Research of Aspirations and Perceptions

toward inclusive and sustainable natural
resource management in the Solomon Islands

iwda
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Contents

Abbreviations

APHEDA	Australian People for Health, Education and Development Abroad
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
CLC	Community Learning Centre
CSO	Community Sector Organisation
CSP	Community Sector Program (AusAID)
GCCG	Grand Coalition for Change Government
IWDA	International Women's Development Agency
Live & Learn	Live & Learn Environmental Education (Solomon Islands NGO)
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MWYCA	Ministry of Women, Youth and Children's Affairs
NCW	National Council of Women
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NTFP	Non timber forest product
NRM	Natural resource management
OBM	Outboard motor
PHAST	Participatory Hygiene and Sanitary Transformation
RTC	Rural Training Centre
RAMSI	Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands
RAP	Research of Aspirations and Perceptions
RWSS	Rural Water Supply and Sanitation
SIDT	Solomon Island Development Trust
SI	Solomon Islands
SIG	Solomon Islands Government
SMK	Solomon Mere Kamap
SINCA	Solomon Islands NGO Cooperation Agreement
SINPA	Solomon Islands NGO Partnership Agreement
WHO	World Health Organization
WPCW	Western Provincial Council of Women

Terminology

Big man	A man with high status in the community
Clan	Two or more lineages united by a founding ancestor
Kaikai	Subsistence garden food used for home consumption
Kastom	Kastom, the Pidgin term for custom, refers to traditional beliefs and land ownership
Kwaso	Local home brewed beer
Marketing	Broad term used to describe the selling of a few garden crops at a 'waterside' or 'roadside' market, selling in a neighbouring village or centre or at larger markets or bulk selling to Honiara.
Mere	Woman
Shell money	String of beads or shell exchanged traditionally for goods and services
Tambu (Tabu)	Something that is against kastom or forbidden
Pikinini	Children
Wantok	Communal, clan and family ties remain strongly focused on the wantok system. A key part of the Melanesian culture, wantok means people from the same language group who are blood relatives and part of the extended family support and assist one another.
Young man	An unmarried male
Young woman	An unmarried female

Acknowledgements

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Executive Summary

This Research of Aspirations and Perceptions (RAP) provides an analysis of the main factors and variables in perceptions held by communities in the Solomon Islands of their position in relation to inclusive and sustainable natural resource management. The research intended to contextualise and guide the identification of appropriate and effective design approaches for Live & Learn's forthcoming project to be implemented in partnership with IWDA through the AusAID assisted Solomon Islands NGO Partnership Agreement (SINPA) which aims to support sustainable livelihoods.

Sex disaggregated findings from the RAP will guide the design and identification of appropriate community led livelihood strengthening projects around locally identified agendas for women, men, young women and young men. Through the RAP the project is intended to *'start from where the communities are at'* while seeking to take a strengths-based approach to support existing groups and networks in advancing inclusive and sustainable natural resource management. This report also contributes base-line data for project evaluation.

The RAP was undertaken in 32 rural communities across seven sites in the Solomon Island provinces of Makira, Western, Renbel, and Isabel identified as impacted by the commercial logging industry.

Participants shared and articulated a wealth of information relating to their perceptions of natural resource issues, land and decision-making power and access, hopes for the future, community organisations and capacity for change.

A range of research findings emerged related to the complexity of challenges facing communities. The RAP revealed that there is a wide variety of issues concerning women and men that are community specific, however it also showed some issues are shared across communities and provinces.

Macro challenges

The macro issues consistently perceived to be urgent include: decreasing land and sea resources; land shortage; unsustainable exploitation of natural resources and associated pollution; social and economic issues; unstable land ownership systems giving rise to ownership and natural resource conflict and disputes; population growth; lack of women's influence in decision-making; poor sanitation; lack of financial literacy skills and inability to identify alternative (sustainable) cash livelihood options.

Circumstances perceived to be contributing to the macro challenges include: deep seated socio-cultural inequities; lack of cooperative/credit unions/banks or other financial institutions; lack of access to markets; lack of reliable communication systems causing isolation; lack of awareness, education, skills and motivation among people to carry out community-based activities; lack of meaningful community-led programs addressing real needs that include disadvantaged and vulnerable groups; lack of trust leading to unresolved crimes and theft; out-migration from remote communities to economically productive centres; shift towards individual needs and priorities and increase in external developments such as logging.

What are the strategic priorities?

1. **Gender inclusive natural resource planning** and inclusive natural resource decision-making.

2. **Land and sea conservation sites** with education where conservation sites exist, and management and set-up where they do not exist, supported by inclusive decision-making for conservation.

3. **Sustainable agriculture skills particularly for women** and young women and young men to increase soil fertility and decrease reliance on timber forest products for cash incomes.

4. **Financial management** utilising savings schemes/ revolving funds to support sustainable livelihoods while giving priority to women in financial decision-making roles.

5. **Improved access to markets** where markets exist and identification of new markets where there are no markets (identification of cost-effective transport) to support non-timber forest product (NTFP) livelihoods.

6. **Increased access to appropriate technology solutions with a focus on sanitation** through community led and determined planning processes e.g. using WHOs PHAST tools.

Summary of key findings

All findings are based on perceptions gathered during the research and articulated by RAP participants.

1. Communities recognise natural resources to include all land and marine resources including plantation and virgin forest, managed gardens, bush, rivers, mangroves and lagoons and all their species. Permission for access to these resources were commonly found to be highly structured for land, and less structured for marine resources as marine ownership boundaries (except in West Rennell) are less clear. Stories were shared of land and marine management structures being eroded as expanding populations placed extra pressure on resources.

2. The research found that there are complex interactions between the social, environmental, economic, cultural and political realms in which women and men and natural resources operate. Women especially understand the complex relationship of natural resource and ecosystem health to human wellbeing. Women identified the effects of logging to impact on everything to do with village life. Environmental destruction, from commercial logging and unsustainable land management, is seen to impact heavily through the fragmentation of socio-cultural and political dimensions of communities participating in the RAP.

3. Women and young women are most concerned about how natural resource issues impact social and family structures, these areas being closest to their day to day roles and responsibilities. Men and young men are most concerned about how natural resource issues link to village decision-making, the cash economy and community politics, reflecting their perceived and actual roles and responsibilities.

4. In traditional communities women and men had communal use and access to all natural resources. Higher population and land sales, combined with a transition to a cash economy have resulted in individualism and greed limiting access to resources and particularly access to land that is now used for foreign resource extractive developments.

5. Women and men participants at all research sites identified that changes in land ownership coupled with changes (lowering) in the status and power of women as land owners are synchronised with the arrival of a cash economy and heavily influenced by the onset of extensive logging operations.

6. Men identify women to be good land managers and intimately linked to the environment and natural resources because of their concern for their

communities and for future generations. Women work longer hours in the garden and have better knowledge regarding planting and harvesting than men. However, women see their role as natural resource managers as 'informal' and 'not regarded as important' by the men. Traditionally women have shown how they protect natural resources and as such stand at the core of the sustainability paradigm to move forward.

7. The research showed that women and men deeply value 'land' and hold a strong desire to be able to manage the remaining land into the future. The research highlighted that 87 per cent of all RAP participants believed natural resources could only sustain their families for a maximum of 15 years if current mismanagement regimes continue. The period communities believe their resources will last, if current practices continue, is dependent on the amount of customary land available for subsistence and the rate at which resources are depleting. The quality of people's lives depends on the quality of their land.

8. Women and men understand concepts of sustainability. Sustainability as a concept held a lot of meaning within traditional subsistence societies as sustainable practices were a matter of survival. At present both pro and anti-loggers know that commercial logging activities are detrimental to

community stability, relationships between wantok and their ability to sustain their growing families into the future.

9. Men currently hold the power in decision-making in both matrilineal and patrilineal systems. Power relationships in matrilineal kinship and landownership systems do not currently extend to power and influence in major decisions relating to land use. This is despite women in matrilineal systems being perceived by both women and men as inheriting the power of life (Kastom) to the land. Traditionally, under the chiefly system, women felt they were more respected and had higher levels of access and influence in decisions concerning all land types and developments. In Rennell women felt they were simply consulted more, but not necessarily more respected.

10. In all communities women held far fewer opportunities than men to participate in decisions. Compounding this was the inequitable gender division of formal natural resource leadership roles, restricting women's ability to control resources beyond the food garden.

11. Power and leadership in all communities were found to be grossly uneven in gender terms with nearly all power and leadership positions being held by men. In West Kolombangara, South Kolombangara, South Rendova and Central Bauro, women and men saw

this imbalance and agreed that a more inclusive approach would benefit their mutual futures. In West Arosi and West Rennell, some women considered that it would be culturally incorrect (given the patrilineal system) if they had increased access to decisions. In Isabel the majority of women felt they were represented in a way that meant they did not see benefit from greater influence or inclusion.

12. Over time as external livelihood pressures have changed, positions of leadership and power structures (in some communities more than others) have also transitioned. In present systems middle men, trustees and the provincial government wield more power and influence in domains where chiefs and elders previously reigned. Participants commented in all communities except Isabel, that the chiefly system and respect for it were eroding.

13. In traditional society women held peace keeping and dialogue building roles in times of conflict. In modern societies this role has been diminished in part due to the introduction of new community power structures where men exert power over land. Women commonly see themselves as 'invisible' in decision-making and power structures in today's society. The consequences of this power shift are most severe in RAP communities in Central Bauro and West Arosi in Makira and West Rennell in Renbel.

14. The marginalisation of women from decision-making processes is having devastating impacts on both women and children, not least because it has resulted in the exploitation of natural resources and the presence of logging camps in communities. The presence of logging camps has led to sexual exploitation of young girls (in Central Bauro, West Arosi and South Rendova), unwanted pregnancy, substance abuse, and tribal conflict.

15. Benefits of natural resource cash based economies are not equally shared. Men in high power positions are the prime beneficiaries of major developments such as commercial logging. Women and men of lower social status often receive no benefits from land developments. Women commonly have no access to benefits apart from small benefits from garden marketing. The inequitable dispersion of benefits from natural resources has become a defining feature of poverty in the research communities.

16. Communities feel that they lack the planning skills and financial basis to engage in alternative non-timber forest product livelihoods. Further, they lack the ability to identify sustainable alternatives. In this environment the drive and temptation toward commercial logging is high. Men in particular struggle to strike a balance between immediate needs and long-term ones.

17. Women and girls in particular will benefit greatly from better sanitation. Currently, a large number of women without access to toilets wait until dark before walking, sometimes long and unsafe distances through loggers' camps, to use beaches or mangroves. This often means they have to go all day without using a toilet and risk damaging their health and reducing their person safety. Participants commented that having to go at night has exposed some to sexual assault.

18. With the exception of Kolombangara Island communities, who have received on-going support from Kastom Gaden and tsunami relief initiatives, prior experience with medium to long-term development projects has been minimal and lacking strategy, however, women and men considered that some of the existing organisations in their communities are equipped, ready and willing to commit to projects for social and environmental outcomes.

19. Desire for change presents an important driver and entry point for the project to engender buy-in and ownership from the outset. Those who do not benefit from natural resource cash economies were found to be those who have the strongest desire to engage in sustainable practices. The majority of people in communities with commercial logging (who were also the people receiving no benefits from natural resource commercial activities) expressed an urgent need to remedy decision-making approaches in regard to inclusive and sustainable natural resource management.

20. Women identify the need for clear, well-supported local leadership opportunities that enable women leaders and women's groups in communities to demand and sustain protection of the environment and the rights of women and children.

21. Possession of differing levels of power and influence over natural resources was not found to affect willingness to manage sustainably. Indeed women were highly likely to express their ability and desire to contribute as change agents to sustainable natural resource initiatives. Women want to manage land sustainability irrespective of their land tenure (matrilineal or patrilineal).

Participant in-depth reflection

Key questions that challenge community futures identified by participants during the RAP include:

How can we sustain the functioning of ecosystems and simultaneously support growing populations with a nutritious diet and cash incomes? How can we live in a cash economy that drives individualism through greed and maintain our communal relationships? How can we engage in business activities while maintaining a good quality of life? How can we ensure the next generation will have values and behaviours for a more sustainable and equitable society? How do gender relations affect women's and men's ability to contribute to sustainable development given existing cultural contexts and roles?

The balance between using land and sea resources sustainably for subsistence and cash livelihoods is not easy to achieve. The interrelated and complex balancing act challenged RAP participants. Many saw inclusive and sustainable natural resource management as desirable but grappled with the following questions:

- Practically (with respect to process) how can decisions about natural resources be made equitably and inclusively?

- Who will ensure women and men of all socioeconomic groups receive equitable benefits from natural resources?

- How can we ensure resource extractive activities that are not on our land, but which are affecting our communities, are sustainable?

- How can we make space for women and men to both participate and influence natural resource decision-making?

Community visions for change

Community visions for change were centred around the themes of decision-making, conservation and (cash and non-cash) livelihoods. Under these themes visions commonly included:

- A need for inclusive natural resource decision-making and planning

- Sustainable agricultural knowledge, skills and livelihoods

- Establishment of land and marine conservation sites

- Improved sanitation

- Improved sustainable livelihood options

- Improved market access

Sex disaggregated perceptions of how a community based project can contribute to change are provided within the Findings section of this report.

Voices for change

On an individual and group basis women and men were asked to reflect on their capacity to engage with initiatives and activities that bring about change associated with sustainable development. Their responses show that they consider the human resource capacity to lead initiatives through existing organised groups is relatively high. However some key challenges act as barriers to change including land disputes and lack of motivation reflected by the disorganisation in some groups. In such cases capacity for reconciliation and working together needs to be addressed prior to capacity building for sustainable livelihoods or longer term development approaches.

Women see themselves, or other women in their constituent groups, to have the capacity to play powerful roles in leadership positions in general and specifically in voices for sustaining peace, promoting sustainability and financial management for sustainable livelihoods.

Young women and men involved in the RAP perceive themselves to be critical stakeholders in the future and express a desire for a space to have their voices heard in decisions that affect their future. Youth across all research sites were found to be most worried about the rate of depletion of natural resources. As one youth said my tomorrow is today, reflecting that decisions made today are directly linked to his future. While youth hold great potential, the research collected stories on their hazardous path ahead with the pressures and influences of Kwaso (alcohol), drugs, teenage pregnancy, lack of secondary education and lack of opportunities/incentives to be involved in cash and non-cash livelihood activities.

There was a strong voice in all communities, among women and men young and old, to advocate for change in either inclusive decision-making or sustainable natural resource management, or both.

In a RAP survey participants identified the following ways that they could contribute to change toward sustainable development:

- Encourage values that support social, environmental and economic sustainability.

- Promote and strengthen greater participation of local/community organisations to generate an inclusive broad-based network for confronting and making decisions on development challenges, including managing natural resources.

- Share entrepreneurial and financial skills (once acquired) and educate others in conservation and sustainable agriculture.

Design recommendations

The RAP identified some core principles and mutually strengthening processes that will need to occur in the forth-coming project design. These include:

- Building on existing strengths

- Utilising existing organised groups, and

- Obtaining the support of existing community leaders and other respected people in the community.

The RAP findings call for an integrated approach to project design. Based on evidence gathered during the RAP the ensuing project should practically and strategically focus on the following key areas:

1. Strengthening existing rural networks and seeking to build-on and replicate successful models of sustainable agriculture, livelihoods products and market access in other areas.

2. Identification of policy and networks that promote equity in reaching markets.

3. Equipping women with financial management skills, literacy and capacity to support the diversification of localised economies via women's small business start-up to cope with financial burdens.

4. Providing women with space to acquire leadership positions in family or community savings groups with linkages to financial institutions. It would be strategic for such groups to establish Sustainable Livelihood Revolving Funds (micro-credit) systems.

5. Generating additional processes to place women in leadership positions (and strive for transformative change in this area in Western province and Makira, and on relative change in Renbel and Isabel).

6. Institutionalising long-term natural resource (land and sea) governance planning skills for women and men, young and old. Community-led natural resource plan development will ensure communities, tribes or clans, can set their own strategies for sustainable development, improve their inclusive management and tackle obstacles.

7. Provision of sustainable agriculture technical training and support especially for women, young women and young men.

8. Fostering women's and young people's leadership (cognisant of the current land tenure system).

9. Improving sanitation by deliberate sanitation initiatives while enhancing women and young women's ability to influence community decisions and planning processes.

10. Supporting and promoting evidence based cross-sectoral policy development ensuring policies are inclusive, gender responsive and sustainable while addressing practical and strategic needs.

These areas should be supported through:

- Piloting projects before going to scale

- Building on positive patterns of change as an entry point for staging integrated approaches

- Focusing on facilitation processes that stimulate and support community-led social change that enables leadership space for women and men young and old, in developing and sustaining livelihoods and land and sea natural resources.

- Building on existing community and gendered strengths, and giving upward importance to working with and strengthening established and organised women's and men's and youth bodies, groups and networks.

- Facilitating dialogue opportunities between women's, men's and youth community organisations and provincial and national government.

- Acknowledging that tackling natural resource management and gender equity is more about strengthening alternative approaches to governance than increasing financial resources.

- Establishing supportive policies and structures which are responsive to working with women and men and natural resources.

It is important to note that the design of the project should highlight the need for a focus on sustainable land use and planning of customary land. To design any kind of project to suggest community members directly take on commercial logging companies outside customary land will reasonably result in disputes and be beyond the means of the project concept.

The RAP identified that deliberate efforts should be made to create space, particularly for women, to utilise new knowledge and skills, and to embed new approaches to decision-making in organisational and community processes and practices.

Putting gender equity into practice will be challenging in and through the design and implementation of the coming project, as it is not yet clear what equity between women and men will look like in the Solomon Islands. What is known is that a multitude of social and economic benefits will follow women's representation in all manner of decision-making positions. Civil society together with SIG and communities are in a position to build space for this change. Accordingly, in partnership with IWDA, particular focus should be given to gender needs as outlined below:

Coordination and collaboration for gender focus

Strengthen the gender and environment focus. It is recommended that the project work in close coordination and collaboration with other interested stakeholders throughout the Solomon Islands including government ministries, donors, non-governmental organisations and other organisations – in three ways:

1. Collaborate with relevant national and international (regional) actors and other organisations involved with SINPA to promote gender equity at the rural level as well as the national level and showcase best practice in women's advancement.

2. Coordinate with rural women's networks and facilitate the expansion of their focus to include natural resource governance, planning and sustainability knowledge, financial literacy skills and associated action.

3. Establish, or work with a gender advisory group of interested staff, community members and others outside the project to support the work of the project.

It is recommended that an enabling environment be created to fully integrate a gender lens on natural resource management

into the core of the project. Three recommendations to create this environment are:

- *The leaders:* the project leadership within the community should be well-versed in the gender dimensions of the project and natural resource issues facing the community. They should be able to articulate the importance of a gendered approach to the goals of the project and to community priorities more generally.

- *The allies:* those interested in gender and issues of concern to women should be identified among the staff of other implementing partners and other stakeholders to support the project and promote complimentary approaches.

- *The gender focal point:* a gender and natural resource specialist should be identified to provide technical assistance and serve as the focal person for project information and support on gender and environment issues.

Influence not just access

Design for more inclusive decision-making needs and to keep in mind that providing women access to decision-making does not necessarily link to an increase in women's power and influence. Women not only need to be included, they need to be given space to take up some of the formal leadership positions (of influence and control). This major shift will be difficult in the conditions described by women in the RAP, of *men's corruption to augment status for personal gain.* A movement for significant changes regarding gender at the national level was afoot at the time of writing this report with a group of stakeholders led by the Ministry of Women, Youth and Children's Affairs (MWYCA) calling for seats to be reserved for women in parliament in 2010. Such change at the national level would greatly benefit this project through the provision of national role models for women at the community level.

Lessons learnt relating to the RAP process

The RAP proved to be a highly useful and desirable approach to project design and development. The approach engendered levels of trust (except in West Rennell where tensions surrounding logging were highest) and led to participation and truer engagement in the form of critical reflection, particularly from women and young women.

The RAP approach proved to be important for:

- Design that is evidence-based and grounded in community reality.

- Allowing stronger partnerships going forward.

- Managing project expectations in a partnership approach with the community.

- Avoiding tokenistic consultation 'after the fact' on a finished design 'from Honiara'.

- Ensuring the integrity of true consultation and engendering ownership from the outset.

The benefit of not applying a narrow focus to the research was that it allowed for direct targeting of practical and strategic changes that are perceived as most beneficial by communities for communities.

Additional lessons included:

- Gender is relevant in the design phase; to understand gender roles; to provide a gender analysis of the situation in communities and; to develop strategies that will ensure both women and men will have the opportunity to participate in and benefit from a given project

- Sound research into natural resources must examine the biophysical as well as the social dimensions of communities and needs to focus on the relationship between the two.

- Gender inequity in the Solomon Islands requires further attention and pressure from the NGO sector, SIG, bilateral and multilateral donors and the international community at large.

The meaning and value of RAP involvement to women and men participants is illustrated through unprompted statements concerning their involvement in the design phase. Such statements were commonly shared during the second day of the RAP in communities:

" *I came to this research meeting because of the words 'Live and Learn'. I've been to other meetings with NGOs on natural resources, but this is different, we don't use biros but we share stories. I found it more effective, I could participate and this is one of the most open talks we have had for some time. I feel valuable that I can be part of designing a project. (Elderly women, Central Bauro)*

You are the first ones to ask what we want in project design; usually we just get a top-down approach placed on us. (Women, West Kolombangara)

I am happy, you are the first people to ask what we want, and are willing to support us not just in trainings but to achieve our visions. (Man, South Rendova) "

These comments were tempered in West Rennell by a level of distrust from some participants related to their past experiences where they felt organisations had made promises for future projects that did not materialise.
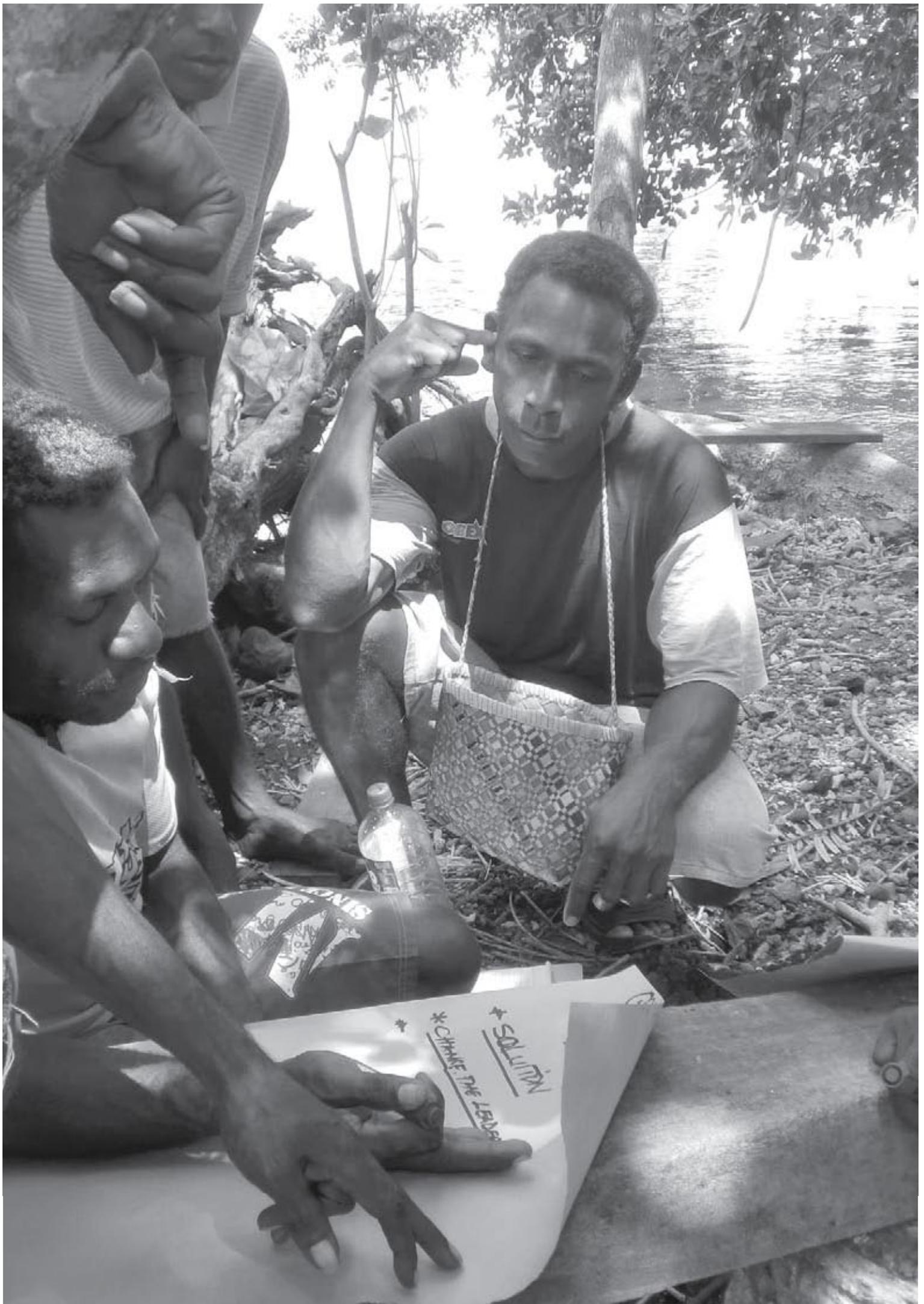
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Introduction

Research of Aspirations and Perceptions (RAP)

The RAP was undertaken during April/May 2009 to support a project design process by Live & Learn in partnership with IWDA through the AusAID assisted Solomon Islands NGO Partnership Alliance (SINPA) in advancing inclusive and sustainable natural resource management in the Solomon Islands. The purpose of the design is not only to achieve direct outcomes for communities, it is also for IWDA to work closely with a mainstream environmental NGO to demonstrate how consistently thinking about and addressing the concerns, needs and priorities of women and men achieves better development outcomes. To facilitate this, strong gender analysis was central to the RAP and the key research questions.

The RAP is an investigative social research method developed by Live & Learn to gauge community aspirations and perceptions toward sustainable development issues. At its core the RAP methodology acknowledges the intimate relationship that exists between the people and the environment.

A RAP is explained by Live & Learn as:

A semi-structured process of learning with and from communities about their aspirations and perceptions toward access and power structures, existing human capital strengths and weaknesses, local capabilities, and other relevant social, cultural, political, environmental and economic information relevant to the subject being explored.

This RAP captures gendered community perceptions toward issues linked to inclusive and sustainable natural resource management and strives to gauge where strengths and opportunities exist to support socially and culturally appropriate environmental education and community development projects. The research also introduced many participants to principles of inclusive decision-making and ways to further explore sustainability in the current context.

For project design to be effective, involving the community during the design phase is highly beneficial, not only for identifying where and how support can best be provided, but by engendering trust and ownership from the outset through genuine community engagement. The findings of the RAP are intended to inform viable and effective project design. A design document will be developed using the RAP findings, focussing on a five year project designed toward inclusive and sustainable natural resource management and associated emergent factors and variables from this research.

At its core the RAP methodology acknowledges the intimate relationship that exists between the people and the environment.

Ideally, social research should entail a long-term comprehensive exploration and analysis of all stakeholder perceptions, issues and options. Practically, as a result of resource constraints, this level of sustained research is not feasible for the RAP. It should be noted that the findings in this report are not based on statistically sound data sets, however they are of high value as they do present the perceptions and stories shared with the research team by 219 participants, female and male, young and old, across 32 communities in four provinces. This report presents the results of research conducted over two days in seven sites with each community. Participants engaged in the RAP were from gendered vertical and horizontal 'slices' of each of the 32 communities.

SINPA relationship to the RAP

Live & Learn in partnership with IWDA, through the AusAID-assisted Solomon Islands NGO Partnership Agreement (SINPA), aims to use this research to support the design of a project that focuses on strengthening livelihood options and safeguarding remaining land and sea natural resources in rural areas, while giving active, structured support to women's involvement. The SINPA project builds on experiences and lessons learnt from the Solomon Islands NGO Cooperation Agreement (SINCA) in which Live & Learn was part of a consortium with APHEDA and IWDA.

The need for a research of aspirations and perceptions

For environmental management to be effective it needs to be informed by an assessment of stakeholder aspirations and perceptions on related issues.

There are innumerable examples of well meaning development projects that fail due to a disconnect between what is believed to be important by outsiders and what is perceived, through values and experiences, to be important by the community. The RAP technique acknowledges that people coming from outside a community may have different perceptions and visions of what is required for sustainable development compared to those within the community. Accordingly, the RAP seeks to start from where the community is at, and to understand what gendered community visions for a sustainable future entail. While the RAP seeks to unveil perceptions, it also has an exploratory nature as participants start to investigate and question root causes of natural resources issues.

RAP objective

The objective of the RAP is to seek to provide an understanding and analysis of gendered perceptions regarding natural resource issues and decision-making structures and how these perceptions relate to land tenure and community aspirations, including strengths and capacity to undertake projects related to inclusive and sustainable management of natural resources.

Key research questions

The RAP endeavours to provide significant insights into these questions:

(i) What are the gendered perceived issues (or problems) related to current natural resource management practices?

(ii) What are the gendered perceived root causes of natural resource management related issues? What challenges and opportunities lie ahead to address these issues?

(iii) What are the gendered perceptions of how natural resource management practices have changed over time?

(iv) What are the gendered perceptions of how natural resource decision-making access and control has changed over time?

(v) What are the gendered perceptions of how land tenure control and access has changed over time?

(vi) What are the gendered perceptions relating to how a community based program can contribute to changing knowledge, attitudes and practices in respect to inclusive natural resource management decision-making and sustainable natural resource management livelihood practices?

(vii) What changes do communities consider desirable for the future?

Data collection methodology

The RAP used a mix of qualitative and quantitative research methods to facilitate the exploration of relationships and interactions between the social, environmental and physical sphere, and gendered perceptions of these. The RAP data collection approach was highly participatory (refer to Annex III) and undertaken over two days in seven community hubs across four provinces. The RAP utilised a combination of; group visual stimuli, ranking cards, cause and effect diagrams, drawings, story sharing, individual surveys, and surveys for community representatives.

RAP approach

It was critical to involve and separate women and young women from men and young men for the first day of research to provide females a space for participation and story sharing with other females. It was also critical to match the facilitator's sex to the sex of the group. Interviews, focus groups and observations were the primary means by which perceptions and aspirations (visions) were generally shared by the communities and documented in the RAP. While day one separated females and males, day two brought them together. On the second day women and men shared stories and 'walked in each others' shoes', presenting their key findings from day one to each other and discussed, contrasted and compared the different perceptions and commonalities between women's and men's perceptions.

The RAP approach emphasises participatory research or partnerships between researchers and community members. It stresses the importance of participatory research and the role of community members in initiating, collecting and using their own data, as well as the collaboration of community members with others (in this case Live & Learn community facilitators and researchers) so that the participants lead the transfer of knowledge and shape the design of the project. In line with this emphasis, Live & Learn trained four people, two men and two women, from RAP communities as facilitators to assist experience facilitators with the RAP.

Research sites and geographic coverage

Communities invited to take part in this RAP were communities identified as being in a vulnerable state in respect to logging activity. The identification was made through extensive consultation with the Ministry of Natural Resources, other CSO's in the Solomon Islands and within Live & Learn's own networks. The Solomon Islands National Resource Assessment Update 2006 provided valuable mapping and forecasting which identified critical areas. All RAP communities are impacted by commercial logging to varying extents outlined in the 'Findings' section of this report.

The RAP was carried out in seven sites across four Provinces; Western Province, Makira Province, Renbel Province and Isabel Province, involving 32 communities and 219 community participants (42 per cent women and young women and 58 per cent men and young men). Communities involved in the RAP are listed below in table 1.

Table 1. RAP Communities

Province	Island	Communities represented in the RAP The first community cited hosted the RAP over two days
Western Province	West Kolombangara	Main communities (3): Sausama, Matahiri, Tanhuka Other villages/hamlets included: Sandfly, Poporo, Habere, Piluzei, Nusa, Kooranborg, Patupaele, Waru, Nusamaheri, Irivah, Engarano
	South Kolombangara	Main communities (6): Hunda, Iriri, Gatere, Kena, Kuzi, Vavanga Other villages/hamlets included: Kelibae, Pine
	South Rendova	Main communities (3): Ughele, Lokuru, Elomana Other villages/hamlets included: Vailara, Agoagana, Vanguva, Leamana, Vancouver, Kombi, Buoruku, Egholo
Makira Province	Central Bauro	Main communities (6): Tawani, Manuiriuiri, Manuhugi, Arohane, Ngorangora, Kaonasugu
	West Arosi	Main communities (5): Heuru, Marau Bay, Ubuna, Tawatana, Asimanioha
Renbel Province	West Rennell	Communities: (4) Lavagu, Tahanuka, Kanaba, Teabamagu
Isabel Province	East Isabel	Main communities (5): Boletei, Baolo, Tuelegu, Sisiga, Ghoveo

Full community profiles can be found in Annex I. Descriptions of these communities are based on the information gathered from participants during the RAP.

The map below shows the location of RAP research sites.
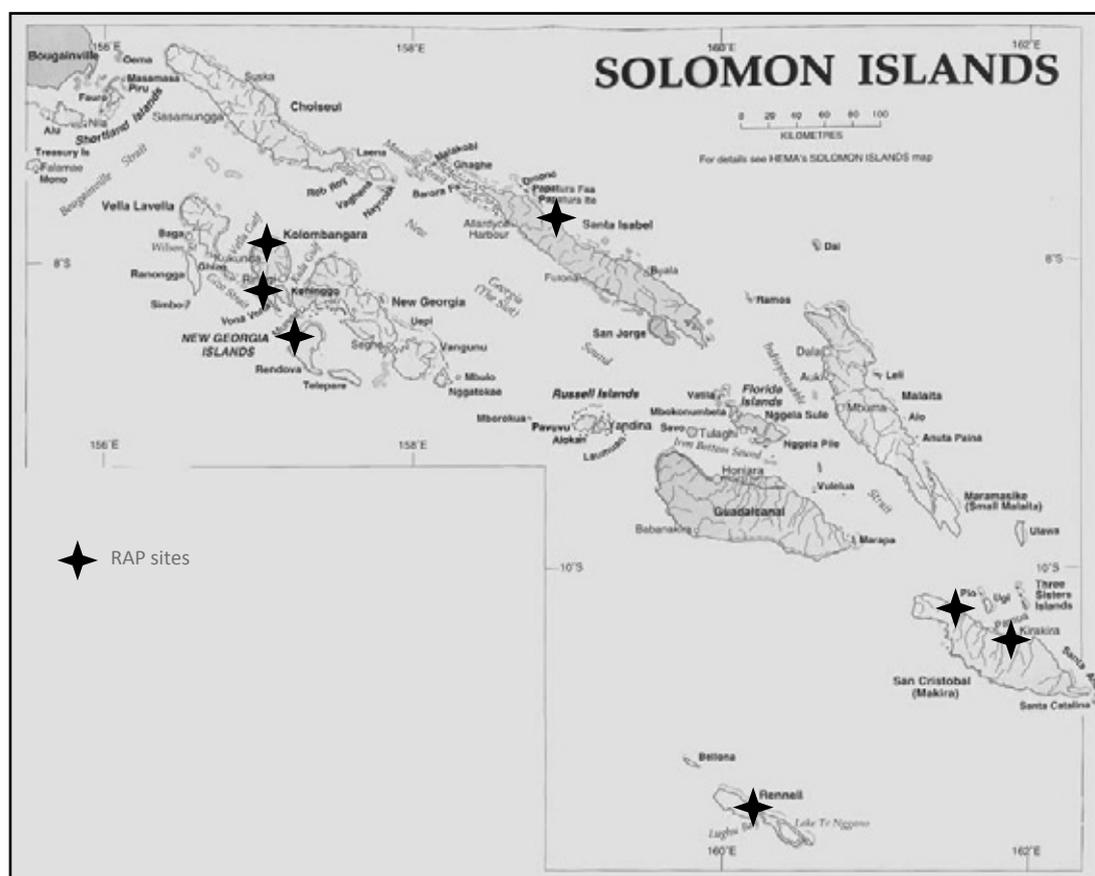
3

Context

Country overview

The people of the Solomon Islands live on a scattered archipelago of mountainous islands and coral atolls covering approximately 28,000 square kilometres. The country is organised into nine provinces and one capital territory; Central, Choiseul, Guadalcanal, Isabel, Makira, Malaita, Renbel, Temotu, Western and Honiara. As populations are dispersed over multiple islands, travel times are long, costs expensive and services can be infrequent. These factors make efficient delivery of social services to communities and community access to markets very limited.

More than 80 per cent of Solomon Islanders rely on rural livelihoods of small-scale subsistence cash-based agriculture and small scale forestry and fishing (AusAID, 2006). Despite recent strong economic growth, the Solomon Islands economy continues to face a number of challenges at the community level. A majority of working age people in the Solomon Islands are engaged in the non-monetary economy (ADB, 2007).

The majority of the population is Melanesian except for a small number of Polynesian outer islands including Rennell. As in most Melanesian cultures, communal clan and family ties remain strong with the existence of the wantok system. Wantok means people from the same language group who are blood relatives and part of the extended family support and assist each other. Kastom, the Pidgin term for custom, refers to traditional beliefs and land ownership. In the traditional culture kastom dictated the roles of women and men. As Solomon Islanders encounter western lifestyles and cash economies there has been a blurring of traditional roles, however kastom is still extremely important. Beliefs and ceremonies vary between communities and provinces, however the culture is deeply rooted in ancestor worship, magic and oral traditions.

While the Solomon Islands have areas with abundant natural resources, natural systems are under great pressure from commercial logging, mining and fishing. Commercial logging is one of the Solomon Islands' most important sources of economic growth, however this source of growth is unsustainable. The country is therefore broadening the base of growth of the economy with mining, agriculture exports, fisheries and tourism all being targeted. It has been difficult for the Solomon Islands Government to lessen their reliance on large scale logging when timber accounted for nearly 60 per cent of total merchandise exports in 1996 (AIDAB 1994:6 in Scheyvens, 1997). In many Provinces logging levels are four times above the sustainable threshold and if these levels continue, natural forest resources available for harvesting will be exhausted by 2015 (URS for SIG, 2006).

While the Solomon Islands have areas with abundant natural resources, natural systems are under great pressure from commercial logging, mining and fishing.

The presence of the commercial logging industry is having vast and negative impacts on ecosystems at large¬— land and sea—as well as social impacts, as explained in this research, and as documented by Herbert, T for the Christian Care Centre (e.g. via disputes related to the benefits from logging and the sexual exploitation of young girls by foreign loggers). Due to the mountainous terrain, most forests targeted for commercial logging are on the lowlands adjacent to sensitive marine environments. Communities are experiencing lower levels of fish yields, not just through the use of unsustainable fishing practices, but also via effects from nearby commercial logging activities.

For decades sustainable forest management has been absent from community life. At the local level land trustees, landowners, chiefs and some elders have control over negotiating logging licences directly with foreign logging companies for well below actual value and in most cases revenue from commercial logging has not been reinvested back into communities. Many communities have nothing to show for the sale of such a lucrative resource. It is recognised by communities that they lack the skills and planning ability and knowledge to assess natural resource development (resource extractive activities) against other options. Communities need support to more appropriately manage the very resources upon which their livelihood depends. The direct link between sustainable natural resource management and greater participation by both women and men, young and old, in natural resource decision-making, is now widely acknowledged in international development agendas.

Many islands in the region are vulnerable to natural disasters like floods, typhoons and volcanic eruptions. An earthquake and tsunami hit Western Solomon Islands on 2 April 2007 affecting 36,500 people. About 6,300 houses were damaged or destroyed across 304 communities. Many RAP participants in South Rendova spoke of events in their lives as 'pre' and 'post' tsunami.

High population growth rates of around 2.8 per cent continue to place pressure on infrastructure and increase the demand for water, sanitation, housing, education, and health services.

The Solomon Islands has endured considerable challenges in the years following ethnic tensions and the coup of 2000. By early 2003 the country had many of the characteristics of a failed state—general lawlessness grew, while extortion and open corruption were rife. Government management of the economy and delivery of basic services collapsed and has since been recovering. The conflict also had a crippling effect on economic activity in export industries such as mining, palm oil and fisheries.

Solomon Islands Poverty Assessment

A Participatory Poverty Assessment conducted by the Asian Development Bank in 2007 indicated that the major causes of hardship in rural communities in the Solomon Islands included: lack of livelihood opportunities and market outlets, poor access to water and sanitation, unsustainable harvesting of natural resources, inequitable gender relations, and lack of access to health care and education in rural areas. These challenges are compounded by a range of risks for young men and young women including unemployment, substance abuse, teenage pregnancy and low educational participation beyond primary years in part due to limited vocational opportunities for young people who wish to seek employment.

Solomon Islands is ranked as one of the least developed countries in the world ranked by the United Nations Development Program as 129 out of 177 countries in the human development index (UNDP, 2007). Of the many who live in poverty, women and children are the most powerless and the most affected, as is reflected in the high and increasing maternal mortality rate (130 per 100,000), pervasive gender-based violence, and the low status of women and their absence from political leadership positions (SPC, 2008). In the context of this assessment, and given the Solomon Islands has among the lowest GDP per capita in the Pacific (AusAID 2008), it will be a challenge for the Solomon Islands to reach many of the MDGs by 2015.

AusAID's Solomon Islands Community Sector Strategy 2007 – 2011

Against this background, the Solomon Islands Community Sector Strategy 2007–2011 highlights the need to focus on development of livelihood options and safe guarding of natural resources through their sustainable management. For these reasons there is an urgent need for local communities to mobilise informed human resources (women and men) to sustainably manage natural resources.

Natural resource management issues

Conflict. Both Solomon Islands communities and the Solomon Islands Government have exploited natural resources for short term gain. Natural resources in the Solomon Islands are under growing pressure from logging, over-fishing, and lack of collaborative and sustainable management. Natural resource conflict between and among tribes and clans poses a significant threat to sustainable management and decisions that truly consider the full range of future consequences

for communities and the environment (Zikuli and Clothier, Live & Learn, 2008). Much of the conflict derives from the inability to build dialogue on how to manage land, who has land tenure and the distribution of natural resources cash benefits from commercial logging activities.

Governance. At the national level, the Solomon Islands Government faces huge governance and resourcing challenges, particularly in the natural resources sector, reflected in limited transparency, accountability and capacity to monitor and enforce good logging practices. Even if government institutions are strengthened and regulatory reach expanded, sustaining the 'supply' of improved governance depends on the simultaneous investment in community level 'demand' that is inclusive of the interests and aspirations of all community members.

Legislation. There is a need to review all natural resource and land legislation to recognise the role of women in natural resource management and gender issues in land tenure. Very few logging agreements in the Solomon Islands include women as signatories (Monson, R pers. com. 2009) despite significant parts of the country being matrilineal. The Grand Coalition for Change Government (GCCG) has instigated a Land Use and Ownership Policy which will affect land tenure in the future inclusive of policy that addresses women's needs in respect to matrilineal land. Land legislation includes the Land and Titles Act 1969 (which has a 2003 amendment bill, with a 2006 review still pending Cabinet approval), the Forestry Act 1969 and the Customary Land Records Act 1992. It also needs to consider AusAID's Land Policy.

Gender and natural resource management

Gender in the margins. For a long time, and until relatively recently, gender has sat in the margins of sustainable development, natural resource strategies and activities. Gender refers to the roles and responsibilities of women and men, young and old, and the relationship between them. Gender roles and expectations are culturally determined through socialisation and they can and do change over time. Over time matrilineal land tenure has eroded in the Solomon Islands and there are signs this is continuing (Maetala, R, in Huffer, E, 2008). Women's customary status and power has been noted to decrease with the introduction of the church, as well as, cash economies, men's increased control of decision-making and intermarriage which has blurred lineage blood lines. In the Solomon Islands gender is often talked about in terms of power and leadership relationships between women and men, or is narrowly defined as 'women's issues'.

Importance of gender for achieving MDGs. The international community has recognised the importance of gender equality to development through the Millennium Development Goals

(MDG 3). Gender equality and the empowerment of women are not only goals in their own right, but are also an essential means by which to achieve all of the MDGs.

The RAP included specific strategies in terms of methodology and data collection to ensure the priorities and interests of women as well as men, are considered in the forthcoming project design and provide a sound gender and power analysis. Research aimed to identify changes to past strengths in cultural practices as a potential leverage point for developing gender strategies. The gendered approach to research recognises that both women and men have a role to play in the management of natural resources and acknowledges that improving the status of women is not just a women's issue, but requires active participation from both women and men that needs to be considered at each stage of a project.

Enabling women's voices. In both patrilineal and matrilineal systems present in the Solomon Islands, women are marginalised in decision-making processes including decisions regarding natural resources. As such, decisions rarely reflect women's roles, knowledge and interests. This has a direct implication for the Solomon Islands context where women have major responsibilities for food production,

knowledge regarding forest product use, growing patterns for domestic subsistence use and cash based livelihoods. There is a significant and urgent need for increased focus on inclusive and sustainable management of natural resources that enables women's voices. Also critical is much greater support for livelihoods that provides alternatives to logging, giving communities greater choice and options relating to their future.

Enabling women's participation in natural resource management depends heavily on understanding the opportunities and constraints within the current land tenure system and the potential to locate gender equity in natural resource management in customary law.

Women and leadership. Women in the Solomon Islands have extremely limited access to leadership positions in public life and politics. Of the 50 members of Parliament, none are currently women. This makes the Solomon Islands one of only a few countries in this position. In 1983 the National Women's Council was created to address violence against women and during the 1990's the Solomon Islands had a fairly strong women's movement. However, during the civil unrest referred to as the 'tensions' of 1998–2003 many gains of the 1980's were wiped out with heightened

violence against women (AusAID, 2008). During this time the Solomon Islands Government collapsed and in 2003 the Solomon Islands invited the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI) to restore law and order and economic development. The Women's movement has regrouped and gained ground since 2003. Currently, on the national scale women's groups led by the Ministry of Women Youth and Children's Affairs are working together to advocate for Temporary Special Measures (TSM) for reserved seats for women in the Solomon Islands Parliament. The TSM is currently being considered by the Parliament and is attracting growing public interest and debate. Women hold only six per cent of senior positions in government (four women compared to 21 men are permanent secretaries) and 16 per cent in the private sector (SIG 2000 and SIHDR 2002 in Huffer, E 2008). Opportunities for women at the chiefly level are also very low.

National Women's Policy. The current Grand Coalition of Change Government (GCCG) has indicated its support for the Solomon Islands National Women's Policy (1998) and Solomon Islands Accession to the United Nations Convention of Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (May 2000), however progress to date has

been slow. The Women's Development Division lacked the resources to carry-out and monitor its activities with regard to policy development and implementation (Huffer, E 2008). GCCG has newly created the Ministry of Women, Youth and Children's Affairs (MWYCA). MWYCA is a step in the direction of advancing women's status in decision-making and developing and implementing national policies that actively support the needs of women in the Solomon Islands and is currently completing the nation's CEDAW reporting and national research into the rates of gender-based violence to build the evidence base for change. Of note, the National Women's Policy calls for government 'to put in place laws and regulations to safeguard women's rights in land matters and to ensure that women are involved in decision-making bodies relating to the ownership and use of land' (Solomon Islands National Women's Policy 1998:28): MWYCA is working toward its implementation.

Good gender and development practice is considered key to sustainable development outcomes.

4

Findings

Summary of findings

The RAP was carried out in seven sites across four provinces; Western Province, Makira Province, Renbel Province and Isabel Province, involving 32 communities and 219 community participants (42 per cent women and young women and 58 per cent men and young men). The exact gender distribution is shown in figure 1 below.

The RAP involved 32 communities and 219 community participants across four provinces.
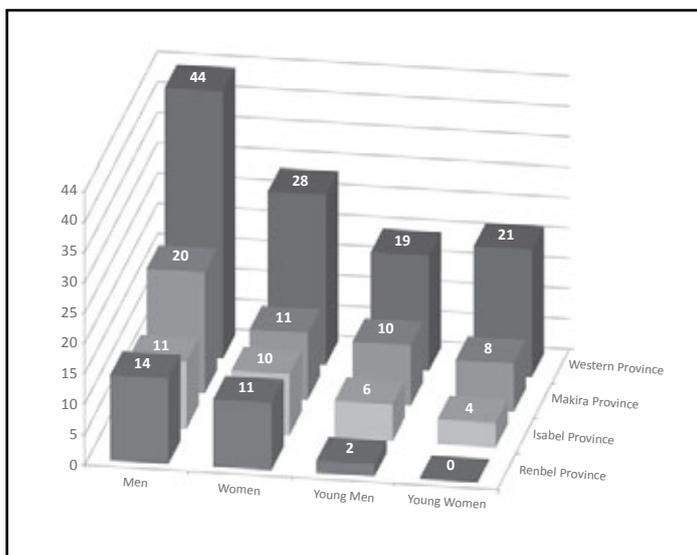
Figure 1. Gender distribution of RAP participants

Live & Learn staff conducted visits to all communities prior to the RAP to invite them to take part in the research. At this time key contacts in each community were asked to ensure gender balance along with diversity in age and socio-economic status in RAP participants. Despite best efforts, participation rates of women were lower than men in the research. Large disparities between ratios of women and men were found in Makira and Western Province. Only in Isabel and Renbel communities were numbers of women and men balanced. Unfortunately in Renbel youth were not properly represented due to miscommunications between communities. Women who were able to participate expressed how rare it was for them to be given a space with other women, and with men, to talk about natural resources. The following sentiment from a woman in West Rennell is representative of other women involved in the RAP.

> *Women's participation in any natural resource consultation is rare here. If you look at women's participation in any Renbel committee there is maybe one woman, or none. Women are only in women's affiliated groups under the Church or NGOs, we are not seen in other places. Women need to be empowered before we can have an equal say in natural resources. (Woman, West Rennell)*

Some similarities in sex disaggregated findings were identified across research sites; however significant differences existed between locations and at times, within communities. Such differences are not surprising given the great distance between provinces, and inclusion of both matrilineal and patrilineal systems in the RAP communities. Where common findings emerged, similar answers were coded and grouped together; where they did not converge, they have been highlighted through the sharing of stories and experiences to focus on specific communities within the provinces.

The findings are based on the premise that strategies for moving forward are best informed by better understanding the relationship between women and men and natural resources both in the present and the past. The findings emphasise that, within the Solomon Islands context, there has always been a clear structural difference between the roles and responsibilities of women and men. Stories reveal how these roles in natural resource use, access and control

of decisions have changed over time and to reflect women's and men's aspirations for the future. Stories (via direct quotes) are used in the findings as stories are an essential part of Solomon Islands culture. We thank the women and men of the communities for allowing us to share their stories in this format.

Findings:

1. Perceptions were found to be very different between women and men. Perceptions between young men and old men and young women and old women did not tend to differ greatly, however young men and young women had more transformational visions that shifted power and leadership roles within their communities than their older constituents.

2. Communities recognise natural resources to include all land and marine resources including plantation and virgin forest, managed gardens, bush, rivers, mangroves and lagoons and all their species. Permission for access to these resources was commonly found to be highly structured for land, and less structured for marine resources as marine ownership boundaries (except in West Rennell) are less clear. Stories were shared of land and marine management structures being eroded as expanding populations and theft placed extra pressure on resources.

3. The period communities believe their resources will last, if current practices continue, is dependent on the amount of customary land available for subsistence and the rate at which resources are depleting. The quality of people's lives depends on the quality of their land.

4. Women and men, young and old, carrying out different roles in the community have access to natural resources (e.g. using land for gardening), however different levels of access exist alongside access and influence in decision-making.

5. Women and men participants at all research sites identified that changes in land ownership coupled with changes (lowering) in the status and power of women as land owners are synchronised with the arrival of a cash economy and heavily influenced by the onset of extensive logging operations.

6. An intimate link was found to exist between access to natural resources decisions and the different spheres of responsibilities women and men hold in the community. In today's societies, landowners or trustees are perceived to hold the most right to accessing all customary land, and are perceived to hold power and influence over land development or transactions. In some communities, such as East Isabel, land owners can be male or female.

7. There is a strong relationship between the extent of population pressure on the land and the urgency women and men feel to manage natural resources sustainably. For example, in West Kolombangara high urgency was expressed, whereas in Central Bauro perceptions of how long resources would sustain the population were longer and urgency was less.

8. Both women and men in all RAP locations perceive women to be particularly and intimately linked to the environment and natural resources, because of their concern for their communities and for future generations. They are shown to protect natural resources, and as such stand at the core of the sustainability paradigm. Further, women and men perceived women to be the most dedicated toward sustainable natural resource management.

9. In all communities women hold far fewer opportunities than men to participate in decisions, in spite of their role as users, managers and—in matrilineal communities—owners, of the land. Compounding this was the inequitable gender division of formal natural resource leadership roles, restricting women's ability to control resources beyond the food garden.

10. Women's access to natural resource decision-making is via representation by men. Despite this representation most do not perceive themselves to have a voice of influence. Men perceived they represent the women (sisters/mothers) in Western Province, East Isabel and Central Bauro. The extent of true representation is seen to vary between families, tribes or clans. In West Arosi and West Rennell, women and men both perceive women to lack even basic representation by men.

11. Power and leadership in all communities were found to be grossly uneven in gender terms with nearly all power and leadership positions being held by men. In West Kolombangara, South Kolombangara, South Rendova and Central Bauro, women and men saw this imbalance and agreed that a more inclusive approach would benefit their mutual futures. In West Arosi and West Rennell, some women considered that it would be culturally incorrect (given the patrilineal system) if they had increased access to decisions. In Isabel the majority of women felt they were represented in a way that meant they did not see benefit from greater influence or inclusion.

12. Men in Western Province communities were most able (and willing) to recognise the importance of women's inclusion in decision-making via activities that encouraged them to 'walk in each others' shoes'. Their participation and comments suggest that themes of inclusive decision-making have been in their thoughts for some time and the RAP provided a space to reflect and comment on these feelings.

13. Women in all communities in West Kolombangara, South Kolombangara South Rendova, Central Bauro and West Rennell all strongly expressed that they do not want spokesmen, they would prefer to speak for themselves. This difference in perceived rights and the desire for influence may reflect the different communities' previous exposure to gender balance ideas as well as the extent of erosion of power systems within the communities (these communities tend to be more open to change (fluid) in times of unrest).

14. Men hold the power over the distribution of benefits from natural resources. The more lucrative the natural resource product, or value-added product, the less influence women have over decision-making about the resources, and less access they have to the benefits. The capital women can accrue from natural resource assets is limited to minor benefits from marketing garden crops.

15. As times change and external livelihood pressures change, positions of leadership and power structures (in some communities more than others) have also transitioned. In present systems middle men, trustees and the provincial government wield more power

and influence in domains where chiefs and elders previously reigned. Participants commented in all communities except Isabel, that the chiefly system and respect for it were eroding.

16. With limited income, and often no access to credit, communities, and especially women, have little access to cash livelihood inputs.

17. Stories revealed that women stated that they tend to harvest first for subsistence (feeding the family with low value crops) with the left over produce going to market, whereas men harvest first for marketing gains (high value crops and resources), and as a secondary concern for the family. However in situations where women and men are in desperate need for cash, irrespective of gender or socio-economic status, they will sell produce destined for home consumption.

18. Young men and young women have a solid understanding of the differences in access, structures and power relationship between the present and the past. Their participation and views suggest that they have given significant personal thought and reflection on what is needed for the path forward. However they also relate that many youth are lost and restless and are being pulled toward homebrew alcohol (kwaso) and drugs (marijuana) while seeking direction and support to move forward and have focus in their lives.

19. With the exception of West Kolombangara, prior experience with long-term development projects was minimal, however women and men considered that some of the existing organisations in their communities are equipped, ready and willing to commit to projects for social and environmental outcomes.

20. Despite some very challenging situations people still have hope and feel that on an individual basis that they can contribute to change. Women and men, young and old, have the desire to engage in their community in general, beyond the church groups, for improved livelihoods and sustainable management of natural resources.

21. Possession of differing levels of power and influence over natural resources was not found to affect willingness to manage sustainably. Indeed women were highly likely to express their ability and desire to contribute as change agents to sustainable natural resource initiatives. Women want to manage land sustainability irrespective of their land tenure (matrilineal or patrilineal).

22. Women identified that approaches for moving forward need to be based on strengthening organised

parts of existing systems and organising financial management schemes and training to support diversified livelihoods, agricultural education and simultaneous action for sustainable NRM livelihoods, and more inclusive decision-making roles.

Identifying natural resources

Women's and men's descriptors for natural resources were found to be similar. However women's knowledge of seeds, planting and root crop life cycle was considered to be higher in some communities than that of men and attributed to the amount of time women spend gardening. Men were more likely to be responsible for mono-cropping systems (cassava and timber) and women for managing more diversified systems (in subsistence gardens).

During an introductory ten minute activity, separate men's and women's groups were asked to identify natural resources and non-natural resources. All participants were able to identify sub-categories within land and marine resources. They also quickly identified products of natural resources. Women's and men's groups commonly identified land-based resources as including food gardens, managed forests, bush, minerals and copra plantations. Marine-based resources commonly cited included fish, beche-de-mer, mangroves and trochus (shell).

Participants noted that all non-natural resources come from outside the Solomon Islands and are transported in as 'cargo'. One man reflected to the men's group at large:

> *We must take better care of our natural resources as these products are the only Solomon Island products. (Man, South Rendova)*

How resources are used

Women and men held common views on how resources are used today and how they were used in the past. The uses of resources were generally consistent across research sites with some very minor variations according to different uses of land for cash livelihoods (e.g. copra and timber milling).

In the past resources were entirely used for subsistence. The marked difference in the present is that although resources are still primarily used for subsistence (e.g. building houses, food for families, carving paddles and axe handles, weaving, and medicine) they are also used for cash income (e.g. milled timber for construction, food for marketing, carving for marketing, and copra milling).

Women and men told stories of how in the past there were strong rules and restrictions (tambu areas) on the timing of harvest and quantity of resources that could be used. Participants described how planning processes still exist for gardens managed by women, however there is little perceived planning, or structure around how other natural resources

are currently managed or harvested. Many resources are currently harvested on an 'as needs basis' and customary rules are commonly ignored.

Table 2, displays the current and traditional natural resource uses as described by RAP participants. Men and women described each other's traditional roles with high clarity and women's and men's responses were identical, however explanation of modern roles were less clear and participants had to think for longer about their answers.

When asked what has changed between the past and the present, women and men were all quick to cite the shift to a cash economy. The effect of the shift was described by a woman in South Rendova:

> *In the past men and mere (women) worked together in the garden for kaikai (subsistence crops); today we work in the garden for selem (cash crops). The change is money. (Woman, South Rendova)*

Table 2. Comparison of current and traditional gendered land uses

Natural Resource	Current use		Traditional use	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Gardens	Use: Subsistence food and marketing crops (root crops with little other variety)	Use: Subsistence food and marketing crops (root crops with little other variety) plus garden crops for church offerings and fundraising, and sharing with marginalised people (e.g. widows). Noted that kumara (sweet potato) is a new and popular crop.	Use: Subsistence food, (high dependence on root crops), custom feast (Rongo or Houra), bride price ceremonies, and gardens made to attract females.	Use: Subsistence food, (high dependence on root crops), custom feast, bride price ceremonies. In the past women were always accompanied to the garden by men to protect them from tribal fighting.
Land	Use: Development (e.g. logging), plantations of cash crops (e.g. copra, teak, cocoa, fruit trees), spiritually used and linked to landowner's identity, and as learning centers for youth to get to know their land.	Use: Limited to gardening and learning centers for young women to learn about gardening.	Use: Wild animal hunting and plant collection, in the past land was shared with other tribes or clans.	Use: Gathering wild crops e.g. cabbages and taro, and planting beetle nuts (in the past beetle nuts were used to welcome visitors).
Forests	Use: Building canoes, timber milling, housing materials, commercial logging, hunting pigs and possums, and for medicine.	Use: Firewood, basket and mat materials, collecting medicines, wild fruits and cabbage.	Use: To make spears, tools (e.g. food scrapers) weapons, and custom drums, tapa cloths, to build shelter, provide protected sites from enemies, catch birds and flying fox, hunting pigs, lizards and possums.	Use: Medicine and firewood. In times of tribal war women were not allowed to use or go into the forest as it was considered too dangerous for them.
Sea	Use: Net fishing (anytime), waste disposal	Use: Collect shell-fish and coral to build walls, gravel extraction, toilet and washing.	Use: Custom bamboo and hook fishing (resources only taken when rivers were dry). Resources conserved for a period of time prior to harvest.	Use: Sometimes used for salt, coral for lime, some taboo areas, fish, turtle and shell fish collection for ceremonies only.

When participants were asked what else has changed natural resource use and roles, women and men frequently referred to:

- Introduction of resource extractive activities such as logging

- Population growth

- Greed for individual wealth and improved social status

- Inter-provincial marriage

- Decline in the amount of land available

- Technology (e.g. chainsaws)

A young man in West Kolombangara explained:

> *Everything has changed, because of land (shortage) and more money, greed, and because the population is big. (Young Man, West Kolombangara)*

As populations have expanded and available land for cultivation has diminished, the practice of shifting agriculture has ceased. This change was noted by a man in South Rendova:

> *As the population has grown we have flogged the land so it is baron. Before, there were smaller plots and we would shift to new land to let the other land rest. (Man, South Rendova)*

Past practices that respected rules and tambu have now been eroded. In West Rennell a woman reflected:

> *In the past Gemugi custom was practiced. (Under Gemugi resources would not be taken from an area for seven years). Only the tribe leader would control the timing of the harvest and when the time was ready he would invite people for the harvesting and use tree bark as a rope harvesting tool. Today people harvest whenever they want and they use chainsaws instead of tree bark. (Woman, West Rennell)*

Such comments were followed by stories about the lack of natural resource management knowledge to suit the prevailing land shortage conditions and lack of resolution skills to deal with rising land disputes.

Land 'sales'

Eighty-eight per cent of land in the Solomon Islands is customary land (owned customarily), by clans or tribes whose lineage can be traced back through the mother (matrilineally) or the father (patrilineally).

The carrying capacity of customary land for many RAP communities, particularly those on Kolombangara, is at a critical tipping point as populations grow and customary land available for subsistence and cash economies lessens. It is a common story that illiterate chiefs exchanged large parcels of customary land for axes and/or cigarettes.

The following stories of customary land being acquired, bought and/or alienated prior to and following the establishment of the protectorate of the Solomon Islands in 1978, are well known and similar across many islands where highly fertile, flat and accessible land was sold (often perceived as 'taken') for minimal community benefit well below value.

> My grandfather swapped the good land for an axe. They (the British Government) just draw a line on the map, my grandfather he did not know maps, but he agreed. (Young man, South Rendova)

100 years ago white fella came and sailed around our island looking for coconut trees. Only the coconut trees were kept as customary land, all the other flat land the Government took from us and have leased to the white fella for (commercial logging) plantations. Now the land we own is very small and our population is becoming very big. (Man, West Kolombangara)

Low literacy let people come and take our land, the challenge is for you and me to make changes in our generation to not allow such things in the future. (Young man, Rendova)

I heard my dad say that our old people sold our land to the British for only one pipe. I also heard my dad say land is not something to be sold because it's our money. (Young woman, Central Bauro)

When asked, 'what do you think of the changes in land ownership?' the resounding response was *'hem no gud (it's no good)'*. Some communities have, or seek, court injunctions to reclaim customary land. Such claims and their processes are long and complex. Stories were shared of fake claims of tribal genealogy and implications of difficulties in defining land boundaries as knowledge of exact boundaries has not been recorded and has been lost.

In contrast, in East Isabel nearly all land is customary, a woman told a story relating back to 1914 when a white man came to her community:

> Our area (Baolo) is a beach. This white man came and walked along the beach and looked around. He came with loads and loads of coconut. Our big man came and chased him away..."Go...Go...Go...area blo pipol". The man went away. If this did not happen he would have taken our land and we would not have any today. (Woman, East Isabel)

Participants stated that remaining natural resources on remaining customary land are under increasing pressure due to:

1. Increasing need for cash (to pay school fees, health and travel expenses).

2. Increasing population (starting to encroach on the carrying capacity of land and sea units).

3. Flow-on effects of external pressures of extensive logging/mining (communities have sold copious amounts of customary land to the Provincial Government who then lease it to logging companies with very small, inequitably dispersed cash returns realised after the sale).

4. Inability to practice shifting cultivation as populations expand and land is in short supply.

5. Corrosion and lack of respect of traditional power structures (e.g. the chiefly system) (this comment does not apply to findings from Isabel where the chiefly system is perceived to be relatively strong).

The Solomon Islands Government, private companies, provincial government and individuals now use the majority of land acquired in and near RAP communities for commercial logging. Logging companies also lease customary land directly from landowners or their trustees through middle men. Table 3 provides a brief description of each RAP site and their exposure to commercial logging.

Land access and tenure will be discussed in more detail later in this report.

Natural resource/ social interface

Without prompting, women and men were able explain the complexity of natural resource related issues and how those issues link to their livelihoods. In most communities (excluding West Rennell and West Arosi where tension is high), participants agreed from the outset of the RAP, that major issues relating to natural resources exist. Current land disputes over commercial logging in West Rennell and West Arosi meant that some participants, particularly men, were guarded in expressing concern over logging activities.

Women, young and old, could clearly see the link between mismanagement of natural resources and the affect on the social realm (the human/environment interface). In this way, women were more likely to focus heavily on social ramifications of natural resource mismanagement, while men were more likely to focus on the political context in which natural resources development transactions take place.

In some more vulnerable communities, like West Rennell, the sustainability of natural resources practices was simply too sensitive to directly discuss in a group setting, however, individual concerns and perceptions were revealed clearly via an individual survey on the evening of the first day of the RAP.

Table 3. Research communities' exposure to commercial logging

Location	Logging history
West Kolombangara	More than three quarters of customary land in West Kolombangara was sold to the colonial government in the 1950s and 60s. This land has been commercially logged for up to sixty years and is currently leased to a Canadian foreign investment company. The logging company, Kolombangara Forestry Plantation Limited (KFPL), is 60% SIG owned and 40% owned by the Canadian Government. The Canadian Government is rumoured to be selling their share to an Asian company. There is much unrest in the communities relating to the sale.
South Kolombangara	Around three quarters of customary land is now owned by SIG and is currently logged by KFPL. The area has been logged consistently since the 1950s.
South Rendova	Commercial logging has been in operation since independence (1978) however, logging ceased in 2008 due to land disputes and disputes over the inequitable distribution of royalties. Activities are due to commence again in 2010. A logging camp is situated on the outskirts of Ughele.
West Arosi	Commercial logging commenced in West Arosi shortly after independence and the area has been heavily logged since. Most logging companies left the area in 2008 when their leases expired and land disputes were rife; however communities such as Asimanioha are still engaged in commercial logging. It is common for individual landowners and/or trustees to lease customary land directly to logging companies.
Central Bauro	Logging has been present in Central Bauro prior to independence, but halted in some communities in 2008. The logging company 'Elite' left Arohane in 2008 after less than a year of operation due to land disputes and disagreement between youths and pro-logging land owners (which resulted in young men burning bulldozers). Some community members in Arohane are negotiating for logging to recommence in 2010. Logging has been continuous in Maniwiriwiri. Kaonasugu community had a logging site that ceased operation around 20 years ago however they are still experiencing its legacy through soil erosion, and river and sea pollution. It is common for individual landowners and/or trustees to lease customary land directly to logging companies.
West Rennell	Until recently, small scale timber milling activities for local housing construction left forest resources in West Rennell largely undisturbed by commercial logging. Pencil cedar, a variety of hard wood, is in high demand and abundant in the area. Heavy commercial logging is about to commence and presents an extremely sensitive issue between strongly opposed pro and anti-logging groups. Two logging companies have proposed to commence operation and machinery is ready and waiting, however one has pulled out due to current wide-scale disputes. Tension in Tahanuku is particularly high. Ninety-nine per cent of the land is still customary owned, allowing for private lease deals direct with logging companies.
East Isabel	Communities in East Isabel have diverse experience with logging. Some logging companies left communities 20 years ago while others are currently in operation. Commercial logging has been present in Baulo for around twenty years while logging in the other communities has commenced with the last three years. It is common for individual landowners and/or trustees to lease customary land directly to logging companies as nearly all land is still customarily owned.

Natural resource (mis)management issues, causes and effects

Separate men's and women's groups participated in an activity to examine the cause and effect of major natural resource related issues. The activity involved a complex diagram that developed as participants reflected on issues. Issues were linked and patterns emerged. The cause and effect activity uncovered the breadth of impacts natural resource mismanagement has on communities while highlighting differences in gender perspectives. The issues men and women identified reflected their gender roles.

Women's perception of the impact of natural resource mismanagement reflects their gendered roles of home makers and child carers. Women's natural resource issue cause and effect diagrams reflect women's interest in how natural resource issues affect the social cohesion of the community. Women made clear links between natural resource mismanagement and increased population and low education, as well as the effect of inequitable cash benefits from natural resources on disputes, youth alcohol and drug abuse, theft, and general disharmony in the community.

Men's cause and effect diagrams focused primarily on the environmental degradation caused by natural resource mismanagement with social concerns as a secondary focus. Men also tended to diagram the inequity in natural resource

political arrangements in the community more clearly than women.

Both men's and women's cause and effect diagrams indicated their ability to draw a direct relationship between population increase, land shortage and soil fertility decline. This was particularly present in those communities having the least amount of remaining customary land and the highest populations such as West Kolombangara.

The following table combines the words seven men's RAP groups and seven women's RAP groups (representing 32 communities) wrote on their cause and effect diagrams. The diagrams were visually presented as a complex network of causes and effects during the RAP activity. Accordingly, while the table below presents all the words, it is not able to represent the complexity of causal relationships mapped by participants.

Natural resource concerns

In addition to the men's and women's cause and effect diagrams, all participants were individually asked (by an open ended question in a face to face survey) what concerns them most about natural resources in their community.

Answers were recorded by gender (women, men, young women, young men) and analysed by gender and by community. Despite this gendered approach, only two major differences were evident in the answers, hence women, men, young men and young women's concerns are
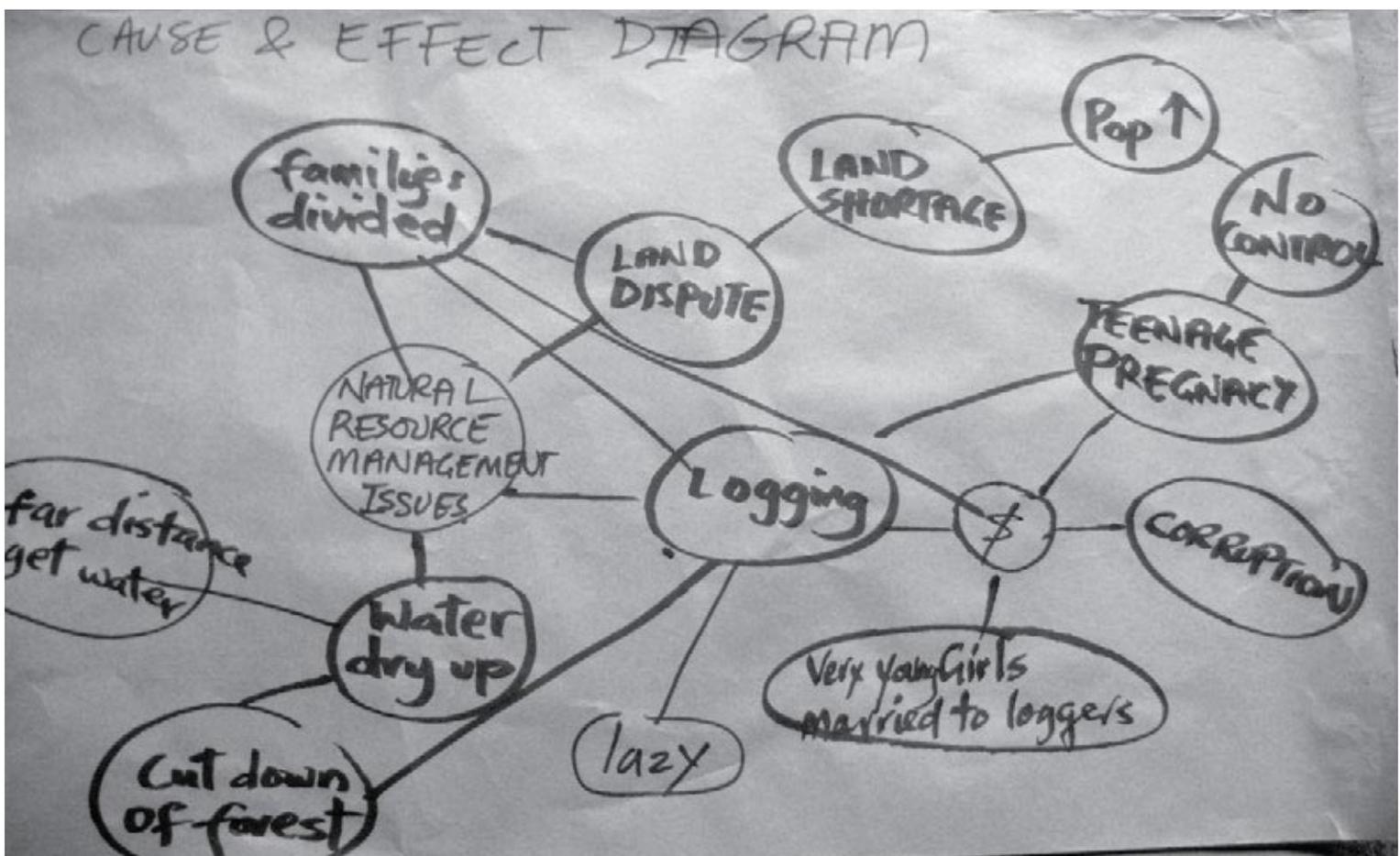
Table 4. Natural resource mismanagement cause and effect diagram outputs

Issue	Effect	Root cause
Shortage of customary land	Lowers ability to support growing population Less kaikai (subsistence food) Less income (from selling or marketing garden crops) Inability to practice land rotation Increase in agriculture pests and diseases Decreased food security Land disputes and divided families	Cash pressured lifestyles Chiefs sold land to governments in the past who then leased it for logging Landowners/trustees lease land direct to commercial loggers for their own gain Population increase due to lack of family planning (products and education) Over-planting gardens with same crops No fallow time or intercropping Unsustainable cutting of bush Corruption Greed and ignorance Uneducated people, peer pressure Disorganised community with no plans Technology (chainsaws)
Shortage of customary forest (bush)	Decreased amount of wood for canoes, carving and housing materials Less community income to be gained from (small scale) timber milling	Cash pressured lifestyles Unsustainable harvesting Lack of re-planting and sustainable cutting (silviculture) practices. Ignorance, disrespect and selfishness Laziness
Pollution of water	Poor health Reduction in availability and quality of marine species (fish, clams, other shell fish etc)	Cash pressured lifestyles Upstream commercial logging by expat companies (oil spills/cloudy water/ flooding/soil erosion)
Inequality in financial 'have's and have nots' (most commonly cited by women)	Health problems go untreated Children cannot attend school Minimal food security (not much variation in kaikai) Theft Disputes Very young girls sexuality exploited by loggers Increased teenage pregnancy Bored youths	Commercial logging Lack of financial management skills Greed and self-promotion School fees Uneducated people No proper record and history of landownership and land boundaries Lack of livelihood options

Figure 2. Natural resource concerns

Pie chart labels:
- Lack of 'say' in decision-making 2.7
- No future for children 3.9
- Land disputes 4.2
- Increasing population 5.8
- Proposed commercial logging 1.5
- Inequity in natural resource benefit 5.4
- Degraded land 6.2
- Unsustainable fishing practice 7.6
- Downstream effects of logging (e.g. water pollution) 10.6
- No concern 1.9
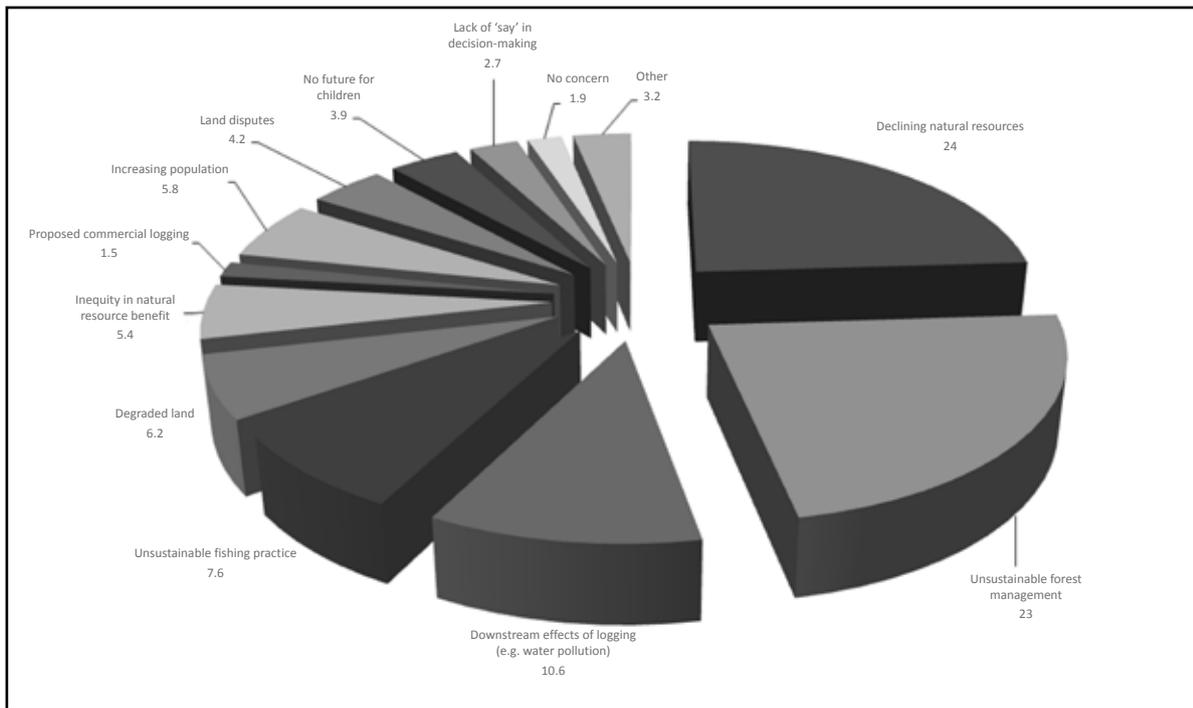- Other 3.2
- Declining natural resources 24
- Unsustainable forest management 23

graphed together. The differences to be noted are that all participants who responded that 'they are concerned about the inequitable distribution of natural resource benefits' were all women (young and old), and all responses of 'lack of say in decision-making' were also all women's responses. Responses regarding participant's major natural resource concerns are shown above in figure 2.

When natural resource sustainability concerns were grouped (unsustainable forest management, declining resources, downstream effects, unsustainable fishing, degraded land and proposed logging), 73 per cent of participants were concerned about natural resource sustainability. Twenty-four per cent of participants saw unsustainable forest management (inclusive of logging) as their most pressing concern while declining land and sea resources, was identified by 23 per cent of participants. Other concerns included inequity in natural resource benefits (five per cent) and lack of say in decision-making (three per cent); both these concerns were cited solely by women. While these percentages may seem low, women's major concern was about sustainability themes, perhaps reflecting their immediate concern for the environment before themselves. Perceptions toward access to decision-making and inequity in natural resources benefits are further explored later in the research.

Of interest is the two per cent of participants who said they had no concerns. These statements were noted to be made by men in positions of influence, who benefit from commercial logging agreements, in West Arosi and pro-loggers in Renbel. While most participants were concerned about depletion of both land and sea resources, stories

commonly reflected men's and women's biggest immediate concern as commercial logging. This concern was a very urgent one in the majority of communities as expressed by a woman in South Rendova:

He (loggers) destroy every plant, every ground, every tree, everything wherever the bulldozer can walk. If logging continues, the river will be spoilt, the fish will die, every bird will run away and all the land here will be swallowed inside the ocean; there will be no future for our children. (Woman, South Rendova)

A young woman in West Arosi commented:

Everything nogud, logging now ia (everything is no good, it's the logging).

In explaining why commercial logging was present in her community, a young woman from East Isabel shared:

We allow logging because we need money. People cry for money. (Young woman, East Isabel)

Concern for sexual exploitation of young girls

Concern relating to the sexual exploitation of young girls was found in three RAP locations. In South Rendova, West Arosi and Central Bauro women told stories of parents in desperate need of money giving permission for very young girls to be bought by foreign loggers. Some of the women expressed extreme concern for the situation, while other just stated the situation:

> *In my community nearly all the young girls have been taken by loggers, their parents allowed it for the money. Some of these girls got pregnant, and now they are here and the loggers have gone. Some pregnant girls leave the country with the loggers. (Woman, Central Bauro)*

> *The (foreign) loggers have most of our girls, parents just allow their children to go when loggers give them money and other materials. (Woman, West Arosi)*

> *The very old (foreign) men took underage girls to marry. (Woman, Central Bauro)*

> *Logging are men's things. They take money, drink beer and take our young girls. Teenage girls don't care if the men are old and ugly; they go for the money. (Women, South Rendova)*

> *The (foreign) loggers have contributed a lot to early teenage pregnancies in our communities. In the village you can see lots of half casts. (Women, South Rendova)*

Women were also concerned about young girls' safety within their own communities. Stories of boys in the communities using violence to sexually assault young girls were shared. While the women knew these activities were not good, it was apparent that they were not fully aware of basic women's rights and the rights of the child.

Concern for sanitation

While both men and women raised the issue of poor sanitation on many of the RAP activities, women and girls in particular were very concerned about sanitation and would benefit greatly from improved sanitation. Currently, a large number of women without access to toilets wait until dark before walking, sometimes long and unsafe distances through loggers' camps, to use beaches or mangroves. This often means they have to go all day without using a toilet and risk damaging their health, and reducing their person safety. Participants commented that having to go at night has exposed some to sexual assault. Further it was found that in some communities water supplies have commonly been put in without consideration of sanitation:

> *Our community have a water supply (funded by the EU), but no toilets. We use the river but we also swim on top and the fish live at the river mouth. (Young woman)*

Concern relating to land disputes

Concerns surrounding disputes and divisions between tribes and clans, as well as within families, were common in communities especially where individuals were negotiating or renegotiating logging contracts. A man in West Arosi explained:

> *Some people have bad and selfish attitudes and some are concerned by everyone. It is impossible to go forward together with selfish people in our community. (Man, West Arosi)*

In West Kolombangara a young man explained his thoughts relating to the reason why disputes occur:

> *Disagreements take place as women are not recognised. The relationships even within families can be very bad. (Young man, West Arosi)*

An elderly man from Kolombangara commented on the impact of intermarriage on disputes:

> *In the past there were only two tribes and then intermarriage started in the last 20 years ago also bringing land disputes and some changes in land ownership.*

Land tenure and gender roles

Land is central to culture, identity and survival and as such is highly valued in the Solomon Islands and integrally related to all aspects of daily life. Despite increasing migration to centres such as Honiara, most people retain customary rights to land in their home community.

With such a large proportion of land being held under customary tenure, it is important to understand the position land takes in the context of Solomon Islands life and the systems by which people receive and transact land rights and how these have changed over time. It must be stressed that land tenure cannot be viewed in isolation of a host of social, political and economic factors. Solomon Islands communities function as integrated 'wholes', not compartmentalised segments; accordingly, land cannot be viewed in isolation of other community functions.

The RAP found the customary land tenure system has changed (unevenly) in response to pressures and circumstances exerted internally and externally. The RAP process also highlighted how the Solomon Islands Government struggles to come to terms with the problems inherent in customary land tenure systems and the impact of past colonial policies, as contemporary societies gradually change from subsistence to a cash economy.

Matrilineal land tenure

RAP communities with the exception of West Arosi and West Rennell, practice matrilineal land tenure whereby claims to land ownership are through a genealogical blood line to the original woman settler. As such the first born female usually heads the clan or tribe while a male relative acts as the spokesperson for the woman and her land.

Participants reflected that traditional matrilineal societies were characterised by women holding strong ownership positions

and *kastom* with respect to land. While men represented women in decision-making in traditional societies, female and male participants still considered women's decision-making access and influence in traditional societies to be greater than in current times. In West Kolombangara a women commented:

> *Women were strong when the matrilineal system was stronger, in those times men had more respect for women. (Woman, West Kolombangara)*

Women and men described traditional matrilineal society where the first born son provided leadership, warfare and protection in times of peaceful coexistence while the second born son (and other sons) held more of a priestly role. Women's roles were centred on the provision of social strength, responsibility regarding ceremonial matters and women were the diplomats of communities. Blood lines were extremely important and women and men were perceived by all participants to traditionally hold mutually important and complementary roles.

Leadership positions in the past were both ascribed and achieved. When the role was achieved it was based on characteristics such as warrior ability, hard work and physical strength. A woman in Rendova described an achieved position:

> *In the past a man who brought home the most heads from head-hunting was seen as a hero and voted our tribal leader (Woman, Rendova)*

Leadership positions for women could be achieved through the display of high moral values, wisdom, hospitality and honesty. Traditionally both male and female strands of leadership were very important.

In the past land ownership linked closely to site-specific land knowledge and management systems. In today's society people struggle to know how to manage their land most effectively. A woman in West Kolombangara shared:

> *Knowledge is inherited with the land through our women; because of this, different people have different knowledge for different land. In each family things are passed down differently. But now there is less land and we don't have the knowledge to know what to do with less land. (Woman, West Kolombangara)*

Participants felt traditional roles, land ownership and women's leadership opportunities, were modified and the matrilineal and chiefly systems eroded with the introduction of resource extractive activities, including extensive logging operations, synchronised with increasing demands for cash for livelihoods. As such women in all RAP communities (and less so in Isabel) expressed that their power in decision-making has decreased markedly with the entry of land trustees, middle men, and provincial government all undermining the power of the chiefly system. Women felt

their status and respect had been lowered from this time forward.

When shown a picture of land as a stimulus tool in RAP group discussion around current land access and control, the women in Central Bauro instantly made comments about men exerting modern day power through major land infrastructure and development decisions:

> *Man make all decisions for using land, then women 'do'; man is boss. (Young woman, Central Bauro)*

> *Mere's (women's) role in decision-making is silence. (Elderly woman, South Rendova)*

Participants in Western Province and Isabel explained that in the past they had a chief for land and a chief for the tribe with different roles, but now there is only one chief, as one woman in Central Bauro commented:

> *The change in traditional leadership structures makes it easier for investors. (Woman, Central Bauro)*

Another woman in West Kolombangara explained:

> *While we women own land our title is no longer respected, our brothers take over. 'Landowner' is just a name passed from mother to daughter for use of land but not control. (Woman, West Kolombangara)*

Participants described that land in South Kolombangara can currently temporarily be passed to sons as custodians if there are no daughters, however it is then passed back to the next female born to the son's mothers' sister. RAP participants shared stories of the past where the importance of adoption was high across communities. Adoption ensured that birthrights (positions of influence) could be transferred.

When inter-marriage occurs land rights are not usually passed on to the children, however, the RAP found different scenarios related to how different tribes dealt with this issue. Stories were also shared relating to how people (male and female) who did good deeds or who had good virtues could be given land as a gift.

Participants described how some logging companies pay trustees (men who act on behalf of women landowners) for the use of customary land for commercial logging. They also described how this provides the catalyst for many disputes. One such dispute is currently being heard in the high court involving one land owner trying to prove matrilineal genealogy to the land against another. A woman in South Rendova described a land dispute she was involved in:

> *We became enemies in our own families, brothers and sisters were arguing over land and logging. The land owner woman wasn't given any of the money, and the brother took it all. We women went into the kitchen and talked about our brother and got very angry; even though*

we own the land, we have no benefit of the land. (Woman, South Rendova)

Further, in South Rendova participants first explained that in today's society the role of the first born son is to represent the mother's land while the brother represents the sisters' interests. Roles are not equitable in practice however, women and men reflected that women have very little influence in NRM decision=making. A man from South Rendova shared:

> *In reality man are boss but actually women own the land, then the first born son of the women makes decisions about the land. If the son dies, then the first male from his sister gets the land, if there is no sister, the Trustees (or tribal leaders) decide. (Man, South Rendova)*

In South Kolombangara a women contributed:

There are currently some women tribal leaders here however their brothers speak on their behalf on all land matters. (Woman, South Kolombangara)

Participants described how changes in attitudes toward land management and access have impacted on gender and power relations:

> *Ownership hasn't changed but the role of a landowner has changed. While men always controlled land consultation on behalf of the women, the men now behave more like they are the landowners. (Women, Central Bauro)*

Before logging women were 'strong to land', now because of money (logging) men are strong. (Woman, South Kolombangara)

The power before was with the women, today it is with the men. In the past decisions about plantations and development were with the women, today men make all the decisions. (Man, South Rendova)

This transition upset a woman in South Kolombangara who stated:

> *We women are important. We 'mother blo ground' (mothers of the land). I want to sit down and tell the men not to forget us. (Woman, South Kolombangara)*

In East Isabel participants felt a sense of satisfaction with the matrilineal system that exists (the strongest of all research provinces) however women still desired change in decision-making power structures. Women in East Isabel commented that there are currently both male and female chiefs who form the House of Chiefs in each district to look after village affairs. East Isabel women commented on some recent changes where women have taken on men's traditional church roles in West Rennell.

> *In the past, since Christianity was started here, it was only men who could conduct worship ceremonies but now, just a few days ago a few women were allowed to be involved. These women have taken up pastoral responsibilities in the church, something that has never happened before. (Woman, East Isabel)*

Patrilineal land tenure

Patrilineal communities involved in the RAP include West Arosi, Makira Province and West Rennell, Renbel Province. Arosi is an exception in Makira as other areas in the province are predominantly matrilineal. This is due to Arosi descendants being closely related to Are-Are in Malaita where patrilineal systems are the norm.

A man in West Rennell explained the patrilineal land tenure system in his community:

> *Land ownership is customary with men having the hereditary right to succeed ownership. The first son inherits the land from the father. In certain cases when there are no male sons, the son of the brother of the deceased landowner inherits the land. In other cases any male from the same tribe can also take over those lands. (Man, West Rennell)*

Other participants explained that in present times, land is passed between males through a verbal 'will' and when this happens land is not necessarily inherited by blood but by virtues. Women can only be stewards of the land while a male heir is young.

Special circumstances exist for males and females when landowners 'gift' land. As one man explained:

> 66 *Land can be a special gift to anyone, man or women (that) the land owner wishes to give it to. This is done through love and respect only. (Man, West Arosi)* 99

With the increased land shortage land is also bought for children who have nothing to inherit.

Land tenure in West Rennell is different from other provinces as it includes both land and sea units. Currently high competition for land exists in West Rennell and participants described that land access can be at individuals risk and terminated at any time by the landowner.

In West Arosi men spoke of how land is still 'used' spiritually as part of their tribal identity.

Due to the strong patrilineal systems, West Arosi and West Rennell present two of the hardest communities to engage with in terms of willingness to creating space for women's voices in the current context.

Past and present power relationships

Both matrilineal and patrilineal communities had highly structured chieftain power systems traditionally, which participants report have eroded and transitioned in recent times.

The following table of past and present power relationships records information gathered from RAP participants in each location.

The power transformations between the past and the present were reflected upon by participants, particularly women and young women, who reflected that in the past societies were happier, more communal and had a better balance between themselves, their population and the environment.

Table 5. Power structures within RAP communities

Province	Past power structures	Present power structures
Western Province	Ultimate power was held with the Paramount Chief under who war heroes, tribal chiefs and landowners held equal power. Each tribal chief headed a chiefly tribal family line who reigned over other tribe members and families.	Power sharing exists between the Paramount Chief and the Provincial Government. Under the Paramount Chief equal power is shared between the church, landowners and their trustees, tribal chiefs, the Council of Chiefs and other powerful community leaders (usually in the village or school committee).
Makira Province	Ultimate power was shared equally between the village chief, a tribal chief and landowners. The village chief represented community members at large. Tribal chiefs were followed in power by chiefly tribal family lines that held power over other tribe members.	Power is equally shared between the village chief, the tribal chief, the Provincial Government and church leaders. Beneath this structure the school committee holds equal power to village trustees and tribal trustees who in turn hold the power over families and tribal members respectively.
Renbel Province	Ultimate power was held with the paramount chief under whom tribal chiefs and landowners held the next level of power. Tribal chiefs had power over sub-tribe leaders who in turn held the power over community members.	Power sharing exists equally between the Paramount Chief and the Provincial Government. Beneath the Paramount Chief power is held equally between church leaders, tribal chiefs and other prominent community leaders. Beneath these structures power is held within church group committees, tribal chiefly blood lines and the village and school committees.
Isabel Province	Ultimate power was held with the Paramount Chief under who war heroes, tribal chiefs and landowners held equal power. Each tribal chief headed of a chiefly tribal family line who reigned over other tribe members and families.	Power sharing is held equally between the elected Council of Chiefs and the Provincial Government. Beneath these structures power is shared equally between trustees and the House of Chiefs and the church. The chief has chairpersons whom they consult with on decisions. Beneath the House of Chiefs power is divided between tribal leaders and community chiefs.

Participants also reflected on the contrast between the present the past, where a barter system was present where people exchanged goods and lived within their closed communal ecosystems.

> *In the past there was enough for everyone, everyone was happy and we shared. Then respect and family life go down, respect for chief has gone down and there have been big disputes, no enough land, no enough kaikai, no enough fish. Sometimes we eat snails. (Women, South Rendova)*

Many participants identified that the way forward must include taking the best attributes of power structures in the past systems and finding a way to combine them with the best characteristics (strengths) of the current system with new ideas; and blend them to order to move forward.

Migration and power

Women and men highlighted a loss of power with increased intermarriage and settler status to the land. One 34yr old woman from South Rendova, Western Province, described how her desire to 'speak up' was limited by her settler status which makes her consider self-harm.

> *I am part Malaita and not a Lokuru and my mother is also part Gela (Central Province). We are always teased as 'floating people'. We always fight over land with relatives. One day my uncle cut my clothes in a fight over land. I cannot ever forget this day. My mother has no power and neither do I, but I want to speak up. It is very sad and sometimes I feel like I want to commit suicide. (Woman, South Rendova)*

In West Kolombangara a woman shared:

> *We settlers are losing identity, we are born from Gizo, Choiseul land is part of our identity and here (Western Province) we have no land. (Woman, West Kolombangara)*

The relationship between land ownership and power and access to decision-making is explored further in the next section.

Access to, and control of, natural resource decision-making

Women and men hold the same views concerning the people in (and outside) the community who hold the most power and control over natural resource decisions in the past and present. Traditionally most power was held by chiefs followed by elders, then clan or tribal leaders, landowners, and men. Women, married-in women (meaning those from other villages or provinces), young men and young women were associated with the lowest positions of decision-making power and influence.

In modern societies participants most frequently identified middle men as holding the most power followed, or held equally, by investors, then MPs, chiefs/elders, landowners or their trustees, and then the Ministry of Environment Conservation and Meteorology and men. Again, women, young men and young women hold the least power, as well as diminished access to representation in decision-making in modern societies compared to the past.

The introduction of additional (western-style) stakeholders in modern systems was identified by women and some men to further limit women's ability to access or influence decision-making. RAP activities and discussions around decision-making highlighted that both women and men do not fully understand their own socio-cultural systems and processes that translate culture and *kastom* in the modern decision-making context. As such men commonly exploit *kastom* in the modern context to their advantage for control of natural resource decisions and benefits (royalties). In communities of West Rennell, West Arosi and East Isabel, women perceive men's control and influence in decision-making as inevitable and perceive little opportunity for contradicting the existing systems.

Women in both patrilineal and matrilineal provinces were found to perceive themselves as having varying degrees of access to decision-making, however, common to all perceptions of current decision-making systems was that women hold little to no power or influence. Desire among women to actively participate in natural resource decision-making (and decision-making in general) was apparent in both land tenure systems. In West Arosi and West Rennell, women's aspirations for change were tempered by their lack of confidence in challenging existing systems and men's fear of losing their existing power. Women in Isabel perceived their current system to work reasonably well and most reported that they currently feel somewhat represented by men and are comfortable with the systems 'their culture dictates'. This did not stop some women in East Isabel expressing their disappointment toward decision-making.

Currently women in all communities make decisions about where to plant crops, but all major decisions, including natural resource investments and major planning, are made by men with little to no consultation or true representation of women. A woman reflected:

> " *Women are the ones who make decisions in the gardens, as they are the ones who know how to plant, to feed children and market to meet the money needs of the family. (Woman, South Kolombangara)* "

The garden is where women's decision-making ends and men take dominium over everything else:

> " *No one knows what's happening in the community these days. I can decide where I plant tapioca, but come to big decision I am invisible. (Woman, West Kolombangara)* "

The research found that while women were given access to land in both patrilineal and matrilineal systems, and ownership of land in matrilineal communities, both women and men, young and old, perceived men to make all decisions in modern societies. The level of influence of men was seen to rise with heightened socio-economic status.

Table 6 below, informed by data gathered during the RAP, summarises sex disaggregated data relating to access and control in natural resource decision-making, past and present.

When reflecting on how and why decision-making has changed, women commonly shared stories of once collective mindsets transitioning to more individual mindsets and decisions being made to serve individual rather than communal interests. They cited these changes had come about with the transition to a cash economy and the coming of missionaries:

> " *In times of head-hunting women made more decisions, when the church came into things it started to change. It then changed more when we changed to using money rather than bartering or shell money. While women can be landowners in Rendova, it is the men who exert their power in any selling or big land decisions. (Woman, South Rendova)* "

Table 6 Gendered perceptions toward land access and present

| Natural resource	Current decision making access and influence		Traditional decision making access and influence	
	Men	Women (excluding settler women or married-in who are commonly marginalised)	Men	Women (excluding settler women or married-in who are commonly marginalised)
Land	Decision-making: Concerning developments (e.g. plantations and commercial logging) Access: Open access and control which rises with socio-economic status (e.g. middle men, trustees provincial government and in some cases chiefs and elders)	Decision-making: Support men's concerns Access: Access through male representation / no direct influence or control (Amount of representation varies between families and is often tokenistic or perceived as being non-existent)	Decision-making: Concerning land use for subsistence (food, shelter and crafts) as well as hunting Worked with other tribal groups to plan crop rotations and share resources The barter system played an important role in decision-making Access: Open access and control which rises with socio-economic status (e.g. chiefs and elders)	Decision-making: Concerning land use of gardens for subsistence (and food, shelter and crafts) and all other land decisions Access: Access through genuine male representation in matrilineal system / limited representation in patrilineal systems In times of warfare or head-hunting women assumed some male decision-making roles when men were absent
Gardens	Decision-making: Concerning season to plant certain crops, and any heavy work required Access: Direct access and control for men and young men	Decision-making: Informal and small scale concerning harvesting, planting regimes and methods Access: Access for women through male representation. No direct influence or control in major garden decisions despite women and young women undertaking the majority of the garden labour	Perceived to be the same as currently practiced	Perceived to be similar to current practices with greater levels of influence and respect
Forest	Decision-making: Concerning developments (e.g. plantations and commercial logging) Access for men if desired, high levels of access and control for high socio-economic status	Decision-making: Concerning small-scale subsistence needs only Access: through male representation / no direct influence or control (Representation is perceived as being highest in Isabel, less in Western Province and little to no representation in Makira and Renbel)	Decision-making: Concerning management, use and strategic protection against enemies Access: Direct access and control for men and young men through male representation with higher levels of influence (e.g. village chief, tribal chief or tribal leaders)	Decision-making: Concerning management and use Access: through male representation with higher levels of influence than the present. Both women and men collectively decided on planning
Sea	Decision-making: Concerning fishing and harvesting times Access and control reasonably open to men and women young and old (in Rennell tribes own sea units in conjunction with land units)	Decision-making: Concerning subsistence needs (collection of shells etc) Access: through male representation / no direct influence	Decision-making: Concerning management and use and strategic timing of tambu sites Access: Direct access and influence for men and young men through male representation with higher levels of influence and control (e.g. village chief, tribal chief or tribal leaders)	Decision-making: Concerning management and use (but less influence than men) Access: through male representation with higher levels of influence than the present
Access to formal leadership positions	Open access by way of 1. lineage and/ or 2. virtues and /or 3. wealth	Highly limited or nonexistent in most communities. In Isabel there are some women chiefs however men represent them in decision-making	Ascribed (though blood lines) and achieved (through warrior ability and physical strength)	Acquired through virtues (social strengths and high moral values)
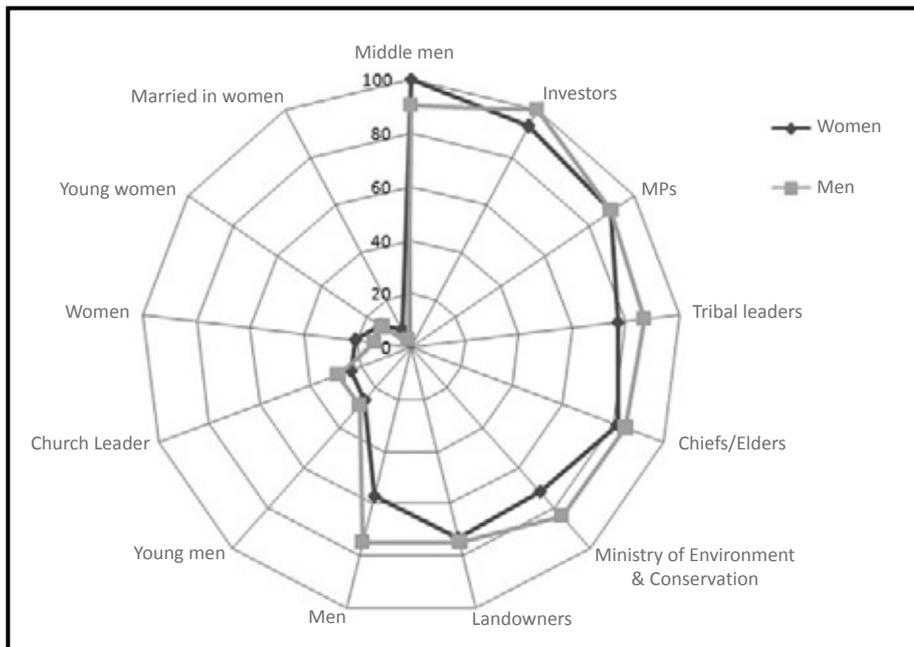
Figure 3. Gendered perceptions of who makes decisions about natural resources currently (Based on ranking frequency of men's and women's responses from 32 communities across 4 provinces)

In South Rendova women also discussed the link between traditional roles of masculinity and how it is reflected in today's decision-making structures:

> *Men think we don't have the body to make decisions; traditionally a man who came back with a head (skull) is a hero and strong physically. They think we women are weak but we are not. Decisions are with the men as they think they are still the strongest. Men are boss.* (Woman, South Rendova)

However not all men have equal influence on natural resource decision-making. This was illustrated when a man in West Rennell spoke:

> *I am a resource owner and I am not consulted properly. I voiced my concerns about logging directly to the pro-loggers as they are my close family and they do not listen to me; I am not as powerful as some of them. (Man, West Rennell)*

Women and men, in separate groups were introduced to an activity about control and access to natural resource decision-making. Facilitators asked women and men to arrange or rank a set of 13 named cards in a way that showed who they feel makes the most decisions about natural resources in their current communities to who they feel makes the least decisions. The participants were then asked to repeat the activity in relation to traditional decision-making access and control.

Figures 3 and 4 respectively depict the gendered results for the decision-making access and control activity in the present and past.

Figures 3 and 4 clearly illustrate the differences in the amount and nature of stakeholders involved in natural resources decisions today in comparison to the past as well as the change in power relationships that have resulted from the introduction of new stakeholders. Both graphs illustrate the lack of power and influence of women, young men and young women in natural resource decision-making. (During RAP consultations with stakeholders outside the communities, it was revealed that a very small number of women in the Solomon Islands act as 'middle men': while this was not found in the RAP communities, it is important to note the existence of women in this role.)

The modern governance and power systems that emerged, largely from foreign values and practices, along with the cash economy, has changed the way people view communalism—which was the basis of traditional governance and decision-making. One young woman from West Arosi reflected on the situation shown in figure 3 and 4:

> *In the past the chief sat in the middle and everyone sat around him; everyone respected the decision he made. Now we have a white fella system and the MPs and middle men have more power than the chief. We have many more people making decisions and it damages the chiefly system. (Woman, West Arosi)*
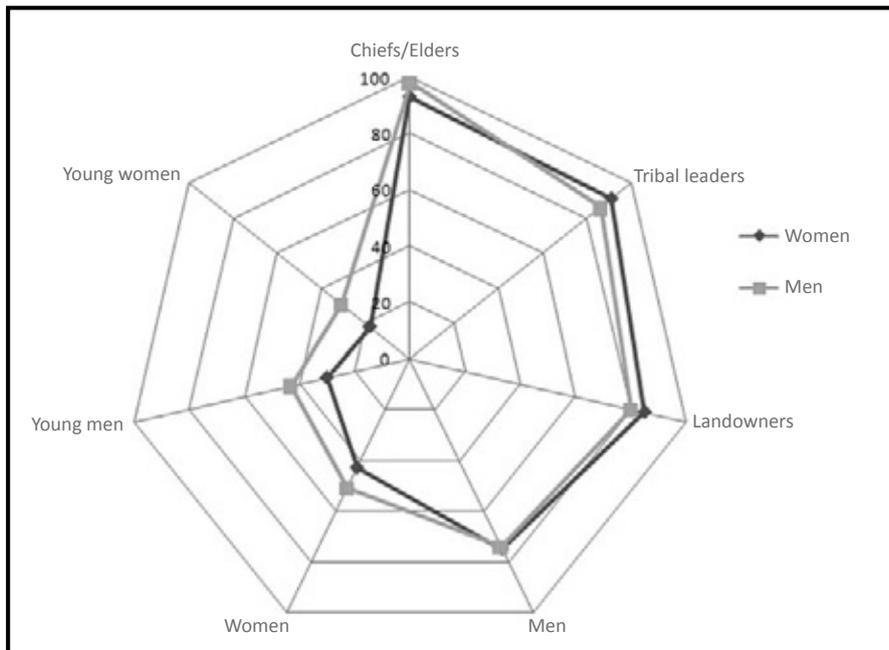
Figure 4. Gendered perceptions of who made decisions about natural resources in the past (Based on ranking frequency of men's and women's responses from 32 communities across 4 provinces)

Reflecting on the past, a woman in West Rennell commented on the influence of different stakeholders in today's decisions, many of whom are outside the chiefly system.

> *Decisions made about natural resources are different from in the past. Many people are now involved in influencing decisions for land and forest. This includes people with money from logging, middle men and the provincial government. Women are only consulted by the husband, but the big decisions are made by these big people. (Woman, West Rennell)*

A man in South Kolombangara commented:

> *In the past chiefs, elders, tribal leaders and landowners jointly worked together to make decisions. There were no big disagreements or disputes as there are today now that we have investors. (Man, South Kolombangara)*

Participants noted that middle men are commonly from the village or nearby villages; may also be a landowner or tribal leader and; are generally very good friends with other people in positions of influence (e.g. chiefs and elders). Participants described how middle men use persuasion to mobilise other men and young educated men to support them in signing logging agreements. MPs were identified as holding the power to bring in foreign investors and although they are not landowners they have very strong influence in decision-making through their connections with others in power positions. A man in South Rendova shared:

> *It is a small group of people who make decisions over our natural resources and they turn deaf ears on everyone else in the community. (Man, South Rendova)*

A woman in East Isabel noted that they do not always know what is going on:

> *Committee (Trustee) meetings are regular in Baolo but they don't tell us about their decisions or what they talk about. Some we (clan members) question ourselves, 'What is this committee meeting about?'. (Woman East Isabel)*

Another woman from a different community in East Isabel shared that she attends all major decision-making meetings in her community, and while she does not actively participate, she felt communication in her community, Sisiga, was better than in Baolo.

In West Rennell women perceived themselves not to play a part in decision-making as is directed and determined by the culture which does not include women and is intensified by the patrilineal system:

> *Women according to our culture will have no right at all to make decisions on land or forests. I have an experience with my own mother who has a brother who died with only one female child. They were the only ones left for this whole family and sadly the land and all the natural resources were taken away from them and are now owned by a different family from the same tribe. (Woman, West Rennell)*

In Central Bauro women are landowners but describe how they do not have any influence when it comes to decision-making of any scale, including land. In Central Bauro all decisions are usually made by a board of Trustees (all men). The Trustees are appointed by the tribes and undertake all signing for developments (e.g. logging). A woman shared:

> *We women are treated as second hand so we don't really make decisions about land. In our culture women cannot override men even though we have a matrilineal (land ownership) system. (Woman, Central Bauro)*

Women in South Kolombangara reflected on women's lack of power and influence in natural resource decision-making:

> *Nowadays men are taking the leading role, but they are destroying women's land and environment with logging; it's a big issue for us. (Woman, South Kolombangara)*

A man in the West acknowledged the marginalisation of women in decision-making:

> *Women's right to making decisions was 'thrown out' with logging; men make the decisions about investments. (Man, West Kolombangara)*

In West Arosi women spoke of how their concern for the environment and children's future is matched with no voice:

> *We women have a caring attitude for our children and the environment but we don't have any voice in decision-making. (Woman, West Arosi)*

The research revealed that on an individual basis, some women feel they are represented by men however, more commonly than not, women feel entirety excluded from decision-making. These differences are demonstrated below:

> *In our kastom mere (women) have the right to sharing land but we are not included (in decision-making), another women interrupted saying: It depends on your family, if they are more likely to listen or not, and another woman clarified: there is no kastom around logging as a land use, for different decisions there are different people involved but it is our kastom for men to make decisions and for women to prepare kaikai in the house, the role of women has changed with logging, because there is no kastom around logging. (Three women in West Kolombangara.)*

Of interest, men in West Arosi took it upon themselves to make a further demarcation in the decision-making ranking

activity. They decided to rank the people who 'normally' accept logging in West Arosi and those who are usually concerned about logging as follows in table 7.

Table 7. West Arosi men's ranking of people who accept logging and people concerned about logging

People who normally accept logging	People who are usually concerned about logging
1. Middle men	1. Ministry of Environment and Conservation
2. Investors	2. Women
3. MPs	3. Young women
4. Landowners (or Trustees)	4. Young men
5. Tribal leaders	5. Married-in women
6. Chiefs / Elders	6. Church leaders
7. Men	

Following the activity using ranking cards, a participant in West Arosi commented:

> *Those who support logging also have the most (cash) to gain from it. (Man, West Arosi)*

In the matrilineal communities, women and men, young and old acknowledge that women had more power traditionally:

> *Now men behave more like landowners and often do not even consult us; (Woman, West Kolombangara)*

Logging is always men who makes decisions and forget about the women. Here in Kolombangara women are the ones who have the power on the land, but men make the decisions. (Woman, South Kolombangara)

At the commencement of the RAP Men in West Rennell described their approval of the current decision-making system as illustrated by one man's delivery:

> *Our culture of making decisions by men is okay. We feel it is good and will not change. Women's participation in decision-making should only be at community work level; our decision-making system is fixed and we like it (Man, West Rennell)*

In Isabel women participants expressed some satisfaction with the current system of representation rather than influence in decision-making:

> *People here have respect for their chief or leader, social life is good and people in Baolo are free to move around and freedom of individuals is respected. Our men represent our interests. (Woman, East Isabel)*

Decision-making access is further complicated dependent on access granted to settlers, married in women and widows.

Access for these individuals is dependent on their individual family support; generally however they are not represented and have no influence in decision-making.

The following three women's stories describe the diversity of women's roles and perceptions that exist around women and natural resource decision-making in Isabel:

A woman settler in East Isabel expressed that she has no say in decisions regarding natural resources, she did not want a bigger say and she believed she could not help improve the management of natural resources in her community because by culture she was not allowed. However the same woman expressed extreme concern toward declining reef resources. She described how her grandfather exchanged pigs and crops for the right to settle.

Another woman in East Isabel shared that her husband works for the nearby logging camp and consequently she did not wish to be involved in managing natural resources as the benefits to her husband were important to her family.

Many responses from Isabel reflected the strong and intact culture of the chiefly system that prevails. Women had strong views about natural resource management, however they explained that their culture determined that they did not, and could not, have a direct voice. An anti-logging woman in East Isabel shared that she feels she is represented in natural resource decisions by men, and attends meetings (in silence) but would still like more influence. However when asked if she could improve the management of natural resources she replied, *no, because there is no chance for us to talk up because men mainly make the decisions.*

Another woman who was strongly against logging said I do not have confidence (to influence sustainable management) and it is against our culture. A young woman said *I am too young to deserve to be involved in making decisions.*

Women in East Isabel discussed how current legislation places more power with Trustees and exacerbates the power struggle of (female) landowners in Isabel:

> *For a clan, or land, we have a maximum of five trustees. The trustees can be male and female but they are mostly male. In the 1960's and 1970's the government came and pegged the area, allocating people to be trustees of the clan for pieces of land. Trustee documents were written by the government in a way that the trustees are seen to be the only owners—it is written for the trustees. This makes trustees abuse the power rested upon them by the document: when investors come they go after the trustee as only trustees can sign the logging agreement. I think the trustee document needs to be reviewed. (Woman, East Isabel)*

In Central Bauro women talked about being called to be present at some meetings only to watch the men dominate.

One woman landowner from Central Bauro described how she was able to assert her power over her land directly to a logging company:

> *When the ELITE logging company came, they asked me if they could park their machines on my land but I did not allow them, I do not believe in logging. (Woman, Central Bauro)*

This type of power assertion is not common. Another woman in Central Bauro described that she felt uneasy about the thought of being involved in decision-making:

> *If I were invited to give my opinion I would feel very reluctant and embarrassed. (Woman, Central Bauro)*

In Western Province, women were surprised to find that men openly expressed they could see value in increasing women's access to power and leadership positions of influence. The men stood up in front of the women on the second day of the RAP and told women that increasing their decision-making access would be beneficial for the community at large. In some communities, particularly in Western Province, men genuinely expressed their desire for inclusive gender balanced decision-making for natural resources (and decisions in general).

> *Decisions must be collective to be sustainable for our future. (Man, South Kolombangara)*

Women spoke freely about their perceptions of men's attitudes toward women. Women were found to be very frustrated by their perception of how the men perceive them.

Women expressed that their concerns relate to the way the men behave around women in the modern context. Women feel disrespected and undervalued in many communities as the following stories relate:

> *No matter what women say, men down the women, because men don't respect the women. Men think they are boss/ (Woman, South Rendova)*

> *Lots of men are more educated than women, so they believe women are only good for working in the garden. (Woman, West Arosi)*

Via an individual face to face survey all participants were asked:

a) Do you currently have a say in/ access to decision-making? and,

b) Would you like a bigger say / more influence in decision-making?

Responses were found to be alike on a province by province basis. As such, figures 5 to 8 below illustrate gendered responses to perceived current access and desired future access and influence on decision-making.

Figure 5 shows that only 33 per cent of women in Western Province currently perceive themselves to have access to decision-making in comparison to 81 per cent of men. The ratios are similar between current access for young men and young women, 85 and 35 per cent respectively. A large 86 per cent of women in Western Province voiced, through the face to face survey, that they want more decision-making power: young women are even more determined to have
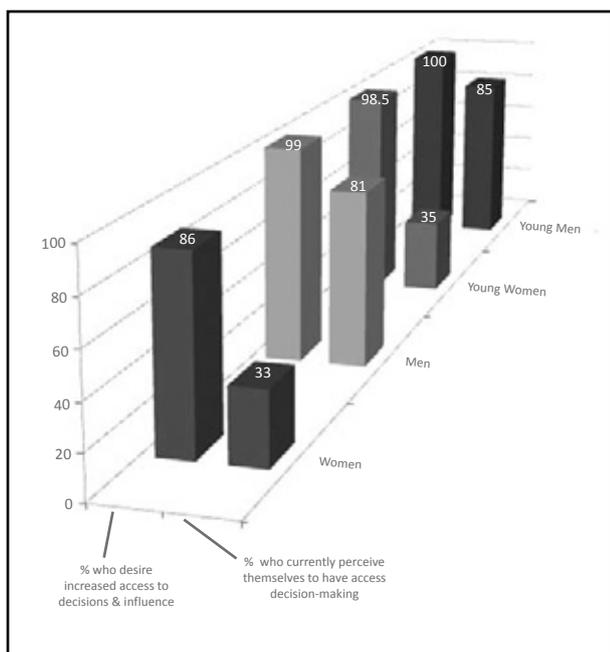
Figure 5. West and South Kolombangara and South Rendova desire for increased influence in natural resource decision-making vs current perceived access
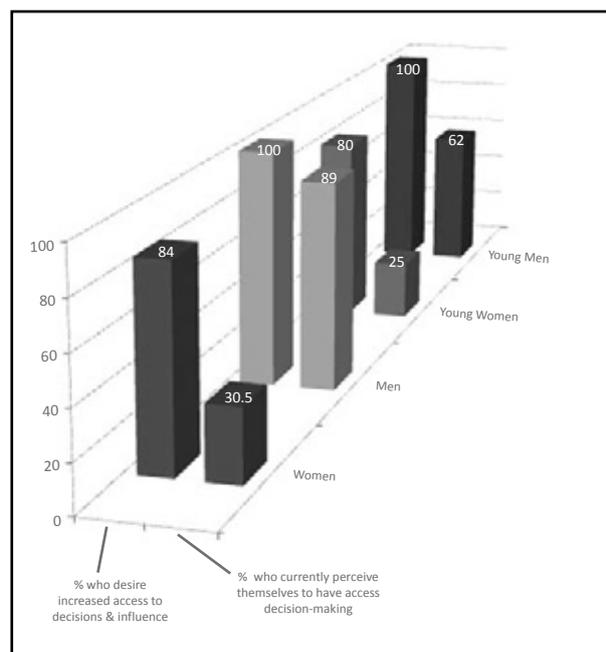
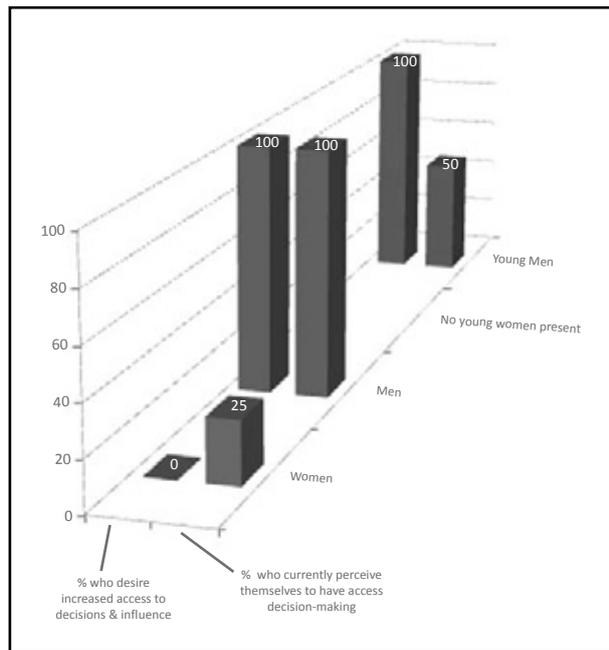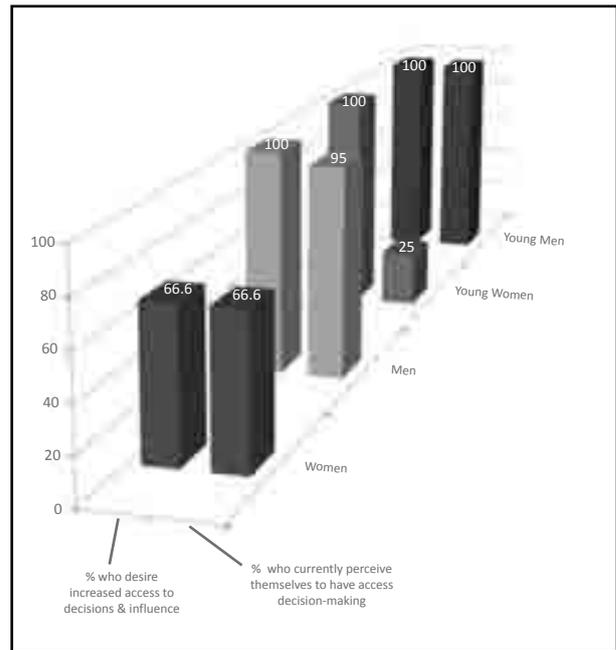*Figure 6. Central Bauro and West Arosi desire for increased influence in natural resource decision-making vs current perceived access*

power and influence with 99 per cent indicating their desire. Through RAP discussions and activities, communities in Western Province showed both women and men are ready to embark on a path toward exploring models and virtues of inclusive decision-making.

Data from Makira Province in figure 6 display similar patterns to those found in Western Province. Currently 31 per cent of women perceive themselves to have access (via representation) to decision-making, in contrast to 89 per cent of men who have access. The disparities between genders is also present in youth with only 25 per cent of young women currently have access in comparison to 62 per cent of young men. Women and young women desire much higher levels of influence; 84 and 100 per cent respectively. Of interest, 100 per cent of men and young men also want increased access and influence. Big barriers exist in Makira toward inclusive decision-making, especially in West Arosi where kastom is often cited as 'not allowing' women to make decisions. Nonetheless West Arosi women were unafraid to express their aspirations in the face to face survey and in the presence of other women.

Results in West Rennell were very different from other RAP sites. In West Rennell women feel extremely pressured and suppressed by patrilineal *kastom*—this was reflected in results where no women said they wanted a bigger say in decision-making. During RAP activities women in West Rennell expressed disappointment and frustrations with current decision-making systems however they could not see any hope in working against the ingrained systems. Only 25 per cent of women report that they have access to decision-making compared to 100 per cent of male participants.

Unfortunately no young women were present to record data. Approaches to inclusive decision-making in West Rennell will need to be radically different—and have a different starting point—from communities in Western Province.

Results show that women in East Isabel have the highest perceived current access to decision-making of all provinces (at 67 per cent) as well as the overall highest current access for women, men and young men combined. Similar to Makira and Western Province, 100 per cent of young women and young men desire greater influence and access to decision-making, however only 67 per cent of women desire greater access (lower than Makira and Western Province communities). Women in Isabel displayed higher levels of satisfaction with current decision-making access than other provinces. Despite this, some voiced the need for improvements. Isabel was identified by participants as still having a reasonably intact chiefly system which could be reflected in current access responses in figure 8. Note that while the graph indicates a large area for improvement desired by young women, the sample size of young women in East Isabel was quite small.

Figures 5 through 8 clearly show that while women have varying degrees of access to decision in all communities, they are represented in principle rather than practice.

A follow-up question asked all participants who indicated they would like a bigger say in decision-making about the area of decision-making in which they would like a bigger say. Responses to this question were not pre-determined options, but open ended, and later coded according to likeness. Responses were found to be very similar between all females

and similar between all males. As such, responses are sex, but not age, disaggregated. Figure 9 shows the gendered responses regarding the areas of decision-making women and young women would like a bigger say on.

Of the women who expressed a desire for a bigger say in decision-making, 27 per cent indicated they would like to influence decisions about everything relating to natural resources. 25 per cent responded they would like to make decisions about all land developments (inclusive of logging) and 15 per cent indicated they want to make decisions specifically concerning logging. Responses about natural resources and logging activities took precedence over conservation and cash benefits. Women believed that having more decision-making influence relating to natural resources would be linked to more benefits, and consequently many did not identify equity in benefits as their primary response.

Figure 10 shows the gendered responses regarding the areas of decision-making men and young men would like a bigger say on.

Of the men who indicated they would like enhanced influence and access in decision-making, 32 per cent indicated that they would like to exercise influence on any decisions relating to natural resources. Conservation of land resources followed with 24 per cent: in contrast to conservation of sea resource with eight per cent. Men identified that the urgency of land conservation surpassed that of conservation of sea resources. Men's and women's responses were not dissimilar, however only women cited their desire for decisions on gardening, distribution of cash benefits, and mining; reflecting their roles, responsibilities and interests.

Decision-making for marginalised people

Women and men discussed the access windows; people with disabilities, married-in women and settlers, have to decision-making. Common men's statements relating to the inclusion and status of marginalised people included:

> *Disabled and very old people, they are outcasts, they do not make decisions, they are completely forgotten. (Man, South Rendova)*

When men in West Arosi were asked how they thought these people felt about not being included, a man responded:

> *They feel neglected and that's how the community looks at them. They feel the community totally forgot about them but we should respect their views. (Man, West Arosi)*

In some circumstances married-in women and men also experience exclusion:

> *Married-in men and married-in women have very good ideas for decision-making but others in the community suppress them because they do not have rights to owning land. (Woman, Central Bauro)*

Their (disabled) appearance is weak physically and that disqualifies them, but actually they are important to decision-making. (Man, East Isabel)
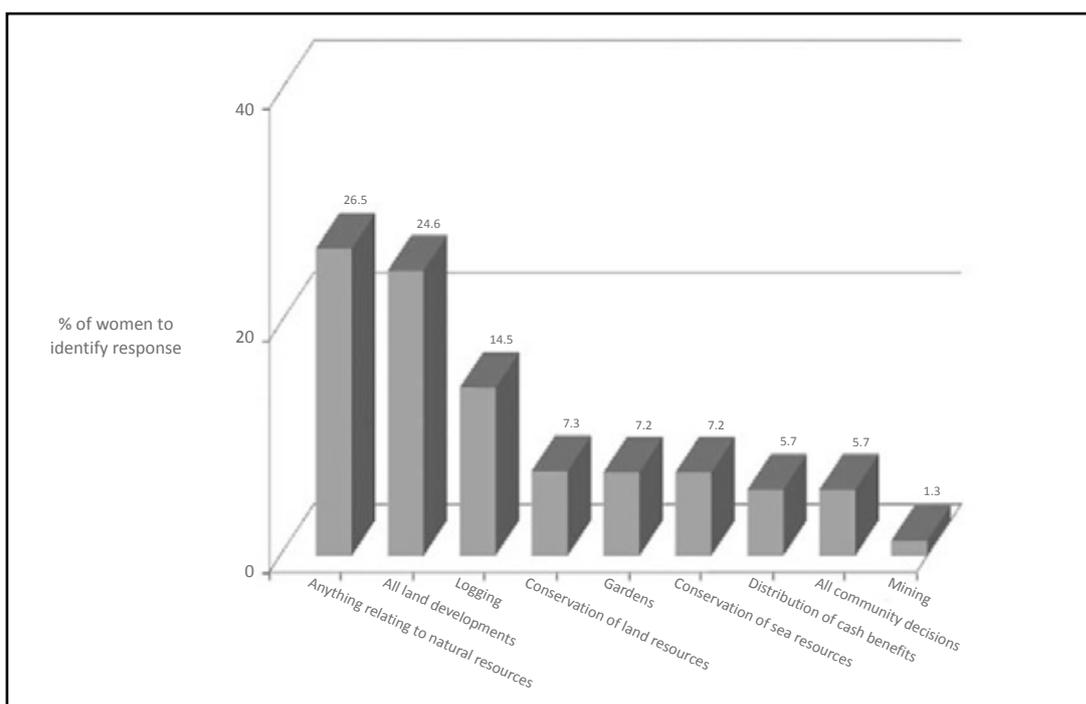

Figure 9. Decision-making areas women desire to influence (Responses from all women who expressed desire for increased access to, and influence on, decision-making)
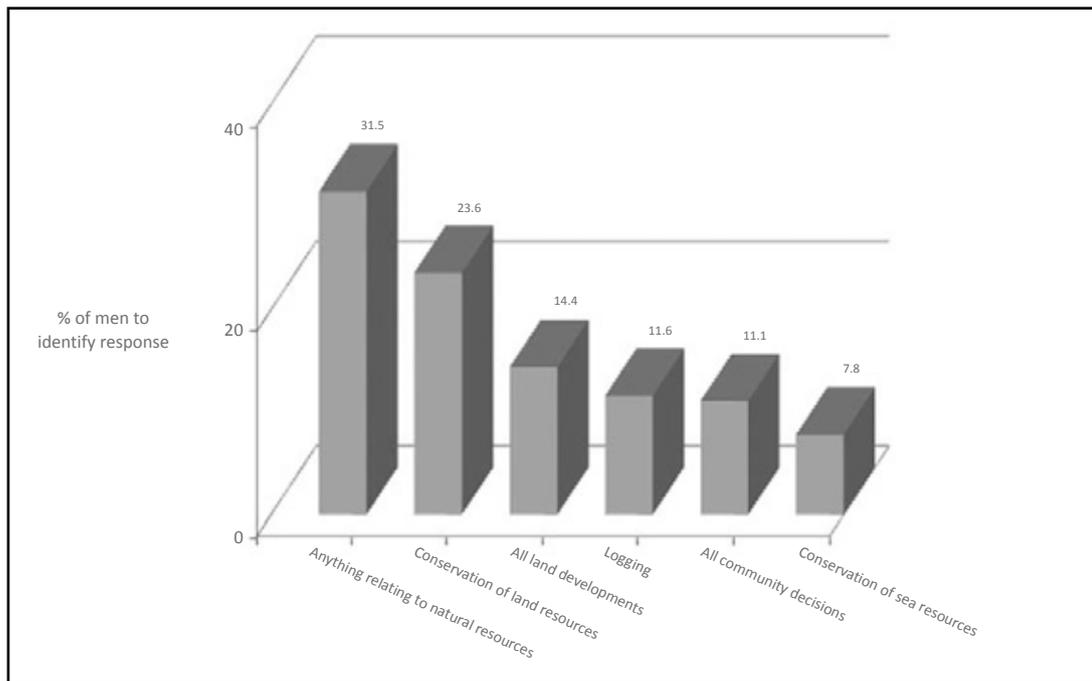
Figure 10. Decision-making areas men desire to influence (Responses from all men who expressed desire for increased access to, and influence on, decision-making)

Access to, and control of, benefits from natural resource economies

Predominantly subsistence, rural livelihoods are being increasingly exposed to cash-based systems and demands. Cash-based activities in RAP communities commonly include agriculture, forestry and fishing. The access and control over the benefits from these resources is perceived to lie almost entirely with male 'middle men' and male land trustees. Only the cash from small scale agriculture sometimes stays with women.

Equity in the distribution of goods, services and wealth, as practiced under traditional chieftain system, is no longer a characteristic of the RAP communities. Since the erosion of this practice, families struggle to meet their daily needs.

Unsurprisingly a strong relationship exists between the extent of influence and prevalence of the cash economy and access and distance to markets. Proximity to markets presents opportunity as well as problems and temptations. The influence of the cash economy on livelihoods was referred to by a man from South Kolombangara, close to the Provincial centre of Gizo:

> *Using garden for kaikai (subsistence food) is stopping, because now we use the shop more, we have lost our good knowledge of how to use land. So our food security is small. (South Kolombangara)*

Similar stories were shared by women and men in South Rendova:

> *In the past the garden supported kaikai for families and ceremonial purposes, now it's used more selfishly. People want more than the person next door. There is no sharing of extras now because people keep anything extra to sell. (Women, South Rendova)*

Children eat less bananas as men want to use the garden for cash rather than kaikai. (Man, South Rendova)

Access to benefts

Women as crop managers are often found to have some control over the benefits from marketing crops, however this was found to vary between families (attributed to levels of greed and levels of respect toward women by men). A woman from Rendova shared:

> *In my own family my husband controls the money. Even if I sell anything I have to give him the money. If I or my children want anything at all, I have to ask him. (Woman, Rendova)*

One woman, who was not representative of the majority, in Western Province, positively described her access to decisions concerning money:

> *In my family we always discuss how we use the money from marketing. I feel my husband always listening to me fairly. (Woman, South Kolombangara)*

A woman in West Rennell explained how only a few people benefit from natural resources while most suffer the environmental and social consequences with no benefits:

The problem here in Rennell is when people want to start a big forestry or mining development the person who signs the contract always wants a big share. Most people have no money and we people struggle.

A man from Arosi was forthright in explaining how benefits are distributed in his community:

> In Arosi, men are king of everything. (Man, West Arosi)

A woman from West Arosi expressed concern relating to how the aforementioned 'kings' misuse natural resource cash benefits:

> Most money is from selling natural resources like copra. The men spend all the money on alcohol. I feel the men are misusing money. (Woman, West Arosi)

Many communities spoke of the erosion of the chiefly system in relation to changes to the distribution of natural resource benefits:

> In the past the chiefly system was very strong compared to now. Back then there was fair sharing of wealth among everyone. (Woman, Central Bauro)

A man in East Isabel commented:

> Today trustees have the power over landowners in decision-making and do not share the benefits. (Man, East Isabel)

As previously mentioned, women and men have different levels of access to cash benefits from marketing. The women of South Rendova gave an example, shown in table 8, of the difference between past and present economies and how changes to the cash economy have also changed patterns in land use.

> Changes in priorities were commonly expressed as being 'gud for some fella and not gud for some fella'.

The main change between the past and the present economies and dispersion of benefits was always attributed directly to logging and the cash economy, as well as the presence of Provincial Government and trustees who receive the bulk of monies (royalties) paid by expat companies to lease land for commercial logging.

Distribution of benefits from commercial logging

Women and men across the seven RAP sites were asked to reflect on the positive and negative aspects of the introduction of commercial logging. Table 9 shows the responses.

During the activity women in West Rennell were found to disagree with the men that roads were a positive legacy of logging developments. One woman insightfully stated:

> When roads are first made we think it is good but then we need money to buy a fare to travel on them. We now have become too lazy to walk. Things we think are good, end up making us sell more resources to afford the 'benefits'. (Woman, West Rennell)

A man in East Isabel described the 'gifts' the community had been given by the loggers:

> We are trying to build a high school in Lilika community, we already have been given 300 iron sheets in agreement with the loggers, but to continue our problem is timber: the logging company agree to provide iron sheets but not timber. (Man, East Isabel)

When asked about what the future will look like if logging continues women in South Kolombangara shook their heads and one woman spoke:

> I'm sad, it will be really bad, there will be a low number of resources and they might finish. There is no benefit: no money comes here because the landowner and middle man waits for it in Honiara. Our future generation will have nothing. (Woman, South Kolombangara)

Research communities in South and West Kolombangara, South Rendova receive fewer benefits (royalties) from commercial logging compared to communities in Makira

Table 8. Changing priorities with the pressures of a cash base economy

Resource	Today's priorities	Traditional priorities
E.g. Fish	1. Sell fish for money first (sold in the local or main market) 2. Then use any remaining fish for kaikai (for subsistence food) Unsustainable fishing practices (nets) are used as a small fish can fetch SBD$10	1. Use fish for kaikai first (subsistence food for the collective) 2. Share kaikai with other families 3. Return small fish to the water Sustainable practices ensuring a future

Table 9. Positive and negative aspects of commercial logging identified by women and men

	Positive aspects of commercial logging	Negative aspects of commercial logging
Men	Cash Roads Building materials	Some people do not have enough land
Women	No positives	Conflicts and disputes Individual selfishness No sharing Jealousy of people with big gardens Tribes fighting

and Isabel and West Rennell. This is because a majority of commercial logging occurs adjacent to customary land in Western Province, as opposed to other communities where customary land is leased.

Landowners and land trustees in all communities, especially in West Arosi, Central Bauro and imminently communities in West Rennell, have direct lease contracts with logging companies on customary land. Such contracts are signed by individual trustees or middle men on behalf of landowners. Middlemen and trustees commonly keep any benefits (commonly less than two per cent of the total contract value) to themselves.

A majority of cash benefits from commercial logging benefit SIG (up to 60 per cent of benefits) and expat investors and logging companies (up to 40 per cent of benefits). In some cases logging companies are part owned by the Solomon Islands Government, further compounding the interests and intent of Solomon Island Government in appraising contractual arrangements. Participants in East Isabel commented on occurrences where the government forfeited regulatory requirements and granted timber rights and issued licences without adherence to procedures that form part of the Forest and Environment Act of 1998 in exchange for large cash benefits.

In South Kolombangara the Paramount Chief described how he had been told his island is "like a ripe apple", with many investors wanting to eat the apple because of its vast diversity (potential for logging).

The pull toward relatively easy money in difficult circumstances is strong but in many cases, promises of benefits result in nothing. One woman in West Rennell explained her experience:

> *Every tribe in Rennell has two members who are trustees (responsible for development issues). All the tribes' trustees have signed contracts for logging. In my*

heart I really don't want logging but I agreed to the signing on behalf of my tribe because I don't want my tribe to be left out from the benefits the other tribes would be getting. But my expectation of the benefits was wrong...only the middle man and some other men get some money out of this signing. (Woman, West Rennell)

Other participants commented in the inequity of commercial logging benefits:

> *There are no benefits to the community, only middlemen. Even the landowner does not benefit. Sometimes the landowner is conned into thinking they will benefit and then they get nothing. (Man, South Kolombangara)*

'Middle men' are 'con men': they are corrupt and benefit from others peoples' resources. (Man, West Rennell)

It is the elders who benefit from logging, so they are the ones who want to sign the new contracts. (Woman, West Arosi)

In Central Bauro a women shared her frustration at being left with the environmental legacy of logging and no benefit:

> *Logging companies get big benefits while we get very little and our environment, rivers and seas are damaged. They loggers get to go home someday and we are left here with nothing.*

Resentment of having to live with decisions made by others was also shared by a man from Central Bauro:

> *Elderly leaders made decision 20yrs ago when I was still a small boy but it was not them who reaped the consequences of their decisions (logging) but it is us. We find things very difficult now.*

A young man in West Arosi commented:

> " *Logging makes the rich richer and the poor poorer. (Young man, West Arosi)* "

This statement was very bold for West Arosi and was met by disagreement from some other participants who remarked that they have no choice and cannot survive without money from logging.

Current and past natural resource markets

The extent of research community's' participation in the cash economy or otherwise can be attributed to the distance between communities and markets. Communities who struggle to access markets cite that they either lack the transport or lack the economic demand for their products to ensure that travel costs are outweighed by the economic gain from selling crops. Most communities sell garden crops, many sell milled timber, and some sell copra, cocoa and/or gravel. Apart from these local markets, trustees and middle men and others with power in communities receive 'easy money' from selling customary land for commercial logging.

Some communities were found to be in closer proximity to marketing opportunities than others. Western province communities have relatively good access to markets compared to those in Renbel and Makira Province. For example, South and West Kolombangara are in close proximity to Gizo (less than an hour by outboard motor (OBM)) and South Rendova is around 1.5 hours by OBM to Munda. In contrast, lack of market access is felt heavily by communities in West Rennell where communities have no access to medium and large sized markets within four hours. Some communities in Makira also experience poor access to markets of scale. The frustration of accessing markets was voiced by a man in West Rennell:

> " *The common artworks for the people of Rennell and Bellona are shown on the wood sculpture done by men of male strength in catching eagles, crocodiles or snakes. The women display their craft in mat weaving and basketry using coconut fronds and pandanus leaves. These skills are one of the main income for us but our biggest challenge is that there is no market outside the community.* "

Other stories from communities who do have access to local markets with other communities, reflect that it is common for markets to be flooded with an excess of common root crops. This situation is most dire in West Makira communities where travel is up to three hours by OBM from Arosi to the main market Kirakira and where people can still not find a diversified food base.

Women in Rendova spoke of the three hour wood canoe journey to the main market in Munda and said they have lots of crops to sell but no good transport:

Table 10. Community proximity to markets and main products sold

Communities	Nearest community market	Market where most agricultural products are sold	Market where most community forest products are sold
West Kolombangara, Western Province	Vanga (45mins paddling canoe) Main products: bananas, coconut, pudding, fish, and cassava.	Gizo (1.5hrs with OBM) Main products: all garden and sea resources.	Ringgi (2hrs with OBM) Main products: timber and round logs.
South Kolombangara, Western Province	Within individual communities.	Gizo or Noro (2hrs with OBM) Main products: all garden and sea resources (mainly kumara, cabbage, coconuts and vegetables) and sea resources, and gravel.	Gizo (2hrs with OBM) Main product: all timber.
South Rendova, Western Province	Ughele (30 mins paddling a canoe) Main products: tapioca, sweet potato, coconut, pudding, fish, cassava. Fish once a week. Collective markets at Ughele occur three times a week.	Munda (1.5hrs with OBM or 3 hrs paddling canoe) Main products: tapioca, sweet potato, coconut, pudding, fish, cassava	Munda and Honiara (Ship transports timber to Honiara over several days) Main product: All timber
Central Bauro, Makira	Pamua / Waimapuru or Kirra Kirra (1hour walk to Pamua and Waimanpuru and half hour truck to Kirra Kirra or 20 minute walk for other communities) Main products: kumara, banana, fish, cassava, cabbage, bettlenut	Pamua / Waimapuru or Kirra Kirra (1hour walk to Pamua and Waimanpuru and half hour truck to Kirra Kirra or 20 minute walk for some communities) Main products: kumara, banana, fish, cassava, cabbage, bettlenut	Honiara (1/2 day by ship) Main product: all milled timber
West Arosi, Makira	Tawatana for nearby communities (30 mins) or markets within individual remote communities. Main products: all garden vegetables.	Varies widely for communities dependant on location, markets are either with 30 mins travel time, or conducted within individual remote communities Main products: all garden vegetables.	Kirra Kirra / Honiara (3hrs by OBM to Kirra Kirra, 1/2 day by ship to Honiara) Main products: all timber, (as well as cocoa, and copra).
West Rennell, Renbel	Markets within individual communities as geographical isolation poses a large problem.	Tupuaki (2hrs walk or 20mins by truck) for some communities. Other communities have no access and there are no markets at the Provincial capital of Tinggoa. Main products: all garden vegetables.	Milled timber sold locally (some marine resources are shipped occasionally and sold in Honiara)
East Isabel, Isabel	Local vegetables sold to nearby logging camps	Buala market (Up to 4 hr by OBM for some communities) Main products: all garden vegetables and some marine resources.	Buala and Honiara (Buala is up to 4 hr by OBM for some communities and Honiara is a few days by ship) Main products: all timber (some marine resources are also shipped and sold in Honiara).

> **"** *Sometimes we take four or five women in the canoe but sometimes the canoe capsizes and all things sink. (Woman, South Rendova)* **"**

People in all communities cited the primary driver for money was to pay secondary school fees (around SBD $1000/year per student). Primary school is contribution based and most children complete primary education. Cash is also used for kerosene, OBM fuel and basic health needs.

Table 10 describes the RAP communities and their proximity to different markets.

Access, lack of transport, and in many cases, distance, to markets presents a major obstacle for many of the RAP communities. Problems are further compounded by the lack of financial services in all provinces except Gizo, Western Province.

Perceptions of sustainable and desirable markets for the future

Communities have a strong sense of the severity and complex range of effects unsustainable natural resource management practices can have on their livelihoods. While participants want access to and participation in sustainable markets they are unsure what activities will provide sufficient income to meet their needs. Suggestions commonly include value-adding to natural resources.

Access to markets was commonly cited as a major challenge to pursuing alternative activities to logging as a woman in East Isabel shared:

> **"** *We have lots of coconut that our grandparents and parents planted. Today it is still there and we do not use it for copra; it just a waste. It would be good to have a copra drier, and involve the youth in doing something like making copra. But markets for our product is an issue, Buala, is too far from here. (Woman, East Isabel)* **"**

Value adding to garden crops (e.g. cassava deserts) and finding markets for handicrafts (mats and baskets) were seen as desirable by women for women. Men commonly cited sustainable timber milling, copra, cocoa, and livestock small business (poultry, beekeeping, pigs), and selling handicrafts (carvings) as desirable. These ideas do not depart from current efforts to make cash incomes. On further reflection, women stated that they did not have the planning skills or access to markets to make these economies work for them.

A few communities mentioned a desire for eco-tourism however this was not common.

Women stated that the lack of inclusive decision-making and consultation on managing money lead to the mismanagement of cash that is made and relates to undesirable community impacts (drugs, alcohol, malnutrition etc). As such financial management skills were considered by women to be an essential foundation to enable and support alternative non-timber forest product (NTFP) livelihood initiatives.

Non-cash based livelihood options centred on sustainable agriculture and conservation of land and sea resources.

Both cash and non-cash livelihood options were further explored by participants in the community's visions section (further in this document).

Perceptions of 'inclusive NRM'

For some communities, the concept of inclusive decision-making was new while others were pre-exposed to the idea and terminology. In all communities genuine inclusion is not practiced.

Once the concept of inclusive decision-making was explained to women and men, they were quick to understand what it meant but varied by location in their ability to see its merits. In Western Province communities were very receptive to the concept, while in West Rennell and Isabel participants expressed reluctance and identified problems with its fit with culture and kastom. In West Rennell this could be seen to be reflected by the impact inclusive decision-making could have on those who currently hold power positions. In Isabel reluctance was seen relating to an upset inclusive decision-making would have to the prevailing and strong chiefly culture.

Men in Western Province were the most likely (out of all RAP men) to express the value of making space for women in decision-making:

> **"** *We need to change the balance to gender equality, but we men took over, we dominated. Why not decision-making with women? When men make decisions they are corrupt and no good. Women must make decisions too. Like in the bible there is a balance, both women and man, we should have balance too. (Man, West Kolombangara)*

> *Today women are being ignored by men; men who make decisions are taking advantage of the right (to land) passed from women. (Man, South Rendova)* **"**

In South Kolombangara the Paramount Chief, Steward Ero, attended the RAP. On the second day he referred to women being left out of decision-making. He said women were 'seen as slaves' by men. The Paramount Chief said the two days of research consultation had made him think about the importance of women's involvement. He promised to take a request forward to the Kolombangara Council of Chiefs to make space for a woman on the Council as well as consider their inclusion in village level committees.

This same level of recognition was not mirrored in communities in Makira, Renbel or Isabel. In Renbel men spoke in relation to inclusive decision-making:

> *I don't believe in equal rights, equal rights cause a lot of problems. (Man, West Rennell)*

For decision-making, realistically and practically only men will make decisions and this will be the case (going) forward. (Man, West Rennell)

During the RAP small groups of participants were asked to draw 'who' should be included in inclusive or 'dream' decision-making. Groups commonly drew everyone in the community. Of interest, some groups drew MPs and middle men as being firmly 'not included' and stated their interests were 'greedy' and 'not for the whole community'. Commonly included in men's and young men's first depictions of 'inclusive' decision-making were chiefs, men, women, youth, NGOs, and the church. Commonly included in women and young women's depictions of 'inclusive' decision-making were women, young women, married-in women, widows, men, chiefs, NGOs as well as all other community members. Women were easily able to identify who should be included, as they themselves are currently excluded.

In South Rendova women drew pictures including women distinctly before they drew men, and stated:

> *We include women before men because women are the custodians of the land.*

He doesn't look after children, he doesn't cook: he doesn't live our life.

In deconstructing the activity and sharing pictures with one another, participants were asked why everyone should be included. Representative responses included: *'so they are all involved',* and *'so they will feel it is their own decision'*; and *'because there will be less conflict'*. These statements in most communities were reflecting on the theory, rather than the practice, of inclusive decision-making and were more genuinely expressed by women than men. Women were more willing (confident) to verbalise why inclusive decision-making would enhance their lives in Western Province and Renbel

Province. They all firmly stated that the current structures and systems of decision-making are not inclusive.

Some other indicative responses from RAP communities are shared below:

> *Effective management of natural resources will only happen if everyone takes part in the decisions. (Man, West Arosi)*

When we are equal we can all make decisions, we will all respect each other. (Man, South Rendova)

Women in West Arosi went one step further and chose to comment specifically on the roles (and value) different people could play in inclusive decision-making. Table 11 presents their thoughts as they verbalised them:

To enable this to happen, women in West Arosi suggested the need for a review of the leadership structure for women to be more involved in politics. They also suggested the benefit of awareness programs for men on women's rights (both direct comments by West Arosi women).

A highly educated young woman in South Rendova shared:

> *Gender balance is a big issue on this island and currently women's voices are not heard. I admire those cultures where women are involved in decision-making: I would really love to be included as women have a heart for their family. We need a strong women's body (organisation/group) here.*

Women in South Kolombangara saw the virtues of inclusion as relating to steps toward reconciliation.

> *Today there are pro-loggers and anti-loggers and they are not on good terms. If we all talk and work together it will be good. (Woman, South Kolombangara)*

When participants were asked what needs to happen to move toward more inclusive models of decision-making,

Table 11 West Arosi Women's identification of people and their roles in inclusive decision making

Position in the community	Reason for inclusion/ role/ characteristics
Village and Tribal Chief / Chairperson	Does not sit 'high up there' but is equal Must possess good leadership qualities and not be self interested
Landowners	They owned the land so their rights must be respected
Church leaders	They can solve conflict peacefully
Tribal leaders	Know all the land boundaries
Men	Always seen as the head in everything
Women and youth	Will ensure decisions benefit everybody Women have some good leadership qualities

both women and men suggested that people first need to come together and talk, and that awareness of the benefits of inclusive decisions need to be understood by everybody. Other suggestions included:

- Create an inclusive decision-making policy
- Change the attitudes of leaders
- Review the way leaders are selected (to ensure the right character)

Influencing the perceptions of men was seen as key. A woman in South Rendova affirmed:

> " *We need to teach the men to include women in decision-making, let us not hide in the bush, he must realise women have an important role in the community. (Woman, South Rendova)*

Men do not know about gender balance, the important thing for both genders is learning about gender balance, at every meeting we are not represented. (Another woman, South Rendova) "

The women of Central Bauro (who had had contact with the National Council of Women) commented:

> " *Where a man stands there is a woman, so gender balance is a must. (Woman, Central Bauro)*

Involve women in decision-making bodies: include women in provincial government and national parliament. (Another woman, Central Bauro)

> *Educate men on women's rights because men do not think we know things. (Another woman, Central Bauro)* "

Many communities commented that while inclusive decision-making is good in theory, it would be very difficult to follow as different people in the community have different attitudes and ways of looking at things.

On the second day of the RAP, when women and men were brought together to share perceptions from the first day and inclusively consider the changes they would like to see in five years, women in some communities were pleasantly surprised to hear men presenting the benefits of including them more in the future.

A young man in West Arosi, where a lot of resistance was found, managed to share:

> " *Including women would help avoid conflict, disagreement and disputes. (Young man, West Arosi)* "

Perceptions of 'sustainable NRM'

Sustainability is embedded in Solomon Islanders (previously subsistence) culture and as such is not a new concept. Participants talk about sustainability as being part of their traditional lives that has now encountered the new obstacles placed by limited land, growing population and a cash economy. A man in West Rennell shared:

> *Sustainable resource management was part of people's lives here in West Rennell we have used it since the times of our ancestors. The problem now is the cash economy and laziness. Today people rely mostly on relatives in Honiara to send money and goods. It is an asset to have a relative in a town but it also makes people rely on food from shops, some people even steal from other's gardens. (Man, West Rennell)*

A man in South Rendova shared:

> *SIG has given us the wrong product with the wrong label and ingredients for our resources (logging). The problems are just too much to bear. (Man, South Rendova)*

All participants were able to give instant examples of signs of unsustainable natural resource management in their communities:

> *Fish is reduced in size and not plentiful. When we first married my husband caught very big fish (snapper). Now the fish is small and are very difficult to catch. One Sunday this year thirty canoes went fishing for snapper, because of this the snapper will stop and run out soon. (Women, South Rendova)*

In the 1960's a Chinaman used to come here to buy trochus from the villages in exchange for such things as knives, clothes, axe etc. At that time people used to collect ten to twenty drums of trochus just beside the village on the reef. Today people have to go far and deep and will only find a single trochus. If they are lucky in a whole day they will have ten trochus. (Woman, East Isabel)

Because nearly all the trees are logged, we have to go so far to look for trees now for our canoe. (Man, West Kolombangara)

They are taking all our gravel and it is spoiling the coast, our sea, it cannot continue at this speed. (Woman, South Kolombangara)

Because our land is little and our population has risen, gardens are made in the same area over and over again so our soil is exhausted. (Man, South Rendova)

Due to logging our nearby river (Aroaha), still looks brown and muddy even though the logger left last year. In the past when there were no loggers and the population was smaller we used Aroaha for drinking. We cannot drink from Aroaha anymore. (Young Women, West Arosi)

We used to be able to drink from the river, but now it is polluted because of logging: fish and people get sick from the river. (Man, Rendova)

Our water has been badly damaged by logging. We are not able to drink it now and have to dig wells for drinking water; we have no other choice. (Young man, West Arosi)

The current logging in Isabel is not sustainable especially the use of heavy machines and the lack of selective cutting. (Man, East Isabel)

> *When I used to go to the forest, I used to have this nice feeling—coolness of air, birds singing, different and spectacular sights, but when I go now, I just feel sad. (Woman, West Arosi)*

The temptation of mismanaging resources for immediate cash benefits is high. Many communities commented that the forestry undertaken on land leased from SIG (formerly customary land) is sustainable. That is sustainable in the sense that many logging companies use replanting and selective logging techniques, however participants commented they saw the forestry as unsustainable for their communities in many others ways as illustrated by their natural resource issues findings section and cause and effect diagrams. In addition, participants had the following comments relating to sustainability:

> *Even sustainable (commercial) forestry is no good, as it benefits the government and foreigners, not us. (Man, South Rendova)*

> *There is no future for land and forest as me fella no own it. (Man, West Kolombangara)*

Communities in Central Bauro witnessed that the logging company activity in their area was unsustainable in every way and broken promises had been made for years relating to replanting: women spoke of their experience in Kanuasugu:

> *We had the first logging site in Makira. Since 1983 the company promised to do reforestation but in all that time nothing has been done. We do not trust them as that was a condition of the lease. (Woman, Central Bauro)*

Communities expressed common stories of overworked gardens leading to poor soil quality and lack of food security:

> *We put in too much cassava, me fella garden the same area, over and over again and the soil is now dry. (Woman, West Arosi)*

I have been putting cassava in the same place for three years, now it will not grow. (Man, Central Bauro)

> *Before gardens were very healthy and small sized gardens fed a lot of people. Today crops are greatly affected by disease and crops are no longer healthy and they do not feed many people. (Woman, West Rennell)*

Secondary to land resources, participants discussed the sustainability of sea resources:

> *Nowadays we catch big fish and small fish. To be sustainable we need to use fishing line again and put the little ones back. (Man, South Rendova)*

Table 12. Participant perceptions of how long natural resource will last for (based on most frequent response)

Province	Location	Perceived time resources will last if current practices continue
Western Province	West Kolombangara	5yrs
	South Kolombangara	15yrs
	South Rendova	10yrs
Makira Province	West Arosi	10yrs
	Central Bauro	10yrs
Renbel Province	West Rennell	Answers for West Rennell were wide spread between 5 to 100 years with some participants responding forever. This could be a reflection of the high tension between pro and anti loggers. Some participants tried to avoid the question.
Isabel Province	East Isabel	20yrs

Participants were asked on an individual face to face basis how long they thought their natural resources would last. Results are shown below in table 12 and were not found to be significantly different between women and men.

Women and men in West Kolombangara expressed extreme concern over their natural resources matched by the extremely small amount of customary land they have for subsistence. From the water's edge it took less than five minutes walk to reach the boundary between customary land and the land owned by the Provincial Government leased to expatriate loggers. West Kolombangara communities were found to be the most willing for change given the imminent and extreme challenges they face.

Communities in Makira, who had experienced logging previously, and are divided over its reintroduction, felt natural resources would last for another ten years. Many participants in Makira gave two scenarios in answer to how long resources would last. The first scenario was that commercial logging activity is reinvigorated and the second scenario was that logging ceased. Their answers concerning the longevity of resources were far lower for scenario one than scenario two.

The diversity of responses in West Rennell were found to match the diversity of attitudes toward logging and the mix of people present who benefit from logging contracts and those who do not. The (easy and immediate) cash benefits of signing contracts for commercial logging companies were seen to outweigh other social and environmental ramifications for many.

Participants in Isabel had more land than other communities which may link to their response of 20 years.

One man from Central Bauro, when interviewed on day two of the RAP shared:

I must tell you, I feel really guilty as I was a signatory to the past logging company in my area. However now I know the problems, I have the power to make some strong resolutions for a brighter future for the new generation. (Man, Central Bauro)

The most commonly cited benefit of sustainable natural resource management was a future for pikininis (children). Some female participants from different locations also commented on the benefit of sustainability solely for the environment and for other species aside from humans. An old woman from Central Bauro spoke in front of all men and women on the second day and suggested:

As parents it is time that we work together with our pikinini. We should advise them of what the future will be like if we are not more careful with our natural resources. We should inform them of our past failures and treat our pikinini with love and respect. (Woman, Central Bauro)

Women and men's response to the question, 'What things would need to change to ensure more sustainable natural resource management?' are shown below in table 13.

Common to both women and men's lists for sustainable NRM is the identification of the need and the importance for land and sea conservation areas.

Existing conservation activities

In traditional communities conservation was commonly practiced to reserve areas of land and sea for periods of time. Today few conservation efforts exist in most RAP communities. Where harvesting rules exist, they are commonly broken. Participants explained that people lack education and/or do simply not respect the rules:

Table 13. Women and Men's identification of things and conditions required for sustainable NRM

Women	Men
Stop logging (use cocoa and copra as alternatives)	Community sustainability policy
Inclusive decision-making	Structures in place for sustainable NRM
Stop using fishing nets and chemicals to kill fish	Replanting
Sustainable natural resource management should be part of the school curriculum	Conservation areas (land and sea)
Government must have stronger control to monitor the effects of logging operations	Reconciliation
Make replanting part of logging contracts	Population control
Have Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)	
Conservation and management of the reef	
Population control	

> *Today the chiefs and landowners try to have tambu areas but no one listens. People just go at night or daytime. Everyone needs money. (Woman, East Isabel)*

Table 14 summarises existing land and sea conservation activities in RAP communities.

Generally in all communities there was a lot of support for the introduction of conservation areas, especially marine areas (possibly because marine areas are less likely to be 'owned' by individuals). A young woman in West Arosi commented on her desire to follow another community's conservation example:

> *Last month my youth group went to Haunnunu and we saw that they are controlling use of their reef with tambu areas. I think it's a good idea we should follow. (Young Woman, West Arosi)*

A man in Central Bauro commented on a forthcoming (proposed) constitution on natural resources in his community:

> *It is timely that you visit for this design as in the near future we will draft by-laws on our land and a constitution on natural resources as a guide to the community on protecting resources. (Man, Ngorangora Central Bauro)*

It should be noted that in West Rennell sea units have strong ownership boundaries and this could present a challenge for future activities related to marine conservation:

> *In Rennell individuals own the land and reef so conservation will be a problem. Who will be willing to give up and sacrifice his land for conservation? (Man, West Rennell)*

Most significant change sought by gender

Answers from a gendered group activity on Day one of the RAP seeking cash and non-cash livelihood options were triangulated with responses from individual surveys asking participants via four different questions, what change, skills, education and ideas they have for the future. The combined results show strategic gender needs below:

Strategic and practical changes identified by women for women include:

1. Inclusion and influence in natural resource decision-making (however not strongly desired in Isabel: in Isabel women desire better representation)

2. Improved sanitation

3. Financial management skills and space to take up financial leadership positions

4. Sustainable agriculture knowledge and training and space to lead decisions about the use of benefits from marketing

5. Small business support/loans to ensure adequate cash income to send children to secondary school

Strategic and practical changes identified by men for men include:

1. Improved natural resource planning skills

2. Knowledge on processes and governance of conservation of land and sea resources

3. Sustainable agriculture knowledge and involvement

Table 14. Existing land and sea conservation activities in RAP communities

Location	Land conservation	Sea conservation
West Kolombangara	A small number of interested tribes and families are involved in tree replanting. A newly formed conservation group named Kolombangara Community Conservation Program (an island wide group) is soon to be registered to consider conservation issues.	A small number of interested tribes and families are involved in as initiating the protection of some small marine sites. A newly formed conservation group named Kolombangara Community Conservation Program (an island wide group) is soon to be registered to consider conservation issues.
South Kolombangara	Iriri community is the only community in the area that have land conservation activities. This includes a small area of protected forest called Mt Rano Conservation Area which participants describe as being protected 'for the white fella to study'.	Ghatere community is currently protecting a marine site however this initiative has not been respected by some members of the community and nearby communities. The protected site is intended to only be harvested for special occasions.
South Rendova	Tetepari Descendants Association (TDA) work with WWF on Tetepari conservation site. Community perceptions toward the site are not positive as NGOs take cash benefits from eco-tourism related to the site.	Pao, Kuurukuru and Palaliki reefs are protected and close for around six months of the year.
West Arosi	There are no land conservation activities in West Arosi. A decade ago the Solomon Island Development Trust involved communities in conservation education (via drama and message) however outcomes were reportedly not sustained.	There are no sea conservation activities in West Arosi possibly resulting in the disappearance of leather back turtles (which used to go ashore every Christmas but have not been sighted in recent years).
Central Bauro	Ngorangora community will soon have new by-laws on land and sea use. All other communities have no activities. (A small forest conservation program was initiated for the communities in 1995–1996 by the Department of Environment, Conservation and Meteorology which had initial positive results, but ceased when the logging companies came in and logged the protected areas.)	A few communities put some effort in protecting their marine resources some time ago but this initiative was hindered and not respected by some community members. Participants suggested that the provincial government, in partnership with the communities, should introduce by-laws to ensure marine protected sites are respected. Ngorangora are going ahead with this.
West Rennell	No land conservation activities	No sea conservation activities, however Live & Learn are working closely with other communities in East Rennell towards World Heritage status.
East Isabel	Papatura Eco-tourism Area exists near Suavenao Island Resort. Beyond this area there are no land conservation activities.	There are no current sea conservation activities in the area, however community members express their need for marine protected sites and the World Fish Organization is negotiating with Goveo community on the possibility of creating MPAs.

4. Improved marketing networks for market access

5. Access to financial support / loans for start-up NTFP livelihoods

Strategic and practical changes identified by young women for young women include:

1. Leadership positions in improved sanitation initiatives

2. Inclusion and influence in natural resource decision-making

3. Sustainable agriculture knowledge, training and involvement

4. Organised inter-community youth competition (e.g. sporting/musical or dancing)

5. Family planning assistance (knowledge, awareness and materials)

Strategic and practical changes identified by young men for young men include:

1. Conservation know-how and governance skills (land and sea)

2. Sustainable agriculture knowledge and involvement

3. Organised inter-community youth competitions (e.g. sporting/musical or dancing)

4. Family planning assistance (knowledge, awareness and materials)

To ensure that women, men and young women and young men's strategic needs are met, all groups would benefit from education and awareness on gender equity and inclusion. In addition, a precursor to these changes would be taking steps toward increased reconciliation between feuding tribes/ clans and families.

Future visions of communities to be part of community solutions

On the second day of the RAP, participants were invited to group themselves in their communities (women and men together) and develop community visions representing the change they would like to occur in their communities in five years time. The results from all communities saw that the visions generally fell across three thematic groups identified by the participants, these were:

1. Inclusive decision-making

2. Conservation / Agriculture

3. Livelihoods (cash and non-cash)

The above groups emerged (with no guidance) after the first two RAPs with Western Province communities and from this point forward facilitators provided the three categories as a guide to other communities.

Full Community Visions and gendered entry points to communities can be found in Annex II.

Community strengths and entry points

Many women and men surveyed indicated that they felt they could play a leadership role in helping others in the community transition to more sustainable natural resource management. Culture also provides a key strength and entry point for more communal decision-making processes. These aspirations need to be married with existing strengths and entry points in the community. Table 15 draws on some of the obvious strengths and thematic entry points for the RAP communities.

The research found that gender needs to be considered in the identification of community entry points. Women and men participate differently in formal and informal community-based organisations and use of networks for the management and use of natural resources. The RAP found that participation of women in formal organisations beyond church women's groups is limited in all communities. Women rely on soft social networks to assist in natural resource management of gardens and women in particular are found to be intensively engaged in building social capital through informal soft networks.

Cash networks are more likely to involve men, however in the West Kolombangara community of Ughele and in South Rendova the community of Sausama, women and men are involved in small scale new savings schemes. Women and men, as families, are involved in marketing networks in West Kolombangara, located near Sausama Rural Training Centre. Such networks are admired by other communities and hold the capacity to be a conduit of weaving new social gender balanced fabrics.

In all RAP communities, and most strongly in Isabel, Makira and Rennell, churches were found to have their own organisations notably for women and youth. Activities were commonly found to be based on fund-raising for church and informal education such as sewing, flowering arranging, baking and sports.

Most outside support to RAP communities has reportedly been via short training workshops. To date, men who have received training have commonly received technical training (agriculture, and mechanical) whereas women who have received training have acquired training through flower arranging, food preparation and storage, baking and sewing skills.

Table 15. Community strengths and thematic entry points for inclusive and sustainable NRM

Location	Strengths / thematic entry points
West Kolombangara	• Organised Sausama Women and Youth Farmers Network • Readiness to actively consider inclusive decision-making • Readiness to make space for women in financial leadership positions (some Sausama families are involved in a savings club) • Desire for sea conservation areas • Rural Training Centre (RTC) site and linkages to Community Learning Centers (CLCs) • Support from WPCW and link to Oxfam's SINPA project • Linkages to APEHDA's work • Linkages to Kastom Gaden's work at the RTC • Linkages to Save the Children's SINPA project
South Kolombangara	• Readiness to consider inclusive decision-making • Support for increased gender equity and inclusive decision-making from Paramount Chief and WPCW • Desire for sea conservation activities • Proximity to West Kolombangara's organised farmers networks • Linkages to APEHDA's work • Linkages to Kastom Gaden's work • Linkages to Save the Children's SINPA project
South Rendova	• Readiness to actively consider inclusive decision-making • Desire for land and sea conservation activities • One community has a fledgling savings club • Support from WPCW and link to Oxfam's SINPA project • Linkages to APEHDA's work • Linkages to Kastom Gaden's work in the area • Linkages to Save the Children's SINPA project
Central Bauro	• Willingness to embark on marine conservation activities • Women desire space to influence financial management • Linkages to APEHDA's work in the area • Linkages to Save the Children's SINPA project • Link to Provincial Women's Council
West Arosi	• Willingness to embark on marine conservation activities • Women desire space to influence financial management • Linkages to APEHDA's work in the area • Linkages to Save the Children's SINPA project • Link to Provincial Women's Council
West Rennell	• Desire for some marine conservation activities • Women desire space to influence financial management • Link to Provincial Women's Council
East Isabel	• Desire for marine protected areas • Desire for better natural resource planning • Women desire space to influence financial management • Linkages to APEHDA's work in the area • Linkages to Save the Children's SINPA project • Link to Provincial Women's Council

Such division of training reflects some of the roles of women and men in communities, but generally does not acknowledge women's role in natural resource management particularly in respect to gardens. An exception to this is Kastom Gaden's focus on women in agriculture through their "women and nutrition" initiatives in some Western Province RAP communities. Acknowledging women's natural resource roles in other locations would give space for women to lead the way in sustainable agriculture training (agroforestry, soil fertility management, rotation cropping and introduction of non-timber forest products (e.g. fruit trees)) for a diversified food security and for cash economies.

Sausama (West Kolombangara) is seen by other communities in Western Province as having a very effective 'structure' (committee for the whole community). While the committee strives toward upward levels of transparency, decision-making and positions of influence are still perceived by women to be dominated by men. Despite this, women and men in Sausama who are involved are very motivated and can see many benefits slowly emerging. Other communities strive to learn from Sausama as a best practice example of how to be organised and undertake effective management in the community. In Rendova, the women mentioned the Sausama network and their desire to be able to attend some of the agricultural trainings offered through the RTC by Kastom Gaden.

Women, where they had acquired training, were found to be more likely than men to state that they had adopted the training and been able to use it for their family or the communities' benefit. Such participation in some cases related back to training or knowledge acquired long ago in the 1980's.

Capacity to identify solutions to natural resource issues

In separate gendered groups, women and men were asked to select a pressing issue from their cause and effect diagram and identify solutions to the issues taking into account existing barriers. The tables below illustrate some of the group work undertaken. The work is evidence of women and men's ability to not only identify solutions to problems, but their ability to work together in applying logical approaches to complex issues.

All these group efforts show clear capacity for thinking through approaches and overcoming barriers. Discussions following the activity indicate that participants lack the governance structures for development and implementation of inclusive community and NRM plans: however they do not lack the ability to have meaningful insight and participation in them.

Further to communal capacity for identifying ways forward, it is evident that there are individuals in every community who hold clear leadership qualities who are not currently in leadership positions.

Table 16. Issue analysis by male RAP participants in West Arosi (documented as closely as possible to original)

Issue	Solutions	Current barriers	Action to overcome barriers
Overharvesting	• Family planning to control population • Better decision-making • Sustainable harvesting • Selective harvesting and replanting	• Greedy decision makers • Low levels of education • Selfishness	• Increase education • Proper decision-making that considers alternatives • Make a policy
Land disputes	• Land tenure system better structured and understood by all • Respect for landowners' decisions • Support each other and work together	• Different people using other people's land • Land boundaries not well defined	• Properly document the land tenure system • Improve attitudes and respect • Put boundaries in place
Increasing population	• Family planning (education and awareness, use of condom) • Isolation of partners (traditional practice)	• Attitudes and disrespect • Lack education on options	• More education • Consider community policy • Increase respect systems • Support from government/NGOs

Table 17. Issue analysis by female RAP participants in Central Bauro

Issue	Solutions	Current barriers	Action to overcome barriers
Divided families	• Sharing of property equally • Choosing the best leader by best qualities	Selfishness and jealousy	• Pray to forgive each other • Proper methods of land recording • Get church help to love and care for each other • Education • Find new ways to sit down together and listen for peace

Table 18. Issue analysis by male RAP participants in West Kolombangara

Issue	Solutions	Current barriers	Action to overcome barriers
Land shortage	• Family planning • Review of government policy on public land for equity in benefits • Sustainable agriculture practices • Discourage large scale logging • Consultation with the lands department	• Lack services for family planning • People do not put policy into practice • Lack of skills on appropriate land use and management • Loggers do not listen to us • Unwilling government	• Community to approach an organisation who does family planning • Awareness to build dialogue, reconcile, and mobilise landowners to show people are ready for change • Invite government for talk • Identify good leaders • Take a sustainable and practical approaches to agriculture and training • Request a meeting with KFPL (logging company half owned by the government)

Social capital

The term social capital attracts a number of definitions: it is used here to refer to the core idea that social networks, families and individuals have differing levels of value or 'social capital' to facilitate change processes and support each other. Co-operation and mutually supportive relations provide a valuable means of combating many of the issues highlighted in this the RAP, for example, unsustainable fishing practices.

Social capital in the communities was found to be high among women and men of all socio-economic standings and is a clear strength to build on. The challenge is that 'spaces' that enable this capital to come forward are currently limited.

Young women and young men commented on their general lack of direction and purpose in most communities linked to no perceived livelihood opportunities and few organised youth social activities outside the church. Some individual young women and men were identified as having strong capacity. One such young woman in Central Bauro showed signs of her advocacy for gender equity when she commented to the other women:

> Men may have different body parts and be physically stronger than women, but our brain size and ability for knowledge are the same for women and men. (Young woman, Central Bauro)

Several women in each RAP community have the capacity and attributes to excel in leadership positions if given the space and respect by others in the community. In the RAP such women came across as visionaries to their contemporaries. A woman in West Rennell was well spoken and firm in all her contributions to story sharing:

> "Kastom" is slang for someone who doesn't want to change, they are a hard man and they are our leaders. (Woman, West Rennell)

Women and youth commonly suggested ways they could come together for social cohesion and skills sharing. Community Learning Centres may play an important role in assisting social cohesion. Some participants explained that old ways of gaining each other's support had been removed with the introduction of new technology. Their comments reflected that the way in which technology influences the community fabric is both positive and negative. While advances in technology, e.g. water standpipes for washing, have allowed women to spend less time on household chores and childcare: such changes have affected their networks and support systems. Women told stories of previously bathing together in rivers or the sea, a precious time for mutual support and strengthening women's networks. They would like for this time and space to be given increased focus and attention within the modern setting.

The modern use of the wantok system presents a potential strength as well as a challenge to harnessing the existing social capital in communities. While the strength of the wantok system is that it provides collective human concern, support and security for all people, its weakness is that it is more frequently open to corruption and nepotism particularly by people in powerful positions. While stories were shared of communities relying on wantok in Honiara sending money to communities, stories were also shared of those in major centres placing extreme pressure on communities to send produce. A woman in East Isabel shared:

> In my village (Baolo), I noticed that several families harvest plenty of food to send to relatives in Honiara. Every time the ship comes these same families send bags and bags of fish, shells, crabs etc. They finish the food for the villagers. This leads to overharvesting. (Woman, East Isabel)

Capacity of partnering organisations

There are many networks, organisations and agencies working on issues related to natural resources, gender and women in the Solomon Islands. It is from this large pool of expertise and building on existing relationships that Live & Learn will be able to draw partners and allies to support the project and to ensure that the project is fully supportive of other sustainable natural resource, livelihood and gender initiatives in the Solomon Islands.

Key stakeholders who will play important roles in supporting communities and Live & Learn at different stages of the project are likely to include; the Ministry of Women, Youth and Children's Affairs, Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Meteorology, National Council of Women (NCW), Kastom Gaden, AusAID's Livelihoods Program, Solomon Mere Kamap, Rural Water Supply, other SINPA partners and area councils in the community provinces. The role of Provincial Government is intended to be strengthened. Consultative meetings were held with many of these organisations during the RAP. The background to potential partners' work and their synergies with Live & Learn activities are shown in table 19.

Additional partners or supporters may include: Solomon Islands Development Trust for support and linkages in relation to promotion of good governance; Kastom Gaden for provision of experience and technical advice for setting up and implementing marketing agricultural networks and training in sustainable agriculture for women through their "Women and Nutrition" program; other SINPA partners and the SINPA Livelihoods Reference Panel; AusAID's Rural Livelihoods Program and Community Sector Program (CSP); as well as Mother's Union, the NGO's Natural Resources Rights Coalition and the newly formed Land Reform Unit at the Public Solicitors Office. WWF is also working with the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Meteorology to support the development of legal frameworks for conservation areas.

Table 19. Partner capacity and synergies

Organisation	Complementary work and identified synergies for working together
Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Meteorology	Background: The Ministry is very interested in conservation however it has extremely limited resources and capacity with only a small number of staff based in Honiara focusing on policy. There is no provincial reach or capacity beyond hosting UNDPs GEF (conservation) program. Synergies: An MOU is soon to be established between the Ministry and Live & Learn to bridge the gap and look to work together on conservation in target communities. Generally the Ministry has interest in environmental awareness and are currently looking to support conservation areas in Rennell, Isabel and Makira.
Ministry of Women, Youth and Children's Affairs	Background: The Ministry is a relatively new entity and has a focus on implementation of the National Policy on Women (1998) in which Natural Resources is a priority issue. The National Women's Policy is due to be reviewed in June/July 2009. Synergies: The Ministry has expressed interest in co-hosting a National Forum on Gender and Natural Resources in 2009 aimed at decision-makers, provincial government, women's desks, and relevant Ministries in order to raise the profile of this issue. They have also expressed interest in an action-based MOU going forward.
National Council of Women (NCW)	Background: NWC has expressed interest in a partnership with Live & Learn. It has been identified that there are great benefits through linking with Provincial and Ward level Women's Councils and establishing additional MOUs. Synergies: NCW is currently involved in a National Committee and a thematic working group on climate change and is supportive of the proposed National Forum. They are also particularly interested in advocacy efforts to address violence against women associated with logging camps, land disputes and changing legislation. The NWC Chairperson is also the Deputy Director of the Land Reform Commission which provides an additional link. NCW manages Women's Resource Centres in each province as well as having a focus on women in decision-making.
Western Provincial Council of Women (WPCW)	Background: WPCW is currently partnered with Oxfam and the Family Support Centre as part of SINPA focusing on addressing violence against women. Following the tsunami and with Oxfam support they are also active in raising awareness of community land rights on Gizo Island. WPCW is well known within Western Province RAP communities. Synergies: The aim of the WPCW program is to increase the likelihood of the protection of social and economic rights of women and men living on Gizo Island and to increase women's participation in decision-making. Women targeted have been internally displaced as a result of the 2 April 2007 natural disaster and/or fear future damages related to natural disasters. As the SINPA project develops they will also be supporting community advocates across the province to raise awareness of the issues of violence against women using a rights based approach. As an example, during April/May 2009, twelve female community interns from Western province were identified by Oxfam to take part in a one month program entitled 'Basic Government Land Processes, Human Rights and Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)'. The training was conducted through WPCW activities and is jointly funded by AusAID and Oxfam. The change logic behind the program is that women and men become more aware of the rights and roles of duty bearers and are able to negotiate for protection of their own rights. This program complements Live & Learn's objectives. WPCW has expressed interest in collaboration depending on geographic reach to the project's target communities.
Solomon Mere Kamap (SMK)	Background: SMK is a new women's NGO with a strategic focus on enhancement of village life for women and men through provision of livelihood skills training for economic empowerment. SMK are recently registered and have received funds from AusAID's Community Sector Project to continue work with women's committees supported through IWDA's work in CLAN (SINCA). SMK have some very skilled female master trainers in agriculture and livelihoods. Synergies: SMK plan to be active in each of Live & Learn's target provinces, except Renbel. Discussions are underway for IWDA to support them in terms of building their capacity as one of their partners.
Rural Water Supply (RWS)	Background: Attention to sanitation nationally is lacking despite coverage sitting between 18 and 33 per cent. The RWS Phase I is nearing completion where the focus has been on construction of 32 water supplies without sanitation. Synergies: RWS is open to the idea of collaborating and sharing ideas and materials with Live & Learn. Discussions have commenced concerning how RWS can work together with NGOs to give upward attention to sanitation and increase engagement. Initial ideas include RWS focussing on policy, coordination and setting the priorities while NGO's and donors focus on latrine construction. RWS have recently formed a stakeholder group and are looking at policy which takes gender into account. In Live & Learn target communities Live & Learn could facilitate community engagement, ownership, management and sustainability elements of sanitation initiatives which are often currently missed.
APHEDA	Background: APHEDA, Live and Learn and IWDA have established working relationships built during the five year consortium under SINCA. APHEDA, under SINPA, are implementing the SKILLS program, whereby communities are engaging in initiatives to share knowledge, improve livelihoods, and learn skills (e.g. literacy through livelihoods, micro enterprise and financial literacy). SKILLS has a strong focus on creation of links between Rural Training Centres and continuing to support the Community Learning Centres established under the SINCA consortium. Synergies: Linkages revolve around Community Learning Centres and Rural Training Centres that are active in the same areas as Live & Learn's project, particularly in Western Province as well as Renbel, Makira and Isabel.
Save the Children	Background: Save the Children, under SINPA, are implementing a Youth Outreach and Partnership Project (YOPP) with key activities that focus on sustainable livelihoods, healthy lifestyles, and mainstreamed policy for youth. Synergies: Linkages exist with youth and women's groups / networks in same geographical area and Live & Learn target communities in Western Province, Isabel and Makira.

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Recommendations and considerations

The RAP identified some core principles and mutually strengthening processes that will need to occur in the forth-coming project design. These include:

- Project design based on community aspirations, perceptions

- Building on existing strengths (of organisations and individuals within communities, around communities)

- Utilising existing women's, men's and youth organised groups

- Obtaining the support of existing community leaders and key multipliers in the community. Key multipliers, or respected people who are able to influence others' stances on issues, may not be in positions of power and influence, e.g. a clinic nurse.

The RAP findings call for an integrated approach to project design. Based on evidence gathered during the RAP the ensuing project should practically and strategically focus on the following key below.

1. Strengthening existing rural networks and seeking to build-on and replicate successful models of sustainable agriculture, livelihoods products and market access in other areas (e.g. Sausama Women and Youth Farmers Network).

2. Identification of policy and networks that promote equity in reaching markets.

3. Equipping women with financial management skills, literacy and capacity to support the diversification of localised economies via women's small business start-up to cope with financial burdens. By committing to skill women to lead financial systems, such as savings scheme and revolving funds, they will be helped to take on leadership roles to build resilience to the impacts of a cash economy on social welfare. This will ensure families save money to pay ongoing school fees, fuel needs etc. It will also allow small businesses to have access to establish funds.

4. Providing women with space to acquire leadership positions in family or community savings groups with linkages to financial institutions. It would be strategic for such groups to establish Sustainable Livelihood Revolving Funds (micro-credit) systems.

5. Generating additional processes to place women in leadership positions (and strive for transformative change in this area in Western province and Makira, and on relative change in Renbel and Isabel).

The RAP identified some core principles and mutually strengthening processes that will need to occur in the forth coming project design.

6. Institutionalising long-term natural resource (land and sea) governance planning skills for women and men, young and old: community-led natural resource plan development will ensure communities, tribes or clans can set their own strategies for sustainable development, improve their inclusive management and tackle obstacles.

7. Provision of sustainable agriculture technical training and support especially for women, young women and young men. Soil fertility is vital for non-timber forest product cash livelihoods. The way the soil is managed affects food security, subsistence and cash agriculture, and health. Good soil management skills are likely to improve people's cash and non cash livelihoods.

8. Fostering women's and young people's leadership (cognisant of the current land tenure system).

9. Improving sanitation through deliberate initiatives and by enhancing women and young women's ability to influence community decisions.

10. Supporting and promoting evidence based cross-sectoral policy development ensuring policies are inclusive, gender responsive and sustainable while addressing practical and strategic needs.

These processes need to be strengthened by:

- Piloting projects before going to scale (a staged implementation approach that strategically acknowledges communities' expectations) and replicating models that work

- 'Learning by doing' and exchange visits between communities: community to community and family to family exchanges and mentoring and to encourage linking knowledge (awareness, training, education) to action

- Building on positive patterns of change as an entry point for staging integrated approaches (conservation may present a strategic entry point in Isabel while gender inclusive decision-making may be a strategic entry point in Western Province, other themes can be mainstreamed once trust and ownership is established).

- Focusing on facilitation processes that stimulate and support community-led social change that enable leadership space for women and men young and old, in developing and sustaining livelihoods and land and sea natural resources. Such a focus fundamentally moves beyond building skills and training and seeks to institutionalise learning that is supported by systemic and social change translating learning into action.

- Building on existing community and gendered strengths, and giving upward importance to working with and strengthening established and organised women's and men's and youth bodies, groups and networks through community-led inclusive participatory implementation.

- Shared learning and partnering with government bodies within communities (e.g. provincial fisheries and environment officers).

- Shared learning and facilitation of dialogue opportunities between women's, men's and youth community organisations and provincial and national government.

- Acknowledging that tackling natural resource management and gender equity is more about strengthening alternative approaches to governance than increasing financial resources.

- Establishing supportive policies and structures that are responsive to working with women and men and natural resources. The Ministry of Environment and Conservation would benefit from a gender strategy advocating the strengthening of institutional structures and policies that encourage a participatory approach and acknowledge women's rights to natural resource assets, education and participation in the civil society and political life in Solomon Islands.

It is important to note that the design of the project should highlight the need for a focus on sustainable land use and planning of customary land. To design any kind of project to suggest community members directly take on commercial logging companies outside customary land will reasonably result in disputes and be beyond the means of the project concept.

The RAP identified that deliberate efforts should be made to create space, particularly for women, to utilise new knowledge and skills and to embed new approaches to decision-making in organisational and community processes and practices.

Putting gender equity into practice will be challenging in and through the design and implementation of the coming project, as it is not yet clear what equity between women and men will look like in the Solomon Islands. What is known is that a multitude of social and economic benefits will follow women's representation in all manner of decision-making positions. Civil society together with SIG and communities are in a position to build space for this change. Accordingly, in partnership with IWDA, particular focus should be given to gender needs as outlined below.

Coordination and collaboration for gender lens on natural resource management

It is recommended that the project work in close coordination and collaboration with other interested stakeholders throughout the Solomon Islands including government ministries, donors, non-government organisations and other organisations—in three ways:

1. Collaborate with relevant SINPA partners, national and international (regional) actors to promote gender equity at the rural level as well as the national level and showcase best practice in women's advancement.

2. Coordinate with rural women's networks and facilitate the expansion of their focus to include natural resource governance, planning and sustainability knowledge, financial literacy skills and associated action.

3. Establish, or work with a gender advisory group of interested staff, community members and others outside the project to support the work of the project.

It is recommended that an enabling environment be created to fully integrate a gender lens on natural resource management into the core of the project. Three recommendations to create this environment are:

- *The leaders:* The project leadership within the community should be well-versed in the gender dimensions of the project and natural resource issues facing the community and be able to articulate the importance of a gendered approach to the goals

of the project and to community priorities more generally.

- *The allies:* those interested in gender and issues of concern to women should be identified among the staff of other implementing partners and other stakeholders to support the project and promote complimentary approaches.

- *The gender focal point:* a gender and natural resource specialist should be identified to provide technical assistance and serve as the focal person for project information and support on gender and environment issues.

Influence not just access

Design for more inclusive decision-making needs to keep in mind that providing women access to decision-making does not necessarily link to an increase in women's power and influence. Women not only need to be included, they need to be given space to take up some of the formal leadership positions (of influence and control). This major shift will be difficult in the conditions described by women in the RAP, of *men's corruption to augment status for personal gain.* A movement for significant changes regarding gender at the national level was afoot at the time of writing this report with a group of stakeholders led by the Ministry of Women, Youth and Children's Affairs calling for seats to be reserved for women in parliament in 2010. Such change at the national level would greatly benefit this project through the provision of national role models for women at the community level.

Community uptake of new ideas

Community members, as a whole will be more likely to accept and lead change if foundations are in place to ensure new ideas are:

- Expressed in local concepts that make sense

- Fit with existing social structures and values

- Economically feasible

- Are tangible—strength in 'look and learn' approach

- Expressed attractively through community 'media' and communication channels

- Reinforced with celebrations

- Supported by female and male community facilitators who are chosen by the community in partnership with Live & Learn, based on attributes, achievements and abilities (recruitment and mobilisation of community facilitators has been identified as a key component to the forthcoming project). It is envisaged that female and male community facilitators will act as focal points of information, momentum and communications with project stakeholders inside and outside the community. The premise behind having community facilitators is that they will be able to provide upward support to the project through their understanding of the community language, ways of thinking, values and communication channels and will deepen the engagement.

Suggested activities

Implementation of project activities should not take a linear approach and may vary by location. It is of vital importance that on-the-ground action is seen to be occurring alongside any Plan preparation and training. Some suggested activities to support women's and men's strategic needs arising from the RAP are outlined in Appendix IV.

Concluding remarks

Long-term sustainability can only ever exist where systems and change are community-led, owned, managed and contextually appropriate. Unfortunately it is commonplace for ill-fitting frameworks to be placed on communities from outsiders. The expectation that "projects" where NGOs come in and 'make us rich' or give us tools (e.g. sewing machines, garden equipment and motors) results, all too often, in no systemic change and models of development that build dependency. Through the RAP however, ownership building processes have already commenced by engaging communities in the project design phase which will need to be consolidated throughout the project.

This RAP provides a basis for project design that is both effective and appropriate to the expectations and context of both female and male beneficiaries. This is not an exhaustive research study; however it does provide a useful insight and overview into gendered perceptions and serves to indicate areas for focus, places to build on existing strengths, future visions, and spaces to bring women's clear voices forward.

The upcoming project is timely; there is much work to be done for inclusive and sustainable natural resource management in the Solomon Islands; one cannot be achieved without the other.

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Annex 1

Community Profiles

Information provided on the RAP communities reflects the views of the RAP participants.

Western Province

The RAP was conducted with communities on the islands of Kolombangara and Rendova in Western Province. The islands are characterised by narrow coral/s and bays and are heavily logged. Rendova is part of the Marovo Lagoon and is largely protected by coral reefs and sand and coral shoals. Marovo Lagoon is the world's largest island-enclosed lagoon. An earthquake and tsunami hit Western Province on 2 April 2007 affecting 36,500 people. About 6,300 houses were damaged or destroyed across 304 communities.

West Kolombangara RAP Communities

Sausama and its nearby communities of Matahiri and Tanhuka, are all located in the West of Kolombangara Island with an approximate population of 1205 across 241 households. These communities are situated less than one hour sea travel by OBM from the main provincial headquarters in Gizo.

Organisations currently providing assistance to West Kolombangara communities include Kastom Gaden (agricultural assistance to the Rural Training Centre) and APHEDA (SKILLS training). World Vision, Oxfam and Save the Children have also been involved with some communities (health and first aid etc.). Men have received short training sessions on bee-keeping, poultry, first aid and ongoing support from the Rural Training Centre. Women have received training on cooking and sewing. Women and youth in Sausama participate in agriculture groups. About eight community farmers networks are established (known as NETWORK).

Sausama Farmers Field School (Rural Training Centre), which is also utilised as a Community Learning Centre, provides training for local farmers and other life skills training. The six communities in the catchment use the Centre regularly. The Centre also provides a link community for Live & Learn / APHEDA since SINCA (the predecessor to SINPA). Sausama Farmers School was initially started through a link with Kastom Gaden.

The farmers' NETWORK undertakes combined marketing efforts (and travel) and shares agricultural knowledge. Sausama NETWORK consists of 32 families. This group has also started a savings scheme for its members managed by a woman. Other groups in nearby communities are not able to organise themselves in the same manner and need support for effective operation.

Nearby in Gizo, Oxfam assists the current work of the Western Province Council of Women on constitution development and the WPCW now have constituency / ward leaders. Current activities of the WPCW are related to community land rights awareness. The WPCW runs a Gizo based awareness programme on economic rights, social rights, and social issues, including involvement of women in decision-making on land.

All communities are matrilineal, however, women are only consulted by men and often ignored or overpowered by men in important decisions concerning land and development. Three quarters of the land is now owned by SIG who acquired the land in the 1950's when it was cheaply sold by elderly chiefs to British colonial rulers. The land has been logged since this time. Only one quarter of the land remains as customary land which poses a very serious land shortage

problem when combined with the increasing population. People report that they feel like settlers in their own land. The paramount and tribal chiefs hold a lot of power and influence due to the upholding of strong traditional power structures.

Land is currently leased to a Canadian foreign investment company and logged in joint partnership with Kolombangara Forestry Plantation Limited (KFPL). KFPL is 60 per cent owned by SIG and 40 per cent by the Canadian company. The Canadian share is likely to be sold to an Asian investor shortly. A dispute is rumoured to be imminent surrounding logging royalties and land ownership issues.

A small number of interested tribes and families are involved in tree replanting as well as protecting some small marine sites. A newly formed conservation group named Kolombangara Community Conservation Program (an island wide group) is soon to be registered to look at conservation issues.

In terms of development, there are small scale managed plantations of cocoa and coconut as well as timber milling, beekeeping, and gardening on the limited amount of land available. Garden products vary widely for subsistence

and kumara, cassava and vegetables are commonly sold at Vanga Rural Training Centre which takes 45 minutes by canoe (paddling) or 30 minutes by OBM to Gizo market. Round logs and timber are sold at Ringgi substation which can be reached after two hours travel by OBM.

South Kolombangara RAP Communities

Hunda and its nearby communities of Iriri, Gatere, Kena, Kuzi and Vavanga, are all located in the South of Kolombangara Island. South Kolombangara is approximately 50 minutes travel by OBM from the main town of Gizo. There is an approximate population of 1115 across 468 households.

Organisations currently providing assistance include Kastom Gaden (for approximately seven years) with some intermittent workshops run by World Vision, Oxfam and Save the Children. Men have received some short training with little reported follow-up on timber-scaling, health and gardening. A successful longer term hydro electricity project has involved both women and men. Women report having received some training on children's rights and women's leadership from WPCW. Kastom Gaden is working with Ghatere community farmers providing farmer field training and technical support. There are no savings clubs or micro-credit schemes in the area.

Three quarters of traditional customary land is now owned by SIG and is currently logged by foreign companies in joint partnership with Kolombangara Forestry Plantation Limited (KFPL). There is serious shortage of land to support families.

All communities are matrilineal and while women are consulted by men on decisions in principle, in practice they have little voice except for decisions relating to gardening and childcare. Currently, the Paramount Chief is looking at mobilising all community committees to be more gender balanced and inclusive in decision-making. He is committed to placing a woman on the Kolombangara Council of Chiefs.

There are medium sized plantations of coconut and small scale agricultural farming. Both are mainly subsistence however some products are sold at Gizo market around 45 minutes by OBM. Saw milling is also undertaken for cash purposes.

Ghatere community is currently protecting a marine site however it was reported that this initiative has not been respected by some members of the community. This protected site is supposed to only be harvested during special occasions such as feasting celebrations. The idea of conservation was well acknowledged by participants and regarded as reintroducing traditional practices. Iriri community also have a small area of protected forest called Mt Rano Conservation Area, which they described as being protected 'for the white fella to study'.

South Rendova RAP Communities

Ughele and nearby communities of Lokuru and Elomana are all situated along the Rendova south coastline with an approximate population of 2343 across 468 households.

Several NGO and government group visits have been made to these communities in the past with little perceived follow up or outcomes. Around half the community members have received some type of training, while others have had none. The chief, with support from men in influential positions, has recently commenced a savings club for some families in Ughele.

Land ownership is matrilineal however the chiefly system entitles men and not women to make important decisions concerning land and other natural resources. A majority of land is still customary, with less than a quarter owned by SIG. Each tribe has a trustee committee with men taking all leadership roles on tribal and land development issues.

Logging has been in operation since independence however since 2008 logging activity has paused due to disputes over land and distribution of royalties. Activities are due to commence again in 2010. A logging camp and machines are located in the outskirts of Ughele.

Tetepare Island (not inhabited) near Lokuru is conserved to preserve its wildlife and sea resources and is administered by Tetepare Descendent Association (TDA) and WWF. As part of the conservation program, WWF pays individuals for finding leather back turtle eggs to help ensure their protection. There are a few marine protected reefs instigated by the Elomana community where harvesting only takes place during important occasions like feasting. The other communities expressed their admiration for what Elomana is doing and would like to protect their reefs as well. Tree replanting is done by certain tribes and interested families. Reports from villagers suggest Tetepare is being sabotaged by some community members.

Although the church is very influential, the chief has more power due to the strong tradition of chiefly status. The most important natural resources contributing to cash livelihoods are garden agricultural products such as root crops and vegetables sometimes taken to Munda market which usually takes 45 minutes by OBM. Other income generating activities for the community include coconut (copra production), timber milling and fishing. Ughele has a medium sized market that operates twice a week for local communities.

Makira Province

Makira (San Cristobal) Island is the largest landmass of the province. It is a mountainous island with steep cliffs along its southern coast. The island has long black-sand beaches in its bays. Logging has been present in Makira for several generations. Currently both research hubs have experienced wide spread logging.

Central Bauro RAP Communities

Tawani and the surrounding communities of Manuiriuri, Manuhugi, Arohane, Ngorangora and Kaonasugu, are situated along the central coastline of Makira province. Central Bauro has an approximate population of 1175 across 235 households.

Organisations who have worked in these communities most recently include World Vision and Save the Children. Participants reported that men received conservation/agriculture training by the Solomon Islands Development Trust many years ago, as well as income activity training and human rights awareness by World Vision. Women have received short training days on children's rights, food processing, life skills (weaving, sewing, cooking) and sports. Other organisations such as CSP are currently working in Makira on infrastructure projects including water tanks. No savings schemes or micro credit systems have been implemented.

Land ownership in Central Bauro is matrilineal however participants explained that the chiefly system is stronger than the land tenure system and entitles influential men to be involved in decision-making. Around three quarters of the land remains customary land. One quarter of the land is owned by SIG and is partially inhabited by settlers from Temotu Province for resettlement purposes due to an expanding population on their own island. A tribal trustee committee (KAWAKE) (entirely men) has been appointed in Ngorangora in the past five years and an elders committee (entirely men) has been established at Kaonasugu to oversee any major development of land and natural resources. The trustees are the signatories for outside deals and as such receive royalties as payment. The trustees present a competing power to the chiefly system and the community report that respect for the chief is declining due to his undefined role. Power sharing is equal between chiefs and church leaders as all the existing community groups are church based. All leadership positions are occupied by men.

Logging has been present in Central Bauro and nearby communities prior to independence, but paused in some communities in 2008. The logging company 'Elite', left in 2008 after less than a year of operation due to land disputes and disagreement between youths and pro-logging land owners, which resulted in youths burning bulldozers in Arohane. Despite this action, logging has continued in Maniwiriwiri. Kaonasu had a logging site that ceased operation around

20 years ago however they are still experiencing its legacy through soil erosion and river and sea pollution. Currently trustees and middle men are instigating new negotiations for companies to return in 2010.

A small forest conservation program was initiated for the communities in 1995–1996 by the Department of Environment, Conservation and Meteorology which had initial positive results, but ceased when the logging companies came in and logged the protected areas. A few communities put some effort in protecting their marine resources but this initiative has been hindered and not respected by certain community members. Participants suggested that the provincial government, in partnership with the communities, should introduce by-laws to ensure marine protected sites are respected.

Most people attend primary school but are limited in their capacity to intend secondary level due to financial difficulties. This situation is more pronounced in Makira in comparison to other provinces.

Communities are separated from markets by vast sea distances. Cocoa and coconut are the most common cash crops with a few agricultural garden crops such as cassava, kumara, yam, pana, fruits and vegetables. Kaonasugu community is also engaged in medium rice and cattle farming. MAOPA, a local cocoa buyer, is present at Manuiriuiri community.

West Arosi RAP Communities

Heuru and its surrounding communities of Marau Bay, Ubuna, Tawatana, and Asimanioha, are all situated along the West coastline of Makira Province known as the Arosi area. The area is home to an approximate population of 1730 across 346 households.

Arosi has received limited support considering its breadth of challenges. World Vision and Save the Children are currently working with some of the communities. It was reported that men have received some training on mechanics and carpentry, proposal writing, leadership training, farming and financial literacy. A small number of women have received training on food handling, childcare and a short session on good governance (by RAMSI). CSP have provided support to build a classroom in Asimanioha community. Generally, there has been very short-term and low levels of assistance received from outside. No micro-credit or savings schemes exist.

Arosi is different from other areas in Makira with landownership being predominantly patrilineal. This is due to Arosi descendants being closely related to Are-Are in Malaita where patrilineal systems are the norm. This contributes to women's exclusion in most important decision-making regarding natural resources and all other decisions. All the land is customary owned while a very small portion has been

purchased by Malaitan settlers who have been displaced through termination of long-term work.

Participants felt the power in the community lies with the village and tribal chiefs, the provincial government and outsiders. Arosi communities tend to have a chairman who undertakes the role of liaising with outsiders. There are no trustees to oversee natural resource development issues so middle men and male landowners hold much power and influence. Women have no say in decisions and are unrepresented in decision-making beyond childcare and garden planting.

Logging commenced in the Arosi area shortly after independence (1978). Most foreign logging companies left the area in 2008 when the contract expired with SIG and disputes were rife, however a few communities including Asimanioha are still currently engaged with logging activities. Negotiations are underway to refresh contracts.

There are no conservation activities in the area, which may have resulted in the disappearance of leather back turtles (which used to go ashore every Christmas but have not been sighted in recent years). A decade ago the Solomon Island Development Trust involved communities in conservation education (via drama and message) however outcomes were not sustained.

Major income generating activities include cocoa and coconut plantations which cannot expand due to limited availability of flat land. Agricultural crops include cassava, kumara, yam, pana, fruits and vegetables. The furthest community to the commercial centre or Kira Kira market is Marou Bay where it takes three hours by OBM.

The youth group in Asimanioha, Arosi are very active. Women reported that when issues come up in terms of money, men become very active, however they are relatively lazy and lack motivation at other times.

Renbel Province

Renbel Province consists of two islands, Rennell and Bellona, and is the smallest province in territorial and population size. Both islands are raised atolls, differing in configuration from the other provinces. This unique and fragile environment has some limestone cliffs undulating straight into bays. East Rennell is best known for the Pacific's largest Lake, being Tegano Lake. Most inland settlements are found along the roads that cut through the islands. Historically Rennell and Bellona are Polynesian, unlike the other Melanesian Provinces. West Rennell presented one of the most disadvantaged areas included in the RAP (based on distance and access to basic services, access to sources of income and access to markets).

West Rennell RAP Communities

Lavangu, and its surrounding communities in West Rennell, are all situated inland with an approximate population of 486 across 96 households. The only means of transport is by land. It takes approximately an hour's drive by truck between the first and last community that the RAP covered. Distance to the major centre, Tinggoa is around two hours by vehicle (when vehicles do not break down).

CSP and ADRA work in cooperation to support Lavangu and Teavamangu communities regarding water and sanitation infrastructure. Live & Learn has previously conducted short-term biodiversity awareness (school based) and advocacy training in 2005 and 2006 respectively. Men have received training on disaster management, church matters, health and sports. Women have received training on life skills (soap making and jam making) and flower arranging via the church. Outside support has been limited in any on-going capacity. Sustained support has been provided to some communities such as Teavamangu by Kastom Gaden and participants stated that current research is underway for effective pest control techniques.

Kinship in Rennell is distinctly patrilineal, giving emphasis to the male members of a clan, sub-clan or family and taking into account the specific generation of the male members. Land tenure is strongly patrilineal and it is assumed within the system that women have no rights to making decisions and their participation, in general, is extremely low. Land is generally individually owned by the first born son of the family however tribes have access to the land.

Land can be handed down as a gift to men who may not be in the line of first-born son, but he must have talents and virtues admired by the lineage. Women can acquire land in Rennell only on a conditional basis when they are born as an only child or when men decide to give land as a present to a sister. Ninety-nine per cent of the land is still customary owned and around one per cent owned by SIG. Customary land is sold to SIG and forestry operations by individual land owners and trustees for royalties. As land is scarce in Rennell, and most of the time landholdings are too small to be divided among the rightful heirs, land is sometimes shared between members of the lineage for gardening and dwellings with the landowner determining the period of time for use.

Power lies predominately with the Paramount Chief and the Provincial Government. While church leaders hold a lot of power, it is only exercised within their domain of influence. Most of the existing community groups are church based. Decisions are made by men, with little or no representation of women, however this varies by family.

Disputes over land ownership are high. Often genealogy is traced as a part of disputes to claim land. Settlers have also purchased a small amount of land to engage in copra and cocoa production.

Until recently, small scale timber milling activities for local housing construction left forest resources largely undisturbed by commercial activities. Pencil cedar, a variety of hard wood, is in high demand and abundant in Rennell. Commercial logging is due to commence shortly and presents an extremely sensitive issue between strongly opposing pro and anti logging groups. Two logging companies have proposed to commence operations and machinery is ready and waiting, however one of these companies has pulled out due to current wide-scale disputes.

Mineral extraction in the form of phosphate mining prospecting has recently commenced causing more disputes within communities. As such, tension in Tahanuku is particularly high. At the time of the RAP a one page feature article in the Solomon Star on Tuesday 19 May was entitled Alluvial Mining, it's Simple and Safe. The article's author was also a business man wishing to invest heavily in Solomon Island's mining industry and offered communities large benefits. Such offers in the absence of community processes to properly and collectively assess the positive and negative aspects of development options make it increasingly hard to identify and compare alternatives.

There are no conservation activities in the area, although within the Province Live & Learn are working closely with communities in East Rennell towards World Heritage status.

Cash from agriculture is relatively new for Rennell and trading is very difficult due to inhospitable terrain. The major income generating activities include carving, small scale milling, traditional baskets and coconut plantations. Agricultural crops such as cassava, kumara, yam, fruits and vegetables are mainly for subsistence use. Marine resources such as trochus, beche-de-mer and shell are sold in Honiara. There is no market at the provincial headquarters, Tinggoa. The geographical isolation makes it difficult for the people to access markets and cash economies in general.

Isabel Province

Isabel is the longest island in the Solomon Islands and dominates the province. It is a large mainly volcanic land mass with steep mountain ranges and mangrove and freshwater wetlands prevalent along the coast. Commercial logging has occurred in Isabel for over 20 years and there is now another logging 'revival'. There is some small scale crop (and fish) activity with a mostly subsistence economy.

East Isabel RAP Communities

Boletei, and the surrounding communities of Baolo, Tuelegu, Sisiga, Ghoveo, are all situated along the East coastline of Isabel Province and consist of an approximate population of 1529 across 305 households. The distance from the first to the last RAP community is approximately 2–3 hours sea travel by OBM. The only means of transport between these communities is by sea.

World Vision, Save the Children and CSP have worked with these communities in the last 3–10 years. CSP has built school classrooms in Bolitei community. Participants observed that World Vision and Save the Children's involvement was for short periods of time.

All communities are matrilineal with land ownership passing through women. Both women and men can be land owners however power to the land is matrilineal. It was reported that women and men respected each other as landowners until recently when some children came to challenge ownership and lineage. For the past five years trustees have represented land owners in all major development decisions. While trustees can be women or men, the majority are men. All land is customary owned and a very small amount has accommodated settlers since 1960's from other parts of Isabel including Bolitei and Tuelegu communities. The settlers own the allocated sites they are living in, which are traditionally arranged and although they are allowed to access the natural resources, they are not involved in decision-making.

Power sharing is equal between chief and church leaders as most of the existing community groups are church based. There are up to five trustees appointed for each land unit. The trustees are the only ones by law who can make land transactions. Most of the decisions made are individually driven which leads to some disagreements within the community. The communal and traditional way of participation is seen as still being upheld very strongly and the chiefly system is currently very much valued. However experiences between communities were found to vary greatly.

Communities in East Isabel have diverse experience with logging. Commercial logging has been present in Baulo for around twenty years and logging in the other communities commenced with the last three years. They have described logging as quick income even though very little reaches the community. Some logging companies left 20 years ago while others are currently in operation.

Major income activities include copra and agricultural crops such as kumara, cassava and vegetables which are mostly sold to the loggers. Marine resources such as fish, trochus, beche-de-mer and shells are sold at Buala and Honiara markets. The furthest community to Buala market is Baulo which takes 3–4 hours by OBM. The geographical isolation makes it difficult for the people to access this main market. Baulo community, in partnership with provincial government, currently engage in tourism at Suavenao Island Resort, though they report seeing very little profit.

There are no conservation activities in the area, however community members express their concern and need for reef protected sites. The World Fish organisation is negotiating with Goveo community on the possibility of creating marine protected sites.

Social and environmental problems common across communities

Social and environmental issues were evident in all communities. Social issues commonly affecting communities include; population increase, decline in food security, sanitation, alcoholism, drugs, theft, teenage pregnancy, sexual exploitation of girls by foreign logging workers (in South Rendova, Central Bauro and West Arosi), land disputes, transportation difficulties, lack of education and unemployment. These problems are further heightened by lack of communications between communities, as well as extremely long distances to markets.

Environmental problems commonly cited include river, stream and sea pollution, soil degradation, erosion and infertility, and pollution of drinking water all exacerbated by logging activities. Communities in Rendova report still recovering from post- tsunami trauma.

WHAT CHANGE would I LIKE ⨍ TO SEE IN
FUTURE (5 yrs Time). VISION.

FUTURE

TODAY	FUTURE: chief.
→ DECISION DONE BY MEN: MEN ALONE!	├ DECISION BE DONE By⁺ MAN WOMAN CHildren youth. Community ⁺ (Community committe) ⁺
⇒ (CONSERVATION ⇒. No Proper MANAGEMENT:	⇒ CONSERVATION Programme: MUST PROPERLy MANAGE and Plan By THE COMMUNITY: (COMMITTE)
⇒ LIVELIHOOD ⇒ NOT REALLy or Properly Managed. e.g. garden, Milling	├ LIVELIHOOD — There must Move Aware AGriculture Prog. ⇒ ness about Livelihood done in The Community; e.g AGriculture AWARENESS — COURSE/ workshop. (milly) — Plan must Be done by the Community. e.g. Milling

1. DECISION MAKING.
2. Conservation progomme - IMPROVED.
(3). Mo LIVELIHOOD - (suppose To Done)

Annex 2

Community visions

The community visions presented are recorded in language as close as possible to how they were presented by communities during the RAP (written and verbal presentations).

Western Province visions

West Kolombangara

Community	Decision-making visions	Agriculture/Conservation visions	Livelihood visions
Group 1 (mixed communities)	Women and men and youth and leaders to be involved in decision-making.	Reforestation (selective cutting, replanting etc.). Farming knowledge and education (sustainable gardening techniques; improve soil fertility, rotation cropping, composting, and access to a more seeds to raise crops to sell in Gizo market). Skills for sustainable harvesting.	Sanitation to improve health. Proper toilet instead of going in the mangroves/sea. Space for sharing of women's traditional craft skills (mats, baskets) and for women to connect and meet. Find link for crafts to be sold in new markets. Learn how to manage budget and finances. Cash livelihood ideas (crafts, baking). Activity youth to get involved in music so less drugs, theft and violence. Provide a focus and to do something useful. Perform around the province.
Group 2 (mixed communities)	Inclusive and gender balanced decisions	Better agricultural practices (planting, seeds etc)	Health clinic and first aid as hospital is far away and people die in emergencies. Coconut oil market.
Group 3 (mixed communities)		Agricultural training on best planting methods for better food base and to take some produce to market.	Farmer training on how to use small land best (in order to have wood to carve, food to eat, marketing produce, a future for the children). Livelihoods training (Honey, poultry, pigs). Inter-community sports competitions. Focus on education (more children to finish form 6) and options for children once they finish school. Village stay.

Entry points:

Women: Sausama Women's and Youth Farmers NETWORK, Kubolauta Farm Committee (six families)

Men: Tanahuka Farmers Network, Patupalle Community Farmers, Habere Community Farmers, Iriva Community Farmers, Poporo Farmers Committee, Titiana Farmers Committee

Young men and young women: Sausama Women's and Youth Farmers NETWORK

South Kolombangara

Community	Decision-making visions	Agriculture/Conservation visions	Livelihood visions
Kuzi	For Chiefs, elders, men, women and youth to all make decision together.	We want to conserve our forest, reef, mangroves, land for future benefit: • Forest – community would benefit from the forest conservation (building materials, breeding place for the animals and birds) • Reef – protect breeding place for fish and shells, beche-de-mer etc. • Mangrove – protect breeding place for fish and shells. • Land – use wisely for farming, fishing, gardening and share equally.	Good management of all resources; farming, fish farming, re-forestation, replanting of mangroves.
Vavanga	Community – chiefs, church leaders, women and men, youth.	Reforestation Marine and forest conservation	• Agriculture able to support livelihoods • Education (school) • Upgrade existing project (Micro-hydro) • Sanitation • Pollution awareness
Hunda	• Inclusive – sharing ideas in decision-making • Not always follow the chiefly rule system	• Reef – protect use of reefs • Forest – control tree harvesting and replanting • Mangroves – selection of resources, less destruction	To support family needs cash and noncash(food): • Fishing project • Timber milling project for the community for future users (building houses)
Kena	• Inclusive – man and women • Man, women and youths should participate in all activities	• Reforestation – in 5 years time community, families will benefit from conservation • MPA: increase marine resources	• Improved agriculture – more nutritious food • Income from tourism encouraged through conservation
Ghatere	• We think to involve men, women, youth in decision-making in the future • Make sure that decision made is beneficial	• Close certain sea areas for marine resources reproduction • Do not sell gravel, stones and sand • Do not harvest mangroves • Use log for village development only	• Improve garden varieties of crops, for market (cash) and food (non cash) • Improve small income generating e.g. bakery, poultry, honey and farming

Entry points:

Women: DORCAS group, Women's Church groups, Women's Council (Gizo)

Men: Council of Chiefs, Men's church group

Young men and young women: Youth Church Group

South Rendova

Community	Decision-making visions	Agriculture/Conservation visions	Livelihood visions
Ughele	Gender balanced: • Meetings about land and sea resources • Decisions for major planning and investor propositions • Church based community projects to include women	• Sea protected from logging and chemicals. • Land – replanting, new ways of cultivation, harvesting, reserve land for rest • Sea – preserve water source, protection of the reef, mangrove forest, discourage fishing nets	• Improved sanitation • Better early childhood education • Awareness of family planning and materials to ensure the population does not grow bigger
Lokuru	• Women included in all decision-making for natural resources • Women be included and not just represented, they will represent themselves • Use a more simple structure (as used in the past)	• More education and upholding of rules for conservation site that exists.	• Agriculture assistance and training on technical aspects of soil fertility practices • Solar lighting to connect/ extend hours of activities • Literacy training • Women church group centre • Copra milling machine for oil/ soap
Egholo	Introduce women into all decision-making. Ensure the chairperson in any meeting can be a women or a man. Include settlers and married-in women.	• Enforce law to ban harvesting (for 6 months) and then open for 2– 3 days or for ceremonies. Ban fishing nets • Introduce agroforestry (fruit trees), rotation of crops and use of compost.	• Improved access to transportation • Use a network for communications between communities • Small business training • Family planning

Entry points:

Women: Kobi 1&2 association (Ughele), women's church groups, YWCA, Dorcus Group,

Men: Tetepari Descendant Association (conservation sites), Adventist Men's group, Euma Association (assist on clan affairs)

Young men and young women: Church youth group, Buruku Youth Group

Makira Province visions

Some communities in Makira were identified as being very resistant and /or hesitant to explore virtues and ideas of fully inclusive decision-making.

Central Bauru

	Decision-making visions	Agriculture/Conservation visions	Livelihood visions
Arohane	• Our community need to well organize and first go through reconciliation	• Clear water • Identify conservation area (Sand, beach and sea resources) • Already we have VPC village peace council who can make by-law	• Better water supply and sanitation • Better gardening areas • Renovation of farms (but village must organise first) • Community hall • Church building
Manipuri	• We need inclusive, both women and men • Good character and respectful attitudes	• Protecting our reefs (shell, fish etc), stream and river • No use of net • Replanting of trees • Stop current poison trees or ropes and chemicals use in rivers (unsustainable) • Land conservation – some people are still selling land	• Proper sanitation and water supply, help each other • Improved gardening for food and marketing
Kaonasugu	Inclusive participation	• Replanting • Control our marine resources • Land management • Improve village set up • Do not plant teak to sell to loggers but make your own timber • We do not have any existing conservation site	Everyone should be involved in livelihood activities; income generating activities and better food production to improve standard of living.
Ngorangora	Inclusive – chief, women and men	• Experienced that our forest washed out where birds breed, and destroyed where wild pigs live • Breeding areas for birds and animals • Replanting of trees • Use our trees for building houses only and not logging	• Upgrading our community hall for agricultural training • Farming cocoa and coconuts
Tawani	• Inclusive – sharing ideas in decision-making with every one • Not always follow the chiefly rule system	• Improve reforestation • Improve wildlife • Improve sea resources • Sustainable harvesting (sustainable practices example use string to fish and not nets)	• More education • Improve cultural systems • Improve standard of living (leaf house to permanent house)
Maniuriuiri	• Inclusive – men, women, youth, all the people • Reliable and respectable decision makers • Youth for tomorrow need leadership training	• Caring attitude towards environmental resources • Restoration of damage environment example replanting • Education on the importance of our environment	• Sanitation and water supply • Solar (energy/lighting)

Entry points:

Women: Mothers Union, SSEC women's fellowship, Catholic women's group, Family Life Group

Men: Fathers group, Family Life, Kawake Land Group, MAOPA (cocoa buyer group), Rice Farming Committee

Young men and young women: Sunday school and youth church groups

West Arosi

Participants in Arosi chose to form two groups for the visioning activity

	Decision-making visions	Agriculture/Conservation visions	Livelihood visions
Group 1	• Gender balance and inclusive – youths, church leaders, MPs, chiefs, NGOs, Government, stakeholders • Fair, peaceful, sustainable • Law – to be recognised	• No more logging and mining • Sustainable (small scale milling/harvesting only) • Rehabilitation (reforestation) example trees • Need to conserve remaining forest	• Improve standard of living – health, finance, education, sport • Improve communication • Spiritual very important to guide us for orderly living/ happiness • Cocoa, copra, home tobacco, cube timber, bettlenut – are current products used to earn money (Women's priority is to build resource centre, they have iron provided by AusAID but there are no other funds for construction.)
Group 2	• Inclusive – youth, women and men, disable , chiefs • Educated people are able to think better	• Awareness – preserve our forest (conservation organisation) • Need conservation policies • Replanting • Tools for replanting	• Agriculture – awareness/ education & tools • Health – awareness, better water supply, sanitation and improve clinics • Schools – improve level of education reached (youth – explains that a well educated person is one with good mental, spiritual and physical appreciation of issues

Entry points:

Women: Mothers Union, Women's church group

Men: Chiefly group, men's church group

Young men and young women: Youth church group

Renbel Province visions

Participants in West Rennell, especially in Kanaba and Tahanuku were challenged by current disputes (strongly opposing pro and anti-logging groups within communities) and a very strong and embedded patrilineal system that does not recognise (represent) women in decision-making in any way. Such conditions made it very difficult for participants (especially men) to have a united voice in visions.

West Rennell

	Decision-making visions	Agriculture/Conservation visions	Livelihood visions
Lavangu	Include all women and men	Forest, reef, land, coastal farming use, manage and control	Water supply, clinic, transport, education, sports, live skills training, market house
Teabamagu	• Cross cultural decision-making • Everyone should be included in community issues concerning natural resources, and projects	• Maintain kastom practices of conservation methods • Sustainable harvesting of forest and marine products	Environmental friendly income and non cash projects
Kanaba	Men making decision can be influenced by women-wife	• Laws on conservation to be applied to forest, land, marine and coconut plantation • Resource owners make own bylaws. • Identify a piece of land to preserve flora and fauna.	• Small business e.g. poultry, piggery, bees, store • Solar, mini-clinic, shelter • Better water and sanitation • Eco-tourism • Truck, chainsaw
Tahanuku	Everyone to be involved in project decision-making	Our environment is okay and will stay the same	• Better water and sanitation • Health clinic building • Women club training (life skill – sewing machine repair) • Community meeting hall • Boat engines Chainsaw/ lucas

Entry points:

Women: Women church group, Dorcus

Men: Community Policy Group, Village Disaster Committee, School Committee

Young men and young women: Youth only have church youth group (with a desire for a sporting group)

Isabel Province visions

Participants in Isabel felt their existing chiefly system was strong and systems of representing women were somewhat effective, some of the visions sought to further strengthen existing systems.

East Isabel

	Decision-making visions	Agriculture/Conservation visions	Livelihood visions
Ghoveo	• Include women, men and stakeholders and young people	• Control sea resources e.g. mangroves • Conserve building material and firewood • Mark the conservation area • More development (sustainable)	• Improve marine products: trochus, fish, turtles, and sea shells • Better agriculture products: potatoes, crops coconuts
Bolitei	• Hold public hearing • More elders involved in formalisation of ideas, training and workshops • Chiefs monitoring of plans and ideas • People – implementation	• Encourage planting of trees, oil palm, rice, • Encourage cattle farm • Encourage sustainable harvesting and support with by-laws	• Non cash – free community support and man power (Food for celebrations, right to use resources) • Cash – better commercial farming or cash crops methods such as rice, vegetables, cattle, poultry, beetle nut, kava, teak, cocoa, coffee and tobacco
Sisigar	Leaders working together	Community to cooperate and have respect for resources • Better management of natural resources • Sustainable harvesting of our natural resources	Government and NGOs should assist community with policies for caring for natural resources
Baolo	Women, men, youth, chiefs and tribal leaders inclusive	• Encourage conservation of marine resources including fish, shells, bech-le-mer, turtle as well as mangroves and forest • Replanting trees	• Sanitation • Rest house for tourist • Copra • Solar power
Toelegu	Include chief, elders, men, women and youth	• Aware people of the community not to over harvest of marine and land resources	• Farming and gardening • Fisheries and marines products • Community hall and rest house • Transportation (boat) • Sanitation/water supply • Communication

Entry points:

Women: Mother's church group

Men: Society Shop, School Committee, men's transportation group

Young men and young women: Youth church

Annex 3

RAP Approach

This research uses a highly participatory approach to explore community members' aspirations and perceptions in relation to social, economic and environmental issues related to natural resource management. The exploration is intended to inform the design and development of forthcoming livelihoods project methodologies that seek to lead communities toward sustainable development. The RAP also provides baseline information for evaluating the changes made by the forthcoming project.

The RAP looks at more than community perceptions of what is inclusive and sustainable natural resource management. It also seeks to provide an understanding of the perceptions held by community members regarding needs, problems, opportunities, and capacity to undertake projects widely associated with natural resource related issues.

RAP activities centred around seven main axis to support the key research questions outlined in the introduction:

(1) Current and past natural resource management practices

(2) Natural resource associated issues and root causes

(3) Access and power over decisions about natural resource management (both past and present)

(4) Access and power relating to land tenure/ownership? (both past and present)

(5) Understanding and capacity for inclusive and sustainable NRM

(6) Current and future natural resource economies, entry points and future approaches/ options

(7) Community visioning and most desired change

Each of the axis were gendered.

A RAP facilitators' research guide and standardised questionnaire, one for all participants and another for community representatives, were used in all locations.

RAP participation

The research sought to involve a vertical and horizontal cross-section of women and men of all ages and status. During RAP arrangement visits Live & Learn staff met with community representatives and explained the nature of the RAP and the importance of balancing the gender, socio-economic status and age of participants. Participation of women and men were generally balanced in most provinces. However participation of young women was limited in some locations due to miscommunications and misunderstanding.

Data collection tools

The RAP involved a participatory gendered approach, encouraging communities to explore their strengths, share experiences, stories, ideas and opinions, and question and clarify issues related to local economies, the natural resources and participation; their root causes and people's well being.

The RAP was designed to facilitate a process that was not only reflective, but in part educative and solution oriented. It is through this process that participants were able to consciously critique their relationships, systems and structures, ultimately building their capacity to engage with the ensuing Live & Learn SINPA project. It was important that the RAP developed a relationship between Live & Learn and the communities.

Data collection focused on qualitative research with a high emphasis on providing time for story-telling as stories are an important part of Solomon Islander culture. The majority of the information collected during the RAP was through story telling. Some activities involved diagrams and drawing and only a select few activities involved a scribe with a group. None of the activities relied on all participants being literate. All activities were conducted in Solomon Islands Pidgin.

The RAP used several different approaches to data collection; referred to in social research as the mixed methods approach. The approach involved the following tools:

(i) Photo stimulus

(ii) 'Chain of effects' diagram for story sharing

(iii) Participatory ranking

(iv) Semi-structured focus group discussions and story sharing

(v) Face to face individual questionnaires

Data collection logistics

The locations of the focus groups at each community were areas where there was shelter and space, free of noise and distractions from other community members. School classrooms, kitchens, and shady trees were used as research venues. In this setting participants felt comfortable and relaxed. Participants were positioned in a circular or semi-circular configuration encouraging participation and interaction.

The RAP took two days at each community. On the first day male and female participants were separated to allow space for open story sharing and particularly to allow space for women to speak and be heard. On the second day women and men came together to share stories and findings from day one and to conduct community visioning.

One facilitator and one note-taker worked with the women's group and another facilitator and note-taker worked with the men's group. The genders of the facilitators and note-takers matched the gender of the group undertaking the RAP to encourage open participation. On day two everyone came together. In each province a local community member, identified through pre-RAP arrangement visits, helped to note-take and / or get the community involved and make participants feel comfortable.

The gendered RAP focus groups involved around 13– 28 participants. The focus groups involved direct and very active participation between the facilitator and the participants.

Focus groups differ from traditional structured interviews in several important ways. First, although the facilitator may have some initial guiding questions or core concepts to ask about, there is no absolute protocol to running the focus group. Second, the facilitator is free to move the conversation and ask further explanatory questions in any direction of interest that may be appropriate. These deliberately open questions encouraged participants to share their attitudes and experiences with each other. The exchanges that occurred between participants had the benefit of highlighting common experiences and views, identifying differences within the group and acting as a stimulus to further thought among participants. Consequently, the research found that focus groups were particularly useful for exploring the RAP topics broadly whilst maintaining some structure but also allowing room for flexibility.

The data collection techniques chosen focused strongly on oral and visual communication; and did not depend on all participants being literate.

RAP analysis techniques

Analysis of qualitative data indicated where the structural, cultural, environmental, economic, mental, social, political and/or institutional phenomena that limit action and restrict change lay.

Data analysis integrated collection and analysis methods to validate the research findings through a dialectic process. There are several key analytic strategies that were used for the RAP:

- *Coding* was a process used for both categorising qualitative data and for describing the implications and details of these categories. Coding was an important method in finding patterns in the data gathered. It involved dividing the data into concepts, categories of concepts, and assigning properties to categories, and the dimension of properties along a continuum.

- *Memoing* was a process for recording the thoughts and ideas of the researcher as they evolve throughout the study. Half of the community facilitators conducted memoing and found it useful to note the differences that occurred between communities and provinces.

- *Integrative diagrams* were used to pull detail together, to help make sense of the data with respect to common themes.

Limitations

The facilitators involved in this research had considerable prior experience in facilitation of community activities and knowledge of the diversity of the communities visited. Facilitators were fluent in Solomon Island Pidgin and note-taking was both in Pidgin and English. Note-taking was not necessarily an exact transcription and translation into English may inadvertently change the exact interpretation.

While gender balance was desirable, the exact composition of participants was determined by the community itself. In most communities gender balance was achieved except where young girls were under represented and Western Province where men were over represented.

The findings from this research should be seen as a starting point to stimulate further more specific discussion as relevant to the theme of further initiatives.

Data collection methods

Data Collection Tool	Method	Purpose
Participatory story sharing via photo stimulus and chain of effects diagram	This tool can be used in indoor or relaxed outdoor settings e.g. under a tree. Participants sat in a circle and the facilitator introduced three picture stimuli to the group, one at a time (e.g. one picture of gardens, one picture of land and one picture of forest). The participants were then asked questions about how the resource is managed now and in the past, and how decisions were made now and in the past. The picture stimuli was followed by a 'cause and effect, or 'chain of effects' activity. The chain of effects diagram activity involved the facilitator writing 'Natural Resource issues/problems' in the centre of a large sheet of paper. Participants were then asked the links issues and problems until they came to the 'root causes of the issue. The facilitator assisted in identifying the root cause by asking the question 'what's causing it' every time a participant mentioned an issue. Issues were linked by drawing lines.	**Natural resources; current and past management practices; associated issues and root causes (linkages and impacts of NRM to social, technical, environmental, economic and political (STEEP) issues)** Photo stimulus: To determine perceptions toward current and past NRM practices in the community. It was designed to enable participants to think of issues associated with NRM, openly share stories to discuss the positive and negative issues related to NRM practices in the past and the present. Chain of effects - This exercise helped in establishing perceptions of root causes to issues and later helped to motivate participants to discuss strategies to address them. Open discussion followed the chain of effects activity.
Participatory ranking	Participants were organised in a 'half circle' with ranking cards in front of the group. Each ranking card was a different colour with a name of an individual, group and/or authority who might make (or not make) decisions about NRM. The 'names' for the ranking cards were generated in pre-testing with Live & Learn SI and from desk-top research (e.g. chief, elder, PM, women, men, investor etc.). There were 13 ranking cards. The facilitator asked participants to: 1. Rank the stakeholders in order of who makes most decisions about NRM to who have least say (access/control) at present, and then, 2. Rank the stakeholders in order of who makes most decisions about NRM to who have least say (access/control) and in the past. Participants were asked to explain to each other why they moved or placed a ranking card in a particular place. After the two lots of ranking a discussion about why change has occurred and who should have access to decision-making in the future occurred.	**Who has access and power over decisions about natural resource management (both past and present)? Who has access and power relating to land ownership (both past and present)? Has it changed? If so, why has it changed? What does it mean for the future?** The ranking aimed to unveil gendered perceptions of who has access and power over decisions about natural resource practices at present and in the past. A short facilitated dialogue followed the ranking with a strong focus on critical reflection and discussion. Participants were asked to consider how access/power has changed over time, and why? and what they would like to see in the future.

Focus group	A facilitated participative dialogue (with a strong focus on critical reflection) on natural resource practices, natural resource economies, and future solutions to root causes of issues. To help the participants identify challenges and solutions. Provided an opportunity for collaborative reflection and learning. The activity sought to inspire engagement through dialogue.	**What is meant by inclusive and sustainable NRM? What are the barriers and ways forward? Discussion of current and future natural resource economies, entry points and future approaches/ options.** Explored what is perceived by inclusive and sustainable NRM; the key barriers and challenges to inclusive and sustainable NRM and the ways forward. It also focused specifically on local natural resource economies, current strengths/issues, entry points and livelihood approaches that have the best potential for the future.
Individual questionnaire	A survey using 16 qualitative and quantitative questions was completed with each participant individually face to face with a Live & Learn facilitator	**Capture individual perceptions, Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAPs) related to NRM issues, access and power in decision-making past and present, capacity for change, previous training, and livelihood ideas.** Aimed to gather statistical information on the all key research questions. It will build upon and compliment the participative activities. It will also ensure that if note-taker skills vary in other activities this data will be documented in the same way in every community. Some questions will involve 'walking in the shoes of another gender' – e.g. asking women questions about how they think men feel, and men questions about how they think women feel etc.
Day 2	• Women and men come together to 'walk in each other's shoes' and reflect on gendered findings of day one • Women and men work together as community to develop a vision • Livelihoods discussion related to reflection on activities and issues and futures thinking. • Discussions relating to the forthcoming design, 'next steps' and RAP feedback visits.	

Annex 4

Example activities to support strategic priorities

Awareness Raising		
Action	**Justification**	**Example activities**
Informal awareness raising activities for inclusive and sustainable natural resource management	The first step in bringing about change in attitudes and behaviours is raising awareness of the issues (This will include the impact NRM issues have on lifestyles and the potential role communities can play in securing solutions)	• Entertainment/educative activities utilising community leaders (not necessarily those in leadership positions) as entry points • Competitions (drawing/weaving/carving etc.) that focus on people of all ages (especially children and youth) to focus on NRM issues of personal importance • Community learning circles, action and experiential learning orientated sustainability and gender themes • Sharing of positive sustainable NRM and livelihood case studies from other locations • 'Look and Learn' visits between communities • Joint community preparation and dissemination of awareness raising materials (t-shirts, posters, informal and non-formal education materials etc.)

Natural Resource Plans		
Action	**Justification**	**Example activities**
Co-ordination of community plans with existing groups	Facilitate a community wide vision with broad participation, facilitate the exchange of ideas and identify resources required	• Inclusive development of a community NRM plan based on clear objectives related to shared community visions • Identify all existing sources of 'informal' information providers • Develop governance guidelines and implementation approaches
Ensure management systems are in place to support the community plan and sustainable livelihoods		• Gender balanced NRM decision support systems • Develop gender balanced systems of management for systems supporting the plan (savings clubs and revolving funds available for sustainable NRM livelihood micro-projects) • Identify possible linkages and networks with other communities and stakeholders

Sustainable NRM Plans and livelihoods options analysis		
Action	Justification	Example activities
Assess impediments to change in realisation of the plan	Change in NRM is not simply a bio-physical issue, it is just as large a socio-cultural and economic issue. It is essential to have a strong understanding of both the impediments and opportunities for change.	• Identify some of the economic, social, cultural, and physical impediments that affect the adoption by women and men of inclusive and sustainable management practices and sustainable livelihood options • Assess emerging market opportunities for new livelihoods and the effectiveness of economic means, proximity and access to existing and new markets
Alternative livelihoods	A critical key to success of sustainable NRM in the future is the availability of economically and environmentally sustainable viable alternative production systems supported by funds	• Develop and demonstrate a range of sustainable livelihoods that are suited to available land, resources, and market access in each community • Develop positions of leadership for women to take on influential roles and decisions in financial management, saving schemes and livelihood funds
Skills and support for 'learning by doing'		
Action	Justification	Example activities
Identification of knowledge, skills and capacity building support required in relation to; sustainable agriculture, financial literacy, set-up and governance of conservation sites, identification of alternative livelihoods and strategies for improved sanitation.	Communities are far from devoid of skills and knowledge. It is important that future work builds on existing strengths and capacity.	• Identify and develop mechanisms that build on existing knowledge and ensure it is incorporated into the planning process • Learning by doing should focus on; integrated NRM planning and governance, sustainable agriculture and land/sea conservation practices, financial management and savings club establishment and funds to support sustainable livelihood initiatives and part-fund sanitation initiatives • Use national pool of technical skills in other and partnering organisations to support areas of skills and training
Co-ordination and delivery of learning materials and courses in partnership with government, civil society, private sector and community organisations.	Inclusive and sustainable NRM cannot ensue in isolation. A combined approach of NRM, people and management skills including leadership, group dynamics, conflict management and support, and long-term management are required as the basis to inclusive and sustainable NRM.	• Establish a train the trainer system for action based change and support as opposed to discreet 'train and leave' regimes • Link to existing NRM training and support capacity e.g. Custom Gaden and link to existing capacity in relation to livelihoods and financial literacy e.g. CSP
Development of training tools and materials	In order to fill knowledge and skill gaps, responsive training programs that are province and community specific are essential.	• Identify, modify and apply existing Solomon Island packages/modules • The emphasis should be on story-telling and visual messages as opposed to a surplus of written materials • Liaise with partners and closely involve community women and men in the creation of materials where possible

Facilitation and support		
Action	Justification	Example activities
Responsive technical environmental, social economic and people management support (long-term and ongoing)	It is critical that community NRM plans are supported by strong facilitation of an inclusive, equitable and logical planning process. Long-term and ongoing facilitation is needed for sustainable NRM and to build existing networks needed for economically viable market access.	• Identify and develop systems for which coordination and communication between communities and major centres can be facilitated • Give multidisciplinary support to Live & Learn Provincial Facilitators (it is suggested that there be one woman and one man part-time employed within communities to support the project over a period of five years) • Establish linkages with other stakeholders with similar interests
Local and national recognition of accomplishments	Positive reinforcement of small and big 'wins' can lead to enhancing community pride and motivation for to continue the journey toward sustainability.	• Identify successful NRM initiatives and support them as demonstration sites inter and intra Province • Organise and support inter community field visits • Identify and support NRM 'leaders' and 'champions' through recognition and training support in networking and utilising them in training others
Engage Provincial and National Government	Provincial and National Government are influential and key stakeholders in land use decisions and policy formation and therefore play an important role in supporting sustainable NRM planning and implementation.	• Seek to engage with relevant government ministries in supportive policy development and implementation (particularly around women and natural resources) • Develop systems and opportunities where provincial government can actively support sustainable NRM • Involve and inform provincial government in NRM planning processes • Seek to engage and have regular visits, updates and support from Provincial Government, environment, fisheries and other relevant local officers
Information and ideas sharing	Non-threatening opportunities to share ideas and experiences are not only useful for solving problems but learning from others' experiences. They can also be effective motivators and realisation that issues and challenges are commonly shared.	• Utilise existing and newly identified CLCs and RTCs to bring communities together to develop links and networks for skills and idea sharing • Provide financial and organisational support to provide space for gendered sharing and field visits to areas of NRM best practice planning and decision-making