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COUNTRY GENDER ASSESSMENT

OF AGRICULTURE AND THE RURAL SECTOR IN --- SAMOA

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THE RURAL SECTOR IN

SAMOA

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Abbreviations and acronyms

ASP	Agriculture Sector Plan
ASSC	Agriculture Sector Steering Committee
BNPL	Basic Needs Poverty Line
CEDAW	Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CGA-ARS	Country Gender Assessment of Agriculture and the Rural Sector
DHS	Demographic Health Survey
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FGD	focus group discussion
GDP	gross domestic product
HIES	Household Income and Expenditure Survey
ILO	International Labour Organization
MAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries
MCIL	Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
METI	Matuaileoo Environment Trust Inc.
MESC	Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture
MNRE	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOH	Ministry of Health
MPMC	Ministry of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
MWCSD	Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development
NCD	non-communicable diseases
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PGEP	Progressing Gender Equality in the Pacific
PHAMA	Pacific Horticultural and Agricultural Market Access Programme
PIFON	Pacific Islands Farmers Organization Network
PLGED	Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration
PSC	Public Service Commission
RPPA	Revised Pacific Platform for Action on Advancement of Women
SACEP	Samoa Agriculture Competitiveness Enhancement Project
SAME	Samoa Association of Manufacturers and Exporters
SBEC	Samoa Business Enterprise Centre
SBS	Samoa Bureau of Statistics

SCCA	Samoa Crops Cooperation Association
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SDS	Strategy for the Development Samoa
SFA	Samoa Farmers Association
SPC	Pacific Community
WST	Samoaan tala
SWSPD	Samoa Women Shaping Pacific Development
UN	United Nations
USD	United States dollar
VCO	Virgin Coconut Oil
VFMAC	Village Fisheries Management Advisory Committee
WG	Working Group
WIBDI	Women in Business Development Incorporated

Executive summary

This Country Gender Assessment of Agriculture and the Rural Sector (CGA-ARS, or Assessment) provides in-depth insights into the gendered dimensions of agriculture and rural development in Samoa. Based on the research findings, the Assessment aims to provide guidance to the Government of Samoa and its development partners, notably the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Pacific Community (SPC), through the identification of priority areas that need to be strengthened.

Samoa women and men contribute to rural livelihoods in different ways. Women play multiple roles that include provision of support in both the family and community settings and income generation through small-scale businesses. Women are often engaged concurrently in subsistence farming and in marketing at roadsides as well as in more structured local markets. They are also recognized to be key in the production of value-added goods, particularly in quality control and compliance in export businesses.

The Assessment identifies ways in which socially constructed gender roles and patriarchal norms in Samoa define men's and women's access to and control over resources, including land and labour. Besides their role as caregivers within their families, women also act as managers of family budgets and financial resources. As the Samoan agricultural sector becomes more market-driven, women are attending training to learn basic business skills. Interviews with governmental stakeholders and community members confirmed that rural women manage small family businesses as families transition from subsistence to market-focused agriculture.

Women in Samoa have an especially key role to play in ensuring the productivity and efficiency of agricultural and fisheries value chains. This points to the need to formally recognize women as key stakeholders as opposed to playing only a supportive role within communities. While it could be argued that this is already taking place within some villages and in various agriculture and livelihood projects, the absence of a systematic and strategic gender-sensitive approach to guide the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) indicates otherwise. To achieve this, there is a need to precisely identify and map

women's engagement in the agricultural sector as well as in the rural economy and, based on this, to evaluate their contributions to the sector, including in the form of unpaid work.

While the cultural context in Samoa may be unique, the Assessment identified some issues that are consistent with global findings, such as 1) women's tendency to classify and report themselves as unemployed when they are engaged in unpaid agricultural work; 2) underreporting and underrepresentation of women as farmers; and 3) women's lack of visibility in agricultural decision making.

Findings on entry points for gender mainstreaming

There are clear commitments to gender mainstreaming at a high level, reflected in specific commitments within guiding policy documents of MAF and in a specific gender policy of the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development (MWCSO). However, there are gaps in the implementation of policy commitments due to a lack of technical capacity, lack of adequate resources to support work on gender mainstreaming and weak accountability mechanisms.

- MAF recognizes the key role of the MWCSO in driving gender mainstreaming and community engagement and has established positions for their representation at the highest level of oversight of the implementation of the Agriculture Sector Plan (ASP) 2016–2020 and also in two of the four working groups responsible for delivery of strategic outcomes of the ASP. These are key entry points to drive gender mainstreaming and hold MAF accountable to policy commitments, but MWCSO lacks the capacity to engage effectively at the working group level. There is a limited amount of gender analysis taking place and little drive within the sector for strategic gender interventions.
- The ASP has specific outputs to increase women's capacity, resources and access to agricultural opportunities, though these are all linked to what is commonly understood to be "what women do," such as poultry farming and small-scale fishing. The recognition of key roles that women play across the sector is not fully realized, though there are opportunities to do so while being informed by proper gender analysis.

- There are a number of ongoing activities that promote women's participation across the different divisions of MAF. While some of these activities are contributing to an increase in women's participation, these are being done in an ad hoc manner and are dependent upon the interest of women in communities across Samoa and the commitment to inclusion of specific officers. These present opportunities for strategic interventions informed by proper analysis.
- There is a limited allocation of both human and financial resources to the work on gender mainstreaming. Though a gender policy exists, and it makes specific reference to working across sectors, it is not being utilized to drive mainstreaming efforts across the agriculture sector. There is also a lack of responsibility for the shared work on gender mainstreaming, with MAF officials looking to MWCSO officials to drive this work and MWCSO placing the responsibility on MAF.

Assessment methodology

The Assessment was informed by an extensive desk review, by community consultations and by information collected through a gender and aquaculture assessment that was conducted in December 2017. The methodology and analysis frameworks used in this report mirror those used in four other Pacific countries – Solomon Islands, Fiji, Tonga and Vanuatu. The Assessment includes:

- A stocktake of the enabling environment for gender mainstreaming done with assistance of government ministries. A number of respondents in these ministries engaged in structured interviews with the stocktake team. These were supplemented by interviews with representatives of the private sector and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and a desk review that provided a broader perspective of the environment for gender mainstreaming.
- A situation analysis of gender in agriculture and rural livelihood informed by the desk review and supported by visits to rural communities.

Recommendations

The Assessment makes the following recommendations for the Government of Samoa and its development partners, notably FAO and SPC, for the enhancement of rural women's empowerment and gender equality in the Samoan agricultural and rural sector, including:

- Creation of a fully operational intra-governmental mechanism for the advancement of gender equality and rural women's empowerment in ARD, to be led and coordinated by MWCSO.
- Establishment of a governmental network of gender focal points in all agriculture- and ARD-relevant line ministries to coordinate and promote planning, implementation and monitoring of all work related to the empowerment of rural women and gender equality within their respective ministries and institutions.
- Periodical collection of high-quality, sex- and age-disaggregated data related to rural women's engagement in agriculture and the rural economy, including on time-use, decent work, employment, migration and agricultural production.
- Technical capacitation of public servants responsible for ARD and associated thematic areas on all relevant aspects of gender equality and rural women's empowerment in ARD.
- Awareness raising on gender mainstreaming and integration of gender mainstreaming responsibilities into job descriptions for all senior officials and management staff in all agriculture- and ARD-relevant line ministries.

1

INTRODUCTION



FAO recognizes that gender equality is both a human right and an absolute necessity for achieving the Organization's mandate to eradicate hunger and poverty worldwide. In 2013, FAO published its policy on gender equality for the attainment of food security goals in agriculture and rural development.¹ In this policy document, gender mainstreaming and women-targeted actions are components of a two-pronged strategy for promoting gender equality in the agricultural and rural sectors.² The set of minimum standards for gender mainstreaming laid out in the FAO policy document includes a requirement to undertake a Country Gender Assessment. This Assessment contributes to the formulation of the Country Programme that is established between FAO and a member country government and expressed in the Country Programming Framework. The Assessment also supports gender analysis at the identification and formulation stages of technical assistance projects. The 2012 FAO Guide to the Project Cycle states that a gender analysis is essential for the preparation of a concept note for programmes and projects and it is recommended by FAO that a gender assessment is carried out prior to any project formulation.

1.1 Background and rationale

Samoa is an independent pacific island nation comprised of two main islands, Upolu and Savaii, and eight smaller islands – Manono, Apolima, Nuutele, Nuusafee, Nuulopa, Namua, Vini and Tapanu. Only four of these islands – Upolu, Savaii, Manono and Apolima – are inhabited. The urban population has grown to around 19 percent of the total population. The rest of the population lives mainly in the rural and outer areas of Upolu and Savaii, the latter being the largest island of the Samoa group.

Samoa's land mass is 2 820 km², 43 percent of which is arable. Its exclusive economic zone (EEZ) is the smallest in the Pacific at 98 500 km². Most of the villages are closely knit communities. It can be argued that Samoa's geographical setting and village set-up make the implementation and delivery of community development initiatives and programmes more

feasible than in some other settings. Over 80 percent of the land is held under customary ownership. Land is one of the main sources of individual and family identity and security. As such, any adjustments to the customary ownership system will inevitably impact the family system.

With 81 percent of the population categorized as living in rural areas, there are many interventions and activities taking place in Samoa in the area of agriculture and rural livelihoods that have a direct impact on women. This report seeks to highlight such activities and identify how men and women are engaged, how their defined gender roles impact their engagement and the environment within which this engagement occurs. In doing so, the Assessment identifies key considerations for support through the FAO Country Programme and through the SPC Progressing Gender Equality in the Pacific (PGEP) programme.

There is a common view in Samoa that social stability rests on continuation of traditional systems in families, communities and the government. Samoan villages tend to be hierarchically organized into tight-knit communities with clear gender roles reflective of patriarchy. This structure includes the *matai* or family heads who are also the members of the village council or *fono*,³ the wives of the *matai*, the women born to the village, the women married into the village and the untitled men and their wives. Samoa as a society is structured around these deeply entrenched defined roles and, as reported by the Government of Samoa to the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) Committee, customary norms are the main impediment to women's full participation in political and public life.

During the Assessment, respondents stressed that change needs to happen in the context of the existing systems and traditions upon which the society is built and held together. Navigating the tension between the limitations of the existing systems and structures and the full realization of gender equality and women's human rights requires 1) analysis

¹ FAO Policy on Gender Equality: Attaining Food Security Goals in Agriculture and Rural Development is available at: www.fao.org/policy-support/resources/resources-details/en/c/427024

² Both the policy document and this report use a broad definition of agriculture which comprises crop production, livestock, fisheries, aquaculture and forestry.

³ The functions of *fonos* were formalized in the Village Fono Act (1990) which stipulates that village administration is carried out by the village councils or *fonos*. *Fonos* are composed of *alii* (royalty) and *faipule* (*matai*). Those who do not hold *matai* title cannot participate in *fonos*.

of strengths that exist in traditional systems; 2) building on those strengths, underlying beliefs and principles to create more enabling environments; 3) creating opportunities for women to actively engage and be recognized for the work they do and the contributions they make; and 4) ensuring that women are not overburdened with multiple economic and reproductive and care responsibilities.

There have been some notable shifts in gender roles over time, with women's greater participation in leadership. As customary norms define relationships, this shift is a reflection of the change in ways that women are perceived within their families and villages.

1.2 Scope and methodology

The Assessment involved identifying stakeholders for consultation, developing gender analysis tools for the community consultations and the stocktake of the enabling environment for gender mainstreaming in selected ministries, and conducting interviews with a range of stakeholders, including government representatives, development partners, NGOs, the private sector and community members. These consultations were necessary to fill in information gaps in the literature review.

The Assessment provides a situational analysis and an enabling environment analysis. These have been done using the following methods:

Secondary data:

- A desk review was conducted of the national, regional and global literature to assess issues relevant to gender equality and advancement of rural women across natural resource management sectors. This included examination of policies and programmes and information from the government and from other key stakeholders involved in the agricultural sector.

Primary data:

- Consultations were conducted with two communities in rural Upolu to provide a snapshot of the gender situation in the rural agricultural context. Focus group discussions were held with men and women from Lotofaga and the Falevao/Lalomauga communities. The discussions were conducted by the Assistant Chief Executive Officer for Community Development of MWCSO.

Following a briefing, community members were grouped into two women-only and men-only focus groups. The focus group discussions were facilitated by representatives from MAF and MWCSO as well as the gender specialists from SPC. The numbers of men and women who were involved in the discussions depended upon who was available at the time of the consultations. The full list of stakeholders consulted is attached in Annex 1.

- Gender stocktakes of MAF and MWCSO were undertaken through individual interviews with government staff in the respective ministries to assess the enabling environment for gender mainstreaming. The results are included in Chapter 4 of this report.
- Finally, interviews were also conducted with civil society organizations and the private sector. These allowed the organizations to provide information on gender inequality issues and opportunities for supporting a positive change in the enabling environment for gender inclusive practice.

The community consultations included the use of gender analysis tools designed by SPC and used in other gender-related research across the Pacific. Some questions were amended to suit the Samoan context. The aim was to gather information on a) women's and men's knowledge and roles in relation to productive and unpaid work; b) women's and men's activities and decision-making responsibilities in agriculture, livestock, fisheries, forestry, other economic sectors and community and household work; c) food security and change in dietary patterns; and d) land tenure and other factors associated with different levels of gender equality. Information from the site visits was used to supplement desk research and validate some of the desk review findings. All stakeholders interviewed were identified through the support of MAF and MWCSO staff. At least one MAF staff member and one MWCSO staff member accompanied the SPC gender specialists to all interviews and community consultations. This arrangement was proposed by SPC and agreed upon in a meeting at the beginning of the two-week in-country mission to allow for capacity building in gender-sensitive research for the staff members. Finally, the two-week in-country mission ended with a validation workshop in April to allow the research team to present their findings and receive feedback from stakeholders. The names of participants who attended the validation workshop are also included in Annex 1.



1.3 FAO in Samoa

Cooperation between Samoa and FAO has been ongoing since the country joined the Organization in 1979. Samoa has been hosting the FAO Subregional Office for the Pacific Islands since 1996. With the aim of increasing the stable supply of competitively priced domestic agriculture products and healthy consumption of safe and nutritious foods, FAO assistance in Samoa focuses on:

- developing and promoting evidence-based recommendations to incentivize the production and consumption of safe and healthy food;
- promoting sustainable and climate-smart practices to help build resilient agriculture, fisheries and forestry production systems; and
- identifying and promoting food control and business practices to facilitate efficient agrifood value chains providing safe, nutritious and affordable food.

1.4 Organization of the Assessment

The report is divided into five main sections: (1) introduction; (2) country context; (3) gender analysis of the policy enabling environment; (4) assessment of gender inequalities in agriculture and the rural sector; and (5) conclusion and recommendations. The first section lays out the purpose of the report, objectives and the methodology used to undertake the Assessment and highlights FAO's presence in the country. The second section provides information on the country context using information from national statistical surveys, including gender analysis where data and information are available. The third section, a gender analysis of the agricultural and rural sector in Samoa, focuses on the stocktake of the capacity of the government to mainstream gender equality and rural women's empowerment in ARD and provides an analysis of the enabling environment. Section four examines gender inequalities in agriculture and the rural sector through the assessment of different aspects ranging from land tenure, food security and nutrition to agricultural value chains, rural finance and disaster risk management. Information was derived from desk review, the Samoa Bureau of Statistics and interviews conducted with resource persons during the preparation of this report. The final section summarizes the findings and proposes recommendations for the Government of Samoa, FAO and the Pacific Community to support gender equality and the empowerment of rural women in agriculture and the wider rural economy.



2

COUNTRY CONTEXT

This section presents information on the national context in which the CGA-ARS took place. It includes information on the social and economic situation of Samoa, including demography, health, education, employment, infrastructure, and gender inequality.

The islands of Samoa lie between latitudes 13° and 15° south of the equator and between the longitudes 168° and 173° west. The Samoa island group is located 2 600 miles southeast of Hawaii, 1 800 miles from New Zealand and 2 700 miles from Australia. Its nearest neighbour is American Samoa, which is located around 80 miles away (Samoa Bureau of Statistics, 2016).

The total land area of Samoa is 2 830 km². Savaii, as the biggest island, is 1 700 km² and Uplou, the second largest island where the capital of Apia is located, has a total land area of 1 110 km² (Samoa Bureau of Statistics, 2016). The total agricultural land area is 350 km² and the total forest land area is 171 km².

The islands are of volcanic origin, clearly visible in the form of several dormant volcanoes and lava fields. Beyond the narrow coastal plains, the mountain ranges rise steeply to a maximum of 1 859 meters on Savaii and 1 100 meters on Uplou, intersected by fertile valleys. The greater part of the territory is covered by lush vegetation and rainforest.

2.1 Main demographic and population characteristics of Samoa

According to the 2016 Census, the population of Samoa had a total of 195 979 people, with 100 892 males and 95 087 females (51.48 percent and 48.52 percent, respectively). Between 2011 and 2016 the population increased by 4.3 percent, with an annual population growth rate of 0.9 percent. In 2016, the majority of the Samoan population (81.55 percent) resided in rural areas (Samoa Bureau of Statistics, 2016).

The total fertility rate in Samoa dropped from 7 children per woman in the 1960s to 3.8 in 2016. The highest fertility rate is in rural areas; for example women in the rural areas in Savaii and the Rest of Upolu regions have on average 4.9 children. Women with no recognized qualifications and women who

are out of work or who work in their own household have on average 5.1 and 5.2 children, respectively. According to the 2016 Census, 43 904 women are of reproductive age (15–49 years), which is 46 percent of the population.

Infant mortality rate decreased from 19.3 deaths below the age of five per 1 000 births in 2001 to 14.3 of deaths below the age of five per 1 000 births in 2016.⁴ However, there has been a notable increase of gendered bias against girls' survival rates, from a nearly equal infant mortality rate in 2001 (19.5/1 000 birth for boys and 19.0/1 000 births for girls) to 12.5/1 000 births for boys and 16.2/1 000 births for girls in 2016 (Samoa Bureau of Statistics, 2018a).

2.2 National social, political and economic situation

Samoa's gross domestic product (GDP) was 3.7 percent in 2017 compared to the lowest growth recorded GDP of -4.9 percent in December 2012 (Samoa Bureau of Statistics, 2018c). However, it should be noted that on 29 September 2009 a tsunami swept over the country's coastal regions, killing 43 people and destroying infrastructure and devastating the agricultural sector as well as the tourism industry. The losses were estimated at USD 106 million, which was equal to 17 percent of the annual GDP at the time (Amosa and Samson, 2012). The 2009 tsunami is a reminder of just how vulnerable the economies – in particular the rural economies – of Samoa and other Pacific nations are to natural disasters.

Political environment

Samoa has been an independent nation since 1962. Its governance system is based on the legal systems of Westminster and England, as adopted by many Commonwealth countries. Parliament consists of 54 elected members of the Legislative Assembly through universal suffrage. The Prime Minister is elected by the members of parliament and cabinet members are selected by the Prime Minister. The Head of State is appointed by the Government. The office of the Head of State is supported by the Council of Deputies comprised of two deputies.

⁴ The infant mortality rate indicates the probability that a child will not survive to its first birthday.

The Constitution of Samoa is the supreme law of the country and can only be changed by a two-thirds majority in parliament. General elections are held every five years. Established in 1960, the Constitution blends traditional and democratic institutions and processes and recognizes the separation of powers between the legislative, judiciary and executive branches. The Village Fono Act (1990) gives Village Councils authority over village law and order, health and social issues. Regarding the judiciary branch, Samoa's court system consists of two district courts and a Supreme Court run by five local judges. An Appeals Court made up of overseas judges sits once a year to hear appeal cases. There is a separate Land and Titles Court that deals with matters relating to customary land ownership and matai (chief) titles.

At the village level, the government appoints liaison officers from each of the villages whose role is to oversee all developments that take place at the village level. The government liaison officers are the government women representatives and the government representatives from the Village Councils, formerly known as the village pulenuu or village mayors. They are selected by the village communities for a term of three years that is renewable upon consensus within the Village Council (Toelupe-Tago, 2007).

The responsibilities of the government liaison officers include the coordination, implementation and monitoring of health-related programmes as well as educational and environmental community development initiatives. This coordination, implementation and monitoring is then fed to the national level through the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development as the national focal point for all community-based initiatives and programmes or through other ministries and agencies directly leading these initiatives. The government liaison officers basically represent the government at the village level and are tasked with filtering of information from the national level to the local level. They therefore have a very influential position in the village community. The importance of their role is such that they are the ones that answer to the government regarding the progress and or non-progress of any village-based governmental initiative. They are paid fortnightly allowances by the government for playing this role (Toelupe-Tago, 2007).

In 2013 the Government of Samoa passed legislation to allow special measures to increase the number of women in parliament to 10 percent. The change made allowances for a minimum number of parliamentary seats to be filled by women. When the general elections were held in 2016, with 24 women standing as candidates out of 164 candidates, four women were elected to the 50-seat parliament and one was appointed to meet the quota. The adoption of this legislation reflects, to some degree, the political will for gender equality and demonstrates progress toward global commitments such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), CEDAW and others.

Social and cultural context

Samoa is a Polynesian Island country that prides itself on having a unique culture and language that distinguish it from other Pacific countries. Despite many social and economic changes, Samoan culture and language have remained relatively strong to date. The Samoan family unit is central to Samoan social structure and culture and it is a fundamental part of one's designation or *faasinomaga*. Village communities are made up of a number of families and their extended families. Families within village communities are often almost all related to each other. This helps to ensure a strong sense of collectiveness and community that facilitates sustainable community development initiatives. The extended family is perceived as a safety structure which provides security and cohesion within the community. While this has been severely tested by mounting economic and social pressures, it remains the key instrument for achieving social harmony. The role of families is considered crucial in ensuring that present and future generations enjoy a decent quality of life (Toelupe-Tago, 2007).

The *faa-samoa*, or the Samoan culture, remains the strong and intact foundation for social and political existence and forms a critical element of national security and stability. A typical extended family setting is comprised of one main matai as the head of the family, other matais and all members of the extended family, who play an important role in village politics and consequently national politics. Very often, the larger the extended family, the greater their influence on village politics and this can have both positive and negative implications for development (Toelupe-Tago, 2007).



Within the village social structure, there is the village council or *fono*, which is the governance forum within the village. Additionally, there are other traditional groups attached to this forum: the *nuu o tamaitai* (group of daughters of the village) and the *aumaga* (group of untitled men). These groups are the basic units of any village community and they have clearly defined roles and responsibilities that contribute to the development of the village. Substantial value is placed on the different roles of the various social units within the village structure, but they need to be managed effectively through strong leadership to ensure that the strengths of these social units are utilized for the benefit of the whole community (Toelupe-Tago, 2007).

2.3 Human development

Samoa's human development index (HDI) value for 2017 was 0.713 – in the high human development category – positioning Samoa at 104 out of 189 countries and

territories ranked. Between 1990 and 2017, Samoa's HDI increased by 15 percent (United Nations Development Programme, 2018). There is no gender-disaggregated data on the Samoa HDI nor available information on the Gender Development Index (GDI) and Gender Inequality Index (GII) for Samoa.

An analysis of the Samoa Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) 2013/14 revealed that Samoa's population living under the Basic Needs Poverty Line (BNPL) was 18.8 percent, dropping from 26.9 percent in 2008 (Moustafa, 2016).

At the national level, 40 percent of women working in subsistence agriculture are below the BNPL. In North West Upolu the rate is higher, with 70 percent of women below the BNPL. This reflects the challenges faced by women in trying to support themselves through subsistence agriculture and the small percentage of women who are able to make a comfortable living in doing so.

⁵ One WST (Samoa tala) is equivalent to USD 0.37 as of August 2019.

⁶ In Samoa, health care is mostly subsidized by the Government, covering 66 percent of all health expenditures. Donor funding covers 21 percent of the total health expenditures while 9 percent of the total health expenditures are covered by citizens' incomes (Samoa Bureau of Statistics, 2014).

One in every five households in Samoa is listed as female-headed (20 percent) and there is no significant variation between rural and urban areas, with 23 percent in Apia Urban compared to 19 percent in Savaii and 20 percent in North West Upolu (Moustafa, 2016). Nationally, 2.9 percent of female-headed households and 2.8 percent of male-headed households are below the food poverty line. More female-headed households, 12.8 percent, are below the BNPL compared to 10.1 percent of male-headed households, reflecting increased vulnerability for female-headed households.

In terms of protection mechanisms, the Government of Samoa provides a National Provident Fund and a worker compensation scheme for those in the formal sector, with voluntary participation by those in the informal sector. Furthermore, the Samoa National Provident Fund administers the Senior Citizens Benefit Scheme (SCBS) a universal social benefit pension which pays WST 130 to 8 700 beneficiaries a month (Amosa & Samson, 2012).⁵

2.3.1 Health

Samoa's health sector is composed of public and private health care systems. NGOs, academic institutions, community-based organizations and development partners also play various roles in providing health care services.⁶ The Ministry of Health (MoH) is mandated to lead the health sector in Samoa and is in charge of primary, secondary and tertiary health care facilities. Due to what had been a lack of cooperation between the key health agencies, the Ministry of Health, National Health Services (NHS) and the National Kidney Foundation (NKF) merged in 2017 (Feagaimaali'i-Luamanu, 2017).

According to the 2014 Samoa Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), a significant proportion of households surveyed reported having adult members diagnosed with non-communicable diseases (NCDs), particularly diabetes (19 percent) and hypertension (23 percent). Incidences of diabetes and hypertension were the highest (32 percent and 36 percent, respectively) among the households in the highest wealth quintile. While the rate of diabetes was the same as in 2009, hypertension appeared to be on the rise, from 19 percent in 2009 to 23 percent in 2014. Data from 2014 highlights that NCDs are responsible for 75–80 percent of disabilities and deaths in Samoa (Samoa Bureau of Statistics, 2014). The prevalence of diabetes in the 25–64 year old age group rose from 22.3 percent in 2002 to 45.8 percent in 2013 (Martyn *et al.*, 2017).

Smoking of cigarettes and pipe and the use of other tobacco products is relatively widespread in Samoa. Men aged 25–49 years are more than twice as likely to smoke cigarettes compared to women of the same age. For women, cigarette smoking is most prevalent among those aged 45–49 years (19.4 percent) and those living in urban areas (17.8 percent) compared to rural women (11.0 percent). While, alarmingly, nearly half of adult men aged 25–44 years smoke cigarettes or pipe, the incidence of smoking for men decreases after the age of 45 years. As with women, men in urban areas are more likely to smoke (39.4 percent) compared to rural men (34.6 percent) (Samoa Bureau of Statistics, 2014).

Alcohol consumption is higher among men (44 percent) compared to women (9 percent). Age plays a role in alcohol consumption. The DHS 2014 identified that 14 percent of males aged 15–19 years were drinking alcohol, which peaked at 58 percent of males aged 30–34 years consuming alcohol. Alcohol consumption was higher for both women and men living in urban areas (19 percent and 58 percent, respectively) compared to rural women and men (5.5 percent and 40.4 percent, respectively).

Ninety-eight percent of pregnant urban women and 92.3 percent of pregnant rural women have received antenatal care during their last pregnancy from a skilled medical provider such as a doctor, nurse or midwife. Women from the lowest wealth quintiles are less likely to receive skilled antenatal care compared to women in the highest wealth quintile (89.1 percent compared to 98.2 percent). The majority of urban and rural women deliver in a health facility (96.6 percent and 78.5 percent, respectively). The likelihood for a woman to deliver in a health facility decreases with her age, number of previous deliveries, lower education and also in lower wealth quintiles (Samoa Bureau of Statistics, 2014).

Both rural and urban women have indicated the same concerns in accessing health care when having serious health problems. Namely, they are concerned that no drugs will be available (77 percent of both urban and rural women) and that no provider will be available (74.8 percent of urban and 73.5 percent of rural women). About a quarter of both urban (24.9 percent) and rural (23.7 percent) women indicated that they need permission to go for a treatment, and this was more pronounced for young women aged 15–19 years (31.5 percent) (Samoa Bureau of Statistics, 2014).

2.3.2 Education and literacy

In Samoa there are four formal education levels: 1) early childhood education (kindergarten/pre-school for children aged 3–5 years); 2) primary and secondary education (years 1 to 13); and 3) higher education (comprised of post-secondary and tertiary education).

According to the 2016 national census, out of the 179 052 people of school age recorded, 93 percent of those aged 3 years and above attended school (94 percent of all age-eligible females and 93 percent of all age-eligible males). School attendance was nearly equal in urban and rural areas (94 percent and 93 percent, respectively). Seven percent of the total target population aged 3 years and above were not in school, most of whom were living in rural areas, particularly in the North West Upolu region (39 percent). School attendance peaks (above 90 percent) for both sexes aged between 7 and 13 years. At the age of 14, school attendance starts declining, at a quicker for males than females between the ages of 14 to 20 years. After the age of 21, school attendance is similar for both males and females. The 2016 census results indicate that about 2 percent of children aged 6–14 years were out of school, of which 60 percent never attended school and 40 percent dropped out of school in the last reference year.⁷ Most (80 percent) of the out-of-school children resided in rural areas. It is interesting to note that numbers of girls never attending school was higher, whereas dropping out of school rates before completion were higher for boys.

Overall, literacy is very high, at 96.8 percent in Samoa (98.5 percent in urban areas and 96.3 percent in rural areas). There are no major gendered differences. Age-disaggregation indicates that literacy levels decrease with higher age, most significantly for both women and men aged 70 and above. Youth literacy⁸ is nearly universal, at 99.1 percent, with some minor gendered discrepancies between males (98.9 percent) and females (99.3 percent) and between urban areas

(99.7 percent) and rural areas (98.9 percent) (Samoa Bureau of Statistics, 2014).

An assessment to determine investment into the Samoan education sector support programme indicated that there was low relevance of secondary education to the Samoan population and economy. The current secondary school curriculum is highly geared toward the upper secondary examinations that give university entrance rather than looking towards training pathways and employment possibilities in Samoa and regionally (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Australia, 2018).

2.3.3 Employment

The 2016 census results indicate that nearly half of the employed population (42 percent) is engaged in agriculture-, livestock-, forestry- and fishery-related occupations (Samoa Bureau of Statistics, 2018). According to the 2017 Labour Force Survey, the labour force participation rate for Samoa is 43.3 percent, compared to 32.2 percent in 2012.⁹ However, unemployment rates rose from 8.7 percent in 2012 to 14.5 percent in 2017 (Samoa Bureau of Statistics, 2017).

Approximately 62 900 people are identified as economically inactive, or outside the labour force.¹⁰ Out of them, 59 percent are females compared to 41 percent males. Pertinent to this gender assessment is that 82.9 percent of the economically inactive people live in rural areas. Women with the highest level of economic inactivity were those aged 15–19 years (94.8 percent), those who had never been married (78.2 percent), those with 5 or more children (79.1 percent) (albeit closely followed by women without children (78.2 percent)),¹¹ those with only primary or no education (87 percent), those from the lowest wealth quintile (83.5 percent) and those living in rural areas (77.5 percent) (Samoa Bureau of Statistics, 2014). The economic inactivity of men mirrors the above profile (Samoa Bureau of Statistics, 2014).

⁷ Dropping out of school occurs when a learner withdraws from learning or school before completing the programme, for whatever reasons (Samoa Bureau of Statistics, 2014).

⁸ Youth literacy refers to the literacy of the population aged 15–24 years.

⁹ The labour force participation rate is defined as the proportion of the economy's working age group 15 years and over that is economically active in the production of goods and services.

¹⁰ According to the ILO, a person is economically inactive if he or she is not part of the labour force, meaning that this person is neither employed nor unemployed and is neither available to work nor looking for work.

¹¹ Children may not pose a serious constraint on Samoan women's employment if they receive child care assistance within the extended family or from domestic helpers, which is common in Samoa. However, when women have a large number of children, they may need to increase their child care participation, which can obstruct their employability (Samoa Bureau of Statistics, 2014).



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Overall, Samoan women are mostly employed in sales and services (31.6 percent), in professional, technical or managerial positions (30.2 percent) or in clerical positions (16 percent). Only 3.3 percent of Samoan women are employed in agriculture. This general occupational trend is mirrored also in the employment of rural women (31.6 percent, 29.3 percent and 14.0 percent, respectively). Only 4.6 percent of rural and 0.5 percent of urban women report being employed in agriculture.¹² It appears that women from the lowest three wealth quintiles are predominantly employed in sales and services, whereas women from the top two wealth quintiles are predominantly employed in technical, professional and managerial occupations.

Overall, most employed Samoan men work as unskilled manual labourers (21.8 percent), work in sales and services (21.2 percent) or work in agriculture (21.1 percent). Most rural men report that they are employed in agriculture (25.5 percent) or work as unskilled, manual labourers (24.8 percent). Overall, men from the bottom three wealth quintiles are mainly employed in agriculture or work as unskilled, manual labourers, whereas men from the fourth wealth quintile are mainly employed in sales and services (23.5 percent) and men from the top wealth quintile are mostly employed in technical, professional and managerial occupations (41.5 percent).

Most women employed in agriculture are not paid (88.1 percent) and/or are self-employed (88.3 percent) and almost two-thirds of them are employed throughout the year (61.7 percent). A similar trend is noticeable for men employed in agriculture (76.2 percent are not paid, 82.1 percent are self-employed and 68.5 percent are employed the whole year). There are, however, some notable gender differences.

Such gender differences can be seen, for instance, in employment outside of the agricultural sector. Most women employed in non-agricultural sectors are employed by a non-family member (81.1 percent) and nearly all of them are employed the whole year (94.7 percent). Men are less likely than women to be employed by a non-family member (72.4 percent) and to hold employment throughout the year (86 percent) (Samoa Bureau of Statistics, 2014).

Based on findings from the community consultations in Falevao/Lalomauga and Lotofaga, the gendered division of labour dictates that men undertake labour-intensive jobs such as planting taro, clearing the land, deep sea fishing and cleaning fish reserves, while women are mainly involved in vegetable gardens, selling vegetables by the roadside, gathering seafood from the foreshore, cleaning the foreshore, tilapia feeding and chicken raising. More research on gendered division of labour as well as on gendered time use in rural Samoa is needed.

¹² The low reporting of rural women's occupation in agriculture may indicate underreporting of their employment as contributing family members on family farms or as subsistence farmers. This may also be a reason why women's employment in agriculture is lower than it is for men.

2.3.4 Basic infrastructure and sanitation

The Samoa water sector has performed well in the attainment of MDG targets for access to improved water and sanitation services. Sixty-nine percent of households in Samoa (a total of 19 931) had access to improved drinking water in 2016.¹³ Additionally, about 22 percent of all households in Samoa own a water tank, the majority of which (80 percent) have been reported in rural areas (Samoa Bureau of Statistics, 2018b).

The 2016 Census also reported that 97 percent of the Samoan population is using an improved sanitation facility and that 85 percent of all households have access to closed sewage and liquid waste disposal.¹⁴

Firewood, coconut husks and shells are the main sources of cooking fuel for 60 percent of all households, especially in rural areas. Nearly all households (96.4 percent) use electricity as their main source for lighting, with no major rural-urban discrepancies.

Results of the 2016 census indicate that nearly half (44 percent) of Samoan households own a vehicle, whereas households in rural areas more commonly use public transportation.

Mobile phone use is widespread, with over 90 percent of all households owning a mobile phone.

2.3.5 Gender inequality

It is important to note that while advances have been made for women in Samoa, particularly in relation to education, challenges remain in advancing gender equality, both in general and in rural areas in particular. As reported by the Government of Samoa to the CEDAW Committee, customary norms are the main impediment to women's full participation in political and public life (MWCSO, 2017).

Persistent challenges can be linked to socially constructed gender roles maintained within the family and community settings. Increases in family incomes and assets have not significantly improved women's decision-making abilities or their positioning within their homes and communities.

While some of the positive advancements in the status of women in Samoa can be attributed to their economic and professional attainments, research suggests that in the Samoan context, women's decision-making status and the gradual breakdown of gender-biased practices within the home and community remain dependent on other more pertinent social and cultural factors, such as marital and social status.

The 2009 DHS found that factors such as age and locality had a much stronger correlation with women's decision-making abilities within the family compared to women's financial earnings or formal employment status. Older women are more likely than younger women to participate in household decision-making and women from urban areas are more likely to participate in decision making than women from rural areas.

This indicates a need for more analysis on how to equitably address the needs of women and men in providing for their families, including in decision making and control over key assets.

During the research for this Assessment, most interviewees stated that "gender is not an issue," as women are regarded very highly in Samoan society and "are treated like queens" in their communities. They expressed that it would be considered an insult to males for women to be seen doing tasks requiring physical labour. According to the interviewees and to feedback from the validation workshop, Samoan women are given a position of prestige.

This notion is also prevalent in governmental ministries in Samoa, where a number of respondents noted that gender is not considered to be an issue because Samoan culture honours women and "places them on a pedestal." This perspective, which may not be an accurate reflection of gender equality, was also found in a previous gender mainstreaming stocktake, which found limited awareness and technical capacity of governmental institutions to implement mainstreaming approaches.

¹³ According to the Samoa Water Sector definition, improved drinking water includes water supplied by the Samoa Water Authority (SWA), metered water and purchased bottled water.

¹⁴ Improved sanitation refers to private households using flush or pour-flush toilets or ventilated improved pit latrine toilets.

3

Policy, legislative and institutional context



This section includes two main components: an analysis of relevant policies and strategies and a stocktake of the ministries' capacities in mainstreaming gender in their policies, strategies, plans and programmes.

3.1 Gender equality frameworks in Samoa

The Constitution provides for equality of women and men, among other fundamental rights, under law and in the Strategy for the Development of Samoa 2016/17–2019/20 the Government commits to “improve the quality of life for all.”

Significantly, Samoa is the first Pacific Island nation to have ratified the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1992 and is party to CEDAW without reservations. The state has reported three times to the CEDAW Committee, with its last report submitted in 2017. The Committee raised a number of concerns, including the lack of awareness amongst women living in rural and remote areas of their rights under the Convention and their lack of access to information to be able to claim their rights. The Committee has also pointed out that electoral laws in Samoa run contrary to the Convention. This is because they restrict women from participating in elections, since only matai (title holders, of which very few are women) are eligible to contest parliamentary elections. The Government of Samoa has acknowledged that this is indirect discrimination and a restriction on women's participation in the national political sphere, as fewer women hold chiefly titles compared to men. However, the government has stated that it is not yet ready to change this criterion due to customary norms but is trying through other avenues such as the Constitutional Amendment Act 2013, which sets the minimum number of women members of parliament at 10 percent (Ministry for Women, Community and Social Development, 2017).

In addition to CEDAW, the commitment of the Government of Samoa to gender equality is reflected in a number of other international and regional commitments. These include:

- The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), acceded to in 1990
- The Beijing Platform for Action and the Revised Pacific Regional Platform for Action (1995)
- The Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration (PLGED) (2012)
- The Sustainable Development Goals (2016)

International and national commitments inform policies that incorporate gender equality considerations across the Government. At the sectorial level, MWCSD has finalized the development of a Village Governance Strategy (2012–2016), Community Integrated Management and Development Plans (2002–2003 and 2004–2007) and the Community Development Sector Plan Monitoring and Evaluation Framework 2016–2021. Each of these has informed and influenced the Gender Equality Policy that was launched in December 2016.

The Samoa National Policy for Gender Equality 2016–2020 is intended to ensure a Samoa in which men, women, boys and girls are able to lead the best lives they can. It acknowledges and recognizes that gender equality and equity are prerequisites to achieving Samoa's national development goals and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Key intended policy outcomes of the Samoa Gender Equality Policy 2016–2020

1. Safe families and communities, including an end to violence against women and children
2. Healthy women and girls
3. Equal economic opportunities for women
4. Increased participation of women in public leadership and decision making
5. Increased access to education and gender-sensitive education curriculum
6. Enhanced gender equality approaches to community resilience and disaster preparedness
7. Enhanced institutional mechanisms for the promotion of gender equality

3.2 Mapping and assessment of relevant ARD policies, strategies and frameworks¹⁵

The Samoa Agriculture Sector Plan 2016–2020

The agricultural sector in Samoa is strategically guided by the Agriculture Sector Plan (ASP) 2016–2020. The ASP provides a framework directing programmes and actions oriented to increasing food, nutrition and income security in Samoa. The ASP recognizes the importance of partnerships and aims to strengthen partnerships between the government, the private sector, NGOs and development partners. To do so, the ASP emphasises the need to build capacity to enable staff to manage partnerships with all strategic partners while concurrently supporting ownership of commitments to gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment within relevant ministries.

The ASP makes specific references to increasing women's engagement in agriculture and rural livelihoods through 1) improving food security, nutrition and income-generating opportunities in rural areas and 2) supporting increased agricultural incomes and employment-generating opportunities for women and youth. Specific desired results include:

- Increased capacity of rural women to run successful chicken farming enterprises, producing for home consumption and sale, measured by the number of (new) successful chicken farming enterprises run by women
- Improved skills and knowledge among rural women and youth in fruit growing, processing, preservation and business enterprise and marketing, measured by the number of (new) successful fruit processing and marketing enterprises they are running
- Increased capacity among rural women and youth to develop viable small-scale fisheries value-added and marketing enterprises measured by the number of (new) successful small-scale fisheries value-added and marketing enterprises they are running

Samoa National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Management 2017–2021

The Samoa National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Management 2017–2021, prepared by the Disaster Management Office of the Government of Samoa, acknowledges the need for women in decision-making positions in disaster planning and post-disaster management. The Plan also acknowledges women as key stakeholders in their communities, as well as being a vulnerable group. Combating violence against women is highlighted as a priority area in the Plan within disaster risk management and post-disaster planning. Agriculture is highlighted as one of the 14 priority sectors for disaster risk management.

National Disaster Management Plan 2017–2020

The National Disaster Management Plan 2017–2020 highlights gender-sensitive policymaking, monitoring and evaluation, as well as integrating gender into vulnerability, risk and capacity assessments. The Plan also highlights furthering women's participation and leadership in disaster management and promotes the systematic collection and use of sex- and age-disaggregated data and gender analysis.

Both the Samoa National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Management and the National Disaster Management Plan are critical to the work of MAF and the empowerment of rural women. Rural women are the most affected during the times of disaster. Research shows that rural women, both in general and in Samoa in particular, are often the last to be consulted in disaster planning as well as often being the least educated and among the most marginalized by customary boundaries and structures (UN Women, 2014). The successful implementation of these disaster plans, including seriously taking a gendered approach to implementation, will lead to better managed post-disaster efforts and will ultimately benefit rural women in Samoa. Both of these plans have strong linkages to the Community Development Sector Plan and highlight the need to work with MWCSO and MAF in implementation at the community level. This presents an opportunity for gender mainstreaming support to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNR) (as the lead agency in implementing the disaster plans) through MWCSO.

¹⁵ This is not an exhaustive list of policies, plans and strategies but a selection of key documents available to the researchers at the time of the production of this Assessment.

Samoa Education Sector Plan (ESP) 2013–2018

The Samoa Education Sector Plan (ESP) brings together key education stakeholders such as the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture (MESCC), the Samoa Qualifications Authority and the National University of Samoa to apply a sector-wide approach to education in tacking national development goals (as education is also a key development issue in the Samoa Development Strategy). Equity is a guiding principle in the ESP, with goals of universal access to primary education; equality of opportunity and an environment conducive to learning for all students, taking into account gender, social background and other factors; the inclusion of students with disabilities in mainstream education; equitable distribution of resources and provision of a curriculum and assessment that promote equity of achievement in learning. The ESP has a particularly strong focus on the collection of sex-disaggregated data and the analysis and measurement of the performance of girls and boys within the education system.

Community Development Sector Plan 2016–2021

The Community Development Sector Plan (CDSP) 2016–2021, led by MWCSA, provides a framework for guiding the development of communities in Samoa. The aim of the CDSP is to empower communities to become the engines of their own development. One of the main intended outcomes of this plan which is pertinent to the agriculture and fisheries sector is the improvement of governance and inclusivity at the community level. Gender-sensitive core components of the CDSP include ending violence against women and gender-sensitive curriculum development. The CDSP contributes to other sector plans across the Government of Samoa. Provided that the community level work of MAF relies heavily on governance structures and inclusivity at the village level, the CDSP can be viewed as a critical area of engagement for MAF.

Water and Sanitation Sector Plan (WSSP) 2016–2020

The Water and Sanitation Sector Plan (WSSP), prepared by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, includes the following goals over the next four years: 1) strengthened sector governance and orientation to guide and sustain sector developments; 2) enhanced water resources resilience from “ridge to reef”; 3) increased access to and improved provision of a reliable, clean and affordable water supply; 4) improved surveillance of drinking water quality and waterborne diseases; 5) increased access to improved basic sanitation and hygiene practises, improved wastewater management

systems and accessibility of all available sanitation information; and 6) strengthened flood mitigation measures to reduce incidence and magnitude of flooding. The successful implementation of the WSSP will contribute significantly to better outcomes for rural families. As waterborne diseases are a problem in rural areas, improvements to drinking water quality will limit them. Rural women will benefit in particular, as they play a central role in the provision, management and safeguarding of water at the household level and are often the primary caretakers for the sick in their households.

3.3 Capacity to mainstream gender across agricultural and rural development sectors

Policy frameworks and enabling environments

Following an earlier SPC stocktake of the enabling environment for gender mainstreaming for Samoa carried out in 2015 (SPC, 2015), some noticeable progress has been made in terms of governmental policy frameworks. Significant institutional gaps still remain, however, particularly in gender mainstreaming, use of accountability mechanisms, technical capacity and financing.

The following five interrelated and interdependent criteria were applied in this gender stocktake of the key government institutions responsible for agriculture, fisheries and rural livelihoods:

1. Demonstrated political will, including policy frameworks, stated commitments, investment and leadership;
2. Organizational cultures supportive of gender mainstreaming approaches
3. Accountability mechanisms that facilitate collection of data, enforcement of commitments and measurement of progress
4. Technical capacity for gender analysis, collection and analysis of evidence, gender-responsive planning and programme design and monitoring and evaluation of change
5. Adequate financing to implement gender mainstreaming requirements.

MWCSA and MAF were assessed for gender-responsive enabling environments as part of this CGA-ARS. It should be noted that gender mainstreaming requires a holistic governmental approach and cannot be left only to the ministry mandated for gender equality

and women's development. Every effort should be made by the ministries responsible for agriculture and rural development to ensure gendered approaches within their mandated frameworks. The following sections outline the responses from government officials who were asked specific questions during the CGA-ARS in relation to political will, technical capacity, accountability mechanisms, organizational culture and adequate resources to determine the enabling environment criteria required for gender mainstreaming.

3.3.1 Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development

As part of its role, MWCSO functions as a catalyst for gender mainstreaming. This role is reinforced through the Strategy for Development of Samoa, which states that gender should be mainstreamed into sectorial plans. MWCSO's National Policy for Gender Equality 2016–2021 identifies clear entry points for gender mainstreaming within the Government of Samoa. Specific objectives under this policy outcome relevant to the CGA-ARS include:

- strengthening of existing entry points and accountability mechanisms for gender mainstreaming across the government
- enhancing data collection, policy analysis and research to better inform policy and programming

Additionally, one of the policy outcomes calls for equal economic opportunities for women, young people and specific vulnerable groups. Specific objectives under this policy outcome relevant to the CGA-ARS include:

- reducing the economic vulnerability of women, young people and specific vulnerable groups through support for entrepreneurship and pathways to jobs
- supporting skills development for vulnerable populations including women and young people

The CGA-ARS revealed ongoing challenges with mainstreaming gender in the agriculture and rural livelihoods sector. A particular challenge lies in the strengthening of entry points and accountability, which is linked to specific actions for MWCSO in terms of training and support provision to other ministries. While this is specified in the National Policy

for Gender Equality, no training had been offered to MAF by MWCSO, with some confusion around who is responsible for mainstreaming gender within MAF.

Another action required under the Policy is to improve the collection, analysis and dissemination of sex-disaggregated data across the Government. This assumes MWCSO will take on this role through its engagement across sectors, recognizing the need to strengthen the capacity of MWCSO to drive inter-sectorial gender mainstreaming.

Political will

Senior officers within MWCSO assessed the political commitment to gender mainstreaming within their ministry as low to medium. While clear commitments are outlined in various guiding documents including the Gender Policy, there are some concerns about the extent to which the staff within the Ministry fully understand what gender mainstreaming means. The interviews indicated that the Gender Policy was not being effectively utilized or referred to within MWCSO. Senior officials recognize the need to build capacity within the ministry in order to be more effective when holding different sectors accountable to their commitments. While the will exists with a clear political commitment to the SDG's, MWCSO needs to be able to communicate with and train relevant sectors across the government on what needs to be done at all levels, and how. Interviewees spoke openly about the lack of understanding of key concepts such as gender mainstreaming within MWCSO.

Organizational culture

Organizational culture for mainstreaming gender within MWCSO is rated medium to high based on the degree of openness of staff in the ministry to discussions about gender mainstreaming. However, due to the rapid appraisal nature of this exercise, the extent to which commitments are being acted on and monitored is not necessarily immediately clear. The Assistant CEO (ACEO) of Policy, Planning and Communications referred to regular staff meetings that were held with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) but stated that these were more of an opportunity to provide an update on the upcoming activities within each division. Since the reorganization of MWCSO in 2016, the responsibility to mainstream gender issues is shared by all ACEOs across the Ministry.¹⁶

¹⁶ Prior to a reorganization process, the National Policy for Gender Equality was under the responsibility of the Division for Women.

There is an assumption that all divisions of MWCSO are responsible for the implementation of the Gender Policy, but there is no clear evidence that this is the case. For example, the Policy and Planning Unit is focused on the new direction of the Ministry and did not refer to the Gender Policy as a guiding document since 2016. This indicates that gender equality is not an overall priority focus area within MWCSO.

A lead MWCSO respondent stated that organizational culture in other sectors is mixed, with many senior officials articulating desirable responses when it comes to gender mainstreaming, but without evidence of clear action and achievements. It was noted that there is significant scope to increase knowledge on how to implement gender equality and mainstreaming across sectors. The MWCSO CEO noted that while it is important to have women in leadership roles, it is equally important that both men and women understand the benefits of gender mainstreaming and optimal ways to implement it.

Technical capacity

MWCSO senior staff recognize the limitations in the understanding of gender mainstreaming amongst the staff within their ministry. They identified technical capacity within the ministry as low to medium. Some expressed concerns that staff talk about gender but often have limited knowledge of what it actually means and noted a need for training. As highlighted by the MWCSO CEO, the ministry needs to step up its knowledge and skills in this area in order to be more effective when providing support and advice across the government. While MWCSO senior staff recognize that MWCSO is not the only ministry responsible for mainstreaming gender, they also recognize the need to capacitate their staff to offer substantive input when called upon for assistance by other ministries.

The MWCSO officials interviewed indicated that their policy, research and planning staff have been assigned the responsibility to mainstream gender across sectors, including in agriculture and rural development. MWCSO deems it important to collaborate with other sectors and to capacitate gender equality and social inclusion experts across the government. However, it was also observed during the consultation that there are capacity constraints of the MWCSO teams responsible for delivering this technical service.

Accountability mechanisms

The MWCSO officials indicated that accountability across sectors is low and noted that there are ongoing discussions about inserting accountability clauses into CEO contracts for the achievement of SDGs 4 and 5. There is a precedent for this since the ACEOs currently have contractual commitments to governance indicators.

The findings on accountability are in line with the 2015 SPC stocktake that identified weak and sometimes non-existent accountability mechanisms for gender mainstreaming government-wide and recognized that holding the government accountable for its duty to promote gender equality is complex, requiring political will and commitment as well as enforcement by senior government officials and politicians.¹⁷

Adequate financing

In terms of adequate resources for work on gender mainstreaming, the interviewees within MWCSO noted commitment as low to medium. Officials of the Economic Empowerment Division, which manages project funds and grants, emphasized that the provision of resources to support cross-sectorial gender mainstreaming, particularly in agriculture, is low.

The Economic Empowerment Division receives support from donors and the government to work with vulnerable groups. This work is correlated to the third policy outcome of the National Policy for Gender Equality, namely the provision of equal economic opportunities for women, young people and specific vulnerable groups. Under the projects managed by this Division, women and other vulnerable groups are supported to gain employment and start small businesses through small grant schemes. Reportedly, 80 percent of the total of 147 projects supported under the Samoan Women Supporting Pacific Development scheme were women's agriculture projects such as poultry farming and vegetable farms. Through this scheme, women are assisted with financial literacy and basic business training and are monitored for three years when they are able to tap into the support provided through other organizations such as the Small Business Enterprise Centre (SBEC) or the Samoa Development Bank.

¹⁷ SPC Stocktake of the Gender Mainstreaming Capacity of Pacific Island Governments – Samoa, 2015

Table 1: Summary of the enabling environment assessment of the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development

Indicative findings		
Enabling environment criteria	Enabling factors	Constraints
Commitment at leadership level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High-level commitments to gender equality are reflected in the National Policy for Gender Equality and in the establishment of MWCSO. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A clear mandate provision for the implementation of the National Policy for Gender Equality within MWCSO is lacking following organizational restructuring. The National Policy for Gender Equality is not effectively utilized or referred to within MWCSO. The Ministry is still in the process of finalizing a strategic plan that will include commitments to mainstreaming gender equality.
Organizational culture and internal willingness to address gender issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As the Ministry responsible for the implementation of gender equality commitments, the level of commitment to addressing gender issues is recognized as medium to high by all relevant Ministry divisions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With the restructure and the merging of responsibilities of the previous Division of Women with other divisions, there is uncertainty concerning the responsibility over the gender equality mainstreaming mandate within the Ministry and across relevant sectors.
Technical capacity to identify and address gender issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MWCSO senior staff recognize the level of technical capacity within the MWCSO as low to medium. There is a need for further training and awareness raising within the Ministry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff lacks capacity to work across sectors and to hold them accountable to gender mainstreaming commitments. There is a lack of capacity for gender analysis within MWCSO.
Accountability mechanisms and systems to enforce commitments to gender mainstreaming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are regular meetings with the CEO where all divisional ACEOs provide updates from their divisions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are weak or non-existent accountability mechanisms in relation to gender mainstreaming, with no particular unit driving the implementation of the National Policy for Gender Equality. Relevant divisions are not paying attention to the Policy.
Adequate financial and human resources to implement gender mainstreaming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MWCSO's Economic Empowerment Division works on the promotion of equal economic opportunities for women, young people and other vulnerable groups. The Samoan Women Supporting Pacific Development scheme supports women-led projects in agriculture. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall, the institutional commitment to adequate resources provision for gender equality mainstreaming within MWCSO is low to medium. Provision of resources to gender equality mainstreaming in other sectors, particularly agriculture, is low.



3.3.2 Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries

While gender equality commitments are outlined in the MAF Corporate Plan and in the ASP, these commitments and actions are not integrated in a cross-cutting manner. Some approaches to meeting gender targets in the ASP are strategic, for example, ensuring an increase in women's participation in certain agricultural activities. Other approaches are more ad hoc and dependent upon the will of women in a given community to attend trainings as opposed to MAF officials clearly specifying the numbers of those to be trained to ensure gender balance.

The policy commitments in the ASP require a specific focus from the different divisions within the ministry to increase the capacity of women for income generation through, for instance, value addition and marketing of agricultural produce. However, all the work is done within the confines of what is already considered women's domain in agriculture, such as poultry farming, small-scale fisheries and fruit growing and preservation. There is little recognition of the key roles that women have across the sector, although there are opportunities for such, informed by gender analysis.

Political will

In reviewing the enabling environment for gender mainstreaming within MAF, interviewees involved in crops, livestock and policy and planning shared the

view that the political will and level of commitment surrounding gender mainstreaming within MAF are medium to high. They referenced the clear commitments in the ASP and the Corporate Plan and also the presence of representation by MWCSD on the Agriculture Sector Steering Committee (ASSC) and in working groups responsible for the delivery of key outcomes. They noted the delivery of activities to communities involving ongoing efforts to engage with the women's representatives in the communities to ensure that women benefit from the training activities and services provided.

In livestock, where women are traditionally engaged in poultry and egg production, the interviewees highlighted a clear commitment to ensuring that a minimum of 30 percent of the 800 farmers targeted per year for training under the ASP are women. There is increased interest in cattle husbandry among young women and farmers are involving their daughters in recordkeeping. While farming of cattle, pigs and sheep is mainly done by men, MAF officers are encouraging farmers to bring substitutes with them who could do the work in their absence and are pushing for 50 percent representation of both women and men in all training activities related to rearing of larger animals. Women are generally believed to be lacking confidence in this area due to their limited exposure, but through a concerted effort via the ASP, more women are encouraged to participate.

Technical capacity

In terms of technical capacity to mainstream gender across MAF, the interviewees stated that it is low to medium at present. They noted the absence of gender focal points and the fact that there had been very little training on gender and agriculture; although divisions were doing their best to implement the commitments under the ASP through the inclusion of women in all activities and programmes. They also noted that there was no analysis of sex-disaggregated data although there is a willingness to do such analysis if proper training and tools were provided.

Organizational Culture

All MAF respondents rated the quality of organizational culture and support for gender mainstreaming within MAF as medium to high. They made reference to the 50 percent balance of women and men at the level of ACEO within the Ministry and the high representation of women at principal and senior officer levels. The low number of female technical and extension officers was noted as an issue still to be addressed. These findings are similar to that of the 2015 stocktake, when respondents associated the improved gender balance within the ministry with a positive organizational culture.

While there are no gender focal points within the MAF and no gender mainstreaming requirements in job descriptions, the focus on the inclusion of women and women's empowerment within the sector was seen as positive by interviewed officials. Indicators in the ASP include the number of women extension service providers and the number of women attending trainings provided by extension officers. All respondents highlighted the gathering of sex-disaggregated data and the monitoring of numbers of women and men when conducting activities or trainings in the field as a positive indication of organizational culture.

Although there is no specific gender policy in place for MAF, those interviewed recall participation of MAF staff in gender sensitisation workshops conducted in the past by the Public Service Commission and MWCSO.

Within the Fisheries Division, principal fisheries officers and female senior officers direct most of the work. However, prior to their participation in gender awareness trainings, they expressed a bias

towards men in their perception of aquaculture farmers. These internal biases influenced the way they conducted their community engagement, often preferring to speak to the males of the household and not recognizing the contributions of women to the maintenance and upkeep of some aquaculture farms. This awareness shifted following the training and their direct involvement in data gathering as part of the SPC gender and aquaculture study conducted in 2018.

It is important for all agriculture and fisheries staff working with communities to undergo gender training in order to recognize that women are farmers in their own right – who do more than merely support male farmers. The Assessment noted that while some activities specifically target women, mainstreaming across the whole of agricultural sector programming is not taking place.

Accountability mechanisms

When asked about accountability mechanisms to ensure commitments to mainstreaming gender were being carried out systematically, MAF respondents rated progress in this area as medium. They noted that they have working groups with representation from MWCSO to support accountability. The working groups meet bimonthly and are required to submit quarterly reports to a steering committee on ASP outputs. However, the MAF officers interviewed were of the view that gender mainstreaming is and should stay the responsibility of MWCSO. This is a common misconception when it comes to mainstreaming gender across government sectors. However, implementing gender mainstreaming lies with the entire staff of public institutions under the leadership of their respective management. Furthermore, MWCSO officials indicated during the CGA-ARS process that in working group settings, their staff are often ill-equipped to contribute to technical discussions on gender in agriculture, with much more up-skilling required in this area.

Adequate financing

When asked about the financing of gender mainstreaming within the agriculture and rural livelihoods sector, all interviewees recognized this as low, highlighting there being no specific allocation for mainstreaming, with the commitments being integrated into ongoing activities as possible.

Table 2: Enabling Environment Assessment for Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries

Indicative findings		
Enabling environment criteria	Enabling factors	Constraints
Commitment at leadership level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key commitments to gender equality are reflected in the Agriculture Sector Plan 2016–2020 that guides the work of the agriculture sector. • MAF has nearly an equal number of women and men in senior positions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is absence of a gender policy or gender focal points to reflect and complement commitments of the ASP and the Corporate Plan.
Organizational culture and internal willingness to address gender issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff within Livestock, Crops and Fisheries/Aquaculture divisions indicated willingness to address gender issues. • There is recognition that due to socio-cultural gender norms, men are always seen to be the ones to carry out the labour-intensive tasks in agriculture. • MAF officials pledged to make more effort to engage rural women in training activities and to carry out awareness raising on gender issues in agriculture. • MAF officials recognize the key cross-cutting role of MWCSO, hence their representation in the ASSC ASP and working groups responsible for two of the four ASP outcomes.¹⁸ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a result of the equal numbers of women in senior positions in MAF and the ongoing efforts to be inclusive, many officials are of the view that “gender is not an issue.” This reveals a lack of understanding of gender concepts (though there is willingness to further develop this understanding). • The presence of MWCSO representatives in the WG and the ASSC revealed a shifting of responsibility of gender mainstreaming to MWCSO, which is believed by MAF officials to have the specialized skills for the work. • Low numbers of female technical and extension officers need to be addressed.
Technical capacity to identify and address gender issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MAF officials rated the technical capacity as low to medium, as there has been very little training on gender in ARD. • Both the Crops and Livestock divisions are working to meet their commitments towards the ASP by working to increase the number of women receiving trainings in order to boost their capacities and incomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an absence of gender focal points or others with direct responsibility for the implementation of gender commitments. • There is a lack of capacity for gender analysis and strategic implementation of the gender commitments in the ASP.
Accountability mechanisms and systems to enforce commitments to gender mainstreaming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The presence of a MWCSO representative in the ASP working groups serves as an accountability mechanism. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a lack of accountability and responsibility within the MAF for commitments towards gender equality in the ASP. This is perceived as exclusively MWCSO’s mandate.
Adequate financial and human resources to implement gender mainstreaming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No financial and human resources are allocated to support gender mainstreaming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is low commitment to the provision of adequate financial resources for gender equality and women’s empowerment in agriculture.

¹⁸ Working groups (WGs) meet bimonthly and the ASSC meets quarterly to review the data and information obtained by the WGs.

4

Gender analysis of agriculture and the rural sector



The agricultural sector produced a total value of WST 34.3 million in real terms, increasing by 6.8 percent in September 2017 compared to the previous year. According to the Samoa Bureau of Statistics, the sector contributes 7.8 percent to the total nominal GDP. This growth is attributed to the increase in agricultural produce supplied to markets, such as taro (up by 121 percent), coconuts (up by 19 percent), cucumbers (up by 19 percent) and tomatoes (up by 11 percent), compared to the same period the previous year (Samoa Bureau of Statistics, 2018c).

The agricultural sector in Samoa is integral for rural livelihoods and incomes, food security and healthy nutrition. Approximately 97 percent of all households in the country are engaged in some form of agriculture. However, of those, only 19 percent have agriculture as their main source of income (Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, 2016). According to the 2009 Samoan agriculture census, most agriculture (86 percent) is carried out on customary land, 9 percent on freehold land and 3 percent on leased government land. Only 1 percent of agriculture is carried out on leased customary land and leased freehold land (Samoa Bureau of Statistics, 2009).

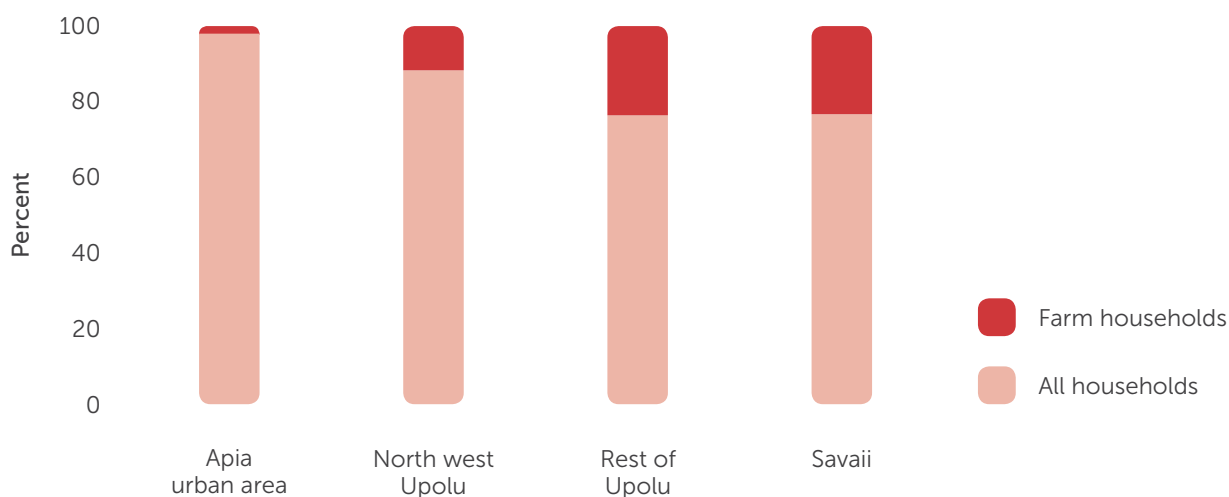
More men than women are employed in agriculture and men outnumber women in agricultural farm households. Yet, as shown in subsection 2.3.3,

women's engagement in agriculture may be underreported and not captured in official employment data.

Paid non-agricultural work provides the main source of income for nearly half the households in Samoa. There are large regional differences: in 2015, paid non-agricultural work was the main source of income for three-quarters of households in Apia Urban Area, compared with only a quarter in Savaii. This reflects the greater opportunities for formal employment in Upolu, especially in Apia. In Savaii, 30 percent of households reported their main source of income as "other," which includes pensions and remittances, compared to only 10 percent in Apia Urban Area (Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, 2015).

In 2015, there were 5 303 farm households in Samoa.¹⁹ These households rely on agriculture for their livelihoods and are of special interest in analysing the agricultural sector. Farm households are most common in Rest of Upolu (ROU) and Savaii. Nearly a third of households in those two regions are farm households, compared with only 13 percent in North West Upolu (NWU) and 1 percent in Apia Urban Area (AUA). This reflects the greater urbanization of areas around Apia and the availability of alternative employment (Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, 2015).

Figure 1: Percent of households by farm household status and region, 2015



Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, 2015.

¹⁹ A farm household is defined as a household for which the main source of income is growing crops and/or raising livestock.

Agriculture in Samoa is becoming more market-oriented. Based on the priorities under the Agriculture Sector Plan (ASP) 2016–2020, the government has placed a strong emphasis on expanding and improving commercial agriculture and fisheries production systems as well as reinforcing agricultural value chains to boost private investment (Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, 2016). The Assessment identified a number of different initiatives for improving food security and nutrition and for enhancing income-generating opportunities in rural areas. This chapter provides an analysis of some gender disparities in the agriculture sector. It also outlines a number of ways in which rural women are engaged in agriculture as the sector becomes more market-oriented. This section is also informed by the key informant interviews and community consultations undertaken for the Assessment.

4.1 Gender and land

Samoans traditionally have rights to the use of customary land through both their paternal and maternal lineages. Women who move to live with their husband's family after marriage traditionally have to help their husband fulfil his role as *tama tane*²⁰ in serving their *feagaiga* or sisters. This change of roles is often perceived as a woman assuming a subordinate role, including in relation to female members of the household. In terms of access to customary land, women have access to it through their husbands.²¹

Landowners are registered as farmers when they seek assistance from MAF. Therefore, MAF recognizes women in their own villages as landowners even where the husband does most of the plantation work. It is commonly recognized in Samoa that women have customary property rights. Most people in Samoa do not have individual rights to property, which is generally shared by a family unit (Schoeffel, 2016).

While land has traditionally been in the custody of the highest-ranking matai, a number of factors related

to modern life are contributing to a change. These include the decline in matai authority over land, the splitting of chiefly titles and the differing interests of Samoans living in villages and those living abroad. Today, portions of customary land that families live on and cultivate are recognized as their own family property. Customary land can be leased with the consent of all those who have rights to it and it is the responsibility of the matai who has authority over the land to obtain this consent. Where this is not possible and there is conflict, cases are referred to the Land and Titles Court (Meleisea *et al.*, 2015).

As outlined above, there are some benefits of the traditional Samoan village governance for women who remain in their own villages after marriage. In general, however, the system presents significant barriers to women's access and participation in decision-making forums such as local government councils, church leadership, school management and community-based organizations. Within the traditional village setting, a woman's status and her access to and control over resources are largely determined by birth order and marital status in the family. High status and respect are given to the eldest female of the family, with the status of the male family member's wife much lower than that of his sister or their daughter.

In the village setting a woman operates within one of three social groups according to her age, marital status and whether she was born in the village. The *auluma* is comprised of *sa'oao* and *tama'ita'i* (daughters born in the village); *faletua* and *tausi* (wives of the chiefs of the village) and those considered *ava a taulele'a*, who are women married to *taulele'a* (untitled sons of the village). Every woman falls into one of the three categories depending on the context of her living environment and whether she is residing in her own village or that of her husband. The status of her husband also determines her place in the village structure (Ministry for Women, Community and Social Development, 2015).

²⁰ 'Tama tane' refers to a man's roles and responsibilities associated with his family, for example a man's duty to protect his sister(s).

²¹ Practice indicates that when a woman's husband passes away, the woman moves back to her village of origin. However, this practice has its variations and a woman's position after the death of her husband depends very much on her age and whether or not she had children with her husband.

4.2 Food and nutrition security

During community consultations in Lotofaga and Falevao/Lalomauga, participants were asked to think about and describe changes in food consumption patterns from at least 15 years ago to 2018. Both communities reported a higher consumption of purchased and imported food at breakfast, lunch and dinner in 2018. They reported that ten years ago most food was locally sourced. They noted significant changes in meals on a Sunday and also when there is a *fa'alavelave*, or a family gathering. One community indicated that ten years ago only one dish would have been served, compared to the numerous dishes cooked for community functions today. This feedback is consistent with Schoeffel's (2016) study into revitalising Samoa's village women's committees to address public health issues. In the study she notes that a well-known physician in Samoa pointed out in a public seminar in 2014 that "in the past large meals of rich and varied foods were served only on Sundays (*to'onai*) or at feasts and few Samoans were obese. Today, many people eat a *to'onai* type of meal everyday" (Schoeffel, 2016, p. 26).

While many respondents from both communities indicated a preference for the locally produced food they consumed in the past, they noted it was much

easier and more convenient to buy food from stores and supermarkets and that locally produced food takes longer to prepare. Some participants in Lotofaga also stated that with income from remittances, it was quite easy to purchase processed food for everyday meals. Agricultural produce such as taro and livestock such as pigs, cattle and chickens were increasingly used for bigger community and traditional gatherings as opposed to everyday meals.

One of the major challenges Samoa is facing is the rising level of diet-related non-communicable diseases (as already described in section 2.3.1). Samoa's heavy reliance on imported food – with a 60 percent increase in food imports between 2005 and 2014 – is linked to changing dietary patterns. These include increased consumption of processed, high calorie, high sodium and low nutrient content food coupled with relatively low consumption of fruits and vegetables. Such a diet presents an increased level of risk for NCDs.

Research shows that 83 percent of Samoan women aged 15–49 years are classified as overweight or obese. Savaii has the highest percentage of obese women in this age group. Findings from the 2013 STEP survey indicate that only 8 percent of women and men aged 18–64 years consume the recommended 5+ servings of fruit and vegetables per day in a typical week (Samoa Bureau of Statistics, 2014). These are startling figures when one considers the intensive agricultural sector programming implemented about 15 years ago to strengthen food and nutrition security for rural families through vegetable farming (see Box 1). A study undertaken by FAO in 2017 revealed that female-headed households and households situated in the bottom income tercile (33 percent) were less likely to meet the threshold for minimum micro- and macronutrient intake (Martyn *et al.*, 2017). The high rates of NCDs, particularly among women, combined with the low rates of adequate

"Many of our people have full-time jobs now and they work in town. Also, a lot of our families have relatives working overseas. The money they get is good and it's easier to buy the food from the shop. We have chickens everywhere in the village, but it's easier to buy the frozen chicken and some noodles and rice from the shop to cook and eat. We still go to the plantation and eat from the plantation, but not every day like before"

Male villager from Lotofaga, 45 years old

Box 1: Mobilising Samoan communities in vegetable farming in 2003

The villagers of Sasina, Aopo and Mauga and Letui were part of an agriculture project to learn new farming practices related to growing vegetables. Like many other Samoan villages, they mostly grew traditional crops such as taro, coconut and cocoa. The programme was implemented in 2003 in the form of a competition between the villages. This motivated the villagers to acquire new skills and knowledge from the Crops Advisory staff. It was also an opportunity to earn money, share skills and enhance food security and better health outcomes. The Development of Sustainable Agriculture in the Pacific (DSAP) programme was funded by the European Union and implemented by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community in collaboration with FAO.

Source: Secretariat of the Pacific Community, 2009



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fruit and vegetable consumption among both men and women, calls for further analysis and renewed focus on behavioural change in eating habits.

The Government of Samoa recognized in the ASP 2016–2020 the critical linkage between MAF and the sectors mandated to address health, education and trade policy. The ASP 2016–2020 also directs MAF to improve the availability of and access to lower-cost nutritionally superior diets based largely on locally produced foods (Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, 2016), a recommendation also highlighted in a survey of dietary patterns in Samoa (Martyn *et al.*, 2017). At the same time, other MAF priorities such as the commercialization of the agricultural sector for the boosting of exports could negatively impact efforts to improve food security, as highlighted in section 4.4.

4.3 From subsistence farming to mixed cropping

According to the Samoa Hardship and Poverty Study, women working in the subsistence agriculture sector (particularly in North West Upolu) are the most vulnerable societal group in the country. Poverty and hardship are exceptionally higher among the unemployed and those working in the informal sector (including unpaid family and community work, subsistence production and other household duties) and are considerably lower amongst the self-employed. Interestingly, those in the informal sector in Savai'i are significantly better off than their counterparts in the informal sector in other regions. This possibly reflects greater sustainability in families and communities reliant on agriculture for livelihoods in rural areas (Moustafa, 2016).

Box 2: Recognizing the roles of rural women and their knowledge to earn an income

The MAF Crops Division realized from their records in early 2018 that a majority of participants in the crops training programmes are women. Men are involved in the initial set-up of the village gardens, which involves digging an area for land preparation, but the subsequent steps are taken over by the women. The farmers involved in crops training also learn to conduct gross margin analysis to i) determine the exact income per crop from the amount planted and ii) understand how to reinvest profits back into their farms. The farmers, who are mostly women, are encouraged to start with 150 m² plots and to slowly extend their farms. Within 150 m² plots, they can plant up to 1 000 plants that, if successful, can yield a relatively significant profit. Crops produced in the plots include green peppers, spring onions, pumpkin and cabbage, which are then sold in the market and as well as used for family consumption. A farm management manual produced by MAF in 2016 identifies a gross margin of WST 1.31 per head cabbage plant and a total of ST 12 907 per acre of head cabbage. According to the MAF Crops staff, farmers have revealed to them that within 3 months, they (the women) were able to earn more than WST 5 000 (USD 1 880).

Female-headed households receive lower average wages and salaries per capita per week compared to male-headed households. The MAF Crops Division revealed that one of the primary factors for concentrating on women in rural areas was that they spend most of their time undertaking subsistence farming to feed their families. In community visits conducted by MAF, women expressed their desire to earn an income by doing what they already do – growing vegetables and other food crops. In response, the village garden initiatives spearheaded by the Crops Division mainly targets women subsistence farmers.

4.4 Gender and commercial agriculture

Commercial agriculture is a major focus of the Agriculture Sector Plan 2016–2020. The Government of Samoa recognizes that in order to boost commercial agriculture vis-à-vis the cash cropping sector, it is important to enhance partnerships with the private sector, NGOs and development partners in the delivery of objectives. While MAF trains women in sustainable farming in communities through the

MAF farmer field workshops to develop vegetable gardening, as described above, another initiative runs alongside this, which includes training programmes to enhance women's engagement in cash crops for the commercial agriculture sector. These programmes include activities such as the production of virgin coconut oil, cocoa, value-added breadfruit and taro chips, coffee and turmeric. A gender analysis of the cocoa sector via the Australian funded Pacific Horticulture and Agriculture Market Access (PHAMA) project found that women were seldom regarded as farmers despite their involvement, together with their husbands, kinsmen and children, in planting (when cocoa was being replanted), weeding and harvesting (AECOM Services Pty Ltd, 2016). The research also revealed that women had the same aspirations as men in that they wished to know how to increase efficiency in both growing and processing cocoa. However, the research noted a lack of support for women in the cocoa sector. For example, a cocoa growers association set up by farmers from three villages in 2012 had no female members. Box 3 contains an excerpt from the gender analysis of the cocoa sector that highlights some of the barriers faced by women in the commercial agriculture sector despite their contributions to the sector.

Despite these barriers, women play a pivotal role in the commercial agriculture sector. During a field visit for this Assessment, the researchers visited one of the packing houses for turmeric and taro set up by MAF for commercial growers to enhance the commercial and export sector. The majority of workers cleaning, drying and packing turmeric were women. According to a staff member at the Atele Horticulture Centre, exporters and they themselves (MAF) preferred women workers because they paid attention to detail, and working with turmeric was time-consuming since



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Box 3: Barriers for Samoan women in commercial agriculture

"A cocoa growers association, Samoa Export Farmers Organic Koko (SEFOKI), was established in 2012 and is composed of members from the three neighbouring villages of Malie, Afega and Tuanai. It has no female members (Malie and Afega do not recognise matai titles that are held by women, which may or may not be a factor in this). Because of Samoa's predominantly male matai system, there is an attitude that men should take the lead in terms of representing the industry. One organiser of growers told us that "women talk too much". SEFOKI was established under the leadership of Mulitalo Saena Penaia, who is also the president of the Samoa Farmer's Federation, which broke away from the Samoa Farmers Association in 2015 due to dissatisfaction with the transparency and accountability of the Association. The Samoa Farmers Federation has 80 female members registered, mainly growers of vegetables and flowers (for the local cut flower market)."

Source: AECOM Services Pty Ltd, 2016, p. 17

Box 4: Rethinking cash cropping to ensure family health is not compromised

“One just has to look at the noni industry. Several years ago, Samoa became the first country to start exporting noni. The noni juice was a major hit in the overseas market and the demand for it was incredible – it was more than what Samoa could supply. However, the money was so good and people just started clearing large parcels of land to grow these noni trees. Money was good, but in the end, you can’t feed your family a meal of noni, can you? People were not growing enough vegetables and ended up selling noni and buying imported foods to feed their families.”

Source: Interview with Edwin Tamasese, Director Soil Health Pacific.

the turmeric needed to be cleaned properly to pass inspection.

Samoa has many good examples of local business initiatives in the agriculture sector working to enhance the livelihoods of rural women. The Women in Business Development Incorporated (WIBDI), established in 1991, is one such example in the form of a successful NGO dedicated to strengthening Samoan village economies. According to the WIBDI website, the organization works in 183 Samoan villages to enhance organic farming, which puts WST 600 000 into the hands of Samoan families annually.²² Another example, this time from within the private sector, is Natural Foods Limited, a locally owned, family-run business that exports local Samoan produce such as taro, copra and breadfruit and value-added goods such as taro and banana chips and papaya leaf tea. At least 70 percent of the company employees are women. They are mainly involved in quality control to ensure products are compliant with required standards. The company recently joined forces with the MWCSO to try to ensure a more consistent supply of produce from the villages involved.

Another finding of this Assessment is that more and more women and entire families are turning to cash crops such as turmeric, cocoa, taro, bananas and noni because there is such a huge demand from exporters. The income received from turmeric, for example, is good and because turmeric is in high demand with a ready market to purchase all of it, plus turmeric is easy to grow. However, a downside to cash crops is that they often require farmers to clear large pieces of land. According to one respondent in the agriculture export sector, another downside to growing a single crop is that families don’t spend enough time on their other agricultural activities such as growing

vegetables for their personal consumption and for sale in local markets. Health-wise, this is a loss for Samoan families.

However, the push from the Government of Samoa to move into the commercialization of agriculture via cash cropping could be complemented with an increase in targeted community awareness on the benefits of growing vegetables, including projects to create awareness around cooking and preparation techniques for vegetables to foster behaviour change for better dietary patterns. Such projects could be undertaken through collaboration between MAF, MWCSO, the health sector, NGOs and the private sector. Whilst there are various activities that have already been undertaken in this regard, such as the vegetable plot initiatives by MAF (see section 4.3 on subsistence farming to mixed cropping), these activities need to be targeted and well planned to benefit all rural and agricultural communities of Samoa.

4.5 Agricultural value chains

Rural women are heavily involved in various points of agricultural and fisheries value chains. According to interviews with farmers and MAF staff, women throughout Samoa are concentrated in virgin coconut oil (VCO) production. With an export value of WST 283 000 annually, the production of VCO serves as an important source of income for rural women.

The above-mentioned gender analysis of the cocoa value chain in Samoa found that women do more work than men in cocoa-processing tasks for small-scale production such as the production of lumps of cocoa paste sold in cup moulds. The analysis noted that it is not unusual for women to own cocoa

²² See www.womeninbusiness.ws.

plantations and that many women cocoa farmers are single or widowed, having taken over management of a plantation on their own family land from their husband, or sometimes from a brother, while others manage the plantation because their husband has a full-time paid job. Women growers typically organize the work of cultivation with young men from their family or with paid male workers at peak times (AECOM Services Pty Ltd, 2016).

Rural women are also involved in the production of taro chips, particularly in quality control and ensuring compliance for export purposes. Although Samoan men are traditionally known to grow taro rather than women, women are involved in the washing of taro and in the production line in factories to ensure quality control. Similarly, in the banana industry – which is a non-growth sector – women are involved in compliance and quality control. In the organic industry, consisting of export of extra virgin organic coconut oil, fetau oil and noni juice, women are involved in all three areas in various stages of the value chain process (MAF and FAO, 2015). According to interviews with MAF staff, taro production has been growing once again

“Whilst we work with the village mayors, we also ensure that we reach out to the women’s groups and also the youth groups to see if they have ideas about meeting the demand from the business side. Exporters are always looking for bananas to purchase, as well as taro and other agriculture goods they can process for value-added products.”

Interview with ACEO, Economic Empowerment, MWCSO

over the past three years following the release of new resistant varieties for commercial production. From 2009–2014, the estimated area of land under taro production increased by 60 percent. Taro prices have steadily increased as export demand increases and overflows continue to be sold at local outlets. While women are not directly involved in the planting and harvesting of taro, they are involved in marketing, in managing family businesses and in various other points of the taro value chain.

An emphasis on strengthening value chains to improve the business environment in Samoa is a key mandate of MAF and one that was evident in the fieldwork for this Assessment. The MWCSO are working with small and medium enterprises to link

the community (rural women) to the businesses. According to interviews with the MWCSO, women’s groups and youth groups are critical to this stakeholder engagement. MAF representatives expressed that a number of current trends in production and pricing of agriculture and fisheries could have a significant impact on women if gender were mainstreamed into these sectors. There is, however, a need for gender analysis and research to assess women’s current roles in agricultural value chains, the value of their unpaid work and key entry points for gender mainstreaming.

4.6 Livestock production and management

The livestock sub-sector is mainly village-based and is composed of cattle, pigs and poultry. Sheep farming is quite new, with some 40 animals (of the Fiji Fantastic sheep breed) brought to Samoa from Fiji in 2004. During the 2009 agricultural census, figures showed that 92 percent of households in Savaii kept livestock. During the same census, almost 38 949 cattle were recorded, which was an increase of 40 percent compared to the 1999 agriculture census (Samoa Bureau of Statistics, 2009).

A 2015 situation outlook on agriculture revealed that *fa’alavelave* (social obligations) dictated the local beef market, with 70 percent of slaughtered cattle used for social obligations. About 29.5 percent was sold through supermarkets and the remaining less than 1 percent was for home consumption (MAF and FAO, 2015). Based on feedback from community consultations and from interviews with MAF Livestock Division staff, this trend appears to continue.

According to community members in Falevao and Lotofaga/Lalomauga, cattle are often slaughtered on special occasions.

The MAF Livestock Division has been actively identifying opportunities for more women to be trained in animal husbandry and is currently working to increase the number of women farmers in its animal husbandry trainings to 30 percent of the total participants. The Livestock Division in MAF stated that there was an increase in women involved in this sector (often daughters of livestock farmers) and their role was mostly to keep records of the cattle (which included tagging, immunization and tracking the numbers of cattle and which cattle needed attention from MAF extension officers).



©FAO

According to those interviewed in the Livestock Division, MAF's heightened consciousness of women's role in this sector happened by chance when a few staff members shared that a daughter of one of the livestock farmers in Upolu kept very good up-to-date records of the family's livestock, which was necessary and made visitations easier for the MAF staff. One staff member interviewed expressed that "the farmers are old school and they don't like to keep written records so we asked them to identify someone in their house who could do this for them. Most of them just happen to have daughters, who were identified by the farmers for this task. We found that the girls are very good with record keeping, which is important for the livestock. When we visit a farm, it is important to know which animal has had problems and how many cattle we have attended to and so on... Now we have in our corporate plan a 30 percent target for women to be trained in this sector."

Each village's Women's Committee is a critical focal point for the inclusion of women in any project involving livestock or another agricultural sub-sector. According to the 2009 agriculture census, holdings are a form of agricultural production under individual management or under collective management by two or more individuals. Group holdings, including holdings managed through a village association, are a common form of holding that present an entry point for supporting more women in the livestock sector. As identified in the agriculture census, a Women's Committee could collectively operate a holding for crop or livestock or poultry production, or a combination of these (Samoa Bureau of Statistics, 2009). However, whether or not they operate as a holding group, the Women's Committee could be used as a key stakeholder group to be informed of any technical visits by MAF staff.

²³ This sub-section is taken from a 2017/2018 gender assessment of the inshore fishery sector in Samoa. The report is being finalized and will be published in 2019.

4.7 Fisheries and aquaculture

According to the Samoa Aquaculture Management Development Plan 2013–2018, aquaculture has contributed to improvement of Samoa's resource status through the re-introduction and re-stocking of giant clam and trochus. These projects were initiated by the South Pacific Aquaculture Development Project (SPADP) and the Fisheries Division and continued through an AusAID-funded Samoa Fisheries Project.

Full-fledged commercial aquaculture has yet to be developed in Samoa, despite previous attempts to culture a range of species. High levels of inputs, specialized facilities and market development requirements contribute to its slow progress. Nevertheless, aquaculture is widely recognized as a viable means of increasing fisheries production, providing additional dietary resources and generating income for local communities. A gender analysis of the aquaculture (and inshore fishery) sector in Samoa identified the key roles of women farmers in the maintenance and upkeep of tilapia farms (SPC, forthcoming).²³ However, the analysis also found that women's roles are not valued or recognized by the women themselves or by the fisheries officers who work with the farmers.

The same study identified very clear roles for men and women in managing fish reserves in the villages, as explained in Box 5 below. The study also found that women did not go out fishing within or beyond the reef, as these were tasks undertaken by men. When asked why women did not fish, one male respondent explained that, "the sea is quite rough beyond the reef, and sometimes even within the reef where the waves break it is still rough. Men go out fishing at

night with spears, and sometimes with fishing lines, but we mostly use spears."²⁴

It is interesting to note that both men and women in the communities interviewed for this survey did not view gleaning as a fishery activity, nor did they view the role of monitoring the fish reserves as an important role in the management of the fish reserve. In interviews with women farmers who run tilapia farms, the majority of these women indicated having a shared role and responsibility in the upkeep and maintenance of tilapia farms, as well as playing a central role in the monitoring of the tilapia, in feeding and in the maintenance and cleaning of the pond. However, the women involved in the daily running of the farms did not see themselves as farmers and deferred to their husbands or sons as the farmers. Furthermore, at the commencement of the study, the MAF Fisheries Division staff themselves unconsciously recognized the men as the farmers, often requesting to speak to the husband or son about training or capacity building for tilapia farms rather than the women who were actually doing much of the work.

A time use survey was done in each of the communities visited for the gender analysis of the aquaculture sector. Within a 24-hour day, the women were primarily involved in reproductive and domestic roles, such as preparing meals, preparing children for school, assisting the children with homework, etc. They identified some leisure activities throughout the day such as playing bingo and watching TV as well as some time allocated to productive roles of weaving, feeding chickens, selling at the roadside market, going to the plantation, weeding the vegetable garden, etc. Men were mainly involved in productive activities in a 24-hour day, preparing to go to the plantation, going to the plantation, collecting firewood, fishing and feeding the pigs.

Box 5: the gendered roles of men and women in fishing communities

The Village Council appoints members of the Village Fisheries Management Advisory Committee (VFMAC) who are responsible for maintenance and physical upkeep of the fish reserves and the giant clam farms. The VFMAC delegates duties to the untitled men of the village who are identified as the village labourers. Rural women are involved in cleaning the foreshore and in gathering invertebrates or monitoring the fish reserves. Fish reserves are seldom opened and the Village Council decides when they are open – mostly at times of community functions. When reserves are opened, men fish for food and women clean and cook for the function. The women also prepare a meal ready for men to eat upon return from their fishing activity.

Source: SPC, forthcoming.

²⁴ Information obtained from a male respondent from the gender and aquaculture survey conducted by SPC in 2017.

The time use survey also confirmed the feedback from the key informant interviews regarding the responsibility and management of a number of tilapia farms assumed by both men and women, noting that women spend just slightly fewer hours than men on productive activities in tilapia farms (SPC, forthcoming).

The findings of the study present some opportunities for the Fisheries Division of MAF to explore. In collecting the data for the survey, fisheries staff became aware of their own unconscious bias when it came to engaging with women in the fisheries sector and recommended further training and technical support to assist them in ensuring that women benefit equitably in this sector. This could include undertaking simple gender analysis of some of the core components of their work such as community consultations, onsite field visits and collection of data.

4.8 Access to and control of finances for rural women

The Assessment identified how socially constructed gender roles in rural Samoa define men's and women's access to, and control of, resources. Women who work as family caregivers and mediators also manage family budgets and financial resources. As agriculture moves towards being more market-driven, rural women are seen to be the ones attending training to learn basic business skills. Interviews with governmental stakeholders and communities confirmed that women manage small family businesses as families graduate from subsistence

to market-oriented agriculture. During focus group discussions and community consultations for this Assessment, the majority of consulted women stated that within families, most decisions were made by both husband and wife.

Women's ability to access finances to support their economic ventures as well as their ability to control such finances is a measurement of their empowerment (Fleming, 2016). Access to finances and income is more of an issue in urban areas compared to rural areas and to some extent reflects wage inequalities (Moustafa, 2016). According to analysis of the 2013/2014 HIES, there is a strong correlation between vulnerability status and education level in urban areas but less so in rural areas (Moustafa, 2016). Control of income has been identified as an occasional problem by The Samoa Business Enterprise Centre (SBEC).²⁵ According to interviews with the SBEC, the majority (80 percent) of their clients are rural women who are seeking support for their agriculture-related businesses. Based on their records, women have a higher level of success rates in paying off small loans with commercial banks and are consistent in attending all necessary business training, including the Start Your Own Business (SYOB) training required by the SBEC. It was also noted that the SBEC previously collaborated with MAF on the Samoa Agriculture Effectiveness Enhancement Project (SACEP) to facilitate farmer's contributions. Under this programme, at least 20 percent of registered clients were women, although the actual number of women benefitting was higher because many applicants under these schemes were actually a team of a husband and a wife, despite only the husband's name being registered.²⁶

"In some cases women take business training and use SBEC support to access credit but have defaulted on their loans. SBEC officers are required to do site visits to try and find out why they have defaulted and have found that in some cases husbands took control of funds in their wives' names."

Chief Executive Officer, SBEC

Consultations also revealed that in some instances, women accessed small loans but were unable to carry out their intended projects because their spouses had other intentions for the funds. This underscores a challenge for the rural women who wish to enhance their small agriculture business or start one. Access to funding does not mean economic empowerment for women if the ability to control the money is not in their hands.

²⁵ SBEC was established in 1994 with the aim of providing training and advice to small businesses in Samoa as well as acting as a guarantor to banks for people who want to enter business lack the capital to do so.

²⁶ Information based on the interview with the CEO of the SBEC, conducted in 2018.



4.9 Gender, natural disasters and disaster risk management

The Samoan economy has experienced a staggering loss from natural disasters over the years. In 2001, one of many major floods impacted the country, with recorded direct losses of WST 11 million. Recovery is often very slow, which has a major impact on the livelihoods and well-being of fishing and farming communities. Samoa was badly affected by the tropical cyclone Gita in 2018, which caused severe flooding across the country, and by the tropical cyclone Evan in 2012, which brought destruction to many homes and caused over 7 000 people to seek refuge in evacuation centres.²⁷ Earlier, in 2009, a severe earthquake and tsunami affected 2.5 percent of the country's population, causing 143 fatalities as well as devastating buildings and infrastructure and damaging crops.

Samoa is also experiencing climate change as manifested in the frequency of extreme weather, higher temperatures, rising sea levels, declining marine resources and loss of biodiversity. Samoa's experience validates global and regional findings that climate change has specific negative impacts on women, including 1) increased workload; 2) increased

family food insecurity; 3) increased stress-related risks for domestic and non-partner violence; 4) damage to women-managed niche agricultural crops that provide income; and 5) unequal access to information and decision making on disaster response (UN Women, 2014). The Government of Samoa recognizes the gendered implications of natural disasters, as reflected in both the National Disaster Management Plan 2017–2020 and the Samoa National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Management 2017–2021. Both plans reflect partnerships with MWCSD and the need for integration of gendered perspectives in post-disaster planning (Disaster Management Office, 2017).

During the community consultation in Falevao, community members, especially older men, spoke of a particular variety of swamp taro, a traditional Samoan crop, that was no longer grown in their community. The older farmers attributed this to the changing nature of the soil in their village and commented that the soils were drier and much harsher compared to 15–20 years ago. While it is not known whether such loss of agrobiodiversity can be attributed to climate change, it is evident that foods that were traditionally grown and eaten not long ago are now no longer farmed.

²⁷ See <https://reliefweb.int/disaster/tc-2012-000201-wsm>.

5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS



The issues surrounding gender in agriculture and rural livelihoods in Samoa are complex and multi-faceted. Traditional governance and cultural systems create challenges to the advancement of women and gender equality because of their focus on the rights of groups over the rights of individuals. Hierarchical social systems also disadvantage particular groups of women in relation to others and social norms that reinforce disadvantages are strong in rural communities. While the cultural context in Samoa may be unique, the Assessment identified issues that are consistent with global findings on gender in ARD. These include 1) women's tendency to classify and report themselves as unemployed when they engage in unpaid agricultural work; 2) underreporting and underrepresentation of women as farmers; and 3) women's lack of visibility in agricultural decision making (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2016).

There are ongoing efforts to engage women in agricultural training and to ensure that they benefit from various project activities and interventions. However, there is a need for a deeper analysis to evaluate the specific impact of these activities on women's agency, livelihoods and well-being.

The key challenge for the Government of Samoa, as outlined in the Agriculture Sector Plan, is to grow the sector in a sustainable way to provide food and raw materials, increase productivity and ensure high-quality products that can compete in both domestic and international markets. The Government's priority under the ASP is to find ways to develop smallholder farming and fisheries and to shift the focus of small-scale farmers from subsistence agriculture to small-scale commercial production and marketing. The Plan highlights a number of steps toward these ends, including increased adoption of improved technology, increased access to credit, and innovations in farming that will create additional jobs on farms, in processing industries, in retail and the wider economy. A key component of the sustainable development of the agricultural sector and the rural economy should be the recognition of women as agricultural producers in their own right and a greater valuing of their role in agricultural production, processing and selling. As identified in the gender analyses of the aquaculture sector (SPC, forthcoming) and cocoa value chain (AECOM Services Pty Ltd, 2016), women play a significant role in agriculture but are not necessarily recognized as farmers based on prevailing gendered norms and practices reflected in the tendency to assume that men are farmers and women are their helpers.

As identified in the interviews with government officials, there is a need for further capacitation of MAF's Crops, Livestock and Policy and Planning divisions to enable 1) a better understanding of gender mainstreaming into national policies, strategies, plans and programmes; and 2) the building of skills and knowledge on gender in planning, implementation and analysis of their community programmes. MWCSO representatives who sit on task forces and committees under the ASP should also attend trainings in order to gain a deeper understanding of gender issues in the context of the agriculture and fisheries sectors to support gender-responsive decision making.

The MAF has already done substantial work on the stimulation of growth in the agricultural sector and the transformation from subsistence agricultural production toward more commercial ventures. There is a need to support skill development of both rural women and men to increase their technical skills and expertise to work in this evolving sector. Additionally, there is scope to encourage more female students to opt for a career in the agriculture sector. Targeted interventions are required to shift the perceptions about agriculture and to make it appealing as a career to both boys and girls in secondary schools.

5.1 Recommendations

The following recommendations highlight specific areas of work that require attention and action from the Government of Samoa and development partners, notably FAO and SPC, to maximize their impact in the promotion of rural women's empowerment and enhancement of gender equality in the Samoan agricultural and rural sector.

5.1.1 Recommendations for the Government of Samoa:

- Create an operational and functioning intra-governmental mechanism for the advancement of gender equality and rural women's empowerment in ARD, to be led and coordinated by MWCSO. This intra-governmental mechanism should aim to put in place a gender mainstreaming process at all governance levels within all agriculture line ministries, most notably MAF (including the Agriculture Sector Steering Committee) and MNRE, among other relevant governmental entities, including MCIL, SBS, MESC, MOH, MOF and MPMC.

- Establish a governmental network of gender focal points in all agriculture line and ARD-relevant ministries and periodically build the capacities of gender focal points, to be coordinated by the intra-governmental mechanism led by MWCSD. Gender focal points should coordinate and promote planning, implementation and monitoring of all work related to the empowerment of rural women and gender equality within their respective ministries and institutions.
 - Strengthen the representation of MWCSD in the Agriculture Sector Steering Committee (ASSC) and in working groups responsible for the delivery of key outcomes in the ARD sector.
 - Ensure periodical collection of high-quality sex- and age-disaggregated data related to rural women's engagement in agriculture and the rural economy, including on time use, decent work, employment, migration and agricultural production.
 - Periodically collate gender statistics, gender analysis and gender impact assessments with clear accountability mechanisms to guarantee monitoring and evaluation.
 - Build the technical capacities of public servants responsible for ARD and associated thematic areas on all relevant aspects of gender equality and rural women's empowerment in ARD. This should include training in strategic gender mainstreaming and integration, for example, for MAF (e.g. Policy and Planning and Crop divisions), MWCSD (e.g. Social and Community Development and Economic Empowerment and Governance divisions), MNRE, MCIL and SBS.
 - Raise awareness and integrate gender mainstreaming responsibilities into job descriptions of all senior officials and management staff in all agriculture line and ARD-relevant ministries.
 - Via the MAF Policy and Planning Unit, institute incentives for sharing of lessons learned and good practices about gender-responsive value-added agricultural and fisheries value chains (possibly in a periodic publication). This should be open to NGO partners and other stakeholders working in agriculture and rural livelihoods.
 - Prioritize MAF's commitment to increase the number of women extension officers, as outlined in the ASP, to ensure that more rural women have de facto access to extension officers.
 - Strengthen the collaboration between MAF and other relevant government authorities, including MWCSD, MESC and MCIL, to stimulate the development of professional careers for young women in agriculture. This can include awareness-raising campaigns, incentives such as affirmative action scholarships and provision of opportunities for the development of agriculture-related business skills.
 - Stimulate the collaboration between MAF and agriculture associations for the provision of ongoing support to rural women agricultural producers.
 - Explore partnerships between the private sector and communities that have the potential to empower rural women and improve their livelihoods in a sustainable manner.
- 5.1.2 Recommendations for FAO and SPC:**
- Technically support the operationalization of the intra-governmental mechanism for the advancement of gender equality and rural women's empowerment in ARD, particularly through technical support to MWCSD. Additionally, technically support MAF and MWCSD in their efforts to strategically integrate gender equality and rural women's empowerment aspects in ARD-relevant policies, strategies, plans and programmes.
 - Support MAF and other ARD-related institutions to conduct further research and raise awareness on rural women's contributions to the rural economy (including in agricultural value addition and their role within agricultural value chains) in order to transform traditional gendered norms, perceptions and practices and to help secure better conditions and opportunities for rural women.
 - In partnership with the Government of Samoa and the Women's Committees set up in every village, explore the possibilities of projects specifically targeted to rural girls and women. Initially, this could include conducting a baseline assessment of all the types of agricultural activities women's groups are involved in. As village Women's Committees are key entry points for work with rural women at the local level, this mechanism should be utilized and built upon.
 - In collaboration with MAF, raise awareness on NCD prevention and healthy diets, particularly in rural areas and among rural women, and support the integration of health education and nutrition in agricultural programming.

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ANNEXES

Annex 1: List of institutions and stakeholders consulted

Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries

Chief Executive Officer for Agriculture
Principal Animal Production Officer, Livestock Division
Senior Animal Production Officer, Livestock Division
Policy Planning Officer, Policy and Planning Division
Senior Crop Physiologist, Atele Horticultural Centre
Officer, Policy Planning Division
Officers, various divisions

Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development

Chief Executive Officer
Assistant Chief Executive Officers, Economic Empowerment, Policy and Governance Divisions
Officers, various divisions

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

FAO Samoa
Assistant FAO Country Representative
Project Associate
FAO Subregional Office for the Pacific Islands
Statistician
Project Officer, Fisheries

Samoa Business Enterprise Centre

Chief Executive Officer

Scientific Research Organization of Samoa

Chief Executive Officer

Soil Health Pacific

Director

Natural Foods Limited

Director

Lotofaga/Lalomauga Community

10 female and 9 male community members

Falevao Community

9 female and 5 male community members

Annex 2: Community questionnaire

Questions to Guide Community Consultations – Gender Assessment

Name of Village/Community:

Date: Time:

Instructions:

Ideally, the team will be able to talk to women and men in separate groups, but if a few men join the women's group and vice-versa, that isn't a problem.

Have a notebook ready to write down comments and observations.

Take a mental head count of how many are in the group at a given time. If you notice people leaving or joining the group, try to keep a rough count of how many were there most of the time.

Head Count	M	Head of Household	Evidence of Disability	F	Head of Household	Evidence of Disability
School age or under						
16–25 years						
26–40 years						
41–60 years						
Above 60 years						
TOTAL						

Ask for a show of hands for how many in the group are the head of the household. (Note: female-headed households may be headed by widows, solo mothers, or where working-age males are working overseas, ill or disabled, such as through diabetes-related complications.)

FACILITATORS TO ASK QUESTIONS IN SAMOAN

Briefly introduce the purpose of the discussion, being cautious not to raise expectations.

Two regional agencies, SPC and FAO, have joined together to do an assessment of women's and men's involvement in agriculture and the rural sector in Samoa. The purpose is to improve the agencies' understanding of how women and men each work for the family livelihood in rural areas. There will also be meetings in Apia with government offices.

This community is one of [insert number] that will be met with. SPC and FAO are doing this so that they can better support your food security, nutrition and ability to respond to climate change, disasters and other events that challenge your community.

Explain that you would like to ask some general questions before moving on to the discussion.

- A.** What are the ways your household earns money? (Note: The purpose of this question is to identify how active the group is in the economy – not how much they earn, just how they earn.)

How many in the group (show of hands to every statement that applies) ...	M	F
Work most of the time in salaried jobs outside the house (teachers, public servants, private sector, NGO workers, paid church workers, etc.) and have NO other income		
Work in salaried jobs outside the house PLUS have other incomes		
Sell fish at the market (local or in Apia)		
Sell animals (pigs, chickens, etc.) or animal products (eggs, butchered meat, etc.)		
Sell fruit or vegetables at the market		
Sell handicrafts		
Have NO cash income		
Grow fruit and vegetables for family food ONLY (subsistence)		
Make handicrafts for family use only (e.g. baskets to carry food from the garden)		
Have no CASH income		
What do you grow (e.g. taro, bananas, etc.)?		

- B.** What do you use money to do? (Note: again, not how much just how money is used)

Uses of money (show of hands to every statement that applies)?	M	F
Pay school fees		
Pay for medicine		
Buy fruit and vegetables at the local market		
Buy rice		
Buy other imported food (butter, salt, sugar, etc.)		
Pay for transport		
Pay for electricity		
Buy clothes		
Buy goods for the house (pots, pans, sheets, etc.)		
Buy alcohol or kava		
Buy smokes		
Donate to the church		
Hire labour for farm or fishing work		
Buy equipment for farm or fishing work		
Buy raw materials for handicrafts		
Buy solar panels/pay for electricity		
Save for emergencies		
Any other uses:		

C. Do you store fresh food, ready for emergencies?

 YES (how many):

 NO (how many):

 How do you store food for when an emergency happens (e.g. a freezer, burying, other)?

D. Do you store packaged food/drink ready for emergencies?

Packaged food stored for emergencies, not for everyday use (show of hands to every statement that applies)?	M	F
Bottled water		
Rice		
Noodles		
Tinned meat		
Tinned fish		
Tinned vegetables		
Tinned fruit		
Biscuits		
Coffee/tea/milo		
Sugar		
Any other food/drink stored?		

E. What other ways do you do prepare for emergencies?

Other preparations (show of hands to every statement that applies).	M	F
Chop branches and trees that might cause damage		
Clear drains to avoid flooding		
Have temporary roof cover ready, e.g. tarpaulin		
Candles/kerosene and lamps		
Diesel and generator		
Extra cell phone credit		
Any other preparations?		

F. Does anyone in your community have a disability?

What type of disability?	M	F
Physical (walking, lifting, body control, etc.)		
Speech		
Vision		
Hearing		
Thinking (unable to reason or be safe alone, etc.)		
TOTAL		

What work do people with disabilities do?

Paid (e.g. farm labour paid in cash or with food):

Unpaid (e.g. mind children while parents do farming or fishing):

G. And lastly...

Who makes decisions about spending money in your household (show of hands)?	M	F
The husband/man makes the decisions about money		
The wife/woman makes the decisions about money		
Both the husband/man and wife/woman make the decisions about money		
TOTAL		

(Note: this question is different to a similar one being asked below; this is specific to household decision-making.)

General Discussion

1. Has there been any training or other support for women/men in your community? Follow-up questions:

- What was the training for? (Prompts: farming/fishing skills, nutrition, disaster risk reduction).
- What agency provided the training or support? (Prompts: govt, NGO, private sector).
- Other than training, what support has been received? (Prompts: farming/fishing equipment, emergency equipment, banking services).

2. Did anything prevent women/men from attending training projects or receiving support? (Prompts: transport, family duties, health issues, not interested).

3. Participatory exercise: How women and men use their daily time.

Using butcher's paper to write up responses, ask men and women separately what women do and what men do, using the time frames of 5–7am, 7–9am, 9–11am, 11am–1pm, 1–3pm, 3–5pm, 5–7pm 7–9pm, 9–11pm.

At the end there will be two (or more) pieces of paper tracking what women and men say they do on an average day. This will provide insight into the division of household labour (or "reproductive" activities) and productive activities (farming, fishing weaving, etc.), as well as into where the work is done (house, bush land, beach, etc.).

4. Participatory exercise: Women's and men's roles in production decision-making.

Using a different coloured felt marker, go down the lists of roles from question 3 and ask "Who makes decisions about how this task is done?" Write "**M**" or "**F**" or "**Both**" next to the task.

If it doesn't emerge from the discussion, specifically ask who makes decisions about: division of farming/fishing labour, land use, selling at the market, etc.

This exercise will identify where "control" is situated.

5. Participatory exercise: Challenges.

Using butcher's paper to write up responses, ask men and women separately 'What challenges have you been facing in your farming/fishing/handicraft work?' (Prompts: pest damage, drought, heavy rain, land disputes, etc.).

6. Do you have any additional questions or comments?

Facilitators:

- One or more males for the men's group; one or more females for the women's group.

Stationery:

- 30 sheets of butcher's paper or 2 flip charts for each village consultation group.
- Blu-Tak or tape.
- 2 boxes of felt pens (different colours).

Annex 3: Government key informant interview questionnaire

Assessment of the enabling environment for mainstreaming gender in agriculture and rural development

Interview guide

The objectives are:

- 1) To assess the level of awareness of gender issues in their sector and the extent to which there is a will to address those issues.
- 2) To assess how gender perspective is integrated in sector policies and strategies.
- 3) To assess the technical capacity for and experience in addressing gender issues in the sector.
- 4) To find out if there is a system in place for supporting gender mainstreaming in the sector/ministry/department, including related to responsibility and accountability.
- 5) To identify key strategic actions to strengthen capacity and support gender mainstreaming processes in rural development.

Essentially, the assessment aims to take stock of the factors in place for supporting gender mainstreaming processes, including the following:

Policy framework: the extent to which gender equality and mainstreaming commitments are included in sectoral/regional frameworks or strategies and divisional strategic plans. ("We are committed to...").

Will of the leadership: demonstrated will means that action is taken on stated gender equality commitments and actions are formalized within systems and mechanisms to ensure mainstreaming is sustainable. ("We want...").

Organizational culture: the extent to which the attitudes of staff and institutional systems, policies and structures support or marginalize gender perspective. ("We do...").

Accountability and responsibility: the ways in which action on commitments to gender mainstreaming can be traced and monitored within the division, and the mechanisms through which individuals at different levels demonstrate gender equality-related results ("We take responsibility for...").

Technical capacity: the extent of skills and experience that organization can draw on to support gender mainstreaming initiatives across and within their operations and programmes ("We are able to...").

Adequate resources: the allocation and application of human and financial resources in relation to the scope of the task of mainstreaming ("We have the resources for...").

The targeted sectors

The main sector of focus is agriculture, but this country assessment also looks at rural development. This includes fisheries, infrastructure (in particular energy and transport), disaster risk management, climate change adaptation, and community development.

Besides the ministries/departments, the Assessment should also target subnational institutions like island councils and other local governance mechanisms.

Consultants are expected to conduct interviews with the senior managers (directors of specific divisions/departments related to the scope of the assessment, heads of agencies or chiefs of local governance bodies/island councils, etc.), the gender focal point if there is one, and a few staff working at the community level, i.e. directly with the population. The selection of people to interview will be made in a discussion between SPC and the consultants. You can choose to conduct "group" discussion with several staff members from the same institution (e.g. senior managers, gender focal points and staff working at the community level).

The interview guide is proposed below.

Name of Line Ministry/ Department/Institution	
Name of Interviewee(s)	
Title(s) of Interviewee(s)	
Date of Interview	
M/F	
Number of years of experience in this position	
Number of years of experience in the sector (including other positions)	
Email	

The context

1. What is the mandate/work of your department/institution? What are the key issues you work to address?
2. Can you elaborate further on the work you are doing?
3. From your perspective, what are the key issues in terms of access to transport and energy in the rural areas and/or outer islands? What does your institution do to address those?
4. Based on your observations, do women and men have the same needs in terms of transport and energy? Can you explain?
5. Has there been any study conducted about it? (We want to find out where they get this information.)
6. Do you think men and women can be affected differently by the issues you are trying to address in the sector? Why? (Check if there is any evidence/data to support their response.) For example, if there are limitations in terms of transport, how do these affect men's activities? And if there are limitations in terms of energy, how do these affect their activities, particularly their capacity to make a living? If there are limitations in terms of transport, are women affected the same way as men? Can you explain? If there are limitations in terms of energy, how do these affect women's activities, particularly their capacity to make a living or to perform their tasks?
7. If yes, how has your institution/department/office tried to address those differences in its programmes and service delivery? From your perspective, is your institution/department/office equitably supporting the activities performed by men as well as by women? Can you share an example? (If they say no, ask why.)
8. Can you name some gender inequality issues existing in your country? Do you think gender inequality is a limitation for women? Does it limit women's capacity to benefit from transport facilities? Does it limit women's capacity to benefit from energy facilities? Is there something to be done to make transport facilities more useful for addressing women's needs? To make them safer for women? How could energy facilities/technologies be used to make public spaces safer for women? How could they be adapted to support women's activities?

Political will/commitment to gender mainstreaming

9. Would you say that the amount of attention given to social issues and gender issues in your ministry/department/institution is high, medium or low? Why?
10. Do you know if women and men benefit equally from the programmes/services of your department/institution? (If no) Why do you think there are differences?
11. Do you have a gender policy or strategy in your ministry/department/institution? (If yes) Can you talk to me about what is in the policy or strategy? What do you think about it? Has it been useful? Why? (If no) Do you think it would be useful to have one? Why?
12. Does your ministry/department/institution use sex-disaggregated data and/or include/conduct gender analysis in designing your programmes/projects? And/or in implementing the programmes? Why?
13. Do you think there are gender inequalities that are limiting women from benefiting from the same opportunities as men and/or preventing them from benefiting from your services? If yes, how is your department/ministry/institution addressing this problem?
14. Do you think men have different priorities from women in terms of transport and energy? If yes, which ones?

15. What is the level of understanding of gender issues by the staff/members of your department/institution?

16. Are there resources allocated to support the integration of gender perspectives in the work of your department/ministry/institution? If yes, which resources?

17. What do you think are the constraints your department/institution experiences in addressing gender issues?

18. What can be done to address those constraints?

19. Do you know of any existing opportunities to support better integration of a gender perspective in the work of the department/institution?

Technical capacity

20. How would you describe the overall technical capacity of your department/institution to identify gender issues, to integrate a gender perspective into your programmes and services, and monitor impacts? High, medium or low?

21. Is there any staff member designated as a gender focal point for the department/institution? (If yes) What is the role of the gender focal point? Who is this person (what is his/her function in the institution)? Do you find it useful to have a gender focal point?

22. Are there staff/members who have participated in any gender-related training? (If yes) How many? What are their functions in the institution? Do they talk about gender issues sometimes? Do you think they work differently?

23. Is there a need to increase the technical capacity to take into account a gender perspective in your department/institution?

24. What would be the most strategic and effective way to increase technical capacity to find on gender issues and be able to address those in your department/institution?

Technical capacity

25. Are there staff/members in the department/institution who take the lead to talk about gender-related work at meetings and can provide advice on gender mainstreaming?

26. Are senior managers or chiefs open to discussions on gender issues in the department/institution?

27. Are staff/members required to make sure that men's and women's different needs are included in their work, and that the programmes and projects benefit women and men in a balanced way? Do they do that because they have been instructed to do it? Are they required to do it by the donors? Is it included in their job description? Etc.

28. What preliminary steps would have to be taken to create a receptive environment for implementation of gender-responsive planning and budgeting?

29. What existing mechanisms could be used and/or adapted to make people responsible for looking into gender perspectives in their work? Do you think it would be useful if addressing gender issues in the staff's work were an explicit part of their responsibility, e.g. in their job description?

30. Do you think this institution is a nice place to work for women? Do they face particular problems? What about men?

31. What is the proportion of women and men in the department/institution? Do you think it would make a difference if there were a better balance between the number of women and men working in the department/institution? If yes, explain.

32. How many women and men occupy the lead positions in your institution (permanent secretary, undersecretary, directors, chiefs)? Do you think it would make a difference if there were a better balance between the number of women and men working in the department/institution? If yes, explain.

33. Who are the champions for gender equality in the department/institution?

Summary questions	Ratings/Responses		
	High	Medium	Low
34. How would you rate the overall enabling environment for gender equality in your department/institution?			
a. Commitment and leadership			
b. Organizational culture that encourages people to look at gender issues in your sector			
c. Accountability and responsibility systems to make people address gender issues			
d. Technical capacity to address gender issues or women's needs			
e. Adequate resources to address gender issues or women's needs			
35. How would you summarize the main barriers to address gender issues and women's needs in your department/institution?			
36. What can be done to remove or reduce these barriers?			
37. How would you summarize the main supportive factors for addressing gender issues and women's needs in your department/institution?			
38. What else needs to be done?			
39. Would you like to make any final comments, ask any more questions or give any feedback on this interview?			

This report explores the opportunities and challenges women face in the agriculture sector in modern Samoa. The gender analysis of the institutional and policy environment also highlights what is already in place to support women in this sector and what else needs to be strengthened to ensure women and Samoan families benefit equitably from government services.

Samoa women play pivotal roles in subsistence, or own-account, as well as commercial agriculture. They are entrepreneurial, often undertaking multiple roles in the agriculture sector and in the household simultaneously. This report also sheds light on those gendered roles women and men play and highlights the impacts that agriculture governance structures and cash cropping can have on women.

This report provides a comprehensive set of recommendations both for government and development partners such as UN FAO and SPC; as well as other implementing partners including communities. Recommendations focus on increased efforts to mainstream gender to support institutional strengthening, strengthening governance systems to include and empower women, continued research on women in the value chain process and women's contribution to value adding and targeted capacity building and gender training for all extension officers, including women.

The Samoa country gender assessment of agriculture and the rural sector is one of five country reports published by UN FAO and SPC. Other country reports are: Fiji, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu.



PACIFIC WOMEN
SHAPING PACIFIC DEVELOPMENT

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(FAO SAP)**

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