



Work Spaces for Women and Girls in the Mussel Industry Value Chain: Promoting Small-scale Entrepreneurship

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Background

- Mussel culture in the Philippines was started only in 1962 when biologists of Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (formerly: Philippine Fisheries Commission) put up a mussel demo farm in Cavite
- In Jiabong, Samar mussel farming started a decade later --- in 1975

Research Locale



- 5th class municipality
- Population of 17,075 (2010)
- Land area: 67.72 sq km
- Has 34 barangays/villages
- Total income: P1.6M in 2006 (US\$38100 approx)

Giabong is top producer of green mussels (locally called *tahong*)

LGU	Area devoted to mussel (has)	Volume of production (kg)	Estimated value of production (PhP)
Giabong	160	6,431,750	32,158,750 (US\$765,685)
Villareal	48	2,378,650	11,417,520 (US\$271,846)
Tarangnan	11	220,650	970,933 (US\$23,118)
Catbalogan	19	529,050	2,433,745 (US\$57,947)
Talalora	3.53	241,666	1,063,260 (US\$25,316)
Zumarraga	3	104,166	458,260 (US\$10,911)
Daram	2	76,666	337,260 (US\$8,030)

Mussel farming is the main source of income

- Tahong is identified as the municipality's OTOP (one town, one product)
- Jiabong has a Mussel Meat Processing Center and a Mussel Shellcraft Center that produces bottled tahong, tahong crackers, shellcrafts, among others. These centers are being managed by the Jiabong Mussel Producers and Vendors Multi-Purpose Cooperative (JMPVMPC).





In this male-dominated industry, what are the work spaces for women/girls?

- What are their roles at the different stages of the Value Chain?
- What are their practical and strategic gender needs (PGNs and SGNs)?
- What investment opportunities and entrepreneurial initiatives are open to them?



Methodology

- Quick survey among the mussels operators: 6 mussel farmers, 3 traders, 2 processors
- Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)
- Focus Group Discussions (FGD)
- Secondary data collection

A Value Chain Analysis (VCA) was conducted

The Mussel Products

Fresh
mussels



Baked
mussels

Mussel
crackers

Bottled
mussels

The mussel Value Chain (VC) consists of

- A **sequence of productive processes** (functions) from the provision of specific inputs for mussel production, to its transformation or processing, to its marketing and up to final consumption
- A **series of institutional arrangements** linking and coordinating producers, processors, traders and distributors of mussels and mussel products

The mussel Value Chain (VC) consists of

- An ecosystem:
 - **Micro level** --- VC operators are the businesses that are found in each VC function
 - **Meso level** – associations, groups which help link the VC operators
 - **Macro level** -- VC enablers which are composed of various support services to the VC operators.

The VC Functions

Consumption

- Prepare for consumption by the households

Mussel trading

- Selling – wholesale and retail
- Marketing
- Brokering

Mussel processing

- Grinding
- Frying, cooking, steaming
- Bottling, packaging, labeling

Mussel production

- Sharpen bamboo poles
- Stake poles at sea
- Harvesting, socking, sorting, cleaning, packing

Input provision

- Buy bamboo poles, sacks, ties/ropes, ingredients for the mussel crackers and bottled tahong
- Prepare the motorboat

The VC Operators

Consumption

Mussel trading

Mussel processing

Mussel production

Input provision

- Brokers: mostly females
- Retailers/Wholesalers: 14 who are mostly females
- Growers-cum-retailers: 3 males, 1 female
- Processor-cum-distributors: 2 females

- Producers of tahong crackers: 1 male, 1 female (registered owner)
- Producers of bottles tahong: 1 male (registered owner)

- Mussel farmers: 94 males and 3 females

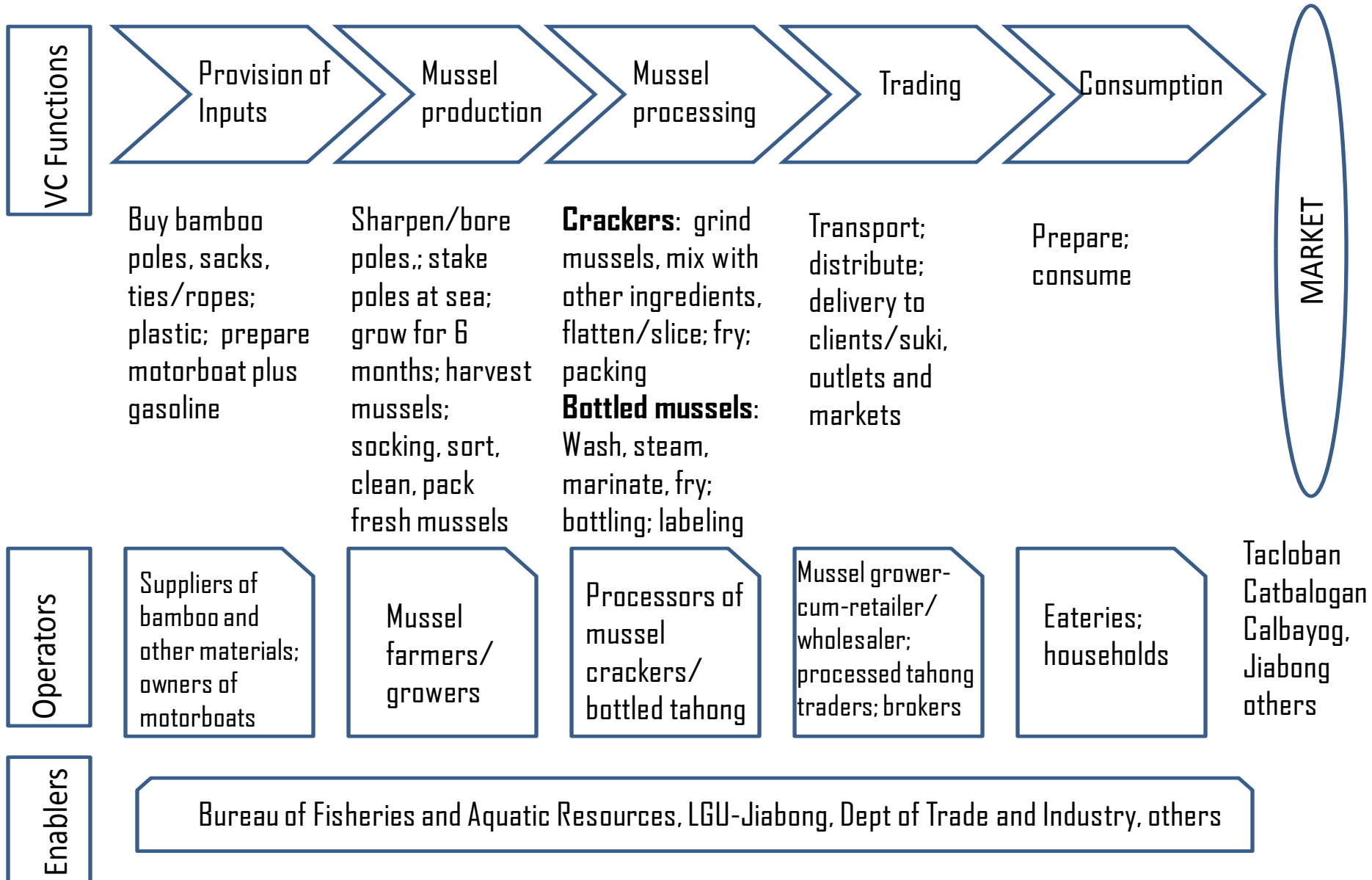
- Sellers of inputs: Tacloban City and Catbalogan
- Providers of motorboats (for rent)



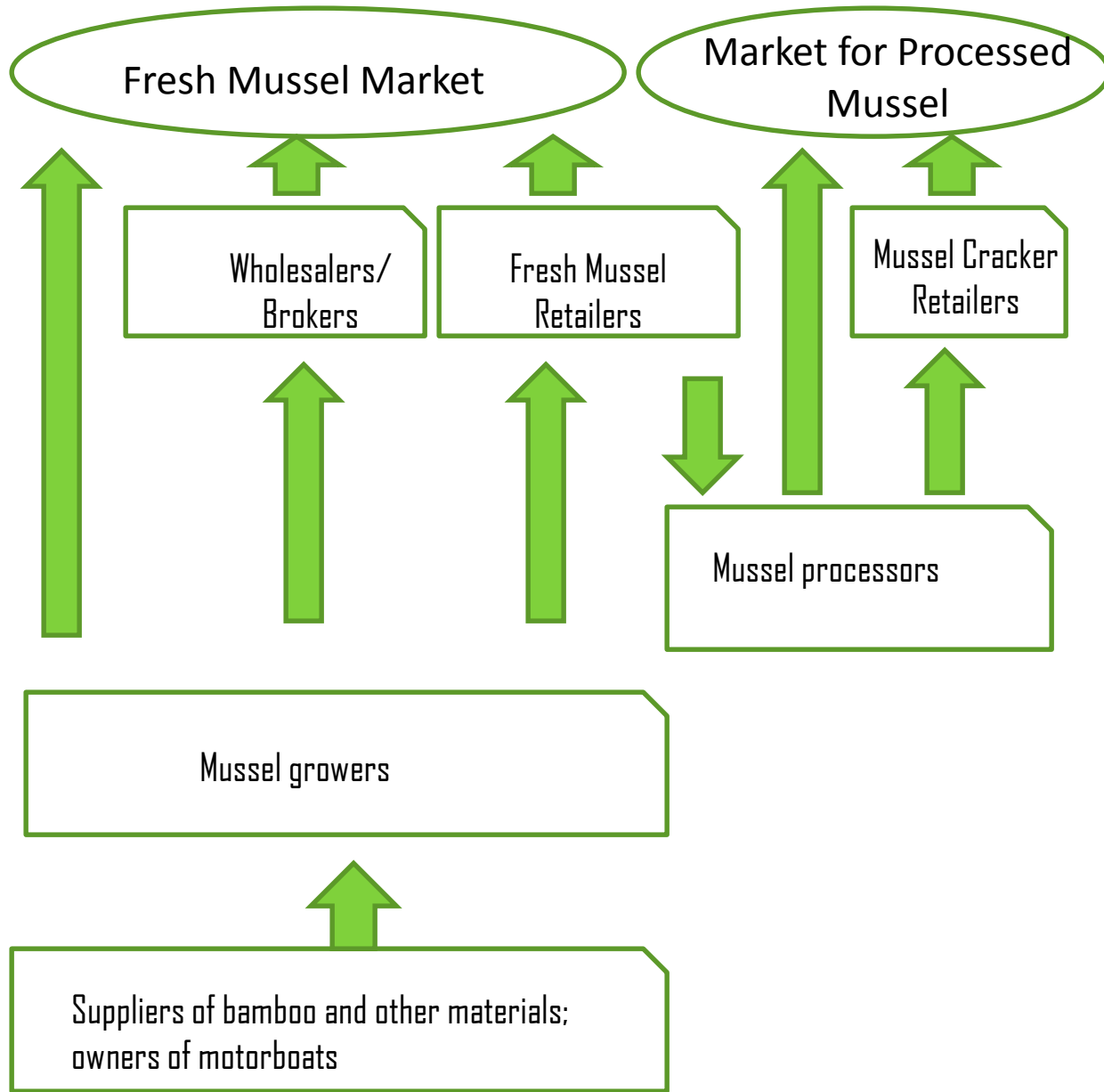
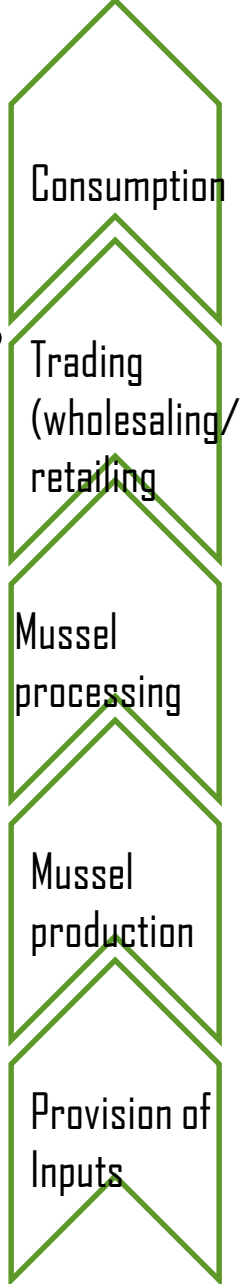
The VC Enablers

- Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
- Department of Trade and Industry
- Department of Science and Technology
- Office of the Municipal Agriculturist
- Office of the Provincial Agriculturist
- Local Government Unit of Jiabong
- Jiabong Mussel Producers and Vendors Multi-Purpose Cooperative (JMPVMPC)
- Others ...

Mussel Value Chain Map



Linkages between VC Operators



The Mussel Farmers in Jiabong

Barangay	Number of Mussel Farmers			Method Used	Number of Poles
	Male	Female	Total		
Jia-an	20	-	20	Staking	1 with 1000 poles 19 with 200 poles each
Alejandrea	33	2	35		3 with 1000 poles; with 500 poles; 31 with 200 poles each
Malobago	19	1	20		All 20 have 200 poles each
Macabetas	22	-	22		All 22 have 200 poles each
Total	94	3	97		



Mussel Shipment

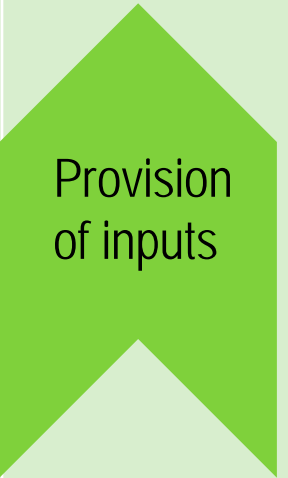
LGU	Volume of production (kg)	Volume of mussel shipped (kg)	% of mussel shipped	Frequency of shipment
Jiabong	6,431,750	91,470	1.42	Daily
Villareal	2,378,650	46,100	19.31	Daily
Tarangnan	220,650	9,340	4.23	3 – 5 x a week
Catbalogan	529,050	10,084	1.91	2 – 3 x a week
Talalora	241,666	4,491	1.86	2 – 4 x a week
Zumarraga	104,166	1,932	1.85	2 x a week
Daram	76,666	2,645	3.45	2 x a week

The Market

- Fresh Mussels
 - Mostly domestic: within the province and outside (e.g., Tacloban, Davao, Cebu, Surigao, Butuan, and Manila)
- Mussel Crackers
 - Within the province and Tacloban City (the regional administrative and commercial capital)
- Bottled Mussels
 - Within the province



Strengths and Constraints in the Mussel VC

OPPORTUNITIES	VC Function	CONSTRAINTS
Higher revenues for bamboo owners when farmed areas increase	 <p>Provision of inputs</p>	No fixed supplier of bamboos; mussel growers cut bamboos in the fields (which are not owned by anyone)

OPPORTUNITIES	VC Function	CONSTRAINTS
<p>Less cost to growers who have own supply of bamboo</p> <p>Potential areas for the expansion of mussel production is big.</p> <p>Jiabong still has at least 200 hectares for farming</p> <p>Presence of mussel operators associations</p>	<p>Mussel Production</p>	<p>Mussel kill in 2008; industry has not recovered yet from losses</p> <p>The sea water is not of best quality for mussel production</p> <p>When climate and sea temperature changes, mussels open before it is ready for harvest</p> <p>Big capitalization is needed if the grower has no own supply of bamboos</p>

OPPORTUNITIES

VC Function

CONSTRAINTS

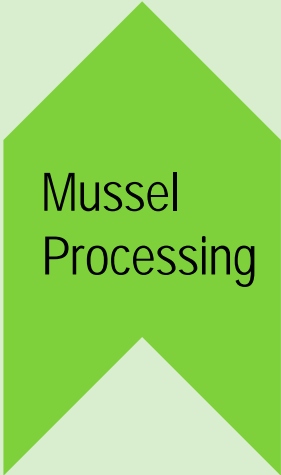
Mussel
Production

Growers do not appropriately put costs/values to self-owned resources/inputs

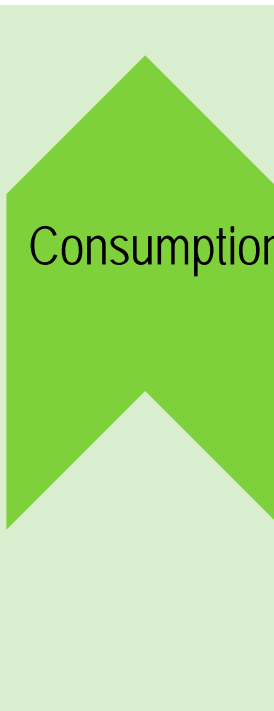
Mussels do not grow to big sizes yet

Rotten bamboo poles left after harvesting cause the quality of sea water to degrade

Low and irregular production to merit export volume

OPPORTUNITIES	VC Function	CONSTRAINTS
<p>Longer shelf life</p> <p>There are only 2 processors</p> <p>Bottled mussel and other ways to process mussels has wide potential for business</p>	 <p>Mussel Processing</p>	<p>Mussel crackers are easily crushed</p> <p>Not regular/continuous supply of crackers in the market</p> <p>Dependent on the supply of mussels</p> <p>Packaging can be improved to lessen crushed mussel crackers</p> <p>Lack of better technology/equipment</p>

OPPORTUNITIES	VC Function	CONSTRAINTS
<p>Large potential profit and rates of return</p> <p>Employs women and girls</p> <p>Less delivery cost since brokers gather all mussel produce for delivery to Davao</p> <p>Possible business for transport providers</p> <p>Regular market outlets</p>	<p>Trading</p>	<p>Bottled mussels take a long time to sell</p> <p>Wholesaler waits for orders; no aggressive marketing</p> <p>Retailers have small market for the products</p> <p>Prices of processed mussels are not standardized</p>

OPPORTUNITIES	VC Function	CONSTRAINTS
<p>Mussel crackers is gaining market as a healthy snack item</p>	 <p>Consumption</p>	<p>Exotic food has small local market</p> <p>Flavor can still be enhanced.</p>

Source: FGDs and KII conducted in December 2012 and January 2013

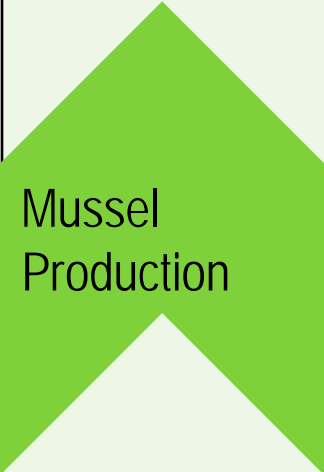


Gendered Work Spaces

- The participation of women and girls is minimal except in mussel processing and in mussel trading.
- This, however, does not mean that the women and the girls are not found in works/labor services in the other VC functions.

Work Spaces for Women and Girls in the Mussel VC

VC Function	Economic Activity			
	Woman	Paid?	Girl	Paid?
Provision of Inputs	Sells bamboo to mussel growers	NO		
	Canvasses lowest price of bamboo in behalf of the husband-farmer	NO		

VC Function	Economic Activity			
	Woman	Paid?	Girl	Paid?
 <p>Mussel Production</p>	Can own and manage mussel farms	NO (but profits from sales)	Collects mussels left in the farms after the adults have harvested the mussels	NO (but profits from sales)
	Looks for financial resources		Cleans and sorts Helps pack mussels	
	Manages cleaning of mussels at harvest time			
	Helps prepare the paraphernalia			
	Helps in harvesting mussels			

VC Function	Economic Activity			
	Woman	Paid?	Girl	Paid?
Mussel Processing	Buys ingredients			
	Prepares the ingredients	NO (but profits from sales)		
	Helps the husband cook the mussels (crackers/bottled)			
	Packaging Delivers processed mussels			


VC Function	Economic Activity			
	Woman	Paid?	Girl	Paid?
Trading	Buying and peddling/ selling mussel products		Peddling/selling of mussel products	NO (but profits from sales)
	Brokering Recording sales	NO (but profits from sales)		
	Looks for transportation			
	Takes charge of deliveries & orders			
	Owens mussel outlets			
	Prepares the sacks			
	Waits for tahong deliveries at the market			

VC Function	Economic Activity			
	Woman	Paid?	Girl	Paid?
Consumption	Prepares the mussels as viand	NO	Helps the mother prepare the meals	NO




The work spaces for women and girls include **extensions of homework**, for which they have been best prepared for by society.

- maternal roles (e.g. caring, nurturing)
- roles that are parallel to household/domestic chores (e.g., cleaning, sorting, preparing paraphernalia/ingredients, cooking, packing)
- activities which are known to be traditionally-female jobs such as selling/peddling



Many times, the women and the girls are not paid . . .

- the work is light and is part of the husband's/father's main work
- the work has been traditionally been regarded as menial and, therefore, without cost/labor value
- work is done when the woman/girl is not doing any other thing anyway



Many times, the women and the girls are not paid . . .

- work is regarded as family labor and the father/husband gets paid for the work
- work is done simultaneously with housework and there is no “extra/separate” time spent that will merit payment.

Work that the woman/girl does is an economic activity. She could have earned had she done the work for others and sold her labor services and time in the labor market.



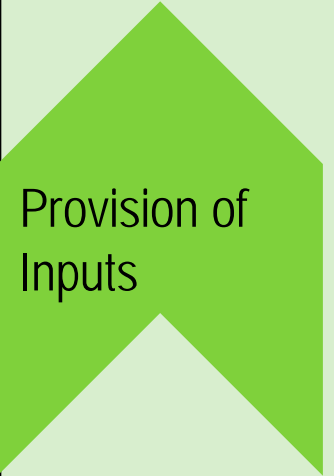
PGNs of Women Mussel Workers

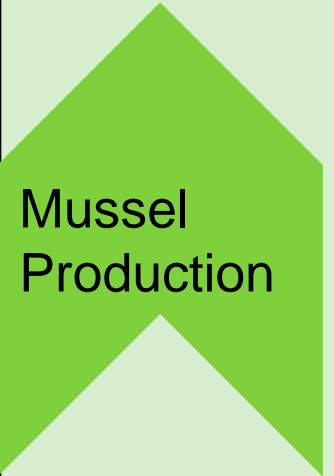
Meeting the **Practical Gender Needs (PGNs)** necessarily improves the quality of life of the women in the mussel industry.

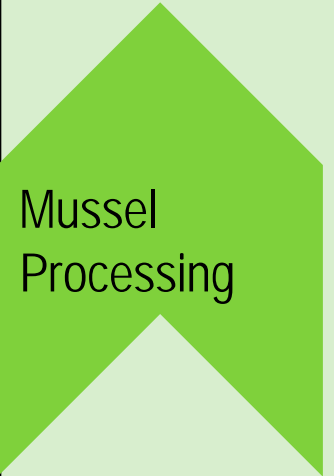
Traditional roles and relationships at home and at work are not generally altered: *still has multiple burden; her productive contribution may still be unrecognized and muted.*


However, her well-being is improved.

Women's PGNs in the Mussel VC

VC Function	Gender Issue	PGNs	Addressing PGNs
 <p>Provision of Inputs</p>	<p>Possible work opportunities for women but there is poor access to sources of capital (e.g., bamboo production)</p>	<p>More sources of income</p>	<p>Access to financing Technology transfer on bamboo production</p>

VC Function	Gender Issue	PGNs	Addressing PGNs
 <p>Mussel Production</p>	<p>Long period of exposure to the sun and the rain</p> <p>Carrying sacks of mussels when there is no help available</p> <p>Wounding of hands and/or feet when sorting, cleaning, packing mussels</p> <p>Wounding of hands from prolonged soaking in water when cleaning mussels</p>	<p>Health care and protection</p> <p>Better work conditions</p>	<p>Provision of trolleys or carts to ease the heavy weight of manually carrying sacks of mussels</p> <p>Use of safe cleaning equipment and hand gloves</p> <p>Construction of a shade (with good drainage system) where mussels are cleaned, sorted and packed</p>

VC Function	Gender Issue	PGNs	Addressing PGNs
 <p>Mussel Processing</p>	<p>Physical fatigue from whole day's work; backache</p> <p>Tired hands from the pressure exerted in rolling the mussel dough for crackers</p> <p>Tired feet from standing for a long period when mixing/rolling the dough to cooking/frying</p> <p>Eye strain</p> <p>Exposure to heat while frying</p>	<p>Health care and protection</p> <p>Better work conditions</p>	<p>Provision of women-friendly equipment used in mussel processing: dough electric mixer and presser, boiler/fryer</p> <p>Provision of working tables and chairs that fits the physical structure of the woman worker e.g., height of chairs/tables</p> <p>Rest area within the work station</p>

VC Function	Gender Issue	PGNs	Addressing PGNs
 <p>Trading</p>	Road accidents when peddling to travellers on board buses passing by Jiabong	Health care and protection Better working conditions	Provision of a bus stop where stalls for the women mussel peddlers will be located.



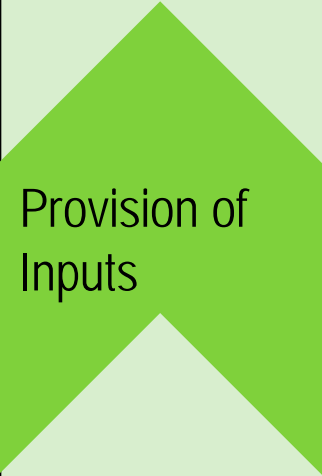
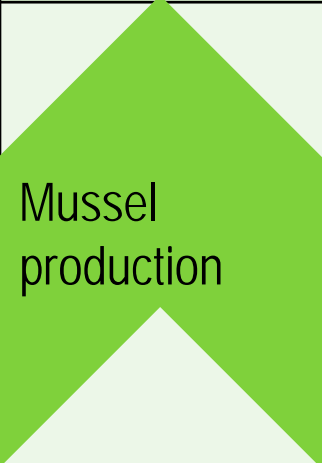
SGNs of Women Mussel Workers

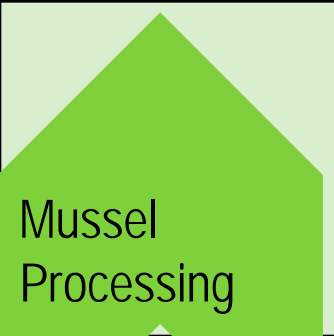


Meeting the **Strategic Gender Needs (SGNs)** necessarily alters the woman's position in society and in the industry value chain

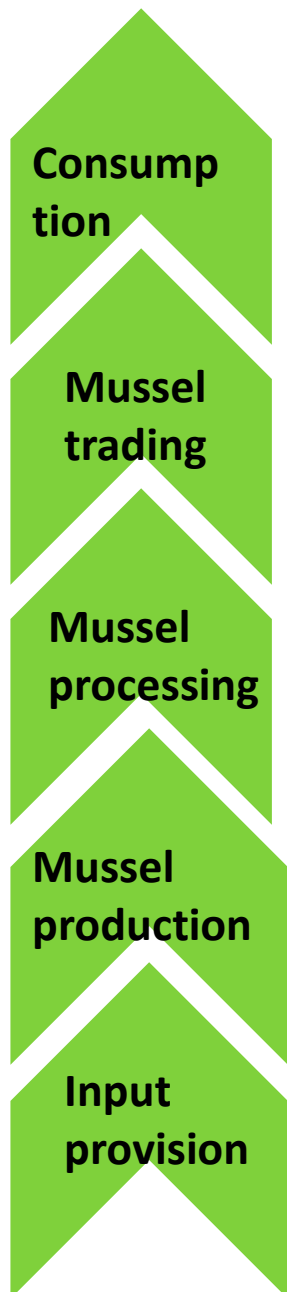
She herself is an enabler of changing women's roles and the transformation of gender relationships in the mussel VC

This is about challenging her subordinate position in the relevant functions of the VC

Women's SGNs in the Mussel VC

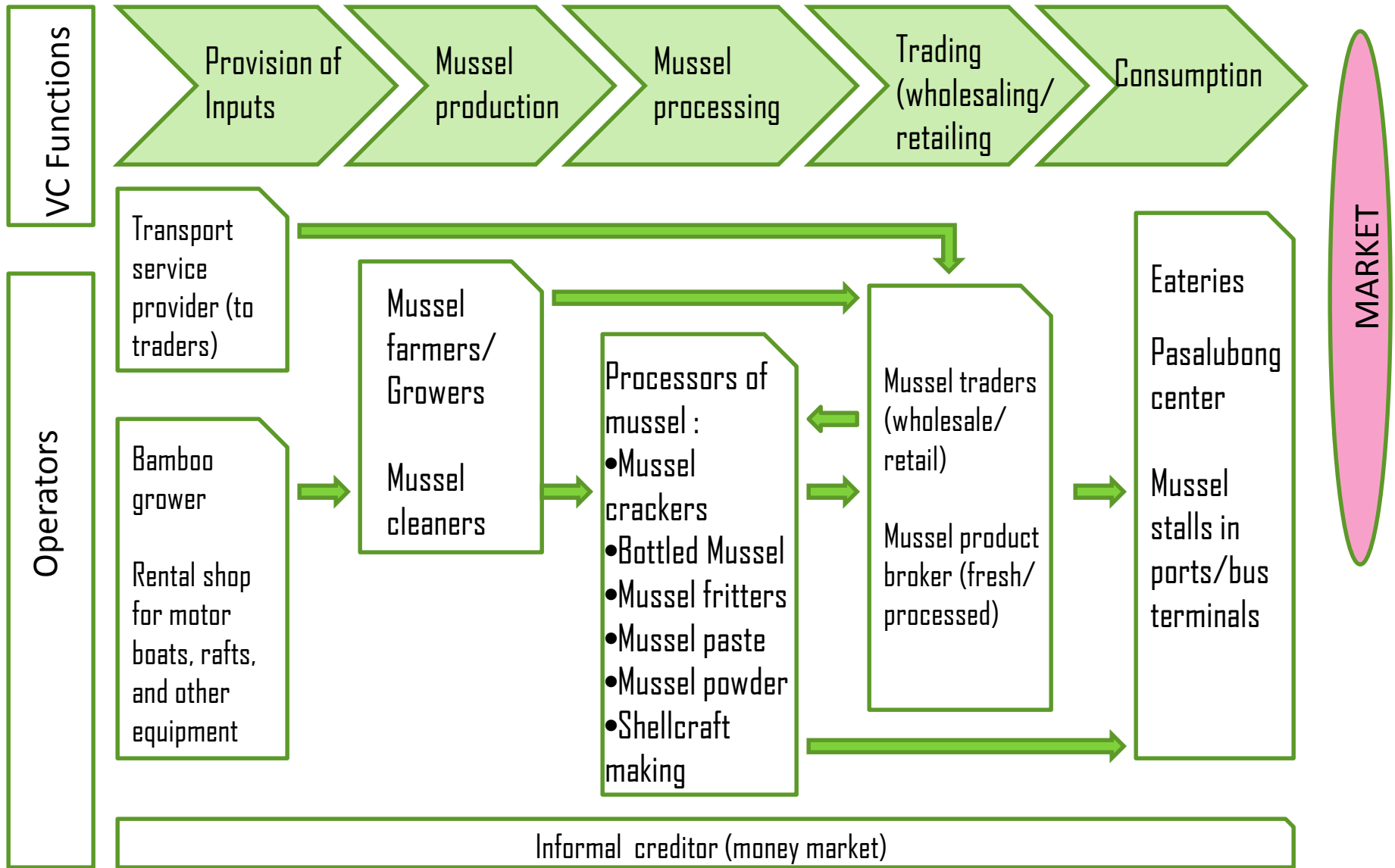
VC Function	Gender Issue	SGNs	Addressing SGNs
 <p>Provision of Inputs</p>	<p>The woman looks for creditor, or does the canvass for cheapest inputs --- as these are unmanly activities (not fit for men)</p>		
 <p>Mussel production</p>	<p>She is expected to be at home while the husband is the best person to go to sea</p>		

VC Function	Gender Issue	SGNs	Addressing SGNs
 <p>Mussel Processing</p>	<p>She is an assistant to the husband in the production of mussel crackers/bottled mussels</p>		
 <p>Trading</p>	<p>The husband rests at home while the woman tends the store and peddles in the street</p>		
 <p>Consumption</p>	<p>When there is food shortage, the husband gets to fill his plate first, then the children. What is left goes to the woman</p>		



SGNs	Addressing SGNs
Recognition of women's skills and abilities	Consciousness raising e.g., Gender Sensitivity Training (GST) for both men and women
Unpaid women's productive activities	Increasing the woman's self confidence through education
Roles based not to be based on gender but on capacity to do work	Organization of women's groups Strengthening the social capital across the mussel value chain
Access to resources and opportunities to own investments and business	Women's participation in decision-making processes in the home, at work and in the community
	Entrepreneurial skills training and technology transfer

*Along the mussel value chain,
the widest window for addressing gender needs
lies in providing opportunities for
entrepreneurship and investments, and in
enhancing the work environment of existing
micro and small mussel enterprises.*



Promoting Entrepreneurship for Women in the Mussel VC

ENABLING STRATEGIES

VC Functions

Provision of
Inputs

Mussel
production

Mussel
processing

Trading
(wholesaling/
retailing)

Consumption

Enabling Strategies

Seed mussel
production

Density farming

Women-friendly
equipment, area &
work environment

Product development
and innovation

Technology transfer

Post harvest facilities

Common service
facilities

Market niching

Market research

Market penetration

Standard pricing

MARKET

Business linkages: vertical and horizontal linkages, organization of producers; cooperatives

Policy creation and enforcement: product standards, environment standards, social standards; local ordinances (regulation of harvest, observance of sanitation, monitoring of seawater quality)

Capacity development: Entrepreneurial training, skills training, feasibility study making, bookkeeping, recording

Enablers

Bureau of Fisheries & Aquatic Resources, LGU-Jiabong, Dept of Trade and Industry, academe, training centers, Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Food and Drug, women's groups, micro-finance institutions, non-government orgs, development partners, chambers of commerce



The mussel industry is sustainable

- It is **a green industry** ---reduces the greenhouse gases by removing carbon dioxide from the ocean for shell formation
- **High employment potential** --- it employs even the unskilled, the women and men, the girls/boys, the minors, and the out-of-school youth at various stages of the mussel value chain



The mussel industry is sustainable

- It is **low-cost** --- it uses locally available resources
- **High market demand and a promising export market** --- both for fresh mussels and for innovative processed mussel products
- A venue for the **woman's economic empowerment** --- more woman's work across the mussel VC functions





