

## Facilitating gender inclusive agri-business

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### Abstract

Two recent phenomena related to sustainable agricultural development converge to frame this article, namely the prioritization of gender and the expanding role of the private sector. The first speaks to the current re-thinking of gender in sustainability discourse and practice ó gender equity and women's empowerment are gaining traction and priority on the mainstream sustainable development agenda. The second refers to the emerging and growing place of the private sector in sustainable development initiatives, strategies and funding. These two entry points are very different: gender coming from a rights-based and social transformation perspective, and the private sector focus on business, economic viability and profit. We argue that when creatively combined the synergies are tremendous. However, the combining process requires facilitation.

We distinguish three arrangements used by large private sector players that operate in international agricultural value chains to link business to sustainable development goals: corporate social responsibility (CSR), certification to social and environmental standards, and public-private partnerships (PPPs). These arrangements are analyzed as different ways to trigger change that combine *instrumental*, *economic* and *facilitative* aspects of human coordination. This article focuses on the nexus of gender, private sector involvement in agricultural development and facilitation: otherwise stated, facilitating interaction to trigger change towards more gender inclusive agri-business.

### Introduction: converging trends in agricultural development

While social and economic sustainability and inclusion have been integral to agricultural development rhetoric and increasingly development practice of both public and private organizations globally for some time now, gender issues have been largely overlooked or sidelined to projects specifically focused on 'women's crops'. Gender equity and power dynamics have not been integrated into mainstream agricultural development led by the public or private sector. However, this is changing. In recent years, major organizations in agricultural development - the World Bank, FAO and IFAD (2009), World Bank and IFPRI (2010), FAO, IFAD and ILO (2010), FAO (2011), UNCTAD (2011), UNICEF (2011) and the CGIAR group, for example - have turned attention back on gender equity and women's empowerment. Development donors are also demanding responses to the gender challenge: the contemporary sustainable agricultural development agenda is set with gender squarely on it. Implementing this agenda is the challenging task at hand.

Private sector partners are the new kids on the block when it comes to sustainable agricultural development. They are engaging partly as a response to state failure, accompanied by a lot of optimism about the impact that private businesses can have *vis à vis* sustainable development. The dominant assumption is that the private sector is better able than the public sector or civil society to be efficient, results-oriented, and flexible (Boomsma et al. 2011). Another aspect of this increasing private sector involvement in development cooperation is a consequence of the internationalization and concentration of companies involved in global agricultural value chains.

Being the relative newcomers, private sector partners in particular face the gender challenge. From the management and board level right down to the implementers, private sector companies find it difficult to put gender concepts and equality aspirations into meaningful practice. The challenge that companies face comes with a sharp edge: to not address gender may entail reputational risk. For example, Oxfam's *Behind the Brand Initiative* is leading a campaign with multinational cocoa companies - Mars, Mondelez, and Nestlé - challenging them as to *“how women in their cocoa supply chains are faring and create aggressive action plans to increase gender equality in the production of their ingredients”* (Oxfam 2013). On the one hand, the campaign is to raise awareness and help companies improve in this area, but it is backed up by the potential for negative public opinion. Private sector actors are seeking innovative solutions to respond to the challenges of gender inclusive agricultural development. Because they are not used to wearing a gender lens it is common to consult third parties - gender experts - for support in these efforts.

Gender dynamics are complex and context-specific: gender norms and values are personal as well as political and often deeply entrenched. Addressing gender inequity is thus not clear-cut: there are no simple answers. As for many issues of inclusive economic development, no one actor knows where and what types of policies, strategies, activities and interventions are more likely to contribute inclusive and sustainable outcomes, and under what conditions these interventions make sense (Knorringa 2010). Furthermore, to add to the complexity, addressing gender equity and women's empowerment often involves more than just changes at the project level or through interventions in the field. Often there are implications for how an organization or company functions: addressing gender may demand organizational change. So, learning, reflection and action research become critical to crafting sustainable and equitable paths forward to untangle these complex problems. This can be somewhat at odds with the private sector demand for efficiency but the context specificity of gender dynamics makes reflection and learning imperative: blueprints simply do not exist.

No one actor is able to solve complex development problems single-handedly: the challenge of redressing gender inequities in agricultural value chains is no exception. To untangle these sticky, power-ridden complexities, collaboration is required amongst the often diverse group of people with stakes in the issue at hand. Multiple stakeholders need to come together and learn their way (Röling 2002) towards a better situation of what is often referred to as social learning in natural resource management (Leeuwis and

Pyburn 2002; Wals 2007). Interaction between stakeholders with different interests, of diverse cultural backgrounds, with complex power dynamics between them, and with sometimes widely varying expectations as to the collaboration, benefits from a facilitator that is able to align and navigate these differences (Pyburn et al. 2014; Boomsma et al. 2011). However, the management of a social learning process for gender equitable agricultural development requires a skilled facilitator with expertise on both gender dynamics and agricultural value chain development.

This article explores how external facilitators support internal reflection and analysis within the private sector on the issue of gender and inclusive agricultural value chain development. We flesh out the role of the facilitator in improving private sector performance in sustainable development, particularly on the gender dimensions of sustainability. To begin, we look at several arrangements that the private sector uses to progress on sustainability goals and how those arrangements are meant to work. We then explore real life examples of each arrangement and examine what the role of the facilitator was within that. Finally we reflect on key aspects of facilitating interaction across the three examples. We end with a number of conclusion as to facilitating gender-inclusive agricultural development with private sector actors.

### **Arrangements to link business with sustainable development goals**

Looking beyond international trade, what does private sector involvement in development cooperation look like? We distinguish three main arrangements that capture ways in which private sector actors actively engage in development cooperation and endeavor to meet sustainability objectives, gender inclusion in particular: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR); Certification to private, voluntary social and environmental standards, and Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs). Each arrangement uses a different logic and draws on different dimensions of human coordination.

The first is CSR, which can vary from a more *hands-off* approach like private enterprise charity funds to a *hands-on* operational involvement, for example through local procurement from smallholders. CSR is an internal company arrangement that links the core business of the company directly to development goals. In CSR this is often driven (at least partly) by external forces. A slightly nuanced, more recent take on CSR is what is referred to as *Shared Values*. In a Shared Values arrangement, the company sees progress on sustainable development as integral to its own success (Porter and Kramer 2011). Ultimately, it is the company that embeds sustainability objectives (including gender equality) into its own business model.

The second arrangement is through third-party certification to voluntary social and environmental standards. This entails the company to *outsource* sustainability through a third party, namely the standard setting organization and related certification system. In this arrangement, the company relies on a social and/or environmental standard that it chooses to ensure that its suppliers are meeting sustainable development objectives.

Examples of social and environmental standard setting organizations for the agricultural sector include: UTZ Certified, Rainforest Alliance, Fairtrade Labelling Alliance (FLO), 4C Association, amongst others.

The third one is PPPs, which evolved from recognition that single actors (public, private and civil society) cannot solve complex problems. PPPs happen when a company partners up with other stakeholders, including from state and civil society in order to address sustainability objectives. For the private sector, being a partner in a PPP often goes hand-in-hand with access to public funding (e.g. matching grants) for investments in innovations and sustainable livelihoods. There are many examples of PPPs.

Table 1 is used to understand these different arrangements, and reflect on how they each operate. Ison et al (2007: 504) (authors of the Table) reviewed what the social sciences say as to how change happens. From this, three dimensions of human coordination were distilled: those that use instruments of power (like laws, standards, rules) to enforce change (*instrumental*); those that assume rational choice incentivizes change (*economic*); and those that rely on emergence of change from interaction (*facilitative*).

Table 1: Three Dimensions of Human Coordination Ison et al (2007: 504)

Discourse	Use Instruments of Power	Assume Rational Choice	Rely on Emergence from Interaction
Forms of rationality (Habermas 1984)	Instrumental	Strategic	Communicative
Basic for individual Behaviour change (Kelman 1969)	Compliance	Identification	Internalization
Preferred ways of arranging human affairs (Hood 1998)	Hierarchy	Individualism	Egalitarianism
Causes of 'wealth of nations' (Bowles and Gintis 2002)	Hierarchy	Market	Network
Innovation model	End of pipe outcome of technology transfer	Induced by changes in relative factor prices; market propelled outcomes of farmers on the treadmill (Cochrane 1958)	Emergent property of multi-stakeholder interaction (e.g. social learning, innovation systems Hall et al 2006)

We will return to these dimensions in our analysis but for now, two points are important to bear in mind. Firstly that the three arrangements use a mix of instrumental, economic and facilitative dimensions: these will be fleshed out in the paragraphs that follow. Secondly, our focus in this paper is on *facilitating interaction* and the role of the facilitator in supporting private sector involvement in sustainable agricultural development 6 column 3 in Table 1. We draw from recent experiences of a knowledge

institute - the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) - as well as examples from other initiatives in facilitating private sector involvement in sustainable agricultural development, particularly in relation to gender inclusion.

### **Corporate Social Responsibility: using ‘rational choice’ to facilitate shared values**

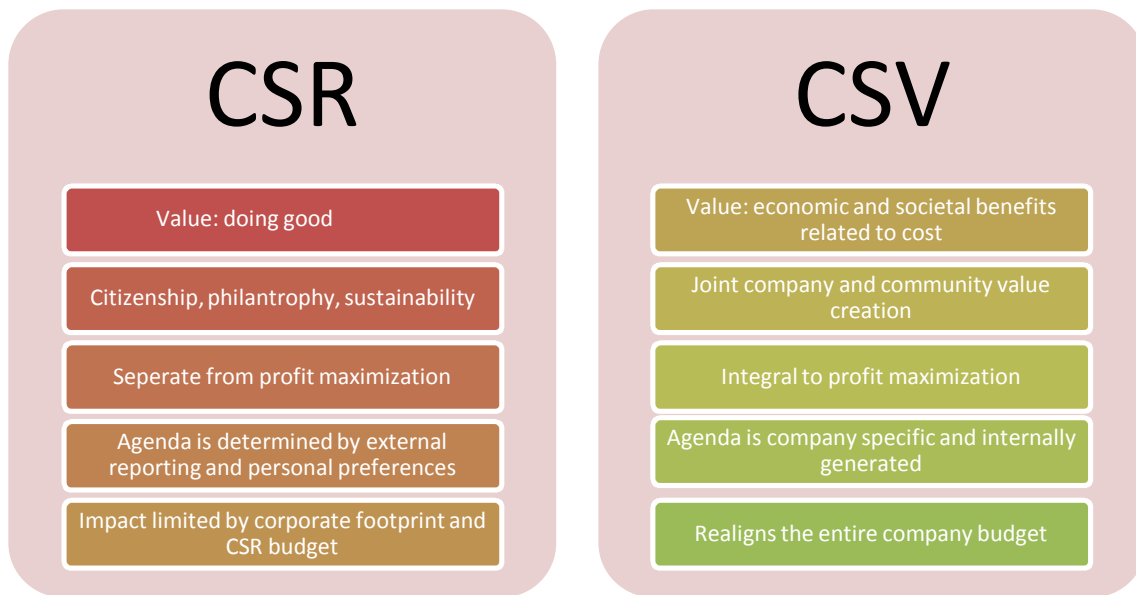
CSR is not a new concept. A first definition was initiated by Bowen in 1953, who used it to refer to the social responsibilities of businessmen (not yet business women) (Bowen in Carroll, 1999). In 1980, Jones brought in a new perspective and came up with a definition that is still commonly used: “corporate social responsibility is the notion that corporations have an obligation [*voluntarily adopted*] to constituent groups in society other than stockholders and beyond that prescribed by law and union contract” (Jones in Carroll, 1999: 284). Today, there are many different views on what CSR entails. For example, some companies regard CSR as a way to enhance their reputations or to reduce the risk of damaging exposés. Others see it as a way of ensuring their activities are ethical: to “do no harm” and possibly do some good. However, many companies see CSR as an extra task rather than as an integrated part of their overall strategy. That puts societal issues at the periphery of their business, not at the core. Although businesses have implemented many successful initiatives, many lack a true understanding of how to *do* CSR and there is little evidence on the impact of CSR strategies. A risk of this knowledge gap is ineffective and counterproductive strategies and wasted efforts (Verhart et al. 2012).

Where CSR puts emphasis on companies’ responsibility, the relatively new concept - Corporate Shared Values (CSV) - stresses the intrinsic motivation of companies to invest in their environment. “Shared value is not social responsibility, philanthropy, or even sustainability, but a new way to achieve economic success” (Porter and Kramer 2011). The concept of shared value can be defined as policies and operating practices that enhance the competitiveness of a company while simultaneously advancing the economic and social conditions in the communities in which it operates. In terms of approaches to triggering change, CSV is about recognizing the economic value of embedding sustainability objectives into core business and within company policies and strategies: an *economic* or rational choice approach from Table 1. Shared value creation focuses on identifying and expanding the connections between societal and economic progress. The main differences between CSR and CSV are illustrated in Box 1 below.

### *Facilitating knowledge development and the shift towards shared values*

CSR and CSV policies are developed at the corporate level, and there is relatively little direct engagement with other public and civil partners. Little evidence can be found of cases where gender is high on the agenda of CSR or CSV policies. Particularly in CSR, gender is not mainstreamed and policies tend to refer only to “non-discrimination” as an umbrella category without breaking down different kinds of discrimination, including that based on gender. As such, CSR policies remain far from being gender-transformative. Looking at the role of facilitators in getting gender higher on the corporate agenda, successful examples exist when it comes to lobbying, campaigning and bringing in evidence on the rationale for addressing gender issues in the corporate domain. In these examples, facilitators play a role at a distance from the company.

Box 1. From CSR to CSV<sup>i</sup>



An example is WO=MEN, which is a Dutch gender platform, where individual experts, development organizations and research institutes collaborate with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands to lobby for and work on gender justice worldwide. WO=MEN believes that the entry point for business is through CSR. This physical platform was established to facilitate discussion and effective lobbying for change. It created space for different actors such as business leaders, gender experts and NGOs to come together to set a new agenda (Verhart et al. 2012). The Oxfam Campaign Behind the Brands, already mentioned in the introduction, is an example of negative campaigning, putting pressure on major food companies to address gender inequalities, for example in their CSR or CSV policies. Although we, as authors, lack evidence on how the campaign contributed to changing the policies of companies like Mars, Mondelez and Nestlé, we have observed more active engagement of these companies in platforms (e.g. World Cocoa Conference in 2014; Chocoa Conference in 2014), projects (e.g. Cocoa Action Plan - Nestlé, Cocoa Life - Mondelez) and activities (e.g. research on gender by Mars in 2014, workshop on Women in the Nestlé Cocoa Supply Chain in London by Nestlé in 2015) that address gender. In doing so, a company like Nestlé makes a direct link to CSV<sup>ii</sup>:

*“We recognize that gender equality, women’s rights, education for women and girls worldwide, and women’s empowerment are critical to **Creating Shared Value** for our business and for society.*

*We believe that different ways of thinking complement each other and lead to better decisions. In other words, gender balance simply makes business sense.*

*It is therefore essential that we help to increase women's participation in, and contribution to, the value chain in a sustainable way.*

*In an attempt to overcome some of the challenges women face, such as limited financial resources, knowledge gaps and access to credit and lending, we have developed several initiatives that promote training and professional development for women, in line with the UN's Millennium Development Goals."*

This quote illustrates nicely how, at least on paper, a business approach can go hand-in-hand with a more rights-based approach. The potential impact of this combination is enormous, as the private sector partners involved (often multinationals), implement large projects that aim at sustainable livelihoods. If a gender focus is included in these projects, a large number of women (and men) could be reached.

### **Certification to private, voluntary, social-environmental standards: from an instrumental to a learning approach**

Many companies rely on private, voluntary standards to meet their sustainability objectives. Each standard has a different balance between its focus on aspects of sustainability: health and safety of workers; environmental issues like pesticide use, ground cover, animal well-being; community relations, and poverty reduction, amongst others. Standards are market-based mechanisms that contribute to sustainable development insofar as they impose, encourage, and/or promote actions to introduce environmental and social aspects and concerns within the decision-making processes of the actors involved (Eritja et al 2004: 32); an *instrumental* approach to change (in relation to Table 1 above). The certified entity needs to comply to rules (standards) in order to enjoy the benefits. When a company uses standards to address its sustainability objectives, it entrusts the standard setting organization and related certification bodies and accreditation system to get at the issues promised in the standard.



The ISEAL Alliance is a platform for social and environmental standard setting organizations that began in 2004 after several years of mobilizing membership. ISEAL operates internationally and works with members (private third-party verification systems) to continually improve those systems and engage in dialogue on common concerns. Standard setting organizations that are members follow a code for developing their codes, which includes stakeholder input and the development of theories of change to articulate their impact pathways and assumptions as to how change happens. When new or 'sticky' issues of common concern arise (e.g. defining a 'living wage' or how to address gender dynamics in the standards systems), ISEAL is a forum for a joint exploration and in some cases, for the development of a common research agenda. For the private sector companies using standards, the learning of these standard setters on gender is one step removed in a way they 'outsource' their social and environmental sustainability, development and inclusion objectives to the ISEAL standard systems

Interestingly, while a standard in and of itself is a good example of both an instrumental way to make change happen through rules and sanctions for non-compliance, and rational choice or economic drivers, through price premiums, the role of the ISEAL Alliance is different. ISEAL acts as a platform for dialogue and learning amongst the standard system members. This shift from an instrumental and economic approach to a learning or facilitative approach brings the standard setters together to sort out the hard stuff of the sticky, wicked issues that they face in common. ISEAL members rely on interaction to learn a way forward (Röling 2002) for improvement and change. As users of the standard, companies benefit from this interaction and facilitative approaches as the standard systems get better at what they do. The ISEAL Alliance platform demonstrates how some social and environmental standard systems go beyond instrumentally catalyzing change. They also provide a point of entry for continuous improvement and dialogue (Tiffen 2003: 169), which is more about interaction and learning of the facilitative side of the human coordination spectrum.

*Engaging in a dialogue on gender equity with standard setters*

An example of facilitating inclusion in the private sector through working with standard setters is the work that KIT has been doing for ISEAL on gender equity and women's empowerment. As a facilitator and action researcher, KIT's role was to stimulate dialogue, catalogue what the goals, aspirations of members are as well as capture strategies in use and develop a conceptual framework for progressing on these issues. In essence, to bolster the facilitative role of ISEAL and get members interacting on gender equity and women's empowerment within the various standard systems. This demanded that the facilitator ask the right questions in one-to-one interviews with the standard setters to draw out their aspirations and current/past research and activities related to gender. It entailed strategically sharing what one organization was doing in ways that would interest other standard setters. And it involved in-depth understanding as to how standards function and what could be potential opportunities for progress. Experience with other contexts where gender was integrated into agricultural practice, research and value chains proved invaluable. Furthermore, two workshops with key stakeholders and later with just the standard setters allowed input, reactions to the emerging guidance document and more interaction and discussion amongst the standard setting organizations.

An interesting dimension of this work was the timing. After several years of attempting to engage ISEAL members to work on gender, in 2014 the time was right. A combination of responsiveness to a demand in the sector, an increased focus on capturing the impact of standards/certification, learning from research that had been undertaken, and an increased sense of relevance were all factors. The KIT facilitator had, for over 10 years, been nudging ISEAL members towards better addressing gender through sharing research, organizing workshops on the topic, making short films to share outcomes and engaging in dialogue at ISEAL annual general meetings. The outcome of this facilitated dialogue was a guidance document that catalogues strategies being used by ISEAL standard systems to address gender and women's empowerment, and an analysis of each: *did the strategy*

*challenge existing gender dynamics, reinforce them or work within them?* Based on the dialogue facilitated by KIT, the standard systems will decide which gender integration actions address independently and which to work on together within ISEAL. Furthermore, each entry point (namely support to the target group, the audit, the standard, the organization itself and the context) offers different kinds of strategies. Some entail working with other organizations while others are about training and guidance to auditors and so on.

In terms of private sector gender synergies, the certification of smallholder farmers is spreading at a rapid rate. But large companies and plantations also seek out certification (Chiquita, for example). If gender is well incorporated in the standard system tools, then the reach is, again, vast.

### **Public-private partnerships: facilitating multi-actor collaboration**

Partnerships gained institutional momentum during and after the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002 (WSSD, 2002) and have become a widely used policy mechanism for international development. PPPs can be defined broadly as an arrangement in which a government and a private entity - for profit or not-for-profit - jointly perform or undertake a traditionally public activity. Partnerships are increasingly put forward as a vehicle for attaining multiple goals. It is assumed that by establishing partnerships between the private sector, governments and NGOs the efficiency and effectiveness of international cooperation can be increased and opportunities can be created for private sector development (*Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken 2013*). PPPs are initiated and stimulated through a combination of funds for partnership establishment, knowledge creation and sharing, financing arrangements and investments.

If we consider PPPs in light of Table 1, PPPs fall under the discourse that deals with innovation models: often PPPs aim at (technical, social, institutional) innovation, as a result of multi-stakeholder interaction. The company benefits from this interaction often through access to finance and access to knowledge and capacities that they need for effective value chain operations. Not only is there a large variety between PPPs, also the role of the facilitator in PPPs can involve different tasks, for example:

- To act as intermediary and build collaboration between the partners
- To inspire others in the initiating organizations and partner organizations to follow the partnership approach
- To encourage the adoption of behaviors to help the partnership to function effectively and grow
- To protect the principles and vision of the partnership (Arnoldus and Laven 2011).

### *Facilitating a step-by-step approach: gender mainstreaming in the cocoa sector*

In 2012 KIT was asked to support private sector members of the World Cocoa Foundation (WCF) in integrating gender in matching grant proposals submitted to WCF.

Cocoa Livelihood Program (CLP). WCF is an international membership organization representing more than 100 member companies across the cocoa value chain, including donors, industry members, producing country governments, research institutes and non-governmental organizations. The CLP is one of its three programs, aiming at improving cocoa livelihoods.

WCF asked KIT<sup>iii</sup> for support in improving outreach to female cocoa farmers and other women involved in the sector. As facilitators we supported WCF and its members and technical partners in understanding the reasons behind low outreach to women. A crucial step was the facilitation of a reflection process on the diversity amongst women involved in the sector - their different incentives, needs, constraints and opportunities. Based on fieldwork in West Africa four profiles of women involved in cocoa farming were developed and validated with WCF CLP partners (Box 2). One outcome was a shared concern that currently it is primarily women like *Ama* who are being reached by interventions, but these are a minority of women involved in cocoa production. At the same time, women like *Rosa* are the majority, contributing significantly to cocoa production but not visible and not being reached. This reflection contributed to the development of strategies to improve outreach: for example promoting dual membership (female and male membership) in cocoa cooperatives.

**Box 2: Diversity among women involved in cocoa production**



**Ama**

Ama is the head of the household, living on her farm with three children to take care of. She hires labour, makes the farm decisions and receives direct income from cocoa.

Typical characteristics: small in number, high age, low education, lacks access to family labour, small plot of land.



**Nora**

Nora lives on a family cocoa farm. Three years ago she asked her husband for a piece of land, and now she farms a small plot of cocoa herself, next to working with her husband.

Typical characteristics: very small plot of land, little access to family labour and inputs, time constraints, decision-making power on own plot of land.



**Rosa**

Rosa lives on a family cocoa farm. She works on the family farm five days a week from 08.00 am to 03.00 pm. Next to cocoa she farms other crops. Her brother makes the decisions on the farm and when cocoa is sold, she only gets some money if her brother is willing to give her a small part of the revenue.

Typical characteristics: majority of women, time-constraints, little decision-making power on farm, no direct benefit.



**Destiny**

Destiny is a 16-year-old woman. She grew up on a cocoa farm. She helps her parents on the farm and does chores around the house. She went to secondary school and she is dreaming of a white-collar job.

Typical characteristics: not interested in cocoa farming, no access to land, no role model.

A second step involved giving assistance to private sector companies, helping them to improve their matching grant proposals by integrating gender. This was important as it turned out that most developed proposals were based on assumptions and were still looking for evidence as to why and how addressing gender inequalities would benefit their business and contribute to the overall CLP objectives. KIT's approach was deliberately demand-driven, meaning that we developed tailor-made trajectories based on

questions put forward by the companies themselves. For example, Cargill, a major cocoa processor, asked us to verify their assumption around the benefits of female leadership in cocoa cooperatives, and to support Cargill locally in developing strategies that would improve female leadership. Cargill sources directly from cooperatives in Côte d'Ivoire and invests heavily in these cooperatives. For Cargill, the cooperatives were a logical starting point for addressing gender issues. Another example comes from ADM, also a major cocoa processor and trader. ADM took another entry point: improving the enrolment of girls in primary and secondary school and vocational training. KIT advised ADM to conduct a situational analysis to support the development of better informed interventions in the communities where they source cocoa. Again another company, Mars, a well-known chocolate maker, was more interested in a gender capacity assessment tool that would support them in assessing the gender capacities surrounding program activities. The intention was that so-called assessment facilitators (with gender expertise and experience with research techniques) would use this tool.<sup>iv</sup>

The ultimate aim of these trajectories was to draw lessons for the whole cocoa sector and develop a toolbox, using company experiences as case illustrations. This process has however, been challenging. A first challenge was to get private partners on board. Secondly, private sector partners are not yet convinced of the need for change or that it must, at least partly, come from within the company. They are also not convinced that they possess the capacity to take up social challenges, as was demonstrated when they outsourced the development of proposals and even part of their implementation to technical partners. On the other hand, this demand-based approach created space for companies to look at their core-activities/objectives through a gender lens, which helped to identify entry points for meaningful actions from a purely corporate perspective. A remaining challenge is that companies prefer clear-cut strategies that help them to solve issues quickly and at the highest scale possible. Addressing gender issues involves changing gender relations, which takes time, as does a change in mindset. This is difficult, as a facilitator, to communicate and remains difficult for companies to grasp.

For WCF as a whole there were also challenges. WCF and CLP involve many different actors, with different interests, represented by a secretariat trying to serve many different needs. Gender was put high on the agenda primarily through donor pressure, which together with Oxfam's campaign, created momentum for action. As a result, local gender expertise was hired, and in addition, KIT was asked to continue playing its role as facilitator of the change process. Disappointing, however, was that one of the most straightforward recommendations, namely to reach to more and different types of women in the second phase of the CLP by taking a family approach rather than focusing on the *male* farm manager alone, was not adopted. Transformative change is therefore unlikely to be an outcome of this program.

In terms of private sector-gender synergies, many PPPs provide matching grants. These grants stimulate innovation and learning. If PPPs would adopt a transformative perspective, this would create room for the necessary learning, at a low risk for

companies. PPPs provide a space for learning (on gender equity as well as other issues) for the private sector.

### Facilitating interaction for gender-inclusive private sector engagement

With Table 1 in mind, we can tease out the predominant dimensions of triggering change related to each arrangement, consider the role of the private sector actor in that arrangement (or position within it), and examine the role of the facilitator in involving the private sector in sustainable agricultural development (see Table 2 below).

The roles that facilitators have played in the three change processes related to the private sector arrangements for addressing sustainability, are very much in the third column of Table 1: *facilitative* and *interactive* dimensions. That is to say, the facilitator's role in each of the arrangements relies on what emerges from interaction amongst stakeholders (public and private). The facilitators promote and support a learning (facilitative) approach. We turn back to the cases to summarize and reflect on the role of the facilitator.

Table 2: Analysis of the arrangements, facilitation & dimensions for triggering change

Arrangement used for gender-inclusive agricultural development	Predominant dimension of triggering change	Role of the private sector	Role of the facilitator ( <i>facilitating interaction</i> )
Corporate social responsibility (CSR) and Corporate Shared Values (CSV)	<b>Economic</b> – sustainable, inclusive development meets economic objectives of the company (core business), and/or reduces reputational risks	Sustainability objectives are embedded in core business or as separate strategy (CSR). They are owners of the objectives, and they monitor results themselves	<b>Facilitative</b> – The role of the facilitators was to support lobbyists, campaigners, researchers and companies with knowledge on gender issues, to incentivize companies to put gender issues higher on their corporate agenda
Certification to social and environmental standards	<b>Instrumental</b> – rules (standards) govern the practices of farmers and	Sustainability objectives are outsourced. Use a third party	<b>Facilitative</b> – role of the facilitator was to support standard setters in looking at

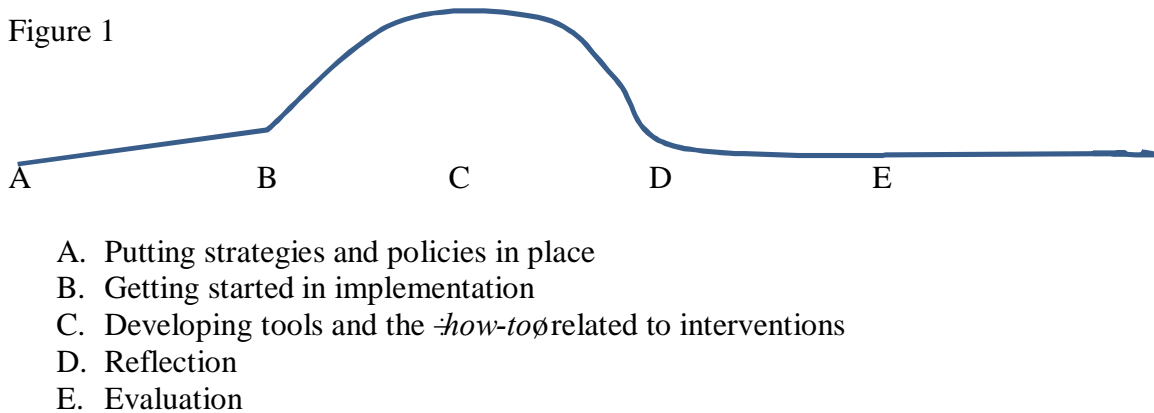
	processors using the standard  Economic ó there is a higher price related to the standard to incentivize compliance	(standard setter and certification system)	options for better gender integration into the existing standards and facilitate a learning process on gender amongst them. Private sector was a step removed as they will use the standards as their way of addressing gender
Public-Private Partnerships	<b>Innovation resulting from interaction</b> – interaction between different stakeholders leads to innovation. The funding mechanisms (e.g. matching grants) are incentivizing companies.	Innovation and learning are key ó the private sector is one actor in a group of actors in the sector, together making sense of how to address sustainability. They do not do all, but know who is doing what.	<b>Facilitative</b> – The tasks of the facilitator can be quite diverse, depending partly on its mandate, but also on the learning capacity and motivation to learn within the partnership (besides the economic reasons for being involved in the PPP). In the case of WCF the facilitator lead a reflection process and created space for a demand-driven knowledge agenda

### When and where do facilitators step in?

The move towards more robust sustainability and reaching objectives for inclusive development is in part, for a company, a process of organizational change. A key question is when to bring in a facilitator, or when a facilitator needs to step in to support the organizational change process. Figure 1 below is a simplified and linear description of how a company might move towards sustainable development and more inclusive business practices: from putting strategies in place to evaluation. We are using this linear description fully recognising that in the case of gender, a linear process is not what we are after and it does not work. Not only is the learning curve and related organisational change non-linear, but there a much bigger need for reflection and learning at the beginning of the curve, that is before putting strategies and policies in place rather than at

the end as shown above. That said, the figure does capture different phases of facilitating an organisational change process, so is useful in that respect.

Figure 1



The question is: *what is the entry point for the facilitator / where can a facilitator add value to the organizational change process?* Sometimes, the space for change arises when an evaluation demonstrates evidence of gender inequalities or (if the evaluation has a gender-sensitive design) shows already how gender inequalities affect other parts of the business. Other times, a company may want support in developing a policy or strategy on gender or guidance in realising that policy or strategy. Where to start (and where to end) depends also on the role of the facilitator and his/her mandate (and specific expertise). It also depends on the urgency of the matter (according to the private sector partner involved), and whether it was the right time to take any action.

The extent to which the facilitator can add value highly depends on how far the private sector company wants to go. In a more interactive environment, the added value of a facilitator is potentially higher than in a purely corporate environment, as you are in the position to align interest and create synergies.

In summary, we said we would flesh out the role of the facilitator in improving private sector performance in sustainable development, particularly on the gender dimensions of sustainability. We have done this by looking at arrangements and case-studies:

For the **CSR case**, facilitators are not so much directly engaging with the private sector, but from a distance are trying to put gender higher on the agenda. The success of this depends partly on the risks involved for the company and also on the personal preferences of the corporate manager. In the case of CSV there is potentially more space for direct interactions, at least if facilitators bring in gender-expertise (content-facilitators).

In the case of gender dialogue with **ISEAL**, the role of the facilitator was to stimulate dialogue, compile experiences across the seven organizations involved in the effort and hold up a mirror by presenting this back to the organizations in a workshop and report.

The facilitator also looked beyond ISEAL for inspiration on how other organizations and sectors were addressing gender equity and women's empowerment in their work. The facilitator lead cross-organizational reflection on existing goals and aspirations related to gender within the ISEAL platform, as well as drawing out and systematizing the strategies in use.

In the case of the **World Cocoa Foundation**, the role of the facilitator (KIT) was to support WCF with research, capacity building, by facilitating discussions and by working with private sector members to help them integrate gender issues in their activities. As in the example of ISEAL their role was also to hold up a mirror by presenting the different types of women involved in the cocoa sector, and discussing what type of women were actually in and excluded from participation and benefits of the CLP. This was the start of a longer-term partnership between KIT and WCF.

## Conclusions

**Synergies.** First of all, in the introduction we argued that combining gender coming from a rights-based and social transformation perspective with the private sector focus on business, economic viability and profit, can create tremendous synergies. We see these synergies manifesting differently with each arrangement.

**Entry points for the facilitator.** A question that we posed in the paper was about the entry point for the facilitator: where can a facilitator add value to the organizational change process? For answering this question it is important that we ask ourselves (and the company) how far the company actually wants to go in its contribution to development; and what is the role of other partners.

**Nature of the change sought.** An interesting reflection is on the nature of the change that can be achieved through involving the private sector. In the examples described in this paper, the kinds of change aspired to are *gender-accommodative* rather than *gender-transformational*. Power dynamics are not challenged or examined when facilitating interactions. The status quo is maintained to a large degree ó at least in the short-term ó however, more women and more vulnerable actors are engaged in the process. An important reflection is: What change are we after and what role can the private sector play in that process? And then, **how can this be facilitated?** Interestingly, the role of social and environmental standards has been transformational in terms of the agricultural and forestry practices of the respective sectors. The role of private voluntary standards has very much been to push the (agricultural/forestry) sector on sustainability and keep on the edge of socially and/or environmentally sound practices. It is still to be seen whether social and environmental standards will play this kind of transformational cutting edge role when it comes to gender equality. Or, whether the aim will be rather to support women in traditional roles ó a more accommodative approach.

**Carving out a discreet role for the private sector in multi-stakeholder processes.** *As facilitators, to what extent do we expect the private sector to work for transformational change?* Different development actors have different things to contribute to socially inclusive and sustainable agricultural development. In a multi-stakeholder environment (e.g. a PPP), the strengths and contributions of these different actors can be maximized and a good facilitator can navigate a process to counteract the limitations of one contributor. There are different roles for different actors (funders, NGOs, government and so on). The private sector can contribute finance and invest in the sector. In order to reach other stakeholders and focus more on social impact rather than economic impact, then we need to turn to other actors (e.g. NGOs, governments and so on). The private sector goals of profit and economic returns are paramount. They are not a replacement for the social safety net. The question remains as to the role of the facilitator in *massaging* more ambitious social aspirations into company practices and policies and in inspiring social change.

**The ‘private sector’ label covers a diversity of companies, but even with incentives, they still cannot address inclusion by themselves.** Given the diversity amongst private sector actors, it is important to distinguish between small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and big corporations whose reach and capacities (including resources) are very different. Large companies often have sustainability policies and the resources to allow more visible and concerted actions related to sustainability as compared to SMEs, who tend to be less present in the arrangements discussed in this paper. Regardless of the size of a company, however, a clear insight is that while the private sector has a role to play in gender-inclusive agricultural development, companies cannot do it alone. Other actors (i.e. state, civil society) are needed, particularly if transformational change is the aspiration and the aim is to reach the most vulnerable actors. Government and NGOs still have critical roles to play in sustainable agricultural development, including as part of PPPs. Governmental roles may include: putting laws, policies and regulations in place around e.g. social protection of vulnerable members of a society. An important question to consider is: What are the incentives for private sector companies to invest further in sustainable development, and particularly such a complex issue as gender relations, once the value chain they are involved in is functioning? In that sense the role of the private sector cannot be discussed without looking also at the role of the public sector and civil society.

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<sup>i</sup> Source last accessed May 5 2015: <http://www.techsangam.com/2012/02/16/differences-between-csr-and-csv-creating-shared-value/>

<sup>ii</sup> Source last accessed January 2015: <http://www.nestle.com/csv/what-is-csv/women-empowermentbuilding>

<sup>iii</sup> Besides one of the authors (Laven), other colleagues that participated in this partnership are Noortje Verhart and Rozemarijn Apotheker. This section is based on joint reflections and discussions.

<sup>iv</sup> Elizabeth Kiewisch (WCF), supported by KIT, developed this tool. The publication of the complete toolbox is forthcoming.