

MID-TERM EVALUATION PERIOD: 1 APRIL 2015 - 30 SEPTEMBER 2016

Gender Transformative and Responsible
Agribusiness Investments in South East Asia
(GRAISEA) Programme

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACN	ASEAN CSR Network
AFA	Asian Farmers Association
AICHR	ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights
AIP	Aquaculture Improvement Programme
AMAF	ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Forestry
ASC	Aquaculture Stewardship Council
ASEAN	Association of South East Asia Nations
AsiaDHRRA	Asia Development of Human Resources in Rural Areas
ATFF	Association of Thai Fisherfolk Federation
AVC	Agricultural Value Chain
BLO	Better Life Organization
CIFOR	Centre for International Forestry Research
COBHRA	Community Based Human Rights Impact Assessment
CSR	Cooperate Social Responsibility
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CF	Change Fusion
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
DPA	Development and Partnership in Action
GALS	Gender Action Learning Systems
GAP	Good Agricultural/Aquaculture Practices
GIN	Global Impactors' Network
GOG	Gender Overview Group
GRAISEA	Gender Transformative & Responsible Agribusiness Investment in South East Asia
IA	Impact Assessments
ISEA	Institute of Social Entrepreneurship in Asia
IIX	Impact Investment Exchange

IDEALS	Initiatives for Dialogue and Empowerment through Alternative Legal Services, Inc.
KIARA	Koalisi Rakyat untuk Perikanan (The People's Coalition for Fisheries Justice)
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries
MCD	Centre for Marine life Conservation and Community Development
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MoE	Ministry of Environment
MSI	Multi-Stakeholder Initiative
NAP	National Action Plan
NGOF	Non-Governmental Organization Forum on Cambodia
ONL	Oxfam Novib Netherlands
OGB	Oxfam Great Britain
OHK	Oxfam Hong Kong
PS	Private sector
PROSE	Promoting the Role of Social Enterprises
PMU	Programme Management Unit
PSC	Programme Steering Committee
P-SIA	Participatory Social Impact Assessment
RAP	Regional Action Plan
RSPO	Round Table on Sustainable Palm Oil
SAVC	Sustainable Agricultural Value Chains
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SE	Social Enterprise
SEASAIP	South East Asia Shrimp Aquaculture Improvement Protocol
SEAFDEC	South East Asian Fisheries Development Center
SEZ	Special Economic Zone
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
SPKS	Serikat Petani Kelapa Sawit
TA	Technical Assistance
TSWA	Thai Sea Watch Association

VietGAP	Vietnamese Good Aquaculture Practice
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

SUMMARY MATRIX

OVERALL DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

	Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
<i>TOC</i>	<p>TOC is relevant to countries/region as value chains are unsustainable /unfair</p> <p>Partner awareness of TOC seems limited</p>	<p>Complex and ambitious TOC will not be realized in short term</p> <p>Partners focused on outputs and outcomes</p>	<p>PMU needs more MEL/Finance resources and might need technical advisor</p> <p>PMU should use communications budget to publish stories and reports</p>
<i>Results</i>	<p>Results are relevant to TOC</p> <p>Responsible business and gender transformation are relevant concepts but they have not been understood and used effectively</p> <p>Partners and proposals are generally relevant</p>	<p>Logical flow is mixed up</p> <p>They are complex ideas that required more explaining and planning</p> <p>Stricter review process for better alignment</p>	<p>Revise down Result 3 Targets/Indicators</p> <p>PSC needs to try to be more active to support PMU if required</p> <p>WG focus should now be on joint delivery</p>
<i>PMU</i>	<p>PMU is strongly relevant because it manages programme</p> <p>PMU has focused more on internal than external communications</p>	<p>It is overworked and understaffed</p> <p>External communications is important for highlighting successes</p>	<p>Use WGs actively to identify gender needs to support joint delivery</p> <p>PMU needs to do more to stimulate partner demand for help and connect to GOG supply of assistance</p>
<i>MEL</i>	<p>MEL system is set up and being implemented</p> <p>Some partner reporting is not congruent with Results level because programmes are not aligned</p>	<p>Dynamic was to start implementing without baselines</p> <p>Results/MEL need to be designed at same time</p> <p>Support for weak</p>	<p>PMU and GOG should invite gender staff to contribute</p>

	Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
	<p>Some partners have had capacity issues monitoring and reporting</p> <p>Some Targets/Indicators are still too ambitious</p>	<p>capacity should have been planned but partners seem to be monitoring and reporting sufficiently well now</p> <p>Programme assumptions can affect MEL plans</p>	
<i>Finance</i>	<p>Financial management effectiveness was reduced by late disbursement and weak capacity</p> <p>Spending was generally efficient except for HR costs</p>	<p>Start up delays are normal, and due diligence is required for action plans to build capacity</p> <p>High staff turnover is expected</p>	
<i>PSC</i>	<p>Governance mechanism is required for programme direction</p> <p>PSC effectiveness is limited by lack of assistance between meetings</p>	<p>Notable there are no independent members</p> <p>Members might be still learning themselves</p>	
<i>WGs</i>	<p>WGs are essential to linking partners for delivery Results</p> <p>They have been ineffective until recently because of poor understanding about their purpose</p> <p>Less vocal members have benefits from learning</p> <p>GOG presence on WGs is important</p>	<p>Better preparation required next time to train leads and educate partners</p> <p>Important to understand what all partners think</p>	
<i>GOG</i>	<p>GOG assistance is fundamental to introducing and strengthening gender</p> <p>Its advice has been concentrated in certain countries because of time,</p>	<p>Members have become more realistic about what they can do</p> <p>Lack of coordination led to patchy help</p>	

	Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
	distance and interest Lack of clarity regarding country level gender staff	Not set out in MOUs like MEL and Finance	
<i>Advisors</i>	Advisors provide relevant and effective advice in aquaculture and palm oil, but palm oil advisors not so engaged in WG2	Technical skills and long experience in the region are crucial factors in their capacity to advise well	

RESULT 1 AND WORKING GROUP 1

	Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
<i>Relevance</i>	Partner objectives and activities are relevant, but SEAFDEC is departure from AMAF and labor and fish is beyond agribusiness	Confused messages regarding strategic focus for AMAF lobbying Advocacy strategies for RAP and NAPs are underdeveloped, with no gender positions have been formulated yet	Advocacy strategies for UNGPs need to be prepared and funded, involving relevant partners and incorporating gender
<i>Effectiveness</i>	GROW activities for RAP and NAPs have not been effective GROW advocacy for AMAF and SEAFISH advocacy on fisheries has been going too slowly Cambodia and Philippines have successfully advocated for national laws	No advocacy strategies for AMAF/agriculture and SEAFDEC/fisheries, and no analysis has started on gender Long-term government relationships and strong technical advice are crucial to build trust and add value	An advocacy strategy for either AMAF or SEAFDEC needs to be prepared and include gender Cambodia needs to monitor the laws and consider gender provisions
<i>Efficiency</i>	GROW is efficient but SEAFISH started slowly	Important to have expertise in policy and law making and implementation, and partnerships with politicians and bureaucrats	
<i>Sustainability</i>	Sustainability via adopting, implementing and monitoring laws, policies and plans	Opening spaces for multi-stakeholder collaboration with mutual recognition	
<i>Impact</i>	Various new multistakeholder partnerships have been established		
<i>Working</i>	WG 1 combines	Better to have one WG	Discuss shared issues in

	Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
<i>Group 1</i>	ASEAN and agribusiness partners and has proven to be too large	per Result	whole group and plan joint delivery in separate Results

RESULT 2 AND WORKING GROUP 2

	Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
<i>Relevance</i>	<p>Indonesia shrimp and palm oil interventions are highly relevant. They all involve responsible business and gender transformation. Engages with shrimp processor</p> <p>Vietnam shrimp programme is also highly relevant and includes strong technical and gender training. Involves shrimp processor too</p> <p>Thailand women-led social enterprises is different but relevant</p> <p>RSPO resolution relates to smallholder strategy and raises gender awareness</p>	<p>Different models for introducing and strengthening responsible business and gender transformation</p> <p>Gendered PSIA in ASC certification is an important step forward for MSIs and gender</p> <p>Working through certification processes is probably easier for building technical skills and gender awareness</p> <p>Segments in value chains can be genuine barriers to gender inclusion so need to look beyond them</p>	<p>ASC certification and CBIB/ASC training effectiveness needs to be tested</p> <p>KIARA might investigate if processors are open to fair partnerships</p> <p>SPKS needs to track that women do not remain stuck in garden roles</p> <p>Whole shrimp and palm oil value chain is required for identify gender inclusion opportunities</p> <p>SPKS could share fair partnerships business model with WG 2 for learning</p> <p>Oxfam/ICAFIS might discuss CSR with processor at right time to situate cooperative contract in wider policy</p> <p>Fisherfolks should adopted gendered policies</p> <p>SPKS might record West Kalimantan experience for RSPO gender awareness</p>
<i>Effectiveness</i>	<p>Effective partnerships between Oxfam/WWF/processor</p> <p>Women's organization accepted in Lampung value chain</p> <p>SPKS technical/gender training successful in improving quality/including women</p> <p>Cooperative slow to function in North Sumatra</p> <p>In Vietnam, increase household gender equality and pond gender inclusion</p>	<p>SPKS gendered training is much shorter and lighter than GALS for similar results, at least initially</p> <p>Due diligence at programme start needs to go deeper than national partners to district ones where involved</p> <p>Local government involvement, as in the case of Vietnam, can be crucial for successful</p>	<p>SPKS could share fair partnerships business model with WG 2 for learning</p> <p>Oxfam/ICAFIS might discuss CSR with processor at right time to situate cooperative contract in wider policy</p> <p>Fisherfolks should adopted gendered policies</p> <p>SPKS might record West Kalimantan experience for RSPO gender awareness</p>

	Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
	<p>is evident</p> <p>Shrimp cooperatives and processing company are piloting agreement in Soctrang</p> <p>In Thailand, women working in Fisherfolk have more advanced managerial roles</p> <p>Despite short-term success of Fisherfolk there are structural weaknesses like ownership and profitability</p> <p>Oxfam successfully lobbied in RSPO for smallholder/gender resolution</p>	<p>implementation</p> <p>GALS is a concrete and tangible gender methodology, with potentially far-reaching empowerment for men and women</p> <p>Restructuring value chains to benefit smallholders/farmers might harm middlemen/laborer livelihoods</p> <p>Capacity building is an important means of sustaining interventions</p> <p>GALS probably increases sustainability as it involves activities and produces plans</p>	<p>raising and advocacy</p>
<i>Efficiency</i>	<p>Oxfam in Indonesia, KIARA and SPKS have had financial capacity issues but WWF has been strong</p> <p>Vietnam/Thailand are efficient</p>	<p>Vietnam processor is committed to contract but working out business model</p>	
<i>Sustainability</i>	<p>Indonesia and Vietnam have been capacity building farmers and smallholders, using gendered methodologies that will endure</p> <p>Vietnam has brokered link with processor, which holds potential for long-term sustainability</p> <p>Fisherfolk sustainability will depend on business success</p>	<p>Thailand has adopted a completely different model to the other countries that has resulted in quicker women empowerment</p> <p>Ultimately, Fisherfolk will need to pay overheads and make profit</p> <p>Oxfam is strong and experienced RSPO advocate, but training SPKS to be one</p>	
<i>Impact</i>	<p>Indonesia/Vietnam have established good multi-stakeholder partnerships</p> <p>Gender transformation is</p>		

	Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
	happening at household and community level		
<i>Working Group 2</i>	<p>WG 2 has been operatively fairly effectively throughout the programmes</p> <p>Thailand has felt somewhat excluded</p>	Partners in WG 2 are working on similar topics in similar ways	Like WG 1, WG 2 needs to move from updating individually to delivering jointly

RESULT 3

	Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
<i>Relevance</i>	<p>Indonesia, Vietnam and Thailand have engaged or are preparing to engage with agribusiness regarding CSR, except KIARA</p> <p>Cambodia has engaged with companies through CSR platform, while Philippines and Myanmar are starting engagement</p> <p>CSR Asia brings relevant CSR expertise and networks to support partners/programme</p>	<p>The Result aims for companies to adopt CSR but that might be too ambitious in some cases</p> <p>Some agribusinesses that have or will be engaged are small</p> <p>CSR Platform has potential to attract and influence companies quickly</p> <p>Philippines does not do much CSR advocacy and Myanmar is not in agribusiness space</p>	<p>Amend Indicators to be understand and adopt</p> <p>Cambodia should continue discussing CSR concept in platform for consensus, and start dialogue on gender</p> <p>IDEALS should start contract negotiations if safe/secure</p> <p>CSRA/GRAISEA needs to understand/leverage CSRA effectiveness/activities better</p>
<i>Effectiveness</i>	<p>Cambodia has been effective in establishing platform and attracting companies and Chambers</p> <p>Philippines effectiveness in legal training not yet tested because negotiations have not started</p> <p>Myanmar has built capacity from low base, and it has engaged Chinese company/Embassy</p>	<p>Oxfam/NGOF/DPA record in governance and justice is basis for platform, plus more company interest in CSR</p> <p>Philippines unfair contract farming is unique in region and IDEALS legal strategy is logical but needs company CSR and government regulation support</p>	
<i>Efficiency</i>	Cambodia has been slow in reporting, Oxfam		

	Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
	Philippines has had financial capacity issues, and Myanmar partner did not always deliver as planned before removal	Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand and Philippines using similar CSR strategy: adopt, implement, monitor	
<i>Sustainability</i>	<p>ASC certification is likely to be sustainable but hard to tell with other Indonesia, Vietnam and Thailand actions</p> <p>Cambodia platform can be sustained by companies/Chambers</p> <p>Philippines strategy to be tested but it is reliant on funding</p> <p>Myanmar will depend on funding for some time yet</p> <p>CSR Asia trainings can be sustained in partners knowledge but not clear how it will continue events/networks and research/advocacy</p>	<p>Cambodia has set up national MSI, and Myanmar is capacity building for sustainability</p> <p>Like ASEAN CSR Network, CSR Asia can bridge CSO and private sector because of its CSR expertise/network</p> <p>CSRA is a consultancy so its activities stop when funding stops, although the relationships might endure</p>	
<i>Impact</i>	<p>Multi-stakeholder partnerships illustrate possible long-term impact</p> <p>Myanmar engagement with Chinese company/Embassy is significant</p>		

RESULT 4 AND WORKING GROUP 3

	Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
<i>Relevance</i>	<p>Too broad in scope; Target segment not defined</p> <p>Some partners/activities not relevant to demonstrate</p>	<p>Strategy is being undermined by lack of focus</p> <p>Philanthropic approach currently at odds with Private Sector Focus</p>	<p>Define a clear target audience and a focused target segment</p> <p>Expand sources of financing and shift focus towards more country-</p>

	Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
	business case to private sector and cause systemic change	Capacity to influence partners has been overestimated	level, long-term options
<i>Effectiveness</i>	Lack of focus; not effective collaboration Challenges linked to timing of Gender Benchmarks & focus on CSO	Value for Money has been less than expected Adding more philanthropic work might bring more support. GIN likely to be sustainable if develops a sustainable value proposition/incentive for members	Focus on depth not breadth Define a clear strategy and expectations for partners' collaboration Leverage GIN for access to capital Expand engagement to private sector actors – investors and financial institutions – to leverage their input for Gender Benchmarks and potential referrals for viable enterprises
<i>Efficiency</i>	Sourcing is more costly than expected Delay in delivering gender benchmarks		Select beneficiaries based on strict criteria aligned with goals and likelihood of being sustainable Focus on country-level GIN networks
<i>Sustainability</i>	Very young enterprises not sustainable without GRAISEA's support GIN has been making progress to expand to a number of countries in ASEAN and might be able to achieve critical mass		
<i>Impact</i>	Too early to tell – some anecdotal evidence of increase in women's self confidence and increase in fishermen's income		
<i>Working Group 3</i>	Challenging relationship among partners and low levels of collaboration	The value and purpose of WG3 was not well understood	Set clear and realistic expectations on why the working group exists and how it should work.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The theory of change (TOC) underpinning the GRAISEA programme is that commercially profitable, gender equal and responsible/sustainable value chains are not mutually exclusive, and that win-win-win results are possible for agribusiness, smallholders/SMEs, and community/environment. Oxfam plays a convening role, establishing a multi-stakeholder network that works with major regional commodity value chains to be more responsible and inclusive, particularly in shrimp, fisheries and palm oil sectors. It sees the programme to be demonstrative and experimental in nature to show and try different intervention strategies and various partnership combinations. Partners include Oxfam country offices, Oxfam GROW campaign, traditional national/regional CSO partners, and new CSR, social enterprise and investment partners from the private sector.

In terms of Overall Design and Implementation, GRAISEA's partners are mostly delivering Outputs and Outcomes that contribute to achieving its Results, but there are some that are not strongly aligned. Management has been effective but overworked, which reflects not only the number of partners but new types of partners, many of whom are either weak organizationally or new to development programming and have required additional assistance in Finance or MEL. Governance is provided in the form of a Steering Committee; and, while skilled and experienced practitioners representing different partners constitute it, it has been learning too. Three Working Groups were established from the start of the programme to provide a space for Result partners to share updates and discuss issues with a view to jointly delivering Results. Unfortunately, these groups failed to function properly for the first year at least because their concept was novel for many partners and the partners were focused on their own implementation. Responsible business and gender transformative are the central programme principles or themes. Gender and private sector/value chain/MSI experts have been assisting partners to implement and their advice has been valuable, although it has lacked coordination especially in relation to gender.

Result 1 concerns advocacy of ASEAN and national government targets to influence them to adopt and implement stronger responsible business and gender transformative standards. National advocacy has been more effective than regional advocacy to date, because of the strong government relationships and subject knowledge of country partners. Further, regional advocacy has been occurring largely without advocacy strategies – objectives, policies, coalitions, etc. – so activities have not advanced it far.

Result 2 regards key commodity value chains that Oxfam and partners have worked on for some time: shrimp, palm oil and fisheries. Here, interventions have been largely successful in increasing technical capacity and gender awareness, and they are showing promise in agribusiness engagement. Highlights include WWF/Oxfam collaboration on gendered PSIA for shrimp processors ASC certification, female Indonesian palm oil smallholders and Vietnamese shrimp farmers taking on new roles in palm gardens and shrimp ponds, and women-led fishing enterprises being established and strengthened in Thailand.

Result 3 focuses on influencing agribusiness to adopt and implement CSR policies and plans. Some of the Vietnam, Indonesia and Thailand work in Result 2 contributes to it. Additionally, Cambodia, Philippines and Myanmar have designed their own approaches. Cambodia has set

up a CSR platform that successfully attracted private sector members and engaged them in CSR discussions. Philippines is training banana growers to know their legal rights and renegotiate their unfair contracts with packing companies. Lastly, Myanmar is training communities to know their legal rights and engage with companies in a new SEZ. While Cambodia is closely related to Result 3, Philippines and Myanmar are a step removed for the moment, because the Philippines is focused on legal strategy and Myanmar on the SEZ. However, their experiences are valuable for learning about different strategies and companies.

Result 4 is about increasing investment in SMEs that are part of AVCs. While partners in this Result have worked hard in their respective fields, they have not linked up as intended. Change Fusion has established a mentor network to provide voluntary business development advice to small social enterprises. ISEA has researched small social enterprises to identify gender benchmarks. Shujog/IIX has conducted impact assessment and provided technical assistance on SMEs. Consequently, Change Fusion/ISEA target segment and approach is quite different to Shujog/IIX. Greater understanding of the nature and needs of social enterprises/SMEs in agriculture value chains is needed to ensure financial products and impact investment can be well targeted.

In terms of programme sustainability, GRAISEA is relying on a number of methods to keep its achievements going after the programme has ended: government policy and law making to promote and entrench responsible business and gender transformation concepts and rules; capacity building using certification processes and technical training as entry points for gender equality; and, agribusiness CSR policies and plans that result in genuine core business practice changes. Cambodia's CSR law lobbying and Indonesia/Vietnam value chain structure changes are good examples of the first two sustainability methods, but both will require monitoring in future.

It is still too early to tell what impact the programme will have in relation to most of the partner activities, but early collaborative approaches point to the development of enduring multi-stakeholder partnerships and initial value chain successes illustrate the potential for gender transformation in new roles for men and women, including women making real decisions.

Going forward, the programme should aim for stronger coherence in objectives and architecture to facilitate easier implementation and make collective impact. Moreover, management needs to be adequately resourced to support a complex and innovative partner network and advisor system design.

I. INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The Gender Transformative & Responsible Business Investment in South East Asia (GRAISEA) programme believes that equitable, sustainable and viable value chains can be built for agriculture commodities through multi-stakeholder cooperation. Governments can provide policies and laws to guide and require responsible business and gender equity, agribusiness can enter into partnerships for fair value chains and gender empowerment, and investors can offer financial services and products for small-scale producer growth and sustainability.

GRAISEA is a joint OGB/ONL programme, running for three years from April 2015 to March 2018. Oxfam GB Regional Centre, in Bangkok, leads it through a Programme Management Unit. The programme involves six countries in which Oxfam country office work with national partners: Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia, Philippines and Myanmar. Indonesia and Vietnam are regarded as “advanced” countries in the programme because of their well-developed programmes. They received larger budgets to progress their value chain interventions and regional linkages. Thailand, Cambodia, Philippines and Myanmar are “learning countries” in the programme context. GRAISEA also involves five regional partners, with a sixth being added during implementation: Oxfam GROW Campaign including SEAFISH for Justice, CSR Asia, Change Fusion, ISEA and Shujog/IIX, with ASEAN CSR Network joining recently.

A Programme Steering Committee consisting of representatives from Oxfam, partners and PMU is responsible for overseeing and guiding implementation of this multi-country/partner network. GRAISEA is trialing three thematic Working Groups for linking and learning, and utilizing a Gender Overview Group and Advisory System for technical assistance and capacity building. The three Working Groups correspond with the three elements of the theory of change: CSR/Private Sector Regulatory Frameworks; Palm Oil & Aquaculture Value Chains and Multi-stakeholder Initiatives; and Impact Investment and SMEs. Technical advisors are made up of regional and global OGB and ONL experts.

The Results/MEL framework consists of two Objectives (an Overarching Development Objective and a Specific Objective), four Results with corresponding Indicators and Targets, and many partner Outcomes with corresponding Outputs and Indicators. This evaluation focuses on the four Results, which Outcomes have theoretically been designed to achieve:

Result 1:

ASEAN and its member states policies have a stronger role in promoting responsible practices, which include attention to gender equality and women economic empowerment, in agribusiness, agribusiness investment, small-scale agriculture and social enterprises

Result 2:

Small-scale producers are connected or engaged with agro-commercial value chains in equitable partnerships and women are recognized as central actors

Result 3:

Corporate agribusinesses in South East Asia have adopted Corporate Social Responsibility policies and plans that support responsible practices in the value chains for women and men small-scale producers, as well as including gender equality and women’s economic empowerment in their core business values

Result 4:

Financial institutions and investors in agriculture invest responsibly by introducing/development innovative financing solutions to assist overcoming specific investment requirements (investment risks) for women, smallholders and buyers of smallholders

Promotion of gender equality and women's economic empowerment is central to the GRAISEA programme. Four gender transformation principles have been developed to guide it:

- Equal access to resources and economic opportunities;
- Gender equality in participation and decision-making;
- Gender responsive policies and investments; and,
- Affecting changes in attitudes and norms about gender.

The equally key concept of responsible business has not been specified to the same extent, but consists of a number of frameworks, ideas and standards, such as UNGPs, CSR, ASEAN sectoral policies and national sectoral and organic laws, industry certification standards, etc.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The GRAISEA programme schedules an evaluation to take place following 18 months of implementation.

This midterm evaluation has three purposes to meet programme needs at this point of its performance:

1. Review critical components of the TOC and make changes to strategies if necessary;
2. Investigate circumstances where the programme appears to have achieved some success, looking for lessons that could be applied in future; and,
3. Review the usefulness of the MEL system, advisory system and/or linking and learning practices and make changes to them, as needed.

The scope of the midterm evaluation has been defined and limited as follows to meet these purposes:

- Four results, with corresponding Indicators and Results;
- Management, Governance, Working Groups, Advisor System including gender; and,
- The programme implementation period from 1 April 2015 to 30 September 2016

GRAISEA hired a consultant to conduct the evaluation; and, following subsequent discussions, GRAISEA and the consultant decided to hire a sub-consultant with finance/investment expertise. The consultant evaluated the Overall components of the programme along with Results 1, 2 and 3, and the sub-consultant reviewed Result 4 specifically.

The lead consultant prepared an Inception Report setting out the evaluation methodology, which is attached to this report in the Annex.

The evaluation reviewed the Overall components mainly for their Relevance and Effectiveness. While it evaluated the four Results against the five standard evaluation criteria, as appropriate, for partners: Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability, and Impact.

Please see the Annex for evaluation questions.

The methodological steps that the evaluation took to research, analyze and write were:

- Conduct literature review;
- Organise key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs);
- Organise country visits and fieldtrips;
- Conduct KIIs for countries/partners not visited by Skype and write up notes;
- Conduct fieldtrips and conduct KIIs and FGDs in person and write up notes;
- Draft report;

- Present draft report to GRAISEA staff and partners; and,
- Finalise report following GRAISEA comments.

Key literature that was relied on during the evaluation was: GRAISEA Full Proposal including Terms of Reference for PSC, PMU, Working Groups, GOG and Advisor System; GRAISEA MEL Plan; Partner Six Month and Annual MEL Reports for Year 1; GRAISEA Annual Report for Year 1; PSC and Working Group Minutes; and specific outputs such as gender baselines and reports.

More than 40 interviews and discussions were conducted during the 4-5 weeks of interviewing. The consultant undertook country visits to Bangkok, Jakarta and Hanoi, and fieldtrips in Indonesia to West Kalimantan and Vietnam to Soctrang. The consultant thanks country Oxfam offices and their national partners for helping to arrange these visits and trips.

The consultant and sub-consultant presented their draft report to GRAISEA donor, staff and partners in Bangkok, with regional and global staff and partners joining online.

LIMITATIONS

KIIs and FGDs were only two hours in length, and the emphasis of the consultant's interviews and discussions was on Management and Thailand, Indonesia and Vietnam value chains. Organising and performing field visits to Indonesia and Vietnam took up considerable time. The depth of analysis for regional partner activities in and regional/global advisors contributions to Results 1, 2 and 3 is constrained somewhat as a result. The sub-consultant focused on evaluating Result 4 so had more time to consider the regional partners roles in it.

Partner Six Month MEL reports for Year 2 were not available to the consultant so the evaluation of Results 1-3 relies on Year 1 reports and KIIs for the first six months of Year 2. The sub-consultant has reviewed Year 2 reports for Result 4 only.

This final report is a shortened version of the draft report for publication.

II. MAJOR FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

THEORY OF CHANGE AND RESULTS FRAMEWORK

Theory of Change

The Theory of Change (TOC) of the GRAISEA programme is relevant to national and regional economic justice because key agriculture value chains like seafood and palm oil are commercially profitable for processors and exporters but significantly less remunerative for farmers and smallholders. Private sector in these value chains often lack awareness of and commitment to responsible business policies such as labour conditions and sustainable business practices including environmental management. These value chains exist in patriarchal communities and societies where women work at home with no assistance, in aquaculture and agriculture production with little or no recognition, or in processing factories/offices in low-level employment roles.

Given the complexity of players, interests, training, negotiating, standards and operations involved in the TOC, it is relevant for Oxfam to play a convening role to build a multi-stakeholder network of targeted partners to make interventions in value chain segments and in creating an enabling environment for agribusiness, SMEs and beneficiaries. Moreover, in light of the ambition of the programme, it is relevant too that Oxfam takes a demonstration or experimental approach to selecting and testing partners and strategies.

Whether the TOC is effective in the medium to long term is beyond the scope of the evaluation, but what is more important to note in this section is that the partners do not appear to have a strong awareness of the TOC and its multi-stakeholder/experimental strategy. Their focus has been on their specific tasks and goals rather than their contribution to the programme as a whole, but there are signs in some of the Working Groups that they are becoming more conscious of their different but related roles to realizing the underlying TOC.

Results Framework

The Results Framework separates the Agribusiness element of the TOC into two results (Results 1 and 3) and mixes up the TOC logic from Agri/SME/Beneficiary to Agri/Beneficiary/Agri/SME (Results 1-4). Notwithstanding, the design is still highly relevant to the TOC.

Responsible business and gender transformation are the two major GRAISEA concepts and standards. As mentioned, they are strongly relevant to the legal/policy environments and value chain structures/operations in the region because responsible business and gender transformation are either missing, immature or piecemeal. While the Results refer to these concepts, there are several issues that have reduced their effectiveness in guiding implementation.

First, it is unlikely that the partners have a shared understanding of the meaning of responsible business, which encompasses other concepts and standards that can overlap and contradict, many of which are being used such as UNGPs, CSR, multi-stakeholder/company certifications, SDGs, social enterprise, and inclusive business, etc. There has been little if any analysis and discussion of responsible business amongst partners, except CSR Asia has conducted CSR training for partners and CSRA/ASEAN CSR Network have organized responsible business events under the programme. Second, while Oxfam defined gender transformation in the programme proposal and explored its value chains relationship in a guidance note, the starting point on the gender journey for many if not all partners was gender blindness, or gender awareness at best. Partners have not found it easy to translate gender principles into revised frameworks, implementation strategies, policy advocacy, capacity building and so forth. Third, gender transformation seems to have become the more dominant concept through programme activities and events, perhaps because of partner need or programme interest.

Additionally, Oxfam's choice of partners and their proposals for each Result is relevant for the most part:

- **Result 1** includes GROW/SEAFISH to advocate ASEAN to promote responsible business and they have regional and policy expertise and experience, but KIARA was new to leading SEAFISH. Vietnam/Cambodia/Philippines/Thailand partners advocate nationally and all have considerable experience in advocacy in their offices. Vietnam presents the best example in the programme of a partner that has designed a comprehensive and coherent programme under Results 1-3 and looks for links to Result 4. ISEA has developed gender benchmarks for social enterprises/SMEs under Result 4 that it plans to use to advocate stakeholders to adopt them under Result 1 but its relevance to ASEAN/government targets needs to be thought through since it is currently weak.
- **Result 2** involves Indonesia/Vietnam/Thailand and they are highly relevant since they are intervening in seafood/palm oil value chains for greater equity and sustainability. Change Fusion is a mentor network that has potential to link skilled volunteers with programme beneficiaries for business development but its relevance to these key GRAISEA valuechains has been moderate so far, having only brokered mentor assistance to Thailand fishing beneficiaries.
- **Result 3** partners are seeking to influence agribusiness to adopt CSR policies and plans. Vietnam/Thailand/Cambodia are relevant as they are targeting national agribusiness. Philippines have taken more of a legal negotiation than policy advocacy approach so far but it is operating in the banana valuechain and in relation to unfair contract farming. Myanmar is starting from a low base and is building basic community capacity in relation to the new SEZ, although it is not linked to valuechains or agribusiness to date. CSR Asia is relevant because it possesses technical skills and business networks on CSR.
- See **Result 4** below regarding the relevance of the partners to realizing it on impact investment.

The effectiveness of the partners and their programme implementation will be discussed below. In sum, GRAISEA has made progress towards most Indicators/Targets in the first 18 months, but not necessarily the most direct or rapid progress.

MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

Programme Management Unit

The PMU is strongly relevant if not absolutely essential to programme implementation because it is responsible for donor contracting and reporting, strategic planning and fundraising, country office supervision and regional partner management, MEL, budget disbursement and financial

management, event organization, and media/communications and knowledge management. However, the programme has many partner Outcomes under each Result that require oversight of and assistance with numerous programme, MEL and finance matters. The current HR structure of one full-time Programme Manager, MEL Specialist and Finance Officer, with part-time Communications support, is insufficient and PMU is understaffed and overworked.

At the same time, there has been partner expectation that PMU should have given more effective strategic and technical assistance as part of its management role. Examples include PMU should have been more engaged in Working Groups to guide partners, and more responsive to weaknesses in partner demand for and GOG supply of gender assistance. Regardless of whether these expectations are fair because PMU is a management not technical unit or these gaps are explicable because PMU has been overworked in its management role, they suggest a need for resources to support programme-wide strategic and technical assistance.

Similarly, PMU has budget for part time communications role, which has been left unfilled recently. While the evaluation did not review communications, the impression is that PMU has been effective in internal communications and knowledge (Trello and Bulletins) but less so in relation to external communications and knowledge, such as posting stories and publishing reports. Indeed, Vietnam's journalist training is surprisingly unique to the programme and holds the potential to support CSR, via stories that explain the enabling environment (through regulation) and identify front-running companies (to promote further adoption).

Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning (MEL)

The MEL system is obviously strongly relevant to programme implementation because it allows inputs and outputs to be monitored and evaluated against indicators and outcomes for transparency and accountability on the one hand and learning and improving on the other. Further, the system is moderately effective since a few partners completed gender baselines (although no partners completed full baselines) and all partners are submitting clear and accurate six-month and annual MEL reports for Management programme monitoring and donor reporting.

However, the MEL system has significant weaknesses that diminish relevance and effectiveness. First, the MEL system was designed in several phases that resulted in a double-layered system. Partners report Outputs against Indicators at Outcome level, while PMU uses that information to report Indicators/Targets at Result level. Where partners Outputs/Indicators/Outcomes are reasonably aligned with programme Targets/Indicators/Results they are relevant for PMU, but where they are not so aligned it is hard for PMU to link them to Indicators/Targets/Results.

Second, some country partners have found it difficult to collect data and complete monitoring as they lack capacity and support from country offices, which have previously agreed to assist them with MEL. PMU has backstopped countries more than expected, which has taken considerable effort. In this respect, MEL Officer has been recognized for effectiveness in explaining MEL system, developing reporting templates, assisting drafting reports, and so on. However, as noted, MEL requires further resources such as an Assistant to help meet the workload.

Third, there is concern that Targets/Indicators/Results were set too ambitiously without fully taking into account the conditions underlying their achievement. This is especially so in Result 3, where the process of identifying and engaging even front-running companies has proven to be extremely time-consuming. Trust often has to be built, starting from poor knowledge of CSOs and CSR at one end of the spectrum to powerful suspicion of CSOs and CSR at the other end. Some Result 3 Targets were revised down from Year 1 to Year 2 but it is likely that

more revision will be needed. Notwithstanding, it is also important to keep in mind that some agribusinesses have CSR policies, so it might be possible for partners to assist them more expeditiously in implementing their policies.

Lastly, given the importance of convening/partnerships and responsible business/gender transformation to the programme, it is surprising to learn that research and analysis is only taking place now on partnership principles and multi-stakeholder networks.

Finance

Financial management was only moderately effective in the first year because initial partner contracting and grant disbursement was delayed several months at the start of the programme. Consequently, partners could not start implementing their activities until the middle of 2015. For Indonesia, there were further delays since Ramadan and Eid fell soon after disbursement. Some outputs were not delivered in Year 1, so grant absorption was low/budget variance was high. Activities were often rolled over to Year 2, making it a tight year in terms of programme delivery.

Further, partner financial reporting quality and timeliness varied depending on technical capacity, available time and organizational culture. Partners with competent and professional finance staff produced high quality reports and submitted them on time. Interestingly, three Oxfam country offices seem to have submitted the lowest standard and slowest delivered reporting. In two of the cases, financial officer staff capacity has been weak and is being addressed, but in the third it looks like organizational culture. As mentioned, country Oxfams supervise partner programme implementing and MEL/financial reporting so it is a worry if their financial management is poor. Moreover, in some cases, it appears that Oxfam are not managing partners finance like MEL.

Lastly, all partners received unqualified audits reports to date so internal control is effective, except for the Myanmar partner, BLO, which had poor banking/cash control.

Generally, budget expenditure has been efficient except for inflated human resources costs if partners experience high turnover and/or recruitment challenges and use senior staff charging at higher rates to fill vacant roles. Even if this solution is essential to continue programme implementation and is only done temporarily, it can quickly use up the allocated partner HR budget because the senior rates can be significantly higher. One partner, in particular, has regularly used senior staff in this manner and it might spend up to its budget cap before the end of the programme.

Programme Steering Committee

PSC is highly relevant to GRAISEA because it can provide strategic guidance and problem-solving advice to PMU so that the programme heads in the right direction and remains on course. Interviews with two PSC members demonstrated that they are senior practitioners with advanced skills and significant experience in strategic planning and programme management.

However, it seems likely that the PSC is only moderately effective in overseeing and directing PMU because, while it appears to listen to PMU in its meetings, it is unclear if it offers advice; and, if it offers advice, it does not seem to follow up between meetings to check on PMU. Additionally, according to one PSC member at least, partners have not been responding to PSC requests for PMU and programme feedback so it can facilitate upwards programme accountability.

SUPPORT AND ADVISORY

Working Groups

The Working Group mechanism is highly relevant tool for achieving Results because it provides a dedicated space for partners to get to know each other, to share their Outputs and Outcomes and, eventually, to strategize collectively to deliver Results jointly.

Unfortunately, the WG mechanism has not functioned effectively until recently for several reasons:

1. It is quite likely that some partners did not understand the mechanism - perhaps because of their programming inexperience - which goes beyond individual project implementation to link them up for better outcomes;
2. As a corollary, it is also quite likely that some partners resisted being involved in WGs because their participation was not fully budgeted and there were no concrete deliverables in workplans;
3. It is very clear that most partners did not understand that WGs should go beyond linking and learning to joint delivery; and,
4. Lastly, it is also very clear that leads did not understand that their roles were leadership not facilitation of their groups.

More practically with the disbursement delay, however, partners were rushing to implement in Year 1 so that reduced time for WG operation.

Nonetheless, WGs 1 and 2 have recently become much more effective, with bonds having been formed and knowledge having been built through linking and learning in the first 18 months. Further, several less vocal partners explained that they have benefited immensely from the linking and learning that has occurred, and they would like to link and learn in other WGs too. WG 3 seems to have engaged in enthusiastic linking and learning, but it has not bonded well. There is a fundamental difference between partner beneficiaries in WG 3 – micro SEs and SMEs - which makes it difficult to find common ground. It is unlikely to move to joint delivery stage.

GOG members sit in WGs and their presence is strongly relevant to linking and learning given the importance of gender transformation to GRAISEA. WGs provide them with regular meetings to identify needs and arrange follow up with partners to increase gender awareness and help integrate gender. Though it is unclear how effectively GOG members have contributed to WGs and followed up partners.

Gender Oversight Group

The Gender Overview Group is highly relevant to programme design and implementation because of the programme strong emphasis on gender transformation and the partners general lack of gender awareness.

While GOG productivity has been high, preparing reports, running training and sharing tools, there are different approaches within the group to providing assistance to country partners. One member lives in the region and seems very willing to respond to partner requests in the countries that she covers - Philippines and Thailand. Two members live in Europe. One of them is focused on GALS in Vietnam and provides regular assistance. The other is working on

Cambodia and Myanmar but remarks that their demand for help is low. Further, he is concerned about the ways of working with the Oxfam gender staff there. Consequently, GOG assistance has been concentrated in Philippines and Vietnam in particular, while the other countries have received less attention and the regional level has been largely missed. GOG as a group seems uncertain if it should identify assistance or wait to be asked to help. Meanwhile, some country Oxfams have relied strongly on their gender focal points to fill this crucial gap.

Accordingly, GOG effectiveness has probably been strong where assistance has been provided to support programme implementation, but its overall coverage has been fairly patchy thus far. Having said this, it needs to be kept in mind that members have different amounts of time to assist partners and presence in the region can play a big role in building relations for effectiveness.

Advisory Support

Partners working with aquaculture and palm oil advisors regard their help as highly relevant. They have significant experience in their respective value chains so they know the issues and stakeholders, understand the institutions and processes, and lead awareness raising and agenda setting especially in the case of ASC (shrimp) and RSPO (palm). Accordingly, these advisors provide effective advice, support and leadership to partners. Additionally, the aquaculture advisors lead WG2, which is functioning well. However, the palm oil advisors are WG2 members but do not appear to be so engaged with it to date, which detracts a bit from their overall effectiveness but not in the value chain.

RESULT 1 AND WORKING GROUP 1 – ASEAN AND STATES/GOVERNMENT

Result 1: ASEAN and its member states policies promote responsible practices, which includes attention to gender equality and women’s economic empowerment, in agribusiness and in agribusiness investment, small scale agriculture and social enterprise

Relevance

Result 1 is highly relevant to the TOC because it seeks to build the enabling environments and regulatory regimes for agribusiness and small-scale agriculture to operate in and comply with.

First, GROW is trying to influence the drafting of ASEAN Regional Action Plan (RAP) and two ASEAN Member State National Action Plans (NAPs) for the implementation of the United National Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) so that they include gender transformation principles. UNGPs contain human rights standards for States to sign and enforce via businesses particularly CEDAW for women’s rights in this context, and they contain responsible business practices for business to adopt and implement. UNGPs are strongly

relevant here. Moreover, the GROW activities to date are relevant to influencing RAP (ASEAN Responsible Business Forum with ASEAN CSR Network) and NAPs (Philippines UNGPs consultation and Indonesia COBHRA training) since they are raising awareness about UNGPs in regional multi-stakeholder and national CSO settings.

Second, GROW is preparing to engage with ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF) to encourage it to commit to developing or improving agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture policies and guidelines using gender transformation principles. AMAF is the leading ASEAN body on agriculture, so it is highly relevant to regional policymaking in relation to responsible business and gender transformation. GROW co-organized a regional CSO learning event with AFA and AsiaDRRHA that focused on agriculture so it was relevant. Meanwhile, SEAFISH has been engaging with Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Centre (SEAFDEC). SEAFDEC has a strategic partnership with ASEAN for technical cooperation for sustainable fisheries. Engaging with it is a departure from the Indicator on AMAF but that Indicator also highlights fisheries and aquaculture and the Result is drafted quite widely to promoting responsible agribusiness practices. Further, SEAFISH is now collaborating with SEAFDEC on labor rights in the fishing industry, which is the right industry but perhaps a little too focused given the Result is promoting responsible agribusiness practices.

Third, GRAISEA countries are advocating for ASEAN Member States to include responsible business and gender transformation principles in national laws and policies regarding agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries. Like States signing and enforcing international human rights standards under UNGPs, including these principles in laws and policies is highly relevant because they can be promoted and implemented. All countries are contributing relevant activities to drafting or amending laws and policies, either directly through policy or law lobbying (Cambodia, Vietnam and Philippines) or indirectly by setting or reinforcing standards (Indonesia, Thailand and Myanmar).

Fourth and last, ISEA has prepared gender benchmarks based on social enterprise case studies, promoted them with a variety of stakeholders and hopes to start advocating them with funds. However, it is unclear how the benchmarks are relevant to the stakeholders and approaches in Result 1. ASEAN/States advocacy is targeting RAP/NAPs using UNGPs, AMAF advocacy is focused on AMAF/SEAFDEC but it still needs to identify its policies, and the Cambodian and Vietnam governments seem to be interested in CSR related laws and regulations.

Effectiveness

Overall, there are some concerns about the effectiveness of the regional level influencing work but national level is strongly effective so far at least.

While GROW regional and national events were relevant because they raised awareness about UNGPs at these levels, they did not focus effectively on advocacy planning to influence drafting the RAP or the two States to start drafting their NAPs. GROW has developed an ASEAN advocacy strategy but not specific to RAP/NAPs, and it has been putting together a CSO caucus for UNGPs advocacy that it will be making submissions in relation to RAP. Both are significantly more direct approaches. Moreover, GRAISEA has only recently begun analyzing the relationship between UNGPs and gender transformation principles with a view to formulating policy asks for RAP/NAP advocacy. In the case of the RAP, however, this analysis and formulating might have come too late because the draft is expected to be finalized by the end of 2016 for submission to AICHR for endorsement, unless AICHR is willing to open further regional consultations to address outstanding issues.

In relation to GROW and AMAF, the CSO learning event was designed to build awareness and solidarity but effective influencing probably needs to develop strong positions and organize advocating them. Like UNGPs, the gender transformation principles have not be translated into AMAF demands. There is a question mark, too, regarding whether AMAF needs to be lobbied on gender policy because it has accepted FAO policy recommendations. Finally, partners said that the change of Philippines government and the AMAF Chair (to Singapore) will probably adversely affect the previous strategy of collaborating with Philippines DARD and Philippines Chair to influence AMAF.

SEAFISH conducted research on fisheries standards with members in Myanmar, Vietnam and Philippines and assessed advocacy capacity during a regional event in Indonesia, but it has not effectively consolidated research into a synthesis report or designed an advocacy strategy using its assessment. Again, the gender dimension seems to be missing here, except that the regional event invited women.

For national law advocacy, Cambodia and Philippines have been the most effective advocates for including responsible business in agriculture law, and Vietnam is setting itself up effectively. In Cambodia, NGOFA and DPA have successfully consulted with communities to identify lobbying positions and lobbied government to insert CSR clauses into agriculture and environment law respectively. Indeed, DPA was invited to sit on the drafting committee and sometimes chaired it. However, in the Cambodian example, government and partners had different concepts of CSR. While these laws have yet to be passed, the Cambodian partners are confident that they will be with the CSR provisions intact, and that will then provide an entry point for including gender equality in future revisions. This will need to be tested. In Philippines, IDEALS together with FAO advised DARD on passing an administrative order to protect farmers, and the Secretary issued the order shortly before the change of government. The incoming Secretary has revoked the order for the purpose of strengthening it, which provides an opportunity for IDEALS to influence it to cover contract farming. Once more, however, the gender dimension is absent from this responsible business advocacy.

Efficiency

GROW has been delivering activities on time, but it has had issues receiving GROW co-funding. Accordingly, it has been fundraising to support activities, particularly from OHK for UNGPs. There is only one GROW staff member in GRAISEA. Since NAP advocacy is country level, greater commitment and resources from country Oxfam would increase its efficiency. SEAFISH completed three research studies with country members but it did not deliver a comparative report and sharing workshop so they have been rescheduled. SEAFISH financial reporting was weak but it has improved.

See Result 2 for review of Vietnam and Indonesia efficiency, Result 3 for review of Thailand, Cambodia, Philippines and Myanmar efficiency, and Result 4 for review of ISEA efficiency.

Sustainability

The formula for sustainability in relation to these partners, targets and standards is adopt, implement and monitor laws, policies and plans.

Impact

The main impact that can be identified in this Result so far is the multi-stakeholder partnerships that were formed or strengthened during the programme between GROW/ASEAN CSR Network, SEAFISH/SEAFDEC, NGO/MAFF and DPA/MOE. These partnerships have identified shared objectives for starting or continuing cooperation, even though there might be differences in approaches, types, purposes and constituencies.

Working Group 1

Partners said that Working Group 1 is too large, because it combines Results 1 and 3 partners. As a result, it has been difficult to have focused discussions on ASEAN or agribusiness issues. In retrospect, WG1 should probably have been separate groups for effectiveness - ASEAN and agribusiness. Partners discussed splitting WG 1 but decided instead to schedule ASEAN discussions for one meeting and agribusiness discussions for the next meeting, etc. Notwithstanding, WG1 seems to be functioning well now and is identifying collaborative activities. Moreover, it is important to recall that the learning members have been learning much in WG1 meetings.

RESULT 2 AND WORKING GROUP 2 – VALUE CHAINS

Result 2: Small scale producers are effectively connected or engaged in agro-commercial value chains in equitable partnerships and women are recognized as central economic actors

Relevance

Result 2 is the heart of the programme, providing concrete and demonstrative interventions in key agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries value chains in major countries in the ASEAN region. Activities in and lessons from this Result could be used to formulate and advocate policies and laws at national and regional level per Result 1, and initiate and strengthen agribusiness engagement for CSR adoption and implementation per Result 3 during and beyond GRAISEA.

Indonesia shrimp and palm oil value chain interventions are highly relevant to achieving this Result. In North Kalimantan, WWF is assisting a processing company to obtain ASC certification by supporting shrimp farmers to contribute to a gendered Participatory Social Impact Assessment. This intervention covers both responsible business and gender transformation. In Lampung, KIARA is helping shrimp farmers to comply with CBIB/ASC standards for responsible business and strengthening a women's organization to join the local shrimp value chain for gender transformation. However, these shrimp farmers have not been connected to specific processors/traders so far. In West Kalimantan and North Sumatra, SPKS has been capacity building male and female palm oil smallholders using gendered GAP training,

and starting discussions with two mills in West Kalimantan regarding “fair partnerships”. Gender baselines were completed for shrimp and palm oil.

Like Indonesia, Vietnam’s shrimp value chain programme is strongly relevant to realizing Result 2. ICAFIS works in Soctrang province and MCD works in Ca Mau province, both in South Vietnam. They collaborate with local government to conduct technical training using VietGAP standards to increase shrimp production and quality, gender activities using GALS methodology to improve household gender equality, and GALS PSIA to prepare action plans for shrimp farming. The Women’s Union has been very supportive of them using GALS, although its views can often reinforce existing gender stereotypes. Moreover, in Soctrang, ICAFIS and local government have linked cooperatives to a processing company, which has resulted in a trial agreement for cooperatives to sell - and company to buy - shrimp products.

Thailand helped to build four women-led fish processing community social enterprises called Fisherfolk. This programme is highly relevant to the Result because women are the central economic actors and their Fisherfolk enterprises have merged into value chains, but not regional/global fishing industry ones yet. Fisherfolk enterprises buy fish from male fishermen, process and package the fish in accordance with sustainable guidelines that they developed - Blue Brands, and distribute and sell to buyers and retailers, the biggest of which is an organic supermarket called Lemon Farm.

In the last intervention under this Result, Oxfam tabled a resolution in RSPO to review the RSPO smallholder strategy because it has not been implemented well. The resolution made the first reference to palm oil and gender in RSPO. As a follow up, Oxfam worked with research institute, CIFOR, to research and write a report on palm oil and gender to launch at the RSPO General Assembly 2016. These activities are relevant to achieving this Result because they raise awareness and increase knowledge regarding gender issues in smallholder palm oil production. Further, Oxfam in Indonesia is supporting SPKS to develop capacity and confidence so that it can be effective advocate for smallholders and gender issues in RSPO and engage and influence the other members.

Effectiveness

The multi-stakeholder partnerships between WWF/Oxfam and WWF/shrimp processor are effective. The processor obtaining ASC certification and processor/farmers complying with ASC standards following certification will demonstrate the effectiveness of WWF intervention in the North Kalimantan shrimp value chain. However, the value chain is extremely rigid in terms of male roles managing shrimp ponds so the effectiveness of gender transformation will need to be monitored. The shrimp farmers in Lampung are being trained in CBIB/ASC so the effectiveness of the training will be seen in shrimp quality and price, but it is uncertain how KIARA will test it. Male farmers are now open to the women’s organization contributing to shrimp production – an exchange visit to shrimp farms in Central Java where men and women were working in the ponds had a significant impact in opening their minds. Like in North Kalimantan, the effectiveness of gender inclusion must be tracked.

West Kalimantan smallholders have improved their palm fruit quality following training that has allowed them to cut out middlemen and sell fruit to mills, which is highly effective. Similarly, female smallholders have increased their roles in the palm gardens, which have reduced costs because hired labor is no longer required and women have been more careful with input use and fruit condition. Lastly, two mills are said to be interested in discussing fair partnership with smallholders. However, discussions with Oxfam in Indonesia and SPKS during the field visit to Sekadau revealed that the following barriers still exist for gender transformation in palm oil: mainstreaming gender in GAP was difficult because GAP is technical so more training might be needed in gender; women might now work in the gardens but there is a risk that they have just replaced laborers and they might not be included elsewhere; and, despite their new roles,

women might still lack confidence to attend cooperative meetings and only a small percentage of smallholders are women (amongst SPKS members there). SPKS support for smallholders in North Sumatra does not seem to have been effective so far because the approach is to work through a cooperative and cooperative is yet to function.

During the Soctrang field visit, male and female shrimp farmers reported that technical training and GALS activities have been highly effective in improving shrimp survival/standard and gender inclusion in pond tasks. Moreover, like in the West Kalimantan palm oil example, there seems to be a correlation between product quality and women's involvement because women pay closer attention to the feeding and maintenance requirements. Unlike West Kalimantan, however, GALS has impacted positively on households and marriages because men are more aware that household chores are genuine work and in some cases are now contributing, and they are less likely to engage in lengthy binge drinking and smoking sessions. However, the level of women's participation in shrimp cooperatives is still weak, while nothing has been done yet about women in shrimp factory/office work.

Additionally, ICAFIS and local government have successfully match-made cooperatives with processor, although ongoing challenges that are being addressed with a view to contracting including the following:

- Middlemen are offering inflated prices to undermine trial;
- Middlemen have threatened processor's CEO;
- Cooperatives have sold shrimp to middlemen;
- Processor has not been answering calls to collect shrimp;
- Cooperatives are concerned about price mechanism; and,
- Company is reluctant to collect small volumes.

In Thailand, Fisherfolk enterprises have proven to be strongly effective in empowering female workers. Further, they have shown themselves to be fairly effective buying/selling fish product at a premium. Their businesses are running at a profit. Moreover, Fisherfolk enterprises have kept middlemen in their value chains because they are often community members too. They have built a strong partnership with Lemon Farm for targeting educated Bangkok consumers. Change Fusion has played a useful role through its mentor network in linking Fisherfolk enterprises with volunteer advisors to address various business development issues plus financing opportunities.

However, there are a few structural weaknesses in the Fisherfolk model to note: women fill most managerial positions in Fisherfolk enterprises so they can be said to be leading them, but they are remain in the minority in the local cooperatives that own the Fisherfolk enterprises; the Blue Brands standard does not include gender indicators so it is not requiring the Fisherfolk enterprises to take steps regarding gender sensitive HR policies and procedures for example; and, the enterprises still depend on funding to pay salaries so they are not totally sustainable.

The Oxfam-led resolution in the RSPO on smallholder strategy is effective because it builds a platform for and increases the legitimacy of gender and palm oil research projects and awareness raising. This new gender information and knowledge can be lead to specific gender policy advocacy. However, this is likely to be a medium or long term pursuit because the smallholder context is very complicated and it is dominated by long-standing issues like land ownership and use. It is not known if Oxfam in Indonesia assistance to build SPKS advocacy skill for RSPO influencing has been effective, although SPKS reports that it has been successfully involved in RSPO activities.

Efficiency

Indonesia had a problem spending in Year 1 because the disbursement delay meant that funds were only received shortly before Ramadan and Eid. Additionally, it has experienced weak financial management capacity, and it was not able to monitor partner finances initially. WWF financial management is strong. It under spent in Year 1 because the processor was paying PSIA expenses and a local election led to rescheduling activities to avoid conflict. KIARA/SPKS have prepared poor financial reports that show but do not explain variances. Sometimes SPKS amends its budget without consulting.

Vietnam and Thailand spending is within budget and activities are usually delivered on time, subject to partners and beneficiaries at the community level.

Sustainability

The sustainability of Indonesia programmes is reasonably assured following the end of GRAISEA because: the North Kalimantan processor will have obtained ASC certification and farmers will follow it; Lampung farmers will be trained in CBIB/ASC and can produce quality shrimp, although the future of the women's organization participation in the value chain is probably still not clear and there are no fair partnerships yet; and, SPKS smallholders in West Kalimantan will have been trained in gendered GAP but the women roles will need to be monitored and they will need to be assisted if they become fixed, and fair partnerships with mills will need to be negotiated.

Like in Indonesia, the Vietnam programme has been capacity building farmers on technical issues and increasing their gender awareness. Further, cooperatives have been linked to processor, which holds potential for long-term sustainability for farmers.

Fisherfolk employees in Thailand have received training and advice that will help them run their enterprises. Further, Fisherfolk enterprises have embedded Blue Brands in their core business practices. However, medium to long term sustainability requires revenue to be generated and profit to be made to meet costs and finance growth. Subsidies will dry up.

The RSPO resolution is sustainable because it has been passed so it can be followed up with research, awareness raising, and policy advocacy in the future.

Impact

The clearest impact from these programmes is the establishment of Oxfam/WWF partnership that can contribute to other ASC certifications and in ASC itself, and WWF/processor partnership that should continue through monitoring certification. Additionally, the inclusion of women in the palm oil value chain is a major success but whether it continues, it can be expanded to other smallholder farms and it can be extended in farms/cooperatives and along value chain, will be the key follow up issues for SPKS.

In Soctrang and Ca Mau, there are long term changes taking place through the GALS process regarding gender awareness and women empowerment, albeit on a small scale for now.

Similarly in Thailand, the role of women in their communities has been transformed by the Fisherfolk experience and they are now seen as real contributors to household incomes.

Working Group 2

Working Group 2 seems to have functioned well from more or less the start of the programme. For partners in WG2 it has been relatively easy to link and learn about equitable value chains and women's empowerment because that is the objective of their interventions. That being said, Thailand has felt somewhat removed from Indonesia and Vietnam programmes because it is working on wildcatch fisheries whereas they are working on shrimp aquaculture. WG2 leads are focused on aquaculture and have been relevant and effective in their roles. However, the palm oil advisors that sit in the group have been relatively hands-off to date.

RESULT 3 - AGRIBUSINESS

Result 3: Corporate agribusiness in SE Asia have adopted corporate social responsibility policies and plans that support responsible practices in the value chains for women and men small-scale producers, as well as including gender equality and women's economic empowerment in their core business values

Relevance

This Result is strongly relevant for pushing front running agribusiness in key value chains to adopt and implement CSR policies and plans, which can build momentum for other companies in the same value chains or even at industry level to do so as well. Moreover, the use of CSR practices and development of CSR standards can lead to enforceable laws and regulations.

Indonesia, Vietnam and Thailand activities are relevant to regional agribusiness adopting CSR:

- In Indonesia, WWF/Oxfam are assisting a shrimp processor in North Kalimantan to obtain ASC certification used a gendered PSIA. Further, SPKS is beginning to link smallholders growing better quality fruit with palm oil mills in West Kalimantan;
- Oxfam in Vietnam has a more developed programme regarding CSR at the national level. There it has mapped out CSR standards that it will promote to aquaculture businesses; and, further, it is developing a CSR index that it will monitor in relation to aquaculture. Additionally, ICAFIS and MCD are trying to link shrimp farmers to processing companies in fair partnerships, and ICAFIS has made progress in Soctrang with Vinacleanfood; and,
- Oxfam in Thailand plans that the Blue Brands standard can be used to influence private sector. It has been engaging with agribusiness though Blue Brands is not ready for certification auditing.

Cambodia, Myanmar and Philippines have taken different paths to influencing agribusiness in GRAISEA. Cambodia is strongly relevant right now, and the other two countries will probably be relevant in time:

- Cambodia has set up a multi-stakeholder CSR Platform with front running companies to increase their CSR-related awareness level;
- Philippines is training banana growers to renegotiate unjust contracts with exporters, although not necessarily in CSR policy; and,
- Myanmar is capacity building prospectively affected communities to recognize SEZ impacts, know their rights, influence development and engage companies using UNGPs as framework but they are not in agriculture sector.

CSR Asia is highly relevant to achieving Result 3 because it has CSR expertise that it has been using to train partners and businesses in GRAISEA countries, to provide technical assistance to partners that have requested it, and to prepare database on agribusiness CSR policies and practices. Presently, it is researching two reports, one on ASEAN agribusiness case studies and the other on ASEAN and SDGs. Further, it has regional platforms and networks that it has used to create opportunities for partners like its CSR Summit and ADB's Inclusive Business Forum. Finally, CSRA work complements and strengthens partner work in Result 1 on CSR policy and law (such as training Vietnam in CSR) and Result 2 on equitable value chain and gender transformation (co-organising the gender and palm oil report launch).

Effectiveness

Indonesia, Vietnam and Thailand are at different stages of influencing relevant agribusinesses. Indonesia has been the most effective so far in the sense that WWF/Oxfam are assisting the shrimp processor to obtain ASC certification, although SPKS is still preparing to engage with mills and KIARA has not started considering it. Thailand and particularly Vietnam are preparing effectively to define the standards of CSR and to start engaging with agribusiness. Only WWF/Oxfam has explicitly incorporated gender transformation principles through the gendered PSIA, but it is not known if Vietnam consolidated CSR standards and SPKS "fair partnership" concept have gender transformation principles, while it is known that Blue Brands has not incorporated gender criteria.

Cambodia has been strongly effective in designing and establishing the CSR Platform, identifying and inviting companies and Chambers to participate in it, and developing and implementing a strategic roadmap for transition from CSO to company leadership and funding. Nonetheless, DPA noted that different stakeholders understand CSR differently: government and companies tend to use a thinner concept of philanthropy and PR for a social license to operate, while CSOs and donors tend to use a thicker concept of policies and plans leading to core business practice changes. Further, the CSR Platform does not seem to have involved much gender awareness raising to date, providing foundation for integrating gender transformation principles in CSR policies and plans.

IDEALS in Philippines has trained banana growers extensively for 18 months to know their legal rights and run contract re-negotiations, but it has yet to start re-negotiations with companies. Again, while gender inclusiveness has been achieved through women attending legal trainings, it does not sound like gender principles have been incorporated into the negotiating positions.

As expected, Myanmar is starting from an extremely low capacity base so the basics will need to be put in place first such as rights/impact awareness and confidence to protect interests/engage companies. Community training and coordination activities are showing promise despite having only been run for half a year. Women leadership is a core topic. It needs to be noted that this programme started ineffectively because the partner, BLO, had poor financial management and weak communication skills. BLO departed, and the programme redesigned to focus more on community training rather than the previous peer training and a CSO network. Oxfam has been engaging with the Chinese SEZ company, CITIC and the Chinese embassy, and it seems to have been constructive.

While CSR Asia evaluated partner CSR trainings and reported that they were suitable/satisfactory and reviewed the side event at ADB IB Forum and reported that it was well attended/received, it would be helpful to know more about the effectiveness of its activities and, therefore, its role in realizing Result 3. For example, in relation to partner training, CSRA noted in its interview that partners have low CSR knowledge base, they can still be resistant to CSR and private sector engagement, and they tend to focus on beneficiaries rather than value chains. Whereas some partners observed during their interviews that training was too conceptual so it was difficult to apply, while other partners mentioned in their interviews that they asked CSRA to tailor or follow-up training to bridge idea and practice gaps. Accordingly, learning such as this could be used to strengthen future CSRA activities, initial or ongoing partner CSR advocacy and private sector engagement, and new and emerging agribusiness connections.

Efficiency

Oxfam in Cambodia and partners there have reporting issues in terms of quality and timing, but their audits revealed no concerns. Their outputs are usually within budget but sometimes they are delayed. Oxfam in Philippines has had financial management capacity issues but IDEALS has capacity. Again, spending was efficient but activities were often delivered later than planned. IDEALS changed budget items from Year 1 to Year 2 with approval. BLO did not have a bank account. In Year 1 it did not implement all activities so there was a large underspend, probably because it lacked capacity and SEZ was delayed due to elections. Unspent money was earmarked to pay partner staff salary, so it has been difficult to claw back that amount after the partnership ended. As a result of ending it, Year 2 started with programme redesign so new activities have only been started.

Sustainability

ASC certification in Indonesia will ensure that responsible business is sustained but gender will need to be monitored to determine if impact extends beyond gendered PSIA. SKPS is still in the early stages of approaching mills to know if that will be sustainable. Vietnam approach of developing a CSR standard for government and company has the potential to be adopted and implemented on a large scale. Thailand has only started to explore using Blue Brands to influence agribusiness. GRAISEA will need to keep investing in these activities for sustainability.

With company and Chamber financial support, the CSR Platform will continue. However, there are risks regarding low company commitment and changing platform direction following leadership transition. It is difficult to know if IDEALS contract re-negotiations will be successful, but it is obvious companies will need strong arguments to convince them to shorten contract periods and increase farmgate prices. Similarly, Myanmar community training is at an early stage and still requires GRAISEA funds to sustain it.

CSR Asia has run trainings and provided assistance and this capacity building can be sustainable. Further, it has organized regional events involving GRAISEA but knowing their sustainability is difficult without know more about their effectiveness. CSR Asia and ADB continuing to invite partners to their responsible business events following the end of the GRAISEA programme would be one way to ensure partner livelihoods and advocacy work continues to be shared, and partners have an opportunity to network for new funding and partnering options.

Impact

Longer-term impact is evident in the multi-sector partnerships that have been established in Indonesia, Vietnam and Cambodia, and that might be set up in Thailand and Philippines. Myanmar dialogue with Chinese companies and Embassy is a significant step.

RESULT 4 AND WORKING GROUP 3 - INVESTMENT

Relevance

Result 4 aims to support the growth of small-scale producers through financial access and, to a lesser extent, business development support. It is highly relevant to achieving the overall GRAISEA goal as it addresses critical challenges constraining the growth of many smallholder businesses in Southeast Asia, namely access to capital, access to skills (business development support), and access to networks. Result 4 aims to prove the business case for investing in agricultural enterprises that provide social as well as economic returns and work towards empowering women.

Oxfam draws on several years of impact investment experience through Oxfam Novib, Oxfam America, and Oxfam GB. Pulling all these different themes/areas together is however a new approach for Oxfam and that's why this programme is considered experimental. Result 4 aims to build on and expand Oxfam's own gender work to make it more applicable to financial sector players. Additionally, Result 4 brings less traditional partners, such as Shujog/IIX, as well as traditional research partners such as ISEA in a new, expanded role.

The key programme documents mention "Growth SMEs", "SMEs", "social enterprises", and "missing middle" but don't give clear definitions for any of these concepts. As a result, different partners and stakeholders seem to use their own definitions and focus on very different target segments. The criteria for selecting beneficiaries have focused on selected value chains (palm oil and aquaculture) and gender inclusiveness (interpreted as number/percentage of women reached either as suppliers or employees), without including specifications on size of enterprises and other key characteristics.

With such broad scope, all outputs and outcomes produced so far support its goal. However, not all of them appear relevant to the mentioned win-win-win strategy, particularly in regard to positively influencing agribusiness companies. Some interventions have focused on enterprises that seem more "microenterprises" than missing middle and too "green" (very early stage and very far from being financially sustainable) to be able to meaningfully contribute to any "business case dialogue" with the corporate sector. Similarly, it remains to be seen whether a regional mentor network in its current structure (based on volunteers) can meaningfully contribute to building enterprises' capacity and as a result, lead to increased financing from financial institutions and investors (understood as private sector rather than philanthropic capital). Given the lack of focus and the fact that partners are operating at different levels within the "SME space", activities carried out have not supported each other in working towards Result 4.

While gender transformation is a critical goal of this programme, it has not been sufficiently incorporated into Result 4 design and delivery. Some of the partners don't seem to have sufficient gender expertise to meaningfully contribute to the goal of gender transformation. Among partners working on supporting enterprises and facilitating funding, gender has been incorporated mainly in terms of number counting and for the time being there does not seem to

be a clear goal and strategy on how to achieve gender transformation in the specific activities. The Benchmarks are meant to guide and support stakeholders in adopting practices expected to lead to women's economic empowerment and better positioning of women and men small producers in their value chains. They are based on 8 case studies conducted in 4 ASEAN countries (Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia, and Vietnam) and will focus on showcasing concrete examples of how companies have introduced practices and approaches beneficial to women. They are currently being developed but due to the timing of delivery, they might not end up influencing much of the delivery. Their relevance for Result 4 could not be assessed at this point as the product is in development. The relevance of the Gender Benchmarks will depend on its ability to offer easy-to-implement recommendations and practical tools for partners based on their specific target market. As different partners are focusing on different types of enterprise, the Gender Benchmarks are likely to be relevant only for some of the current partners.

Of the four partners under Result 4 (Shujog, Change Fusion, ISEA, Oxfam Thailand/Sea Watch association), three see most of their work/involvement in GRAISEA falling under a different component.

Oxfam has a strong gender expertise and gender advisors have worked with some of the partners on gender awareness and incorporating gender considerations in their work (ISEA). However, this has not trickled down as much to other partners. Shujog/IIX screen enterprises based on the number of women reached (either as employees, suppliers, or customers) but its impact assessments don't seem to incorporate a deeper gender lens and measure how the enterprise is impacting women (or has the potential to) and eventual business benefits of doing so. Change Fusion indicated their work doesn't have a gender lens as this is expected to be Oxfam's task.

In the MEL plan, there are gaps both among outcome and output indicators for each partner, as well as in the linkages between partners' MEL plans and the overall Result 4 targets. In the case of ISEA and Change Fusion, outcome and output indicators could be made more specific and quantifiable and more specific in how they are contributing to the goal of Result 4. For example, how is the knowledge generated by GIN workshops contributing to Result 4. Similarly, targets for ISEA do not specify the number of financial institutions/investors reached and don't track the change that Gender Benchmarks might bring. They are mainly focused on output rather than outcome level.

Additionally, the MEL plan for Result 4 does not include gender-related indicators that would help track progress in achieving women's economic empowerment, such as women's access to key resources, participation in management and decision-making roles, control over use of income, job creation, etc. It also does not track sufficiently influencing, which is an important objective of the programme.

Effectiveness

Overall, the programme has been moderately effective in achieving targets from inception to date. Out of the 4 main targets for result 4, two had been revised down. This relates to the number of enterprises accessing financing and the number of enterprises accessing business development support through a global mentor network (GIN).

Shujog/IIX has achieved targets up to date and they are on track to meet year 2 targets. Original targets had been revised down at the end of year 1. This revision was requested by Shujog/IIX to reflect a higher level of effort than what originally estimated.

Given the multitude of criteria that enterprises need to meet to fit under GRAISEA and be appealing to impact investors (financially-sustainable small and medium enterprises in the agriculture sector in 4 ASEAN countries, with a strong social impact and the likelihood – as a

minimum - to positively impact women smallholders), building a strong pipeline has been a challenge. The fact that Shujog/IIX is based in Singapore and doesn't have strong presence on the ground in the countries of operation is an extra challenge to consider. The partnerships under working group 3, which would have provided more "eyes on the ground" have not been as effective as anticipated in producing suitable referrals.

Specifically, Shujog found sourcing more time-consuming than planned (expectation seems to have been that referrals would come mostly from Oxfam). Similarly, Shujog indicated that both impact assessments and technical assistance have required more time than originally planned as enterprises are younger than what they are typically used to and it takes longer to get/produce required information. Shujog has reallocated a larger portion of its budget to project management to compensate for staff's increased level of efforts and it has expanded its traditional channels for sourcing investment-ready enterprises to include agriculture-focused networks, associations as well as relevant conferences.

Shujog/IIX have conducted 6 impact assessments so far and, out of these 6 candidates, one is undergoing due diligence for a possible capital raise by an impact investor. If that is successful, they would have met their target on number of SMEs that successfully raise capital.

The guarantee facility proposal that Shujog recently submitted is relevant to the programme and one of the main outputs of Result 4. If successful in its structure and uptake – might unlock private sector capital for younger enterprises than what typically targeted by impact investors. However, Oxfam's initial feedback was that the proposed structure would not be appropriate for the type of enterprise GRAISEA is targeting. At this time, there is no final position from Oxfam/SIDA on the proposed guarantee facility.

ISEA is highly likely to achieve its outputs. However, they might not achieve their outcome target by March 2017, which is when its role in GRAISEA is currently set to end. Delivery of country-focused research was delayed in year 1 and this has affected the timing of ISEA's main deliverable - the Gender Benchmarks – which is currently being developed. It's too early to know if the gender benchmarks will be effective in producing practical tools that can guide the other partners in promoting women's empowerment.

As the benchmarks will only be ready in March, ISEA has focused on raising gender awareness and creating interest among stakeholders on the upcoming Gender Benchmarks, to be presented at a conference in March 2017. ISEA has been very active in engaging with a wide network of stakeholders on advocacy and awareness raising. As a result, they have been able to engage a much larger number of stakeholders than what targeted. However, ISEA seem to have mostly focused on engaging and raising awareness among social enterprises, civil society organizations, and government institutions, and not as much with the corporate sector, impact investors, and financial institutions, which are the target audience for adopting gender benchmarks in Result 4 (indicator 2). It remains to be seen whether these efforts will be effective in influencing the financial sector.

ISEA and Oxfam are currently exploring the feasibility of extending ISEA's role in GRAISEA well beyond March 2017 and expanding it to provide more hands-on support in implementing the benchmarks as there is recognition that more time and resources are needed to achieve its outcome.

Under Result 4, Oxfam Thailand has been working in close partnership with Change Fusion. Change Fusion works on strengthening the capacity of Fisherfolks under Result 2 and considers its involvement in Result 4 a minor component of its overall role in GRAISEA.

Change Fusion has reached their targets to date of connecting mentors and leaders of agriculture enterprises, generating knowledge and on the Global Impactors Network (GIN), and facilitating capital into Fisherfolks enterprise in the South (Prachuab Khiri Khan and Nakhon Si Thammarat provinces) through Bkind, a fund that invests in socially-responsible companies

listed on the Thailand stock exchange. This has allowed the enterprise to improve its operation and supplier relationship with Lemon Farm, a retailer of organic food products. Change Fusion had already begun developing a mentors network in Thailand and it was able to leverage from this pool of professionals/entrepreneurs to support the Fisherfolks work in the South of Thailand. It is also expanding GIN at the regional level, to Indonesia, Vietnam, and the Philippines in collaboration with Oxfam and – at least initially - leveraging Oxfam’s existing portfolio of beneficiaries.

The GIN business model, which is expected to strengthen enterprises’ capacity and improve their access to networks, is being piloted now through GRAISEA. It has the potential to increase enterprises’ access to networks and, through this, access to markets. If GIN is able to expand at the country level to incorporate a much larger number of mentors, this could be an effective way to provide access to networks. However, it might not be as effective to provide enterprises with access to skills. GIN is composed of employed professionals that are providing mentoring services on a volunteer-basis. Only up to 20% are willing and committed to mentoring on a medium/long-term basis (more than one-time mentoring) and their availability and irregularity in communication has been an issue raised by Fisherfolks. Realistically, given the nature of enterprises that GRAISEA is currently supporting and plans to support in the future, these require a much more hands-on type of capacity building than what can be offered by the current GIN mentors. The business plan for Fisherfolks has not been completed yet and the irregular support from Change Fusion staff and mentors was cited as a contributing factor, together with the difficulties of reaching consensus on the way forward among community leaders.

With the exception of ISEA, which has focused entirely on gender research and advocacy, there is an expectation that the gender dimension would mostly come from Oxfam or as a result of the Gender Benchmarks. Oxfam has been responsible for delivering gender sensitivity training to mentors involved in the two Thailand projects but a clear strategy on women’s economic empowerment seems lacking, which does not allow to measure effectiveness on this front. The research piece on the role of women in selected agriculture and aquaculture value chains has showed where women are typically engaged but has not shed any further light on what can be done to strengthen women’s position and move up the value chain. Similarly, impact assessments collect gender-disaggregated data and enterprises are screened based on women’s involvement but women’s economic empowerment is not effectively tracked.

An Oxfam gender advisor is a member of working group 3. As indicated, Oxfam has not been as effective in getting all of Result 4 partners incorporate gender considerations and a clear gender strategy aimed at promoting women’s economic empowerment in the implementation of their activities. In some cases this might be due to the actual difficulties of measuring empowerment on the ground given limited time and resources. In other instances, it seems more of a “structural issue” where incorporating the gender dimension is considered Oxfam’s responsibility and to the partner’s.

Efficiency

The programme under Result 4 has been less efficient than originally anticipated. Shujog requested a budget revision, which while keeping the same total budget, has cut targets considerably. PMU and SIDA signed off on these changes. For GRAISEA this means less value for money.

Shujog has spent 100% of the budget allocated for the first 18 months of implementation. The travel budget and project costs were under spent while the programme management and office overheads were overspent by 63% and 28%, respectively. The overspending in programme management seems to be due to internal staff challenges, with senior and executive

management spending more time on GRAISEA reporting and research deliverables following the departure of several mid-management resources.

ISEA has taken longer than expected to complete research in the four countries, which has delayed delivery of its outputs. The budget is under spent by about 30%, mostly due to the delay on the final Indonesia case study and country workshops in Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines. While ISEA has a network of country partners that have been leveraged for this work, it has also indicated that language barriers and difficulties of some of their partners to produce reports in English had not been sufficiently accounted for in the agreed budgets. As such, these country partnerships have proven less efficient than originally expected.

Change Fusion's budget was recently revised and approved by PMU. Total budget remained the same but a portion of funds previously allocated to cover an annual event will now be used to support local partners to implement GIN in each country. According to CF, this will allow GIN to be better suited to each local reality. Overall, Change Fusion's budget for Result 4 is underspent by about 60%. This is because most of the expenditures are expected to take place in the second half of the year (the annual event in May 2017 and the grants to local partners in Indonesia and Vietnam).

Sustainability

The programme is very ambitious in its goals and the current time frame is unlikely to be sufficient to ensure sustainability.

A proposal for a guarantee facility— which is meant to bring innovative financial solutions to support the growth of social enterprises in Southeast Asia - is currently under review. This has the potential to considerably contribute to programme sustainability. However, if approved, it will take considerable time to structure it and launch it. Similarly, some of the projects supported under Result 4 (Fisherfolks and deep South women producers' group) are too young and early stage to be likely to continue on their own after the end of GRAISEA. The plan to expand Result 4 partnership to AVPN to tap into additional sources of philanthropic capital might help extending financial and capacity building support to these beneficiaries until they are financially sustainable. However, leveraging philanthropic capital is not considered sustainable on its own or as a way to achieve systemic change.

ISEA has been developing the Gender Benchmarks while at the same time working on building a network of stakeholders that will promote them. This will contribute to disseminating knowledge on gender transformative practices. Whether the Gender Benchmarks can bring sustainable positive change will depend on the ability of ISEA to produce something that is truly practical, user-friendly, and cost-effective, produced with the private sector in mind. ISEA has also indicated that support in the form of training and consulting services is critical to ensure adoption and implementation of the Benchmarks.

GIN is likely to be sustainable and expand in size and geographical presence after programme ends, if it is able to attract and retain interest from qualified individuals with no outside financial support. GIN's sustainability is likely to focus more on building enterprises' access to networks rather than skills. If able to recruit sufficient angel investors, GIN might also be a way to facilitate access to seed funding (but this is expected to be limited to very promising enterprises in selected high-growth sectors).

Shujog/IIX focus on financially-sustainable enterprises seeking to scale. If successful in demonstrating the business case of more responsible practices to their beneficiaries as well as to their funding partners, they are likely to achieve sustainable positive social and gender change.

Impact

With the projects in its early stages, it is not possible to arrive at definitive findings on the impact of the Programme. Anecdotal evidence has been reported of increased women's economic empowerment within the Deep South Women's Group (women becoming more self-confident due to their increased economic role).

Working Group 3

Oxfam originally expected Shujog to lead this working group. Due to internal staff changes and a perceived high level of effort required for this task, Shujog relinquished the chair, which was then filled by Oxfam.

Result 4 has brought together partners that work in very different areas within the MSME ecosystem. One focuses on facilitating private sector investment into financially viable private sector companies seeking to scale while the other three partners focus mostly on community-level, very early stage enterprises that seek philanthropic capital (donations, grants, interest-free loans, etc.) and require considerable technical assistance support to build their capacity. They bring different perspectives, target audience, and ways of working. There seems to be a fair amount of misunderstanding on the level of collaboration expected among partners and members of working group 3. While some expected stronger linkages and support, particularly in terms of pipeline sourcing, others understood their role as functioning mostly independently. As Shujog operates with a different kind of enterprises and clients, the value add of this working group does not seem immediately clear to them, with the exception of potentially being able to strengthen their gender expertise.

Overall, the network of partners has not been as effective as anticipated in working together and leveraging each other's expertise. Collaboration has been challenging and has affected partners' ability to deliver and contribute to overall goal, particularly when it comes to cross-referring viable beneficiaries, and to WG3's role as a learning platform rather than simply an experience-sharing platform. There seems to be a combination of factors at play for this challenging working relationship: unrealistic assumptions about the linkages that could be established between partners' work (as they operate at very different levels within the social enterprise space); the way the Result 4 component has been designed; possibly some level of miscommunication; and excessive reliance/weight on individuals rather than all-round organizational fit in selecting partnerships. As key personnel in some of the partners have changed, communication and collaboration seems to have become more difficult.

III. CONCLUSIONS

OVERALL DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

TOC and Results Framework

Partners concentrate on implementing their projects to a large extent so they do not necessarily understand the TOC and Results Framework. However, there are increasing signs of linkages being created in WGs to achieve Results as planned.

Choosing proposals should have been a much stricter process to ensure harmony with programme Results; for instance, by requiring prospective partners to amend their proposals for better fit. However, there might not be that many alternative partners too, so a reasonable degree of proposal misalignment needs to be tolerated in the initial stage.

Responsible business and gender transformation are complicated ideas and fields that require defining and explaining so that they can be understood, and applying and integrating so that they can be used. They can probably only be partly realized in the programme. More time might have been spent upfront achieving gender awareness, revising programme frameworks and filling capacity gaps to ensure that gender was understood, used and tracked. GOG preparing the gender tools compendium and analyzing UNGPs/gender relationships will help partners to identify appropriate tools programme-wide and sharpen advocacy asks in Result 1 respectively.

Management and Governance

PMU

A programme with this many partners and activities needs fully resourced management to stay on top of its numerous roles, that are multiplied by the number of partners and activities. Moreover, the multi-stakeholder network and collaboration mechanisms not only require coordination and management, but also strategic and technical assistance.

Given PMU workload, it is unsurprising it has focused on internal communications. However, external communications is valuable for expanding networks and influencing targets, as well as being fundamental for demonstrating and ensuring transparency and accountability. GRAISEA has a lot programme highlights to share with wider audiences, such as Cambodia's CSR Platform, Indonesia's and Vietnam's gendered palm oil and shrimp value chains, and Thailand's women-led fisher folk enterprises.

MEL

If the Results Framework and MEL system are developed together, it will be easier to develop Indicators and Targets for Results, and monitor and report against them. Moreover, it will reinforce that partners are supporting achievement of Results not simply implementing their projects, which can lead to their activities detaching from the programme.

The assumptions underpinning programmes have an impact on designing the MEL system as well. They need to be analyzed to understand their implications for what is realistic for the programme. In Result 3, the assumption was that agribusinesses could be identified and engaged reasonably quickly so they could be influenced to adopt and implement CSR policies and plans. But the reality turned out to be that it is difficult to identify companies in some cases, while in other cases it has taken time to overcome prejudices regarding motives and tactics.

There are governance and capacity issues affecting the MEL system that need to be addressed. First is that some country partners did not have capacity to monitor and report on their own and needed help. Second is that country offices signed MOUs with GRAISEA to manage country partners including providing MEL help. Third is that some country offices have MEL staff but others do not, so it would have been good to map staff to ensure that they are aware of the programme and committed to helping partners and for PMU to be prepared to help otherwise. This assignment of roles could have been included in MOUs for referencing later.

Baselines are essential for understanding effectiveness and impact of programme implementation. Perhaps because of the delay in funding, however, the dynamic of the programme from the outset was to start implementing rather than preparing it. This seems to be

the case with conducting MEL baselines, as it was for building other basic blocks such as creating space for Working Groups and increasing awareness of gender transformation.

One of Oxfam new strategic roles, which is exemplified by GRAISEA, is to convene partners in multi-stakeholder networks to link its traditional work in advocacy and livelihoods to its more recent work in enterprise development and private sector engagement to the new areas that it has identified gaps in such as SMEs and investment for stronger effectiveness and impact. Being the hub of old and new spokes and transforming these relationships into a proper network is a skilled and complex undertaking that will require thought and preparation.

Finance

Programme start up phases often experience bottlenecks with so much to be put in place so it is not unusual that the programme contracting following inception took longer than thought. However, in such an ambitious programme, the delay has considerably affected implementation time.

Partner organizational strength can vary significantly. While financial management weakness can be identified by due diligence and addressed through action plans, the weakness level of and assistance required for Oxfams seems to have been unexpected or more than anticipated.

Staff turnover and recruitment challenges are an ongoing issue in the development industry because the roles require multiple skills but often only offer short contracts and low salaries. However, partners should know and always comply with budget guidelines and other programme rules.

PSC

Experienced programme, advocacy, organizational and financial guidance is vital for overseeing and improving plans and operations, particularly for strategic thinking and problem solving. Given the size and complexity of the programme is not surprising if PSC is still learning to steer and partners do not have time for upwards feedback.

Support and Advisory

WGs

While the WG mechanism is crucial for partner linking and learning then joint delivery because Results are group aims, its early operation was undermined by poor appreciation of relevance and effectiveness. More attention might have been paid to training leads to lead not facilitate and explaining to partners the purpose and process, and more time/budget might have been allocated to organizing in-person meetings. Responsibility for this probably lay with PMU but PSC could have provided steer to justify it. Whether there was time following disbursement delay will have been a key question however. Alternatively, if the programme was four years, there might have been less pressure on WGs to finish linking and learning and start joint delivery, but they still need to be effective.

While some more vocal partners have made their complaints about the WG mechanism clearly, some less vocal partners seem to have appreciated the linking and learning objective thus far. In assessing the relevance and effectiveness of such mechanisms it is important to listen to all.

GOG's presence in WGs is important so that it can identify partner and their programme needs, but also tailor its interventions more closely to WG purpose of jointly delivering Results.

GOG

GOG is essential to starting partners gender journey because it is the unit in the programme to train on gender issues and advise on gender inclusion. While it sounds like the members started with high expectations of what they would achieve, they have become more realistic about the awareness level of and programme context for gender. The gender transformation process is a long-term one and many in the region including partners are still gender blind - or just becoming gender aware.

GOG has lacked coordination to ensure that it is providing assistance to all country and regional partners to overcome both member geographic distance and weak partner demand and to avoid concentrated/patchy coverage that has resulted but which can still be remedied.

While it is unclear if it is an obstacle, GRAISEA might have negotiated for country gender focal points to be included in country Oxfams commitments to supervise partners under the programme. The MOU could have spelled out gender roles like it does with MEL and Finance supervision, explaining the relationship between country Oxfams/GOG.

Advisory system

Advisory system is functioning well, perhaps because it incorporates longstanding relationships and existing cooperation in GRAISEA.

RESULT 1 AND WORKING GROUP 1

Advocacy strategies for ASEAN RAP and NAPs are still underdeveloped in terms of key elements such as background research and policy formulation, regional and national advocacy coalitions including country Oxfams, lobbying strategies and targets, and advocacy tools and papers. Specifically, the application of gender transformation to UNGPs is only just being examined.

GROW/SEAFISH are sending confused messages regarding the target and focus for influencing. Is it AMAF/agriculture or SEAFDEC/fisheries? The Indicator states that AMAF is the target but it might not be the best target for fisheries. With planning and resources it might be possible to engage both AMAF and SEAFDEC for adopting responsible business and gender transformation policies, or adding to existing standards and principles. Additionally, while it is easy to see the importance of labor rights in regional fishing, it is difficult to see its strong relevance to the GRAISEA programme because it is such a specific element of responsible business and gender transformation in the valuechain when the emphasis of other activities is on income generation and gender equality.

Similar to UNGPs, GROW/SEAFISH still have to develop and implement an advocacy strategy for AMAF/agriculture and SEAFDEC/fisheries, depending on which one or both of them is target and focus. Integrating gender transformation principles into specific policy advocacy positions has not yet started.

In both Cambodian and Philippines cases, long and positive relationships with government has built trust and opened doors so that it invited participation and valued expertise of partners. This is especially so with DPA, which MOE requested to join the committee.

In Cambodia, different stakeholders have different opinions on the meaning of CSR that highlights the importance of promoting models to support thicker definitions. Moreover, CSR provisions could be important to insert in other sectoral and organic laws.

With the benefit of hindsight, it would have made more sense to have one Working Group for Results 1 and 3 to allow bonds to form and programmes to be understood under each Result. Nonetheless, the method for ensuring time to discuss ASEAN and agribusiness sequentially in WG1 seems manageable and it is progressing towards considering joint delivery.

RESULT 2 AND WORKING GROUP 2

Indonesia and Vietnam

Indonesia and Vietnam partners have used different models for introducing and strengthening responsible business and gender transformation in shrimp and palm oil value chains. In North Kalimantan, the entry point is the processor ASC certification process and its requirement for PSIA; meanwhile, in Lampung, CBIB/ASC has been used as the standard and a women's organization has been established and is being supported to be part of the value chain. In West Kalimantan and North Sumatra, technical training provides the opportunity to include gender. In Soctrang and Ca Mau, collaboration with local government has opened doors to combining technical training and GALS methodology, as well as linking with the processor in Soctrang.

Gendered PSIA in ASC certification is an important step forward for MSIs working on gender. Currently, the gendered approach is nested in social criteria, but it will be progressive to use this example in ASC to develop specific criteria to look at gender issues in shrimp value chains. This awareness raising and policy making can be replicated for shrimp standards in Europe, US/Japan, and transferred to palm oil in RSPO and other agriculture/aquaculture MSIs where appropriate.

Further, it is probably easier to work towards responsible business and gender transformation via a MSI certification process where certification is needed for exporting and premium prices. For shrimp farmers and palm oil smallholders that hope to achieve these goals by themselves in their respective valuechains, they will need to find trainers for technical skills/gender awareness and companies that will be open to the new forms of equitable and inclusive partnership.

However, it must also be recognized that agriculture value chains can still present substantial barriers to gender inclusion because harvesting work especially is hard labour and male-centric. Significant gender inclusion advances might be more effectively located in the less laborious tasks in the farming value chain segment such as buying/maintenance/selling, or other stages of or institutions in value chains such as processing/management and cooperatives/offices. Importantly, women should not be included in the value chain merely to replace hired labor, but as a stepping-stone to upping their empowerment.

Finally, the experience of a non-functioning cooperative in North Sumatra is a sobering one and suggests that while GRAISEA might have conducted due diligence at the national partner level, it is probably also necessary to do so at district level to identify capacity gaps and include building them into the programme or deciding that they are too large for Oxfam/partners to take on.

In Vietnam, the participation and role of local government has been fundamental to providing technical training, permitting gender activities, and brokering the cooperatives/processor trial. While this is not unique to Vietnam because Indonesia and Thailand local governments are involved in programmes there, the level of involvement is unique perhaps due to political system.

GALS has been effective in improving gender equality in households and gender inclusion in ponds but not necessarily gender empowerment in cooperatives yet. Putting households aside for a moment, it looks like SPKS has achieved similar results in terms of gender inclusion in gardens and weak gender empowerment in cooperatives on the surface at least, without investing the time and effort required for GALS activities. It will be useful to learn if GALS achieves more effective and sustainable gender transformation by the end of the programme. Some observations so far are that GALS is more concrete and structured because it produces drawings and requires plans that can remind men and women of their new knowledge and undertakings, and it seems to build a stronger sense of local community that empowers community members, sometimes in unexpected ways.

In these restructured Indonesia and Vietnam palm oil and shrimp value chains, middlemen have lost business and laborers have lost work. While some middlemen and laborers might be at arm's-length, others might be part of the community and their livelihood loss could be an issue. Since GRAISEA is aiming for equitable value chains, the hidden or ignored trade-offs being made in its programme activities need reflection. When asked about the possibility of injustice here, interviewees tended to brush off the query, pointing to the many other business and work options available to middlemen and laborers.

In Vietnam, the technical and gender training will endure in the minds of participants, which they can use to improve farming or analyze issues. Local government involvement and GALS methodology probably increases the likelihood of sustainability because government role will continue, and GALS activities can be applied and plans can be referenced at anytime. The processor still seems to be working on its business model for cooperatives, but it is committed especially with government support and consulting with cooperatives, so the ultimate contract will be valuable learning. What is missing in the processors case, is a wider responsible business and gender transformation approach for operations. Currently, its approach feels more like a bottom-of-the-pyramid.

Thailand

Thailand has taken a totally different path towards achieving responsible business and gender transformation by developing women-led social enterprises. Consequently, the women are not merely labor, but occupy empowered buyer/manager/sales positions.

While the Fisherfolk enterprises certainly provide a quick win for women empowerment, sustaining them ultimately requires profitability through larger supply, better marketing and stronger sales. Additionally, the gender transformation process seems to have stopped short at only including women in management roles because the Blue Brands standard lacks gender criteria/indicators and enterprises have not adopted gender sensitive policies and procedures.

Change Fusion mentor network can provide relevant business development advice where the right mentors can be found and are willing to volunteer their time and expertise. However, Change Fusion should concentrate on assisting MSMEs in the key agriculture value chains to contribute to achieving Result 2, rather than experimenting with non-agriculture enterprises such as handicrafts from this point.

RSPO

Oxfam is a strong and successful advocate in RSPO. Its palm oil advisors are recognized experts in their field and have years of experience in this MSI. The Oxfam strategy is to flag gender in RSPO and integrate it into its programme, so that it continues to build information and share knowledge regarding gender and palm oil. The strategy is to strengthen SPKS to advocate too because the smallholder issue is likely to be more important in the future with plantations reaching their end of their operating life and SPKS is the only CSO in Indonesia that represent smallholders.

WG2

WG2 is largely working as intended because the partners are working on similar targets and issues. However, like WG1, WG2 needs to move from updating programmes to delivering Result 2 jointly in Year 3.

RESULT 3

Indonesia, Vietnam and Thailand understand the importance of operating at government, valuechain and company levels. Like government, building company trust and interest in CSOs and CSR can take significant time to achieve. Yet some agribusinesses that are targets of Result 3 influencing in Indonesia, Vietnam and Thailand are small in size compared to apex agribusinesses that the Result might envisage.

Cambodia has been effective in attracting company and chamber participation to the platform because of its longstanding efforts for good governance and economic justice in extractives, agriculture and forestry sectors in Cambodia. Moreover, there is a new generation of companies that are interested adopting CSR. The challenge for the platform will be to include large agribusiness, plus companies that operate in the provinces and have headquarters in home countries like Chinese and Vietnamese ones.

Philippines seems to be unique in ASEAN for its extensive unfair contract farming. IDEALS strategy of legal training and contract negotiation is justifiable, but it probably needs company and government strategies for a systematic approach, like packaging companies adopting CSR policies that include fair contracts and government issuing orders to require companies.

Economic development and foreign investment is likely to keep increasing quickly in Myanmar. Communities need to be prepared to protect their livelihoods and negotiate their compensation. Starting rights and impact training is essential. Engaging with companies at national level is important for information gathering and relationship building for the future. However, GRAISEA is focused on agribusiness and agriculture/aquaculture valuechains so Myanmar should keep up to speed with them.

CSR Asia is a good partner for the programme at this stage of its development and perhaps later on because it provides dedicated CSR expertise that partners lack and it has relevant private sector platforms and networks that might offer new openings for partner advocacy and engagement. In this respect, CSRA, like ASEAN CSR Network, can bridge partners and agribusiness.

While CSR Asia is new to development programming, it seems to have performed well so far in delivering relevant and effective activities using its expertise and network. But having a better understanding of the effectiveness of its activities would be useful for maximizing and finetuning its important contribution to achieving Result 3. In designing CSR training, for instance, it might have been useful to assess partner knowledge and needs in relation to the Result in advance, target the training to their level and interests, evaluate if it was effective, and follow up to determine how partners have applied their CSR learning in their programme delivery. Noting, of course, that Indonesia requested a tailored course and Thailand asked for an additional course.

This same type of preparation/evaluation could have been used for partner technical assistance, CSRA Summit and ADB IB Forum, and could still be utilized for publishing research, etc. Regarding responsible business event presentations, for example, answers to the following types of questions would be useful:

- Who attended presentations, why did they do so, and how can they help to achieve Result 3?
- What questions were asked after presentations, what contacts were made after presentations, and how can they help to achieve the Result?
- What relationships have continued since presentations, what activities and commitments have they involved so far, and how can they help?

RESULT 4 AND WORKING GROUP 3

Strategy is being undermined by lack of focus. Not having a clear target segment to reach smallholders and not clarifying key concepts (growth SMEs, social enterprises, SMEs) has led to confusion and lack of focus. Oxfam indicated an intention to focus on the “missing middle”, i.e. serving those enterprises that are above the microfinance level but unable to access mainstream commercial banks financing. However, projects are still being sourced from Oxfam’s portfolio, which is mostly composed of grassroots-level, community-based microenterprises. Depending on the focus that GRAISEA decides on, some partners might not be the most suitable to achieve desired goals.

There is a Gap between the Philanthropic approach and the Private Sector Focus. There seem to be two main categories of financing that Result 4 is trying to tap into: private sector capital and philanthropic capital. Both of them are valuable and can contribute to achieving the desired goal, namely assisting small-scale producers to produce equitably, sustainably and viably. They can also reinforce each other if used appropriately and strategically. Currently this is not happening as there is too much of a gap between the type and size of enterprises tapping into philanthropic sources and those tapping into private sector capital. Community-based and young enterprises that are not operationally or financially sustainable and rely mostly on donations are not suitable candidates for impact investing. The original assumption that very young enterprises could access impact investment in a relatively short period of time after being incubated has proved unrealistic.

As understood from Oxfam, an important objective of this programme is to influence the corporate sector and agribusinesses companies into shifting towards more equitable and sustainable supply chains by showing that this makes business sense for them. When looking to influence the private sector to bring real change and prove the win-win-win proposition (systemic change), this is unlikely to happen through CSR and philanthropic-supported interventions. The experience of other development organizations, such as International Finance Institutions and multilaterals, has been that demonstrating a clear win-win-win proposition and a strong business case for investing in gender-inclusive social enterprises should come from examples of companies that have successfully combined the business side (financial returns) with social impact. There is a risk that socially impactful projects or

interventions supported through CSR will remain confined to the philanthropic arms of large corporates and not be able to meaningfully change their practices.

Capacity to influence partners has been overestimated. Oxfam has selected partners based on a perceived ability to “influence” them into adopting more responsible and gender-inclusive practices. Oxfam’s ability to do so seems to have been considerably overestimated as some of the partners seem to be carrying on with their usual way of working with no much change following their role in GRAISEA. Overall, partners seem more a combination of partners and beneficiaries than fully-fledged partners.

Value for money has been less than expected. This is both due to budget and target revisions on Shujog’s side and the increased level of effort that Oxfam has had to put it to ease collaboration among partners and raise their gender skills.

The goal of gender transformation for smallholders in agricultural value chains is too ambitious given budget and time constraints. Women smallholders tend to be in the most vulnerable positions in the selected agriculture value chains and much work is required to improve this in any meaningful way. As some of the partners are not familiar with gender-sensitive approaches aimed at promoting women’s economic empowerment, Oxfam is currently looking at simultaneously building partners’ gender capacity as well as pursuing gender transformation. The Gender Benchmarks, which are expected to be the main output in this area and to be used to strengthen Shujog and Change Fusion’s gender capacity, will only be ready at the end of year 2.

Over-reliance on Oxfam. All partners of working group 3 expected more support from Oxfam either in terms of pipeline sourcing or incorporating a gender dimension. While some guidance and coordination from Oxfam is understandable, some partners might not have the necessary level of technical skills and experience to be “real partners” in a programme of this nature and complexity.

Missing linkages between result-level and partner-level Indicators. As of now, the MEL system does not sufficiently support measuring and monitoring gender progress, as detailed in the findings. Effectiveness at the level of indicators for each partner has been satisfactory but less so if considering the main indicators for Result 4 (facilitating responsible investment) and the overall programme goal and theory of change of promoting systemic change and demonstrating a win-win-win proposition for investing in socially and gender-inclusive agricultural enterprises. Similarly, the programme does not specify the kind of women’s economic empowerment it strives to achieve and thus does not allow to effectively track progress.

The purpose of Working Group 3 was not well understood. Partners haven’t been able to effectively leverage each other’s expertise. The misunderstanding on the level of collaboration expected among partners has made it difficult to build trust, and thus foster more collaboration and learning. Due diligence during programme planning might not have sufficiently assessed what could be expected from each partner and whether there might have been more suitable partners to support GRAISEA’s goals. However, this seems set to change as most partners recognize the learning opportunity that WG3 brings and value being exposed to experiences and lessons learned from different areas within the enterprise space.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

OVERALL DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

1.1 Increase human resources capacity to manage and coordinate

PMU should employ one fulltime MEL Assistant and one fulltime Finance Assistant if funding is available. The Assistants roles should be designed to conduct routine MEL and Finance tasks such as requesting and reviewing MEL and Finance reports. MEL Officer and Finance Officer should then have more time to focus on capacity building and technical assistance for regional and national partners where required. Important tasks for both officers might include strengthening country Oxfam MEL and Finance so that they can supervise national partners more effectively. Further for the MEL Officer, contributing MEL to deliver Results at partner level and in WGs is crucial in the time left. This might mean encouraging partners to report Outputs/Outcomes more directly to Results/Indicators, and working with WGs to develop collaborative activities that support joint delivery of Results.

1.2 Consider trialling technical coordination in Management Unit

Following discussions with and suggestions from two senior interviewees, the evaluator agrees with them that it might be worth consider trialling a Technical Coordinator to perform specific technical coordination tasks to help partners deliver Results and to contribute to Oxfams convening/partnering. Such a Technical Coordinator would report to Programme Manager and sit alongside MEL/Finance Officers in the PMU structure. The additional capacity would free up Programme Manager's time to manage the existing programme and plan the subsequent one, including fundraising, networking, brainstorming, etc. Possible TC activities include:

- Coordinate the GOG and Advisory System so that they are responding to partner and WG needs, preventing concentration and encouraging requests;
- Provide additional policy researching and advising capacity to fill gaps and answer queries in relation to responsible business and gender transformation issues - for example, assisting Cambodia developing CSR definitions for the CSR Platform and gender provisions for regulation;
- Identify and organize collaborative activities in Working Groups for joint delivery of Results, working with MEL Officer and WG Leads for relevance; and,
- Explore and recommend new or stronger local to national to regional to global programme links, across the whole programme not just for ASC and RSPO.

1.3 Make effective use of Communications budget in time left

Consider using the Communications budget to commission stories on representative programme highlights. These stories should explain the TOC and frame the highlights in it, indicating how they contribute to it. The stories should be published on Oxfam website but also on development websites such as Devex to promote Oxfam's innovation in drawing together key partners to work on entire valuechains with government and private sector using the principles of responsible business and gender transformation. If speaking opportunities arise as a result of this media work, they should be used for further promotion. Interested stakeholders that approached GRAISEA in response to the stories should be considered in programme strategizing. Developing and resourcing a comprehensive internal and external

communications strategy including a fulltime Communications Officer and media training for partner stories and interviews will be important as the programme moves into more policy advocacy oriented work.

1.4 Develop a convening/partnering TOR for the programme

Given the centrality of Oxfam's convening role to the GRAISEA programme it is surprising that there is no structure in place yet to let Oxfam know if it is convening well and how it might improve doing it. GRAISEA should consider drafting a TOR like the TORS for PSC, GOG and Advisory System that sets out its convening objectives and partner principles. MEL Officer can set a mid-term baseline for whether GRAISEA is meeting its objectives and the partners are following the principles. This baseline can guide GRAISEA in strengthening its convening and helping partners to follow principles. The consultant performing the final evaluation can review this baseline. These TORs – GRAISEA, PSC, GOG and Advisory System – should be part of the MEL Framework in the future.

1.5 PSC should support PMU more proactively from now

PMU has been good at raising issues and discussing challenges with PSC but PSC has not been so good in advising and assisting PMU to address issues and overcome challenges. PSC might like to prepare action points in its meeting minutes setting out its advice and assistance, and appoint members to follow up PMU between meetings and report back in subsequent meetings.

1.6 WGs need to set joint deliverables to achieve Results

WG1 and WG2 are now functioning sufficiently well to transition from linking/learning to joint delivery. Leads, together with MEL and GOG, should identify a list of activities that partners can deliver together for discussion and agreement to deliver at least one in Year 2. The activities need to contribute directly to achieving Results. WG1 will need to work on Results 1 and 2. Some examples might include:

- Country Oxfams contributing to GROW/SEAFISH designing and implementing ASEAN and AMAF/SEAFDEC advocacy for Result 1;
- GOG working with GROW/SEAFISH to develop gendered policy positions for ASEAN and AMAF/SEAFDEC advocacy for Result 1;
- GOG working with Indonesia, Vietnam and Thailand to compare entire value chains with gender transformation to understand where further gains in gender equality and women's empowerment can be reached for Result 3, and also discussing how the more advanced elements can be ultimately realized;
- Vietnam sharing its consolidated CSR standards and Indonesia explaining its "fair partnership" concept to reach consensus on what national CSR regulations and equitable company engagement looks like for Result 3; and,
- CSR Asia linking Oxfams to agribusiness and helping them to strengthen their influencing CSR adoption and implementation for Result 3, such as guiding Philippines to contact banana growers for CSR/contracts discussions or contributing to Cambodia to expand CSR Platform members to include more agribusiness.

1.7 GOG requires stronger coordination to identify need

GOG requires stronger coordination to identify national and regional partner need in gender awareness and ensure fuller coverage of programme Results. The most obvious gaps seem to

be gender policy formulation for ASEAN and AMAF/SEAFDEC advocacy, and gender provisions for draft CSR amendments and gender training for the CSR Platform members in Cambodia. Where appropriate, this assistance should include country gender focal points for greater buy-in.

RESULT 1 AND WORKING GROUP 1

2.1 Advocacy needs to be designed, funded and conducted

GROW, GRAISEA, country Oxfam and partners need to develop, resource and implement advocacy strategies for ASEAN/States and AMAF/SEAFDEC. Strategies require current stakeholder and power analysis to map interested CSOs for coalition building including country Oxfams, identify possible champions and allies in regional bodies and national governments, formulate gender policy positions under UNGPs and agriculture/fisheries policy/law. Currently, GROW Officer is leading solo, with support from ACN on UNGPs, AFA/AsiaDHRRA on AMAF, and SEAFISH on SEAFDEC. Oxfam has provided further resources to support UNGPs, but more might be required. For example, if GRAISEA is serious about NAP advocacy, there is much work to be done: survey existing NAPs and compare them against UNGPs and AICHR, determine drafting mechanism and consultation process, develop country-specific positions and join national CSO campaigns, etc. These strategies need to be regularly monitored and adjusted given the fluid nature of policy advocacy. GRAISEA positions should be closely tied to Result 1 – responsible business and gender transformation in agribusiness and agriculture.

2.2 Cambodia to monitor legal reform including gender issues

NGOF and DPA should monitor implementation of the amended agriculture and environment laws once they have been passed to understand how the new CSR provisions are administered in practice and develop recommendations for improving their enforcement. As part of monitoring and recommending, Cambodia should work with GOG to start developing gender transformation provisions that can be tracked in monitoring and included in recommending in the future.

2.3 ISEA gender benchmarks advocacy to contribute to Result 1

If ISEA receives additional funding to participate in Year 3 of GRAISEA, more thought needs to be put into how its gender benchmarks support Result 1 aims and activities: how can the gender benchmarks be used to influence ASEAN/States to promote responsible business and gender transformation in agribusiness and agriculture? Take into account that GROW/SEAFISH are targeting ASEAN/States, Vietnam/Philippines/Cambodia are focused on national government, and Thailand has developed Blue Brand for influencing ASEAN. Thailand might be the best entry point for ISEA because Blue Brand was designed for social enterprises and it lacks gender criteria. Additionally, the first step there is to discuss Blue Brand with private sector. However, the gender benchmarks will need to be adapted from case study principles to CSR standard criteria for practical audit review.

RESULT 2 AND WORKING GROUP 2

3.1 Monitor gender inclusion for learning value chain lessons

The most important task for the value chain interventions is to understand the effect of the different models that are being used to achieve gender inclusion in shrimp, palm oil and fisheries industries for extending these interventions to other parts of these value chains and expanding them to other agriculture industries. For example, pertinent questions to ask are:

- How has supported gendered PSIA in North Kalimantan improved gender equality in the shrimp farms and if it has not how can the process be strengthened?
- What difference has establishing a women's organization made to the Lampung shrimp farming cooperatives and what more needs to be done to entrench it?
- Have the increased roles for women in palm oil gardens in West Kalimantan or shrimp ponds in Vietnam allowed them to take on new roles in the palm oil value chain like buying inputs/selling products or decision-making roles in cooperatives (or SPKS)?
- Where can GALS methodology be applied to other parts of the value chain such as processing companies factories or offices to extend gender inclusion?

3.2 Learning from Vietnam/Indonesia agribusiness engagement

Vietnam shrimp farmers are engaging with a processing company, Indonesian shrimp farmers are working with a processing company on ASC certification, and Indonesian palm oil smallholders will be engaging with processing mills for fair partnership. It is vital to learn from these interactions through monitoring and maybe research to improve successful partnerships in value chains, but also to maximize influencing companies to adopt wider CSR policies and plans per Result 3. Such learning should also take place in relation to Thailand/Cambodia/Philippines/Myanmar.

3.3 SPKS should set specific objectives/activities for RSPO

To strengthen SPKS capacity for advocating on behalf of smallholders in RSPO and to continue building gender inclusion knowledge in the palm oil sector, GRAISEA, Oxfam and SPKS should set achievable objectives and activities in the second half of the programme, which take into account its capacity level and programme commitments. For instance, SPKS could document and present its approach to and impact of gendered GAP training to show the importance of including women in the value chain to improve fruit quality and reduce input costs. If SPKS would like, it could take this idea slightly further and provide analysis and recommendations on training design and process. With new funding maybe from RSPO, SPKS can scale-up the training to deliver it to more smallholders. Drawing key lessons from this intervention to feed back into RSPO policy making is important.

3.4 Target Change Fusion mentoring to support Result 2

Change Fusion has completed its apprenticeship in Thailand working with social enterprises in fisheries and handicrafts. The fisheries mentoring now needs to be built upon to link Change Fusion more closely with agriculture smallholders and aquaculture smallscale producers in the three GRAISEA valuechains if possible or strongly related agriculture value chains if not such as rice and cocoa. Possibilities in GRAISEA include assisting Lampung women's organization, West Kalimantan members, North Sumatra cooperative or Philippines banana growers with business planning or organizational development, etc.

RESULT 3

4.1 Amend Result 3 Indicators/Targets to make them achievable

One of the key lessons for the GRAISEA programme is that starting engagement and building partnerships with agribusiness can be a slow and intensive process to overcome doubts and identify commonalities. While Result 3 cannot be amended, its Indicators and Targets can and they might be changed as follows:

- Indicator 1 reads “understood” not “adopted”. The Target needs to be discussed with partners. Vietnam and Cambodia can reach many companies through CSR regulation and CSR Platform. Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines and Myanmar are more restricted.
- Indicator 2 reads “adopted” not “implemented”. Again, the Target should be consulted upon. However, of the current private sector engagement, perhaps only Vietnam and Indonesia shrimp processors will be open to adopting CSR policies and plans.

4.2 Cambodia to safeguard CSR Platform transition to companies

Cambodia should continue discussing the CSR concept with CSR Platform members to promote the thicker version requiring CSR policies and plans. Continuing discussion about UNGPs is important, too, because they go beyond CSR to international human rights law and enforcement. Commencing dialogue regarding gender is also essential for influencing CSR policies and plans. It is essential that CSR, UNGPs and gender are situated in the business case to increase their appeal.

4.3 IDEALS needs to start contract re-negotiation process soon

IDEALS has been training banana growers to understand supply contracts and re-negotiating positions. It should start contract re-negotiations soon, understanding company positions and grower risks and preparing to counter and mitigate them. It does not want grower safety or livelihoods to be threatened or harmed as a result. Furthermore, it should develop its CSR advocacy for companies and continue its government lobbying to support its legal strategy, ensuring that gender transformation is incorporated.

4.4 Consider moving Philippines to Result 2 for linking/learning

The Philippines intervention is currently more of a value chain intervention than an agribusiness CSR one and it might be helpful for IDEALS to be moved to Result 2 and to join WG2 to learn from its experienced partners working on Vietnam, Indonesia and Thailand issues. Regardless, it will still be important for Philippines to continue government advocacy and start agribusiness influencing to create the regulatory and CSR enabling environment to support banana growers.

4.5 GRAISEA and CSR Asia understand CSRA effectiveness better

GRAISEA and CSR Asia should work closely together to understand the effectiveness of CSRA activities better for the remainder of the programme, and to feedback the lessons that they learn into designing final CSRA activities to strengthen its contribution to achieving Result 3. CSRA's expertise and networks should be leveraged to the greatest extent going forward to build partners expertise and activities in CSR and private sector engagement, and to offer platforms for starting and continuing partnerships for CSR such as reports and events.

RESULT 4 AND WORKING GROUP 3

5.1 Define a clear target audience and a focused target segment

Recognizing that the scope of GRAISEA is too broad given allocated resources, it's recommended assessing if the primary strategy of Result 4 is to engage the private sector through the CSR angle or by demonstrating the business case for supporting responsible and gender-inclusive enterprises. The most appropriate target audience should be determined based on a realistic assessment of Oxfam's strengths and weaknesses and considering the resources at hand.

Similarly, it is recommended identifying a more focused target segment and determining clear selection criteria for beneficiaries. Criteria should be based on a combination of sector and vision alignment (agricultural value chains in targeted countries with an interest/commitment to empower women) as well as likelihood to grow and become sustainable. Examples of possible criteria in this respect are: number of years in operation; soundness of business plan; experience/skills of management team, number of women engaged either as suppliers, consumers, and/or employees, commitment to empowering women that should be substantiated (either based on business motivation or track record). Overall, focusing on the "missing middle" (above the microenterprise level) seems more in line with the goal of demonstrating the win-win-win proposition and creating lasting, sustainable change.

5.2 Expand sources of financing and shift focus towards more country-level, long-term options

The type of capital that is more appropriate to tap into will depend on specific target audience and segment that Result 4 decides to focus on. If the focus will be very small, community-based enterprises, philanthropic capital can be useful to provide seed funding and business development support (skills, networks, and access to markets). It can be used to fill a gap and support high-risk, early stage businesses that the private sector is not ready to fund. In this regard, Oxfam's strategy to bring AVPN as part of Result 4 would fit well. More strategically, philanthropic capital could also be used to: 1) support targeted women's empowerment initiatives within selected enterprises (e.g.: increase women smallholder's leadership potential as per ISEA research); and 2) document this work and lessons learned in a user-friendly format with the private sector in mind. (See recommendation 5)

If focusing on the missing middle and trying to demonstrate the business case for investing in gender-inclusive agricultural enterprises, engaging the mainstream financial sector should be a key strategy while still leveraging philanthropic capital for targeted women's empowerment initiatives. Building on the lesson that a country-level approach for capacity building seems more effective in supporting smaller enterprises, local sources of financing, such as angel investors and banks (community banks and commercial banks), should also be explored.

5.3 Focus on strengthening country-level GIN networks & leverage them to access capital.

The experience has been that young enterprises are better served by local advisors that have a better understanding of the local context, no language barrier, and can be accessed on a more regular basis. In expanding and building the GIN network, the priority should be on strengthening the number of mentors locally in the countries of operation. This platform could also be leveraged to facilitate access to finance by making a focused effort to include more angel investors and professionals from financial institutions. This doesn't seem to have been explored so far. GIN's benefit/value add to enterprises is expected to be centered more on providing access to networks rather than skills. In this regard, the programme will likely need to find additional providers of business development services that can assist early stage enterprises with continuous, hands-on specialized support in an effective way.

5.4 Define a clear strategy and expectations for partners' collaboration.

As Result 4 partners and working group 3 expand, a clearer strategy should be laid out on how partners will contribute to achieving targets on their own and as a group. The evaluation has found that different partners had different expectations about tasks and responsibilities and “joint work” and some of the underlying assumptions proved not to hold. Moving into the second half of the programme, the strategy for Result 4 should be re-assessed and agreed upon with all partners to avoid miscommunication or misunderstandings going forward. While bringing a diverse set of partners can be more challenging than working with a more homogeneous group, this richness of experiences and perspectives is very valuable to support the learning objective of Result 4. Given the ambitious goals and lean budget, priority should also be given to partners that have both the right vision and the ability to implement it, i.e. those that bring strong financial inclusion/business development skills and women’s economic empowerment expertise in agricultural value chains.

5.5 Expand engagement to private sector stakeholders on Gender Benchmarks.

Whether the focus of Result 4 will shift more towards CSR or mainstream financial sector, both would require a stronger engagement with the private sector (for profit) to leverage their input and incorporate their perspective. For the Benchmarks to make a real difference, they need to concretely guide stakeholders on measuring impact on women’s economic empowerment and tracking progress in a cost- and time-effective that can be easily incorporated into their regular work. Engaging more private sector stakeholders might also bring more leads and referrals for viable enterprises, and therefore contribute to efficiency.

5.6 Invest more in knowledge creation.

If GRAISEA is to be used as a learning platform, as well as to build Oxfam’s own gender expertise and influence private sector stakeholders, it is recommended investing in creating more knowledge on the economic benefits (business case) that private sector enterprises have gained from gender-inclusive or from empowering women (e.g: measuring the benefit of having more women in decision-making positions, of investing in women’s professional development/leadership development, etc.). This should be done with private sector stakeholders as the main target audience and clearly track value for money and economic benefits (increase in sales, improved brand equity as determined by increased social media presence, awards and recognitions, increased number of customers, etc.). Aim at 4-6 robust cases by end of GRAISEA, sourcing primarily from Shujog’s list of clients.

V. LESSONS LEARNED

Many of the lessons learned have been set out in either Conclusions and Recommendations sections. This section will take a step back and point to some of the bigger picture lessons that have been learned:

1. Oxfam needs to be clear about what it wants to achieve through networked programmes like GRAISEA and to set up MEL frameworks for monitoring and evaluating it. For example, if Oxfam wants to take on a new convenor role in the region drawing together its expertise and partners for more comprehensive and sustainable outcomes, it should surface this goal more explicitly and understand the skills, steps and standards required.
2. Partners that are new to development programming might not be aware that a programme is a set of linked projects that requires collaboration to realise Results and Objectives. It is not merely partners delivering their own Outputs and Outcomes, and it may even require non-budgeted contributions. This highlights the importance of Oxfam explaining its partnership principles to new partners and ensuring they are provided with sufficient capacity building from the outset.
3. GRAISEA assumed that partners were capable of journeying from gender blindness to gender awareness on their own but for some partners taking that first step is difficult because they are gender blind. Moving from gender awareness to integrating gender transformation principles into activities is going to be an even more complex step. And, yet, there might also be a limit to the amount of gender transformation that can take place in segments of value chains or throughout value chains because they are very closed.
4. Behavioural change has a strong personal dimension to it so long-term government and company relationships need to be started and fostered, and the influencing goals sought might take longer to realise than the 3-year programme cycle. As CSOs become more comfortable with government/company engagement, and as governments/companies become less critical of CSOs, space is opening for new multi-stakeholder partnerships for more effective policy and law.

ANNEXES

TERMS OF REFERENCE



GRAISEA MTE ToR-
revised13June.pdf

INCEPTION REPORT



16 09 28 Inception
report_MTE_Coghlan.

INTERVIEW LIST AND FIELD VISIT SCHEDULE



GRAISEA MTE
Interview List and Fie

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT



GRAISEA MTE Data
collection instrument.

OXFAM

Oxfam is an international confederation of 17 organizations networked together in 92 countries, as part of a global movement for change, to build a future free from the injustice of poverty.

GRAISEA

Gender Transformative and Responsible Agribusiness Investments in South East Asia (GRAISEA) is a regional programme which is funded by the Government of Sweden. Based on the recognition that financial viability and gender equitable and sustainable supply chains are not mutually exclusive, GRAISEA promotes win-win-win propositions: wins for communities, small-scale producers and larger businesses.

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This document was written by Matthew Coghlan and Caterina Meloni. For more information, or to comment on this publication, please email graisea_pmu@oxfam.org.uk.

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