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Improving nutrition through women's and men's engagement across the seaweed food chain

13th AFAF



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Overview

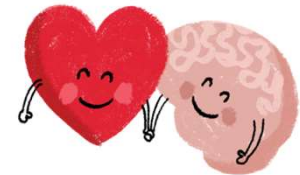
1. Background
2. Methods and participants
3. Findings
 - Roles
 - Barriers & enablers
4. Implications
5. Next steps



Background

Nutrition and food security in the Pacific

- Good nutrition is important for preventing disease, improving health.
- Pacific Island nations face considerable challenges including malnutrition and food insecurity.
- Gender inclusive, nutrition-sensitive agriculture – provides opportunity for access to nutritious food as well as supporting livelihoods and income



Seaweed aquaculture

Benefits of seaweed

- Sustainable food source, no feed crop
- Nutritious - vitamins and minerals, fibre, omega fatty acids and in some cases protein.
- Inclusive value chain for men, women and families.
- Socio-economic benefits – low cost; cultural and social significance

Journey to date

Previous projects (since 2016)

- technical support for sustainable production and farming
- dietary intakes and potential role of seaweed to improve nutrition outcomes
- understanding consumer motivations and interest

This project

To understand the barriers to, and enablers of, men's & women's economic empowerment through the seaweed food chain.

What are the roles (current and potential) of men and women?

What are the barriers they face in participating?
What are the things that help them participate?

How are men and women's experiences different?



Methods & Sample

Methodology & Data collection

- Photo elicitation process (Roles)
- Focus group discussion (Enablers and barriers)
- Conceptual frameworks:
 - International Labour Organisation Market System / Value Chain Framework (ILO, 2021)
 - Women's Empowerment and Market Systems (WEAMS) Framework (Jones, 2016)

Context & setting

- Coastal villages across Savai'i (10 villages) during Oct and Nov 2021
- Concurrent project → UN Seaweed Farming Inception project

Participants

- 135 people (men and women) aged 18 – 84 years
- Gender disaggregated groups – 2 groups per village



Top photo: Map of Savaii and the 10 villages

Left: Women learning the new seaweed farming method (UN funded project)



Photos of the photo elicitation and focus group discussion sessions in the villages

Findings – Roles

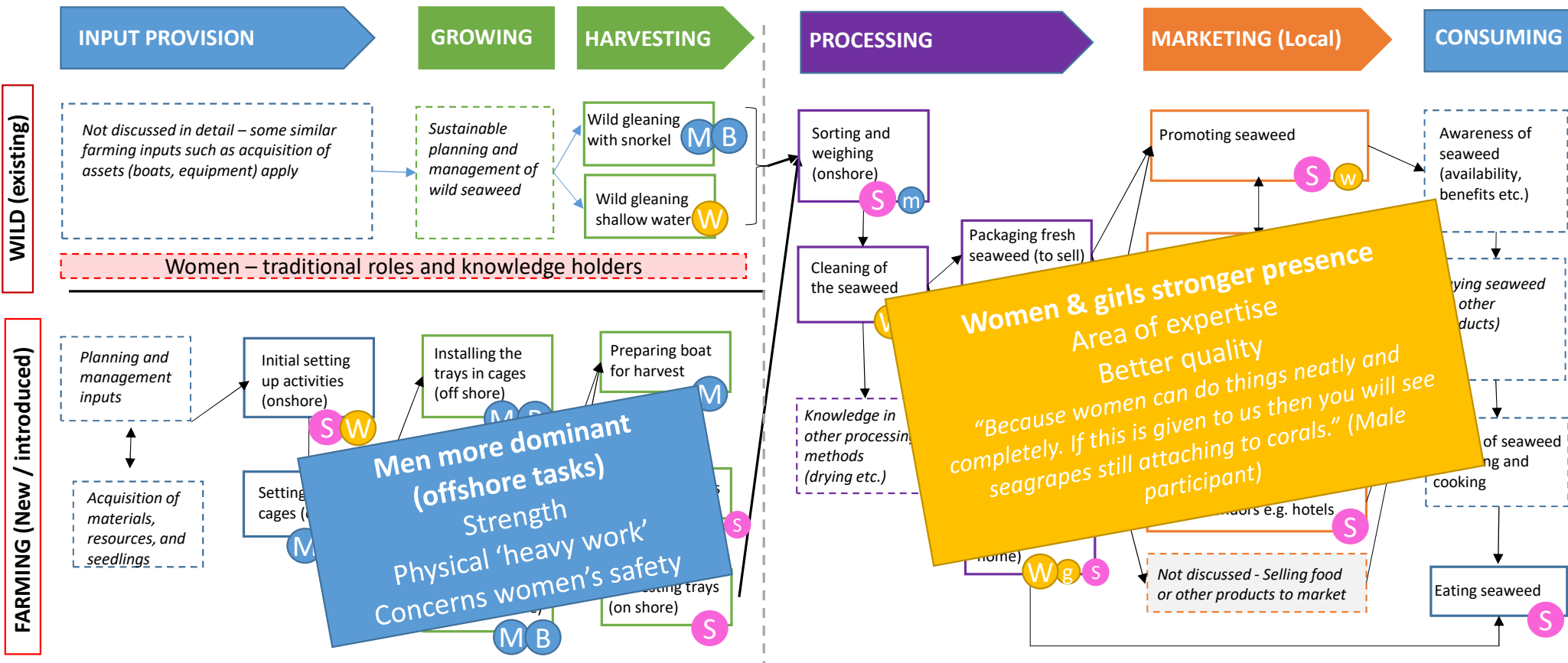
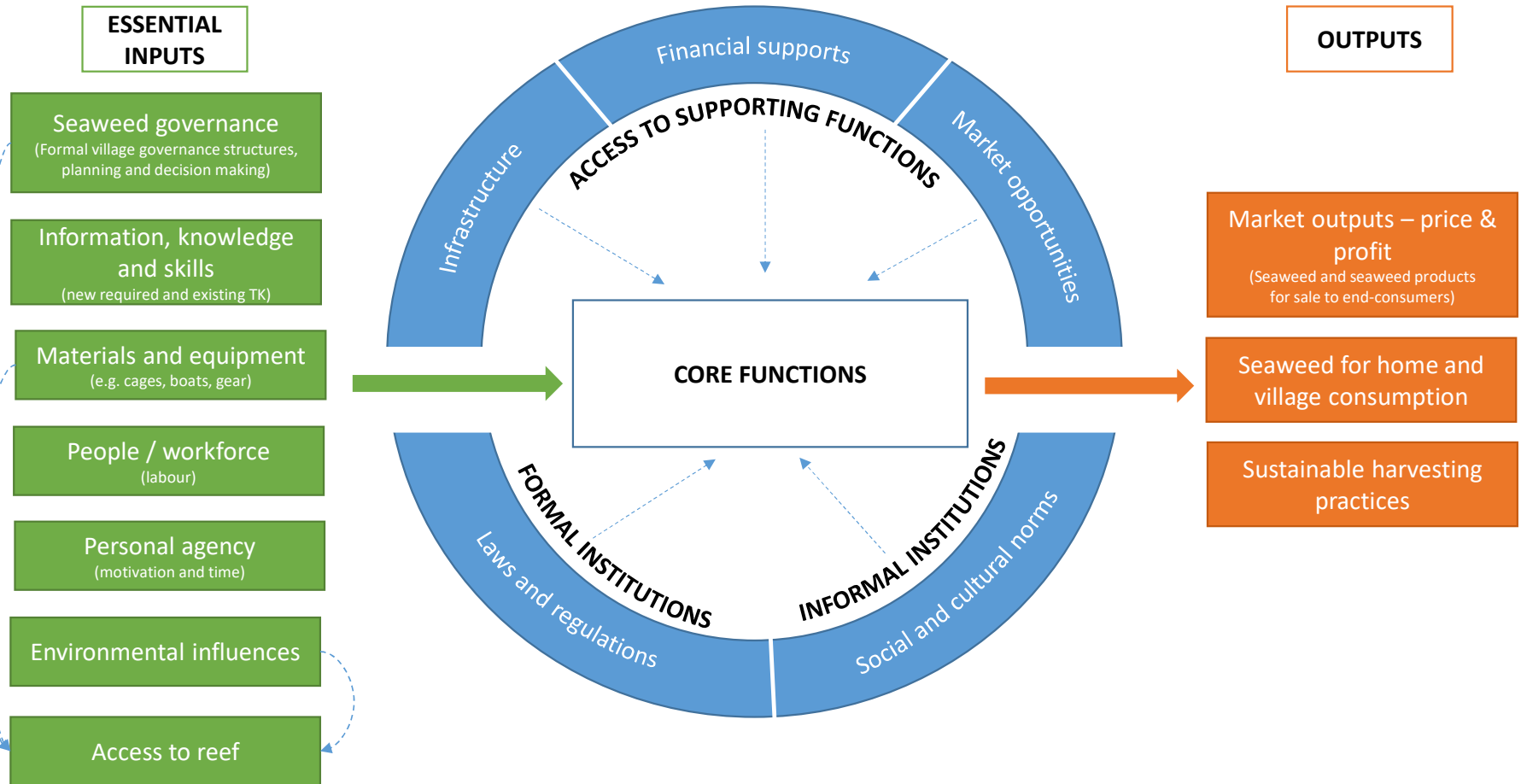


Figure showing the local Samoan seaweed value chain and roles of men and women as perceived by the villages. The arrows indicate the flow of tasks. The circles with the letters represent the genders - M=Men, B = young men (untitled men/older boys), W=Women, G= girls, S=Shared role. Capital letter indicates stronger presence / potential lead role. Dashed boxes indicate opportunities/tasks identified in the focus group discussion data that followed, but roles were not attributed to these.

Findings - barriers & enablers



PERCEPTIONS OF INDUSTRY

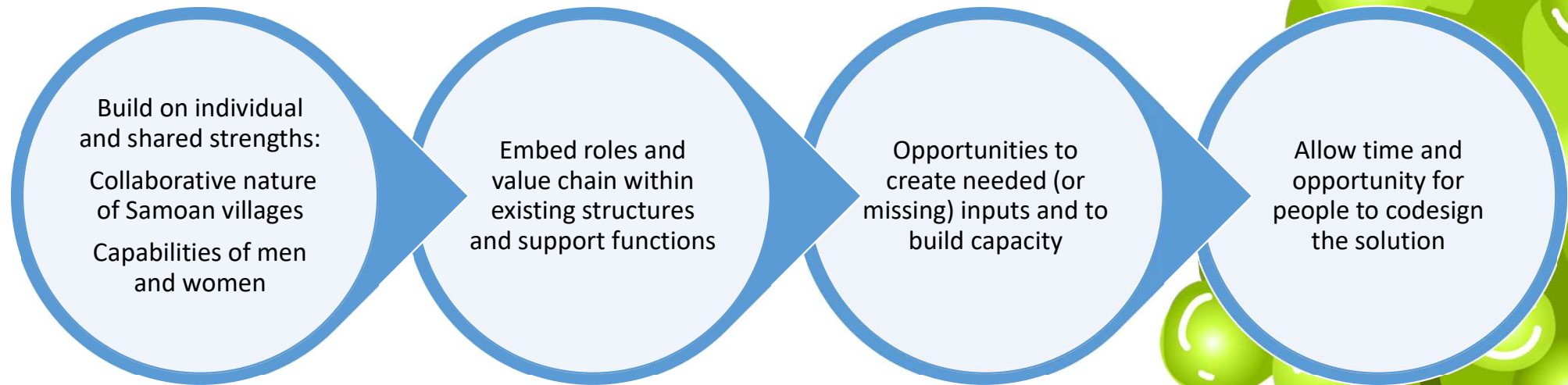


Gender Implications

- Cultural and social norms surrounding traditionally gendered activities → consider negative impacts on participation
- Role and value of women in seaweed value chains (gleaning, knowledge holders, driving force of seaweed industry)
- In creating new opportunities, ensure we are not inadvertently “driving women out of the value chain”
 - Support women to maintain and strengthen their roles
 - Involve women from the start with ‘new’ technologies (institutions and social norms / inclusivity)



What we've learned, and where to from here



Acknowledgments

We would like to thank:

- Samoan community and the participants in our study
- Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries Samoa
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- University of the Sunshine Coast



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Thank you

Questions?

