
- MenCare global campaign website includes resources such as manuals, films and posters: <http://men-care.org/>
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Resources for measuring gender-transformative change

- Hillenbrand E, Karim N, Mohanraj P and Wu D. 2015. *Measuring gender-transformative change: A review of literature and promising practices*. USA: CARE. Working paper.
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Lawless S, Doyle K, Cohen P, Eriksson H, Schwarz AM, Teioli H, Vavekaramui A, Wickham E, Masu R, Panda R and McDougall C. 2017. Considering gender: Practical guidance for rural development initiatives in Solomon Islands. Penang, Malaysia: WorldFish. Program Brief: 2017-22.

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