

BECOMES

Midterm Review Report



Prepared by Jane Cousins
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Jane Cousins, Consultant

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ABG	Autonomous Bougainville Government
ACIAR	Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research
ARB	Autonomous Region of Bougainville
BECOMES	Bougainville Cocoa Farming Families Support Project
CPB	Cocoa Pod Borer
CSF	Commodity Support Facility
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DPI	Department of Primary Industry
FBMT	Farmer Business Management Training
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GED	Gender Equality and Diversity
GEF	Gender Equality Framework
HH	Household
KII	Key informant Interview
MFF	Model Farming Family
MIS	Monitoring and Information System
MTR	Mid Term Review
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
IPA1	Intervention Phase 1 Area
IPA2	Interventions Phase 2 Area
IPDM	Integrated Pest and Disease Management
PKG	Papua New Guinea Kina
PNGCCI	Papua New Guinea Cocoa and Coconut Institute
PPAP	Productive Partnerships in Agriculture Project
TOT	Training of Trainers
VSA	Volunteer Services Abroad
WB	World Bank

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the mid-point of BECOMES there is evidence the project has enhanced the capacity of smallholder cocoa farmers, strengthened collective farming practices and made a solid start on building the capacity of community coops and business groups. BECOMES' successful **Model Farming Families** (MFF) strategy and **Farmer Business Management Training** (FBMT) have enhanced the capacity of local farmers to contribute to improved cocoa farming practices and increased gender equity within smallholder households.

Changes towards more gender equitable social practices in individuals and groups, entrepreneurial capacity building and improved access to value chain opportunities have led to greater involvement of women and young farmers in cocoa production and more equity in the economic benefits. This win-win situation has been widely recognised by smallholders and industry stakeholders.

Smallholder cooperatives and organisations are now stronger but are still in the 'nascent' stage and require ongoing support in order to survive and prosper and exploit. BECOMES' facilitation of improved access to premium markets through installation of centralised drying systems shows that provision of infrastructure is central to reinvigorating the cocoa industry. This includes roads, transport and banking services. Development and roll out of a **Cooperative Strengthening Package** will enhance the ability of community business groups to address these issues and link more effectively with premium markets and services.

BECOMES has built robust relationships with all stakeholders and despite the significant challenges identified in working with the cocoa industry, DPI and ABG, appears to be in a strong position to advocate for change – bringing transparency to quality testing processes, advocating for roll out of combination solar dryers, sharing learning with multiple stakeholders as a CSF 'trail blazer', and promoting the success of CARE's gender equitable approach through regular reporting and sharing events.

In the next two years of the project Bougainville faces a period of uncertainty leading up to and following the referendum and the project will need to take this into account in deciding whether, when and in what manner to implement some of the report's recommendations. In particular, whilst current indications identify DPI as the best partner through which to roll out CARE's gender inclusive approach, this is likely to shift significantly as the referendum approaches, making substantial investment in a partnership with DPI a better prospect after the referendum.

FINDINGS

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE ONE: [Smallholder families have improved social and technical capacities to manage their cocoa farming](#)

Improved technical capacity to manage cocoa farming. There is clear evidence that improved adoption of the five best integrated pest and disease management (IPDM) practices by smallholder cocoa farmers has boosted cocoa production, quality and income. With **20% of smallholders reported to be practicing 4 out of 5 recommended IPDM practices and 33% practicing all 5**, the project doubled its midterm target of a 10% increase in IPDM practice. Its gender inclusive training and provision of women friendly tools like secateurs have increased women's involvement in pruning, budding, and chemical and fertiliser application (previously done mainly by men). Cocoa production has increased among target smallholders, with an 18% increase in those producing 11 to 20 bags and a **combined average increase per smallholder family from 8 bags at Baseline to 11 bags at midterm**. Families in the target area received increased cocoa income by selling more beans, higher quality beans, and/or by adding value through better fermenting and drying services. The project reports an **estimated 22.5% increase in farms following improved drying / fermentation processes and selling dry beans**.

Improved social capacity to manage cocoa farming. The MTR found improvements in the way husbands and wives share responsibilities, plan their work together and manage their finances. There is strong evidence of women's greater involvement in and contribution of more skilled labour to cocoa farm management, and some evidence of men sharing more equally in household tasks. There is also evidence of increased shared decision making between men and women, particularly on how income from cocoa is spent, attributed to CARE's **FBMT** and **Gender Equality and Diversity** training.

CHALLENGES/LESSONS

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

There is no absolute comparability between baseline and mini farmer survey statistics, as a number of measures differ, resulting in limited capacity to understand changes in technical practice and their actual impact on farmers.

Limited cross-correlation of increases in women's use of advanced farming techniques, such as pruning, with **data on their workload, income, and joint decision-making**, limits ability to establish whether division of labour, decision making and income sharing between men and women is more equitable or whether women's workload has simply increased, risking negative impacts on women and lack of sustainability. Data on decision making is drawn from individual cases with little detailed information on which decisions are being shared more equitably and whether women's influence is limited to issues traditionally associated with their roles, like food purchase, education and health. A more nuanced understanding of individual behaviour change is needed to improve project interventions and generate a robust business case able to demonstrate increased cocoa production and quality is driven by increased gender equality.

The Mini Farmer Survey's quantitative evidence on increases in quantity, quality and income resulting from changed farmer practices could, with fine-tuning, and augmented by Monitoring and Information System (MIS) data, demonstrate the success of CARE's approach to sceptical farmers and industry stakeholders.

Implementation

A case of sabotage motivated by 'jealousy', in which trees were chopped down in a husband and wife's rehabilitated cocoa block in Tinputz, highlights the need to monitor and mitigate these risks, where new skills and / or inputs such as fertiliser and cloned seedlings, are supplied only to selected smallholders.

For women with hybrid cocoa trees, which are older and taller and have thicker branches, secateurs are too small and bow saws have been suggested as more appropriate.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE TWO: Targeted smallholder families are demonstrating increased cooperation and collective action to increase production efficiency as well as enable market opportunities

BECOMES has strengthened collective action to increase production efficiency and enable access to market opportunities via several avenues.

Enhanced capacity of cocoa cooperatives and business groups. BECOMES' cooperative capacity building – highly rated by stakeholders – has enabled targeted groups to develop from 'nascent' and in some cases dysfunctional to functioning. DPI, CSF and VSA are eager to partner with and / or utilise CARE training skills, either directly or in TOTs to others.

Installation of combination solar dryers for Opiuk and Kukurina groups **has provided access to communal cocoa infrastructure and value chain services for 125 target households**, resulting in improved production efficiency, more smallholders able to sell dry beans and improved access to better marketing opportunities. These groups earn additional income by providing fermentation and drying services to non-members while increasing access to value chain services for a large number of smallholders.

Model Farming Family (MFF) strategy promotes collective action and stronger business groups and is contributing to improved livelihoods by facilitating increased production of higher quality beans. MFFs are playing a central role in establishing and/or strengthening collective practices, some directly by strengthening cooperatives and community groups. ‘Clustering’ of smallholders helps MFFs in this process.

Development of new cocoa value chain enterprises: The targeted development of viable enterprises by women and youth has been moderately successful. Gaps in the value chain and interested potential entrepreneurs were identified, existing barriers addressed (e.g. lack of access to credit by offering a 25% in kind contribution), and skills training and mentoring in business management provided. To date **six enterprises have been established against the target of 10** for the year.

Development of supplementary businesses by non-targeted farmers. MFFs are using skills gained through Farmer Business Management Training to invest their cocoa profit in new business projects, e.g. one MFF bought a chainsaw, renovated their house, bought chickens and built their flock to 300. Interest in additional business opportunities is also growing among cooperative members, including women

Access to better marketing opportunities through improved fermentation and drying processes. Farms which previously sold only wet beans have improved knowledge of fermentation and drying and are making the transition to selling dry beans and thereby attracting better prices.

CHALLENGES/LESSONS

Coops and business groups are still in the developmental stage and require continued support and mentoring to be able to operate independently. In particular, women lack confidence in the ability of group leaders to promote women’s aspirations for their families and communities.

Cost barriers to installation of combination solar driers. Other community groups have expressed strong interest in acquiring combination solar driers, but cost is a barrier. CARE has advocated on this and the Chief Secretary has expressed willingness to replicate the driers across Bougainville. CSF has also mentioned funding this in Tranche 3, but status is unknown at the time of writing.

Cocoa pricing by local buyers and access to international premium price: Most farmers participating in BECOMES are not reaping an economic reward for producing higher quality dried beans because the cocoa buyer to which most of them sell – Agmark – is not differentiating between premium and low quality beans (80% vs 20% of world market price respectively). To access premium price Agmark requires a minimum 16 bags of dry beans to pass the quality – “cut” – test, carried out only at the Agmark depot near Kokopau. Most smallholders produce less than this and face challenges getting their beans to the Agmark depot.

Poor road infrastructure and transport issues. Many growers face the challenge of getting their improved quality dry beans to market. At the time of the MTR fieldwork, transport operators were refusing to access Kukurina cooperative’s newly installed dryer on the existing road (which close to the village is an unsealed track), requiring members to carry bags of coffee down the mountain on their backs.

Barriers to development / viability of enterprises by women and youth. Despite some success, barriers remain, including lack of access to credit. CARE contributes 25% in kind to identified entrepreneurs, but the remaining 75% is hard for them to raise. As well, different enterprises and individual entrepreneurs have different needs and some new enterprises need considerable additional support to ensure they are viable. This is problematic when the project is poised to move to a new location in Central Bougainville.

MFFs also have different levels of capacity/confidence to train other smallholders and some require ongoing support and mentoring.

Future threats to the tenure of landless farmers, including widows and people with a disability – cooperative membership is currently open but landowners want the title to their land and when it is

returned to them by the large former (colonial) plantation owners there is a high risk that those leasing cocoa blocks will be evicted. There are currently no protections and guarantees.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3. Cocoa industry stakeholders demonstrate increased capacity to address the specific needs of smallholder cocoa farming families

BECOMES has established robust formal and informal partnerships with a range of stakeholders, all of whom value CARE'S work with smallholder cocoa farmers, its holistic approach and its willingness to partner and compliment rather than duplicate. Despite the significant challenges identified in working with the cocoa industry, DPI and ABG, BECOMES is in a strong position to advocate for transparency in quality testing and roll out of combination solar dryers, while sharing learning with multiple stakeholders and promoting CARE's gender equitable approach through regular reporting and sharing events.

CHALLENGES/LESSONS

Limited government capacity and resources. BECOMES is unable to build on and integrate a gender inclusive approach into existing DPI activities, as DPI and other government agencies are hamstrung by lack of capacity and/or resources. This includes challenges having input into the PNG Cocoa Board's cocoa curriculum for primary and secondary school, with several unsuccessful attempts to do so. Going forward into the final two years of the project these challenges will no doubt increase, given the imminent referendum on independence in Bougainville, which will dominate agendas and dictate priorities at all levels of government.

In this low resource setting, CARE's strength is an impediment to high level policy and advocacy work, which must be seen to be done by Government, donors and the CSF and not by one of the 26 CSF grantees.

Fragmented and decentralised cocoa industry There is little coordination within the cocoa industry at present and **no industry partners to work with**, since most industry stakeholders are limited in their capacity and/or desire to incorporate gender inclusive approaches into their work. Within this context, it is not feasible for BECOMES to have a significant impact on the extension or other work of cocoa industry partners within the first phase of the project to 2020.

Women's economic empowerment

There is strong evidence that the cumulative impact of all BECOMES work with has **increased women's economic empowerment**, through increased skills, knowledge and confidence, along with both the freedom and the opportunities to exercise these skills in business ventures. Further evidence of this can be seen in the findings presented above.

CHALLENGES/LESSONS

An important gender-specific barrier identified in the baseline but not addressed during the MTR is the attitude, expressed by a majority of both men and women, that women should not be cocoa farmers – i.e. women should not be 'owners' of commercial agricultural enterprises.

Changes in the cocoa value chain for women and youth.

As women have benefitted from changes in skills, gender relations and access to business opportunities and services, youth have benefitted from involvement in BECOMES through increased access to cocoa blocks and land.

Changes for smallholder families and community institutions

There is strong evidence that increased income from cocoa production has been translated into improved wellbeing for smallholder families who have participated in BECOMES project activities. Data from the mini farmer survey shows nearly all of the 71 household farming families interviewed are benefiting positively from cocoa farming, with 99% reporting improvements in the financial aspects of their lives and 94% reporting improvements in the social aspects, including improved relationships between family members

and with others in the community. Mini farmer survey data shows 51% used **income earned from cocoa to purchase an asset**, such as generators and solar panels. 72% of respondents said a major change was the **ability to save some of their income towards future plans**, a significant departure from traditional practice among rural smallholders in Bougainville.

CHALLENGES/LESSONS

While the mini farmer survey data indicated income from the sale of cocoa was sufficient to meet the needs of nearly all smallholder families, data from two other sources diverges significantly, suggesting families are halfway to earning a level of income that would meet needs and/or support family aspirations.

DPI has expressed concern that use of all land by some farming families for cocoa production is jeopardising food security, as they are not growing food crops but buying food from farmers higher up the mountain.

BECOMES model and theory of change

The achievements of THE BECOMES project are a good 'fit' with the CARE's Women's Empowerment Framework and confirm its explanatory force. The data from which the findings above are derived show positive changes have taken place between baseline and midpoint in gender relations, and to a lesser extent in age relations.

CHALLENGES/LESSONS

Overall, an 'unpacking' of the project's theory of change reveals strong causal relationships that suggest transformational changes can be attributed to project interventions. However, there is insufficient data at this stage to 'prove', crucially, that women are not working more in exchange for increased family income, from which they may or may not be benefitting personally. This challenge needs to be addressed in the second two-year phase by improved qualitative and quantitative data collection, including comprehensive sex disaggregation.

Participation of marginalised and vulnerable groups

There is evidence that BECOMES is reaching marginalised and vulnerable groups, including economically vulnerable women and people with a disability, both through its trainings and its enterprise development work, as well as farmers living remote locations. This includes a range of people, from the landless farmers of Matakrus, who have been beneficiaries of CARE's trainings and support to cooperatives, to an unmarried woman who after CARE's training said "I have no man, but I can now earn my own money. This makes me feel strong." Stakeholders and partners acknowledge CARE's ability to reach the most vulnerable, including people living with a disability.

CHALLENGES/LESSONS

Without the supplementary services needed by cocoa farmers or their family members living with a disability, which it is not CARE's core business to provide, the difference BECOMES can make to the lives of people with a disability is limited

EFFICIENCY

Program management

CARE management of BECOMES is efficient and highly valued by both partners and to beneficiaries.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

Monitoring and information system (MIS). As planned, BECOMES project has established and is using an efficient MIS to collect project data. Included in this are the development of the Mini Farmer Survey, a recent initiative, and additional templates for tracking changes in income of cooperatives and

entrepreneurs. All field staff undertake some level of routine monitoring, which helps promote ownership of project learning within the team, and monthly team reflections have ensured that MIS data is analysed and contributes to improving practice across all three objectives.

CARE's experience in learning what works and what doesn't is highly valued by CSF and others. BECOMES shares lessons learnt with CARE and regularly reports to and shares learnings with DPI and other relevant stakeholders through regular sharing events.

CHALLENGES / LESSONS LEARNED

There is **room for improvement in MEL skills among all staff** and potentially the need for an additional MEL Officer to ensure collection and analysis of the project's large quantity of data. In addition, the technical resilience of the MIS is in question due to issues with server that have delayed and could potentially undermine some MEL, design and implementation functions.

There are **gaps in and lack of comparability between data**, including data on which farmers grow 'hybrid' coffee trees, which grow 'clones' and which are making the transition from hybrids to clones; no absolute comparability between baseline and mini farmer survey statistics; no control groups and is not collecting data from farmers not participating in BECOMES. Limited cross-correlation of increases in women's practice of advanced farming techniques with data on their workload, income, and joint decision-making limits ability to establish a robust business case able to demonstrate increased cocoa production and quality is driven by increased gender equality.

The **Mini Farmer Survey** is a promising project initiative that captures hard' evidence on increases in quantity, quality and income resulting from changed farmer practices. With improvement, and correlated with strong evidence of changes in gender dynamics between cocoa farming men and women (based on qualitative and quantitative data), it **forms the basis of a compelling business case** to put to potential private sector partners and to argue for replication across other CSF cocoa implementing partners.

SUSTAINABILITY

While effective and efficient implementation of the BECOMES project design has proved the project's theory of change, this has occurred at the community level through the efforts of CARE's own extension officers. On current indications, lack of progress in increasing the capacity of cocoa industry stakeholders to address the specific needs of smallholder cocoa farming families, the degree to which the results achieved to date are likely to be sustainable even at the community level is in question.

The **Model Farming Families strategy** has proved highly successful in supporting individual smallholders as well as promoting collective action and stronger business groups, and is contributing to improved livelihoods by facilitating increased production of higher quality beans. The MFF strategy offers a means of sustaining BECOMES community level achievements until after the referendum in ABG (when working with DPI holds less risk) and while working to promote uptake of CARE's gender inclusive approach by industry.

DPI buy in and expressed support for CARE's family focused, gender equitable approach to strengthening smallholder cocoa farmers and cooperatives.

CHALLENGES/LESSONS

Lack of resources and capacity on the part of the DPI to take on the BECOMES approach, for example, in Tinputz there is only one extension officer (going to start soon and probably focussing on fresh produce).

Lack of interest in taking on CARE's approach among members of a fragmented ABG cocoa industry. Agmark has been providing advice and extension services for 3 years in Arawa through 1 extension officer, targeting 'their' farms on a very small scale.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

1. To address gaps in and lack of comparability between data, revise data collection needs and processes in light of endline evaluation and Investing in Women in Cocoa Business Case development. Develop a MEL plan for the next two years, ensuring inclusion of the following:
 - Ensure all relevant data is disaggregated by sex;
 - Collect data on hybrids and clones, and those farmers transitioning from hybrids to clones;
 - Ensure women's and men's attitudes to women as cocoa farmers in their own right, i.e. 'owners' of commercial agricultural enterprises, is captured in the end of project evaluation;
 - Address IT/technical issues to ensure accessibility and security of data;
 - To determine the extent to which increased production and improved quality are responsible for changes in income and to enable understanding of the real impact on farmers of shifting between income brackets, ensure collection of absolute quantitative data on smallholder production (number of bags sold) and income (price per bag or annual income).
 - To ensure cross-correlation of increases in women's practice of advanced farming techniques with data on their workload, income, and joint decision-making, collect appropriately detailed baseline data on key gendered dimensions (perhaps at the time of farmer registration in the new project areas), including: i) division of labour (household and farm), ii) decision making and iii) access to and control over resources and benefits of cocoa farming. Ensure these can be correlated with changes in quantity and quality of cocoa produced. This will also enable comparability with end of project evaluation data (with use of identical measures).
 - Review the MELF in light of the MTR findings and recommendations and revise accordingly, ensuring the project's advocacy and gender sensitive data needs are met;
 - Review Baseline and Mini Farmer Survey to ensure alignment and consistency with MELF.

In the medium to long term

- *To extend and deepen the results of improved data collection on changes in gender equality and women's economic empowerment, conduct longitudinal studies with small cohorts of participating and non-participating smallholders, documenting time spent by husbands and wives on key 'gendered' tasks, their involvement in key 'gendered' decisions and the benefits women receive from their farm labour.*
2. Address MEL staffing and skills development needs, including the following:
 - To facilitate collection by the MIS and Mini Farmer Survey of qualitative and more refined quantitative data that effectively captures changes towards more gender equitable practices, including gendered division of household and farm labour, provide training on gender sensitive MEL for the Senior M&E Officer and all BECOMES staff involved in data collection (e.g. on structuring survey questions to elicit the concrete information needed to determine whether and what specific attitude and behaviour changes have occurred);
 - Employ an additional M&E officer (dependent on project budget).
 3. Collect evidence towards development of a business case for investing in women in cocoa.
 - Leverage 'hard' evidence on increased quantity, quality and income resulting from changed farmer practices by advocating through appropriately pitched reports (in terms of medium, technical language and format) to farmers, business groups, District Administration, government agencies and industry stakeholders.

In the medium to long term:

- *Undertake research/refine the evidence base to 'prove' the BECOMES model (i.e. women's*

economic empowerment can drive reinvigoration of the cocoa industry in Bougainville.) Focus on achievements to date in Tinputz in order to develop a strong 'business case' for use with industry stakeholders, such as Agmark, and in the more challenging operating contexts in Central and South districts (both target beneficiaries and district administrations). Collect qualitative data, including testimonials, from a range of women, men and youth cocoa farmers; develop 'evidence based research' presentations targeting donors, government and industry; develop a promotional video for cocoa industry stakeholders and District Administrations. Build on CISP's business case for investing in women in coffee.

Implementation

4. To reduce the risk of unintended negative impacts from project activities, confirm adequate feedback and complaints mechanisms are in place and effectively disseminated to both project participants and non-participants.
5. Provide bow saws to women smallholders growing hybrids; seek feedback from women on women friendly tools to establish an evidence base on this strategy and to inform ongoing tools development.
6. Consider partnering with Callan Services, a disability service operating in this region, to provide the supplementary services needed by cocoa farmers or their family members living with a disability.

Cooperatives and community business groups

7. To strengthen the ability and confidence of women members to contribute to effective group management that supports the aspirations of women and families (as well as those of men), provide additional training and mentoring to women executive/board members.
8. To maximise the influence of MFFs who are natural advocates and high performers:
 - enlist them as inspirational speakers to visit other wards or host visits to their block;
 - establish an award (with financial/in-kind component) for the model farming cluster (or appropriate level) and Model Farming Family (or group of MFFs) who has successfully motivated smallholders to form a collective (or other achievement).
9. To expedite strengthening of cooperatives and assist with the roll out of CARE's cooperatives training, develop a **Cooperative Strengthening Package**, for use by BECOMES team and others.

Cocoa value chain enterprises

10. To reduce the burden of finding start-up capital for identified entrepreneurs, reduce the capital investment required from 75% to 50% and enlist more assistance from MFFs to mentor and inspire.
11. To support women and youth entrepreneurs, consider strategies to promote networking and exchange of learning, including:
 - exchange visits of women business group executive members;
 - joint training for women executive members from different groups;

In the medium to long term

- *establish a Women in Cocoa Business Group/Youth in Cocoa Business Group and help organise events – internally for the groups and externally to showcase their work to the community.*
12. To increase women's economic independence, explore mobile banking options for rural and remote areas and if feasible (taking into account the limitations to mobile banking in areas such as Tinputz) trial one or more of these.

Advocacy

13. **Pricing.** To address the lack of transparency in **pricing by local Bougainville buyers** (which has been acknowledged by the Cocoa Board and the DPI and is being addressed by the ABG through the formation of the Bougainville Commodity Authority), consider the following actions in the short term:

- advocate to Agmark on the need to grade lower down in the value chain at the farm gate, on grounds that increased benefits to producers will ensure Agmark a more secure supply chain;
 - provide information to cooperatives and individual smallholders on existing local buyers and build skills in carrying out the quality “cut” test;
 - link producers of high quality dry beans who may be able to access premium prices through the formation of a ‘super-cooperative’ by meeting minimum quantity requirements; and
 - continue to liaise with the DPI on progress re addressing these issues.
14. **Combination solar driers.** Advocate for roll out of across Bougainville with relevant authorities in ABG and support by quantifying the impact of solar driers on cooperative members / communities. Explore with CSF the possibility of BECOMES being funded to take the lead role in the installation of combination solar driers, tasked with ensuring a quality community group / business group readiness approach to mitigate risks of poor management and operation.
15. **Business Case.** To avoid being seen to assume DPI’s cocoa industry coordination and policy role, postpone active advocacy on integration of gender inclusivity across the sector by and through government until the second phase of the project - post 2020. This may require review and revision of strategic objective 3. Meanwhile, undertake research and refine the evidence base to develop a business case demonstrating that women’s economic empowerment underpins and can leverage reinvigoration of the cocoa industry in Bougainville (**see recommendation under MEL**).
16. **Pitching to industry.** Promote CARE’s gender inclusive approaches to Agmark and other companies, and to non-participating cooperatives who are improving the quality and quantity of their cocoa.
- Advocate on the benefits of a **Cocoa Industry Graduate Program**, leveraging the success of CISP’s Coffee Industry Graduate Program to demonstrate the business case for investing in women.
 - Market the idea of an **Industry MFF Award** to Agmark (or any other company that shows interest) as an entry point to working with them on integrating gender equitable policies and practices. The visibility brought by sponsoring such an award (with DPI endorsement?) could prove an incentive to one cocoa industry company to come on board with CARE’s approach (which they would need to integrate before bestowing the award).

Medium to long term:

- Leverage the likelihood that by 2020 all cocoa bean products will be marketable only if they have **cocoa certification** under known labels as an entry point for working with the cocoa industry by: i) Presenting the World Bank (and other) data on which this prediction is based, ii) Presenting the value proposition of certification, based on data from other sectors, e.g. Coffee, iii) Presenting CARE’s expertise in meeting the gender equality requirements of certification (This will be dependent on and require assessment of the extent to which certification schemes in the cocoa sector currently include gender equality provisions in capturing “social” co-benefits, how these provisions are being implemented, and how compliance is monitored).
17. Continue to pursue opportunities for BECOMES to have input into PNG Cocoa Board’s cocoa curriculum for primary and secondary school – in particular the social aspects – and explore the potential for providing supplementary training to teachers or those responsible for teaching the curriculum.
18. *While beyond the project’s control, consider raising the issue of potential **threats to the tenure of landless cocoa producers** with ABG and other key stakeholders (e.g. World Bank), who may be able to develop legal protections and guarantees for cocoa smallholders who are leasing land.*

DPI

19. Keeping in mind the uncertainty of the period leading up to and following the referendum, postpone training of DPI staff and extension officers (as requested by DPI) until after the referendum. Instead, apply savings from the 2017-18 budget to support a female internship program under which two

women could be trained as DPI extension officers, undertaking long term on the job training with BECOMES extension officers, delivering CARE's gender equitable training packages to cooperatives and smallholder farmers.

20. In view of limited DPI capacity with respect to limited number of extension officers, strengthen links between DPI and MFFs at local level.

In the medium to long term

21. Identify MFFs interested in becoming agricultural extension service providers. Support them to develop an extension service business through provision of training and mentoring, and build their capacity to deliver technical cocoa and FBMT training independently as sub-contractors to DPI and (longer term), to industry partners).
22. Leverage DPI's strong interest in CARE's **cooperative capacity building package** to explore the possibility of partnering with them on their plan to integrate livestock and food production with cash crop cultivation, taking a family focus and building out from there to incorporate development of cooperatives.

Industry

23. If feasible, seek a formal agreement with Agmark to include its farms in BECOMES activities over the next 2 years.
24. Ensure industry partners are supported to build their capacity in providing gender equitable extension services.

Packaging of CARE's approaches and training

25. In the medium to long term

To increase the scale and reach of BECOMES' gender sensitive approach, adapt existing BECOMES training materials (FBMT, Cooperative Strengthening, GED) to facilitate easy application to a range of cash crop farmers.

26. To maximise the Model Farming Family strategy:

In the short term

- document the approach and success factors, and develop into a training package.
- enlist MFFs as inspirational speakers to visit other wards or host visits to their block;

In the medium to long term

27. Consider additional strategies, such as:

- Engaging community leaders and opinion influencers (church leaders?) to support and leverage efforts of MFFs in their role modelling of more gender equitable behaviour, towards accelerating uptake of MFF gender equitable behaviours by other smallholder families and **promoting wider social norm change**. Focus in particular on men sharing household chores, decision making and income from cocoa sales, perhaps via special 'community days' which celebrate / award outstanding MFFs and highlight (make visible) the causal connection between more equitable households, economic success and family wellbeing. Potentially link to the Industry Award and to provide incentives for competing communities/clusters.

Commodity Support Facility

28. Seek to establish CARE as the lead support agency for CSF grantees:

- to enable integration and quality control of CARE's gender equitable approach;
- to promote sustainability of newly installed combination solar driers.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Context

Increasing demand for cocoa internationally is predicted to continue and to outstrip supply by one million tonnes by 2020 (Situation Analysis, 2016?). Good quality Bougainville cocoa is also in high demand, given the prevalence of 'Fine' or 'Flavour' status in the region, but supply growth is being affected by a number of issues on smallholder farms where the bulk of cocoa is grown. These include lack of skills in modern cocoa farming methods, disease and pests such as the devastating cocoa pod borer, lack of access to credit and financial services, labour shortage, lack of access to premium markets, and decreasing youth engagement in cocoa farming. Low prices paid to farmers and poor business management skills result in many farms having few resources to invest in business-like farming methods, contributing to low productivity and quality, further reducing prices in a vicious circle (Baseline, 2017)

The Bougainville Cocoa Farming Families Support Project (BECOMES) is a four-year project funded by the Government of Australia and the Government of New Zealand under the Commodity Support Facility. The goal of the project is *to improve the economic and social wellbeing of younger and older women and men in cocoa farming families in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville*. Taking an integrated, evidence-based approach with relevant interventions and improvements in the efficiency of the value chain, the project seeks to address both the technical and social constraints to cocoa production towards reinvigorating the cocoa industry. All activities contribute toward the aim that cocoa farming becomes more profitable for all members of the cocoa farming family and improve family livelihoods and wellbeing.

BECOMES project strategic objectives:

1. Smallholder families have improved social and technical capacities to manage their cocoa farming
2. Targeted smallholder families are demonstrating increased cooperation and collective action to increase production efficiency as well as enable market opportunities
3. Cocoa industry stakeholders have increased capacity to address the specific needs of smallholder cocoa farming families

Use of CARE's Gender Equality Framework

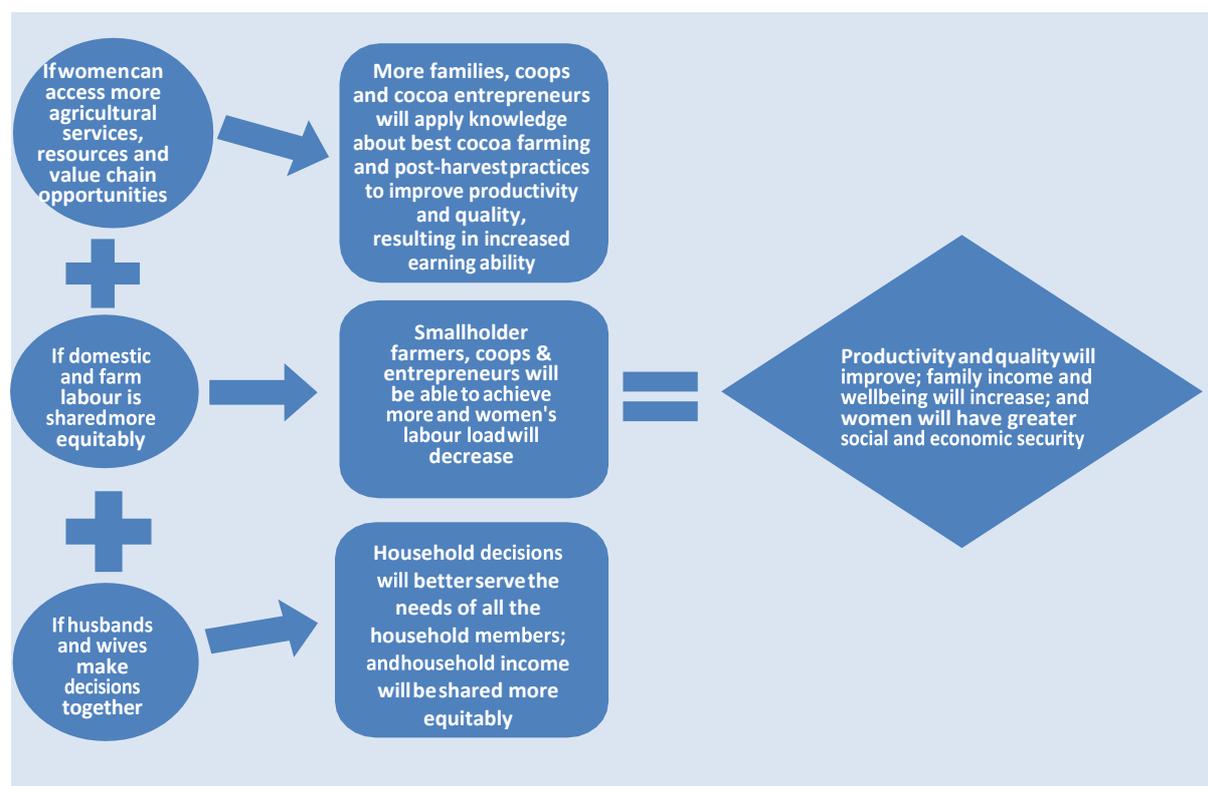
CARE's Gender Equality Framework (GEF) underpins the BECOMES project design and expresses its theory of change – its theory of how women's economic empowerment will be achieved and drive broader economic development and increased productivity and wellbeing for all cocoa farming families. The framework's focus on the domains of *individual agency*, *social relations of power*, and *institutional structures*, as they impact women's empowerment, allows barriers to women's meaningful engagement in, and benefit from, the cocoa industry in Bougainville to be analysed and addressed. The project's use of a gender sensitive approach is informed by a Situation Analysis that shows how gender (and age) inequality limits cocoa smallholder productivity.

Individual, relational and institutional barriers to women's economic empowerment are addressed at multiple levels by the BECOMES project by improving women's access to extension services and other resources, encouraging a more equal gender division of household decision making and domestic labour, increasing women's access to the value chain by supporting the establishment of small business enterprises, improving women's participation at all levels in cocoa cooperatives and business groups, and promoting the ability of industry stakeholders to address the needs of women, men and youth cocoa farmers.

At the level of individual women's agency, the project works with smallholder cocoa farmers to equip men, women and youth with technical knowledge of improved cocoa farming methods; it also provides women

with women-friendly tools to facilitate their application of new technical skills. At the relations level, CARE’s Farmer Business Management Training increases planning and financial management of smallholder farms and promotes women’s participation and benefit from cocoa farming by demonstrating that increased quality cocoa production and higher income are the outcome of improved cooperation and more equal decision making between husbands and wives in smallholder families. At the structural level, the project works to increase the effectiveness of business groups and cooperatives and facilitates increased participation of women and youth through establishment/strengthening of gender sensitive structures and governance. BECOMES also seeks to partner with cocoa industry stakeholders, including the private sector, government and NGOs, by equipping them with gender sensitive policies and practices that ensure maximisation of women and youth involvement in and benefit from cocoa farming.

Figure 1: Summary of BECOMES theory of change



The framework helps to keep gender in the forefront of understanding why and how the project is or is not on track, and ensures due consideration of the project’s efforts towards (and success in) creating an *enabling environment* for achieving project objectives through the empowerment of women cocoa farmers.

1.2 MTR Rationale and purpose

The key purpose of the MTR is to assist the project in achieving its strategic objectives and overall goal by providing project staff, CARE ARB, CARE PNG management, CARE Australia and donors with an evidence based assessment of progress to date and recommendations for improving the performance, outcomes and sustainability of BECOMES in second half of the 4-year project. The MTR assesses the extent to which the project is contributing to livelihood and gender equality improvements for the cocoa farming families in the target area of Tinputz and how future effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of project activities and outcomes might be enhanced.

Building on the project's existing learning and evidence base, the MTR highlights issues and challenges faced, how these have been addressed by BECOMES and with what success. Recommendations have taken into account the extent to which these challenges are within or beyond the control of the project and/or its collaborating partners and stakeholders.

The analysis also identified challenges with the BECOMES model and theory of change and informs the recommendations for addressing these going forward.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Mid-term Review Approach

As the aim of the MTR is to facilitate understanding of how and why change did or did not happen as a result of project activities, and to make recommendations as to how the project design and/or implementation might be improved in its second phase, the review used a mixed methods approach. This enabled the considerable quantitative data captured by routine project monitoring and reports¹ to be 'unpacked' and augmented by, cross-referenced and triangulated with, qualitative data from Focus Group Discussions (FGD), participatory self-rating activities, and KIIs with intended beneficiaries and stakeholders. Focus group discussions (FGD) and participatory activities were facilitated with cocoa farming families (including model farming families, and with some separate consultation of men and women) and co-operative group members. Key informant interviews (KII) were conducted with key BECOMES staff, Model Farming Families, Co-operative leaders/members, smallholder cocoa farmers, cocoa entrepreneurs, community leaders, DFAT, government agency representatives, extension officers, local and international NGOs and other cocoa industry stakeholders, such as the company Agmark.

At the mid-point of the project both quantitative and qualitative data were assessed against baseline data on: the social (gender equitable) and technical capacities of smallholder families to manage their cocoa farming; the level of cooperative and collective action to increase production efficiencies and market opportunities; and the capacity of cocoa industry stakeholders to address the specific needs of smallholder cocoa farmers. Data were analysed with reference to these objectives – the 'what' of progress to date in achieving outcomes towards objectives – as well as the 'why' of what enabled or prevented attainment of outcomes.

Alignment with ethical research standards

The MTR adhered to standard ethical research practices. Prior to participating all in the research activities participants were fully informed of the purpose and nature of the research and were provided with a chance to ask questions. They were informed of their right to privacy and confidentiality and the option to withdraw their involvement at any time during the data collection process.

Evaluation questions and scope

The MTR is structured in accordance with the following evaluation questions developed by CARE and grouped into three dimensions:

¹ A desk review of key BECOMES documents and materials included Quantitative data provided by existing studies (Situation Analysis, Baseline Study, Midterm Mini Farmer Survey) and project monitoring, annual reports (e.g. figures on increased production and income of targeted smallholder families, increased number of women in leadership positions in cooperatives/collectives, increased access to information and skills training, increased access of women and youth to the value chain), along with data from periodic BECOMES team learning and reflection processes.

Effectiveness

- To what extent is BECOMES on track to achieve its objectives and outcome areas?
- To what extent are project strategies furthering women's economic empowerment through stronger agency and access to opportunities within the cocoa value chain?
- Do project participants see the cocoa value chain as being a more equitable venture for women and youth, particularly on family farms?
- What verifiable impact or significant change (both positive and negative) has the project brought about for the targeted smallholder families and community institutions such as co-operatives and business groups? Consider whether these changes are attributable to the BECOMES intervention, and what evidence we have for this?
- What, if any, are the challenges with the BECOMES model and theory of change and how can these be overcome?
- To what extent are the most marginalised and vulnerable groups being reached?

Efficiency

- How efficient is the management of BECOMES? Analyse the performance of the Monitoring and Evaluation mechanism of the project and the various tools (database, trackers etc.)
- What is the value of BECOMES and CARE's management of BECOMES to the partners and to beneficiaries?

Sustainability:

Are the outcomes likely to be sustainable and enduring? Assess preliminary indications of the degree to which the project results are likely to be sustainable beyond the project's lifetime (both at the community and institutional level), and provide recommendations for strengthening sustainability.

2.2 Data collection tools

Qualitative participatory tools were developed in collaboration with BECOMES Project team and CARE Australia. These included FGD guides for smallholder farmers, groups of Model Farming Family couples and members of cooperatives and business groups. Different sets of KII questions were tailored for government departments and agencies at both ABG and district level, private sector stakeholders, NGOs, DFAT, CARE Bougainville staff and other stakeholders such as non-participating cooperatives.

2.3 Selection of Communities

The MTR team undertook field research to collect qualitative data in Tinputz District in north Bougainville. This is where the project has been implemented to date and where the CARE BECOMES team currently works with 1,000 smallholder cocoa families, 5 business groups/cooperatives, 6 small entrepreneurs and a range of stakeholders from the public and private sectors. To enable data to be drawn from a number of communities, target beneficiaries were brought together in one location for FGDs and KIIs from several communities in the project area, including Matakus, Suangu, Teoptop, Mate, Unonovi and Namatoa. In addition the MTR team made site visits to three participating cooperatives / business groups located in three communities in the mountainous area of Tinputz. Characteristics of these sites are representative of some of the challenges faced by the cocoa smallholders and the BECOMES project.

2.4 Data collection

A total of eight FGDs were conducted with target beneficiaries, including young farmers (since BECOMES has a special focus on youth), women and men farmers who had received technical and FBMT training from BECOMES, and model farmer family (MFF) couples who had received technical cocoa training, FBMT and

in addition Gender and Diversity trainings. An FGD was also held with BECOMES team. FDGs were also conducted with cooperatives and business groups. KIIs were held with BECOMES Senior M&E officer, ARB Program Director, ABG Department of Primary Industry, ACIAR, CSF, Tinputz District Executive Manager, Agmark Private Limited, VSA, a non-participating cocoa cooperative and the PNG Cocoa Board.

A total of 7 days was allocated for the consultant's work in-country. Two (2) days were spent in Buka conducting KIIs with key stakeholders and CARE staff, three days (3) were spent conducting field work with the MTR team, one (1) day was allocated to data analysis and preparation of reflection workshop by the consultant, and an additional half day to facilitate the workshop.

2.5 Data Analysis

After the qualitative data was collected the consultant undertook a preliminary analysis, synthesising the quantitative and qualitative data sets. Initial findings and provisional recommendations for enhancing project performance and outcomes in the second half of the project were presented to BECOMES Project staff in a reflection workshop. The team actively discussed the findings and both responded to and recommended their own changes in design, management, and/or implementation of the next phase of the project. The outcome of the workshop, including actions taken by the project manager in response to initial recommendations, have been integrated into this report.

2.6 Limitations

Behaviour change data

MTR data on changes in gendered division of domestic labour and decision-making are relatively weak. The quantitative results furnished by the mid-term mini farmer survey data, and compared with the Baseline data, was based on survey questions that did not generate strong, defensible data (see details in section on M&E). The qualitative data is also less than robust, as it is based on only a handful of individual examples. Overall, it cannot be claimed that these data support claims that the positive changes recorded in gender relations are substantive and attributable to the project. At the same time the data does not adequately monitor the type or extent of unexpected negative changes in this dimension. Recommendations include suggestions for improving the project's collection of this type of data.

Counterfactual

As there was no comparison of those farmers benefitting from participation in BECOMES activities with those who did not receive training, there is no counterfactual to show categorically that it was CARE's intervention that brought about positive change and not other factors (e.g. better weather during project implementation than in the previous year resulting in increased production, or an increase in the price of cocoa resulting in higher incomes).

Communication and logistics

Challenges in remote areas where internet network coverage is patchy and unreliable can result in breakdown of communication. It was not known by the project team that the day on which the MTR team visited the Mate Women's Group was market day for the women (who also sell vegetables). As a result, the team was able to talk with only two women and a male volunteer. Earlier in the day, miscommunication about the timing of the team's meeting with another coop group required reorganisation of the day's schedule and reduced the amount of time available able to spend at each of the 3 sites. This had a slight impact on the quantity and quality of the data collected.

Timing

Despite the limited time for field work, some clever logistical organisation by the BECOMES team facilitated a range of meetings with smallholder farmers brought in from several different communities, in addition

to which, three site visits were made to hold FGD and participatory activities with cooperatives in different communities located in the mountains, and KIIs were conducted with the leader of a non-participating cooperative, the Tinputz District Executive Manager and a DPI/ACIAR representative at District level.

2.7 Organisation of findings

Findings are presented in Section 3 under the three broad headings of Effectiveness, Efficiency and Sustainability, with subsections on each of the evaluation questions. For the first evaluation question under Effectiveness - To what extent is BECOMES on track to achieve its objectives and outcome areas - a quantitative table is presented for each of BECOMES' Strategic Objective, corresponding to the MELF. Following each table is a narrative section detailing achievements, challenges/lessons learned, and recommendations.

3. FINDINGS

3.2 EFFECTIVENESS

3.1.1 To what extent is BECOMES on track to achieve its objectives and outcome areas

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE ONE: Smallholder families have improved social and technical capacities to manage their cocoa farming

ACHIEVEMENTS

At the start of the project, low production in the geographic target area was a major issue among the smallholders, with nearly 70% of the households surveyed in the baseline study producing less than 10 bags of beans per year. In addition to CPB attack, the main production constraints for smallholder cocoa farmers are lack of proper tools and trainings, shortage of labour and lack of access to drying and fermentation facilities. Mostly those farmers who possessed one to two cocoa blocks produced only wet beans due to lack of their own fermentary and drying facilities.

The project uses two indicators to demonstrate improved social and technical capacity of smallholder families to manage cocoa farming: achievement of a 20% **increase in production of quality cocoa** by target households, leading to the second indicator, a 10% **increase in smallholder household income**.

A comparison between baseline and midterm mini farmer survey statistics² (see **Table 1** and **Figure 1** below) indicates that by the mid-point the project had almost achieved the target increase in production for the entire project. **Table 1** shows an 18% increase in the number of smallholder families producing

² The midterm mini farmer survey was conducted separately by the BECOMES Senior M&E Officer just prior to the mid-term review. Whereas the MTR was primarily qualitative, the mini survey was quantitative. It was conducted in nine (9) communities that fell within the targeted sites in the Intervention Phase 1 Areas (IP1As) and from which an average of eight (8) household farming families from each village participated in project activities. However, the survey was not a longitudinal survey as the 71 household in the mini-survey were not drawn from the same 140 surveyed during the baseline. While there is no comparability between baseline and mini farmer survey statistics, and the latter offer only a snapshot of midterm statistics, it is nevertheless a good indication of changes taking place. Of the 71 household farming families interviewed, 152 respondents (men=71 and women=71) were interviewed.

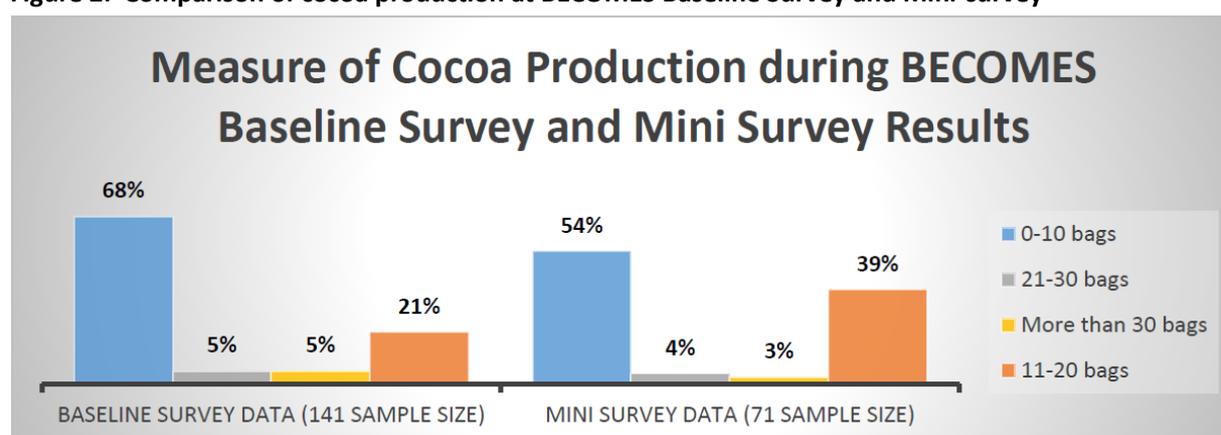
between 11 and 20 bags (consisting of a 10% increase in the number producing between 11-15 bags and an 8% increase in the number producing 15 - 20 bags.

Table 1: Percentage increase in production of quality cocoa by target households

Target increase	Baseline (Mini survey if no baseline data available)	Midterm mini farmer survey
20% increase in production of quality cocoa by target households	68% of the targeted families were producing between 0-10 bags	- 26% of the targeted families produced 0-5 bags across two production seasons - 29% produced between 6-10 bags 54% produced between 0-10 bags
		- 31% produced between 11-15 bags - 8% produced 16-20 bags 39% produced 11-20 bags (nearly double baseline)
	5% produced 21-30 bags	4% produced between 21-30 bags
	5% produced > 30 bags of quality cocoa	3% produced > 30 bags of quality cocoa

Project data show that while the combined average of cocoa production at the time of the Baseline Survey was 8 bags, average production at the time of mini survey was 11 bags per smallholder family. This is an average increase of 3 bags per family.

Figure 2: Comparison of cocoa production at BECOMES Baseline Survey and Mini-survey



The quality of beans is more difficult to determine as this is usually done by buyers and, as detailed below, there are issues with the application of accepted quality parameters to smallholder cocoa beans by the main buyers in Bougainville. However, it can be safely assumed that increased correct use of small scale fermentaries and increased smallholder access to large scale solar combination driers has resulted in a comparable improvement in the quality of beans produced (for more detail on this see p.23 under Strategic Objective 2)

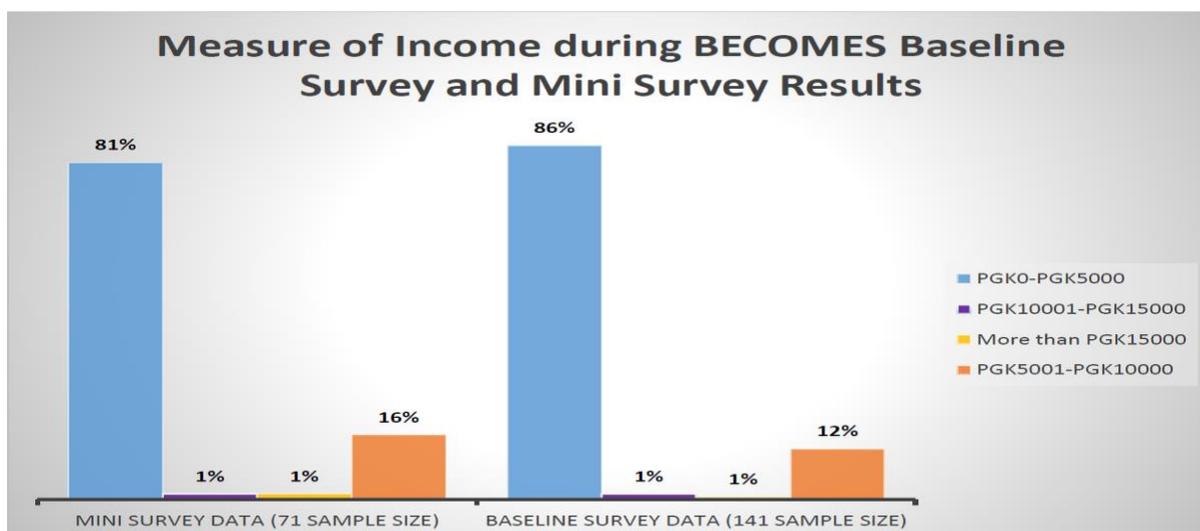
Evidence charting the **increase in household income** of targeted cocoa farming families between the Baseline and the farmer mini-survey at the midpoint shows that increased production resulted in increased income.

Table 2: Percentage increase in cocoa farming family household income

Target increase	Baseline	Midterm mini farmer survey
10% increase in income of the households	86% of the farming families earned between PGK0-PGK5000	- 17% earned between PGK0-PGK1,000 - 64% earned between PGK1,001-PGK5,000 81% of the farming families earned between PGK0-PGK5000

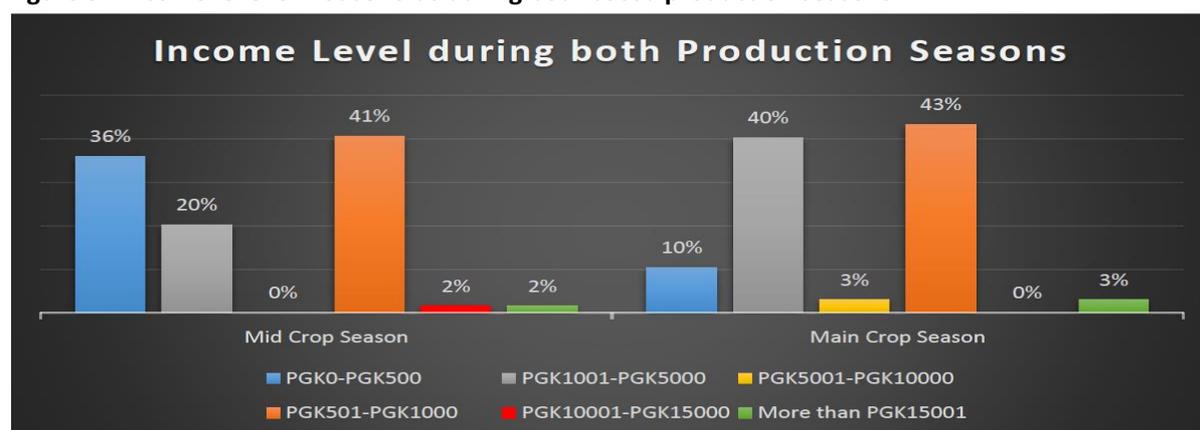
	12% earned PGK5,000 – 10,000	16% earned more than PGK5,001
	1% earned PGK10,000 – 15,000	2% earned more than PGK10,000
	1% earned more than PGK15,000	

Figure 2: Difference between cocoa farming family income at baseline and midterm



At this stage the 4% increase in the number of households moving from one income bracket to a higher one, e.g. from the under PGK 5,000 income bracket to the PGK 5,000-10,000 bracket is modest (as captured by the mini farmer survey). However, an overwhelming 94% of the 71 respondents to the mini-survey said their income from cocoa had increased. This can be seen more clearly in the breakdown of earnings between the mid-crop and main seasons (see **Figure 3** below). While it is not known at this point how big a change was required to move between brackets (e.g. 5K or 500K), the simple fact of increased farmer income overall is further supported by data in the Project MIS Database³ collected during the registration of the 500 smallholder farming families in IP1 Areas. When first registered, average smallholder annual income was PGK 1,746.75; at midpoint, according to the mini-survey data, average income was PGK 3,570.37 (BECOMES Mini Farmer Survey, p. 13).

Figure 3: Income level of households during both cocoa production seasons



As well as growing *more cocoa* as a result of improved farming practices (see section below), smallholders have also increased their income by adding value to their beans through improved practices of fermenting and drying. Farms which previously sold only wet beans have improved their knowledge of fermentation

³ BECOMES Project Monitoring and Information System Database

and drying processes and are making the transition to selling dry beans, thereby improving their access to better marketing opportunities. The installation of combination solar driers with project help has enabled groups to produce dried beans of uniform quality in quantities of up to 16 tonnes (the minimum required by some buyers, e.g. Agmark, to access premium international market prices). Opiuk Cooperative Society, for example, had access to premium markets before the BECOMES intervention, but has increased the quantity it sells at premium price. Non-members can also access this service for a fee. Other smallholders are now utilising a number of small fermentaries set up through the entrepreneur component of BECOMES (see below).

Smallholder families have improved cocoa farming practices

Both quantitative and qualitative data show that at the midpoint the BECOMES project has achieved a significant improvement in the cocoa farming practices of smallholders. According to smallholders' self-reporting in the mini farmer survey – the project has doubled its original target of 10% improvement in smallholder integrated pest and disease management (IPDM), achieving a **20% increase in the number of smallholders who say they practice 4 out of 5 of the recommended (IPDM) practices** and a **33% increase** in the number of smallholders claiming to be **practicing all five IPDMs**.

Table 3: smallholder families have improved cocoa farming practices

Objective and Outcomes	Target	Baseline + Mini survey (where the question was asked retrospectively)	Midterm mini farmer survey
Outcome 1.1 Smallholder families have improved cocoa farming practices	1.1.1 There is a 10% percent increase in target HHs demonstrating improved pest and disease management practices	B: 19% of the targeted families were following two out of five integrated pest and disease management practices (IPDM) M: 28% of targeted families were practicing 2 of 5 IPDM practices and 28% reported practicing all 5	- 39 percent of households reported practicing 4 out of the 5 recommended IPDM practices - 61 percent of HHs reported practicing all 5 IPDM practices
	1.1.2 There is increase in 20% of women farmers from target households who practice the advanced practices of pruning and fertiliser application	32% of women are involved in pruning and 9% are involved in fertiliser application	Data on number of women practicing pruning was not collected in midterm mini farmer survey, as women friendly tools were introduced only in Jan- Feb 2018. However, qualitative evidence on increased pruning is furnished by FGDs. (See narrative below)
	1.1.3. There is increase in 20 percent of target HHs demonstrate improved drying and fermenting processes	30% of the households are following drying / fermentation processes and selling dry beans	Estimated 22.5% increase in HHs following drying / fermentation processes and selling dry beans. (see narrative below for details)

FGD and anecdotal evidence suggest a majority of the women farmers targeted by BECOMES are now involved in pruning, which is an important IPDM practice that leads to increased yields. The project team estimates that **20% of women farmers from target households are practicing advanced pruning and fertiliser application**. Women in one focus group explained that as a result of participating in BECOMES technical training they now know how to look after their cocoa trees properly and can confidently undertake all the tasks required for good cocoa block management, including those previously done almost exclusively by men – pruning and budding (Women smallholder FGD). When prompted for more detail, the women said they knew the correct method of pruning because they can identify which branches to remove and are able to remove them cleanly, a task all agreed had been made easier for women by CARE's provision of women friendly tools such as 'scissors' (secateurs). All the women who had received secateurs were using them and one woman said: "the scissors are always in my basket" (Women Smallholder FGD).

The women also had good knowledge of sanitation and hygiene practices, the most important of which they explained was correct disposal of cocoa pod borer by burying them; and weed management (clearing for 1 metre around the base of the trees). Budding, a practice carried out previously mainly by men, was being enthusiastically adopted by some women, one of whom said she had successfully budded 25 trees (Women's Model Farming Family FGD). According to the mini-farmer survey, 61% of smallholders are currently practicing all 5 IPDM practices including fertiliser application (p.6). This is a significant increase over the 2% recorded at baseline and can be attributed to CARE trainings, which promote use of fertiliser as an important means of guarding against CPB attack (see details of attribution below in section 3.1.4). While there is much anecdotal evidence that farmers are reinvesting their income in cocoa farming by purchasing fertiliser among other inputs, the mini survey shows that fertiliser application is the missing practice among the 31% of respondents who reported using 4 out of 5 IPDM practices. The extent to which women are involved in application of fertiliser is not indicated by the mini survey results and application of fertiliser was not a priority in women's discussions of their new skills and knowledge, although one woman mentioned in an FGD that she had been shown this by an MFF mentor.

Improved drying and fermenting processes: According to BECOMES MIS data, there has been an estimated increase of 22.5% in the number of households selling dry beans as a result of following improved drying and fermenting processes. This includes the 125 households who belong to either the Opiuk Cooperative Society or Kukurina Business Group and are accessing the services of their respective solar combination driers, installed with project assistance. An additional 100 households are accessing the drying and fermentation services of the small fermentaries supported under the project's value chain enterprise support component. The estimated 22.5% does not include the non-members of the Opiuk and Kukurina groups, who pay to access the groups' fermentation and drying services, and who would put the total significantly higher.

CHALLENGES / LESSONS LEARNED

- ❖ A woman in Kesopohit who grows hybrids and received secateurs provided feedback that hybrids are older and taller trees with thicker branches and secateurs are too small to use on them (despite which, she and her husband applied their new pruning knowledge and produced more beans). Male smallholders suggested that bow saws are more appropriate for pruning hybrids.
- ❖ Currently there is no absolute or simple comparability between baseline and mini farmer survey statistics (e.g. measures of farmers' practice of the 5 IPDMs) and no absolute measures of smallholder cocoa production (in terms of number of bags sold) and income (in terms of price per bag or annual income). This means limited capacity to understand changes in technical practice and the real impact on farmers of shifting between income brackets.
- ❖ To date there has been little cross-correlation of increases in women's uptake of advanced farming practices, such as pruning and application of chemicals and fertiliser, with data on women's workload and perception of labour division, their income, and joint decision-making. This information is key to determining whether there is more equitable labour, decision making and income sharing between men and women or whether women's workload has simply increased without commensurate increases in their access to and control of resources and benefits. While the available evidence leans heavily in favour of improvements, at this point it is not sufficient to support a claim that women's increased involvement in cocoa farming is a positive shift in terms of their workload.
- ❖ Cocoa farmers are aware that CARE's intervention has increased the quantity and quality of cocoa they produce. Similarly, women credit CARE with their acquisition of new skills and their increased participation in and benefit from cocoa production. To date, the project has not shared with farmers (or others stakeholders) the 'hard' – quantitative – evidence it has captured on increases in quantity,

quality and income that have resulted from changed farmer practices. This presents an opportunity to showcase evidence on the success of CARE’s approach, and to promote it to farmers and industry not yet been convinced of its efficacy.

- ❖ As part of a study conducted recently in Bougainville, a case was documented of sabotage motivated by ‘jealousy’ in which trees were chopped down in a husband and wife’s rehabilitated cocoa block in Tinputz, from which they were making good money with new varieties resistant to cocoa pod borer. The couple responded by supplying the saboteurs with new budded cocoa plants, so that they could rehabilitate their own cocoa blocks. (p.20 Do No Harm research) It is not known whether this couple were participating in the BECOMES project, however their case highlights the need to monitor and mitigate risks relating to issues of inclusion, where new skills and knowledge, and / or inputs such as fertiliser and cloned seedlings, are supplied to only a limited number of smallholders.

Household labour and decision-making is shared more equitably in smallholder families

The Baseline Study found that a majority of the men and women surveyed expressed attitudes supportive of gender equality. As seen in **Table 4** below, a majority of respondents felt that men should not make most of the household decisions and that they should share household chores and childcare when women work on the cocoa farm or elsewhere outside the home. Most said that men do not have the right to use cocoa income without consulting women, and most did not accept any exclusive division between ‘men’s work’ and ‘women’s work’, and were strongly supportive of equal access to education for sons and daughters (Baseline, p 42). The exception was in attitudes towards women’s ‘ownership’ of cocoa farming, an idea with which a majority of both men and women disagreed⁴.

Table 4: Smallholder attitudes and values on gendered division of labour and decision making at baseline

	Statements	Agree	Strongly Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	Most household decisions should be made by men	23%	8%	49%	20%
2	There is men's work & women's work; one shouldn't do the work of the other	15%	12%	53%	17%
3	If a woman works outside (home or farm) husband should help with child care & domestic chores	34%	43%	11%	9%
4	It is always right for parents to encourage & support the education of sons and not their daughters	5%	5%	19%	65%
5	Women should humbly accept if men assert all rights to use cocoa income	5%	3%	32%	56%
6	Cocoa farming should only be for men & not women	4%	4%	44%	43%

Conducted during the inception phase, when BECOMES project activities had already been carried out in target sites, these baseline results could be interpreted in at least three ways: as an indication that CARE’s promotion of gender equitable farming practices was already having a positive influence; as evidence that attitudes in matrilineal Bougainville, where a significant percentage of women hold community group leadership positions (baseline, p.), are already more gender equitable than, say, those in highlands PNG; or as evidence of both, indicating that matrilineal Bougainville provides receptive ground for CARE’s approach.

⁴ Despite women’s major share in the workload related to cocoa farming activities, 70% of male respondents and 66% of female respondents opposed women’s ownership of cocoa blocks, on grounds that “a women cannot manage it herself [sic] without the help of men for works like pruning, harvesting, etc., due to lack of physical strength ... labour costs increase, relations strain, inability to spare more time as already busy with domestic chores, which is her primary responsibility” (p. 43)

Although at the mid-point there is no conclusive data on how household labour and decision making are shared between men and women in the project areas and how this has or has not changed as a result of project interventions, qualitative data from FGDs, case studies recorded by the project, staff observation and anecdotal evidence suggest significant changes in women’s involvement in decision making related to cocoa farming and the management of cocoa income. This appears to be as a result of improved cooperation and communication between smallholder husbands and wives.

Table 5: Household labour and decision-making is shared more equitably in smallholder families

Outcome areas	Target increase	Baseline	Midterm mini farmer survey
Outcome 1.2 Household labour and decision-making is shared more equitably in smallholder families	1.2.1. There is increase in 10 percent of men and women that household tasks are shared more equitably in the household	<u>Men</u> 22% to 68% reported they were the equal main worker with an average of 48% <u>women</u> 12% to 77% reported that they were the equal main worker with an average of 48%.	99% of both men and women reported that household tasks are shared equitably
	1.2.2. There is increase in 20% of target HHS reporting women's increased involvement in decision making related to cocoa farming	38% of the targeted households excluded women's involvement in decision making and husband alone takes the decision	FGDs provide evidence of women's increased involvement in decision making on cocoa farming, including planning, and management of cocoa income.

Household and cocoa farm labour

The Baseline study found women bear a greater workload than men, undertaking “multifarious activities relating to the household and cocoa farms”⁵. Informed by CARE’s Gender Equality Framework, the BECOMES design seeks to rebalance the gendered division of labour – in both farm and household – more equitably. However, as it also aims to promote adoption by smallholders of a more businesslike approach to cocoa farming and a more labour-intensive production strategy, there is a risk that to the extent the project succeeds in this while failing to rebalance the gendered division of labour, women’s workload may simply increase. To ensure the project upholds the ‘do no harm’ principle, changes in gendered labour dynamics brought about by project interventions need to be effectively monitored. See Recommendations.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- ❖ There is clear evidence of **women’s greater involvement in the skilled dimensions of cocoa block management**, i.e. pruning, budding, and application of chemicals, as a result OF BECOMES interventions. “I used to let my husband do the cocoa farming and cut the grass, but the training has increased my interest and with my own tools I can apply my new skills. I prune, clone, mix the chemicals and apply them” (Women Smallholders FGD).
- ❖ FGDs with women and KIIs with men provided some evidence of **men sharing more equally in some household tasks**, such as caring for children while their wives are attending training, taking the children to school and cooking family meals (Women Smallholder and MFF FGDs; KIIs with Tinputz Executive Manager and former CSIRO rep).
- ❖ BECOMES activities were reported by female members of business groups and cooperatives, to have had brought changes in how their husbands behaved, especially in relation to sharing the benefits from cocoa income and supporting them to save some money as well as *share the work load* (Coop Assessment, p.11) In addition, **collective sharing of block management tasks**, organised by reinvigorated community / business groups with the help of MFFs, appears to have impacted

⁵ Men make the gardens, help women collect firewood and shop, and work the cocoa block. Women undertake multiple household chores, including child care, washing clothes and dishes, collecting water and firewood, and shopping. Women also sell garden food in the market, and some were equal main workers on cocoa the farm. Baseline Study, p.9

positively: “women’s workload is reduced in the household because the group is helping everyone on their block.” (female member of Opiuk Cooperative Society FGD, Opiuk Members)

CHALLENGES / LESSONS LEARNED

- ❖ Qualitative data collected by the project and demonstrating changed gender relations in term of more equally shared household and farm labour is thin. The midterm mini farmer survey provides quantitative data showing husbands are helping with household chores, but the 100% positive response rate of women to the closed question, “Does your husband help you with household chores?” (Mini farmer survey, p. 15), provides no details on what has changed and to what extent, since the start of the BECOMES project.

Without solid evidence that household and farm labour is shared more equally between husbands and wives, there is a risk that strong financial incentives for women’s increased participation in cocoa production (new skills and knowledge leading to increased cocoa income and improved financial returns for women) may result in women’s workloads increasing, for example: “We were given technical training on ‘best practice’ in cocoa farming. I really benefited from both the theory and the practical. Now, I have adjusted my daily program so that I always have some hours to work on my cocoa block.” (Melena from Kaskurus Village, Tinputz, a BECOMES Case Story). “Now that I can do everything a man can do in cocoa farming, I can work in the cocoa garden even if my husband is too busy” (Smallholder from Namatoa, Women Farmer FGD). “This training was revolutionary. I now feel much more confident with the knowledge and skills I was taught. And I started to use them right away. Encouraging cocoa farmers, particularly women like me, has helped us to manage our time well, so that we now have a lot of time to work on our cocoa blocks.” (Emilia from Teop village, BECOMES Case Story). These examples highlight the need to mitigate this risk.

Household level decision making

The Baseline⁶ and other recent studies present evidence suggesting that women in Bougainville are involved in decision making to a greater extent than elsewhere in PNG⁷. One such study found that “some women ... have a fair degree of agency in decision-making” at household level, “some relationships appear to be cooperative” (Do No Harm, p X) and income pooling and cooperative decision-making were quite common. At the same time, the research found that even within households identified as cooperative the husband might ultimately control decisions and the wife might have little power, especially with respect to important decisions involving significant resources (Do No Harm, p X)”. It also found that across three areas of Bougainville “the greatest variation in financial decision-making occurred in Tinputz households” (p.21) and that women in Tinputz District were the most marginalised from decision-making and less involved in joint decision-making than elsewhere in the ARB.

This brief background highlights the complex nature of household decision making in the project area and the challenges associated with measuring it. While responses to yes/no survey questions, along with a small number of positive testimonies from individual women indicates that BECOMES has effected a radical

⁶ According to the Baseline: “About one-third of male and female respondents are holding leadership positions in social, political, religious and sports groups in the ratio of 56% of men and 44% of women, which demonstrates that there is an acceptance and encouragement to women occupying the leadership positions in these predominantly male headed households” (Baseline p 41).

⁷ It has been suggested that Bougainville’s status as a matrilineal society and as a post conflict society in which women have played a recognised role as conflict mediators and peace builders may have contributed to the relative higher degree of their participation in household decision making than elsewhere in PNG.

shift to more equitable household decision making, this result needs to be qualified and cannot be generalised, as outlined below.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- ❖ FGDs with groups of Model Farming Family couples revealed improvements in the way husbands and wives are planning their time and managing their finances together for the benefit of the family: “Before, I did nothing except cutting the grass. Now my husband and I plan our work together in the block and the garden. We want to convert to clones⁸ and are growing and selling greens to finance this” (Women MFF FGD).

Success factors include CARE’s Gender and Diversity training package delivered to MFF couples: “It helped me understand how to deal with problems in my relationship between myself and Pauline, and how to work together to make decisions on the income from our cocoa” (Sylvester, MFF, BECOMES Case Story); the high quality FBM training delivered by BECOMES to both MFFs and other smallholders (resulting in improved skills in block management and planning); the positive influence of MFF role models on other smallholder couples; and the financial incentive of relatively quick results from the application of new skills and knowledge, due to the almost year-round cocoa season.

- ❖ **Family ‘vision’ acts as incentive.** Included in the FBMT (which contain modules on communication, shared decision making, budgeting and planning) is a ‘visioning’ activity in which husbands and wives imagine their family as they would like it be in five years’ time. This ‘shared vision’ developed by husbands and wives had together was widely referred to by FGD participants as a concrete focus for shared decision making and the application of new financial and business management skills: “Before CARE came, my husband and I worked together on cocoa production, but my husband made all the decisions. Now, we share and discuss, so that we reach our vision” (FGD participant, Women MFF). After BECOMES held trainings for smallholder families who were business group members, an independent consultant conducting an assessment of the groups found that: “Men appreciated the support of the women and are now genuinely interested to work together as families to improve their livelihoods” (Cooperatives assessment, p 11)

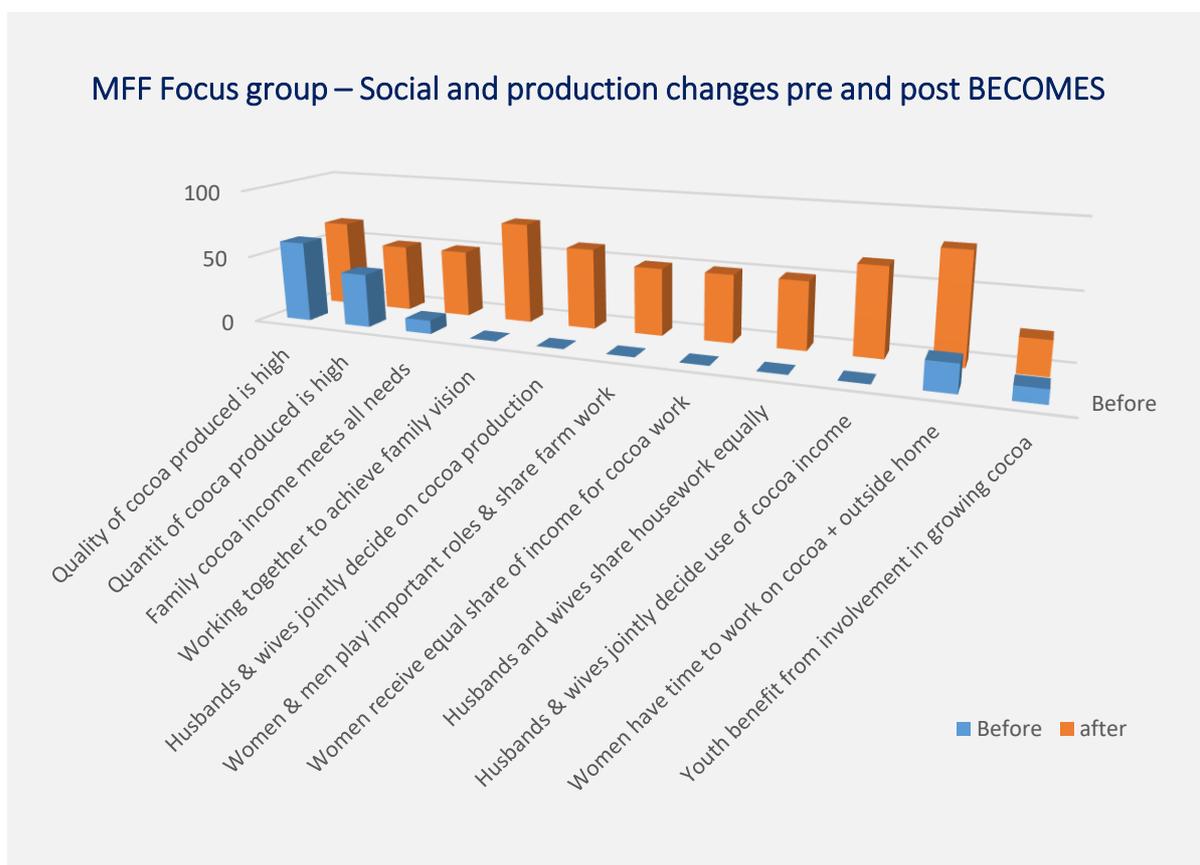
Young farmers too were putting FBMT learning into practice to achieve their new plans: “We opened savings account for two of our children (one is still a baby). We have a five-year plan to build a house for my mother and we’re saving towards it.” (Young Farmer FGD).

- ❖ **Increased joint decision making on how cocoa income is spent** is illustrated by a number stories. In Bougainville, as elsewhere in PNG, conflicts often occur over men using their earnings for their own consumption to the exclusion of the needs of the household, and in some cases violence results. In FGDs for the BECOMES MTR both women and men shared stories of radical change in husbands’ behaviour after they had taken part in the FBM Training: “Now when my husband sells the cocoa he returns the money to me instead of spending it all on beer and we decide together what to do with it. He has realised that the family needs to benefit” (Woman from Hanntobin community, women

⁸ It takes 3-5 years for a cacao seed to become a fruiting tree. Each tree makes a limited number of seeds and those seeds are not identical to the parent plant. To reduce the time needed to raise a fruiting cocoa tree with specific genetic traits, such as resistance to cocoa pod borer (CPD), a vegetative propagation technique known as ‘budding’ is used. A bud is cut from a tree, placed under a flap of bark on another tree and the ‘budding patch’ bound with a material that prevents moisture loss. When the bud is growing the old tree above it can be cut down. Alternatively, the clone can be budded onto an advanced cocoa seedling. In each case, the new tree has the same genes as its parent tree.
<https://www.icco.org/fag/48-biotechnology/112-propagation-of-cocoa-trees.html>

smallholder FGD). The Chairman of Opiuk Cooperative commented: “Unlike before, when the men would use most of the income from selling the cocoa, now they are more conscious about spending from the income” (p.12).

Figure 4: Social and cocoa production changes before and after BECOMES



CHALLENGES / LESSONS LEARNED

- ❖ The data on decision making is drawn from individual cases that provide little detailed information on which decisions are being shared more equitably. It is not known, for example, if women and men are deciding jointly on everything or if women have influence only over certain areas, such as food purchase, education and health, which are traditionally associated with their roles.

A more nuanced understanding of the extent to which individual changes in behaviour have occurred and why or why not, is not only critical for improving / adjusting project interventions, but for generating the evidence required by a robust business case that increased gender equitability drives improved cocoa production and quality. Currently there is not sufficient evidence to affirm this component of the theory of change: “If husbands and wives make decisions together, then household decisions will better serve the needs of all the household members and household income will be shared more equitably”. There is compelling anecdotal evidence that this is happening, but no hard evidence of the extent to which all decisions are made more equitably or the extent to which income is shared more equitably.

- ❖ Analysis of project monitoring data by the project or MTR has not provided cross-correlation of increases in women’s uptake of advanced farming practices, such as pruning and application of chemicals and fertiliser, with data on women’s workload and perception of labour division, their

incomes, and joint decision-making. This information is key to determining whether there is more equitable labour, decision making and income sharing between men and women or whether women are undertaking additional cocoa related work without receiving commensurate increases in help with household tasks, and access to and control of resources and benefits. While the available evidence leans heavily in favour of improvements, at this point it is not sufficient to support a categorical claim that women's increased involvement in cocoa farming represents a positive shift in terms of more equitable labour and decision making in the household.

- ❖ Mobile bank accounts, which are the most convenient for people living in rural communities, can be operated by only one person. This has led to “many complaints regarding who holds the money” (KII Chairperson of Teonena Cooperative, May 3). Separate bank accounts for wives and husbands could be a solution to this. Husband and wife members of cooperatives could nominate the share to be transferred by the Coop into each account. Currently the cooperatives working with CARE have not adopted this practice.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

Rec # 1: To address gaps in and lack of comparability between data, revise data collection needs and processes in light of endline evaluation and Investing in Women in Cocoa Business Case development. Develop a MEL plan for the next two years, ensuring inclusion of the following:

- Ensure all relevant data is disaggregated by sex;
- Collect data on hybrids and clones, and those farmers transitioning from hybrids to clones;
- Ensure women's and men's attitudes to women as cocoa farmers in their own right, i.e. 'owners' of commercial agricultural enterprises, is captured in the end of project evaluation;
- Address IT/technical issues to ensure accessibility and security of data;
- To determine the extent to which increased production and improved quality are responsible for changes in income and to enable understanding of the real impact on farmers of shifting between income brackets, ensure collection of absolute quantitative data on smallholder production (number of bags sold) and income (price per bag or annual income).
- To ensure cross-correlation of increases in women's practice of advanced farming techniques with data on their workload, income, and joint decision-making, collect appropriately detailed baseline data on key gendered dimensions (perhaps at the time of farmer registration in the new project areas), including: i) division of labour (household and farm), ii) decision making and iii) access to and control over resources and benefits of cocoa farming. Ensure these can be correlated with changes in quantity and quality of cocoa produced. This will also enable comparability with end of project evaluation data (with use of identical measures).
- Review the MELF in light of the MTR findings and recommendations and revise accordingly, ensuring the project's advocacy and gender sensitive data needs are met;
- Review Baseline and Mini Farmer Survey to ensure alignment and consistency with MELF.

In the medium to long term

- To extend and deepen the results of improved data collection on changes in gender equality and women's economic empowerment, conduct longitudinal studies with small cohorts of participating and non-participating smallholders, documenting time spent by husbands and wives on key 'gendered' tasks, their involvement in key 'gendered' decisions and the benefits women receive from their farm labour.

Rec # 2: Address MEL staffing and skills development needs, including the following:

- To facilitate collection by the MIS and Mini Farmer Survey of qualitative and more refined quantitative data that effectively captures changes towards more gender equitable practices, including gendered division of household and farm labour, provide training on gender sensitive MEL for the Senior M&E Officer and all BECOMES staff involved in data collection (e.g. on structuring survey questions to elicit the concrete information needed to determine whether and what specific attitude and behaviour changes have occurred);
- Employ an additional M&E officer (dependent on project budget).

Rec # 3: Collect evidence towards development of a business case for investing in women in cocoa.

- Leverage ‘hard’ evidence on increased quantity, quality and income resulting from changed farmer practices by advocating through appropriately pitched reports (in terms of medium, technical language and format) to farmers, business groups, District Administration, government agencies and industry stakeholders.

In the medium to long term:

- *Undertake research/refine the evidence base to ‘prove’ the BECOMES model (i.e. women’s economic empowerment can drive reinvigoration of the cocoa industry in Bougainville.) Focus on achievements to date in Tinputz in order to develop a strong ‘business case’ for use with industry stakeholders, such as Agmark, and in the more challenging operating contexts in Central and South districts (both target beneficiaries and district administrations). Collect qualitative data, including testimonials, from a range of women, men and youth cocoa farmers; develop ‘evidence based research’ presentations targeting donors, government and industry; develop a promotional video for cocoa industry stakeholders and District Administrations. Build on CISP’s business case for investing in women in coffee.*

Implementation

Rec # 4: To reduce the risk of unintended negative impacts from project activities, confirm adequate feedback and complaints mechanisms are in place and effectively disseminated to both project participants and non-participants.

Rec # 5: Provide bow saws to women smallholders growing hybrids; seek feedback from women on women friendly tools to establish an evidence base on this strategy and to inform ongoing tools development.

Rec # 6: Consider partnering with Callan Services, a disability service operating in this region, to provide the supplementary services needed by cocoa farmers or their family members living with a disability.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE TWO: Targeted smallholder families are demonstrating increased cooperation and collective action to increase production efficiency as well as enable market opportunities

Table 6: Cooperation & collective action to increase production efficiency and market opportunities

Strategic objective	Target increase	Baseline	Midterm mini farmer survey
Strategic objective 2: Targeted smallholder families demonstrating increased cooperation and collective action	2a. There is 10% increase in percentage of target households that report better marketing opportunities through collective action	Only 1% of the target households who are members of the co-operative have access to premium markets	Opiuk Cooperative accesses a premium market and is receiving 5% higher prices for the 33 bags of cocoa beans dried through its solar combination drier
	2b. There is 20% increase in percentage of HHS reporting improved production efficiency through collective action	Only 2 % of targeted HHS reporting increase in production efficiency through collective action	By proxy methods the project estimates an 11.5% increase in production efficiency

to increase production efficiency and enable market opportunities	2c. There is 10% increase in the number of women in leadership positions within collective structures	32% of women are involved in the leadership positions within 5 collective structures in the year 1	4% increase in leadership positions (Comparison between Benchmark study on coops and profile developed by BECOMES)
Outcome 2.1 Smallholder families have increased skills to undertake collective action	2.1.1. 50% of Model Farming Families play a central role in establishing / strengthening collective structures	0 as the concept of MFF was introduced by BECOMES.	The data is yet to be collected by the project MIS, but an estimated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% of MFFs are active in organising collective work, • 15% playing a central role in strengthening group structures
	2.1.2. 20% increase in the percentage of target HHs who are actively engaged in existing collectives / new collectives	At baseline collectives are at nascent stage & not working in a collective fashion. Only 8% of target HHs belong to non-functional groups	
	2.1.3. 10% increase in the membership base of targeted collectives / co-operatives	The average membership base of the six collectives in the year 1 is 30-40	Membership of Opiuk Cooperative Society increased from 50 to 85 and Mahe Agro Group
	2.1.4. There is 20% percent increase in percentage of target HHs accessing communal cocoa infrastructure and value chain services	Only 2 % of the targeted households have access to communal infrastructure such centralised drying system and value chain services	Estimated 13.8% increase in the target households accessing communal drying systems and value chain services
Outcome 2.2 Women and youth cocoa farmers have increased entrepreneurial capacity	2.2.1. 40 prospective women, youth and groups are trained in enterprise management	Zero at the beginning of the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 enterprises set up (against the target of 10 for the year) • 5 trainings held for entrepreneur's • Supervisory/monitoring visits being made, to troubleshoot and address problems
	2.2.2. 50% of targeted women, youth and groups manage viable enterprises	1 group enterprise during the inception of the enterprise program; it is making no profit and needs technical and business management support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 nurseries • 3 drying enterprises • 1 converting wet beans to dry beans and selling • 1 Cocoa Bean Packaging Material

ACHIEVEMENTS

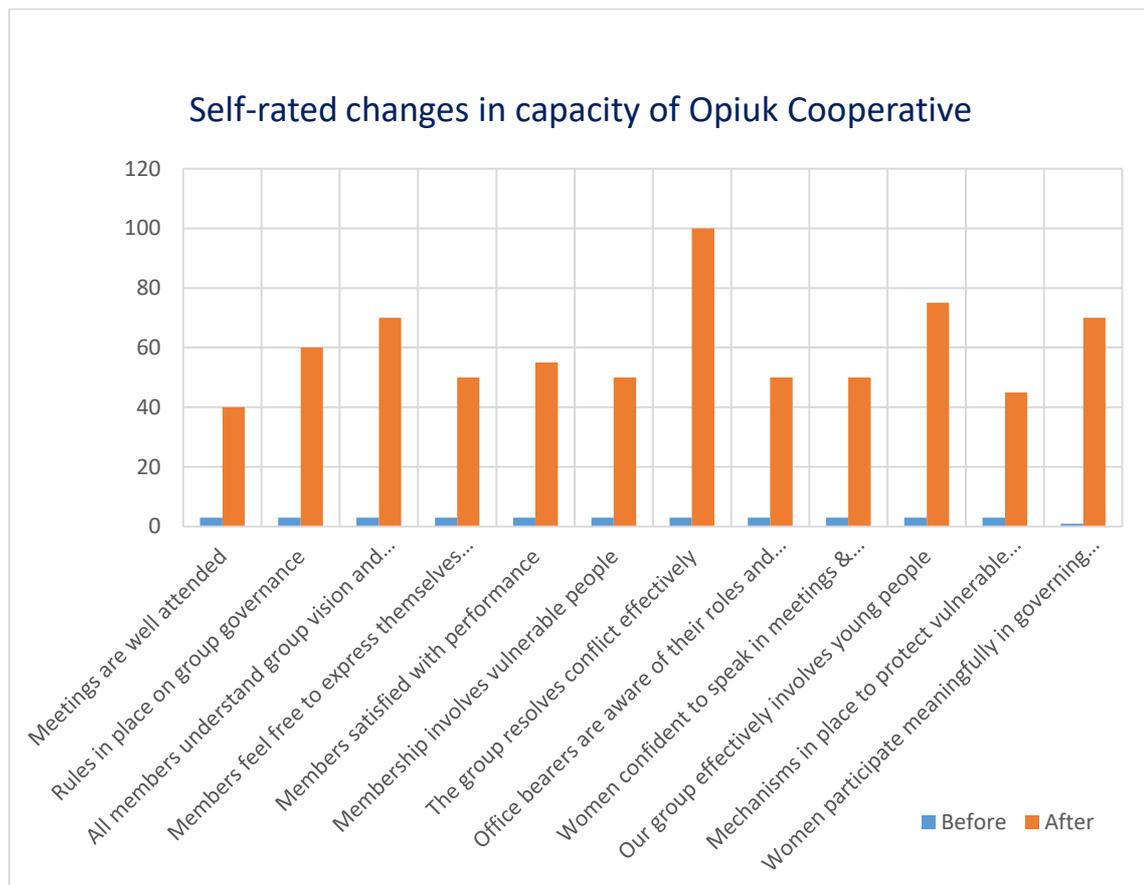
There are a number of different avenues via which BECOMES is promoting collective action to increase production efficiency and enable access to market opportunities.

- ❖ **Enhancing capacity of cocoa cooperatives and business groups:** In May 2017 an independent assessment of existing community business groups and cooperatives in the Tinputz area (Opiuk, Kukurina, Mate Women Group and Mate Farmers Group) was undertaken to inform development of targeted strategies for strengthening them. The assessment found all four groups were at a nascent stage, as “their management and operational mechanisms were very volatile to non-existent” (p.). All groups needed “full support” to strengthen management and leadership structures and capacity, organisational governance and to establish conflict management mechanisms, which none had. Similarly, none had a coherent approach to providing services and benefits to member farmers. Opiuk, Kukurina and Mate Women’s Group received minimal or no benefits while those received by Mate Business Group were short-term ad hoc, e.g. support during a family members’ death, payment of school fees or cocoa transport costs. At the same time, the assessment found that as a result of BECOMES training activities, which had begun 6 months earlier in the area, evidence of changes in gender relations were emerging. In Opiuk and Kukurina groups women’s participation in the

reinvigoration and operation of the groups was evident and had resulted in positive outcomes, including women leaders in both groups (Assessment, p11).

CARE's expertise on cooperative capacity building is rated highly by stakeholders including DPI, CSF and VSA, all of whom are eager to partner with and / or utilise CARE's training skills, either directly or via TOTs. BECOMES' delivery of high quality **institutional capacity building for cooperatives has enhanced their functionality**. Indicators of stronger coops and business groups include improvements across a range of criteria, as assessed by Opiuk and Kukurina group members in a self-rating activity undertaken during MTR consultations.

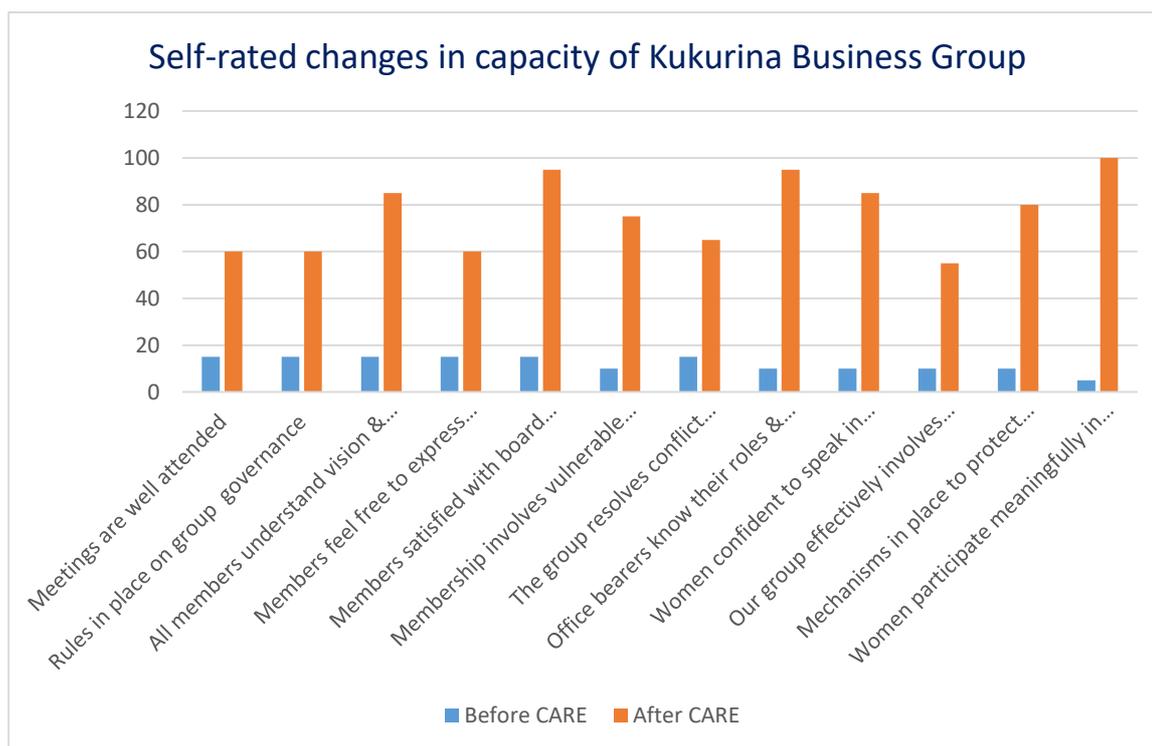
Figure 5: Self-rated changes in capacity of Opiuk Cooperative



Source: Focus Group activity, Wed May 2 2018

Increased membership, accompanied by improved attendance at meetings, development of Vision and Mission statements, which the majority of members say they are aware of and understand, and rules and procedures on how the organisation should function. The groups agreed that Cooperative leadership capacities have been strengthened and that office bearers, including women, are more confident to carry out their roles and responsibilities. Women involved in their group's governance feel they have more skills, confidence, knowledge and opportunities to participate. Members rated highly their ability to express their views freely and agreed that conflict resolution mechanisms are now in place.

Figure 6: Self-rated changes in capacity of Kukurina Business Group



Source: Focus Group activity, Wed May 2 2018

Installation of combination solar driers for Opiuk and Kukurina groups has increased to 125 the number of target households able to access communal cocoa infrastructure and value chain services. Access to combination solar driers has led to improved production efficiency and increased the number of smallholders able to sell dry beans, thereby improving their access to better marketing opportunities. As a result of the higher quality dry beans Opiuk Cooperative Society is producing⁹, it is now receiving a higher price from Arawa Fresh Produce. These groups also earn additional income by offering fermentation and drying services to non-members while increasing access to value chain services for a large number of smallholders. Other community groups have expressed strong interest in acquiring combination solar driers, but cost is a barrier. CARE has advocated on the benefits of combination driers, in response to which the chief secretary expressed willingness to replicate the driers across Bougainville. A note was prepared with the support of PNG Cocoa Board and sent to the ABG. CSF will fund setting up of solar driers and fermentaries under its third tranche and is eager to share CARE's learnings on cost cutting measures regarding installation, along with aspects such as governance of business groups and cooperatives operating combination solar driers.

- ❖ **Model Farming Family (MFF) strategy promotes collective action and stronger business groups** and is contributing to improved livelihoods by facilitating increased production of higher quality beans. Many MFFs are playing a central role in establishing and /or strengthening collective practices. And some are actively involved in strengthening cooperatives and community groups. For each of the groups participating in BECOMES there is at least one MFF working consistently with them, including the Mate Women's group (KII, FGD).

In addition, **BECOMES' geographical 'clustering' of smallholder cocoa farmers** has assisted MFFs to improve collective practices. By organising 'clusters' of families into collective work groups that

⁹ The solar combination drier guarantees a more uniform quality of dry bean and can dry up to one tonne or 16 bags at a time. This is the minimum amount for which Agmark will pay premium price.

perform the same task on each block in rotation (FDG smallholder farmers), MFFs are facilitating more efficient ways of working on blocks.

- ❖ **Development of supplementary businesses by non-targeted farmers.** MFFs are using skills gained through Farmer Business Management Training to invest their cocoa profit in a new supplementary business projects. For example, one Model Farming Family built a store with cocoa profit and then leased it; another bought a chainsaw, renovated their house, bought chickens and built their flock to 300 (previously a family in which all cocoa money had been spent on beer) (FGD MFF women farmers).

There is also growing interest in additional business opportunities amongst cooperative members. Women coop members said they now have more time and income at their disposal because of BECOMES training has changed their husbands' behaviour, especially in relation to sharing the benefits from cocoa income and supporting them to save some money as well as share the work load (Assessment, p.11). As a result, "we can now think of working or making business" (p 12).

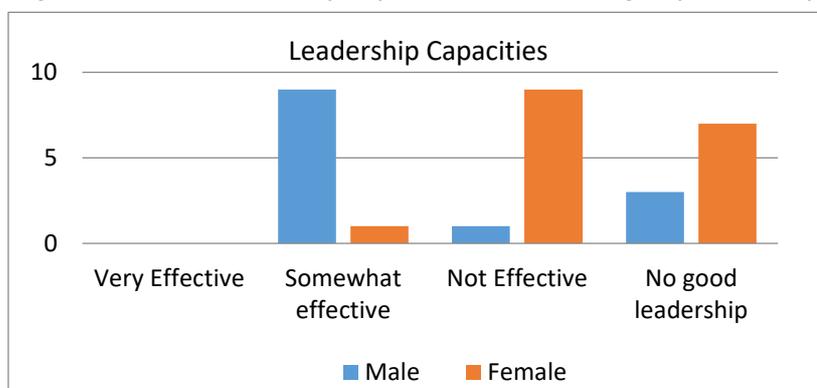
- ❖ **Access to better marketing opportunities through improved fermentation and drying processes.** Farms which previously sold only wet beans have improved knowledge of fermentation and drying and are making the transition to selling dry beans, by undertaking these processes themselves or paying for services provided by other, and thereby attracting better prices for their beans. **irect development of new cocoa value chain enterprises:** The targeted development of viable enterprises by women and youth has been moderately successful, with six enterprises set up against the target of 10 for the year. Gaps in the value chain and interested potential entrepreneurs were identified, and existing barriers addressed. For example, as many smallholders do not have their own fermenter and depend on neighbours for drying, small scale fermentaries was identified as a value chain niche feasible for women to move into. BECOMES provided skills training and mentoring in business management and addressed the issue of access to credit¹⁰ by offering a 25% in kind contribution to identified entrepreneurs.

CHALLENGES/LESSONS LEARNED

- ❖ **Coops and business groups** are still in the developmental stage and require continued support and mentoring to be able to operate independently, as illustrated in the charts above.

In particular, while women cooperative members saw group formation and /or strengthening of group (structures) as providing opportunities for working with coop leaders to promote their aspirations for their families, they had little confidence in the ability of leaders to drive this agenda, with an overwhelming majority of women rating the effectiveness of group leadership as either ineffective or lacking (independent assessment of cooperatives in Tinputz).

Figure 6: Male and female perspectives on business group leadership capacities



Source: Becomes Survey Database, Question 1.2

¹⁰ At the start of the project, less than 50% of households had access to credit (Baseline, p.8)

- ❖ **Cocoa pricing by local buyers and access to international premium price:** Due to an increase in the number of cooperatives and individuals offering fermentation and drying services, more smallholders are able to sell dry beans. While this in theory improves their access to better marketing opportunities (as illustrated by the example of Opiuk), the majority of smallholders now producing higher quality dry beans report that the cocoa buyer/exporter to which most of them sell – Agmark – is not differentiating between premium quality (for which they should be paid 80% of world market price) and low quality beans (which attract only 20% of world cocoa price). In relation to accessing higher prices for better quality beans, little has changed since the start of the project, when it was reported that while “the quality of dry beans is generally decided based on the parameters such as colour, shape, aroma and texture... it was reported that in practice these quality parameters are not recognized by the buyers while deciding the price to be paid” (Baseline, p.9).

This means most of the farmers participating in BECOMES are still not reaping an economic reward for producing higher quality dry beans. In order to receive the premium price, Agmark requires producers to sell at least 16 bags/1 ton of dry beans and pass the quality test – the “cut” test, in which randomly sampled beans are cut and scientifically tested for uniform moisture content. An additional barrier is that this test is carried out only at the Agmark depot near Kokopau, not at the farmgate. The Toenina Cooperative Chairman pricing by local buyers was a problem and proposed (among other solutions) teaming up with the two ‘BECOMES’ cooperatives with newly installed solar driers (Opiuk and Kukurina) in order to meet Agmark’s quantity criteria.

- ❖ **Transport issues:** In addition to the challenge of accessing premium prices from international buyers for their cocoa, many growers also face the physical challenge of getting their improved quality dry beans to market. As the Baseline study put it: “transport of cocoa beans is a formidable issue for many farmers” (p8). This is due to a weak ARB transport system and disrupted road network resulting from the civil war. Some growers located in remote and mountainous areas with no road connection to the main highways often have to carry cocoa bags on their backs from their farms to the main road or buyer’s site. At the time of the fieldwork for the MTR, transport operators were refusing to access Kukurina cooperative’s newly installed dryer¹¹ on the existing road (which close to the village is an unsealed track), forcing members to do just this (a process that required ‘splitting’ each bag into two - as one bag is too heavy for one man to carry - and its repacking again into one bag upon reaching the main road 2-3 hours down the mountain). The baseline study concluded that “development of road infrastructure is imperative in the cocoa growing areas by the ARB and PNG national government providing good interior road connectivity and mobility of cocoa produce from the farms to markets in order to strengthen the cocoa sector”. However, in view of current realities, including lack of government funding for road infrastructure into the foreseeable future, it has been suggested that “coop leaders need to find creative ways to address this problem. If the cooperatives can find an entrepreneur, CARE can develop initial support for the business.” (KII, BECOMES Project Manager)
- ❖ **Barriers to development / viability of enterprises by women and youth.** While this component of the project has met with some success, barriers remain, including lack of access to credit. CARE offers a 25% in kind contribution to identified entrepreneurs, but the requirement that they contribute the remaining 75% is proving onerous. Different enterprises have different needs, as do individual entrepreneurs. For example, the financial rewards of drying and fermentation services are immediate, whereas it takes time for seedlings to grow. This means some new enterprises need considerable additional support ensure they are viable. This is problematic when the project is poised to move to a new location in Central Bougainville.

¹¹ While the siting of this group’s combination dryer was questioned by one key informant, who also raised the question of access for coop members whose cocoa ‘blocks’ are located more remotely from the group’s infrastructure, it was explained that the selection of the site was done by the respective cooperative groups based on the proximity of the village and the ownership of the land.

- ❖ **MFFs** have different levels of capacity/confidence to train other smallholders and some require ongoing support and mentoring.
- ❖ **Future threats to the tenure of landless farmers**, including widows and people with a disability – coop membership is currently open but landowners want the title to their land and when it's returned to them by the large former (colonial) plantation owners there is a high risk that those leasing cocoa blocks will be evicted. There are no protections and guarantees currently.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Cooperatives and community business groups

Rec # 7: To strengthen the ability and confidence of women members to contribute to effective group management that supports the aspirations of women and families (as well as those of men), provide additional training and mentoring to women executive/board members.

Rec # 8: To maximise the influence of MFFs who are natural advocates and high performers:

- enlist them as inspirational speakers to visit other wards or host visits to their block;
- establish an award (with financial/in-kind component) for the model farming cluster (or appropriate level) and Model Farming Family (or group of MFFs) who has successfully motivated smallholders to form a collective (or other achievement).

Rec # 9: To expedite strengthening of cooperatives and assist with the roll out of CARE's cooperatives training, develop a **Cooperative Strengthening Package**, for use by BECOMES team and others.

Cocoa value chain enterprises

Rec # 10: To reduce the burden of finding start-up capital for identified entrepreneurs, reduce the capital investment required from 75% to 50% and enlist more assistance from MFFs to mentor and inspire.

Rec # 11: To support women and youth entrepreneurs, consider strategies to promote networking and exchange of learning, including:

- exchange visits of women business group executive members;
- joint training for women executive members from different groups;

In the medium to long term

- *establish a Women in Cocoa Business Group/Youth in Cocoa Business Group and help organise events – internally for the groups and externally to showcase their work to the community.*

Rec # 12: To increase women's economic independence, explore mobile banking options for rural and remote areas and if feasible (taking into account the limitations to mobile banking in areas such as Tinputz) trial one or more of these.

Advocacy

Rec # 13: Pricing. To address the lack of transparency in **pricing by local Bougainville buyers** (which has been acknowledged by the Cocoa Board and the DPI and is being addressed by the ABG through the formation of the Bougainville Commodity Authority), consider the following actions in the short term:

- advocate to Agmark on the need to grade lower down in the value chain at the farm gate, on grounds that increased benefits to producers will ensure Agmark a more secure supply chain;
- provide information to cooperatives and individual smallholders on existing local buyers and build skills in carrying out the quality "cut" test;
- link producers of high quality dry beans who may be able to access premium prices through the formation of a 'super-cooperative' by meeting minimum quantity requirements; and
- continue to liaise with the DPI on progress re addressing these issues.

Rec # 14: Combination solar driers. Advocate for roll out of across Bougainville with relevant authorities in ABG and support by quantifying the impact of solar driers on cooperative members / communities. Explore with CSF the possibility of BECOMES being funded to take the lead role in the installation of

combination solar driers, tasked with ensuring a quality community group / business group readiness approach to mitigate risks of poor management and operation.

Rec # 15: Business Case. To avoid being seen to assume DPI’s cocoa industry coordination and policy role, postpone active advocacy on integration of gender inclusivity across the sector by and through government until the second phase of the project - post 2020. This may require review and revision of strategic objective 3. Meanwhile, undertake research and refine the evidence base to develop a business case demonstrating that women’s economic empowerment underpins and can leverage reinvigoration of the cocoa industry in Bougainville (**see recommendation under MEL**).

Rec # 16: Pitching to industry. Promote CARE’s gender inclusive approaches to Agmark and other companies, and to non-participating cooperatives who are improving the quality and quantity of their cocoa.

- Advocate on the benefits of a Cocoa Industry Graduate Program, leveraging the success of CISP’s Coffee Industry Graduate Program to demonstrate the business case for investing in women.
- Market the idea of an Industry MFF Award to Agmark (or any other company that shows interest) as an entry point to working with them on integrating gender equitable policies and practices. The visibility brought by sponsoring such an award (with DPI endorsement?) could prove an incentive to one cocoa industry company to come on board with CARE’s approach (which they would need to integrate before bestowing the award).

Medium to long term:

- Leverage the likelihood that by 2020 all cocoa bean products will be marketable only if they have **cocoa certification** under known labels as an entry point for working with the cocoa industry by: i) Presenting the World Bank (and other) data on which this prediction is based, ii) Presenting the value proposition of certification, based on data from other sectors, e.g. Coffee, iii) Presenting CARE’s expertise in meeting the gender equality requirements of certification (This will be dependent on and require assessment of the extent to which certification schemes in the cocoa sector currently include gender equality provisions in capturing “social” co-benefits, how these provisions are being implemented, and how compliance is monitored).

Rec # 18: *While beyond the project’s control, consider raising the issue of potential **threats to the tenure of landless cocoa producers** with ABG and other key stakeholders (e.g. World Bank), who may be able to develop legal protections and guarantees for cocoa smallholders who are leasing land.*

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3. Cocoa industry stakeholders demonstrate increased capacity to address the specific needs of smallholder cocoa farming families

Table 7: Stakeholder capacity to address specific needs of smallholder cocoa farming families

Objective/outcomes	Target	Baseline	Mid term
Strategic Objective 3. Cocoa industry stakeholders demonstrate increased capacity to address specific needs of smallholder cocoa farming families	3a. 10% increase in number of target smallholders who report accessing extension services / trainings from cocoa industry stakeholders	Only 2% of the target households reported accessing extension services from the industry stakeholders	No increase
	3b. Increase in the number of industry stakeholders that have gender equitable and inclusive policies, programs or practices	No clear baseline figure is available. Literature reviews and a gender assessment during project design suggest no industry stakeholder has gender equitable inclusive policies, programs or practices	No change

Outcome 3.1 Key stakeholders engage more meaningfully with smallholder cocoa farming families	3.1.1. At least 5 industry stakeholders engage with CARE on strengthening approaches to working with smallholders	CARE is building collaborative relationships with the stakeholders during the baseline study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agmark • Cocoa Board • DPI • VSA • CSF
	3.1.2. At least 3 industry stakeholders providing marketing opportunities or information to target HHs	None of the industry stakeholders are providing market information. Small holders sell their cocoa to Agmark	No change
Outcome 3.2 Key stakeholders in ARB cocoa industry have more gender equitable and inclusive policies, practices and programs	3.1.3 At least 3 industry stakeholders that engage meaningfully with CARE on gender issues	CARE began engaging meaningfully on gender issues with industry stakeholders during the baseline study	Agmark is collaborating with CARE on piloting of women friendly tools

ACHIEVEMENTS

BECOMES has established robust formal and informal partnerships with a range of stakeholders, all of whom express appreciation for CARE’S work with smallholder cocoa farmers (KIIs) (the DPI, Tinputz District Administration, ACIAR, the PNG Cocoa Board, VSO and Agmark). Complementarity is a key theme of many stakeholders when describing their relationship with CARE and BECOMES, demonstrating the capacity of BECOMES to work effectively with stakeholders and find the best entry point for collaboration.

- ❖ DPI recognises the success of CARE’S integrated, holistic family approach and acknowledges that it reaches into communities which DPI has no capacity to service. It understands “the importance of working in partnership to maximise resources” and considers CARE as a “lead partner” undertaking complementary work: “CARE stops before the market, DPI takes over and does market access.” (KI, Fri 4 May). DPI rates highly the knowledge and facilitation/training skills of BECOMES extension officers and wants to enlist BECOMES assistance in delivering its suite of coop trainings to DPI extension officers responsible for fresh produce and other cash crops. BECOMES’S financial literacy, saving and budgeting, and business management training for coops are rated highly.
- ❖ Tinputz Administration acknowledged that in the absence of DPI extension officers, BECOMES’S work with cocoa smallholders is invaluable and that without CARE cocoa farmers would have received little or no training.
- ❖ The Cocoa Board highly values CARE’S help to roll out the installation of two combination solar dryers in two communities in Tinputz.
- ❖ A former ACIAR representative praised the BECOMES approach as “one of the best concepts in dealing with cocoa farming, when both wife and husband in the family have knowledge and skills. It’s different from the usual approach. Giving value to the mother - through skills and knowledge – allows the father to see the value of the mother’s contribution.” (KII, Thurs 3 May, Tinputz)
- ❖ Agmark is happy with the informal partnership under which it is trialling, procuring and supplying ‘women friendly tools’ for cocoa farmers, and the female manager in its Kokopau office acknowledges that the tools make a huge difference for women and youth cocoa farmers – “a step I the right direction” empowering them to perform tasks such as pruning, previously done for the most part by men. Agmark is currently trialling a 10 litre pump for herbicide spray, which is a more suitable size for women to carry

CHALLENGES/LESSONS LEARNED

- ❖ BECOMES aims to improve the sustainability of the cocoa industry by building the capacity of industry stakeholders, including DPI staff, to embed gender-inclusive community development approaches into their ways of working. The project is designed to work through and with government at all levels – ABG, DPI headquarters and with extension staff in the districts. Where possible it aims to build on existing partnerships and activities rather than initiating stand-alone new initiatives. **However, by**

their own admission, DPI and other government agencies are hamstrung by lack of capacity and / or resources (KII DPI Director and Regional Manager)

- Tinputz has been particularly poorly served. It should have three DPI extension officers but currently there is only one - working on fresh produce in the mountain areas of the district (KII DPI Director and Regional Manager, Northern Region). It is unclear whether the officer will relocate to Namatoa and add cocoa to his current focus or whether a 'cash crop' extension officer will be recruited later in the year.
- Tinputz District Executive Manager and the ACIAR representative admitted that "BECOMES is doing the DPI's work in Tinputz. Community members are asking where is the DPI?" The BECOMES project has very high visibility and while all government stakeholders very supportive of CARE's work, concern by some at the implications for/ impact on their credibility.
- "[Tinputz] District doesn't yet have a plan to support the 5 MFFs in each ward to spread skills to others." (KII, Tinputz District Manager)
- The Cocoa Board developed the combination solar dryer as a user-friendly alternative for smallholder farmers, but has no funding to roll it out to the communities and admitted this would have been impossible without the funding CARE received through the CSF grant. CARE's ability to partner with the Cocoa Board on installation of the dryers was largely dependent on a number of contextual factors which 'prepared the ground' in the communities: CARE's previous work in the communities in Tinputz, relationships already established with the District Administration, relative lack of social issues in the communities/ ability of people to work together, etc. This will not be the case in Central District.
- Cocoa Board claims its combination solar dryer is 'woman friendly' because it replaced the regulation 1 square metre size of commercial fermenting boxes (which can hold up to one ton of wet beans) with a mini-box that holds 250-300 kg of wet beans and is manageable by women. Similarly, because the solar drying technology delivers a milder and more well regulated heat, women can get up on the trays and turn the beans. In Arawa the wife of a private grower who installed a comb dryer is now doing all the processing – fermenting and drying. The woman friendly aspects of the comb dryer weren't explained to smallholders when the Cocoa Board delivered its training on how to operate the dryer after installation.
- Cocoa Board – "it is important to link the coops with the right specialty market". After installation of comb dryer, when first dry beans are processed the Cocoa Board usually requests that a 1kg sample is submitted to the board in Kokopo, where it is tested for moisture content and quality. This information is then provided to international specialty buyers, who may trial the beans in chocolate making and if they meet quality standards they then go direct to the producer. None of this was communicated to the two coops or to BECOMES.
- ❖ The coordination of the cocoa industry is fragmented and decentralised and most of the local cocoa industry stakeholders (buyers/exporters/retailers of cocoa farming products) are limited in their capacity, as well as their desire, to incorporate gender inclusive approaches into their work, as they currently have other priorities. Currently no cocoa industry stakeholder is delivering extension services apart from Agmark, which delivers limited extension services to 'their own farmers' in the Arawa region. They have only one extension officer and have not been open to his (I assume) upskilling by BECOMES. While the Regional Manager of Agmark is a woman and understands, applauds and supports CARE's efforts to empower women cocoa farmers, the company's openness to partnering with BECOMES is based on a commercial relationship that is financially beneficial to Agmark. As the preferred supplier of cocoa related farming products, including women friendly tools, it says "thanks for all the business" (KII, Thurs 3 May, Tinputz). For this reason, no formal MOU was developed.
- ❖ As noted above under Objective 2, pricing is linked to cocoa certification. If by 2020, as argued by the WB, all cocoa bean products will be marketable only if certified under a known certification label (such as Rainforest Alliance, 4C, UTZ, Fair Trade, Organic), certification will require companies such as

Agmark to comply with gender equality provisions, potentially providing an alternative entry point for engaging cocoa companies in CARE's approach. See recommendation.

- ❖ PNG Cocoa Board is developing a cocoa curriculum for primary and secondary school, to promote interest and develop knowledge and skills in cocoa farming. Several stakeholders in KIIs emphasised the importance of this. The curriculum development process has reached the stage of being approved to be piloted. It has been suggested that if the curriculum proves too challenging for teachers to teach, it could be taught as an extra-curricular activity. (KII, Thurs 3 May, Tinputz) promoting interest in and knowledge of cocoa farming from a young age. BECOMES has sought discussions with PNG Cocoa Board about the content and roll out of the curriculum, but after many attempts has been unsuccessful.
- ❖ CARE was unable to proceed with a multi-stakeholder workshop because it is one of 26 CSF grantees and high level policy and advocacy work must be seen to be done by Government, donors and the CSF.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Department of Primary Industry

Rec # 17: Continue to pursue opportunities for BECOMES to have input into PNG Cocoa Board's cocoa curriculum for primary and secondary school – in particular the social aspects – and explore the potential for providing supplementary training to teachers or those responsible for teaching the curriculum.

Rec # 19: Keeping in mind the uncertainty of the period leading up to and following the referendum, postpone training of DPI staff and extension officers (as requested by DPI) until after the referendum. Instead, apply savings from the 2017-18 budget to support a female internship program under which two women could be trained as DPI extension officers, undertaking long term on the job training with BECOMES extension officers, delivering CARE's gender equitable training packages to cooperatives and smallholder farmers.

Rec # 20: In view of limited DPI capacity with respect to limited number of extension officers, strengthen links between DPI and MFFs at local level.

In the medium to long term

Rec # 21: *Identify MFFs interested in becoming agricultural extension service providers. Support them to develop an extension service business through provision of training and mentoring, and build their capacity to deliver technical cocoa and FBMT training independently as sub-contractors to DPI and (longer term), to industry partners).*

Rec # 22: *Leverage DPI's strong interest in CARE's **cooperative capacity building package** to explore the possibility of partnering with them on their plan to integrate livestock and food production with cash crop cultivation, taking a family focus and building out from there to incorporate development of cooperatives.*

Industry

Rec # 23: If feasible, seek a formal agreement with Agmark to include its farms in BECOMES activities over the next 2 years.

Rec # 24: Ensure industry partners are supported to build their capacity in providing gender equitable extension services.

3.1.2 Women's economic empowerment and access to the cocoa value chain

To what extent are the project strategies furthering women's economic empowerment through stronger agency and access to opportunities within the cocoa value chain?

There is strong evidence that the cumulative impact of all BECOMES work with smallholders, entrepreneurs and community business groups is increasing women's economic empowerment, through increased skills, knowledge and confidence, along with both the freedom and the opportunities to exercise these skills in business ventures. This can be seen in the findings presented above.

3.1.3 Changes in the cocoa value chain for women and youth

Do project participants see the cocoa value chain as being a more equitable venture for women and youth, particularly on family farms?

The baseline study, undertaken during the project inception phase after BECOMES activities had begun, found there was "gender sensitivity and awareness of the existing gender barriers and ... unequal opportunities among the men and women" (p.9). Subsequently, as a result of further project activities, women have benefitted from changes in skills, gender relations and access to business opportunities and services, as documented above. Similarly, youth have benefitted from involvement in BECOMES through increased access to cocoa blocks and land. In the Young Farmer FGD, youth described how acquisition of new skills (possibly in tandem with BECOMES youth-focussed strategies) had enabled two to farm their own block, which they had previously been unable to manage, and four to acquire blocks from either the husband's or wife's side of the family.

CHALLENGES/LESSONS LEARNED

- ❖ Despite evidence that BECOMES has contributed to women's economic empowerment and greater access to the value chain through support for women entrepreneurs, an important gender-specific barrier identified in the baseline but not addressed during the MTR is the attitude, expressed by a majority of both men and women, that women should not be cocoa farmers – meaning women should not be 'owners' of commercial agricultural enterprises.

RECOMMENDATIONS

See Rec # 1: Ensure women's and men's attitudes to women as cocoa farmers in their own right, i.e. 'owners' of commercial agricultural enterprises, is captured in the end of project evaluation.

3.1.4 Changes for smallholder families and community institutions

What verifiable impact or significant change (both positive and negative) has the project brought about for the targeted smallholder families and community institutions such as cooperatives business groups? Consider whether these changes are attributable to the BECOMES intervention and what evidence we have for this?

There is strong evidence that increased **income from cocoa production has been translated into improved wellbeing for smallholder families** – whether individual farmers or cooperative members – who have participated in BECOMES project training and other activities. Data from the mini farmer survey shows that an overwhelming majority of the 71 household farming families interviewed are benefiting positively from cocoa farming, with 99% reporting improvements in the financial aspects of their lives and 94% reporting improvements in the social aspects of their lives. In relation to economic improvements, 96% said that the income from the sale of cocoa was sufficient to meet their family needs. However, data from the FGDs and a self-rating activity with cooperative and business group members during field work revealed that this is not uniformly the case, with all four groups indicating that on a spectrum they were perhaps halfway to achieving a level of income that would meet their family needs and/or support their family aspirations (2 self-rating participatory activities with MFFs and 2 with business groups/cooperatives).

Around half (51%) of the mini farmer survey respondents said they were **using income earned from cocoa to purchase an asset**. Of these, 22% purchased generators and solar panels for electricity, 21% purchased building materials for new homes, and 19% purchased cocoa farming tools such as knives, pruners, brush cutters and chainsaws. This was followed by households who spent money on kitchen utensils and chemicals (9%), trade store investment (4%) and the purchase of items such as fridges or televisions (3%). Fermenter building and renovation accounted for 1% together with land purchase for future cocoa farming.

Another significant change for a majority (72%) of smallholders who participated in the mini farmer survey was the **ability to save some of their income**. This is significant because financial planning and saving for the future is generally not practiced among rural smallholders in Bougainville. "A challenge is saving money for my kids, and our new home and water tank. Saving is not in our culture, but I realise that I have to save money and plan for the future." (BECOMES case study, year?) Traditionally, cocoa is harvested and sold as needed to pay for food and essentials and one-off expenses such as school fees and contributions to bride price. It also provides 'beer money' for men, who are customarily been seen as the 'owners' of the cocoa crop and its proceeds. As a result of BECOMES Project's *Farmer Business Management Training* (FBMT), which covers topics budgeting, income management and saving, practices are changing. When asked how they had benefitted from BECOMES, a group of young farmers said they had bought, built, extended or were saving for a house, an outcome of saving towards their shared family vision. "Now we have our own house, bought with cocoa money." (Young Farmer FGD) And: "We opened savings accounts for two of our kids. We have a five-year plan to build a house for my mother and we're saving towards it." (Young Farmer FGD).

When asked the most important thing/s learned from CARE trainings, most women FGD women and young farmer participants (both Model Farmer and non-Model Farmer) mentioned budgeting/managing money, block management, sharing the workload and making decisions together with their husbands/wife, or as one MFF woman put it: "working together to achieve our dream" (MFF women FGD participant). Women smallholder farmers who had attended technical training but were not Model Farmers said it was noticeable how well the MFF husbands and wives worked together. Cooperation between them had increased, along with production and income.

According to the mini farmer survey, **94% the household farming families interviewed said they had experienced 'social improvements' in their lives**, including improved relationships between family members and with others in the community. This also applies to young farmers. For one young man, participation in the BECOMES project wrought "a big personal change. Before, I was lazy, but working on the cocoa block has made me feel good. My attitude has changed. Now I drink less and I'm saving money. I'm a changed man. I save, I budget, I don't fight with my wife. I made a 'penny box' and after putting in 5-20 Kina after each sale, at the end of the year we bought a semi-permanent house." (Young Farmer FGD)

As noted above, community business groups and cooperatives need more support to be able to work together more effectively.

Evidence supporting the attribution of increased IPDM practices to the BECOMES Project

The BECOMES Baseline Study¹², conducted during the inception period¹² of the project when project activities had already begun, found that 66% of the 141 household farming families interviewed had received technical trainings on cocoa farming in the six months prior to March 2017, and that 60% of these had been conducted by the BECOMES Project. According to the baseline study conducted in June 2017, some farmers had "received training sporadically on different topics from other agencies, like DPI, MONPI

¹² 2017 BECOMES Baseline Evaluation Report, Dr Goud

(no longer operating in Bougainville), World Vision, PPAP". Overall, the baseline study found that for smallholders the major source of the information on cocoa farming related practices was "friends or fellow cocoa farmers, followed by newspapers and radio; they are yet to access the mainstream information sources like local magazines, TV and internet" (p. 7) Training priorities were scientific methods of post-harvest handling of pods, wet beans extraction, fermentation methods and drying process with practical demos.

Since 2017 the Project MIS database¹³ shows that 172 technical trainings have been conducted by BECOMES in targeted project sites, covering all 5 IPDM practices within the IP1 and IPA 2 Areas and reaching more than 2,522, people (MA=769, FA=442, MY=798, FY=513). All stakeholders mention the **high quality of training delivered by BECOMES**. The ABG Department of Primary Industry said it was "impressed with the knowledge and especially the training and facilitation skills of BECOMES's extension officers", which key informants said they had seen in action in a short session run for their officers in Buka as a result of collaboration with a VSA Volunteer working with DPI. They expressed strong interest in having BECOMES provide similar training incorporating the FBMT and cooperative capacity building packages to smallholder farmers in other agriculture sectors, such as fresh produce and livestock. VSA Program Manager said CARE trainings could be shifted to different industries funded by CSF. He suggested CARE be the support agency for CSF grantees. (KII, Mon, 30 April)

The **high quality of targeted training materials developed by CARE and BECOMES** underpins improvements in both the cocoa farming practices and business management skills of smallholders. BECOMES developed a small **cocoa training booklet** "Kakao Bilong Yumi", which uses cartoons and targeted visual representations to communicate the same information smallholder cocoa farmers receive in face-to-face technical training. The booklet has proved extremely popular with farmers and stakeholders alike and has been widely distributed. It's mention by key informants and participants FGDs affirms its contribution to increasing the knowledge and skills of farmers (KIIs and FGDs). BECOMES also produced a number of **videos**, designed to address low literacy levels among smallholder farmers and informed by the project's Training Data Base, which indicated a lower level of participation in trainings by women and young people. In addition to targeted promotion of trainings to youth and women, the videos were highly successful in attracting audiences. The MIS Data Base shows 20 video training events were conducted in communities in the IP1As, attended by more than 425 people (Male Adults=128, Female Adults=70, Male Youth=118, Female Youth=109). During showings, audiences were engaged, debating technical points and offering corrections on technical information that were later incorporated by the BECOMES team.

CHALLENGES/LESSONS LEARNED

- ❖ One DPI informant suggested that some farming families had used *all* their land for cocoa and had none left for growing food crops and were buying food from farmers higher up the mountain.

RECOMMENDATIONS

See Rec # 22: Leverage DPI's strong interest in CARE's **cooperative capacity building package** to explore the possibility of partnering with them on their plan to integrate livestock and food production with cash crop cultivation, taking a family focus and building out from there to incorporate development of cooperatives.

¹³ BECOMES Project Monitoring and Information System database

3.1.5 BECOMES model and theory of change

What, if any, are the challenges with the BECOMES model and theory of change and how can these be overcome? Is there adequate data collected/available in usable form to 'prove' the theory of change.

The achievements of THE BECOMES project are a good 'fit' with the CARE's Gender Equality Framework and appear to confirm its explanatory force, particularly in the eyes of beneficiaries and partners, among whom there is no dispute that the involvement of women and a focus on greater equity, along with the development of modern cocoa farming family businesses, is the reason for CARE's success to date. Many stakeholders, like the VSA Program Manager, are convinced of the model: "It is an admirable model. It balances the technical and human. 'Family' is the secret to a successful rural industry." (KII Mon 30 April)

The data from which the findings presented above are derived show positive changes have taken place between baseline and midpoint in gender relations, and to a lesser extent in age relations. BECOMES project interventions have demonstrably increased women's knowledge, skill, confidence and motivation in cocoa farming and promoted greater cooperation between smallholder husbands and wives in relation to cocoa farming and led to increased production of higher quality beans and corresponding increases in income for most target beneficiaries. This has resulted in a virtuous circle of increased gender equitable attitudes and behaviour by men, such as more equitable sharing of decision making, farm labour and its economic rewards with women, which has further reinforced women's confidence, motivation and ability to respond to economic opportunities and – for some - to access higher levels of the value chain through the development of enterprises.

Improvements in women's agency, augmented by more democratic, participatory, inclusive and gender-equitable governance structures and processes in cooperative business groups (also outcomes of the project), have contributed to strengthening of those groups and their work, and improvements in the delivery of benefits to members.

Overall, an 'unpacking' of the project's theory of change reveals strong causal relationships that suggest transformational changes can be attributed to project interventions. However, there is insufficient data at this stage to 'prove', crucially, that women are not working more in exchange for increased family income, from which they may or may not be benefitting personally. This challenge needs to be addressed in the second two year phase by improved qualitative and quantitative data collection, including comprehensive sex disaggregation.

3.1.6 Participation of marginalised and vulnerable groups

To what extent are the most marginalised and vulnerable groups being reached?

There is evidence that BECOMES is reaching marginalised and vulnerable groups, including economically vulnerable women and people with a disability, both through its trainings and its enterprise development work, as well as farmers living remote locations. This includes a range of people, from the landless farmers of Matakrus, who have been beneficiaries of CARE's trainings and support to cooperatives, to an unmarried woman who after CARE's training said "I have no man, but I can now earn my own money. This makes me feel strong" (Women smallholder FGD, Tues May 1). Stakeholders and partners acknowledge CARE's ability to reach the most vulnerable, including people living with a disability: "CARES' approach is the best approach to empower families, to address poverty. BECOMES is reaching the poorest, the really poor families" (KII Thurs May 3).

ACHIEVEMENTS

- ❖ One woman who is unmarried reported that the most important change for her as a result of her participation in BECOMES trainings was economic independence and confidence: "I have no man, but

I can now earn my own money. This makes me feel strong. I grew hybrids and they went ‘bugerap’, so I had no income, but now I have 200 clone trees.” (Women smallholder FGD, Tues May 1)

- ❖ The project also works with people / families living with a disability. Despite being a lower left leg amputee Patrick has tended his 750 hybrid cocoa trees on his own since 1980. He lives in Mate Village in the mountains of Tinputz and although a member of a farmers group receives no help from them and doesn’t earn enough from his trees. Nevertheless, he assists the Mate Women’s Group with their fledgling cocoa nursery venture by ‘budding’, a task the women still lack confidence in and, at 10 Kina per clone, are loathe to make mistakes with. He said that as a result of CARE training the incidence of CPD in his trees has decreased (although is still a problem) due to his improved pruning technique, and his production of beans has increased. He does receive help from ‘the boys’ who carry his beans down the mountain to a seller, but has to carry his own wood for the fermentary and finds weeding a problem. What would really help is a prosthesis from Lae, as he only has crude wooden crutches, which limit what he can do with his hands, but this is a distant dream.

CHALLENGES

- ❖ One of the entrepreneurs that BECOMES is supporting is a woman whose daughter lives with a disability. Also a cocoa nursery venture, the business was designed with the aim of having the daughter look after the plants. However, the mother has realised that the level of support her daughter requires is more than she can currently manage given her other responsibilities.
- ❖ There are few disability services operating in this region. Without the supplementary services needed by cocoa farmers or their family members living with a disability, which it is not CARE’s core business to provide, the difference BECOMES can make to the lives of people with a disability is limited.

RECOMMENDATIONS

See Rec # 6: Consider partnering with Callan Services, a disability service operating in this region, to provide the supplementary services needed by cocoa farmers or their family members living with a disability.

3.2 EFFICIENCY

3.2.1 Program Management

CARE management of BECOMES is efficient and highly valued by both partners and stakeholders.

DPI

- ❖ “CARE is more outcomes based and sets precedents for DPI because CARE achieves outcomes more quickly” and “shares more data and experiences than other CSOs/NGOs.”
“CARE’s staff are very experienced and go right down to where DPI hasn’t and can’t [currently] go.”
“DPI can incorporate what’s working in the BECOMES project into its extension program.”
“DPI is already using CARE farmers” [to provide training/advice to others].
“BECOMES has established a very good reputation for CARE”
“DPI appreciates CARE’s engagement, unlike other NGOs. CARE sends monthly reports and makes regular visits.”

PNG Cocoa Board / CCI

“[The BECOMES Project Manager] initiated the partnership by asking about the combination solar driers. The government doesn’t fund implementation /roll out of the technologies developed by the board, so we’re very grateful CARE was able to do this. We have found CARE very helpful. Timely – completed to schedule.”

VSA: “It’s privilege working with a group that’s so well organised and highly skilled.”

Agmark

“BECOMES is a very good project when it comes to focussing on women and youth – the first of its kind. There has been no previous focus on women although they do most of the work. Tools for women is a step in the right direction. Especially in combination with clones.”

3.2.2 Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

ACHIEVEMENTS

- ❖ As planned, BECOMES project has established and is using an efficient monitoring, information management system (MIS) to collect project data. It uses monitoring tools and processes specific to project indicators on productivity, quality, participation of women and youth, gender roles and relations in the farming community, including access to inputs, information, farming knowledge, division of labour, and incentives. Benchmarks and targets were established for these indicators by the baseline survey.
- ❖ All field staff have undertaken and are responsible for some level of routine monitoring. This helps promote ownership of project learning within the team and along with monthly team reflections has ensured that MIS data, while not always up to date, is analysed and has contributed to improving practice across all three objectives. The **Training Data Base**, for example, has been used to fine tune trainings by customising to farmer needs. During the first 6 months of the project the team identified that youth participation in trainings was low. In response they promoted the trainings with awareness sessions in the community targeting youth. The project also produced a training video, as an appealing alternative to formal training. It attracted high numbers of youth and women viewers, and provoked strong engagement with the content - to the extent they viewers debating and correcting technical errors in the video during the showing.
- ❖ Lessons learned are being shared across CARE and BECOMES regularly reports to and shares learnings with DPI and others with relevant stakeholders in the ABG. Most notably, BECOMES will share what it has learned up to the mid-point in a stakeholder workshop with the relevant stakeholders. Subsequently Learnings will be shared with all the CSF grantees in a phased manner. CSF: “CSF is new so CARE’s experience in learning what works and what doesn’t is valuable.” (KII Mon 30 April)
- ❖ Templates have been developed for tracking changes in income for entrepreneurs.

CHALLENGES / LESSONS LEARNED

- ❖ According to the Senior M&E Officer that the project is inadequately resourced to carry out regular collection of quantitative data (KII, Fri 4 May). Because of the pressures of implementation and short turnaround time for extension officers between trainings in the Buka office, the data collected are not always entered routinely and sometimes there is a significant lag. On average, 13 activities are conducted per month by extension officers. Likewise, although profiles have been developed for all 6 cooperative societies with which the project works, these need to be updated every 6 months to retain their usefulness.
- ❖ Currently the project has no control groups and is not collecting data from farmers who are not receiving support from BECOMES.
- ❖ The technical resilience of the MIS is in question, due to issues with the server. This has delayed

and could potentially undermine some MEL, design and implementation functions. For example, detailed village profiles that could be useful in refining/designing interventions are stored on a server that is presently inaccessible and Village Profiles and the performance tracker of MFFs are currently under reconstruction.

- ❖ There is no differentiated data on which farmers grow ‘hybrid’ coffee trees and which ‘clones’, and which are making the transition from hybrids to clones (the more resilient type). This could be collected along with other household data and is important for understanding causal factors in increased production and improved quality.
- ❖ Cocoa farmers are aware that CARE’s interventions have increased the quantity and quality of cocoa they produce. Similarly, women credit CARE with their acquisition of new skills and their increased participation in and benefit from cocoa production. However, the project does not share with farmers (or others stakeholders) the ‘hard’ – quantitative – evidence it has captured on increases in quantity, quality and income that have resulted from changed farmer practices. This is potentially a missed opportunity to showcase hard data on the success of CARE’s approach and to promote it to both farmers and industry stakeholders who have not yet been convinced of its efficacy.

If correlated with strong evidence of changes in gender dynamics between cocoa farming men and women (based on qualitative and quantitative data), it could form the basis of a compelling business case to put to potential private sector partners and to argue for replication across other CSF cocoa implementing partners.

RECOMMENDATIONS

See Rec # 1: to address some of the gaps in and lack of comparability between data

See Rec # 1(i): to provide a basis of comparison for assessing project outcomes and assist in building the business case for CARE’s Gender Equitable approach, collect data from farmer groups not supported by CARE. Data to be collected will need to be determined by the project on the basis of its capacity (in terms of human and financial resources) to collect and analyse additional data, but at a minimum should include changes in quantity and quality of cocoa produced, cross correlated with data on changes in key gendered dimensions of division of labour, decision making and access to and control over resources and benefits of cocoa farming.

See Rec # 2: to address the issue of unreliable data, such as the unrealistic 100% agreement by women to the survey question “Does your husband help with household chores?”, structure survey questions to elicit the concrete information required to determine whether and what specific changes of attitude and behaviour have occurred. For example, regarding household labour, ask similar / same questions as those used in the Baseline study, which looked at specific tasks men and women do and how much time is spent on each. In addition, consider the following advice:

Indicators and tools to be used ... can be based on local knowledge. Conduct prior and follow-up participatory and/or qualitative research to identify appropriate local indicators and ways of wording questions so that they are likely to be clearly understood and taken seriously by interviewees and thus encourage the most reliable responses. Focus on concrete facts where people can give reliable answers – in these situations, recall can be as reliable as baseline data. Consider local priorities when weighting indicators¹⁴.

¹⁴ Drawn from ‘Review of evaluation approaches and methods used by interventions on women and girls’ economic empowerment’, Georgia Taylor and Paola Perezniato, ODI, Social development Direct, UKAID, March 2014, p.43

See Rec # 2:to increase local awareness of the positive impacts of changed (more gender equitable) farmer practices on the ‘big picture’ of cocoa production, and subsequent improvements to livelihoods, consider providing appropriately pitched reports (in terms of the medium, technical language and format used) on increased quantity, quality and income resulting from changed farmer practices to farmers, business groups, District Administration, government agencies and industry stakeholders. In addition to the individual ‘success stories’ which farmers can easily relate to, many may also be motivated by ‘hard’ evidence. These reports could also contribute to the ‘business case’ for CARE’s approach and promote buy-in from other stakeholders, and in particular help leverage commitment of ABG DPI extension resources, to support sustainability after BECOMES leaves Tinputz District.

3.3 SUSTAINABILITY

While effective and efficient implementation of the BECOMES project design has proved the project’s theory of change, this has occurred at the community level through the efforts of CARE’s own extension officers. On current indications, lack of progress in increasing the capacity of cocoa industry stakeholders to address the specific needs of smallholder cocoa farming families, the degree to which the results achieved to date are likely to be sustainable even at the community level is in question.

ACHIEVEMENTS (specifically in terms of sustainability)

- ❖ DPI buy in and expressed support for CARE’s family focused, gender equitable approach to strengthening smallholder cocoa farmers and cooperatives.

❖ The Model Farming Family (MFF) strategy

BECOMES' **Model Farming Families (MFF)** strategy has proved successful in supporting individual smallholders as well as promoting collective action and stronger business groups, and is contributing to improved livelihoods by facilitating increased production of higher quality beans. Successes and strategies associated with the MFF model include:

- ❖ MFFs are trained together as a location-specific group. This promotes peer support among them back in their own communities and provides a training model for MFFs to use when training other farmers (FGD, MFFs);
- ❖ MFFs are highly motivated by being cast as role models in their communities. This confers status, but also creates expectations in the community that MFFs will effectively pass on their new knowledge and skills to other smallholders (FDGs, KIIs), an expectation MFFs seek to live up to.
- ❖ Many MFFs are playing a central role in establishing and /or strengthening collective practices. And some are actively involved in strengthening cooperatives and community groups. For each of the groups participating in BECOMES there is at least one MFF working consistently with them, including the Mate Women's group (KII, FGD).
- ❖ BECOMES' geographical 'clustering' of smallholder cocoa farmers has assisted MFFs to improve collective practices. By organising 'clusters' of families into collective work groups that perform the same task on each block in rotation (FDG smallholder farmers), MFFs are facilitating more efficient ways of working on blocks.
- ❖ In addition to training other smallholders (without support from CARE), MFFs provide troubleshooting advice (FDGs, KIIs);
- ❖ MFFs are performing well as role models in their communities. Smallholder farmers who have received only technical training observed that: "MFF husbands and wives work well together. There is an increase in cooperation. Their production has gone up, and their income. We see that they now have enough." (FGD female smallholder farmers).
- ❖ MFFs are using skills gained through Farmer Business Management Training to invest their cocoa profit in a new supplementary business project. For example, one Model Farming Family built a store with cocoa profit and then leased it; another bought a chainsaw, renovated their house, bought chickens and built their flock to 300 (previously a family in which all cocoa money had been spent on beer) (FGD MFF women farmers).
- ❖ Some successful MFFs are functioning as natural advocates for BECOMES technical capacity building and gender equality approaches. These MFFs have developed their own 'success story' about how their family progressed from a low production/low income family to a

CHALLENGES / LESSONS LEARNED

- ❖ Lack of resources and capacity on the part of the DPI to take on the BECOMES approach, with only one extension officer in Tinputz (going to start soon and probably focussing on fresh produce)
- ❖ Current lack of interest on the part of Bougainville's fragmented cocoa industry to take on the approach. For the past 3 years Agmark has been providing advice and extension services in Arawa, but with only 1 extension officer, targeting 'their' farms on a small scale.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Department of Primary Industry

See Recs # 19-20: Leverage the good relationship built with DPI to partner more closely with them, building capacity through training and linking them more solidly with MFFs.

See Rec # 22: Leverage DPI's strong interest in CARE's cooperative capacity building package.

Extension service providers

See Rec # 21: Identify MFFs interested in becoming agricultural extension service providers

Community

Rec # 25: To maximise the Model Farming Family strategy:

In the short term

- enlist MFFs as inspirational speakers to visit other wards or host visits to their block;

In the medium to long term Consider additional strategies, such as:

- Engaging community leaders and opinion influencers (church leaders?) to support and leverage efforts of MFFs in their role modelling of more gender equitable behaviour, towards accelerating uptake of MFF gender equitable behaviours by other smallholder families and promoting wider social norm change. Focus in particular on men sharing household chores, decision making and income from cocoa sales, perhaps via special 'community days' which celebrate / award outstanding MFFs and highlight (make visible) the causal connection between more equitable households, economic success and family wellbeing. Potentially link to the Industry Award and to provide incentives for competing communities/clusters.

CARE

See Rec # 3 (a): Leverage 'hard' evidence; **& 3 (b):** research/refine the evidence base to 'prove' the BECOMES model.

See Rec # 3: Document the MFF approach and success factors, and develop into a training package.

Rec # 25: To increase the scale and reach of BECOMES' gender sensitive approach, adapt existing BECOMES training materials (FBMT, Cooperative Strengthening, GED) to facilitate easy application to a range of cash crop farmers.

Industry

See Rec # 16: Promote CARE's gender inclusive approaches to Agmark and other companies

Commodity Support Facility

Rec # 27: Seek to establish CARE as the lead support agency for CSF grantees:

- to enable integration and quality control of CARE's gender equitable approach;
- to promote sustainability of newly installed combination solar driers.

CONCLUSION

At the mid-point of BECOMES there is evidence that the project has enhanced the capacity of individual smallholder cocoa farmers, strengthened collective farming practices and made a solid start on building the capacity of community cooperative and business groups. BECOMES successful Model Farming Families strategy and Farmer Business Management Training have enhanced the capacity of local farmers to contribute to improved cocoa farming practices and increased gender equity within smallholder households.

Increased technical capacity has been accompanied by changes towards more gender equitable social practices on the part of both individuals and groups. As a result, women and young cocoa farmers have greater involvement in cocoa production and more equity in the economic benefits, along with increased entrepreneurial capacity and improved access to value chain opportunities. This win-win situation has been widely recognised by both smallholders and industry stakeholders.

Smallholder cooperatives and organisations face significant challenges sustaining the progress they have made. They are still in the 'nascent' stage and require ongoing support in order to survive and prosper. BECOMES' success in improving business group access to premium markets through the installation of centralised drying systems (combination solar driers) is evidence that provision of infrastructure is an important enabler for reinvigorating the cocoa industry. This includes roads, transport and banking services. Development and further roll out of a CARE Cooperative Strengthening Package will enhance the ability of community business groups to tackle some of these issues and link more effectively with premium markets and services.

BECOMES has built robust relationships with all stakeholders and despite the significant challenges identified in working with the cocoa industry, DPI and ABG, appears to be in a strong position to advocate for change – bringing transparency to quality testing processes, advocating for roll out of combination solar driers, sharing learning with multiple stakeholders as a CSF 'trail blazer', and promoting the success of CARE's gender equitable approach through regular reporting and sharing events.

In the next two years of the project Bougainville faces a period of uncertainty leading up to and following the referendum and the project will need to take this into account in deciding whether, when and in what manner to implement some of the report's recommendations. In particular, whilst current indications identify DPI as the best partner through which to roll out CARE's gender inclusive approach, this is likely to shift significantly as the referendum approaches, making substantial investment in a partnership with DPI a better prospect after the referendum.

Annexes

Annex 1

Key informants

Name	Position	Organisation/Company
Christopher Hershey	Program Director	CARE International in PNG
Belinda Mare Gara	Grants Manager	Commodity Support Facility
Paul Bedggood	Program Manager	Voluntary Service Abroad
John Gordon	VSA Volunteer	Voluntary Service Abroad
Emilia	Woman entrepreneur	Fermentary
John Bunsip	Chairperson	Teonena Cooperative
Blaise Voslva	Executive Manager	Tinputz District
Normal Tora	Former ACIAR Representative/ Acting DPI Extension Officer	ACIAR DPI, Tinputz
Kenneth Dovaro	Director	Department of Primary industries and Marine Resources (DPI)
Wendy Sawa	Northern Regional Director	DPI
James Botapu	ACIAR	DPI
Clare Toben	Regional Manager	Agmark Private Limited
Kenny Francis	Research Officer, Cocoa Quality	PNG Cocoa Board (CCI)
Patrick	Cocoa farmer and volunteer with Mate Women's Group	Mate Farmer Group

Annex 2

Focus Group Discussion Groups

FGDs with Smallholder Farming Families	1 x FGD with women farmers
	1 x FGD with men farmers
	1 x FGD with young farmers
FGDs with Model Farming Families	1 x FGD with 3-4 Model Farming Family couples
Focus Group Discussions with coops and business groups	1 x FGD Opiuk Cooperative (Executive & 5 members)
	1 x FGD Kukurina Business Group (Executive and 5 members)
	1 x FGD Mate Women's Group (2 members)

Annex 3

Key informant interview questions

Stakeholder	Nature of partnership	Purpose of collaboration	Key Informant Questions
Commodity Support Facility	Formal	<p>Contract Manager</p> <p>The purpose of the CSF is to foster economic development and good governance through a grants facility targeting economic opportunities for all people of Bougainville. It aims to promote growth and development of agricultural, forestry and marine resources sectors through funding appropriate sector-focused production, marketing, research, extension and training activities. CSF currently provides grant and technical support to 26 community groups and cooperatives improving cocoa production of smallholder families</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) What is the value of BECOMES and CARE's management of BECOMES to the CSF? b) What are the major learnings from BECOMES that can have be adapted and replicated by other CSFgrantees? c) How do you perceive CARE's focus on social and gender aspects? d) How well does BECOMES project align with the mandate of the CSF? e) What are your views on BECOMES' special focus on women and youth? f) What are some of the innovations tried by BECOMES that will be helpful to overall CSF future strategy?
Department of Primary Industry and Marine Resources	Government department	<p>Secretary DPI is the chair of CSF and provides advisory support to the management of CSF</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) What is the value of BECOMES and CARE's management of BECOMES to DPI and Beneficiaries? b) What are the major learnings from BECOMES Project to approaches on smallholder families? How do you rate the performance of the BECOMES Project? c) Is there any regular interaction and exchange of information between DPI and CARE? d) What value is added by BECOMES to improving the economic wellbeing of smallholder families? e) How do you rate CARE's work with cooperatives? f) To what extent are project strategies furthering women's economic empowerment within the cocoa value chain? g) Do project participants see the cocoa value chain as being a more equitable venture for women and youth, particularly on family farms
PNG Cocoa Board (CCI is merged with Cocoa Board)	Technical	<p>Cocoa Board of PNG: statutory body responsible for regulating and developing the Cocoa Industry by monitoring and promoting cocoa growing, processing and marketing.</p> <p>PNG Cocoa Board's research and extension depart. has developed communal infrastructure known as Combination Solar drier to achieve high quality so groups can access premium markets. CARE and PNG Cocoa Board collaborated to set up two (2) combination driers in the target area.</p> <p>CARE worked with the cocoa board local office on issuing licenses to the groups.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) How and when was this partnership forged? b) This is your first collaboration with INGO. Do you think this partnership will continue in the next few years? c) What is the value of the combination drier to the cooperatives and community groups supported by CARE? d) How will they help them to access better markets? e) Is this partnership is mutually beneficial? f) Do you think this partnership with CARE has given visibility to the PNG Cocoa Board in Bougainville and also to the promotion of technology? g) Do you think the partnership with CARE has helped Cocoa Board in reaching out to the communities?

Agmark PVT Limited	Private Sector - informal	<p>Agmark Limited engages in wide scale agri-business in PNG. It grows, trades in, and exports cocoa to chocolate manufacturers worldwide.</p> <p>It also operates hardware and agricultural supply retail outlets, which offer building materials, agricultural and industrial equipment, and chemicals.</p> <p>Informal partnership with CARE to piloting and test women friendly tools – secateurs and spray tank.</p>	<p>a) How do you perceive this collaboration between an INGO and private sector agency?</p> <p>b) Do you think women friendly tools will promote the inclusion of women in advanced techniques like pruning and spraying?</p> <p>c) Is Agmark thinking of adapting gender inclusive approaches in their work?</p> <p>d) Do you think BECOMES' focus on women and youth will help the overall cocoa production and industry?</p> <p>e) Has working with CARE helped in reaching out to the farmers and communities since Agmark is the major supplier of cocoa industry?</p>
Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR)	Technical	<p>ACIAR aims to improve the economic returns to PNG smallholder cocoa producers and the industry, through delivering a more consistent and higher quality product through their technical approaches to cocoa production. BECOMES is promoting five best practices developed by ACIAR and PNG Cocoa Board</p> <p>Designated officers from ACIAR have provided technical support to deliver high quality trainings and preparation of extension material</p>	<p>a) What is the value of BECOMES and CARE's management of BECOMES to the smallholder families?</p> <p>b) How do you rate technical approaches adopted by CARE?</p> <p>c) Do you think CARE's special focus on women and youth will help overall cocoa production and industry?</p> <p>d) What are some of the successful interventions of BECOMES project which has wider implications on the overall economy of Tinputz district?</p> <p>e) Do you think CARE's Model Farming Family is sustainable?</p>
PPAP	Strategic	<p>PPAP is a world bank funded project which aims to improve the livelihoods of cocoa farmers by improving the performance of value chains in main production areas.</p>	<p>a) Is there any collaboration between CARE and PPAP?</p> <p>b) Do you think BECOMES family approach is beneficial to the cocoa farming families</p>
Tinputz District Administration	Government	Advisory Support	<p>a) What is the value of BECOMES and CARE's management of BECOMES to the district administration and the cocoa farming families in Tinputz?</p> <p>b) What are some of the successful interventions of BECOMES project which have wider implications on the overall economy of Tinputz district?</p> <p>c) What do you think of Model Farming Family Approach? Is this community based resource pool developed by BECOMES going to be helpful to the district administration?</p> <p>d) What is the role of the project steering committee and how has it contributed to the effectiveness of BECOMES interventions in Tinputz?</p>
Teonena Kovanis Cooperative	Civil Society - Technical Support	<p>Tenonena Kovanis Cooperative is considered one of the successful 'model' cooperatives in Bougainville, with 200 members. It is seen as a pioneer in the centralised drying system, bank linkages and market access.</p>	<p>a) How has BECOMES project benefited from the expertise and experience of Kovanis Cooperative?</p> <p>b) Are the study tours organised by BECOMES a good idea. What are some the 'take aways' for the groups from Kovanis, especially on membership base, banking system, technology and market access?</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c) How do you rate BECOME's work with community groups? In what way will setting up combination driers help in managing the demand for cocoa beans? d) What are some of the successful interventions of BECOMES project which have wider implications for the overall economy of Tinputz district? e) What do you think of CARE's gender inclusive approaches? f) Do you think BECOMES can replicate the joint bank account system of Kovanis? g) Will Kovanis will be able to support BECOMES supported groups in accessing better markets?
Voluntary Service Abroad (VSA)	Strategic and Technical	<p>VSA is New Zealand's largest, most experienced volunteer agency working in international development. VSA promotes the transfer of skills and knowledge to increase the capacity of the communities by building partnerships and by placing skilled volunteers within communities.</p> <p>VSA is working in ARB since 1998 and focuses on four priority Agriculture, health, Law and Justice and Resilience.</p> <p>CARE and VSA collaborated in placing a cooperative advisor to work with groups in Tinputz. The adviser also conducted capacity building of DPI staff in collaboration with CARE extension officers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) How and when this partnership was forged? b) Do you think this partnership is mutually beneficial? c) What is the value of BECOMES and CARE's management of BECOMES to the smallholder families and cooperatives? d) How do you rate technical approaches adopted by CARE? e) Do you think CARE's special focus on women and youth will help overall cocoa production and the industry? f) What are some of the successful interventions of BECOMES project which have wider implications for agricultural projects in ARB? g) Do you think CARE's Model Farming Family is sustainable? h) Do you think BECOMES family approach is beneficial to the cocoa farming families? i) What do you think of CARE's Gender Equality Framework? j) What learnings from BECOMES can be adapted by other agencies in Bougainville? k) Do project participants see the cocoa value chain as being a more equitable venture for women and youth, particularly on family farms

Annex 4

Focus Group Discussion Groups

FGDs with Smallholder Farming Families	1 x FGD with women farmers
	1 x FGD with men farmers
	1 x FGD with young farmers
FGDs with Model Farming Families	1 x FGD with 3-4 Model Farming Family couples
Focus Group Discussions with coops and business groups	1 x FGD Opiuk Cooperative (Executive & 5 members)
	1 x FGD Kukurina Business Group (Executive and 5 members)

Annex 5

DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

Arija, K.A., 'BECOMES Assessment Study of Existing Cocoa Co-Operatives / Community Groups', June 2017

James Knowles, 'Monitoring and Evaluation Guidelines For Women's Economic Empowerment Programs', June 2015

Richard Eves, with Genevieve Kouro, Steven Simiha and Irene Subalik, 2018, *Do No Harm Research: Bougainville*

V.Vinod Goud, Bougainville Integrated Cocoa Support Project (BECOMES) Baseline Evaluation, June 2017

World Bank, Dec 2014, *The Fruit Of Her Labor: Promoting Gender-Equitable Agribusiness In Papua New Guinea Cocoa Sector*

<http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/862511468190437817/pdf/ACS10004-v3-Box391477B-PUBLIC-IFC-003-WBG-Report-COCOA-FA-R-PUBLIC.pdf>

PROJECT DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

PNG Governance Facility – CARE International PNG BECOMES Grant Agreement, 2016-0042

CARE International PNG, Bougainville Cocoa Farmers Support Project (1st August 2016 To 31st December 2016), Dec 2016

Bougainville Integrated Cocoa Support Project (BICSP) – Completion Report for BICSP Phase 1, CARE Australia, August 2016

BECOMES Annual Reflection/Review Workshop Report, 10 Nov 2017

BECOMES Project Activity Six Monthly Report, (1st January 2017- 30th June 2017), June 2017

CARE International in PNG, Bougainville Cocoa Families Support Project Annual Plan – July 2017 to June 2018

BECOMES Project Activity Six Monthly Report (1st July 2017 to 31st December 2017), Dec 2017

CARE Australia Country Portfolio Discussion (FY2017)

BECOMES Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework with Performance Benchmarks (date unknown)

Vagi, Valea. 'BECOMES Project Mini Survey Report: Cocoa Best Practices, Income and Productivity', April 2018

Annex 6

BECOMES Mid-Term Review: approach, methods and plan. April 2018

MTR Team:

Jane Cousins (Consultant)
Tracey Kathoa (BECOMES Project staff)
Pamela Hasuun, (BECOMES Project staff)
Dickson Lopis (BECOMES Project staff)
Lawrencia Sirman (BECOMES Project staff)
Job Varah (BECOMES Project staff)
Lawrence Chicka (BECOMES Project staff)

Overview

The Bougainville Cocoa Farming Families Support Project (BECOMES) is a four-year project funded by the Government of Australia and the Government of New Zealand under the Commodity Support Facility. The goal of the project is *to improve the economic and social wellbeing of younger and older women and men in cocoa farming families in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville*. The project seeks to address both the technical and social constraints to cocoa production towards **reinvigorating the cocoa industry** – using an integrated, evidence-based approach with relevant interventions and improvements in the efficiency of the value chain. All activities contribute toward the aim that cocoa farming becomes more profitable for all members of the cocoa farming family.

The design of the BECOMES project is underpinned by CARE's Women's Empowerment Framework, through which barriers to women's meaningful engagement in, and benefit from, the cocoa industry in Bougainville are analysed and addressed. BECOMES addresses individual, relational and institutional barriers to women's economic empowerment at multiple levels by improving women's access to extension services and other resources, gender division of household decision making and domestic labour, access to the value chain and ability of industry stakeholders to address the needs of women, men and youth cocoa farmers.

BECOMES project strategic objectives:

4. Smallholder families have improved social and technical capacities to manage their cocoa farming
5. Targeted smallholder families are demonstrating increased cooperation and collective action to increase production efficiency as well as enable market opportunities
6. Cocoa industry stakeholders have increased capacity to address the specific needs of smallholder cocoa farming families

Rationale and purpose

The key purpose of the MTR is to assist the project in achieving its strategic objectives and overall goal by providing project staff, CARE ARoB, CARE PNG management and donors with an evidence based assessment of progress to date and recommendations for improving the performance, outcomes and sustainability of BECOMES in second half of the 4-year project.

The MTR will assess the progress of the project to date in contributing to livelihood and gender equality improvements of the cocoa farming families in the target geography, and suggest amendments in project design, management and implementation arrangements that are likely to enhance the future effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of project activities and outcomes. To contribute to the project's learning and evidence base, the MTR will highlight issues and challenges, how these have been addressed and with what success. Recommendations will take into account the extent to which these issues are within or beyond the control of the project and/or its collaborating partners and stakeholders.

The analysis will also highlight any challenges with the BECOMES model and theory of change and inform strategies for overcoming them that may require changes to the project design, MELF, etc.

MTR approach

Evaluation questions and scope

The MTR approach is structured in relation to the following evaluation questions, grouped into three dimensions:

Effectiveness

- To what extent is BECOMES on track to achieve its objectives and outcome areas?
- To what extent are project strategies furthering women's economic empowerment through stronger agency and access to opportunities within the cocoa value chain?
- Do project participants see the cocoa value chain as being a more equitable venture for women and youth, particularly on family farms?
- What verifiable impact or significant change (both positive and negative) has the project brought about for the targeted smallholder families and community institutions such as co-operatives and business groups? Consider whether these changes are attributable to the BECOMES intervention, and what evidence we have for this?
- What, if any, are the challenges with the BECOMES model and theory of change and how can these be overcome?
- To what extent are the most marginalised and vulnerable groups being reached?

Efficiency

- How efficient is the management of BECOMES? Analyse the performance of the Monitoring and Evaluation mechanism of the project and the various tools (database, trackers etc.)
- What is the value of BECOMES and CARE's management of BECOMES to the partners and to beneficiaries?

Sustainability:

Are the outcomes likely to be sustainable and enduring? Assess preliminary indications of the degree to which the project results are likely to be sustainable beyond the project's lifetime (both at the community and institutional level), and provide recommendations for strengthening sustainability.

Overall approach

The MTR will assess the project's achievements to date in relation to the evaluation questions listed above, pertaining to effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability, using the project design and MELF, and the Baseline and mid-term mini farmer quantitative survey. The MTR will use a mixed methods approach as this can capture change in a range of ways, exploring not only what change has occurred but why and how. Qualitative and quantitative data can complement each other and allow for effective triangulation of data. Qualitative methods such as focus group discussions and culturally appropriate participatory activities will enable the views of participants to be heard and will help 'unpack' quantitative data on gender dynamics and add confidence about causality. They will also provide good material for learning and improving future project design.

Methods

A desk review of key BECOMES documents and materials will include project design documents, work plans, regular monitoring data and progress reports, and two benchmark studies – a baseline study undertaken at the beginning of 2017 and a mini farmer survey conducted in April 2018. The latter was conducted in 9 communities, with an average of 8 farming families per village, and reaching 71 households in total – nearly half the number surveyed in the Baseline study (p 4. Mini Farmer Survey Draft Report). Data at the mid-point of the project (both quantitative and qualitative) will be assessed against baseline data on the social (gender equitable) and technical capacities of smallholder families to manage their cocoa farming; the level of cooperative and collective action to increase production efficiencies and market

opportunities; and the capacity of cocoa industry stakeholders to address the specific needs of smallholder cocoa farmers. Data from project documents will be analysed with reference to these objectives, the 'what' of progress to date in achieving outcomes towards objectives, and the 'why' of what factors enabled this or prevented it from happening.

Findings from the desk review will inform the qualitative research by identifying gaps in data, gaps in understanding of how and why project activities were or were not successful, and exploring more fully issues already identified, such as the lack of progress made to date on objective three: increasing the capacity of cocoa industry stakeholders to address the specific needs of smallholder cocoa farming families.

The primarily quantitative data provided by existing studies, project monitoring, annual reports (i.e. increased production and income of targeted smallholder families, increased number of women in leadership positions in cooperatives/collectives, increased access to information and skills training, increased access of women and youth to the value chain), along with data from the learning and reflection processes, will be augmented by, cross-referenced and triangulated with findings from qualitative data to be collected during the consultant's field trip (see table below). Focus group discussions, participatory activities will be facilitated with cocoa farming families, including model farming families (men and women will be consulted separately), and co-operative group members. Key informant interviews will be conducted with key BECOMES staff, Model Farming Families, Co-operative leaders/members, smallholder cocoa farmers, community leaders, DFAT, government agency representatives, extension officers, local and international NGOs and other cocoa industry stakeholders. For a comprehensive list see below.

After the qualitative data has been collected a reflection workshop will be held with BECOMES Project staff to synthesise and analyse the two data sets and suggest changes in design, management, and/or implementation in order to enhance project performance and outcomes in the second half of the project.

Overview (please see tables below for more detail on the individual tools)

Alignment with ethical research standards

The MTR will adhere to standard ethical research practices. Prior to participating all in the research activities participants will be fully informed of the purpose and nature of the research and have a chance to ask questions. They will be informed of their right to privacy and confidentiality and the option to withdraw their involvement at any time. (See consent forms in Annex ??).

Use of CARE's Gender Equality Framework

The BECOMES project expresses its theory of change – how women's economic empowerment will be achieved and drive broader economic development and increased productivity and wellbeing for all cocoa farming families - through CARE's Gender Equality Framework. The framework has a tripartite focus on individual agency, the social relations of power, and institutional structures, as each of these domains impact on women's empowerment. It helps to keep gender in the forefront of understating why and how the project is or is not on track, and ensures due consideration of the project's efforts towards (and success in) creating an *enabling environment* for achieving project objectives.

KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research Question	Sub-questions	Method
Effectiveness		
<p>To what extent are project strategies increasing women’s economic empowerment through stronger agency and access to opportunities within the cocoa value chain.</p> <p>(also Gender Equality and Women’s Voice)</p>	<p>To what extent do target beneficiaries believe participation in project activities has improved their wellbeing (e.g. increased knowledge, increased decision making; improved intra-HH relationships; livelihood security, income; control over productive assets)</p> <p>To what extent has women’s access to the value chain increased? To what extent has this improved women’s economic and social wellbeing?</p> <p>To what extent have cultural and social norms and attitudes changed within the HH – e.g. in relation to division of domestic labour and decision making - and/or community since the project started?</p> <p>What if any unintended negative consequence of the project activities were observed and how addressed. Unanticipated positive consequences?</p>	<p><u>Focused Group Discussions (FGDs) with target beneficiaries:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 1 x Model Farming Families (male and female together) ➤ 1 x Smallholder families (joint) ➤ 1 x Mate Women’s Group (women only) ➤ 1 x Mate Farmers Group ➤ 1 x Women farmers (women only) ➤ 1 x Young Farmers ➤ 2 x cooperatives/business groups <p>(See FGD guides below)</p> <p><u>Participatory activities</u> will be integrated into the FGDs to elicit views of women and men in relation to gender equality (See tools below)</p> <p><u>Review of project documentation</u> including PDD, Baseline study, Mini farmer survey, monitoring information and reports, etc.</p> <p>FGD with BECOMES team, KIIs with Senior M&E officer, ARB Program Director</p> <p><u>Key Informant Interviews with:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Department of Primary Industry ➤ Agmark Private Limited ➤ DFAT ➤ ACIAR ➤ Productive Partnerships in Agriculture (PPAP) <p>(see MTR itinerary below for names)</p>
<p>To what extent is BECOMES on track to achieve its objectives and outcome areas?</p>	<p>Which objectives are on track – why / why not?</p> <p>To what extent are target beneficiaries participating in and benefiting from project activities?</p> <p>To what extent do cocoa farming families see improvements in their livelihoods and attribute this to participation in BECOMES activities?</p> <p>To what extent are coops/farmers groups participating in and benefiting from project activities?</p> <p>To what extent are key stakeholders engaging in and benefiting from project activities?</p>	<p><u>Review of project documentation:</u> Baseline and other assessments, progress to date against baseline on objective and outcome performance indicators. FGDs with farming families, cooperatives/business groups; KIIs with relevant stakeholders (see below) + District Administrator,</p> <p><u>FGDs with target beneficiaries</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ women farmers ➤ men farmers (1 model, 1 not) ➤ with youth farmers <p>(See FGD guides below)</p> <p><u>FGDs with coops / business groups:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 1 x Opiuk Cooperative (Executives and 5 members) (women and men together) ➤ 1 x Kukurina Business Group (Executives and 5 members)

		<p><u>KIIs with stakeholders:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Department of Primary Industry ➤ Agmark Private Limited ➤ DFAT ➤ ACIAR ➤ Productive Partnerships in Agriculture (PPAP) ➤ VSA
<p>Do project participants see the cocoa value chain as being a more equitable venture for women and youth, particularly on family farms?</p> <p>(also Gender Equality and Women’s Voice)</p>	<p>What has changed for women entrepreneurs since the start of the project?</p> <p>What has changed for young people, particularly those on family farms, since the start of the project?</p>	<p><u>FGD with women farmers</u></p> <p><u>FGD with young farmers</u></p> <p><u>KIIs with stakeholders</u></p>
<p>What verifiable impact or significant change (both positive and negative) has the project brought for targeted smallholder families and community institutions such as co-operatives and business groups?</p> <p>Consider whether these changes are attributable to the BECOMES intervention, and what evidence we have for this?</p> <p>(also Gender Equality and Women’s Voice)</p>	<p>Are any ‘stand out’ cases (perhaps among model farming families) which illustrate the</p> <p>What positive changes have taken place in gender dynamics between baseline and mid-line in gender and age relations within both HH and community (increased gender equitable attitudes and behaviour of men, older adults and other key community stakeholders?). How do these link to increased women’s and youth’s agency (knowledge, confidence, skill, motivation)? Do these changes underpin other positive changes, e.g. in the structure, functioning and delivery of benefits to members by coops / business groups, as a result of women’s increased agency, available time and resources; e.g. in women’s and youth’s access to higher levels of the value chain through the development of value chain services and access to the market, as a result of changed attitudes and behaviour of the part of key stakeholders? (This ‘unpacking’ will reveal and clarify causal relationships and help to determine the extent to which any transformational changes can be attributed to the project.</p>	<p><u>Quantitative data on positive changes in income</u> (project baseline, mini review and monitoring / reporting)</p> <p><u>Cross reference with Focus Group Discussions with target beneficiaries</u> –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - women farmers - men farmers - young farmers <p><u>Participatory activities with focus groups</u></p> <p>Cross reference with FGDs with coops</p> <p>Project data on improvements in coop structures and governance, with a focus on increased democratic, participatory, inclusive and gender-equitable arrangements,</p> <p>Cross reference with KIIs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Department of Primary Industry ➤ Agmark Private Limited ➤ DFAT ➤ ACIAR ➤ Productive Partnerships in Agriculture (PPAP) <p>Cross reference with baseline and mid-line survey data on women’s and youth’s access to higher levels of the value chain through the development of value chain services and access to the market (and other resources); cross reference with target beneficiary FGDs</p>

<p>What, if any, are the challenges with the BECOMES model and theory of change and how can these be overcome?</p> <p>(also Gender Equality and Women's Voice)</p>	<p>Is there adequate data collected/available in usable form to 'prove' the theory of change.</p> <p>How well does the Women's Empowerment Framework 'explain' the achievements of the project?</p> <p>To what extent are other factors responsible for project outcomes, including unexpected outcomes?</p> <p>Are there required changes in any dimension of the WEF (agency, relations, structures) that are beyond the control of the project to an extent that threatens the achievement of the overall goal?</p>	<p>Cross reference with data above on causal links between improvements in HH division of labour, decision making, sharing of income, etc and improved productivity and increased HH income.</p> <p>Cross reference with: project monitoring data on coop structures and governance, with a focus on increased democratic, participatory, inclusive and gender-equitable arrangements + data from FGDs above</p>
<p>To what extent are the most marginalised and vulnerable groups being reached?</p> <p>(also Gender Equality and Women's Voice)</p>	<p>How were target communities selected? Who are the vulnerable and marginalised groups in the project area? Were they consulted in project design/inception?</p> <p>To what extent are marginalised and vulnerable people (e.g. single women households and people with disabilities) participating in project activities?</p> <p>What barriers have vulnerable people faced in terms of participation and how have these been addressed by the project.</p> <p>To what extent has BECOMES improved the lives of the most vulnerable</p> <p>To what extent are the cocoa cooperatives and groups inclusive?</p>	<p><u>KIIs with BECOMES staff, District Administrator, Department of Primary Industry, CSOs/NGOs (e.g. VSA)</u></p> <p><u>FGD and participatory activities with women and youth farmers</u></p> <p><u>FGDs with coops and community groups</u></p> <p><u>Cross reference with: project monitoring data on coop structures and governance</u>, with a focus on increased democratic, participatory, inclusive and gender-equitable arrangements</p>
<p>EFFICIENCY</p>	<p>SUB QUESTIONS</p>	
<p>How efficient is the management of BECOMES? Analyse the performance of the Monitoring and Evaluation mechanism of the project and the various tools (database, trackers etc.)</p> <p>(also Gender Equality and Women's Voice)</p>	<p>What is the management structure and is it appropriate to the needs of the project?</p> <p>Does the M&E system capture monitoring data needed to track progress towards outcomes and objectives, and provide timely feedback needed to manage the project effectively?</p> <p>How is M&E data used by the project? Who are the main users?</p> <p>Is M&E data used to improve implementation and refine the project strategy? How is the</p>	<p><u>Review of project documents and rapid assessment of tools</u> – MELF, project data base and component tools.</p> <p><u>KIIs with key BECOMES staff</u>: Project Manager, Senior M&E Officer, ARB Director – cross reference with KIIs with DFAT, ACIAR, others??</p> <p><u>FGD with BECOMES team</u></p> <p><u>BECOMES team MTR Reflection Workshop</u>,</p>

	<p>'feedback' process managed and in what ways are project staff involved in the process of 'proving' the theory of change?</p> <p>What do they think of mechanisms for collecting, analysing and sharing information within the project? How do they think it could be improved?</p> <p>Do mechanisms exist for monitoring the quality and adequacy of the M&E data collected? Do M&E staff have adequate resources and capacity to implement the monitoring system?</p>	
What is the value of BECOMES and CARE's management of BECOMES to the partners and to beneficiaries?		<p><u><i>KIIs with stakeholders:</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Department of Primary Industry ➤ Agmark Private Limited ➤ DFAT ➤ ACIAR ➤ Productive Partnerships in Agriculture ➤ VSA <p><u><i>FGDs with target beneficiaries</i></u></p>
Cost efficiency?	<p>Was the budget adequate to achieve the stated objectives?</p> <p>Was the timeframe for the project realistic?</p> <p>Were resources used efficiently? How could this be improved?</p>	<p><u><i>KIIs with BECOMES team members</i></u></p> <p><u><i>Project financial and narrative reporting</i></u></p> <p><u><i>KIIs with stakeholders:</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Department of Primary Industry ➤ Agmark Private Limited ➤ DFAT ➤ ACIAR ➤ Productive Partnerships in Agriculture ➤ VSA
SUSTAINABILITY	SUB QUESTIONS	METHOD
Exit strategy and	<p>On the basis of achievements to date, how appropriate is the project exit strategy to the project timeline?</p> <p>Are project activities in line with or complementary to those of collaborating partners, government agencies, NGOs?</p> <p>If required, how might it be adjusted?</p>	<p><u><i>KIIs with ARB Program Director and BECOMES Project Manager</i></u></p> <p><u><i>FGD with BECOMES program staff</i></u></p> <p><u><i>KIIs with stakeholders:</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Executive Manager, District Administration ➤ Kovanis Cooperative ➤ Cocoa Board ➤ Department of Primary Industry ➤ Agmark Private Limited ➤ DFAT ➤ ACIAR ➤ Productive Partnerships in Agriculture ➤ Voluntary Services Abroad
Institutional partners and capacity to leverage resources for scale-up	<p>How is BECOMES managing expectations of it as the first project funded under the CSF?</p> <p>How has it leveraged resources</p>	<p><u><i>KIIs with ARB Program Director and BECOMES Project Manager</i></u></p> <p><u><i>FGD with BECOMES program staff</i></u></p>

	<p>from other stakeholders to date?</p> <p>And how is it leveraging the strong interest shown by all stakeholders to position for scale up / replication with reference to a range of different partnerships, e.g. technical, funding, collaborative?</p>	<p><i>KIIs with stakeholders:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Executive Manager, District Administration ➤ Kovanis Cooperative ➤ Cocoa Board ➤ Department of Primary Industry ➤ Agmark Private Limited ➤ DFAT ➤ ACIAR ➤ Productive Partnerships in Agriculture ➤ Voluntary Services Abroad
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MTR Data Collection Plan

An itinerary for the field component of the MTR has been developed by the Project staff (see Table below).

Focus group discussions (FGDs) and Key informant interviews (KIIs) will be conducted over four days in the villages of Matakus, Suvangu, Teoptop, Mate, Unnovi and Namatoa. The locations were selected because they are situated in remote and mountainous project intervention areas (some villages are closer to the road than others). The FGDs will be conducted with the following participants / stakeholders: model farming families and smallholder families, women and men's farming groups, cooperatives, business groups, Women farmers and young farmers. The groups and the families were chosen as being representative of the target beneficiaries of the BECOMES project, including vulnerable women and young people (BECOMES has a special focus on youth). The consultant will carry out KIIs with translation support where needed from female facilitator Tracey Kathoa and male facilitator Lawrence Chicka, both of whom will also facilitate the FGDs, where possible in parallel sessions to make best use of time.

Focus Group Discussions x 8

- 1 x Model Farming Families (male and female together – in addition women's views will be sought in separate KIIs where they are encouraged to speak freely)
- 1 x Smallholder families
- 1 x Opiuk Cooperative (Executives and 5 members) (women and men together)
- 1 x Kukurina Business Group (Executives and 5 members)
- 1 x Mate Women's Group (women's community group)
- 1 x Mate Farmers Group
- 1 x Women farmers
- 1 x Young Farmers

KIIs x 4

- 2 x women from Model Farming Families
- 4 x individual entrepreneurs and stakeholders

Key Informant Interviews

During this time, meetings will also be held with the following stakeholders. Questions will be tailored for each key informant and finalised once the consultant is in country.

- Executive Manager, District Administration
- Chairperson, Kovanis Cooperative
- Cocoa Board -
- Department of Primary Industry
- Agmark Private Limited
- DFAT
- ACIAR
- Productive Partnerships in Agriculture (PPAP)
- Voluntary Services ABROAD
- BECOMES program staff

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (the names of key informants are included in the itinerary)

S I N O	Stakeholder	Nature of the partnership	Purpose of collaboration	Tentative Key Informant Questions
1	Commodity Support Facility¹⁵	Formal	Contract Manager	g) What is the value of BECOMES and CARE's management of BECOMES to the CSF? h) What are the major learnings from BECOMES that can have be adapted and replicated by other CSG grantees? i) How do you perceive CARE's focus on social and gender aspects? j) How well does BECOMES project align with the mandate of the CSF? k) What are your views on BECOMES' special focus on women and youth? l) What are some of the innovations tried by BECOMES that will be helpful to overall CSF future strategy?
2	Departme nt of Primary Industry and Marine Resources	Government department	Secretary DPI is the chair of CSF and provides advisory support to the management of CSF	h) What is the value of BECOMES and CARE's management of BECOMES to DPI and Beneficiaries? i) What are the major learnings from BECOMES Project to approaches on smallholder families? How do you rate the performance of the BECOMES Project? j) Is there any regular interaction and exchange of information between DPI and CARE? k) What value is added by BECOMES to improving the economic wellbeing of smallholder families? l) How do you rate CARE's work with cooperatives? m) To what extent are project strategies furthering women's economic empowerment within the cocoa value chain? n) Do project participants see the cocoa value chain as being a more equitable venture for women and youth, particularly on family farms
3	PNG Cocoa Board (CCI is merged with Cocoa Board)	Technical	Cocoa Board of PNG is the statutory body responsible for the regulating and developing the Cocoa Industry. Its roles and responsibilities are to regulate, monitor and promote cocoa growing, processing and marketing.	h) How and when was this partnership forged? i) This is your first collaboration with INGO. Do you think this partnership will continue in the next few years? j) What is the value of the combination drier to the cooperatives and community groups supported by CARE? k) How will they help them to access better markets?

¹⁵ The purpose of the CSF is to foster economic development and good governance through a grants facility that targets economic opportunities for all people of Bougainville. Its objectives are to: promote the growth and development of the agricultural, forestry and marine resources sectors within Bougainville, through funding appropriate sector-focused production, marketing, research, extension and training activities that are consistent with the strategic framework being articulated in the DPI Agriculture Investment agenda. CSF is presently providing grant and technical support to 26 community groups and cooperatives in improving the cocoa production of smallholder families

			<p>PNG Cocoa Board 's research and extension depart. has developed communal infrastructure known as Combination Solar drier to achieve high quality so that groups can access premium markets CARE and PNG Cocoa Board collaborated to set up two (2) combination driers in the operational area. CARE also worked with cocoa board local office in issuing licenses to the groups</p>	<p>l) Is this partnership is mutually beneficial ⁱⁱ? m) Do you think this partnership with CARE has given visibility to the PNG Cocoa Board in Bougainville and also to the promotion of technology? n) Do you think the partnership with CARE has helped Cocoa Board in reaching out to the communities?</p>
4	Agmark PVT Limited	Private Sector	<p>Agmark Limited engages in agri-business in PNG. It grows, trades in, and exports cocoa to chocolate manufacturers in Asia, China, the US and Europe; and markets and trades in a range of other agricultural commodities, including coffee, copra, essential oils, chillies, pepper, and other spices. The company also operates hardware and agricultural supply retail outlets, which offer building materials, agricultural equipment, industrial equipment, chemicals, paints, and white goods</p> <p>Piloting and testing of women friendly tools</p>	<p>f) How do you perceive this collaboration between an INGO and private sector agency? g) Do you think women friendly tools will promote the inclusion of women in advanced techniques like pruning and spraying? h) Is Agmark thinking of adapting gender inclusive approaches in their work? i) Do you think BECOMES' focus on women and youth will help the overall cocoa production and industry? j) Has working with CARE helped in reaching out to the farmers and communities since Agmark is the major supplier of cocoa industry?</p>
5	Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR)	Technical	<p>ACIAR aims to improve the economic returns to PNG smallholder cocoa producers and the industry, through delivering a more consistent and higher quality product through their technical approaches to cocoa production. BECOMES is promoting five best practices developed</p>	<p>f) What is the value of BECOMES and CARE's management of BECOMES to the smallholder families? g) How do you rate technical approaches adopted by CARE? h) Do you think CARE's special focus on women and youth will help overall cocoa production and industry? i) What are some of the successful interventions of BECOMES project which has wider implications on the overall economy of Tinputz district?</p>

			<p>by ACIAR and PNG Cocoa Board</p> <p>Designated officers from ACIAR have provided technical support to deliver high quality trainings and preparation of extension material</p>	<p>j) Do you think CARE's Model Farming Family is sustainable?</p>
6	PPAP	Strategic	<p>PPAP is a world bank funded project which aims to improve the livelihoods of cocoa farmers by improving the performance of value chains in main production areas.</p>	<p>c) Is there any collaboration between CARE and PPAP?</p> <p>d) Do you think BECOMES family approach is beneficial to the cocoa farming families</p>
7	Tinputz District Administration	Government	Advisory Support	<p>e) What is the value of BECOMES and CARE's management of BECOMES to the district administration and the cocoa farming families in Tinputz?</p> <p>f) What are some of the successful interventions of BECOMES project which have wider implications on the overall economy of Tinputz district?</p> <p>g) What do you think of Model Farming Family Approach? Is this community based resource pool developed by BECOMES going to be helpful to the district administration?</p> <p>h) What is the role of the project steering committee and how has it contributed to the effectiveness of BECOMES interventions in Tinputz?</p>
8	Tenoena Kovanis Cooperative	Civil Society - Technical Support	<p>Tenonena Kovanis Cooperative is considered as one of the successful 'model' cooperatives in Bougainville, with 200 members. It is seen as a pioneer in the centralised drying system, bank linkages and market access.</p>	<p>h) How has BECOMES project benefited from the expertise and experience of Kovanis Cooperative?</p> <p>i) Are the study tours organised by BECOMES a good idea. What are some the 'take aways' for the groups from Kovanis, especially on membership base, banking system, technology and market access?</p> <p>j) How do you rate BECOMES's work with community groups? In what way will setting up combination driers help in managing the demand for cocoa beans?</p> <p>k) What are some of the successful interventions of BECOMES project which have wider implications for the overall economy of Tinputz district?</p> <p>l) What do you think of CARE's gender inclusive approaches?</p> <p>m) Do you think BECOMES can replicate the joint bank account system of Kovanis?</p> <p>n) Will Kovanis will be able to support BECOMES supported groups in accessing better markets?</p>

9	Voluntary Service Abroad (VSA)	Strategic and Technical	<p>VSA is New Zealand's largest, most experienced volunteer agency working in international development. VSA promotes the transfer of skills and knowledge to increase the capacity of the communities by building partnerships and by placing skilled volunteers within communities.</p> <p>VSA is working in ARB since 1998 and focuses on four priority Agriculture, health, Law and Justice and Resilience.</p> <p>CARE and VSA collaborated in placing a cooperative advisor to work with groups in Tinputz</p>	<p>l) How and when this partnership was forged?</p> <p>m) Do you think this partnership is mutually beneficial?</p> <p>n) What is the value of BECOMES and CARE's management of BECOMES to the smallholder families and cooperatives?</p> <p>o) How do you rate technical approaches adopted by CARE?</p> <p>p) Do you think CARE's special focus on women and youth will help overall cocoa production and the industry?</p> <p>q) What are some of the successful interventions of BECOMES project which have wider implications for agricultural projects in ARB?</p> <p>r) Do you think CARE's Model Farming Family is sustainable?</p> <p>s) Do you think BECOMES family approach is beneficial to the cocoa farming families?</p> <p>t) What do you think of CARE's Gender Equality Framework?</p> <p>u) What learnings from BECOMES can be adapted by other agencies in Bougainville?</p> <p>v) Do project participants see the cocoa value chain as being a more equitable venture for women and youth, particularly on family farms</p>
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FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDES FOR COOPERATIVES AND BUSINESS GROUPS

Questions will explore the following dimensions prior to and after the BECOMES intervention:

- a) Leadership Mechanisms / Governance System
- b) Management/Operations
- c) Women's participation
- d) Conflict Management Mechanisms
- e) Membership Base
- f) Youth Inclusion

There will be some customised questions to the Opiuk Cooperative Society and Kukurina Business Groups, where BECOMES has installed Combination Driers, and for Mate women's group which has been supported with a nursery.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GROUP	BEFORE BECOMES	AFTER BECOMES
Leadership Mechanisms	As office bearers were you aware of your roles and responsibilities?	How confident are you to run your organisation? Which trainings run for you by BECOMES helped increase your confidence and knowledge?
Governance Management/Operations	How was your management, governance and operation systems?	Describe your management, governance and operations systems now. Did BECOMES help you to improve the

	Did you have a vision and mission for the group before Care's intervention?	systems? Which trainings and activities helped you to improve these systems? Does your group now have a vision and mission?
Women's Participation	How many women were in the governing board? How did they participate in governing the organisation?	Has there been an increase in women's participation both in terms of numbers and in governance mechanisms
Conflict Resolution Mechanisms	Did your group have a conflict resolution mechanism in place?	Do you have a conflict resolution mechanism in place now? What helped you to put those systems in places? How useful is it? Can you provide an example?
Relationship between Board of Directors and Members	Please describe the relationship between the Board of Directors and the Members before the start of BECOMES	How is the relationship now?
Membership Base and the inclusion of vulnerable and marginalised women.	What was the membership base? Who were the women who were involved? How was the participation in monthly meetings?	Please describe any change in the size of the membership base and the characteristics of the women involved? Is there any increase in participation? Are they meeting regularly?
Youth Inclusion	What was the involvement of youth in your group. Was an effort made to involve young people?	What is the involvement of youth in your group.
Business Orientation		To what extent and in what ways has the group's attitude to business changed?
Combination Driers only for Opiuk and Kukurina Business Groups		a) How do you plan to operate the combination drier and share the profit with the members? What are the groups rules of access and governance of the drying system? b) Do you think it will help to access better markets? c) Do you think it will increase the income of smallholder families and improve their living standards?
Enterprise- Mate Women's Group Only		a) How are you managing the operation of the nursery? b) Are members contributing to the nursery? c) What kind of support have you received from Mate Farmers Group? d) How are you planning

Reflection workshop with BECOMES staff

Since staff participated in a reflection workshop quite recently, it makes sense to start where they left off and use the additional qualitative data collected on the MTR field trip to augment the picture they constructed

Draft agenda:

Time	Activity	Method	Materials
9.00 – 9.30	Review of BECOMES project objectives, key outcomes and indicators Overview of the emerging findings from the additional data collected	PowerPoint presentation and/or theory of change and logframe on wall	Projector, screen Flipchart paper
9.30-10.30	What has been achieved? Group work to consolidate data (quantitative and qualitative) – outputs, key outcomes, progress toward achieving objectives - plus challenges and unexpected results – under each objective.	World Café - data will be roughly organised under each objective. 3 groups will circulate around each objective, reading and fine tuning organisation of data	Flipchart paper, large format printout of data
10.45-11.30	What have we learnt? Develop answers to ‘why’ questions. What factors have contributed to progress, challenges and unexpected results?		
11.30 – 12.00	What next? Applying the learning. What should be continued? What needs to change and how?	Plenary session	
12.00 – 12.15	Summarise tentative findings and recommendations. Wrap up	Consultant	

BECOMES MID TERM REVIEW ITINERARY: April-May 2018

TEAM DAYS	DATE	LOCATION	ACTIVITY	ACCOMODATION
1	Saturday 28 April 2018	Jane arrives Rabaul	Jane travels from Nadi to Rabaul	Kokopo Beach Resort
2	Sunday 29 April 2018	Jane arrives Buka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rekha meets Jane at the airport 	Steakhouse, Buka
3	Monday 30 th April 2018	BUKA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety and Security Briefing • Presentation on BECOMES progress to date • FGD with BECOMES team • KII with Program Director, ARB <p><i>KIIs with stakeholders:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Belinda Mere Gara - Grants Manager Commodity Support Facility 2. Paul Bedggood, Program Manager VSA; John Gordon VSA Volunteer 	Steakhouse, Buka
4	Tuesday 1 st May 2018	TINPUTZ	<p>Focus Group Discussions</p> <p>8 x FGDs will be conducted in total, in project villages including Matakurus, Suvangu, Teoptop, Mate, Unnovi and Namatoa. FGDs will be conducted with cooperatives, business groups, male farmers group, women group, model farming families and smallholder families, women farmers and young farmers (since BECOMES has a special focus on youth)</p> <p><i>FGDs with Smallholder Farming Families:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) 1 x FGD with women 2) 1 x FGD with men (parallel sessions) 3) 1x FGD with Young farmers <p><i>FGDs with Model Farming Families:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4) 1 x FGD with 3-4 Model Farming Family couples 	Kaskkrus Guest House Accompanied and supported by female facilitator Tracy Kathoa and male facilitator Lawrence Chicka
5	Wednesday 2 nd May 2018	TINPUTZ	<p><i>Focus Group Discussions with coops and business groups:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5) 1 x Opiuk Cooperative (Executive & 5 members) 6) 1 x Kukurina Business Group (Executive and 5 members) <p>Visit to the site of centralised drying system</p>	Kaskkrus Guest House - supported by female facilitator Tracy Kathoa & male facilitator L. Chicka
6	Thursday 3 rd May 2018	TINPUTZ	<p><i>Key Informant Interviews:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Executive Manager, District Administration 4. Chairperson, Kovanis Cooperative 5. 3 x Women entrepreneurs (plus visit to some of the enterprises) <p><i>FGDs with Farmer Groups</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Mate Women's Group 8. Mate Farmers' Group 	Kaskkrus Guest House Accompanied and supported by female facilitator Tracy Kathoa and male facilitator Lawrence Chicka
7	Friday 4 th May 2018	TINPUTZ- BUKA	<p><i>KIIs with stakeholders in Buka:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Cocoa Board – Kerry Francis 7. Department of Primary Industry – Thomas Betitis, Secretary or Wendy Sawa, Regional Manager 8. Agmark Private Limited - Clare Toben Regional Manager 9. DFAT – Edmond Berry 10. ACIAR - Normal Tola, Coordinator 11. Productive Partnerships in Agriculture (PPAP) - Patrick Koles 	Steakhouse, Buka
8	Saturday 5 th May 2018	BUKA	Prepare reflection workshop with BECOMES team Discussion on MIS (3 pm to 5 pm)	Steakhouse, Buka
9	Sunday 6 May	BUKA	Half day reflection workshop with BECOMES team	Steakhouse, Buka
10	Mon 7 May	Travel to POM		Holiday Inn Express
11	8 th May 2018	POM- NADI		
	10- 19 May	Fiji	Draft MTR report	
	Fri 25 th May	Fiji	Submit draft MTR report for feedback	
	29 May-14 Jun	Fiji	Finalise MTR report and annexes	
	15 th June	Fiji	Submit final MTR report, complete with annexes	

BECOMES PROJECT: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Welcome and thank you for volunteering to take part in this focus group. You have been asked to participate as your point of view is important. I realize you are busy and I appreciate your time.

Introduction:

My name is Jane Cousins, and I am an independent consultant. I'm researching the implementation of BECOMES Project and I'd like to collect your views to improve the way this project works. I'm not CARE staff, and the answers and information you give will be completely confidential. I will describe what people in this community and others think in a report, but I will not mention any names. Your personal contributions and views will not be shared with anyone else in a way that can identify you. Also, you don't have to participate if you don't want to, or, if there are any questions or discussions that you don't want to answer or participate in, you don't have to. However, please try to answer and be as involved as possible. The discussion will take about an hour and a half. Is it OK if I tape the discussion to help me remember it?

Anonymity and confidentiality: Although we are taping the discussion it will remain completely anonymous. The tapes will be kept safely in a locked place until they are transcribed word for word, then they will be destroyed. The transcribed notes of the focus group will contain no information that would allow anyone as an individual to be linked to specific statements.

Before we start, I would like to remind you that there are no right or wrong answers in this discussion. I'm interested in knowing what each of you thinks, so please feel free to be honest and to share your point of view, whether you agree or disagree with what you hear. It is very important that I hear all your opinions.

You probably prefer that your comments not be repeated to people outside of this group. Please treat others in the group as you want to be treated by not telling anyone about what you hear in this discussion today.

Ground rules

- The most important rule is that only one person speaks at a time. You might feel like jumping in when someone is talking but please wait until they have finished.
- There are no right or wrong answers
- You do not have to speak in any particular order
- When you do have something to say, please do. We want to hear from everyone.
- You do not have to agree with the views of other people in the group. As I said, there are no right and wrong answers.
- Does anyone have any questions? (answers).
- OK, let's begin

Warm up

- First, I'd like everyone to introduce themselves. Can you tell us your name?

Introductory question

I am just going to give you a couple of minutes to think about your experience of participating in the CARE activities. Is anyone happy to share his or her experience?

Guiding questions for women and men smallholder cocoa farmers

- How is the household organized? Meals, arrangements for children, care of the house? (Women's use of their time in household tasks and their ability to decide about this use/delegate tasks – more equal sharing of domestic labour)
- When a decision needs to be taken in the household or about cocoa farming, how does it work?
- How are women entrepreneurs in the cocoa value chain perceived in the community?
- Women's assertiveness and self-confidence.
- Women's acquisition of new assets for the enterprise, but also for the household.
- Women's ability to acquire, control and use these assets on their own.
- Women's saving behaviour and women's access to individual bank accounts

MODEL FARMING FAMILIES

Questions for model Farming Families

- What are the 3 most important things you have learnt as a Model Farming Family?
- What if anything has changed for your family as a result of being a MFF? (probe – technical knowledge and its application/practice, economic improvement, change in social/gender relations at HH level)
- How do you think other smallholder cocoa farming families see your family? (e.g. promoting good role models)
- How do other smallholder farming families respond to what they see your family doing in cocoa farming? (probe – copy what they do). What do they do? Why do they do that? (probe for more detail)
- Why do other farmers follow your advice or copy what you do? What do you do to encourage / educate them?
- What are the challenges in being a model farmer?
- What would help you to be more effective in your role as a model farmer?

Questions about model Farming Families

- What have you observed about MFFs? What do you think about MFFs?
- What have you learnt from Model Farming Family?
- What are the 3 most important things you have learnt from Model Farming Family?
- Have you applied any of the things you have observed? What? Why?
- What if anything has changed for your family as a result of applying things you learned from a MFF? (probe – looking for technical knowledge and its application/practice, economic improvement, change in social/gender relations at HH level)

Concluding question

- Of all the things we've discussed today, what would you say are the most important issues you would like to express about the BECOMES program?

Conclusion

- Thank you for participating. This has been a very successful discussion
- Your opinions will be valuable to this study
- We hope you have found the discussion interesting
- If there is anything you are unhappy with or wish to complain about, please contact the local or speak to me later
- I would like to remind you that any comments featuring in this report will be anonymous
- Before you leave, please make sure you have completed the attendance list.

Please remember to maintain confidentiality of the participating individuals by not disclosing their n

ⁱ These driers are also known as centralised drying system

2. Community groups include Cooperatives, Business Groups and Women's group

ⁱⁱ CARE made a presentation in a high level steering committee and the chief secretary expressed his willingness to replicate the driers across Bougainville

A note has been prepared by CARE and send across to ABG