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MASTER THESIS

Exploring the experiences of female small-scale organic cocoa farmers
about gender-based inequality in agency and empowerment in light of the
Sustainable Development Goal 5: A case study from rural Ghana

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Abstract

In all parts of the Global South, female farmers face challenges to access productive resources and output markets in an equal manner as male farmers, which is referred to as the gender gap in agriculture. In Ghana, where cocoa is one of the major cash crops, these systematic disadvantages mean that female small-scale cocoa farmers face challenges to equally benefit from cultivating the cash crop. Even though there is agreement among researchers that quantitative differences in access to assets result from underlying social gender norms and intra-household inequalities in bargaining power, there is a research gap as to how these underlying causes affect female small-scale cocoa farmer's agency and empowerment in private and public spheres.

To form networks in the form of farmer organizations or cooperatives has become a major strategy among small-scale farmers to overcome obstacles to participate in high value agricultural chains. Especially women can benefit from participating in group activities not only in terms of economic, but also social empowerment if farmer organizations consider and challenge existing gender norms, are committed to gender equality and to design programs in a gender-sensitive manner. However, there is a research gap with respect to the extent to which farmer organizations consider female farmers' challenges and gender equality as an aspect in their activities.

Framing the study within the capability approach stresses the consideration of a person's agency, his or her ability to define the freedoms he or she values and wishes to achieve (capabilities) and to have the freedom to act upon these capabilities and turn them into functionings (actual achievements) by the use of resources. Embedding the concepts of agency and capabilities in the context of gender equality also includes the concept of empowerment, which can be understood as gaining the ability to make choices which were previously denied to someone. Due to societal gender norms and patriarchal structures, women face structural inequalities in capability deprivations compared to men. In order for women to become empowered, capability inequalities, as well as inequalities in the access to resources have to be removed and women's agency has to be improved.

The aim of this study was to explore the experiences of female small-scale organic cocoa farmers in rural Ghana with regards to gender-based inequality in agency and empowerment in their households, community, economic and political spheres in the light of the Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5). In particular, one objective was to explore the extent to which women are engaged in decision-making within the household, community, economic and political spheres in rural Ghana. Other objectives of the study were to explore existing strategies that local farmer cooperatives follow in order to bridge the gender gap in agriculture, as well as to provide recommendations to improve farmer cooperatives' strategies towards addressing SDG 5.

The study drew on data that was collected but not yet used in the context of a previous study in the Yayra Glover cooperative in the Suhum District in the Eastern Region of Ghana during May and August 2019. This study conducted a qualitative secondary data analysis (QSA) of the primary data that was collected in the aforementioned previous study. In total, four main themes with several sub-themes were developed from the coding process of the data: (1) The internalization of gender roles and patriarchal structures, (2)

women's participation in decision-making, (3) strategies of local organizations and (4) recommendations to develop a clear gender strategy.

In order to ensure that the research does not include any risks that could harm participants and in order to ensure confidentiality of the data and anonymity of the participants, the research followed strict ethical guidelines. Ethical clearance and approval to conduct the research was granted by two universities: first, the Institute of Development Research and Development Policy (IEE) at the Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany and second, the Humanities Sciences Social Research and Ethics committee from the University of the Western Cape. Furthermore, ethical clearance and approval to conduct the research was granted by the Yayra Glover cooperative.

The findings of this study imply major challenges among female small-scale cocoa farmers related to the internalization of gender roles and patriarchal structures that are embedded in the local culture. Even though women are to a certain degree actively engaged in activities and decision-making in all the spheres studied, gender roles determine the tasks 'appropriate' for women and limit their access to leadership and key decision-making positions. Strategies of local organizations to overcome gender-based inequalities and to contribute to the eradication of the gender gap in agriculture could be identified on a micro and macro level. However, no clear gender strategy was followed by the Yayra Glover cooperative.

Against this background, I recommend that the local cooperative adopts a participatory approach to develop a clear gender strategy going beyond the delivery of extension services and inputs. Capacity building and gender sensitization training should be facilitated to challenge gender roles and patriarchal structures in rural cocoa growing communities. This will be necessary to achieve the targets of SDG 5, to empower female cocoa farmers, achieve gender equality in cocoa communities and to bridge the gender gap in agriculture in rural Ghana.

Keywords: Gender, inequalities, empowerment, gender gap, agriculture, small-scale farmers, agency, decision-making, cooperatives, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Declaration

I declare that *Exploring the experiences of female small-scale cocoa farmers about gender-based inequality in agency and empowerment in light of the Sustainable Development Goal 5: A case study from rural Ghana* is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Full name: Tamara Sophia Kaschek Date: 22.01.2021

Signed T. Kaschek



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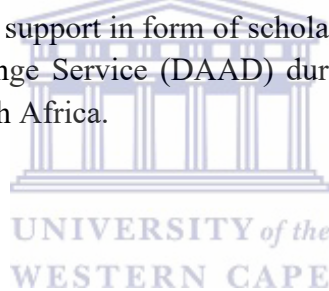


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List of abbreviations

CECA	Citizen Empowerment and Community Action
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
COCOBOD	Ghana Cocoa Board
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FBO	Farmer-based organization
GCFS	Ghana Cocoa Farmers Survey
GII	Gender Inequality Index
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HDI	Human Development Index
HSSREC	Humanities and Social Sciences Research and Ethics Committee
IDEG	Institute for Democratic Governance
IEE	Institute of Development Research and Development Management
IFOAM	International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
ISD	Institute for Social Development
LBC	Licensed Buying Company
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
PBC	Producer Buying Company
PPP	Purchasing Power Parities
QSA	Qualitative Secondary Analysis
RUB	Ruhr University Bochum
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UWC	University of the Western Cape
WEAI	Women Empowerment in Agriculture Index

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Gender equality, the empowerment of women and the realization of women's rights, dignity and capabilities are central development goals and requirements for a just and sustainable world (The World Bank 2001, 1; UN Women 2014, 12). However, despite efforts, women and girls remain disadvantaged compared to men and boys in many ways, which not only reduces their well-being but also limits their ability to participate in and benefit from development (The World Bank 2001, 34). In no region of the Global South¹ do women enjoy equal legal, social and economic rights as men (The World Bank 2001, 1). Among all world regions, gender inequality is most prevalent in Sub-Saharan Africa (UNDP 2018, 8). The average Human Development Index (HDI) for women is about 5.9% lower than that for men worldwide and 10.8% lower in Sub-Saharan Africa (UNDP 2018, 37). The most prevalent gender inequalities can be found in the discrimination of rights by gender, unequal access, ownership and control over productive resources, economic opportunities, time spent on unpaid domestic work and participation and representation in decision-making and leadership (The World Bank 2001; The World Bank et al. 2009; United Nations 2009). All these inequalities are shaped by socio-cultural gender norms that vary across and within regions, countries, ethnic and religious groups (The World Bank 2001, 112). Across regions and countries, gender norms typically assign the responsibility for unpaid domestic and care work to women and the primary wage-earning responsibility to men (United Nations 2009, 5; The World Bank 2001, 109). Women's resulting weakness in the labour market increase dependency on the male wage, which underlies and is a product of asymmetric gender relations and is central to the understanding of their subordination and of their role in the economy (Beneria and Sen 1981, 292–93).

Besides other international agreements, declarations and laws, the issue of gender equality has been included in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of the United Nations (UN) under goal 5 “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls” (United Nations 2017, 9–10). In 2015, this agenda replaced the Millennium Declaration and expanded eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to seventeen Sustainable

¹ The term Global South refers to a “societal, political and economic disadvantaged position in the global system”. In contrast, the term Global North describes an “advantaged and privileged position”. Although the terms also refer to a geographical division, they rather describe a (post-) colonial context from a critical perspective (glokal e.V. 2012, 4) (translated from German).

Development Goals (SDGs) as a set of universal development goals. SDG 5 replaced MDG 3 “Promote gender equality and empower women” and builds on the progress it made and the gaps that remain towards achieving gender equality (UNDP 2020b). It works with 9 targets and 14 quantitative measurement indicators covering general discrimination on the basis of sex, gender-based violence and harmful practices, reproductive health, unpaid domestic work, access to and control over economic and natural resources and enabling technology, and opportunities for leadership in decision-making (United Nations 2017, 9–10). SDG 5 has addressed many of the shortcomings of MDG 3 by being more expansive in terms of its targets with a bigger focus on women’s human rights and by introducing the concept of “leave no woman or girl behind” (Stuart and Woodroffe 2016, 72; Rosche 2016, 119). However, SDG 5 and the 2030 Agenda in general have also been criticized by many scholars, especially because of the lack of policy implications, voluntary monitoring and reporting on progress on the SDGs and limited additional resources that risk a weak implementation of actions to achieve the SDGs (Rosche 2016, 123; Razavi 2016, 27; Koehler 2016, 57–59; Musindarwezo 2018, 31). According to Fukuda-Parr (2016, 50), Razavi (2016, 39), Rosche (2016, 122), Stuart and Woodroffe (2016, 78–79) selectivity in the prioritization of certain goals, dilution, simplification and national adaption combined with a lack of additional funding will result in a lack of implementation of those targets of SDG 5 that are most transformative but also most difficult to implement.

The disadvantages that women around the world are facing, strongly manifest themselves in the agricultural sector, which literature calls ‘the gender gap in agriculture’. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) (2011, 5) describes the gender gap in agriculture as the fact that “women in agriculture and rural areas have one thing in common across regions: they have less access than men to productive resources and opportunities”. This not only imposes costs on the agricultural sector, but also the broader economy and society as well as on women themselves. If female farmers had the same access to productive resources as men, they could increase yields on their farms by 20-30% and raise total agricultural output in the Global South by 2.5-4%, which could in turn reduce the number of people facing hunger in the world by 12-17%. This strengthens the argument that achieving gender equality is a requirement to achieve other development goals and that gender equality and sustainable development depend on each other and can reinforce each other in powerful ways (FAO 2011, 5; UN Women 2014, 24).

1.2 Problem statement

Ghana is one of the countries in the Global South where gender inequality is exceptionally high (UNDP 2018, 40–41). The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted by all 193 UN member countries, including Ghana, wherefore Ghana has committed itself to take actions towards achieving sustainable development, amongst other things, by addressing gender inequalities, male dominance and patriarchy (UNCG Ghana and CSO Platform on SDGs Ghana 2017, 3–12). In Ghana, the majority of rural households, and almost half the female rural population are dependent on agriculture as their main source of income (Ghana Statistical Services 2014, 102). In Ghana's forest zone, where the case study was conducted, cocoa is one of the major cash crops cultivated by farming households (Ghana Statistical Services 2014, 105). About one quarter of cocoa farm owners or operators in Ghana are women. However, the number of women working in the cocoa sector, as often unreported unpaid family labor on cocoa farms of their husbands, is much higher. Women account for almost half of the cocoa workforce in West Africa (Kiewisch 2015, 502). Despite their important contributions to the agricultural sector in general and to the cocoa sector, female farmers in Ghana face structural disadvantages in accessing output markets, assets and farming inputs (Lambrecht et al. 2018; Quaye et al. 2019; Doss and Morris 2001; Bymolt et al. 2018; Hill and Vigneri 2014; Vigneri and Holmes 2009; IFPRI 2002; IFPRI et al. 2010). The Ghanaian society is largely characterized by patriarchal norms, which has major implications for power structures and decision-making patterns in the private and public sphere, in particular in rural farming communities (Fuseini et al. 2019, 298–300; Lambrecht et al. 2018, 693; Lambrecht 2016, 194–95; Quaye et al. 2016, 84; UNDP 2018, 88). Beyond a lack of access to productive resources, female farmers in Ghana are disproportionately deprived with low levels of control over the use of income and intra-household decision-making power, as well as high workload (Quaye et al. 2016, 77–81; Malapit et al. 2014, 13). Men not only dominate decision-making and leadership in the household, but also in communities and politics (Quaye et al. 2016, 81). Women in Ghana are disproportionately underrepresented in local and national parliaments, communal groups, such as farmer organizations, participate less in communal and political decision-making and are less likely to be found in leadership positions (UNDP 2018, 39–41; Ghana Districts n.d.; Malapit et al. 2014, 13; IFPRI et al. 2010, 252–55; Lambrecht 2016, 195; Abakah 2018, 1–12).

To earn income independently is a crucial factor that can enhance Ghanaian women's influence in decision-making in the private and the public sphere (Fuseini et al. 2019,

302–4; Wrigley-Asante 2012, 358; Sen 1999, 191–92; The World Bank et al. 2009, 68). To increase women’s participation in decision-making, cocoa cultivation, as a major cash crop, can especially benefit female small-holders through higher incomes and financial independence and therefore promote gender equity within the household and community (Hill and Vigneri 2014, 326; IFPRI 2002, 4; AGSF 2005, 27). Female farmers might especially benefit from high-value certified cocoa cultivation in combination with the participation in a cocoa farmer cooperative. New market opportunities in high-value cocoa production chains, such as organic or Fair Trade, can on the one hand benefit small-scale farmers, especially women, through higher incomes and better working conditions (The World Bank et al. 2009, 176). On the other hand, they remain difficult for small-holders to access, especially women (Swinnen et al. 2013, 296–98; Van der Meer 2006, 209; The World Bank et al. 2009, 176). As a response, it is a major strategy to form networks in the form of cooperatives or farmer-based organizations (FBOs), that link small-scale farmers with high-value chains and trade. (Kariuki 2006, 48; Liu 2009a, 66; 2009b, 225; Swinnen et al. 2013, 299; The World Bank et al. 2009, 177). Beyond economic gains, women can benefit from increased bargaining-power, self-esteem and self-confidence (Burchi and Vicari 2014, 359; Ferguson and Kepe 2011, 425–26; Manchón and Macleod 2010, 379–82; Nakazi et al. 2017, 14; Doherty 2018, 151–52). However, such cooperatives are rarely formed exclusively for or by women. Therefore, the extent to which organizations and food standards focus on male or female farmers and challenge existing gender norms and inequalities is critical for female farmers to be able to benefit from high-value chains and farmer groups in terms of both, economic and social empowerment (The World Bank et al. 2009, 64; Doss 2001, 2082).

Many previous studies on the gender gap in agriculture have focused on quantitative gender differences in productivity and access to resources, such as assets and extension services, which is referred to as the ‘gender *asset* gap in agriculture’ (Cahn and Liu 2008; Doss and Morris 2001; Gilbert et al. 2002; Hart and Aliber 2010; IFPRI et al. 2010; Lahai et al. 1999; Lambrecht et al. 2016; Peterman et al. 2011; Ragasa et al. 2013; Saito et al. 1994; Udry 1996; Doss 2001). There is agreement among researchers that these quantitative differences result from underlying social gender norms. However, there is a clear lack of empirical research adopting a qualitative approach to create a deeper understanding of gender norms, rules and perceptions as they relate to the gender gap in agriculture, from the perspectives of female farmers themselves. Most studies take gender norms as given and static, rather than dynamic social constructs (Lambrecht 2016, 188). I,

therefore, argue that the gender gap in agriculture cannot be reduced to a gender asset gap as studied by many researchers. Gender norms should not just be seen as underlying causes but should rather be included as a distinct aspect in the gender gap in agriculture aside from assets and be subject to in-depth research in different cultural contexts. Furthermore, literature concerning a gender-based analysis of the impacts of food standards and of access to information from cooperatives are limited (FAO 2011, 20; Smith 2013, 102; 2015, 409; Doss 2001, 2082). Therefore, there is a need for empirical research with a gender lens, on what kind of strategies are currently followed by farmer cooperatives to achieve gender equality and empower female farmers, how female members of the cooperative perceive their situation with regards to empowerment, and how strategies of the cooperative can be improved.

1.3 Study aim, objectives and research questions

The main aim of the study is to explore the experiences of female small-scale organic cocoa farmers in rural Ghana with regards to gender-based inequality in agency and empowerment in their households, community, economic and political spheres in order to strive towards achieving SDG 5.

Objectives:

- 1) To explore the experiences of female small-scale organic cocoa farmers with regards to gender-based inequality and women empowerment in the household, community, economic and political spheres in rural Ghana.
- 2) To explore the extent to which women are engaged in decision-making within the household, community, economic and political spheres in rural Ghana.
- 3) To explore strategies that local farmer cooperatives follow in order to bridge the gender gap in agriculture.
- 4) To provide recommendations to improve farmer cooperatives towards addressing SDG 5.

Research questions to help achieving the respective objectives of the study are as follows:

Main Research Question: What are the experiences and challenges of female small-scale organic cocoa farmer's in rural Ghana with regards to gender-based inequality and women empowerment in the household, community, economic and political spheres?

Sub-Research Question 1: How are women engaged in decision making processes of the household, community, economy or politics?

Sub-Research Question 2: What strategies do farmer cooperatives have in place in order to bridge the gender gap in agriculture?

Sub-Research Question 3: What recommendations could be provided to improve cooperatives striving towards addressing SDG 5?

1.4 Thesis outline

Following the introduction (Chapter 1), the thesis outline consists of a literature review (Chapter 2) that focuses on gender inequalities and provides a summary of the main prevalent issues regarding gender, the gender gap in agriculture (2.1) and a contextualization of these issues in the Ghana case study (2.2). Furthermore, the potential benefits from and limitations of female farmers' participation in high-value chains and farmer cooperatives for empowerment are discussed (2.3).

Chapter 3 forms the conceptual framework of the study and analyzes how women empowerment is embedded in the SDGs, which targets of SDG 5 this study focuses on (3.1) and provides a critical discussion about the positives and shortcomings of SDG 5 and its predecessor MDG 3 (3.2).

The capability approach provides the theoretical framework of the study (Chapter 4). Chapter 4.1 gives an overview of the basic concepts of the capability approach and Chapter 4.2 puts these concepts in the context of agency, gender equality and women empowerment. Chapter 4.3 summarizes the main aspects of the theoretical framework.

Chapter 5 elaborates on the methodological approach of the study, including the research approach and design (5.1), a description of the research setting (5.2), sampling strategy and selection of study participants (5.3), an operationalization of concepts (5.4.1), data collection instruments (5.4.2), data analysis (5.5), and aspects of scientific rigor and trustworthiness (5.6). Chapter 5.7 provides a summary of the methodological approach.

The empirical results of the study are presented and discussed in Chapter 6, starting with the internalization of gender roles and patriarchal structures (6.1), women's participation in decision-making processes (6.2), strategies of local organizations (6.3) leading over to recommendations provided for the Yayra Glover cooperative to design a clear gender strategy (6.4).

Finally, Chapter 7 provides a summary and some concluding remarks (7.1), as well as limitations of the study and recommendations for further research (7.2).

Chapter 2

Gender inequalities – Setting the scene

As a continuation of the previous study focusing on poverty reduction and investment decisions among small-scale organic cocoa farmers in the Eastern Region of Ghana, this qualitative secondary analysis (QSA) study is addressing the aspect of gender inequalities among female cocoa farmers in rural Ghana. Therefore, the literature review examines the main prevalent issues regarding gender and discusses how these existing gender inequalities are manifested in the agricultural sector, thereby elaborating on the different aspects of the ‘gender gap in agriculture’. Thereafter, it gives an overview of the socio-cultural gender norms in Ghanaian society and discusses its implications for women’s empowerment, in particular for women working in the agricultural sector and in cocoa cultivation. Lastly, the potential benefits from and limitations of female farmers’ participation in high-value chains and farmer cooperatives for empowerment are discussed.

2.1 Current global gender issues

In recent decades, considerable advances in gender equality have been achieved through a number of international norms, agreements and declarations (UN Women 2014, 12). A landmark for the global agenda for women’s human rights, gender equality and the empowerment of women was the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing 1995 (The World Bank 2001, 40; UN Women 2014, 20). As a result of the conference, many countries ratified the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), incorporated gender equality into their constitutions, revised their labour codes to establish equal treatment of men and women in work and employment, or established policies for decision making positions, including quotas for governmental bodies and parliaments (The World Bank 2001, 41). However, many issues around gender remain pervasive in many dimensions of life worldwide, not only among deprived women in the Global South, but also in the Global North.

One major prevalent gender issue is the discrimination of rights by gender. Asymmetric rights and privileges for men and women include asymmetries in legal statutes, in customary laws and in practices in communities, families and households. Examples include family planning, the right to marry and to divorce, the right to inherit and manage property, to undertake income-earning activities outside the household or to travel independently. Gender disparities in rights constrain the choices available to women in many aspects of life and limit the opportunities they have in the economy and in society (The World Bank 2001, 57). In no region of the Global South do women have equal rights than

men in any dimension (political, legal, economic or social). Even when women's rights are determined in national constitutions or laws, there is frequent violation of those rights. Sub-Saharan Africa is among the regions where women have on average the least equality of rights in the world (The World Bank 2001, 37).

Other aspects related to gender inequalities are gender norms, the gender division of labour and unpaid domestic and care work. Gender specific social norms and customs vary across and within regions, countries, castes, social classes, ethnic and religious groups (The World Bank 2001, 112). Generally, it can be said that across regions and countries, gender norms determine the roles that women and men have in the family and in the community, shape individual preferences and power relations between sexes and dictate the type of work considered appropriate for women and men. Social norms create powerful incentives that guide people's behaviour, whereby behaviour outside the accepted boundaries can unleash formal and informal systems of social sanction (The World Bank 2001, 109). Gender specific norms typically include the assignment of responsibility for reproductive work within the family to women and the primary wage-earning responsibility to men (United Nations 2009, 5). This typical and consistent gender division of labour in which men work more in the market and women more in the home is existent in most countries, both in the Global North and Global South (The World Bank 2001, 109). The goods and services produced under 'domestic work' contribute to the reproduction of the labour force and to its daily maintenance, and therefore to the functioning of the economic system. "Women's unique responsibility for this work, and their resulting weakness in the labour market and dependency on the male wage, both underlie and are products of asymmetric gender relations" (Beneria and Sen 1981, 292). Therefore, the primary involvement of women in household activities is central to the understanding of their subordination and of their role in the economy (Beneria and Sen 1981, 293). Moreover, women often undertake multiple activities at once, such as taking care of children while working in the household or in home- or farm-based income-generating activities. Even when women work in the labour market, they continue to do most of the unpaid work at home which means that women's work is often 'invisible' and not accounted for (The World Bank 2001, 152–53) and leads to the burden of the so-called 'double day' for women (Beneria and Sen 1981, 293).

Furthermore, gender discrimination in access and control over productive resources is widespread around the world. Women have unequal access to a range of productive resources including human resources, physical and financial capital, such as employment

and earnings, land, information, technology, and credit. Asymmetries in asset ownership persist through the life cycle and affect women's autonomy, their ability to influence household decisions, and their economic status (The World Bank 2001, 51). A disproportionate share of unpaid domestic and care work being done by women, keeps them from taking paid work (The World Bank 2001, 169). Limited access and control over productive resources and weaker ability to generate independent income constrains women's power to influence resource allocation and investment decisions within the home. Furthermore, it limits women's ability to participate in political processes as active agents and to influence decisions in their communities and at the national level (The World Bank 2001, 57).

In addition, women face gender inequalities in intra-household bargaining power. People make many important decisions within their households, together or individually, e.g. about children, work, household consumption, expenditures, and investments. These decisions are made in an environment which is influenced by social and cultural norms, economic incentives and individuals' aspirations and power to influence the decision-making process. How resources within the household are allocated is a matter of competing interests and unequal bargaining power among members to pursue and realize those interests (The World Bank 2001, 147–50; Agarwal 1997, 3). Because women's contributions to the household are systematically undervalued and less visible, this seems to justify the subordination of women's needs. Together with women's limited ability to earn income independently and financial dependency on the male, this means that they have less decision-making power to influence resource allocation within the household (The World Bank 2001, 153–69; United Nations 2009, 6; Agarwal 1997, 10–16). Furthermore, social norms in many societies tolerate assertive behaviour much more among men than among women. Therefore, the cultural construction of 'appropriate female behaviour' restricts their ability to bargain and negotiate their rights (Agarwal 1997, 17).

Social gender norms, women's subordination and economic situation not only affect bargaining power inequalities within private spaces (households), but also in the public space (Agarwal 1997, 29). Therefore, another issue become gender inequalities in communal and political participation and leadership opportunities. Women are often excluded from or underrepresented in decision-making bodies on the communal level, which shape the rules governing the community (Agarwal 1997, 31). Furthermore, women remain underrepresented in political participation at all levels of government, where key policy decisions are made, and resource allocations are decided on, from local councils to national

assemblies and cabinets across all world regions. In many countries, women's participation in politics is often undermined by gender roles, women's time-consuming involvement in domestic work, and deeply entrenched cultural attitudes about the suitability of women for decision-making positions (The World Bank et al. 2009, 37–38). In Sub-Saharan Africa, the average representation of women in parliaments increased from 18.1 % in 2009 to 23.5% in 2017, which is rather a sobering result despite efforts (United Nations 2009, 23; UNDP 2018, 41). However, there are a few Sub-Saharan African countries that lead in terms of female representation in their parliaments: Rwanda (55.7%), Senegal (41.8%), South Africa (41%) and Mozambique (39.6%) to mention some. In comparison, the global average and also the average for countries with a high HDI lie at a much lower level with 23.5% and 26.7% respectively (UNDP 2018, 38–41; Sossou 2011, 7; Dahlerup 2005, 145).

2.2 The gender gap in agriculture

A large share of the world's agricultural labour force are female small-scale farmers, whereby small-scale production refers to farms with less than ten hectares that is usually based on family labour (FAO 1993, 4–13; Fold and Neilson 2016, 197). On average, women comprise 43% of the agricultural labour force in the Global South, ranging from a share about 20% in Latin America up to 50% in sub-Saharan Africa (FAO 2011, 7). Furthermore, agriculture is the most important source of employment for women in rural areas in most countries of the Global South (FAO 2011, 22). Despite women's active and increasing role in agriculture and rural livelihoods in the Global South, amongst other things as a result of male labour migration, they do so often with limited or no access to productive resources (FAO 2011, 7; FAO 1993, 4; United Nations 2009, 42). The above-mentioned disadvantages that women around the world are facing, strongly manifest themselves in the agricultural sector, which literature calls 'the gender gap in agriculture'. The FAO (2011, 5) describes this gender gap in agriculture as the fact that "women in agriculture and rural areas have one thing in common across regions: they have less access than men to productive resources and opportunities. The gender gap is found for many assets, inputs and services – land livestock, labour, education, extension and financial services, and technology – and it imposes costs on the agricultural sector, the broader economy and society as well as on women themselves". "While the size of the gender gap differs by resource and location, the underlying causes for the gender asset gap are repeated across regions: social norms systematically limit the options available to women" (FAO 2011, 23). Malapit et al. (2014, 1) found in their baseline survey on the

empowerment and deprivation of women in agriculture among thirteen countries from five regions, using the WEAI², that on average, women are twice as disempowered as men. In the following discourse, I elaborate on the different dimensions of the gender gap in agriculture, focussing more on the underlying gender norms, rather than quantitative differences.

2.2.1 Farmland and labour

According to the FAO (2011, 23), land is the most important household asset for households that depend on agriculture for their livelihoods because access to land is a basic requirement for farming. Women across the Global South are consistently less likely to own or operate land, to have access to rented land, and the land they do have access to is often of poorer quality and in smaller plots (FAO 2011, 23). Women's rights to land and to inherit land are very diverse and complex, varying across regions and countries depending on culture (e.g. matrilineal or patrilineal), ethnicity, religion, etc. (The World Bank et al. 2009, 128–30). Therefore, this master's thesis does not cover the topic of women's rights to land. It would require a very deep understand of existing local customary norms and institutions, as well as national law concerning women's land ownership, which would exceed the frame of this thesis and could be subject to separate research that deals with gender inequalities in access to land among female Ghanaian farmers on its own.

With regards to the availability of farm labour, women are particularly disadvantaged in terms of time constraints because traditional gender roles make them responsible for most domestic tasks leaving them unable to allocate their time to productive farming activities. Women in rural areas are specifically disadvantaged because of the absence of basic services such as water and childcare (FAO 2011, 27; Doss 2001, 2080; Quisumbing and Pandolfelli 2010, 584; The World Bank et al. 2009, 319). Furthermore, there are certain perceptions about which agricultural tasks are more appropriate or suitable for women or men according to social norms. In addition, there are gendered differences in physical strength, which restrict women's ability to carry out certain physically demanding activities. Social norms and these differences in physical strength result in a certain gender division of labour in agriculture. Physically demanding tasks, such as clearing and preparing of land or planting of trees are perceived to be male tasks. Therefore, women either depend on their husbands or brothers or need to hire labour to help them with these tasks.

² For more detailed information on the index and its indicators see Chapters 2.2 and 5.1

This becomes a disadvantage because women might not be the person in the household that control income and decisions concerning farming activities and therefore lack financial resources needed to hire labour (FAO 2011, 27–28; Lambrecht 2016, 195; The World Bank et al. 2009, 321).

2.2.2 Credit

In general, smallholder farmers face constraints in accessing credit and other financial services irrespective of their gender (FAO 2011, 38; Doss 2001, 2081; Malapit et al. 2014, 1). However, female small holders continue to have poorer access to financial services with the share being between 5 to 10 percentage points less compared to male farmers. Women in Africa receive less than 10% of credit going to smallholder farmers and 1% of the total credit to the agricultural sector. Similarly, only 5% of loan funds in the form of rural credit to the Global South from external sources such as multilateral banks, reach rural women (FAO 2011, 38; UNDP 1995, 39). Malapit et al. (2014, 36) identified lack of access to credit and lack of decision-making power regarding the use of credits as the foremost contributor to women's disempowerment in agriculture across countries and regions. Furthermore, if women obtain credit, their loans tend to be smaller than those for men. One reason for this is women's low ownership of land which limits their access to financial services since land is a critical source of collateral to secure loans (The World Bank 2001, 52). Accessing credit and other financial services such as insurance can in turn be an important determinant of accumulating and retaining other assets (FAO 2011, 38).

2.2.3 Technology

Evidence from different countries of the Global South shows that female farmers have less access to all types of farming inputs, equipment and technology such as fertilizer, mechanized technology, oxen, tractors, seeds, but also labour (Due and Gladwin 1991; FAO 2011; Gladwin 1992; Lambrecht et al. 2016; Peterman et al. 2010; Saito et al. 1994; Udry 1996; Doss 2001), partly because most of them are very capital intensive and require heavy investments and credit to finance them (Lambrecht et al. 2016; Doss 2001, 2081). One major reason for women's reduced access to technology is women's limited control over cash resources and intrahousehold bargaining power inequalities (The World Bank et al. 2009, 66–67; Peterman et al. 2011, 1505). Results of a study by Udry (1996, 1029) imply that men are more concerned with maintaining control over resources, even if re-allocating resources to a plot with the same crop controlled by the woman in the same household would have increased overall household yields. Furthermore, access to

information about new technologies and appropriate application methods are a prerequisite for accessing them. Sometimes cooperatives, farmer organizations and other organizations carrying out agricultural extension programmes are a source of and control access to inputs and information, whose member recruitment is often gender biased (Doss 2001, 2083).

2.2.4 Agricultural extension and advisory services

The term agricultural extension or advisory service refers to the delivery of information, advice, training, and knowledge related to agriculture or livestock production, processing, and marketing provided by governments, NGOs, or farmer organizations (Meinzen-Dick et al. 2011, 62). The primary objectives of delivering agricultural extension and advisory services are concerned with transferring technologies, skills and knowledge related to agriculture, such as production and post-harvest handling of high-value crops, environmentally sustainable production, but also leadership and organizational skills. The necessity of these services lies in supporting small and marginalized farmers in achieving food security, improving rural livelihoods and to strengthen sustainable natural resource management (Swanson 2008, 6–12).

Despite their important roles in agriculture, women farmers generally receive less technical support for agriculture from extension (United Nations 2009, 49), reducing their likeliness to have access to and adopt improved technologies and inputs, which can result in significantly less productivity and income relative to male farmers (Kinkingninhoun-Médagbé et al. 2008, 57; Ragasa et al. 2013, 454–57). A global survey of the FAO (1993, 55) among extension organizations in 132 countries during the 1980s showed that an average of 5% of all agricultural extension resources worldwide, 7% in Africa (FAO 1993, 11), are allocated to programmes for women farmers. Several more recent studies from various Sub-Saharan African and Asian countries showed that this picture has not changed since then and that female farmers are still less likely to receive and participate in extension services and trainings until now (Cahn and Liu 2008 in Papua New Guinea; Gilbert et al. 2002 in Malawi; Hart and Aliber 2010 in South Africa; IFPRI et al. 2010 in Ghana, India and Ethiopia; Kinkingninhoun-Médagbé et al. 2008 in Benin; Lahai et al. 1999 in Nigeria; Ragasa et al. 2013 in Ethiopia).

One reason for women's low access to extension services is that most extension resources are absorbed by resource-rich commercial producers and less directed to small farmers. While resource-poor small-scale farmers account for more than 75 percent of the world's farmers, on average only about one-third of the time and resources of extension is

allocated to them compared to two third going to commercial producers (FAO 1993, 13). Even though this disadvantages both, male and female small-scale farmers, women are at particular disadvantage because they are disproportionately low equipped with resources (FAO 1993, 36; IFPRI et al. 2010, 3; 173; Meinzen-Dick et al. 2011, 70).

Another major reason is that the majority of extension officers are men. The study by the FAO (1993, 55) in the 1980s revealed that only 15 % of global extension agents are women, among agricultural fieldworkers it is only 5% worldwide. In Africa, only about 10% of all extension staff and about 9% agricultural field workers are female (FAO 1993, 41–42). Looking at a more recent study by IFPRI et al. (2010, 254), the result showed that there was not much change in this regard. The share of females among agricultural extension agents varied from 0% in India, 9% in Ethiopia to 15% in Ghana. Male agents often have the stereotypical image of women that “do not farm” (IFPRI et al. 2010, 62). They tend not to see them as productive farmers in their own right, but rather as farmer’s wives in their reproductive and domestic roles (FAO 1993; Meinzen-Dick et al. 2011, 70; The World Bank et al. 2009, 280). In a study by Mudege et al. (2016) among potato farmers in two districts in Malawi, as well as by Cahn and Liu (2008) who evaluated a rural livelihood training program in Papua New Guinea, methods used by extension officers were biased against women, which limited women’s ability to attend trainings even when men and women recognized the need for women to participate. In the case of Ethiopia, extension agents were evaluated on how many farmers they could get to adopt packages with new innovations. This gave extension agents an incentive to prefer talking to the household-decision maker, which in husband-wife households was always the male (IFPRI et al. 2010, 175). It has been assumed that men are the main agricultural decision makers and would pass on relevant extension information to their wives (Meinzen-Dick et al. 2011, 70; The World Bank 2001, 175; The World Bank et al. 2009, 49). However, in many regions, such as Sub-Saharan Africa this is not always the case and information and knowledge gained from extension services are not pooled within the household (Meinzen-Dick et al. 2011, 70; The World Bank 2001, 175). Even if information is shared, this reinforces women’s subordinate status and gender roles, with men being the ‘knowers’ and women the ones who depend on men’s knowledge and need guidance, which largely disempowers women because it erodes their agency and self-esteem (Mudege et al. 2016, 303). Furthermore, low levels of education were identified as another factor reducing the likelihood of women to have access to agricultural extension services (Cahn and Liu 2008, 140; Ragasa et al. 2013, 453).

Furthermore, women farmers' participation in extension services is restricted by time-constraints due to gender division of labour and women's obligations to domestic roles that keep them from participating (FAO 1993, 57; Cahn and Liu 2008, 140; Gotschi et al. 2008, 652). A study by Saito et al. (1994, 58) among farmers of four sub-Saharan African countries found women farmers to spend at least twice as many hours as men on domestic work and other non-farm productive activities in addition to farm activities. Especially poor women find it difficult to cope with the costs of participation and are therefore less likely to join farmer groups for extension activities (The World Bank et al. 2009, 66–67). “With little or no time available at the margin, any additional task – even learning new technologies that can raise productivity – must be done at the expense of other tasks presently undertaken” (Saito et al. 1994, 58). Malapit et al. (2014, 36) identified high workload as the second largest contributor to female farmers' disempowerment across regions. Another important factor restricting female farmers' ability to participate in extension services and training are gender inequalities and social gender norms, restricting women's mobility and decision-making power in their households. Mudege et al. (2016), Cahn and Liu (2008), as well as Gotschi et al. (2008), who studied smallholder farmer groups in central Mozambique, found that underlying gender norms mediate access to information and identified several constraints faced by women. First, men saw themselves as representatives of the family and even if women wanted to attend, the man decided that he will attend and represent the household (Mudege et al. 2016, 291; Gotschi et al. 2008, 652). Second, often, women could not make independent decisions to attend training sessions and sought permission from their husbands. If husbands were not a group member, they could even prevent their wives from attending training because they did not see the benefit. ‘Supportive husbands’ would allow a woman to attend the training sessions (Mudege et al. 2016, 291; Cahn and Liu 2008, 140). Furthermore, “women indicated that husbands do not like the fact of not knowing where the women are, and therefore women find it hard to leave the household for longer than a couple of hours” and “some [women] participate in groups against the will of their husbands” (Gotschi et al. 2008, 652). Third, some men regarded women as less educated or less intelligent enough to be able to understand the training wherefore the man should be the one going to the training and gain information for both himself and his wife (Mudege et al. 2016, 291).

Furthermore, women in the case study by Gotschi et al. (2008, 652–55) reported that groups reinforced gender relations that are prevalent in their societies and that they were

not able to talk freely or disagree in front of men, which restricts their ability to put their issues on the group agenda for discussion. Women were also less likely to hold leadership positions of the group and to participate in decision-making. Only the position of the treasurer is more often held by women, who are said to be more trustworthy and less likely to abuse money (Gotschi et al. 2008, 652–53). Limited agricultural education and training have been a critical factors in limiting the opportunities for women to gain new technological knowledge in their areas of production, and to voice their demands for research, training, and other kinds of support, including technology, policy, and financing (The World Bank et al. 2009, 262).

2.2.5 Technology adoption

Another important aspect that has to be mentioned is that successful technology adoption by female farmers goes beyond questions of availability and accessibility. Even if women are able to participate in training and to gain knowledge about new technologies and innovations, this does not necessarily make them physically accessible for women, and if accessible this does not necessarily translate into adoption of and benefiting from them due to certain constraints (Saito et al. 1994, 63). Quantitative differences in adoption rates of improved technologies between women and men in sub-Saharan Africa have been reported by several studies (Doss and Morris 2001, 27 in Ghana; Gilbert et al. 2002, 239 in Malawi; Kinkingninhoun-Médagbé et al. 2008, 62 in Benin; Sanginga et al. 1999, 13–14 in Nigeria; Tiruneh et al. 2001, 52 in Ethiopia). The reasons behind reduced adoption rates of technology despite access to extension and information among women are similar to those for not having access in the first place: Social gender norms that lead to gender-biased methods of extension agents giving male members privileged access to technology and design of trainings primarily according to the needs of male farmers (Kinkingninhoun-Médagbé et al. 2008, 62; Saito et al. 1994, 75); time constraints due to the various responsibilities in productive and reproductive activities that limit the adoption of labour intensive technologies and innovations; limited access to other resources such as land, tenure security, credit and labour, which is in itself gender biased, but also education level that is generally lower among females and constrains them in utilizing information and adopting new technology in praxis (Cahn and Liu 2008, 140; Doss 2001, 2080–83); and inequalities in intra-household decision-making and control over livelihood planning, agricultural inputs and cash resources (Cahn and Liu 2008, 140; Lambrecht et al. 2016, 860–63; Mudege et al. 2016; Saito et al. 1994, 19–20; Udry 1996). The latter becomes specifically problematic for capital intensive technologies such as mineral fertilizer (Lambrecht

et al. 2016, 860). Saito et al. (1994, 19–20) found that among farming households in Kenya, females made most of the day-to-day decisions concerning running their own farm, but fewer of the decisions that require major investments for capital intensive technology adoption.

From the review of literature on the gender gap in agriculture there are two main shortcomings in empirical studies. First, plenty of studies quantitatively measure and capture the ‘gender *asset* gap in agriculture’. Even though there is agreement among researchers that quantitative differences in access to assets result from underlying social gender norms, few explicitly put the focus on these factors. Most studies take gender norms as given and static, rather than dynamic social constructs (Lambrecht 2016, 188). Findings from qualitative studies by Gotschi et al. (2008) and Mudege et al. (2016) showed that considering these aspects sheds another light on the issue around the gender gap in agriculture. Second, empirical studies often compare male- and female-headed households, but there are very few studies that compare male and female farmers within the same household and consider intra-household inequalities (Lambrecht et al. 2016, 842). I, therefore, argue that the gender gap in agriculture cannot be reduced to a gender asset gap as studied by many researchers. Gender norms and intra-household inequalities should not just be seen as underlying causes, but rather as part of the problem and should therefore be included as an own aspect in the gender gap in agriculture in addition to assets and set in the focus of agricultural support programs and empirical research.

2.3 Gender patterns in Ghana

In Ghana, the average HDI for women is 9% lower than for men and the prevalence of gender-based inequalities is also shown in Ghana’s disproportionately high value of the Gender Inequality Index (GII) which accounts for 0.538 (UNDP 2018, 40) which ranks Ghana 131st out of 189 countries³. The GII is a calculated value between 0 and 1 including aspects of health, representation in parliaments, secondary education and employment. A low value of the GII indicates low inequalities between women and men and vice versa (UNDP 2018, 19). Furthermore, female farmers in Ghana are more than three times as disempowered as their male counterparts, according to a baseline survey by Malapit et al. (2014, 13) WEAI. The WEAI is the first comprehensive and standardized measure of women’s empowerment and deprivation in the agricultural sector, looking at five domains and ten indicators. Among all ten indicators, women in Ghana were more

³ Global GII Value: 0.441; GII Value Sub-Sahara Africa: 0.569 ((UNDP 2018, 41)

constrained than men, with the most severe constraints being the access to and decision-making power over productive resources and control over the use of income (Malapit et al. 2014, 13).

This section examines the socio-cultural gender norms in Ghanaian society, in particular in rural areas. It further elaborates on the implications of these gender norms on women's involvement in the economic sphere, and in decision-making and leadership in their households, the community and politics. The second sub-chapter in particular discusses the implications of gender norms and patriarchal societal structures for women working in the agricultural sector, especially in cocoa cultivation.

2.3.1 Socio-cultural gender norms and their implications for women empowerment

The Ghanaian society is largely characterized by patriarchal norms and values that mainly have their origins in cultural and religious traditions of the major religions in the country, Christianity and Islam, as well as different ethnic cultures (Fuseini et al. 2019, 298). This has major implications for household power structures and decision-making. The man is defined as the head of the household and therefore expected to lead any activities and decision-making, as well as to provide basic income for the family. The woman is the subordinate, and is expected to 'follow' her husband, to take care of the household chores and to assist the male in the role of providing for the family and with payments for expenses such as school fees or medical expenditures. Women in Ghana spend on average four times more time on unpaid domestic work than men. Aside from the household chores, they are expected to engage in farming activities for consumption, but also in income generating activities, both farm- and non-farm based, such as selling crops at the market or petty trading, to add to the male income (Fuseini et al. 2019, 298–300; Lambrecht et al. 2018, 693; Lambrecht 2016, 194–95; Quaye et al. 2016, 84; UNDP 2018, 88). This coincides with Ghana's comparably high female labor force participation rate that accounts for 74.8% compared to 79.2% among males. This figure is higher than the average female labor force participation rate in Sub-Saharan Africa (65.2% female vs. 74% male) and much higher than the world average (48.7% female vs. 75.3% male). The difference between the female and the male labor force participation rate in Ghana seems to be much lower compared to the Sub-Saharan African and world averages (UNDP 2018, 40–41). However, as mainly all over the world, women's per capita income in Ghana

(\$US 3349 PPP⁴) is lower than that of males (\$US 4849 PPP), which might be due to the fact that they work less in income-producing activities, work in lower paid jobs or receive less wage for the same work done by men. The figures reveal that men in Ghana earn approximately 1.5 times the income of women. Nevertheless, on the global average, the difference is a bit higher with males earning approximately 1.8 times the income of women (UNDP 2018, 36–27).

Throughout Ghanaian households, community and political leadership are male dominated (Lambrecht 2016, 195). Male authority in household decision-making is often justified with the male being the main provider of economic income in the household but also with women being less intelligent or intellectual as perceived by men (Fuseini et al. 2019, 301–2). In many Ghanaian households, men prefer to maintain the status quo of being in control of household decisions and like women to ask permission from them before taking decisions. Otherwise, men fear to lose control and power over women and that women will control them (Fuseini et al. 2019, 303; Wrigley-Asante 2012, 359). According to tradition, women can neither be family heads, nor customary clan heads or chiefs. The highest official position for a woman is the ‘queen mother’ or ‘woman chief’ in the matrilineal Akan tradition political hierarchy. However, they have less power than male chiefs and key decisions for a clan or community are made by men (Lambrecht 2016, 195). Also, in the formal political system, women in Ghana do not enjoy equal representation and participation. The share of women in the national parliament of Ghana accounts for only 12.7% (UNDP 2018, 39–41). With this share, Ghana very much lags behind other leading African countries in terms of female representation in parliaments, such as Rwanda, South Africa or Mozambique (Dahlerup 2005, 145; Bauer and Darkwah 2020, 101). Also in local district assemblies, women’s participation and leadership is limited (Bawa and Sanyare 2013, 287). For example, in the Eastern Region, where this study was conducted, 22 districts currently have male chief executives meanwhile only 3 have female leaders. Nationwide there are 222 male and only 37 female district or municipal chief executives (Ghana Districts n.d.).

Due to socio-cultural gender norms and patriarchal structures, most women are socialized with the belief that their place is in the household and their role is to be a good wife and mother, a subordinate and not a leader and that men are superior to women and better

⁴ “Purchasing power parities (PPPs) are the rates of currency conversion that try to equalise the purchasing power of different currencies, by eliminating the differences in price levels between countries” (OECD n.d.), or described in other words “The rate at which the currency of one country would have to be converted into that of another country to buy the same amount of goods and services in each country” (Callen 2020).

endowed for participation and leadership in politics (Sossou 2011, 5; Acheampong and Dinye 2015, 200). Furthermore, women seem to dislike the corrupt and hard-handed nature of local politics (Bawa and Sanyare 2013, 288). There are many obstacles that keep women from participating in politics even if they are interested. Due to the socio-cultural background and a lack of adequate formal education and literacy, they lack self-esteem and self-confidence to raise their voice in public, especially in front of males. They face time-constraints due to gender norms that assign household chores, certain farming activities and the trading at markets to women. They lack financial resources, e.g. to run campaigns, but also leadership-oriented training programs and political education for women (Sossou 2011, 4–6; Baba et al. 2018; Osman and Abdulai 2018, 137; Acheampong and Dinye 2015, 200; Bawa and Sanyare 2013, 287; Gyimah 2008, 74; Baah-Enumh et al. 2005, 103–4; Tagoe and Abakah 2015, 371–77).

Even if women are active in politics, e.g. as a member of a political party, they would only be given lower positions and not be recruited into key decision-making roles (Abakah 2018, 1). The highest position given to a woman in a political party is often that of a women's organizer (Sossou 2011, 6). Women often report being relegated to the background and being insulted if they are outspoken or aspire to reach a higher position and run as candidates in district assembly elections (Sossou 2011, 5; Baba et al. 2018, 36; Abakah 2018, 10). Amongst other things, they report victimization through verbal insults, name calling, ill treatment, being ridiculed and suspected as flirts and prostitutes, and pressurized to leave the floor to their male opponents, by both, men and fellow women in their party and their families. On top of insults, women are penalized for not conforming to conventional norms about women's appearance and behaviors such as wearing of trousers as a woman (Abakah 2018, 10; Osman and Abdulai 2018, 137; Bawa and Sanyare 2013, 288; Tagoe and Abakah 2015, 377; Bauer and Darkwah 2020, 108). This issue in Ghana has been described as “the politics of insults” by participants in a study by Bauer and Darkwah (2019).

Women's participation in community projects is usually higher than in politics, because those activities are perceived to have a direct benefit on their immediate needs and well-being, compared to political participation. However, women in Ghana are found to be rather passive participants in the implementation of community projects and programs through providing labor or cooking food for workers and less actively participating in decision-making during planning and implementation of communal work and programs (Abakah 2018, 12)

To earn income independently is a crucial factor that can enhance Ghanaian women's influence in decision-making in the private and the public sphere. Upon being recognized as a contributor to household income and less dependent on the male, women can become more self-confident, exercise greater voice and increase bargaining power within their household (Fuseini et al. 2019, 302–4; Wrigley-Asante 2012, 358; Sen 1999, 191–92; The World Bank et al. 2009, 68). Women's access to paid work can also have positive effects on women's decision-making roles in their communities, as well as on women's political participation. Paid work that takes women out of the home and into the public domain, as well as off-farm employment have greater positive impacts than home- and farm-based self-employment or informal wage labor. Another major factor for change in the lives of women in Ghana is secondary education. Besides enabling better access to employment, it has direct positive effects on decision-making power and political participation (Kabeer 2011, 3–5). Beyond that, training for women to develop a range of skills, and raise women's awareness of their rights as women, as workers and as citizens, is critical to improve the livelihoods and empowerment of those women in Ghana who missed out on the opportunity of formal education (Kabeer 2011, 12).

2.3.2 Implications for women in agriculture and cocoa cultivation

82.5% of rural households in Ghana own or operate a farm with a female proportion of household members engaged in agriculture of 41.3% (Ghana Statistical Services 2014, 102). In Ghana's forest zone, where the case study was conducted, cocoa is one of the major cash crops cultivated by farming households (Ghana Statistical Services 2014, 105). Ghana is the second largest producer (21% of global production) of cocoa beans in the world. In 2019, the Ghanaian cocoa sector contributed 7.3 % to the agricultural Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the country and 1.4 % to the national GDP (Ghana Statistical Service 2020, 4–5).

Many crops in Ghana are culturally defined as 'men's crops' and 'women's crops'. Men are often viewed as being responsible for producing more profitable cash crops, such as cocoa, in order to be able to finance main household expenditures and because cropping activities related to cocoa are seen as physically more demanding, which is expected to be done by the male. Women are viewed responsible for producing subsistence crops for home consumption and therefore expected to prioritize working on the land for household purposes over working on the land for their private income (Doss 2002, 1987; Hill and Vigneri 2014, 325; The World Bank et al. 2009, 321; Lambrecht 2016, 194–95). However, many studies found that gendered patterns of cropping are not as clear cut as they

seem, and most crops cannot be classified as pure ‘men’s’ or ‘women’s crops’ (Doss 2002, 1999; Lambrecht et al. 2018, 703). Even though men are in fact more involved in cash crop production, women are involved in the production of all the major crops in Ghana and both men and women grow both types of crops, cash and subsistence crops (Doss 2002, 1993–99). Doss (2002, 1992) found that although cocoa is disproportionately grown by men, the term ‘men’s crop’ is misleading, because cocoa cultivation is also very important for many female farmers. This implies culturally constructed gender roles and gendered cropping patterns and speaks against the assumption that ‘women are not farmers’ or do not make an important contribution to household income from their agricultural activities. Several studies showed that such gendered cropping patterns and division of labour change over time (Lambrecht 2016; Lambrecht et al. 2018). For example, Lambrecht (2016, 196) found that women in the Volta Region of Ghana were recently encouraged to cultivate cash crops, whereas previously, this was not well regarded. This change was due to the fact that children attend school more frequently and for a longer period which increases the need for cash to pay school fees. In the same way, cocoa cultivation has become more gender balanced since women are better able to acquire land rights, to manage their own farm and retain control of income from sales (Hill and Vigneri 2014, 326; IFPRI 2002, 4; AGSF 2005, 27).

Presently, an estimated 25 percent of cocoa farm owners or operators in Ghana are women. However, due to unpaid family labor on cocoa farms of their husbands, the number of women working in the cocoa sector is often much higher. It is estimated that women account for almost half of the cocoa workforce in West Africa. In addition, they provide 85% of labor for other food crops, primarily for home consumption (Kiewisch 2015, 502) and spend a considerable amount of time and energy on other ‘female’ tasks (Lambrecht 2016, 195). A study by Quaye et al. (2016, 84) among selected communities in Ghana found that, while men spend more time on their farms, women multitasked and had to combine household chores, farm work and involvement in off-farm generating activities such as petty trading and the selling of cultivated crops on the market. This implies that the ‘typical’ Ghanaian female farmer is burdened with a ‘double day’. In most communities, the women complement the basic food crops from her husband with other ingredients such as spices and vegetables, which she cultivates herself or buys on the market. Depending on the ingredients and the budget received from the husband to prepare meals, some women use a considerable proportion of their private crops

and income to maintain adequate levels of household consumption (Lambrecht 2016, 194).

Despite their indispensable contributions to the agricultural sector in general, to the cocoa sector, and to the food security of their families, female farmers in Ghana face structural disadvantages in accessing output markets, assets and farming inputs such as land, labour, credit, technology and equipment, information, extension services and training (Lambrecht et al. 2018; Quaye et al. 2019; Doss and Morris 2001; Bymolt et al. 2018; Hill and Vigneri 2014; Vigneri and Holmes 2009; IFPRI 2002; IFPRI et al. 2010; Quaye et al. 2016). Malapit et al. (2014, 13) identified the lack of access to productive resources, including ownership, purchase, sale or transfer of assets, as the domain most contributing to disempowerment among female farmers in Ghana. In contrast, for male farmers, the ownership, purchase, sale, or transfer of productive resources were factors that least contributed to their disempowerment (Malapit et al. 2014, 13). In a 'typical' Ghanaian rural farm household, most or all of the farmland is under the husband's control. However, a woman can also inherit, acquire and hold land in her own right within her own matriliney, e.g. inherit from a woman maternal relative (aunt, mother), but also from her father (Lambrecht 2016, 192; The World Bank et al. 2009, 128). As mentioned above, this thesis does not focus on the issue of land. For a recent discussion on the topic of gendered access to land in Ghana refer to Lambrecht (2016).

A study by IFPRI et al. (2010, 252–57) on agricultural and rural services in Ghana showed that accessibility of extension services is generally low among all farmers, but with a substantive gender gap with only 2% of females in male-headed households being visited by an extension agent compared to 12% among males. Similar patterns were shown for group visits (10-15% male vs. 0-6% female) and community meetings (17-24% male vs. 0-6% female). Furthermore, men were more likely than women to belong to an FBO (IFPRI et al. 2010, 252–57). Hill and Vigneri (2014, 326) review the 2002-2004 Ghana Cocoa Farmers Survey (GCFS) and found that women produce less cocoa on systematically smaller farms, apply lower levels of fertilizers and use less agricultural equipment but with the same land productivity as male farmers.

Beyond a lack of access to productive resources, female farmers in Ghana are disproportionately deprived with low levels of control over the use of income and decision-making power regarding agricultural production, and a high workload (Quaye et al. 2016, 77–81; Malapit et al. 2014, 13). Despite the fact that Ghanaian female farmers seem to be

burdened with a 'double day', many of her additional tasks are not rewarded through either additional income or better access to and control over household resources. Instead, her many activities reduce the time to work on her farm or to engage in other income-generating activities which further lowers her opportunities for more decision-making power within the household. Mostly, it is only the revenues from the sale of crops from her own farm or private business that are under the sole control of the woman. If a woman sells crops from her husband's farm, often a bargaining process within the couple determines which share of the revenues she can keep (Lambrecht 2016, 195). Malapit et al. (2014, 13) identified the lack of control over the use of income as the second largest factor contributing to disempowerment among female farmers in Ghana. However, according to Lambrecht (2016, 195) the degree of decision-making power over household income is dependent on the understanding between husband and wife with regional differences within Ghana. For example, women in the northern regions have no or very limited control over household income meanwhile in other regions, such as the Volta region, women are perceived to be better managers of the household budget and therefore joint decision-making and control over the household income by husband and wife is not uncommon (Lambrecht 2016, 195). However, Quaye et al. (2016, 81) found that even if husband and wife took decisions jointly, at the end the final decision was still taken by the man. Men not only take up leadership positions in the household, but also in community decision-making (Quaye et al. 2016, 81). Also Malapit et al. (2014, 13) found that deprivation in community leadership, such as not being a member in a group and feeling uncomfortable speaking in public, was the domain that contributed third most to the disempowerment of female farmers in Ghana.

To increase women's participation in decision-making, cocoa cultivation, as a major cash crop, can especially benefit female small-holders through higher incomes and financial independence and therefore promote gender equity within the household and community (Hill and Vigneri 2014, 326; IFPRI 2002, 4; AGSF 2005, 27). For example, a study among small-scale farmers in Ghana assessed the impacts of the introduction of cash crops and found that this weakened the traditional gender division of intrahousehold rights and obligations (AGSF 2005). Furthermore, female farmers might especially benefit from high-value certified cocoa cultivation in combination with the participation in a cocoa farmer cooperative if they adopt a clear gender equality strategy, as in the case of the Kuapa Kokoo cooperative in Ghana. With 100.000 members, Kuapa Kokoo, which means 'good cocoa farming' in the local language Twi, is one of the biggest smallholder

farmer organizations in West Africa and the first, that became Fairtrade certified in 1995 (Kuapa Kokoo 2017). Together with the Divine chocolate company, they developed and implemented a gender equality strategy that set quotas for women's representation at all levels of the cooperative structure, strengthened equal access to training and resources, and made gender equality a part of the cooperative's constitution. The strategy resulted in increased gender equality and women empowerment within the cooperative (Doherty 2018, 151–52). Based on their research on gender and agricultural extension in Ghana, the World Bank (2010, 4) provides specific recommendations for the Ghanaian agricultural sector. To improve the situation of female farmers, organizations carrying out agricultural extension and training should not only increase the share of female extension agents, but also create incentives for agents to reach out to female farmers. Furthermore, extension and farmer organizations should identify and address the factors that prevent women from joining FBOs and from attending training sessions and meetings. In particular, they recommend to organize training at times and locations that make them more accessible for women and to promote the formation of FBOs made up only by women (The World Bank 2010, 4).

2.4 High-value chains, cooperatives and the question of gender

This section elaborates on the potential benefits from and limitations of female farmers' participation in high-value chains and farmer cooperatives for empowerment.

Certain driving forces such as the globalization of trade and following worldwide fragmentation of agri-food supply chains as well as the industrialization of agriculture have led to new sources of risk concerning food safety and rising social and environmental concerns among consumers. As a result, different public and private sustainability standards have emerged in the food sector in the last decades that take these risks into account and address changing consumer preferences and demands (Henson and Humphrey 2010, 1643–1635; Liu 2009b, 206–8; Raynolds 2009, 1083). Two of the most common examples are certified standards for organic agriculture and Fair Trade that aim to benefit producers through access to premium markets, added value, higher prices and incomes (Liu 2009b, 206–14; The World Bank et al. 2009, 176). The term high-value chains refers to the higher value and market price of products as a result of the strict compliance with food quality and safety standards, which has major implications for the benefits of small-scale farmers participating in high-value chains (Swinnen et al. 2013, 293–94).

Some voluntary sustainability standards, such as Fairtrade⁵ and UTZ Certified⁶ specifically include the aspect of gender equality in their guidelines and requirements for certification. For example, they either encourage or require producer organizations to carry out training sessions and workshops on gender issues and target women with specific support (Meemken and Qaim 2018, 40–41). In contrast, for example the public European Union (EU) organic standard does not put a key focus on gender equality in their production rules, but rather ecological aspects (European Commission 2007). This means that the underlying philosophy and values of organic agriculture and standards do not necessarily guarantee equal treatment of female and male farmers. However, this does not mean that it cannot have the potential to benefit female farmers and address gender issues (Sumner and Llewelyn 2011, 105–14).

The growth of high-value chains in large parts of the Global South in the past decades has major implications for women's employment (FAO 2011, 20; Swinnen et al. 2013, 293–94; Van der Meer 2006, 209). On the one hand it can benefit small-scale farmers, especially women, through opening up new possibilities of niche market specialization in organic farming and Fair Trade (The World Bank et al. 2009, 176). For example, high-value, export-oriented crops such as certified cocoa have created better-paying employment opportunities and rising rural income for women since wages are typically higher and working conditions better than in traditional agricultural employment (FAO 2011, 20; Swinnen et al. 2013, 301). Many high-value crops require labour-intensive production techniques, such as pruning and trellising, which cannot be mechanized and in which women often specialize, so they might find it relatively simple to meet some certification requirements, such as those for organic production (The World Bank et al. 2009, 176). While there is much literature documenting the economic, social and environmental impacts of food standards, less studies especially analyse these impacts with a gender lens (FAO 2011, 20; Smith 2013, 102; 2015, 409). Nevertheless, there are some empirical studies from all regions of the Global South that document the positive impact of food standards on gender equality and women empowerment. They found evidence that women's participation in high-value agriculture through certification with Fairtrade, organic or both has benefitted female farmers' in several ways: increased income, asset

⁵ The term 'Fairtrade' refers to the certification and labelling system regulated by Fairtrade International, a non-governmental organization, that is certified by FLOCERT. In contrast, the term 'Fair Trade' refers to the Fair Trade movement and principles as a whole.

⁶ UTZ is a certification program for sustainable farming of coffee, tea, cocoa and hazelnuts. The program is part of the Rainforest Alliance, an international non-profit organization. Its name refers to Utz Kapeh, meaning 'Good Coffee' in the Mayan language Quiché

ownership, access to agricultural extension and knowledge, control over agricultural production and income from sales, decision-making power, self-esteem, dignity and pride, improved status in their households and the community, improved representation and leadership in producer organizations and a more gender equal distribution of domestic work in their households (Chiputwa and Qaim 2016, 1253; Farnworth and Hutchings 2009, 27–28; Utting-chamorro 2005, 595; Le Mare 2012, 99; Lyon et al. 2010, 93; Meemken and Qaim 2018, 39; Setboonsarng and Gregorio 2017, 8; Verhart and Pyburn 2012, 75–76).

On the other hand, increasing standards raise challenges for small-scale farmers, especially women, to have access to those markets and participate in global trade because they can face difficulties to comply with standards. However, empirical results are not clear since some results found smallholders and women being included, while others found them to be excluded (Swinnen et al. 2013, 296–98; Van der Meer 2006, 209; The World Bank et al. 2009, 176; Smith 2013, 103–10; Lyon et al. 2010, 93; Altenbuchner et al. 2017, 28; Manchón and Macleod 2010, 375; Utting-chamorro 2005, 595). Major constraints for participation in high-value agricultural markets for small-scale farmers mainly relate to other major constraints faced by smallholders in general, and even more by women. These are a lack of access to information and knowledge, in this case about changing food standards, demands, prices and the use of technology, lack of access to productive resources such as land, as well as financial means and credit to invest in technology, low bargaining power and lack of institutional capacity. Especially, third-party verification or certification, where an independent organization controls compliance with standards, have high transaction costs and require large amounts of investment (Kariuki 2006, 45–47; La Cruz 2006, 70; Lyon 2003, 342; Swinnen et al. 2013, 297; Van der Meer 2006, 213–14; Manchón and Macleod 2010, 375). As a response, it is a major strategy to form networks in the form of farmers' organizations, cooperatives or FBOs, that link small-scale farmers with high-value chains and trade. Major obstacles are overcome by providing access to information and trainings on certification and food standards, reduction of large transaction costs through a formation of larger production units, more efficient joint certification⁷ and quality control at a larger scale, and capacity building among producers (Kariuki 2006, 48; Liu 2009a, 66; 2009b, 225; Swinnen et al. 2013, 299; The World Bank et al. 2009, 177). Farmer cooperatives, FBOs and other organizations

⁷ The term joint certification refers to the certification of a group of farmers via a cooperative

carrying out agricultural training and extension are therefore an important source of information and inputs for poor marginalized farmers and can support farmers in linking them with high value chains.

However, organized groups in agriculture are rarely formed exclusively for or by women. Therefore, important gender issues are related to prevailing gender norms that restrict the inclusion of women, their participation in decision-making and leadership in groups (The World Bank et al. 2009, 64; Smith 2013, 103). Country studies from Kenya, Nigeria, Zambia, Burkina Faso (Saito et al. 1994, 67), Ghana, India and Ethiopia (The World Bank et al. 2009, 254) showed that less women are members in such cooperatives or FBOs. As in the case of agricultural extension services in general, often men become members of farmer groups and represent their wives, because of patriarchal structures and because women are not seen as farmers in their own right. Having to meet requirements for certification and to attend in training sessions organized by farmer groups might increase women's workload adding to their already high burden of work (Smith 2013, 103–10). None of the three most common certification schemes adopted by farmer cooperatives, Fairtrade International, UTZ certified, and Organic (International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM)), address gender inequalities in domestic work or directly reduce women's unpaid labor. This is mostly because the issue is seen as one in the private space that goes beyond the scope of what a certification system can address (Sexsmith 2019, 32–33). Additionally, less education and language barriers among women inhibits them from participating in group activities and from taking up leadership positions. Sometimes, women become members of a farmer group, but do not actively participate (Smith 2013, 110). Altenbuchner et al. (2017, 28) study the impact of organic farming on women's empowerment in India, and found that organic farming per se does not empower female small-holders if social gender norms and patriarchal structures are not addressed and if the organic initiative works within traditional gender patterns. Women faced additional workload and were excluded from decisions and agricultural training on organic methods which reinforced pre-existing gender inequality. Lyon (2008, 266) studied a Fairtrade coffee cooperative in Guatemala and found that patriarchal organizational structures and the gender division of labour that burdens women with most household work made frequent participation and leadership in the cooperative very difficult for women. In a case study by Burchi and Vicari (2014, 359) about a farmer cooperative in Brazil women complained about unequal distribution of tasks in the household and participation in the cooperative at the expense of leisure time. Despite the

improvement of the status of many women in communities in Nicaragua, ‘machismo’⁸ still prevails in many communities and is restricting the participation of women in high-value chains such as Fair Trade certification (Utting-chamorro 2005, 595). In the same way, Fair Trade employment among women in Bangladesh improved gender relationships and the status of women in their families, but rarely led to increased involvement of women in the public sphere. Women were still excluded from communal decision-making (Le Mare 2012, 100)

Often farmer organizations and standard requirements lack a clear gender policy and implementation strategy (Smith 2013, 103). Therefore, the extent to which organizations and food standards focus on male or female farmers and challenge existing gender norms and inequalities is critical for female farmers to be able to benefit from high-value chains and farmer groups in terms of both, economic and social empowerment (The World Bank et al. 2009, 64; Doss 2001, 2082). If gender roles are neglected, activities by farmer groups can contribute to maintaining the status-quo or even reinforce pre-existing gender-based structures and inequalities. If gender roles are taken into account and farmer groups are committed to gender equality and design programs in a gender-sensitive manner, they are more likely to succeed in empowering women who depend on agricultural and rural livelihoods in the Global South (Quisumbing and Pandolfelli 2010, 589; Smith 2015, 417). Empirical studies from Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America have found evidence that benefits from participation in group organizations and value adding for women can go beyond improved access to assets and increased profits and income from farming. Additionally, women benefit from gains in decision-making power, control over agricultural activities, self-esteem, self-confidence, greater awareness and advocacy for their rights, financial independence, negotiating, marketing and leadership skills and overall transformed gender-power relations in their households and communities (Burchi and Vicari 2014, 359; Ferguson and Kepe 2011, 425–26; Manchón and Macleod 2010, 379–82; Nakazi et al. 2017, 14; Doherty 2018, 151–52). This empowerment impact from group activities might even be of more significance to women, than the direct economic benefits (The World Bank et al. 2009, 63–68). Amongst other things, this was achieved through gender balanced representation in the cooperative’s board and by addressing gender issues through training and capacity building. Through that, women became more aware of

⁸ ‘Machismo’ refers to the Spanish term for patriarchy and male superiority

their rights and also encouraged more women to join the cooperative (Manchón and Macleod 2010, 378–82; Burchi and Vicari 2014, 359; Doherty 2018, 151–52).

Some of the recommendations most often given by researchers to improve cooperative strategies toward achieving gender equality are to design a clear gender strategy, make women primary targets of their activities and design training in a gender-sensitive manner. Part of such a strategy should be to have strict women's quotas for equal representation and leadership and mandate equal decision-making roles at all levels of the cooperative (The World Bank 2010, 4; 2001, 241–42; Doherty 2018, 151–52; Sexsmith 2019, 39; Nakazi et al. 2017, 14; Mudege et al. 2016, 300; Farnworth and Hutchings 2009, 6; The World Bank et al. 2009, 70). Furthermore, an increase in the share of female extension agents while training the whole staff on gender issues and raising awareness on the role of rural women in agriculture, their specific needs and constraints, has to be another important aspect of such a gender strategy (The World Bank 2010, 4; Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) 1993, 63; The World Bank et al. 2009, 282; Mudege et al. 2016, 300; Gotschi et al. 2008, 655; Cahn and Liu 2008, 143; Percy 2000, 25–26; Saito et al. 1994, 75; Meinzen-Dick et al. 2011, 62; Due et al. 1997, 723; Moore et al. 2001, 98; Lahai et al. 1999). Additionally, cooperatives should adopt a participatory approach and communicate with women to identify constraints and challenges that make it difficult for them to participate and to find out from them how a women empowerment strategy could look like. For example, training and meetings organized by the cooperative should take place at times and locations that make them more accessible for women and childcare facilities should always be provided during trainings and meetings (The World Bank 2010, 4; Sexsmith 2019, 34–39; Quisumbing and Pandolfelli 2010, 586).

Apart from that, it has been recommended that the role of farmer organizations has to go beyond delivering technology and knowledge and linking farmers with high-value chains. Equally important for women is the delivery of non-technology services in the form of women and community empowerment programs. These include the linking with other organizations and initiatives to close female bias in access to other productive resources such as land or credit, capacity development for livelihood diversification, training on political participation and leadership, marketing and negotiating skills, and gender sensitization campaigns in communities to challenge social gender norms and patriarchal structures (Gladwin et al. 2001, 199–200; Gotschi et al. 2008, 655; Jafry and Sulaiman 2013, 483; Lahai et al. 1999; Lambrecht et al. 2016, 863; Meinzen-Dick et al. 2011, 62; Mudege et al. 2016, 300; Ragasa et al. 2013, 466; Sulaiman and Hall 2004; The World

Bank 2001, 241; The World Bank et al. 2009, 67–283; Nakazi et al. 2017, 14; Wrigley-Asante 2012, 359; Gyimah 2008, 75–76; Tagoe and Abakah 2015, 379; Osman and Abdulai 2018, 132; Utting-chamorro 2005, 597; Doherty 2018, 160). Through these strategies, they can facilitate a “larger structural change, in a context where cultural values can constrain women’s ability to make choices and where these structural inequalities cannot be addressed by individuals alone, but rather require collective solidarity” (Kabeer 1999, 457).



Chapter 3

Conceptual framework: The Sustainable Development Goals

In order to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger by 2015, amongst other development priorities, the United Nations and its member states adopted the Millennium Declaration in September 2000 and developed eight MDGs related to issues of poverty, education, gender equality, health and environmental sustainability. In January 2015 negotiations about the post-2015 development agenda resulted in the United Nation's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This agenda replaced the Millennium Declaration and expanded eight MDGs to seventeen SDGs as a set of universal goals and universal call for action by all countries in the Global South and North to end poverty, protect the environment and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030. The SDGs recognize that development must balance social, economic and environmental sustainability in order to improve life for future generations (United Nations, n.d.; UNDP 2020a; UNDP 2020b; UNDP 2020c) As the conceptual framework of the study, this chapter explains the relationship between gender equality, women empowerment and sustainable development and how gender was and is incorporated within the past and current development agenda. Further, I provide a critical overview of the successes and failures of the gender equality related goals MDG 3 and SDG 5.

3.1 Gender and sustainable development

Current patterns of growth go along with rising inequalities in wealth, income and capabilities worldwide, across and within nations. So do gender inequalities remain widespread across economic, social and environmental dimensions. The impacts of anthropogenic activities have caused a crisis of unsustainability not only environmentally, but also in social dimensions with severe risks for future generations (UN Women 2014, 22). The underlying causes and consequences of unsustainability and gender inequality are deeply intertwined. The fruits of economic growth have not been equally distributed and therefore increased disparities between countries and regions, but also between different genders (UN Women 2014, 22; Fukuda-Parr et al. 2013, 25). Economic growth not only relies on the exploitation of natural resources, but also on exploitation of human labour resources, amongst others those of women, who perform a large part of unpaid and often invisible care and domestic work and who are confined to low-paid jobs with poor working conditions and poor access to social protection based on gender-based discrimination and segregation (UN Women 2014, 23; Fukuda-Parr et al. 2013, 25). The disadvantaged positions of women also negatively affect the next generation not only because they lead

to poorer nutrition among children and higher child mortality (The World Bank 2001, 79–80), but also because gender roles and the division of labour within the household and thus gender disparities are reinforced and passed onto the next generation within the household (The World Bank 2001, 99).

To achieve sustainable development, women's knowledge, agency, capabilities and collective action are central. Therefore, gender equality and sustainable development depend on each other and can reinforce each other in powerful ways. The UN Women World Survey on the role of women in development defines sustainable development as “economic, social and environmental development that ensures human well-being and dignity, ecological integrity, gender equality and social justice, now and in the future” (UN Women 2014, 22–26). Beyond the moral and ethical obligation to treat all human beings, irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, religion etc., as equal, gender equality has positive multiplier effects for a number of key development goals. It strengthens countries abilities to grow, to reduce poverty, and to govern effectively which makes it an important aspect in any development strategy that seeks to enable all people, women and men equally, to escape poverty and improve their lives. Improving women's access to and control over productive resources, as well as women's agency and participation in decision-making is important for many aspects of human development, such as child health, food security, sustainable livelihoods, climate change adaptation, environmental conservation, as well as sustainable water, sanitation and energy services (UN Women 2014, 12–13; United Nations 2009, V). The following example shows how gender equality can contribute to the achievement of other important developmental goals. Closing the gender gap in agriculture could increase yields by 20–30 percent and raise total agricultural output in the Global South by 2.5–4 percent, which could in turn reduce the number of hungry people in the world by 12–17 percent (FAO 2011, 5).

Besides other international agreements, declarations and laws, the issue of gender equality has been included in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of the United Nations under goal 5 “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls” (United Nations 2017, 9–10). SDG 5 replaced MDG 3 “Promote gender equality and empower women” and builds on the progress it made and the gaps that remain towards achieving gender equality (UNDP 2020b). MDG 3 with only one target and three indicators mainly focused on eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education, wage employment, and national parliaments. SDG 5 works with 9 targets and 14 indicators covering general discrimination on the basis of sex, gender-based violence and

harmful practices, reproductive health, unpaid domestic work, access to and control over economic and natural resources and enabling technology, and opportunities for leadership in decision-making (See a comparison of MDG 3 and SDG 5 targets and indicators in Annex 1) (United Nations 2017, 9–10). Besides SDG 5, a number of other SDGs, such as “no poverty” (SDG 1), “good health and well-being” (SDG 3), “quality education” (SDG 4), “decent work and economic growth” (SDG 8) and “peace, justice and strong institutions” (SDG 16) to mention some, include targets with gender specific indicators (UN Women 2019; Sexsmith 2019).

The following three targets from SDG 5 form the conceptual framework of the study:

- 5.4 Recognize and value **unpaid care and domestic work** through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibilities within the household and the family as nationally appropriate
- 5.5 Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of **decision-making in political, economic and public life**
- 5.A Undertake reforms to give women **equal rights to economic resources**, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws (United Nations 2017, 9–10).

3.2 Critical Perspectives towards SDG 5

In this section, I elaborate on the criticism towards shortcomings of the MDGs, in particular MDG 3 and if and how these shortcomings have been taken up and addressed by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular SDG 5. I then continue with a summary of the feminist and postcolonial critique of the 2030 Agenda and SDG 5 and give a summary of the current state of progress towards gender equality provided by the gender snapshots of the SDG progress reports from the last two years.

The MDGs have been widely criticized in being too narrow and not adequately reflecting human rights standards agreed on in international declarations, which was largely a result of a top-down process of their development by a UN internal group of technocrats and limited consultation with other sources of knowledge and expertise (Kabeer 2015a, 385–89; Fukuda-Parr 2016, 45; Pheko 2012, 3; Esquivel and Sweetman 2016, 1; Razavi 2016, 26). Concerning gender equality and women’s empowerment, MDG 3 failed to adequately conceptualize the many dimensions and complexities of the challenges women

face and reduced them to one narrow target of achieving equality in primary and secondary education. Furthermore, the MDGs failed to recognize that all goals had gender dimensions and therefore, failed to integrate gender perspectives into all eight goals (Pheko 2012, 3; Kabeer 2005, 13; Fredman et al. 2016, 178–79; Gabizon 2016, 101; Fukuda-Parr 2016, 46; Sen and Mukherjee 2014, 188). The formulation of MDG 3 appeared to be premised on the assumption that achieving gender equality in education would lead to progress on gender equality in the economic and political spheres. However, this focus on education could not initiate real transformation towards more gender equality in other dimensions of women’s lives and left the inequitable position of women largely unchanged (Kabeer 2015a, 389; Sen and Mukherjee 2014, 197; Johnson 2005, 56–63; Kabeer 2005, 23–24; Fredman et al. 2016, 178). Despite the importance of education, to challenge patriarchal structures, change on many other fronts is needed. Some of the most pressing issues that represent key barriers to gender equality, such as women’s human rights and agency, gender-based violence, women’s unpaid labor, gender discrimination in land ownership and access to other productive resources were absent in the MDGs (Kabeer 2015a, 389; Sen and Mukherjee 2014, 197; Kabeer 2005, 23–24; Pheko 2012, 4; Olowu 2012, 106). Furthermore, the target was measured with enrolment and not completion rates, even though girls are more likely to drop out of schools than boys (Stuart and Woodroffe 2016, 71).

In addition, MDG 3 has been criticized in failing to give attention to differences among women and the intersection of gender inequality with other forms of inequalities based on class, race, caste and ethnicity. “A major limitation of the MDG agenda was its failure to acknowledge both vertical inequality and horizontal inequalities (beyond gender inequality) [...]. It is not simply one more horizontal inequality to be added to the others. Rather, it intersects with these other inequalities in ways that intensify the disadvantages associated with other forms of inequality” (Kabeer 2015b, 202). As a result, most progress has been made by those who were already relatively better-off, rather than by those who were most vulnerable and marginalised, leaving the marginalised further behind more fortunate groups. This was consistent across all MDG targets and indicators (Stuart and Woodroffe 2016, 71; Kabeer 2015b, 202). For example, Kabeer (2015b, 202; 2005, 24) argues that increasing the share of women in national parliaments drawn from a narrow elite did not necessarily promote the needs and interests of women from poor and marginalised groups (Kabeer 2015b, 202; 2005, 24). Expanding the share of women in non-agricultural employment did little to address the poor pay and exploitative conditions

that characterised the non-agricultural activities undertaken by poorer women from disadvantaged social groups (Kabeer 2015b, 202).

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with 17 SDGs and 169 targets addressed many of the shortcomings of the MDGs, incorporating a broader and more transformative agenda (Fukuda-Parr 2016, 43; Razavi 2016, 26). One difference is that the MDGs were rather a North-South aid agenda, meanwhile the SDGs are a global agenda for sustainable development setting targets for all countries in the Global North and South (Fukuda-Parr 2016, 44). Compared to the top-down process of the development of the MDGs, the process of defining the 2030 Agenda was more inclusive and participatory. Over a period of three years, consultations with civil society organizations, including women's rights advocates, academics, UN agencies and members states took place as a multi-stakeholder debate for the formation of the agenda (Kabeer 2015a, 389–90; Rosche 2016, 111; Razavi 2016, 26; Fukuda-Parr 2016, 47). In contrast to the narrow focus of the MDGs, the Agenda 2030 and the SDGs cover a broader range of issues related to human rights, inequality, marginalisation and poverty (Esquivel and Sweetman 2016, 1; Razavi 2016, 26). As demanded by the feminist agenda, gender equality and women's empowerment received a stand-alone goal alongside the integration of gender perspectives in all other goals, thereby acknowledging that achieving gender equality is a central precondition for the achievement of the whole agenda (Kabeer 2015a, 390; Rosche 2016, 121). SDG 5 is more expansive in terms of its targets compared to MDG 3 with a bigger focus on women's human rights addressing major gender gaps, including gender-based violence, women's unpaid care work, decision-making and leadership, as well as access to and control over economic resources (Stuart and Woodroffe 2016, 72; Rosche 2016, 119).

The failure of the MDGs to reach the most marginalised groups has been seen as one of the major challenge to be taken up by the 2030 Agenda (Stuart and Woodroffe 2016, 71). This has translated into the inclusion of the concept “leaving no one behind” into the agenda to reach out to the poorest and most marginalized that have been left behind and made less progress than those who were comparatively better-off during the MDG period. The concept implies that no target can be met if it is not met for any specific marginalized group, including women and girls. This also means to “leave no woman or girl behind” and reach out to the most marginalized women, especially those who face intersectional discriminations such as poor women living in a rural area or disabled women from an ethnic minority (Stuart and Woodroffe 2016, 69–74; UN Women 2019, 4).

Nevertheless, the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs have also received critique from the feminist and post-colonial feminist agenda. Amongst other things, the formulation of some targets and the absence of other important aspects within the targets has been criticized. Razavi (2016, 32) as well as Stuart and Woodroffe (2016, 72) criticize that SDG 5, as its predecessor MDG 3, fails to fully address structural constraints and gendered power relations. For example, the intra-household sphere of decision-making where bargaining over issues such as allocation of resources, division of labour and women's right to engage in political and communal life takes place, is missing in the SDGs. Another aspect that is missing under SDG 5 is women's leadership in civil society and collective organizing despite its importance for women's voice and influence in bringing about gender responsive policy changes (Razavi 2016, 32). Razavi (2016, 32) and Musindarwezo (2018, 29) argue that the formulation of the target on unpaid care and domestic work leaves it open to governments to take action on this target or not, and to provide the much needed infrastructure and public services to support unpaid care work. Razavi (2016, 32) further criticizes a certain 'elitism' in measures of women's political participation that is limited rather to high-level leadership despite little support for the assumption that power at the top trickles down to less privileged women on the ground. Furthermore, measuring the number of women in parliament does not adequately reflect the effectiveness of women's participation and their ability to influence politics and decision-making in their favour (Musindarwezo 2018, 31; Gysman 2018, 55).

Furthermore, the 2030 Agenda fails to challenge current patterns of capitalist and neoliberal growth that threaten human rights and produce and reproduce gender inequalities. Growth centred development prioritizes profitability and side-lines social and ecological justice and sustainability. By exploiting female labour resources, such a growth model does not provide an enabling environment for gender equality and the realization of women's rights. However, the 2030 Agenda is rather embedded within the current profit-and growth-driven economic model, instead of questioning it (Esquivel 2016, 11–12; Esquivel and Sweetman 2016, 6; Musindarwezo 2018, 29; Razavi 2016, 27; Bidegain Ponte and Rodríguez Enríquez 2016, 91; Koehler 2016, 65–55). Furthermore, powerful global actors, such as "big" countries, international financing institutions, transnational corporations and international well-funded NGOs, mainly based in the Global North, strongly influenced the development agenda and were hardly challenged in their positions of power (Esquivel and Sweetman 2016, 6; Esquivel 2016, 12; Struckmann 2018, 21). Instead, despite the intensive consultative process, consultation with Southern grassroots

organizations and communities about their needs, priorities and local knowledge was insufficient. Southern women's grassroots organizations faced major challenges to participate in the consultation process due to a lack of funding that made it impossible to travel to the United States. In addition, communication predominantly took place in English, which hindered participation from non-English speaking countries in the South. As a result, the needs and priorities of marginalised women on the grassroots level in the Global South are underrepresented in the SDGs. Northern voices of women represent the voices of the women in the Global South at the global level speaking on their behalf, thereby neglecting and excluding the experiences and needs of women of color and poor women that differ from those of white, middle-class women in the Global North (Struckmann 2018, 17–21; Tallis and Mathonsi 2018, 8–9).

Other major points of criticism are a lack of policy implications, voluntary monitoring and reporting on progress on the SDGs and limited additional resources that risk a weak implementation of actions to achieve the SDGs. The 2030 Agenda does not include clear policy recommendations and means of implementation and the nature of the national voluntary reporting system allows governments to choose whether to report on progress and which part of the agenda to prioritize (Rosche 2016, 123; Razavi 2016, 27; Koehler 2016, 57–59; Musindarwezo 2018, 31). According to Fukuda-Parr (2016, 50), Razavi (2016, 39), Rosche (2016, 122), Stuart and Woodroffe (2016, 78–79) selectivity in the prioritization of certain goals, dilution, simplification and national adaptation combined with a lack of additional funding will result in a lack of implementation of those targets of SDG 5 that are most transformative but also most difficult to implement. In the absence of enforcement and monitoring mechanisms, the burden will fall on civil society organizations and women's rights advocates to pressurize and demand accountability from governments (Fukuda-Parr 2016, 51; Razavi 2016, 39). This is also reflected in current progress reports on the SDGs. "While some indicators of gender equality are showing progress, [...] insufficient progress on structural issues at the root of gender inequality are undermining the ability to achieve SDG 5" (UN Women 2019, 10). Financial gaps limit the implementation of laws and policies on gender equality and persisting gender gaps are visible in all other SDGs with gender-specific indicators (United Nations 2019, 20–33). In addition, the current COVID-19 pandemic could even reverse many of the hard-won gains for women globally. Especially the most marginalized groups of society, who face intersecting deprivations, such as poor women and girls, are disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 crisis (UN Women 2020; United Nations 2020, 10).

Chapter 4 Theoretical framework

One of the most relevant contributions to the measurement of multidimensional poverty and inequality was made by Amartya Sen when he introduced the capability approach. He argues that the more ways in which a person is considered poor are considered, the more dimensions of disadvantages can be found. Therefore, he argues that “the need for a multidimensional view of poverty and deprivation not only guides the search for an adequate indicator of human poverty, it also clarifies why an income-based poverty measure cannot serve the same purpose” (Sen 1999, 5). Instead, human poverty and inequality measurement must be a multidimensional procedure in order to get an adequate broad view of deprivation (Sen 1999, 5). This chapter provides an overview of the basic concepts of the capability approach and how these concepts can be contextualized with the concepts of gender equality and women empowerment.

4.1 The capability approach – an introduction

Sen (1999, 3) defines development as “the process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy” or as interpreted by Alkire (2007, 347) as “the freedoms that people value and have reasons to value”. Compared to narrower understandings of well-being and development such as personal income, economic growth, industrialization or social modernization, Sen understands these measures only as *means* to expand the freedoms, but argues that freedoms depend on other determinants, such as social and economic arrangements (e.g. facilities for education and health care), as well as political and civil rights (Sen 1999, 3; Robeyns 2003, 64). The basic concepts included in the capability approach are *functionings* and *capabilities*. *Functionings* are things a person may value doing or being, which can vary from very basic ones (being adequately nourished; being sheltered, being healthy) to more complex ones (being able to take part in the life of the community). *Capabilities* are people’s potential functionings that are realizable for him or her to achieve and therefore reflect a kind of *freedom* with the real opportunity to achieve what we value. This means that the combination of a person’s *functionings* reflect her *actual achievements* or outcomes and a set of *capabilities* represents the opportunities, the *freedom* to achieve alternative functioning combinations (Sen 1992, 31; 1999, 75; Robeyns 2003, 63).

Moreover, inequalities in the actual achievements of a person can shed light on the inequalities in the respective freedoms or capabilities of that person (Sen 1992, 5). In literature, having equal opportunities is often restricted to the meaning of equal availability of

some particular means such as income or other productive resources (Sen 1992, 7). However, equalizing access to resources does not necessarily equalize the capabilities enjoyed by a person (Sen 1992, 33). The ability to convert resources into capabilities varies largely between people due to personal factors, social norms and traditions (Sen 1992, 38; Robeyns 2003, 63). In contrast to that, according to Sen (1999, 7), ‘real’ equality of opportunities must be considered as equality of capabilities, which is to be achieved through the elimination of inequalities in capabilities. “If we are interested in the freedom of choice, then we have to look at the choices that the person does in fact have, and we must not assume that the same results would be obtained by looking at the resources that he or she commands” (Sen 1992, 38). “If freedom is what development advances, then there is a major argument for concentrating on that overarching objective, rather than on some particular means” (Sen 1999, 3).

Based on his thoughts, poverty must be seen as the deprivation of basic capabilities rather than merely low income, or more generally low holding of primary goods or resources (Sen 1992, 110; 1999, 87). Therefore, in poverty and inequality measurement and analysis the approach strengthens the understanding of the nature and causes of poverty and deprivation by shifting primary attention away from *means* (specifically income, which is usually given exclusive attention to by welfare economists) to *functionings* that people have reason to pursue and to the capabilities that enable them to achieve these functionings (Sen 1999, 90; Robeyns 2003, 63–64). Sen sees income-based poverty or inequality measures as inadequate as they only concentrate on the deprivation in *one* variable, in particular income:

“A person with an above-poverty-line personal income may still be deprived in the sense of being illiterate, [...] or being without crucial services (such as safe water or health care) which are often provided by public provisioning (going well beyond what is purchased by personal incomes)” (Example from Sen (1999, 5)).

In the same way Sen (1999, 5) argues that human poverty and inequality cannot be measured by another exclusive indicator, since the lives of human beings can be deprived in several ways:

“Someone can, for example, enjoy good health and live quite long, and yet suffer from being illiterate and remain cut off from learning as well as communication and interactions with others that rely on literacy. Another person

may be literate and quite well educated, but in a fact be particularly prone to premature mortality because of the epidemiological characteristics of the region or country. If illiteracy were our only criterion, the first person would be seen as deprived, but not the second [...and vice versa]. But both are, in important ways, quite deprived, and it would be a mistake to concentrate only on one of the two types of information and ignore the other” (Example from Sen (1999, 5)).

Sen does not deny that resources can have an important contribution to a person’s well-being and that inequalities in resources can be causes of inequalities in capabilities (Robeyns 2003, 64). But a person’s well-being and consequently, inequalities in the well-being between different people cannot be evaluated *only* by looking at the resources (e.g. income) that he or she is able to access. These are concerned with the instruments of achieving well-being and can be seen as the means to freedom, but not as the freedom to achieve or the achievements itself. Furthermore, a person’s well-being cannot be reduced to just one dimension (Sen 1992, 42–56).

Furthermore, to concentrate only on people’s well-being neglects the importance of freedoms to achieve functionings other than one’s own well-being. While the capability of a person reflects his or her freedom to pursue certain achievements, he or she has reason to value, these can be goals other than one’s own well-being. The freedom to achieve can also be someone’s agency, his or her ability to take decisions and have choices, which in turn can play a direct role in someone’s well-being (Sen 1992, 42–56). A person’s agency achievement refers to the realization of the totality of her goals and values she has reason to pursue, whether or not they are connected with her own well-being. Therefore, Sen (1992, 56) argues that there has to be a clear distinction between the well-being achievement and the agency achievement of a person and therefore also between his or her agency freedom and well-being freedom. “The former is one’s freedom to bring about the achievements one values and which one attempts to produce, while the latter is one’s freedom to achieve those things that are constitutive of one’s well-being” (Sen 1992, 57). While Sen (1992, 57) argues that the two aspects are distinguishable and separate, he also emphasizes their interdependence. For example, it could be one of the agent’s important goals to pursuit well-being. At this stage, it also has to be noted that the expansion in agency freedom brings about an expansion of choices to be made which can be both an opportunity – the choices *can* be made by oneself – and a burden – the choices *have to be*

made by oneself. While some types of choosing can be valuable parts of living, others have no great value because they impose losses of time and energy (Sen 1992, 63).

4.2 Gender, agency and capabilities

Inequalities ultimately relate to the nature of human diversity and thus, often can emerge in one space meanwhile they decrease in another. Therefore, it makes sense, when analysing inequality, to look at groups of specific classifications based on dissimilarities in physical and mental abilities and disabilities, age, gender, and the social and economic bases of well-being and freedom (Sen 1992, 117). One basis of classification that is particularly relevant in the context of inequalities in capability deprivations is gender because of the systematic disparities in the capabilities or freedoms that men and women enjoy in society due to unequal social and political circumstances (Sen 1992, 122; Nussbaum 2000, 220). Gender-based inequalities in capability deprivations cannot solely be determined by looking at the means to freedom, such as income or other resources because women may have special disadvantages in converting means into particular functionings. Therefore, the extent to which women are deprived may be underjudged if we concentrate only on availability of means (Sen 1992, 112). To identify factors influencing the specific capability deprivation among women, it has to be contextualized in economic and social circumstances that encourage or resist change in the attitude of societies toward women's empowerment, which are to a large extent shaped and influenced by socio-cultural gender norms (Sen 1999, 202). Contextualizing this within the gender gap in agriculture, providing access to productive resources does not necessarily translate into the use and benefit from these resources among women, as I have elaborated on in the literature review. For women to be able to actively make use and benefit from resources, social gender norms have to be addressed, since they have a crucial impact on the deprivation of, what Sen (1999, 189) calls women's agency. Sen (1985, 206) defines agency as "what a person is free to do and achieve in pursuit of whatever goals or values he or she regards as important". He argues that an agent is someone who acts and brings about change and that acting freely and being able to choose are directly connected to well-being (Sen 1999, 19; 1992, 51). Therefore, he argues for an urgent need to include women's agency into the agenda, particularly because of the crucial role women's agency can play in removing capability inequities that oppress women's well-being (Sen 1999, 189–91). Agency can for example take the form of decision-making, bargaining, negotiation, but also resistance. Kabeer (1999, 438) describes agency as one dimension of power and in a positive sense it refers to "people's capacity to define their own life-choices and to pursue

their own goals, even in the face of opposition from others” (Kabeer 1999, 438). But agency can also be exercised in a negative way if an actor has the capacity to override the agency of others. The concept of agency can be applied to the capability approach in the sense that agency is necessary for agents to define the freedoms they value and wish to achieve (capabilities) and to have the freedom to act upon these capabilities and turn them into functionings (their actual achievements and outcomes of well-being) by the use of resources (means) (See Figure 1) (Kabeer 1999, 438).

Closely linked to the concept of agency, the ability to define ones goals and act upon them, is the concept of empowerment, the ability to make choices, as a second dimension of power (Kabeer 1999, 437). If the ability of a person to achieve one’s goals is constrained by the availability of choices, it can be taken as disempowerment (Kabeer 1999, 438). To be disempowered implies to be denied choices, wherefore, empowerment is about change and refers to “the expansion in people’s ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them” (Kabeer 1999, 436–37). In contrast, someone who already might have exercised a great deal of choice for his or her whole life might be powerful, but not empowered, because he or she was never disempowered in the first place (Kabeer 1999, 437). The ability to exercise choice can be described as three interrelated dimensions: resources (means), agency (process) and achievements (outcomes/functionings). Access to resources is rather a measure of potential than actual choices available to women. How changes in women’s resources will translate into changes in the choices they are able to make and if they benefit from making use of these choices largely depends on the degree of the potential agency or entitlement embodied in that resource (Kabeer 1999, 443–52). Furthermore, the freedoms that someone may value doing or being may vary between and within different societies, regions and cultures. Consequently, differences in functioning achievements do not necessarily proof disempowerment but can also be traced back to differences in valuing freedoms. Therefore, when studying empowerment, it is important to distinguish between differences in functioning achievements due to differences in preferences and differences due to a denial of choice (Kabeer 1999, 439). People’s empowerment or disempowerment can be seen as relative to each other. In the context of gender relations, disempowerment women occurs when a group’s shared norms, beliefs, traditions and practices give men the right to exercise power and authority over women and privileged access to and control over means to exercise power (Mason 2005, 90; United Nations 2009, 6). Therefore, the concept of empowerment is closely linked to that of gender equality. When men and

women are given equal opportunities, access to resources and equal capabilities and if women acquire the agency to act upon these capabilities and take advantage of opportunities and are actually able to make choices, women empowerment can occur (Meinzen-Dick et al. 2011, 10; Mason 2005, 90).

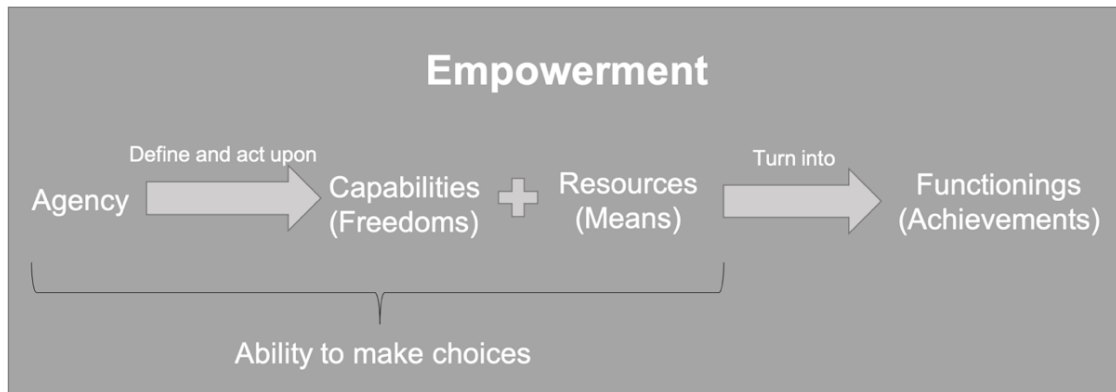


Figure 1: Embedding agency and empowerment within the capability approach (*adapted from Kabeer (1999)*)

4.3 Summary of the theoretical framework

To summarize, the capability approach stresses the importance of considering multiple dimensions of inequality, focusing on the deprivation in capabilities (freedoms) instead of resources. Furthermore, the approach stresses the consideration of agency, the ability of people to define the freedoms they value and wish to achieve (capabilities) and to have the freedom to act upon these capabilities and turn them into functionings by the use of resources. Embedding the concepts of agency and capabilities in the context of gender equality, also includes the concept of empowerment, which can be understood as gaining the ability to make choices which were previously denied to someone. Due to societal gender norms and patriarchal structures, women face structural inequalities in capability deprivations compared to men. Therefore, in order for women to become empowered, these capability inequalities, as well as inequalities in the access to resources have to be removed and women's agency has to be improved. When women acquire equal capabilities, agency and access to resources than men, they will acquire the ability to make choices that have previously been denied to them and to act upon their interests to improve their well-being and overcome gender inequalities in functionings.

Chapter 5 Methodology

In this chapter I provide an overview of the research approach and design and the rationale for choosing a qualitative approach, a description of the research setting, study participants and sampling, data collection instruments and data analysis, as well as how trustworthiness of the findings has been ensured. Furthermore, in the section on data collection instruments, I present the selected relevant capabilities for this study and how they have been operationalized and explored.

5.1 Research approach and design

5.1.1 Primary data collection and secondary analysis study design

A secondary analysis study uses primary data collected for prior purposes to develop new social scientific understandings. Generally, researchers refer to the ‘original’ study for which the data has been collected to distinguish between the previous work and that to be performed in the secondary analysis study. By returning to their own data, researchers can undertake secondary analysis to address new questions which were not a focus of the original study (Gladstone et al. 2007, 433; Irwin 2013, 295–96). Primary data was collected by the researcher in the context of the field research of another study (Kaschek 2019), which is referred to as the original or previous study. During field research, quantitative as well as qualitative primary data was collected. However, the previous study only made use of the quantitative primary data that was collected. Therefore, the qualitative data formed the base for a qualitative secondary analysis (QSA) for this thesis.

At this stage it is important to clarify that this chapter refers exclusively to the qualitative methodology that is backing this study, which is clearly distinct from the quantitative methodology that was used for data collection and analysis in Kaschek (2019). Nevertheless, both types of data have been collected – one after each other – in the context of one field research period from which Kaschek (2019) as the previous study and this study as a secondary analysis study emerged.

The purpose of the previous study by Kaschek (2019) was to assess the impact of the participation in an organic certification program through a farmer cooperative on poverty reduction and investment decisions among small-scale cocoa farmers in the Eastern Region of Ghana. Thereby, multiple dimensions of poverty were identified based on different conceptual and theoretical approaches, including Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1: ‘End poverty in all its forms everywhere’ and the capability approach. Furthermore, the study strived to identify reasons and determinants that affect farmers’ decision

to join the cooperative. Subsequently, the study also dealt with the constraints that farmers are facing who were not participating in any cooperative program.

Data was collected in the Yayra Glover cooperative in the Suhum District in the Eastern Region of Ghana between May and August 2019. This data collection was subject to ethical clearance of the Institute of Development Research and Development Policy (IEE) of the Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany (RUB) (Annex 7). Focusing on the same cooperative, this QSA study concentrates exclusively on female small-scale farmers and on SDG 5. As a continuation of the previous study, the qualitative secondary analysis study design allows to address the question of gender in the same context, which has not been a focus in the previous study. Therefore, the two studies address two different key developmental issues, poverty reduction (SDG 1) and gender equality (SDG 5) linked by the same case study.

5.1.2 Qualitative research approach and case study design

A qualitative research approach with a case study design was adopted as the methodological approach for this study. The rationale for using a qualitative approach was to be able to explore the phenomenon of gender inequality from a local grassroots perspective among a specific group of women, namely small-scale cocoa farmers, about which the researcher has limited knowledge, and not to produce representative or generalisable results (Neuman 2014; Robson and McCartan 2016). Women's experiences differed largely from one to another which increased the need of a small-scale qualitative study that seeks to explore the phenomenon from women's own experiences and perspectives on the ground. This type of study needs openness and flexibility in the field and during interviews. In the same way, strategies used by local cooperatives were unknown to the researcher, which had to be explored using qualitative in-depth interviews.

A case study design of the research includes an exploratory case study of female small-scale farmers of the Yayra Glover cooperative in the Eastern Region of Ghana. "A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context [...] [and] relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion" (Yin 2009, 18). The research strategy is to focus on a case to include the study of an individual person, a group, a specific setting or an organization, in this case individual women in a specific farmer's organization, and to take their context into account (Robson and McCartan 2016, 149).

5.2 Research setting

Research for the case study in Ghana was conducted among twelve women from the Yayra Glover cooperative that is based in the Suhum District, in the Eastern Region of Ghana. Target group of the cooperative are exclusively small-scale organic certified cocoa farmers with landholdings smaller than 10 hectares. Yayra Glover is not just a farmer cooperative, but also functions as a so-called Licensed Buying Company (LBC). Ghana's cocoa sector did undergo reforms as a response to historic market volatilities that included partial liberalization and elements of privatization of the sector. Prior to 1992, all operations along the domestic cocoa supply chain were under full control of the Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD). Since the partial liberalization COCOBOD still plays a crucial role in the determination of the cocoa price in Ghana, as the only authorized cocoa exporter as well as importer and supplier of inputs and provider of extension for cocoa farmers. However, because of the establishment of LBCs, the state-owned Producer Buying Company (PBC) was no longer the single purchaser of cocoa. LBCs were now licensed to purchase cocoa beans from farmers alongside PBC. The initial number of six LBCs has increased to over twenty-five until today (Kolavalli and Vigneri 2011, 202–4; Tiffen et al., n.d., 13; Vigneri and Santos 2008, 7–10). Consequently, cocoa farmers in Ghana have the option to sell their cocoa to about twenty-five LBCs - depending on which specific LBC operates in their region or community. LBCs in turn sell the cocoa to COCOBOD, from where it gets sold and exported to national and international markets (Berlan 2008, 176). Yayra Glover is the only LBC that focuses on organic cocoa farming and also provides organic inputs as well as extension and trainings on organic farming to their farmers. They operate in nine rural communities in the Suhum District, in total working together with 1290 farmers by the time of conducting the research. Out of the 1290 farmers they are working with, 216 were women. Besides cocoa, most farmers also produce food crops for own consumption and local markets such as banana, plantain, yam, cocoyam or cassava. The nine communities lie within a distance to Suhum between 30 and 60 minutes by car. Living conditions in all the communities were very similar and rather poor. Most communities had electricity supply, but no community was connected to a water supply and sewage system. Water was either collected from a communal borehole or from a stream.

5.3 Study participants and sampling

For the selection and sampling of participants, I used a non-probability purposive sampling strategy to create a homogenous sample of women. This was appropriate since the

study seeks to explore the phenomenon of gender inequality on the ground, using in-depth interviews with a small number of women. To answer the research questions, a purposive sampling strategy is required that defines particular characteristics of the target group and excludes women who do not meet these criteria. Using such a strategy means that the researcher is not able to know how many participants will meet the criteria and if criteria for the target group have to be further adapted once in the field, since the researcher has limited knowledge about the larger group of population from which the sample is taken. The sample needs to be flexible, e.g. through varying criteria, sample size and adding or supplementing samples, which is a feature of a qualitative approach (Neuman 2014; Ritchie et al. 2003). The rationale for the choice of a homogeneous sample was to gain a detailed picture of a particular issue from the perspectives of a specific group of women with similar socio-economic characteristics (Ritchie et al. 2003, 78–79) to identify if and how their experiences resemble and differ. The population from which the sample was drawn were female small-scale farmers working with a farmer cooperative carrying out agricultural extension services in relation to high-value market standards in a rural area in Ghana.

Yayra Glover was identified as the most suitable cooperative for the case study in the context of the previous study (Kaschek 2019) since it is the only LBC which at the same time is a cocoa cooperative, focusing on high-value cocoa organic production that also delivers inputs and extension services. Within the cooperative, individual selection criteria were applied to identify respondents, which were as follows. Women should live in a female and male headed household and both household heads should be small-scale cocoa farmers working with the same farmer cooperative. Other socio-economic characteristics such as ethnicity, religion or educational level were flexible. These selection criteria specifically excluded single female headed households. The reason for this was that single female headed households would represent a different sample group which could be explored within a separate study. The context in which these women are living, their experiences and challenges they are facing are different from the group of women that the study intends to target. The study intends to look at intra-household inequalities, rather than exploring challenges of single female headed households. In the same way, households with one male and multiple wives were excluded. This specific context would have opened up completely different discussions and research questions dealing with culture and polygamy, which would go beyond the scope of this study. In total, twelve women from four villages aged between 40 and 64 years were selected and interviewed for this

study. All women lived together with their husbands and between one and eight children and/or grandchildren. The selection process took place together with field officers who identified women in the cooperative who met the selection criteria (An anonymous list of the interview partners is provided in Annex 5).

In addition, three key informants were identified and interviewed during two key informant interviews. One key informant interview was conducted with a local expert, one of the leaders of the cooperative, who was knowledgeable about the local conditions and the strategies of the cooperative related to the empowerment of female farmers. Two more key informants from the Citizens Empowerment and Community Action program (CECA) from the Institute for Democratic Governance (IDEG) were interviewed together as experts on the study topic on a broader scope. The CECA program is working in the area of capacity building, mobilization and empowerment of citizens, in particular women, in cocoa growing communities all over Ghana to enhance their knowledge on local government structures for them to be able to effectively engage in and influence political decision-making and demand accountability to strengthen development in their communities. One project manager of the whole program and a project officer mainly responsible for the women empowerment part of the program were interviewed about the challenges among women in their program and about the strategies they use to address these. The purpose to include these experts into the study was to get a broader picture of the challenges of female cocoa farmers related to gender-based inequalities in Ghana for data triangulation and to be able to explore strategies of the CECA program that could be given to the Yayra Glover cooperative as recommendations to improve their strategies.

5.4 Data collection instruments

5.4.1 Operationalization of concepts

An important aspect of the capability approach is that it is rather a “framework of thought, a normative tool” (Robeyns 2003, 64) and not a complete theory that determines how to measure inequality and which capabilities are to be taken into account. Instead applying the capability approach implies that the researcher has to choose the relevant capabilities within a certain context (Robeyns 2003, 64). This section unpacks and operationalizes the concepts of agency and empowerment in the context of gender for this study against the background of the literature review, conceptual and theoretical framework. This includes the presentation of relevant capabilities chosen for this study and how they have been operationalized and explored.

Many of the commonly used indices or measurement tools for gender-based inequalities such as the GII, GDI or SDGs use quantitative indicators, such as maternal mortality rate, life expectancy, labour force participation rate, years of schooling, per capita income, share of seats in parliaments and time spent on unpaid domestic and care work. They largely focus on the measurement of equality in access to means, opportunities and achievements rather than capabilities (UNDP 2018, 5–19; United Nations 2017, 9–10). But to capture all aspects of gender equality, women’s agency capability and empowerment aspect also have to be included, and quantitative *and* qualitative indicators are needed (Musindarwezo 2018, 31; Gysman 2018, 55–57).

Generally, agency has most often been operationalized with decision-making, meaning asking women about their roles in relation to specific decisions, e.g., concerning food and major household purchases, family planning and children’s education or health, women’s work outside the home, labour and sales in agricultural production, major investments such as house repairs etc. (Kabeer 1999, 446; Ibrahim and Alkire 2007, 50). In the selection of relevant indicators to measure agency, researchers have to pay attention to the significance of a certain decision for women’s lives. Within households and communities, a certain hierarchy of decision-making responsibilities can be found according to pre-existing gender division of responsibilities and roles. Therefore, playing a role in decisions that would have assigned to them according to gender roles anyway but are of less significance, provide no information about empowerment compared to decisions which relate to strategic life choices and choices that have previously been denied to them (Kabeer 1999, 447). This can also be incorporated when asking about resources as a measure of empowerment. Beyond measuring access to resources, a potential choice, the aspect of agency can be included to measure how resources translate into the realization of actual choices. This is most frequently done by including the aspect of ‘control’ over resources, meaning to ask women not only if they have access to a resource but also if they have a say in decisions related to that specific resource or ownership rights (Kabeer 1999, 443–45).

Important contributions to the measurement of agency and empowerment, in particular among women in agriculture, have been made by Ibrahim and Alkire (2007) with a proposed set of internationally comparable indicators to measure agency and empowerment and the WEAI developed by Alkire et al. (2013). I based the development of the interview guide on these two sets of quantitative indicators by Ibrahim and Alkire (2007) and Alkire et al. (2013). Therefore, the challenge for this study was to transform quantitative

measurement tools into a qualitative research approach with a set of open questions for a semi-structured interview for an in-depth understanding of women's agency and empowerment.

Ibrahim and Alkire's (2007, 19) set of proposed indicators focus on empowerment as expansion of agency. They propose indicators for four possible levels of agency whose increase could lead to empowerment:

- Empowerment as '*control*' which refers to control over personal decisions and seeks to assess to what extent the agency of individuals and social groups is constrained by local power relations and patriarchal social hierarchies. It is operationalized by asking about control over personal decision-making that affect everyday activities in one's life (Ibrahim and Alkire 2007, 19–20; Narayan et al. 2007, 377).
- Empowerment as '*choice*' A which refers to household decision-making with respect to different aspects of life which are an important indicator for power relations, particularly as reflected through the division of gender roles within households. It is operationalized using questions regarding who in the household normally takes decisions with respect to different aspects of life (existence of choice) and if someone could influence these decisions if he or she wanted to (actual use of choice) (Ibrahim and Alkire 2007, 20–23; Alsop et al. 2006, 336).
- Empowerment as '*choice*' B which refers to domain-specific autonomy in decision-making that goes beyond the household. It is operationalized by asking to which extent a person feels their action in each domain is motivated by a fear of punishment or hope for reward, by a desire to avoid blame or gain praise and by consonance with the respondent's interests and values (Ibrahim and Alkire 2007, 24–27).
- Empowerment as '*change*' which refers to the ability to induce change in one's life on the individual level. It is operationalized by asking if a person would want to change something in his life and what, as well as the person's ability to contribute to the desired change, thus examining the domains in which the person desires to be an agent and his/her actual ability to be an agent (Ibrahim and Alkire 2007, 28–29).
- Empowerment '*in community*' which refers to changing aspects of one's life on the communal level measured with an indicator asking for a person's ability to change things in his/her community if he/she wanted to (Ibrahim and Alkire 2007, 29–30; Alsop et al. 2006, 313).

The WEAI defines five domains of empowerment, specifically for women in agriculture:

1. Agricultural Production: This dimension concerns decisions about agricultural production and refers to sole or joint decision-making about food and cash crop farming, livestock and fisheries, and autonomy in agricultural production and reflects a woman's ability to make choices in key areas of agricultural production. It is operationalized by asking women about their actual input in decision-making concerning different aspects of farming such as which inputs to buy, which crops to grow, when to take and who takes crops to the market and the extent to which she feels able to take own decisions.

2. Access to and control of productive resources: This dimension concerns ownership of, access to, and decision-making power about productive resources such as land, livestock, agricultural equipment and credit. Operationalized by asking whether the woman can potentially make decisions over assets and whether, in fact, she decides how to use it.

3. Control over the use of income: This dimension measures the actual input into decisions about the use of income generated from both farm and non-farm activities as well as the individual's perception of his or her ability to take own decisions regarding income and expenditures, reflecting whether a person is able to benefit from her or his efforts.

4. Leadership in the community: This dimension concerns leadership in the community, here operationalized by asking whether a woman is a member of an economic or social group and whether she feels comfortable speaking in public.

5. Time Allocation: This dimension concerns the allocation of time to productive and domestic tasks and satisfaction with the time available for leisure activities by asking to recall the time spent on different activities within the previous 24 hours (Alkire et al. 2013, 7–11).

Based on the literature review, the conceptual framework and the discussion of theoretical concepts the following key domains were identified as the most relevant to explore gender-based inequalities in agency and empowerment among women for this study:

A) Unpaid domestic and care work and time-conflicts (Time autonomy)

B) Participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life with the following three sub-domains:

B1) Intra-household decision-making (Control over productive resources, use of income and other major household decisions)

B2) Participation and decision-making in communal and political spheres

B3) Control over decision-making on participation in training sessions (Economic sphere)

The following table illustrates how these key domains are embedded within the capability approach and how they have been operationalized for the purpose of this study.

Table 1: Operationalization of concepts embedded in the capability approach

Domain	Capabilities/ Freedoms	Functionings/ Achievements	Operationalization
Time-autonomy	Enjoy being able to exercise autonomy in allocating one's time between different activities	Allocating ones time to different activities according to personal preferences and needs	Asking women to describe how their daily life looks like and what activities they perform around the day
Agency and empowerment in the economic sphere	Enjoy working in the labor market outside the household equal to men	Carry out economic activities outside the household	Asking women to describe the income-generating activities they perform.
Gender equality in access to and control over productive resources and income	Enjoy access to and control over productive resources and income equal to men	Making use of and benefit from productive resources and income	Asking women about how they take decision regarding their farm and if they feel able to take decisions alone and why (not). Asking women about how they organize money and expenses as a household.
Agency and empowerment in the private sphere	Enjoy personal agency and decision-making power equal to men within the household	Engaging in decision-making and having an equal say than men in the household	Asking women about the major decisions taken in their households in their daily life, how decisions are taken and if they feel able to take decisions alone and why (not).
Agency and social empowerment in the communal sphere	Enjoy personal agency and decision-making power equal to men in communities	Engaging in decision-making, having an equal say than men and equal access to leadership positions in the communal sphere	Asking women to what extent they feel able to change something in their community if they wanted to and in which ways, they are active in community groups and projects.
Agency and social empowerment in the political sphere	Enjoy personal agency and decision-making power equal to men in politics	Engaging in decision-making, having an equal say than men and equal access to leadership positions in the political sphere	Asking women about their ability to actively participate in political decision-making, how they are active and what constraints to participation they face.
Gender equality in access to and benefiting from agricultural extension services	Enjoy access to and benefit from agricultural extension services equal to men	Participation in and benefiting from extension services	Asking women if they are able to participate in the training sessions provided by the cooperative and about the constraints they face that reduce their ability to participate.

5.4.2 Semi-structured interviews

For the data collection, I used semi-structured in-depth interviews with an interview guide because it was the most suitable data collection method for both, interviews with women and key informants, in serving the study's purpose. All interviews with women were conducted in the local language Twi, recorded, transcribed verbatim in Twi and translated into English by research assistants. The translator during interviews was a female Ghanaian who used to work in the administration of the cooperative in the past and was therefore familiar with the context and the language of the participants and could create a comfortable environment during interviews. The transcriber was a male Ghanaian field supervisor who had a lot of practical experience in conducting and supervising research projects, including the collection of data in the field as well as the transcription of interviews for research purposes. The translator was a female Ghanaian studying in Germany, speaking Twi as her mother tongue and with a high proficiency in English. By the time of translating, she was also a master student with a focus on gender on her research.

Interviews lasted between fifty minutes and one and a half hours. Open-ended questions allowed to go into more depth, to assess what the respondent really believed and to produce unexpected findings (Robson and McCartan 2016, 289). The interview guide for interviews with women was used as a checklist of topics to be covered including a default wording and order for the questions which reflected the chosen key domains (Robson and McCartan 2016, 285). Flexibility had to be assured so the interviewee could share experiences, which were not always aspects that were covered by the interview guide, because the researcher could not foresee them, but still be highly relevant for the study. Experiences with the study topic differed from woman to woman. Thus, not every interview followed the same structure and was modified based on the flow of the interview and additional probing questions (Robson and McCartan 2016, 285), which allowed that the interview was shaped by the interviewed woman and gave the respondent more freedom to decide on what to share with the interviewer or not. Knowledge or thoughts were created at some stage. Participants could specifically give recommendations or suggestions on how the cooperative could further support women or propose solutions to problems raised during the interview. Furthermore, talking about social and cultural gender norms and experiences with gender inequality can be a sensitive topic, which participants may not want to talk about in a group setting, which is why one-on-one interviews were more suitable. The interview guide with women can be found in Annex 2.

One objective of the study was to identify strategies that local organizations follow in order to bridge the gender gap in agriculture as well as to provide recommendations to the Yayra Glover cooperative to improve existing strategies. For this purpose, semi-structured interviews with an interview guide with key informants were the most appropriate method because strategies used by local cooperatives were not known to the researcher whereby the researcher could not predetermine in which direction the interview will go. Interviews with key informants were conducted and transcribed in English by the researcher and lasted two hours and two hours and ten minutes. Both interview guides for key informants can be found in Annex 3 and 4.

5.5 Data analysis

Data was analysed digitally with Atlas.ti using the thematic coding analysis approach (TCA) following the five steps proposed by Robson and McCartan (2016, 469–77): (1) Familiarization with data, (2) Generating initial codes, (3) Identifying themes, (4) Constructing thematic networks and making comparisons and (5) Integration and interpretation. Between data collection and analysis, interviews were transcribed verbatim and translated into English. Since the researcher was not familiar with the local language, the process of transcribing and translating interviews was done by someone else. The familiarization phase included reading and re-reading the data, while noting down memos about initial ideas for formal coding and initial thoughts about themes, to really get familiar with the data that has been collected (Robson and McCartan 2016, 470–71). In the second phase, data extracts were given codes “in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, with similar extracts being given the same code” (Robson and McCartan 2016, 469). Gibbs (2007, 38) describes coding as “how you define what the data you are analyzing are about. It involves identifying and recording one or more passages of text [...] that, in some sense, exemplify the same theoretical or descriptive idea. Usually several passages are identified, and they are then linked with a name for that idea – the code”. I used a mix of a concept- and data-driven coding approach. In concept-driven coding, categories or concepts the codes represented could be derived from the literature review, previous studies, key domains in the interview schedule, or by reading through some of the transcripts or field notes. This approach was appropriate because, if a research project is framed in a clear theoretical and conceptual framework, as in this case the capability approach and the sustainable development goals, it is likely that some ideas and potential codes can be predefined. Pre-defined codes were related to the key domains identified and represented challenges that were often found among female farmers in the Global

South related to gender-based inequalities in previous studies and literature and that the researcher captured as frequently mentioned during interviews. Below is a list of the pre-defined codes:

- Women do domestic and care work
- Various activities
- Time-constraints
- Joint decision making
- Insults and verbal abuse in politics
- Women miss out training on market days
- Woman does not attend training because husband attends
- Alternative Livelihoods

However, the approach was not exclusive, and it was necessary to be flexible for an adaptation and expansion of the list of codes during the analysis as new ideas were derived from the text. Additional new codes were created through the more inductive data-driven coding, where the codes and themes emerge purely from the interaction with the data without preconceptions (Gibbs 2007, 44–46; Robson and McCartan 2016, 486).

In the first phase of data analysis, interviews were read and re-read several times until the first order coding process was completed making sure that nothing was missed out. After the first-order coding phase, 357 initial codes were created. During the second-order coding, codes were grouped together. In total, during this phase 21 code groups emerged (See Annex 6: Code Tree). Coding was followed by the third phase, grouping the different codes into a smaller number of themes, putting together all the relevant coded data extracts, by combining some of them to a theme and forming sub-themes. Once all possible themes and sub-themes were defined, they were refined and reworked by considering if they form a coherent pattern, or if, for example, some data extracts did not fit in a theme and had to be placed in another. Thereafter, themes were again evaluated by re-reading the entire data set to confirm that the themes adequately reflect the data and if any codes or data extracts were missed out earlier. From the codes and the research questions, four main themes with several sub-themes each emerged. In phase four, themes were put together in one or more networks to develop a thematic map of the analysis. During this stage figures 2 to 4 developed (See Chapter 6). Finally, using these thematic networks, data was interpreted in phase five, by noting patterns, plausibility, making comparisons and noting relations between variables, to understand what the data, codes and themes actually mean (Robson and McCartan 2016, 469–76).

5.6 Trustworthiness

In order to ensure credibility and transferability of the study, it was important to provide as much detail as possible about selection criteria, research setting and participants (Creswell and Miller 2000, 129). The researcher spent a period of four months in the cooperative to develop familiarity with the research context and area, and to gain as much detailed information about the research site and participants as possible. A rich description of the setting and participants' context of the case study, as well as selection criteria for participants and a clear rationale for why these criteria have been applied were provided for the reader. To ensure trustworthiness of the study during data collection, data triangulation was used as defined by Miller (2000, 126–27) and Robson and McCartan (2016, 171). I used this strategy in my study through the use of different sources of information, personal experiences of women, and information from three key informants (Creswell and Miller 2000, 128–29; Robson and McCartan 2016, 172).

Audit trails were used to ensure that the whole research and data analysis process and the derived codes, themes and interpretations were rigorous and to reduce researcher bias in the findings. Throughout the research the researcher kept detailed and accurate records of all research activities through interview transcripts, field notes, data collection chronology, and a detailed data analysis procedure description, which were reviewed by the supervisor and co-supervisor of the research project. Throughout all phases and between phases of the analysis process, progress was regularly reported to and discussed with the supervisor and co-supervisor of the research project. Critical and detailed feedback from supervisors was therefore considered to revise codes, themes and interpretations. Together with the supervisor and co-supervisor of the research project a consensus around findings was achieved. In addition, feedback from a writing coach from the Institute for Social Development (ISD) at the University of the Western Cape (UWC), who is familiar with the phenomenon being researched, was considered by the researcher, especially with regards to the findings and interpretations. Furthermore, interpretations that were not clear due to language issues have been double checked with the transcriber who went back to the initial Twi transcript to confirm the translation, meaning and interpretation of a statement. Where necessary, interpretations have been corrected.

5.7 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is concerned with the consideration of the researcher's background, that affects the choice of the topic, the lens from which it is being looked at, the choice of methods and relevant findings, as well as the data collection and analysis. Therefore, it was

necessary to reflect on the researcher's background and in which way it affected the research and its findings in order to ensure trustworthiness and objectivity of the study (Malterud 2001, 483–84). The researcher is a young white female student who grew up in a middle-class working household in Germany. She holds a bachelor's degree in Geography and a master's degree in development management. Her studies, the time spent in Nicaragua during her undergraduate studies and an internship in a women empowerment project in Nairobi, Kenya strengthened her interests in development issues particularly related to agriculture, gender inequalities and the struggle of farmers and women in the Global South. The researcher grew up in a country of the Global North, where the image of women might differ from the one in a rural Ghanaian context, and where the researcher was able to enjoy more privileges than the study participants. Therefore, it was very important to reflect on the researcher's background, concerning the lens through which the research topic was approached and how it influenced the relationship between researcher and study participants, data collection, findings and analysis. Furthermore, it was important to reflect on colonial and post-colonial aspects of gender inequalities in Ghanaian society and 'western' ideologies and influences when working with SDGs, as has been done in Chapter 3.2 and partly in the discussion in Chapter 6.1. Since the researcher was not familiar with the local language, a translator assisted during the interviews with women. This person was female in order to ensure a comfortable interview environment for participants and to avoid bias due to gender-sensitive communication barriers. Because the translator was never able to translate everything that had been said word by word, it affected my data collection, as well as data analysis and findings. Interviews were transcribed in Twi before being translated from Twi into English. Both steps were carried out by two different persons. This helped to reduce bias through leaving less space for interpretations, while keeping consistency in each stage.

5.8 Summary of the methodological approach

To summarize, a qualitative research approach with a case study design was adopted using semi-structured interviews with an interview guide as the main data collection instrument. Data was collected in the Yayra Glover cooperative in the Suhum District in the Eastern Region of Ghana during May and August 2019. Twelve women were selected and interviewed adopting a non-probability purposive sampling strategy to generate a homogenous sample. Furthermore, three experts have been interviewed during two expert interviews. Selected women all lived in a female and male headed household in which both household heads were small-scale cocoa farmers working with the same farmer

cooperative. Other socio-economic characteristics such as age, religion or educational level varied. All interviews with women were conducted in the local language Twi, recorded, transcribed verbatim in Twi and translated into English by research assistants. Interviews lasted between 50 minutes and 1.5 hours. Interviews with key informants were conducted and transcribed in English by the researcher and lasted two hours and two hours and ten minutes. Data was analysed digitally with Atlas.ti using the thematic coding analysis approach (TCA) following five steps: (1) Familiarization with data, (2) Generating initial codes, (3) Identifying themes, (4) Constructing thematic networks and making comparisons and (5) Integration and interpretation. A mix of a concept- and data-driven coding approach was adopted, using a list of pre-defined codes related to the key domains identified, as well as codes that emerged from the data set. After the first-order coding phase, 357 initial codes were created that were grouped together into 21 code groups during the second-order coding. In total, four main themes with several sub-themes emerged from the data. To ensure credibility and transferability of the findings, data triangulation, a rich description, audit trails and reflexivity were used.



Chapter 6

Findings and Discussion

This chapter analyzes and discusses the empirical results of the QSA study as guided by the research questions and the four main themes with several sub-themes that were developed from the coding process:

Main theme 1: The internalization of gender roles and patriarchal structures

Main theme 2: Women's participation in decision-making

Main theme 3: Strategies of local organizations

Main theme 4: Recommendations to develop a clear gender strategy

6.1 The internalization of gender roles and patriarchal structures

The findings of the study reveal that the main challenges for women to become active agents in all the spheres studied (household, economic, communal and political), are related to the internalization of gender specific roles and patriarchal structures embedded in the local culture. Gender roles result in a clear gender division of labor and responsibilities as well as unequal power relations, women's subordination and male superiority, in the household and the public sphere. This has various consequences for women. Women stem household chores and perform multiple agricultural and non-agricultural activities at once, which puts a heavy work burden on them and results in various time-conflicts. However, women's crucial contributions to the household were not recognized, not even by women themselves due to the internalization of gender roles and patriarchy. Women were not seen as farmers in their own right with a priority on their farming activities and the organic training, but rather expected to prioritize 'female' tasks such as household chores and going to the market to trade and buy food for the home. Furthermore, they were often not seen as capable to be their own farm managers. Other challenges that could be identified were a lack of alternative livelihoods and financial constraints, challenges related to their physical strength, and a lack of basic education, political education and knowledge about women's rights. The main consequence of these challenges was the dependency of women on the male, not only in terms of social security, but also in terms of information and knowledge and physical strength which reinforces patriarchal structures and unequal power relations between men and women. Furthermore, the internalization of women's subordinate status and unequal power relations in decision-making combined with a lack of knowledge about women's rights largely disempowers women in terms of their self-confidence and self-esteem.

This section is structured according to the different sub-themes. However, no sub-theme is isolated but instead all sub-themes are interrelated, wherefore aspects from one sub-theme will inevitably come up in another. The following figure provides a visual of how various challenges are intrinsically embedded in the internalization of gender roles and patriarchal structures. Other challenges such as a lack of education and a lack of alternative livelihoods have been treated as separate but can be seen as a result of gender roles and patriarchy, wherefore the circles overlap. Only challenges related to physical strength are pure ‘biological’ challenges and not socially constructed, wherefore it does not overlap with the big circle on internalization of gender roles and patriarchy. The challenges in the three outside circles are linked by the creation of dependencies on the male which is visualized by the overlapping with the dependency circle. The dependency circle is in turn overlapping with the big circle because dependency on the male in terms of education, strength and social security is reinforcing patriarchy and its internalization.

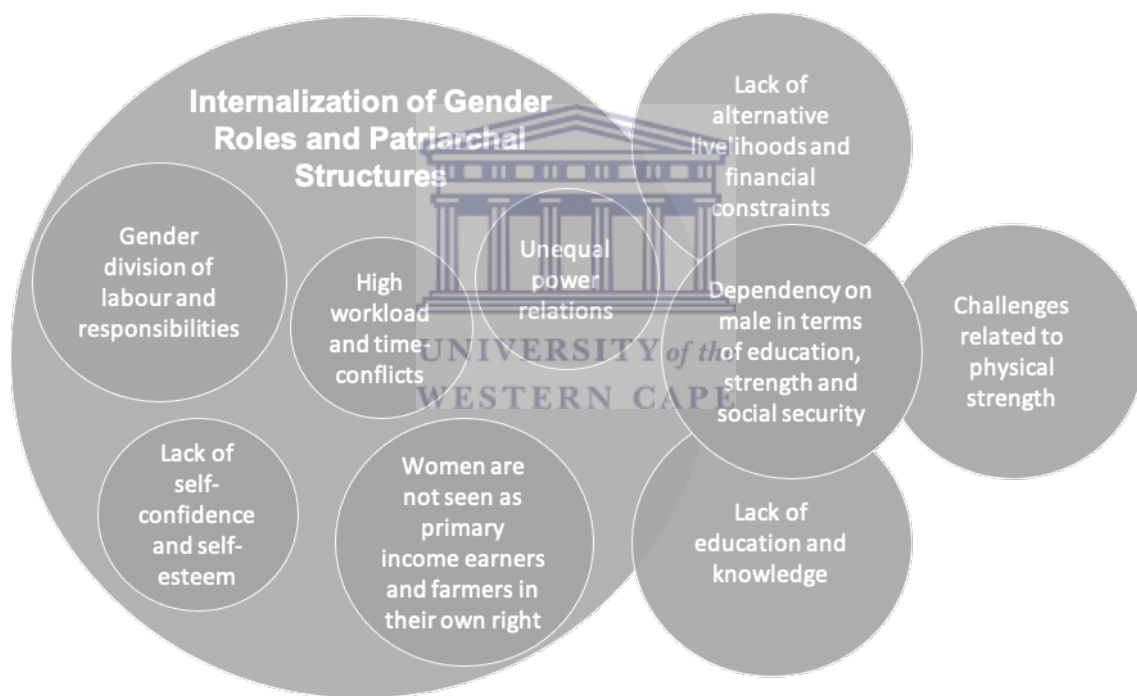


Figure 2: Visual of the main theme ‘Internalization of gender roles and patriarchal structures’

6.1.1 Gender roles, gender division of labor and responsibilities

From all the interviews, it became visible that cultural gender norms assign all types of domestic work such as cleaning, cooking, fetching water, doing laundry, buy food for the house, and taking care of children to women, which is common in societies around the world (The World Bank 2001, 109; United Nations 2009, 5). Women often used expressions like “*since I am a woman*” (Respondent 4; Respondent 10) to justify that it was their responsibility to take care of such duties. In contrast, domestic tasks were also denied

being male responsibilities indicated by expressions like *“the man must not sweep”* (Respondent 8) or *“my husband can’t do that”* (Respondent 9). Mostly it was the older children that assisted their mothers with domestic tasks. Husbands only helped out a little, if they were around and had time, and if the children were not available to help their mothers. Unlike women who are obliged to spend a lot of their time on domestic tasks according to gender roles, men enjoy a high degree of choice with regards to assisting in the household. The only task where men took part more frequently was with taking care of children, such as preparing them for school, assisting with schoolwork, and supervising pre-school children. One woman reported that this was due to the fact that among children women are less respected than men, *“sometimes children don’t fear their mothers like they do their fathers”* (Respondent 9), which implies that gender roles are already passed on to the next generation through socialization in the family. Furthermore, interviews revealed that women internalized the depreciation of the domestic work they do, describing them with expressions like *“those small chores”* (Respondent 11; Respondent 12).

“He is the man, he heads the house, and I am a woman, I give the support that I have to assist” (Respondent 4). This quote by a woman exemplifies the culturally embedded patriarchal structure that characterize their households, which has been found by several other researchers among Ghanaian households (Lambrecht 2016, 192–94; Fuseini et al. 2019, 298–302; Lambrecht et al. 2018, 693). The men are defined as the household heads, the main income earners and decision-makers, and the women as a subordinate who are expected to follow and assist her husband with small expenses. Cultural norms deny women’s capabilities to make their own decisions (Fuseini et al. 2019, 301–2) and to take care of things on their own.

“In spite of all the interventions for them [the women] to be empowered, most of them ha[ve been] told “lay back”, always waiting for the man to respond to issues because it’s a cultural thing” (Key informant 3).

Most women indicated that it was their husband’s responsibility to give them housekeeping money, so they could buy food for the home. *“I live with my husband, so if there are things that have to be bought, he has to give me to go and buy”* (Respondent 10). *“My husband, he gives the money and I go to the market”* (Respondent 11). One woman stated that her husband gives out money *“when need be”* because *“it is the father [the man] who knows the problems of the house”* (Respondent 10). Mostly, women reported that they *“add a little”* (Respondent 5) to the housekeeping money from their husbands, when they have made some sales at the market. *“My husband gives me money. When I also go to sell*

at the market and make some money, I also buy things for the house” (Respondent 7). Some women also reported that it was their husband’s responsibility to take care of any issues related to the children (school fees and medical bills) or the house. “It is the man, when the children are sick or something else, who takes care of it” (Respondent 11). Women also assisted with money for such expenses, as has also been found by Lambrecht (2016, 194).

“As for that [house repairs], the man does that. If he is at it, I support him with money. [...] If he hires a mason to do the job and he says “I don’t have money, assist me with some” and if I have some, I assist him” (Respondent 4).

Besides the household chores, women were also responsible to go to the market regularly to sell produce such as plantain, banana, cassava, cocoyam, mango or orange from her own and her husband’s farm, which is another ‘typical’ female responsibility in Ghana as reported by Lambrecht (2016, 195). Additionally, women would sometimes buy produce from others and sell it at the market. This also included fish and palm oil that women extract from palm nuts. Most women go to the market at least twice a week. Depending on the location where they visit the markets, market days would differ. Most women sell at the market in Suhum, which is mostly the closest market to their village, where market days are on Mondays and Thursdays. In addition to the market in Suhum, some women sell their produce at markets in other places which are farer away, for example in Accra, where they spend the night and return two days later. Alternatively, some women do not go to the market to sell produce at all, but instead traders would come to their farms or their homes to buy the harvested produce from them. Besides such food crops, cocoa cultivation was a main economic activity for women, where they focus on during cocoa season. One woman also had a hairdressing business that she attended to frequently. Therefore, women had different agricultural, processing and few non-agricultural streams of income.

6.1.2 Women are not seen as primary income earners

If and how the income of women and men was pooled or kept separate, and who had the control of which income, largely varied from household to household and never seemed to be clearly defined. Women used the income from selling crops from both farms at the market to buy food for the house. *“As for that [income from banana sales], we cut it together, it isn’t much, that’s why. [...] that is what we eat from [buy food for the home]” (Respondent 9). One statement by the same woman indicates that the understanding of*

‘my own income/profit’ that is in the sole control of women is not always separated from ‘income used for household expenses’.

“When I go to the market and sell my things, what I get, I take my profit from it, that one I don’t share with anyone. So, I use it to buy things I need; onions, pepper, and tomatoes, [...] salted tilapia, meat” (Respondent 9).

Even though the woman saw the income from market sales as *her* profit from which she buys things *she* needs, whatever she buys is benefitting the whole household, not only herself. This shows how women themselves underestimate their important contributions to household income and reproduction. It is rather seen as a natural responsibility and as a matter of course that women spend a substantial amount of their profit to buy food for the household. This coincides with the results by Lambrecht (2016, 194) who found that women in Ghana are expected to use a substantial amount of their private income to ensure household food security.

Cocoa proceeds, including the premium, which seemed to be the major source of income for both women and men, have sometimes been kept separate and were mostly used for purposes such as paying school fees, buying farm implements and paying laborers to weed the cocoa farm. Sometimes women managed the sales of their cocoa themselves and the selling of cocoa was done individually. *“He sells his, and I sell mine, too”* (Respondent 1). Other times, cocoa was sold together, the money was received by the husband who then gave the respective share to his wife. *“For the cocoa, he has his and I have mine. [...] Afterwards we sell it together and he gives me my money and also takes his money”* (Respondent 9). In any case, women controlled the cocoa income from their farms themselves.

“Everyone keeps their money. If the man wants to save his money in the bank or if I want to save my money in the bank or do something with it, everyone uses their own money” (Respondent 4).

Therefore, also farming related costs have been paid separately with the money from the cocoa proceeds. *“If the work is done on my portion, I pay [the laborers]. If it is done on his portion, he pays. We pay with the money we make from the [cocoa] work”* (Respondent 7). *“Everyone buys his/her farm implements because everyone has his/her own farm”* (Respondent 4).

Sometimes, income from cocoa was pooled within the household. *“We put the money together, then save some, then take some for housekeeping and if the children are in need of something they come”* (Respondent 2). One reason stated by women why the money was pooled, was to be able to cater for the children’s schooling. *“We put it [the income]*

together because of the children” (Respondent 7). “If you say that it is from your farm and spend it, how will you take care of children?” (Respondent 2). If cocoa income was pooled, also farming related expenses, such as hired laborers, for both farms were paid together.

“As for the money [cocoa income], the two of us, we don’t share it [don’t keep it separate]. When the money comes, [...] he gives it to me to keep for such and such purposes. [...] When we have hired laborers to work on the cocoa farm for us, [...] when it comes to paying them, we save together, so when they finish, I say for instance “my husband, the laborers are done and they say they’ll take this much”. For instance, the payment is three million [300 Cedis], [...] we will take some and pay them” (Respondent 11).

Also, other farming related costs such as those for equipment were then paid together. “We buy those from the money we make from selling the cocoa. So, we could all agree that we need a pan, or we need a basket or a cutlass” (Respondent 3). However, in most cases, it was not clear who was responsible for keeping and controlling this common budget, because women mostly talked about her and her husband as a couple, for instance “our monies are together” (Respondent 2) or “we combine it” (Respondent 12) or used passive expressions such as “money is kept” (Respondent 3). Differences between Ghanaian households in managing common or separate budgets have also been documented by other studies. Lambrecht (2016, 195) found that the share of income from market sales that a woman can keep to herself, and the degree of decision-making power over household income largely depends on an individual understanding between husband and wife and can vary between regions. However, this case study shows that it does not only vary between regions, but even on a much smaller scale, between households in the same village. Who has access to which and how much income could not be fully grasped in the frame of this study. Therefore, it could be subject to further research focusing on women’s access to and control over household income considering different degrees of income pooling within households. Only one woman clearly stated that she managed the overall household income.

“The money is together, and it has been given to me to keep, “woman, take the money and keep”. He has given me the money to keep, if we have to buy something we decide together. [...] All of us know where the money is kept. [...] So, even when I have travelled, he is able to go for it and call and say “[...] I’ll go and take some and pay them”. If it is 100 Cedis or 200 Cedis, he, too, informs me” (Respondent 11).

Nevertheless, this also implies a kind of patriarchal hierarchy, because income first seems to be given to the man in the house and then given to the wife, which was also reported by one other woman (Respondent 9). Furthermore, even if it was reported that money

was pooled and saved together, it seemed that each still kept at least something in their own pockets. *“If we both do not have money saved up and he has, at that moment, we can use his money. If I also go to the market and make some money, I can use it when the need arises”* (Respondent 7). In one case, only the man kept a share of his money separate from the common savings.

“If I have sold some farm produce or made a client’s hair, that money is kept. So, if we need the money for something at home, then we use that money to buy. [...] Other times, when there is no money saved up, he gives it to me himself” (Respondent 3).

This implies that even though all income from the woman, from sales of crops and her hairdressing business went into a common budget, her husband still kept something from his income to himself.

Irrespective of whether income from cocoa was pooled or kept separate, money for common expenses of the household such as school fees and hospital bills was not only disbursed by men.

“He makes money and I also make money, so we draw a budget. If we have targeted to do something with the money, we go ahead and do it. [...] If we have gone to sell and we have some money saved up, we discuss it together, then we use that money. [...] So, we both work it out together to take care of the home. [...] If I have money, I pay. If the father has money, he also pays. [...] We both can pay. We both see to it [hospital bills and children’s schooling], that it’s catered for” (Respondent 7).

Other women also reported that they contributed to larger investments of the household, such as in a plot and a new building for the family.

“Currently, we are also building. We have bought a plot of land at [village name]. So, when we make money from the cocoa, we both contribute a little to the building of the house. After building, then we start to save for the future” (Respondent 6).

At first sight, it looks like women only contribute little to household income and expenses and are financially dependent on their husbands because men are seen as responsible to provide housekeeping money to the woman. Having a deeper look at the data, those financial dependencies appear to be socially constructed and maintained through an internalization of gender roles. Women themselves shared the traditional image of gender division of labor, in which they are responsible for domestic work and men are the only breadwinners. *“Concerning that [house chores], I do it [...], then my husband supports with housekeeping money”* (Respondent 5). Such clear societal gender roles in Ghana have also been reported by Fuseini (2019, 300) where they have been described by

participants as “typical African” culture. However, in fact, women perform various economic activities outside their homes and expenses are jointly managed by both, husband and wife. It seems as if women contribute in the same way to covering expenses, even if they indicated that their role was only to “assist” their husbands with money and that they only “add a little” to the male income. It is rather women’s perception than reality that they only contribute little to household income and expenses. In contrast to the ‘typical’ understanding of gender roles among women, that men are the main breadwinners, one woman provided a very much different view which points to women’s important role in contributing to household income through their various economic activities and challenges the socially constructed stereotypical image.

“It is not like I want to disgrace my husband. Ultimately it is I. I am the one who goes ‘up and down’. [...] We women are the ones who bear the problems – we take care of the children when they are sick. [...] We the women are the ‘go-getters’. We like hard work. You see that when some of the men make money, they spend it at the bar and at hotels. [...]. You see that women are compassionate. Any woman who can carry pure water for sale without being ashamed, carry salted fish to sell, is also not ashamed. But if a man works for a while and does not succeed, he will say that the money is lost. But we women are the ones who go beneath the ground, so we can do whatever we want to do” (Respondent 6).

From this statement gender roles in the household become even more clear. Men are expected to be economically successful in order to cater for their families and are therefore scared and ashamed of economic failure. In contrast, women are less expected than men to be economically successful and her contributions are not recognized and only seen as a minor addition to the husband’s income. Therefore, it seems to be perceived as more common or less of an issue if a woman fails and if a woman is successful or even more successful than her husband, it is seen as a disgrace for her husband. These findings correspond with the study by Lambrecht (2016, 194) who found Ghanaian households in which women contributed equally or more to household budget than their husband, but stating this publicly was considered inappropriate as it would embarrass the husband. This stresses that internalization of both, female and male gender roles, contribute to the perpetuation of patriarchy. Women perform various activities to contribute to their family’s wellbeing, not only in the home, but also in the labor market, which corresponds with the study by Quaye et al. (2016, 84) who found women in Ghana multi-tasking, combining household chores and several farm and off-farm activities. However, these are not recognized, not even by themselves in many cases, because they have internalized patriarchal structures. Their work is seen as inferior to the men’s, which makes them see their

contributions as a ‘naturally’ given responsibility to assist men rather than an own job and achievement. Patriarchy as a political-social system in which males are superior to females and have the right to suppress women and maintain power over them, is carried out and maintained through the internalization of social gender norms and a process of socialization. Male domination is institutionalized through social structures in the private and the public sphere of a society (Habiba et al. 2016, 212–17). In a study about women in Pakistan, Habiba et al. (2016, 212) found that internalization through socialization begins in childhood when boys and girls are taught to adhere to different gender roles by their parents who have themselves been socialized with the same structures. They describe this as a form of ‘neopatriarchy’. Tuwor and Sossou (2008, 374) found that, in West Africa, the internalization of stereotypical gender roles among young children is also a result of a representation of women in textbooks as only mothers and housewives. Many societies in Sub-Saharan Africa have internalized colonial norms of sex discrimination, and ideas about the role of women by religious and development ‘missionaries’ until postcolonial times, in addition to traditional forms of prejudice that have existed in pre-colonial times. Historically, religion, especially Christian religious beliefs linked with conceptions of gender among European colonizers, played a crucial role in fostering women’s subordination in Sub-Saharan Africa (Rowan-Campbell 1999, 14; Bawa 2019, 54–55). In many African societies and cultures, prejudices and stereotypes against women are embedded in myths, legends, proverbs and folktales. In the African context, mythology plays a central role in transmitting values, shaping gender roles and the socialization and internalization of these roles, shaping women’s own beliefs about themselves and their behavior towards change (Kolawole 1997, 55; Tuwor and Sossou 2008, 372). Kolawole (1997, 82) describes this as a “manipulation of culture and tradition to give women negative images” which makes culture being used as a “sledgehammer of oppression to perpetuate inequality and gender injustice against women in Africa” (Tuwor and Sossou 2008, 367). A study by Dery (2020) found that most men in Ghana are resistant towards feminism and attempts to achieve gender equality because they see it as a Western construct and an unwelcome foreign intervention that threatens their tradition and culture of patriarchal social order, rights of men and masculinity.

Women’s responsibility to engage in economic activities to add to the male income, which on one hand challenges traditional gender norms according to which women do not participate in the labor market. However, many women don’t recognize their own contributions and don’t realize that their economic activities are in fact challenging

patriarchal structures because they are not aware that they live within a patriarchal society. *“They live within a [patriarchal] system, and if they don’t understand the system of [patriarchy] [...], it’s like having an exam question that you don’t understand. [...] you will not be able to address the question as it is”* (Key informant 3), meaning that the system is not challenged as a result of the internalization of patriarchy through socialization. This confirms findings by Baba et al. (2018, 36) Therefore, on the other hand the gender division of labor in the home is not challenged by women. While women are more and more involved in the labor market, men do not get more involved in domestic work.

6.1.3 High workload and time-conflicts

Women’s high work burden often resulted in exhaustion and time-conflicts, which Beneria and Sen (1981, 293) have been described as ‘double day’, and which has also been documented among women in Ghana by Quaye et al. (2016). Adding to results from other studies in Ghana (Tagoe and Abakah 2015, 377; Baah-Ennumh et al. 2005, 103; Gyimah 2008, 74), time conflicts were one major reason why women felt they could not actively participate in politics.

“I won’t have time. [...] Sometimes you might be called for a [political] meeting - maybe I would be working on the farm or carrying my wares around for sale – you won’t be able to attend because of the many ups-and-downs that you have to engage in” (Respondent 7).

One key informant stressed the critical role that men play in this issue. *“If a man is not going to support you to clean children and cook and stuff, of course you will not have time for other things”* (Key informant 3). One woman also expressed that exhaustion and tiredness from work did not allow her to follow political discussions and to inform herself about politics on television or radio.

“It is not like I don’t have time to watch TV [to listen to politics]. Anytime I sit behind the TV, I feel sleepy. I get tired from the day’s work; so, when I sit behind the TV, I begin to doze off” (Respondent 2).

Another woman expressed both, time conflicts and the uneasiness from high workload as constraints to engage in politics.

“I don’t involve myself in it [politics]. [...] I don’t really have that much time. [...] Even in the morning when I come out and sit here, I feel uneasy. I am always busy on the farm” (Respondent 11).

Many women also reported that they were not always able to attend the training organized by the cooperative because they were either busy with house chores, had to go to the market or to the farm.

“For us women, maybe the time that we will have to meet, we might be working at home and after might have to go to the market. [...] Or you might even have to go to the farm to work on some plantains or cocoyams [...]. Since you would have not finished working on the farm, you cannot abandon it to attend the meeting” (Respondent 3).

Another woman expressed her exhaustion from the many activities and that she had to take time to rest. *“Sometimes I am actually not that busy, but just tired. [...] Maybe I have gone to the farm or the market and I have to rest”* (Respondent 7). This corresponds with results from other studies among female farmers that identified high workload as the second largest contributor to female farmers disempowerment (Malapit et al. 2014, 36) and time-constraints as a major reason why women could not participate in extension services (FAO 1993, 57; Cahn and Liu 2008, 140; Gotschi et al. 2008, 652). On top of that, many women complained that the announcement for the training by the field officers was given very short notice, which makes it even more difficult for them to coordinate their activities to make time for the training.

“The time that we are informed is short. Maybe the information comes around in the evening that the meeting is scheduled for the next day. One might have already drawn plans for that day” (Respondent 3).

Interviews revealed that this is, amongst other things, a result of a lack of communication between the male field officers carrying out training and women in the FBOs.

6.1.4 Women are not seen as farmers in their own right

One statement by a woman who was asked if it would help to organize trainings for women only, shows how deep women have internalized gender roles and patriarchal structures.

“Women only? – it could be possible that someone trades on Friday and another may also use Sundays to sell her bananas. So, if it is created for only women, it will not be effective. But if they put us together [male and female], if you [the woman] are not around, your husband can attend then he relays the information to you when you return” (Respondent 1).

For men, who are perceived to be the main income earners, participation in trainings is expected to be a priority. Meanwhile women are expected to prioritize ‘female’ activities that benefit the whole household, i.e. going to the market to sell and buy food and to do house chores. For women, it is not a matter of choice if they attend the training because it is seen as their natural responsibility to go to the market instead, if the training takes place on market days.

Most women reported that their husbands always attended the organic training sessions. *“Every time, my husband attends. As for him, he attends by all means”* (Respondent 2). If

women missed out trainings, they mostly relied on the information that was passed on to them by their husbands. *“When I come home, my husband tells me [what was discussed]”* (Respondent 3). This creates dependency on the male knowledge and reinforces women’s subordinate status and gender roles, which was found to largely disempower women because it erodes their agency and self-esteem in a study by Mudege et al. (2016, 303). Among women, it is seen as a problem that they miss out training and are not able to personally receive information, because they are concerned that the information passed on is not accurate.

“[If] I will have the opportunity to go and listen myself [...] that will help me more than someone else relaying the information to me because the person might not give accurate information” (Respondent 3).

Nevertheless, they don’t challenge the status quo that doesn’t leave them a chance to choose between their ‘female’ responsibilities and the training, meanwhile men don’t face such time conflicts. This shows once more, how deeply women have internalized gender division of labor. Furthermore, it shows that women are not recognized as farmers in their own right compared to men. Because their farming activities and income contribution through cash crop production is systematically undervalued and not seen as a substantial contribution compared to the male income, it is not seen as a necessity for women to attend trainings to improve their farming methods. Similarly, it is expected from women to prioritize house chores before the work on the farm, meanwhile their husbands take the lead to the farm in the morning and stay longer in the afternoon and spend more time on productive activities.

“As for household chores, [...] I do it morning and evening, then he also takes the lead to the farm and I remain to do the household chores, then when I’m done with everything, I join him in the farm”. “About 2 pm you have to close [work on the farm] and come back home and do the house chores and find how to get food for the men to eat. So, when we close, we have to put food on the fire to give our men food to eat” (Respondent 9).

Besides cleaning and preparing children for school in the morning, women were sometimes also expected to cook food and bring it to their husbands on the farm. *“My husband would have already gone to farm. So, I have to cook food, I cook and take it to him in the farm”* (Respondent 11). One challenge that came up but will not be discussed in detail in the frame of this thesis, is land ownership.

“In a way, they [women] are not directly involved [in cocoa farming] because most of them are not really owning the lands [...]. But, they... they go with their husbands... especially when they have to pluck and pack cocoa. [...] I think, women, some of them, you see, on individual basis, they go with their

men, that's what I have seen. They work together. And in some cases, I have seen that a woman has got her own farm, that she inherited from the father" (Key informant 1).

Another key informant added the issue of non-recognized, non-paid farm work of women in the cocoa sector in this context.

"Where women have access to land, they tend to work for their husbands, where, when the man sells the crop, he decides what to give you. So, you realize that the women, or the wives of the farmers are working full time, as farmers [...] as helps on the farms. But they don't get paid on monthly basis. But it's just like, "oh, you are my wife, so you, you help me on the farm". When the money comes, the man takes the money. [...] So, you realize it's unfair to the women. They work on the farm but that is not even seen as a [...] job. [...] At the end of the day, the money doesn't come to them." (Key informant 3).

Land ownership still seems to be rare among women which reduces their chances of earning and controlling income independently and increases their financial dependency on men. However, this issue rather seems to affect 'hidden' women working in the cocoa sector, i.e. those women who neither own land themselves, nor operate a farm as a caretaker⁹, but are 'invisible' workers on the cocoa farms of their husbands. Those women were not part of the target group of the study. A research focusing only on those 'invisible' women in the cocoa sector, could shed more light on this issue.

However, also some women in this study, who owned or managed their own farm, reported that their husbands took care of the sale of their cocoa and received the money from the purchasing clerk (Respondent 8, Respondent 9, Respondent 11, Respondent 12). *"The cocoa, my husband takes care of its sale, when I harvest mine, he sees to the sale"* (Respondent 8). Even though men handed down the respective shares from cocoa sales to women (See Respondent 9), it is noteworthy that there seems to be a kind of patriarchal hierarchy, that puts men in charge of cocoa sales, and in dealing with sharing the money. This was not only the case for sharing the proceeds between husband and wife, but also for the payment of laborers and sharing proceeds with landowners. *"After deducting some for the hired laborers, my husband makes sure we divide it into two and I take one and give one to them [landowners]"* (Respondent 11). One woman also reported that her older children took care of the sales of different food crops from both farms, and that the

⁹ The majority of cocoa farmers are not farm owners but only caretakers. This means that the cocoa farm belongs to someone else who officially owns the land and does not want to take care of the farming work but still wants to earn profit from it. For example, this can be the case if someone obtains a plot of land through an inheritance from their parents after their death. He or she would then find a caretaker and at the end of the year the revenue is shared among the caretaker and the landowner. The revenue can either be shared equally, or it can be split into three parts where two third would go to the landowner and the farmer who is the caretaker would keep one third.

proceeds were all put in the hand of her husband. *“When they sell it, [...] they give it to the father”* (Respondent 10). Men were also put in charge of other farm issues, such as the purchasing of farm implements (machetes and baskets) (Respondent 2, Respondent 7, Respondent 8, Respondent 9), hiring laborers (Respondent 2), or the planting of crops (Respondent 7). In one case it was also seen as the responsibility of the man to attend trainings organized by the cooperative and pass on the information received to his wife, which was the reason why the woman did never attend any training. *“I have attended just once. [...] Because my husband attends. [...] It is because he goes that I do not attend. [...] When he returns, he relays the information to me”* (Respondent 9). The same woman later said that she felt the need for training to improve her farming to be able to become self-sustaining and financially independent.

“Maybe to teach me what I can do to have a profitable harvest from my cocoa. So, that I would be able to have enough to take care of myself. If I come and you teach me that, then I would use that knowledge to carry out my business” (Respondent 9).

Against the background that the organic trainings organized by the cooperative address exactly this aspect of improved farming methods to increase yields, this statement reflects internalized patriarchal structures in the household. Despite the fact that the woman sees the need to participate in trainings like this to improve her farming and become more independent, she is kept from attending because her husband is seen as the one responsible to attend the training and represent the household. The reason why men are often put in charge of many farm issues is often that women are not seen as capable enough to be their own farm managers and to receive trainings, as one key informant states.

“You will have most of them saying “oh, it’s a woman, so probably a man should be in charge”. Even if they are not going to take the land away from the woman, usually they put a man in charge, because they will say “in case of any issues, he’s better positioned to handle it than the woman”” (Key informant 3).

This is in line with many other studies that showed that women are often not seen as farmers in their own right but rather as farmer’s wives. Even if women own or operate a farm themselves, they are not seen as capable to receive training or should be represented by their husbands who are perceived as more capable (FAO 1993; Meinzen-Dick et al. 2011, 70; The World Bank et al. 2009, 280; Mudege et al. 2016, 291; Gotschi et al. 2008, 652).

Another reason for this patriarchal hierarchy that puts man in charge of most farm issues and does not recognize women as farmers in their own right, is that many men like to

maintain the status-quo of unequal power relations in their households. One key informant stated that the only way of making men accept women in the economic sphere was if they were able to maintain the power and their status within their households despite the women earning income independently.

“The women are really going to join you [in the farm], not to control what you earn [...] but just to add on what you have”. Something like that will make them accept women everywhere in whatever they do. [...] Because, you see, the man, for him, the cocoa, it's like his power, his everything” (Key informant 1).

Men fear to lose their power and control when women engage in cocoa trade and earn income independently. Therefore, they try to maintain the status quo of current power relations and gender roles in the household that assign the role of the main breadwinner to the man and a subordinated role that only assists with additional income to women. How severe this fear is for men is shown in a statement from another key informant, who explained how gender sensitization trainings with men try to address this issue. *“[If] you make room for women to, to have a space, doesn't mean that you have handed over your power, so to speak, to them, but it's just [...] to put them [...] on the same level”* (Key informant 3). In many Ghanaian households, men generally prefer to maintain the status quo of being in control. They fear to lose control and power over women and that women will control them if they contribute equally to household income (Fuseini et al. 2019, 303; Wrigley-Asante 2012, 359). In farming households in Ghana and Sierra Leone Udry (1996, 1029) and Carr (2008, 905) found that men ensure to maintain power within their households by allocating more productive resources such as land or fertilizer to themselves. This guarantees greater agricultural production to them, even if reallocating resources equally among men and women in the same household would have increased overall household yields.

6.1.5 Lack of alternative livelihoods and financial constraints

Another major challenge for women refers to financial constraints, especially during the cocoa low season. *“Income levels are very low, and [...] cocoa too is a seasonal crop. So, when the cocoa is out of season, they [cocoa incomes], they remain very little”* (Key informant 2). Cocoa low season mostly falls into the period between October and January, and the high season between January and September (Key informant 1). *“When it gets to this time we are really hard presses on money. [...] At the moment, it isn't cocoa season, so there is really suffering”* (Respondent 2). Even though these challenges affect both, male and female cocoa farmers, women seem to suffer disproportionately from financial

constraints. The two issues for women that stand out most from all interviews are access to financial resources and credit and a lack of alternative livelihoods, which confirms findings from other studies (2011, 38; UNDP 1995, 39; Malapit et al. 2014, 36).

“Most of the [...] farmers we interviewed, especially women, the most what came up was the fact that “credit, credit, we don’t have access to credit [...] And then also, alternative livelihoods was something that came up second for them” (Key informant 2).

One major aspect of financial constraints is the lack of profitable alternative livelihoods for women besides cocoa farming.

“This place is solely a cocoa growing area, whenever the cocoa doesn’t grow, there is some suffering. So, if one gets something to supplement, it will help (Respondent 12).

For most women, the cocoa business is the most profitable business and provides for the main economic income. During the cocoa low season, most women focus only on the marketing of food crops on local markets, such as banana, plantain, yam, cocoyam, cassava, coconut, and other fruit and vegetables. Despite the availability of these alternative agricultural livelihoods, they don’t compensate the lacking cocoa income during low cocoa season, because selling of food crops is not as profitable.

“There is financial difficulty. Here, if you undertake anything, it doesn’t work. I, for instance, I used to sell banana. But after sales, things don’t break even [there is not much profit]” (Respondent 6).

Furthermore, also these alternative agricultural livelihoods are not constantly available and predictable.

“Sometimes things get really difficult [...], because I have children around me. [...] And it isn’t every day that I will get banana to sell. [...] So, sometimes there is hardship, but [only] when the cocoa comes, we get relieved” (Respondent 8).

The main challenge, especially for women to become financially more independent from men, are a lack of alternative non-agricultural livelihoods that they can engage in. Financial constraints and the lack of alternative livelihoods can reinforce each other because a lack of appropriate alternatives in the economic sphere limits the income, and therefore capital available to women to invest in new businesses. *“Previously, I used to trade in head pans, aluminum pots, but now I do not have the capital” (Respondent 7).* Another statement by the same woman, also shows how financial constraints and the lack of alternative non-agricultural livelihoods intensify the problem of time conflicts, stress and inability to participate in organic training sessions.

“If I am able to get a little help with something than can assist me to ease the stress. [...] Over here, we like to trade, so anything small... [...] Previously, when I sold aluminum pans and buckets, [...] I arranged the things here so I did not have to roam to sell my goods because I have [fixed] days that I roam to sell my things. [...] I will attach a timetable, so that If I know the days that the meeting will be held, I will not go roaming on that day” (Respondent 7).

A lack of capital and alternative non-agricultural livelihoods such as the trading business with aluminum pots makes women more dependent on fixed market days to sell their crops and allows less flexibility in managing their time schedules. Therefore, financial constraints and a lack of alternative livelihoods also make women more likely to miss out trainings. Furthermore, financial constraints also largely disempowered women in the perception of their capability to make a change in their communities.

“If I only have a new job and I am capable. [...] If the opportunity presents itself and I am capable, I will do it. [...] [But] I haven’t done a thing like that before. [Because] I do not have the strength; I do not have money. In doing something of that magnitude, one has to be financially sound” (Respondent 9).

“Village life is lived in poverty. [...] I see that I can do something, but the money [for it] isn’t there. In this village there is no money. So, even if you plan something, you can’t execute it. [...] If someone helps me financially, I will be able to do something” (Respondent 12).

Similarly, women were disempowered to participate in politics, due to their financial situation, even when they had voice and were interested in actively participating in politics.

“Political party like? [...] Yes, I am able to talk. [...] I can really indulge in it. [...] I could do it, but this is a situation that I have so many [financial] problems. How can I channel myself into politics?” (Respondent 6).

“My eyes are really focused on my work. There are certain things that when you go after them, they won’t bring you any rewards” (Respondent 5).

Due to their financial situation and time allocation problems, women prefer to focus on income generating activities instead of activities that won’t bring them any direct economic benefits. This confirms findings from other studies in Ghana that identified financial constraints as barriers to participate in local governance among women, especially because running electoral campaigns require large amounts of money (Sossou 2011, 5; Osman and Abdulai 2018, 137; Bawa and Sanyare 2013, 287; Gyimah 2008, 73; Baah-Enumh et al. 2005, 103).

6.1.6 Challenges related to physical strength

The following statement by a woman demonstrates how the challenge of financial constraints and access to credit is closely related to another challenge among women, the lack of physical strength and dependency on hired labor for strenuous farm work.

“The women, [...] they often complain about things, maybe when it is a low cocoa season, at that time, the farmers also have a drop in their finances. [...] And that is the time too that the cocoa becomes bushy and [...] that they need money to get the cocoa farm weeded” (Respondent 11).

Many women reported that they were not able to carry out certain activities on the farm, such as weeding, pruning, and the plucking or carrying of cocoa because they are physically too demanding for them using expressions such as *“as a woman, I can’t weed”* (Respondent 5). One woman even reported that she struggles with pain from the work on the farm. *“I am [was] able to pluck the cocoa, but in recent times, I have been unwell. I felt body pains at the slightest activity”* (Respondent 1). This makes women very much dependent on male labor, through both hired laborers and the help from their husbands. *“I, for instance, can’t weed, so I hire laborers to do it for me. After weeding, it begins to ripe one after the other, then my husband plucks them for me”* (Respondent 9). In most cases, women used hired labor for the weeding of their farms, pruning trees, and carrying cocoa. *“I am a woman, so I hire laborers and they carry to the roadside for us for sale”* (Respondent 5). In contrast, the plucking of cocoa was mostly undertaken by their husbands, while women collected the plucked cocoa.

“When you hire laborers, they don’t pluck them well. They pluck some and leave some. So, I do not use hired labor for this task. I go with the man [her husband] to pluck them. When my husband plucks them, then my children and I will gather them” (Respondent 1).

In some instances, where the husband was not available for help, labor was also hired for the plucking of cocoa. *“When the man [her husband] isn’t present, we give it to hired laborers but when he is around, he does it himself”* (Respondent 12). Women’s disadvantage due to biological preconditions make it necessary for them to spend more money on hired labor, wherefore they have less money available for other things. This makes them dependent not only on male labor, but also financially more dependent on their husbands. Besides the issue of dependency, a big challenge for women becomes the lack of access to financial resources and credit to be able to pay hired laborers in the first place to compensate the work they are not able to do themselves.

“Right now, I’m no longer strong, so everything is about money. I have to spend on everything: I have to weed the cocoa land, if I have to prune the trees, etc. Because if these aren’t done, the cocoa wouldn’t yield as it is supposed to” (Respondent 12).

“We wish that they will give us something to help us, the women, something little that we can use to hire laborers to work on the farm for us, because it is usually tedious for us” (Respondent 4).

The two statements stress the point that the lack of access to financial resources and credit and reduced physical strength result in a vicious cycle that disproportionately affects women. If a woman does not have the strength to weed and neither the financial resources to hire labor, cocoa yields and earnings will be reduced and reinforce financial constraints and inability to hire labor. This confirms findings by Malapit et al. (2014, 36) who identified lack of access to credit as the foremost contributor to women's disempowerment in agriculture across countries and regions. Another issue regarding the physical strength of women and their inability to carry out certain tasks on the farm is the fact that farming tools are often designed for men as standard users and inappropriate for female users, for example in their weight.

“He [her husband] uses the machete till it gets old. So, when he buys a new one, I collect the old one from him to use because it is much lighter for me. [...] When it is new, it is difficult to handle [laughs]. It is heavy” (Respondent 7).

This issue again points to the problem that women are not seen as farmers in their own right and the belief that women do not farm, wherefore farming tools are only designed for men, which is a common issue among women in agriculture across regions. Scholars argue that technology is usually designed for men as the standard users or based on the assumption that design is gender-neutral, despite women's very different technological needs due to their differences in ergonomical characteristics (Singh et al. 2006, 230; 2019, 54). The design of farming equipment such as ploughs, irrigation equipment, sprayers, watering cans and hoes are often not women-friendly and inappropriate for women for example in their weight. For women, who are considered to have about two-third the strength of men, the use of farming tools designed for men often results in drudgery, pain and reduced productivity (Hope et al. 2009, 72; Ferguson and Moosa 2011, 27; Singh et al. 2006, 230; 2019, 54; The World Bank et al. 2009, 289; Hansda 2017, 191–92). Even if other models that are better suited for women's needs are available, women might not be aware or might lack the cash to purchase them meanwhile their husbands, who are mostly responsible for buying farm tools, do not see the need to purchase women-friendly equipment for their wives (The World Bank et al. 2009, 289–90).

6.1.7 Lack of education and knowledge, self-confidence and self-esteem

Another challenge that largely disempowered women to participate in politics and community projects is a lack of education.

“Generally, the level of education among the women is lower than the men. [...] Even [though] in general the level of education in the rural areas is low,

the men have more, higher probability of going further in the education than the women. [...] The more it is difficult to access education, those who are likely to be affected are women” (Key informant 2).

Among the reasons for this is the fact that girls are seen as being more obliged to help in the household than boys, and less expected to work in the labor market and therefore not expected to continue beyond basic education, which is a result of the internalization and socialization of gender roles. But also, problems such as teenage pregnancy and early marriage result in school dropouts and reduced level of education among girls and women (Key informant 2). The detailed reasons for the lack of education among women in Ghana are not further discussed because it would exceed the scope of this thesis. For a discussion of gender discrimination in education in West Africa refer to Tuwor and Sossou (2008).

One woman mentioned the higher level of education of her husband as the reason why she needed his support in case she wanted to change something in her community. *“Let’s take it in terms of education, he [her husband] is a little higher than me. [...] It matters, because he is [more] educated”* (Respondent 11). Another obstacle for women in terms of education are language barriers. One key informant from IDEG’s CECA program reported that women were often disempowered to participate in community programs and to represent their communities in national programs because they lacked basic skills of the English language.

“When they’re trained and we organize national programs, too, we try to get equal representation [of women and men]. [...] [But] at times, for some of the things, it’s difficult getting an equal number of women to match the male because [...] the men [...] largely are more vocal than the women. [...] We have realized that some of the women, even though they are very active, [for] some of them it’s because of the English, they have problems with English” (Key informant 2).

Despite women’s motivation to engage in activities, language barriers keep them from taking up leadership positions in their communities. The same was reported by a woman in the cooperative in the context of political leadership.

“They usually force to give me a role, but I reject it because I haven’t been to school before. If you have to go somewhere and you have to read in English...” (Respondent 1).

Another key informant added that the lack of education in rural areas also results in a lack of knowledge among women about women’s rights.

“Civic education is not so strong in the rural areas. So, most of them don’t even know about rights, what they are entitled to. [...] What you don’t know, you can’t claim anyway” (Key informant 3).

Furthermore, the lack of basic education also seems to result in a lack of education concerning the political system and a biased understanding of political participation. According to one key informant, this is a general issue among rural cocoa communities in Ghana. Mostly they don't have knowledge about governance, how they can actively engage with and consult the local assembly in order to address issues in their communities, and what the role of the local government is (Key informant 2). One woman largely had the understanding that politics is only for young people and wealthy elites, which is why she perceived herself as someone who is not eligible to actively engage in politics due to her age and low economic status in society. *“For me, I am old... [...] In this home, we are not financially stable. None of us are of high ranking in society”* (Respondent 9). This also points to another challenge that women are facing, a lack of self-esteem and self-confidence. This confirms findings from other studies which identify a lack of formal education and knowledge about women's rights that result in a lack of self-esteem and self-confidence, and missing political education among women as a main obstacle to become active in the public sphere among women in Ghana (Sossou 2011, 5–6; Baba et al. 2018, 38–39; Osman and Abdulai 2018, 137; Acheampong and Dinye 2015, 200; Gyimah 2008, 72–74; Baah-Ennumh et al. 2005, 104).

Women's disempowerment in terms of their self-confidence and self-esteem seems to be largely a result of the internalization of patriarchal structures and women's subordination in power relations combined with a lack of knowledge among women about their rights. A lack of self-confidence and self-esteem for example disempowered women to actively participate in politics. One woman stated that she can imagine herself being a women's organizer of a political party, but a lack of self-confidence and the belief that she needed someone to tell her what to do largely disempowered her to actually follow her aspirations.

“Well, as for politics, maybe I can be a Women's Organizer. [...] [But] there are things that you know you can do but if you haven't got the power yet, you can't just get up and do it. But if someone tells me to, I can do it, but if no one tells me to do something I can't just get up and do anything” (Respondent 5).

6.1.8 Unequal gender power relations

In the political sphere, the subordination of women is especially expressed through insults and verbal abuses that result in a lack of self-confidence and self-esteem and the expression of fearing to participate in politics among women. These were described using expressions such as *“For me, I am afraid”* (Respondent 9).

“I don’t just get myself involved. [...] For me, once anyone starts talking [about] politics, I leave the person, because what someone might say to you, you will go and through yourself in the sea [laughs]. [...] It is not really that I’m afraid as such, but it is about the way politics is conducted here. If you aren’t careful, what someone might say will hurt you deeply” (Respondent 12).

Another woman reported that she used to be involved in politics and explained that she quit because of the insults and verbal abuse from others.

“Politics is a weird venture. Sometimes people will be expecting you to return with something when you go to Suhum or when you go for a meeting. But maybe when you went, you did not bring anything back. [...] Amidst the many insults that will be rained on you. So, for politics, it is not something that I will venture into anymore” (Respondent 3).

Furthermore, she stated that if verbal abuses in politics were not an issue, she would continue with her position. The issue also illustrates how insults and verbal abuses are often a result of a lack of political education and the understanding that political participation has to come with material rewards. The same woman described that she received information about politics since then from her husband, who is an assembly man. *“Because my husband is the assembly man, I also hear some from him [information about politics]” (Respondent 3).* When asked if she would be able to take up the leadership role as an assembly woman like her husband, she clearly said no and laughed. The many insults and verbal abuses eroded her self-esteem and self-confidence and disempowered her to continue with her political activities, let alone to take up a leadership role. Furthermore, in order to stay informed about current politics, she is now dependent on her husband’s knowledge. Another woman expressed that she was afraid not to fulfil the expectations if she engaged in politics which shows both, a lack of self-confidence, combined with the fear from insults when expectations are not fulfilled in the view of others. *“I see it as, if I indulge in it, I might not do it the way I ought to” (Respondent 7).* It seems as if a consequence of this might be that women become increasingly disinterested and actively disassociate themselves from politics.

“After voting, I leave the polling station, I don’t stay there. [...] People say it [what goes on in politics] and I get to hear and even [when] I hear it, it doesn’t concern me” (Respondent 8).

“When it comes to that, I am silent. So, when it is time to cast my ballot, I go to vote and return home quietly” (Respondent 9).

During interviews, it often seemed as if politics in general and political participation was a very sensitive topic that women felt uncomfortable speaking about, probably due to the bad experiences with insults and verbal abuses. Sometimes when they were asked why

they were not actively involved in politics or why they quit political activities, they used short answers such as “*Oh, no reason. [...] I just don’t like party politics*” (Respondent 8; Respondent 3) and avoided giving a specific reason as if they felt ashamed and if they did something wrong by venturing into politics as a woman. It seems that women are often the ones who suffer most from such insults in politics because their self-esteem and self-confidence is already lower due to their subordination in power relations and decision-making in society.

Very similar results about verbal abuse and insults as a major constraint for women in Ghana to actively engage in politics have been found by other scholars (Sossou 2011, 5; Baba et al. 2018, 36; Abakah 2018, 10; Osman and Abdulai 2018, 137–38; Bawa and Sanyare 2013, 288; Bauer and Darkwah 2020, 108). Even though the ‘politics of insult’ may affect men as well, there are strong indications that insults, hate speech, and sexual harassment in the public space and the workplace are disproportionately targeted toward underprivileged social groups such as women across regions, which is a result of the persistent unequal power relations between women and men (Tagoe and Abakah 2015; Wilhelm and Joeckel 2019; Council of Europe 2016; Bawa and Sanyare 2013; Cortese 2006; Bauer and Darkwah 2020, 113). Furthermore, women fear and suffer more from insults than men because their self-esteem and self-confidence is already lower due to their subordination in society. Women in the study by Tagoe and Abakah (2015, 377) also stated not being able to bear insults and verbal abuse in relation with not being interested in politics, which supports the findings from this study, that the fear of insults results in political indifference among women.

Women’s subordination in power relations and decision-making also became visible in their households, and the communal sphere, sometimes as a result of dependency on the male in terms of education, social security and physical strength. It was often reported that women had to seek permission or advice from their husbands before taking a decision or at least they felt that they needed the backing of their husbands in order to become active agents, as one key informant describes.

“When we were selecting the people, some women said they have to consult their husbands before they come. [...] For them to [...] be recruited, for them to be selected and empowered, trained, they have to consult their husbands. [...] But a man wouldn’t say “I have to go and consult my wife”. “If you have selected me, I’m willing and ready”” (Key informant 2).

Similar to the woman in the cooperative that didn’t attend the training because her husband attended, another Key informant shared a story about a woman in the CECA

program who could not join training sessions because she lacked the permission of her husband.

“There was a woman who wanted to be part of the intervention we do there. But the community said, they were going to ask her husband. [...] So, the husband was called and then he got there. [...] He didn’t even ask to be briefed about what the program was. He just said, “Oh no, she doesn’t have time to be part of this”. [...] Yes, and the community was like “her husband said no. So... that is it”. So, there are those things still there. She made a decision, but she didn’t have the backing of the husband, so it still didn’t hold anyways” (Key informant 3).

One statement by a woman who was asked if she felt that she could change something in her community if she wanted to, shows how decisive the support of the husband was for her.

“I can do it, I can do it, but, hmm. [...] Well, if I say I can do it, it is often said that “when a woman shoots a gun, it is in the name of the man”, so if I say I can do it, I will need my husband to push me on it [need my husband’s support]” (Respondent 11).

She explained that this was mainly due to the fact that her husband was more educated than her. When she was asked if she could change something in her community if she wanted to, without having her husband’s support, she replied using the expression “*that isn’t really in me*” (Respondent 11), symbolizing a kind of disinterest which might exist due to the dependency on her husband in terms of education that disempowers her and erodes her self-confidence. Another statement by a key informant confirms that the support from husbands seems to be very important for many women, especially if they want become active agents or take up leadership roles in their communities.

“For most of the women who have gone through the training and have really transformed and are taking up leadership roles, you find a couple of them saying, their husbands, they had the full support of their husbands. Yes, so, they went all out. [...] It’s a thing for them. [...] “As long as I have the support of the spouse”, then they’re all... [becoming active]” (Key informant 3).

This confirms findings of a study by Mudege et al. (2016, 300) who found the husband support for women was often decisive to be able to attend training sessions. Furthermore, women perceived it as necessary to consult their husbands and discuss certain things and receive advice from their husbands before taking a personal decision and that they were not able to take an own decision without discussing it with their husbands beforehand. This was for example the case for some farming activities. “*The work, the farming work, he is a man, and I am a woman; he has more strength than I do. [...] So, in case of anything, I have to discuss with him*” (Respondent 11). The woman stated that she would

take decisions concerning the farm alone, in case that her husband was not available, and that another reason for the consultation was that their household income was pooled. Nevertheless, the statement still shows the primary subordination of women in decision-making due to the dependency on the male in terms of physical strength. Another example where a woman had to consult her husband were investments in a new business, such as trading, using own income or savings.

“When I discuss with him and I see that I have the money for it, I can do it, but in any case, I have to discuss with him. [...] There are certain things, if you do them and they don’t go well or they develop problems or become difficult, he will say “this person didn’t even consult me regarding that” (Respondent 5).

This reflects the perceived necessity among women to have their husband’s support and permission, due to dependency on the male in terms of social security in case of failure or difficulties. Another woman felt she needed to seek advice from her husband in case she wanted to open her own savings account at the bank. The fact that she doesn’t see herself as capable shows her disempowerment and lack of self-confidence due to a dependency on the male in terms of education and experience. Furthermore, women’s subordination in power relations becomes visible since on the other hand her husband does not consult her when it comes to his savings in his bank account.

“For that [savings in private bank account], he hasn’t made it known to me before. He hasn’t ever told me about it. He has his own bank notes. [...] [But] I won’t follow his example that, because he doesn’t tell me, I will also not tell him. I will have to let him know so that he’ll advise me. [...] I see it as, he looks after me, he is my husband. [...] So, I feel like when I discuss it elsewhere behind his back or I do things from my own thoughts, it doesn’t suit me well and I am not happy about it” (Respondent 10).

Even though she doesn’t see it as a good example that her husband does not talk about his finances in the bank with his wife, she does not challenge the husband’s behavior but would judge it as a bad behavior if she would act in the same way. Women have internalized patriarchal structures and their subordination in power relations and decision-making in society. Gender roles determine that women have to consult husbands and need advice because men seem to be better positioned to take a decision or take care of certain things or because women are dependent on men in terms of education, social security and physical strength. Therefore, it is taken as natural that women have to consult their husbands, meanwhile men do not necessarily consult wives to ask for permission. This confirms findings from other studies in Ghana that found that women have been socialized with gender roles and therefore have internalized that women are subordinates, not leaders and

that men are superior to women, household heads, and better endowed to be leaders and decision-makers (Sossou 2011, 5; Acheampong and Dinye 2015, 200; Wrigley-Asante 2012, 355–56). It further confirms results from similar studies from Ghana and other Sub-Saharan African countries that report that women have to consult husbands and ask for permissions or should seek advice from husbands before they take decisions (Mudege et al. 2016, 291; Cahn and Liu 2008, 140; Gotschi et al. 2008, 652; Fuseini et al. 2019, 302–3).

6.2 Women’s participation in decision-making

Addressing the second research question, this section analyses women’s participation in activities and decision-making in their households, the economic, communal, and political sphere. Results indicate that women are to a certain degree actively engaged in activities and decision-making with varying degrees between the different spheres and from woman to woman. If women are engaged in activities and decision-making, gender roles and unequal power relations determine the type of work that seems to be appropriate for them and restrict their access to leadership positions or to have a ‘final say’ in decision-making. Since women have internalized these gender roles and unequal power relations to a high degree and do not necessarily challenge them, women themselves contribute to their reinforcement and persistence. The following figure visualizes how opportunities for women to engage in activities, decision-making and leadership in the different spheres studied are determined and limited by gender roles and unequal power relations.

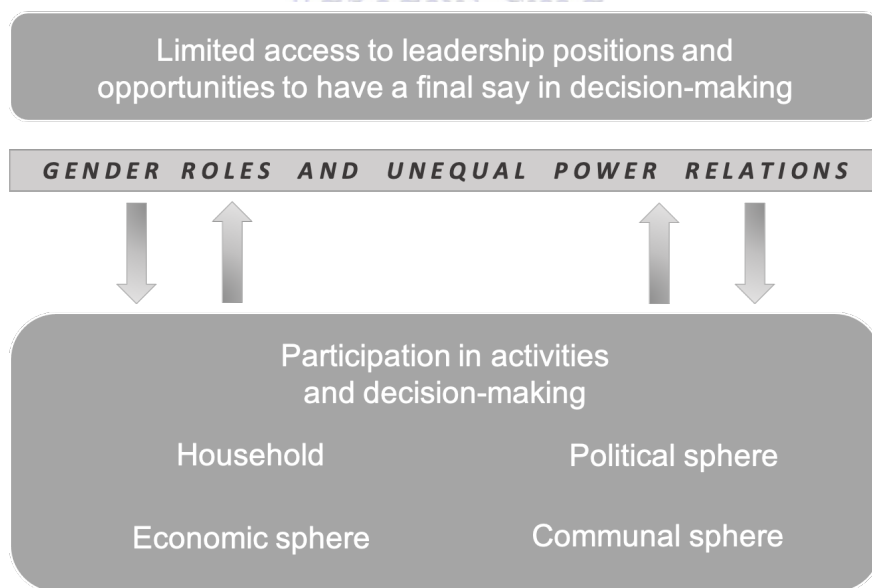


Figure 3: Women’s participation in activities and decision-making

6.2.1 Household and economic sphere

Because husband and wife were in all cases both farmers and often pooled farm income in order to take care of the home, the two spheres are very interrelated and are therefore analyzed together. Result from this study partly stand in contrast to the general perception in Ghanaian households that men are supposed to lead any activities and decision-making and that women should not take decisions independently (Fuseini et al. 2019, 289–303) and “*can't do anything*” (Key informant 2) when their husband is not around. Many women were actively involved in household-decision making, joint decision-making was very common, and women also took decisions independently when their husbands were not around. Joint decision-making was very common with respect to different household decisions including decisions about the farms, investments and savings, and children's schooling. Women used expressions such as “*we decide on that together*” (Respondent 4, 6, 8, 9), “*I and my husband decide on that*” (Respondent 2, 7, 8, 11, 12) or “*we both put our heads together*” (Respondent 3) to describe household decision-making concerning the different things. Amongst others, joint decision-making about farming activities such as weeding, hiring labor, or planting new plants was very common, especially in households where economic resources were pooled.

“I and my husband decide on that. If we have to take hired laborers, say two or three, to work on the farm, after they have done their work, if it is necessary to uproot plantain and plant them there or with the cocoa every year some die out, in all these [things] the man and I take decisions on them. The plantain that we set at those places it is necessary to plant cocoa around them too. So, on all that, the man I take decisions [together]. (Respondent 11).

Another woman stated that she took all decisions regarding her farm herself, independent of her husband. “*I do it myself. [...] I take laborers, I plant, I do [decide] everything myself*” (Respondent 5). Joint decision-making was also common with household decisions about larger joint investments, for example in a business or a house, or about joint savings at the bank.

“I can say that “I have got something little and you have got something too, so this money, let's use it for this work”. [...] It isn't that he usually says it, I do often say that, too. I am able to say that “this year, we will do that kind of work” and we will do it” (Respondent 8).

“Right now, the children are many. So, we would have to look for a place where we will stay. So, for that [invest money], we do it [decide] together” (Respondent 9).

Also, decisions about how to take care of children, including nieces and nephews, for example related to schooling, were taken jointly.

“We decide together on it. [...] For instance, it could be my sister’s child or my younger siblings’ child. In such a case, I inform him that “I am bringing this particular child, so I want us to look after the child together”. So, something like this, we decide on it together”. (Respondent 8).

Women often had the clear opinion that decisions in a household should be taken jointly, but in case of absence of their husbands, they would not be reliant on them, and were able to take day-to-day decisions on their own. *“When he isn’t present, I take the decision alone. [...] But so far as he is present, we ought to think on things together”* (Respondent 12). Another woman stated *“Oh, why not? I can, when he isn’t present, I can do it”* (Respondent 8). One of the most often mentioned reasons for why women perceived joint decision-making as important, especially in the case of decisions concerning the farm, was that economic resources in the household were pooled. *“Our monies are together. So, when we want to hire laborers, for instance, we have to decide that together before it can be done”* (Respondent 11). Another important reason was the living together with another person and the existence of different opinions that should be discussed.

“As for that [farm activities and major household purchases], I decide with my husband, because I can’t decide on it alone because we live together and so we decide together. I am his wife, and he is my husband, so we decide together. [...] If you live alone, then you can decide on things by yourself. But once you live with another person it is important to discuss things together. He also consults me on other matters” (Respondent 4).

“He is my husband. So, he has to bring his opinion while I also bring mine to know what exactly has to be done” (Respondent 10).

In particular in relation to economic activities on the farm or the investments into a new business, women stated that it was important to bring different ideas and knowledge together to ensure success and profit.

“For that [investing in a new business], we are two people right, so... [...] Our elders say, “wisdom isn’t resident in only one person”. So, an idea may come to one person [...], so we will discuss that together and if it is a good idea, we accept it” (Respondent 11).

“My husband and I decide on it and work at it. [...] We make plans [together] that will ensure the progress of the farm[s] so that we will benefit from it” (Respondent 7).

However, one woman explained that even though decisions were discussed between her and her husband, the final decision will be taken by the man alone. *“The man, he will say “I want to do this work, so come and let’s discuss it”. But he will make the decision at the end of the day”* (Respondent 8). This confirms findings by Fuseini et al. (2019, 307) and Quaye et al. (2016, 81) who found that women in Ghana can initiate or be part of joint household decision-making, but men always have the final say. This seems to be a

kind of manipulation of women's agency. Men might only pretend to give women more space to engage in and influence household decision-making, but at the end, they demonstrate that they are still the head of the house, the main decision-maker and women are in a subordinate position. This, once more, confirms that, even though Ghanaian women are to a certain degree involved in household decision-making, in many Ghanaian households, men prefer to maintain the status quo of unequal power relations and maintain in control of household decisions (Fuseini et al. 2019, 303; Wrigley-Asante 2012, 359). It also corresponds with Ghanaian traditional norms, according to which women cannot be family heads (Lambrecht 2016, 195). Men largely undermine women's intelligence and their capability to take decisions, and women have internalized this thinking and therefore do not necessarily challenge that men take final decisions (Fuseini et al. 2019, 302). This internalization largely affects women's self-esteem and their agency and limits women's opportunities to have a final say in household decision-making. Overall, the degree of decision-making power in household decision-making and women's agency seems to differ between women and results around decision-making power are not completely clear. Some women on the one hand emphasize the importance of joint decision-making and are able to take day-to-day decisions alone. On the other hand, they feel the need to consult their husbands and seek advice when it comes to more significant decisions regarding the farm, investments into a new business, savings and banking related issues because they are dependent on their education, physical strength and social security, as described in the previous section. Furthermore, women's agency is further restricted because men want to retain their power of decision-making and want to have the final say over women. As described in the previous section, women in the study were involved in a number of economic activities aside from their 'female' responsibilities at home and on the market. They are all independent cocoa farmers, palm oil traders, fish traders, or hairdressers. With regards to attendance in organic training sessions by the cooperative, there are women who always attend training sessions in contrast to those women who miss out training sessions due to their 'female' responsibilities or because they are represented by their husbands. *"Anytime they come, I am able to attend"* (Respondent 1). The difference between these two groups of women is that some prioritize their farming activities over 'female' responsibilities. *"Once they announce that they are coming, I go. [...] When they call for meetings, I leave other things I might be doing to attend"* (Respondent 4). This implies that the degree of agency among women differs to some extent. Thereby the internalization of gender roles plays a crucial role. Some women have internalized that they

are not farmers in their own right, and that it is not a matter of choice for women to prioritize their farming activities, including training sessions, over 'female' activities. They are expected to fulfill their 'female' responsibilities before giving attention to economic activities. In comparison, the other group of women seems to see themselves more as farmers in their own right and to have an increased degree of agency and autonomy in setting priorities. Women who regularly attend the training provided by Yayra Glover, stated how access to trainings has helped them to improve their farm management and to increase yields. One woman stated how the training taught her a better way how to dry cocoa beans.

"It helps me in so many ways. Because they didn't want us to use dangerous chemicals [...]. Sometimes too they come and teach us that, in the past, when someone harvests the cocoa and puts it out to dry, one gathers it back into a room. They teach us that this is not a good practice since the cocoa beans would have grown moldy by that time it is being sold. [...] It would become "white white". How they taught to take it immediately after drying helped us." (Respondent 3).

Another woman described how the training has helped her in dealing with insect infestation on her cocoa plants.

"Initially, when I did not attend the organic training, there were some little insects that used to attack my cocoa and I didn't know what to do. But when I joined [...] the way they taught us to weed in patterns, [...] it's better" (Respondent 6).

A third woman explained how the training helped her to understand better weeding practices in order to increase cocoa yield.

"In their talk, they show us how to maintain the cocoa, to weed it – how we should weed under the trees and tend for the cocoa tree and the like. [...] As for the harvest [yield], it is better than when they initially came here" (Respondent 10).

Furthermore, another woman mentioned how she benefits from the organic inputs provided to her. *"They give us the chemicals that help the cocoa to grow well"* (Respondent 12). Women confirmed that, revenue from cocoa sales and cocoa premiums gives women direct access to individual income that they are in control of.

"It helps us [...] how one can till the farm to make profit out of it so as to have some money for one's pocket. [...] For that [cocoa premium], I take it for myself. I use some to take care of my children's schooling. I use some to weed under the cocoa. I also use some to hire laborers" (Respondent 1).

Another woman explained how improving her farming through access to training allowed her to have access to individual income and be able to provide for her family and how this has encouraged her to regularly attend. *"For me, I delight in meetings and trainings.*

It helps us. Like the organic training that came has benefited me a lot since I am able to at least put food on the table” (Respondent 6). This shows how access to independent income that is in the sole control of women gives them more self-confidence to recognize their economic contributions to the household and to see themselves as farmers in their own right.

Furthermore, women are also involved in associations and groups with other traders and farmers. One woman, who had a palm oil business reported to be a member of an association with other palm oil traders, in which she was part of the organizers.

“We, who are into the oil production, have an association. When we go for meetings, everybody brings in their thoughts. When we want to do something, we all contribute towards it and the government also helps by bringing us a machine. [...] For that, I go around to tell everyone the particular day that we are to have a meeting” (Respondent 2).

Two other women regularly attended meetings of a group of organic cocoa farmers in their village.

“We meet for instance every two weeks and think about the farming activities. [...] We think about ways that will help improve our cocoa work. [...] For instance, if we have to buy a machine to assist in the cocoa activities. [...] We keep it with the cocoa official and in case anyone needs it, the person goes for it” (Respondent 11).

One of the two women held the position of the treasurer in the group. This further shows that some women see themselves as farmers in their own right and as primary income earners in the household and have agency and autonomy to decide to become members and hold a position in an association that supports their livelihood. However, they seem to be less likely to obtain leadership roles in such groups or associations such as the cocoa official or the secretary in the case of the farmers’ group. Furthermore, gender roles determine the roles that are appropriate for women in such groups. So is the position of the treasurer more often held by women who are said to be more trustworthy and less likely to abuse money than men (Gotschi et al. 2008, 652–53).

6.2.2 Political sphere

The sphere that has been found to be the most restricted for women in the case study in terms of active participation and decision-making was the political sphere. Meanwhile most women reported that they vote during elections, only very few were actively involved in politics, for example as member of a party or women’s organizer. This corresponds with the low share of females in national and local parliaments in Ghana (UNDP 2018, 39–41; Bawa and Sanyare 2013, 287; Ghana Districts n.d.). As Abakah (2018, 1)

and Sossou (2011, 6) found, even if women are active in politics, they would only be given lower positions such as that of the women's organizer and not be recruited into key decision-making roles. This was also the case for the women in this study. As described in the previous section, there were only two women who were actively involved in politics beyond taking part in elections. One woman was a member of a political party but did not want to take up any leadership role due to her lack of education and problems with the English language (Respondent 1). The second woman used to be a women's organizer of a political party and could not imagine herself taking up a leadership role such as that of an assembly woman and even quit her position as women's organizer due to insults and verbal abuses from others (Respondent 3). Two other women could imagine becoming active in political decision-making, for example, as a women's organizer, but were not empowered to follow their aspirations due to a lack of self-confidence, financial constraints and time allocation problems (Respondent 5, Respondent 6). These results confirm that socio-cultural gender norms in Ghana largely determine the roles appropriate for women in society and that most women are socialized with the belief that they have to prioritize 'female' tasks in the household and the market and cannot become political leaders, which seems to be reserved for men (Sossou 2011, 5; Acheampong and Dinye 2015, 200). Furthermore, they confirm findings from other studies around obstacles such as lack of education, lack of self-esteem and self-confidence, financial constraints, time-constraints, insults and verbal abuse that restrict women's opportunities to become actively engaged in political decision-making and access leadership positions in politics (Sossou 2011, 4–6; Baba et al. 2018, 36; Osman and Abdulai 2018, 137; Acheampong and Dinye 2015, 200; Bawa and Sanyare 2013, 287–88; Baah-Ennumh et al. 2005, 103–4; Gyimah 2008, 74; Tagoe and Abakah 2015, 371–77; Abakah 2018, 10).

6.2.3 Communal sphere

Women in the case study were more active in communal activities than in politics. For example, they were members in communal associations, engaged in communal labor, and were part of groups that taught alternative livelihoods. However, they were less found in key decision-making positions of communal activities, but instead rather in positions that seem to be 'typical' female tasks such as summoning women for communal labor like cleaning the town and gathering rubbish, cooking food for laborers, and the position of treasurer and fundraiser. Many women stated that they involve in communal labor if they are called to do so or in case of any communal issues. "*When they call for communal labor, I involve myself in it*" (Respondent 1). Another woman stated "*Maybe they come*

to do something [...], somewhere is damaged and everyone is asked to bring some quantity of gravels. I engage myself in things like that, I don't exclude myself" (Respondent 8). A typical role given to women in communal activities was to summon all the people, especially the women, when it was about tidying up the town by sweeping and gathering rubbish.

"With communal labor, when we go, we go to tidy up the town. When we have tools, we weed, and we sweep. [...] For that, I am part of those who summon the people. I go around to call the people, then they come together for the work to be done. [...] I am the organizer. [...] When the announcement is made, we are already aware of the work to be done. "Every woman should take a broom, a basket, a rubbish collector. And the men too should take the machete and weed". We the women usually sweep and gather the rubbish to the refuse dump" (Respondent 2).

This statement shows how strong gender roles of women that clean and sweep, and men who weed, are manifested and reinforced in community activities. Another woman stated:

"If the women are to go and do communal labor or if we are to weed around the borehole and its surroundings, I am able to say it and we all get it done. [...] It is like my husband is the assembly man, so when we go to do such work, I am able to tell what has to be done. [...] When I was the women's organizer – when we had communal labor - I was the one who decided the times we had to go and where exactly we had to clean, like the refuse dump, etc." (Respondent 3).

This statement on the one hand shows how communal and political activities become intertwined and demonstrates the hierarchy between men and women in both spheres. As the women's organizer of a political party, which is often the highest position given to women, it is one of the tasks to gather the women in the village to sweep and gather rubbish. This shows how women who want to be active in politics and in their communities are being reduced to their gender roles, instead of putting them in key decision-making positions. In contrast, her husband who is in a key decision-making position in the local assembly is delegating the 'female' tasks top-down to his wife, who is then put in charge to summon the women for cleaning. Another role typically performed by women during communal labor is to cook food for the laborers, which in the same way reflects how female gender roles who cook food are manifested in community activities.

"I can even cook food for the workers who will be involved in the project, for instance those who will be drilling the boreholes, I can do something like that to help them or I can even offer them accommodation" (Respondent 8).

One woman was active in the Parent's and Teachers' association of a local school where she was supporting the fundraising for the school.

“If there is anything damaged in the school, myself and other people are able to raise money to ensure that the problem is fixed. [...] We are able to raise it [money] for purchases to be done and also get people to help fix what is damaged. Formerly, this school building was not yet built, so we used to raise funds to help before this one was built” (Respondent 1).

Furthermore, she stated to contribute financially in the case of communal issues, such as a damaged pipe. *“When they say that maybe the pipe is damaged and we have to contribute towards its repairs, I am able to give some money”* (Respondent 1). Despite her commitment and financial contributions, she was not in a key-decision making position in the community, even though she aspired to. *“At first, I could be selected among the PTA [Parent’s and Teachers’ association] [...] even as a Chairman. [...] [But] as for me, I am only part of the supporters”* (Respondent 1). Another woman stated that she was part of a communal group who was taught how to make soap for communal sales and savings and that she was the treasurer of the group’s revenues. *“I used to be in a group which trains on how to produce soap [...]. The key to the group’s money was with me”* (Respondent 4).

Abakah (2018, 12) found that Ghanaian women’s participation in community projects is usually higher than in politics, because those activities are perceived to have a direct benefit on their immediate needs and well-being, compared to political participation. Similar conclusions can be drawn from this study. Women were much more active in communal activities than in politics and often had the understanding that political participation does not bring them any direct rewards. However, even though women were very active in their communities, gender roles determined the positions and tasks appropriate for women. Therefore, they were often in charge of organizing women for sweeping and gathering rubbish in the villages, cooking food for workers, or holding the position of the treasurer. This confirms findings by Abakah (2018, 12) who found that women’s participation in the implementation of community projects is rather passive through providing labor or cooking food for workers and less active through participating in decision-making during planning and implementation of communal work and programs. Furthermore, it confirms findings by Gotschi et al. (2008, 652–53) who found that women were less likely to be put in leadership positions in group activities, besides the position of the treasurer because women are said to be more trustworthy in dealing with money. The results also coincide with cultural traditions in Ghana determining that women cannot become community chiefs and that key decisions for a community are taken only by men (Lambrecht 2016, 195).

6.3 Strategies of local organizations

In the frame of this study, strategies to address gender inequalities among cocoa farmers of two different forms of local organizations have been analyzed. First, strategies of the cocoa farmer cooperative Yayra Glover, which has been the focus of this case study, and second, strategies used in the CECA program carried out by the local institute IDEG. For both organizations, the two sub-themes that could be identified are strategies on the macro level and on the micro level. However, both organizations have their main focus on the micro level. I therefore provide a brief overview of the strategies on the macro level and focus on the analysis of the strategies on the micro level. The following figure provides an illustration of the development of this theme and the different strategies used by local organizations on the identified levels.

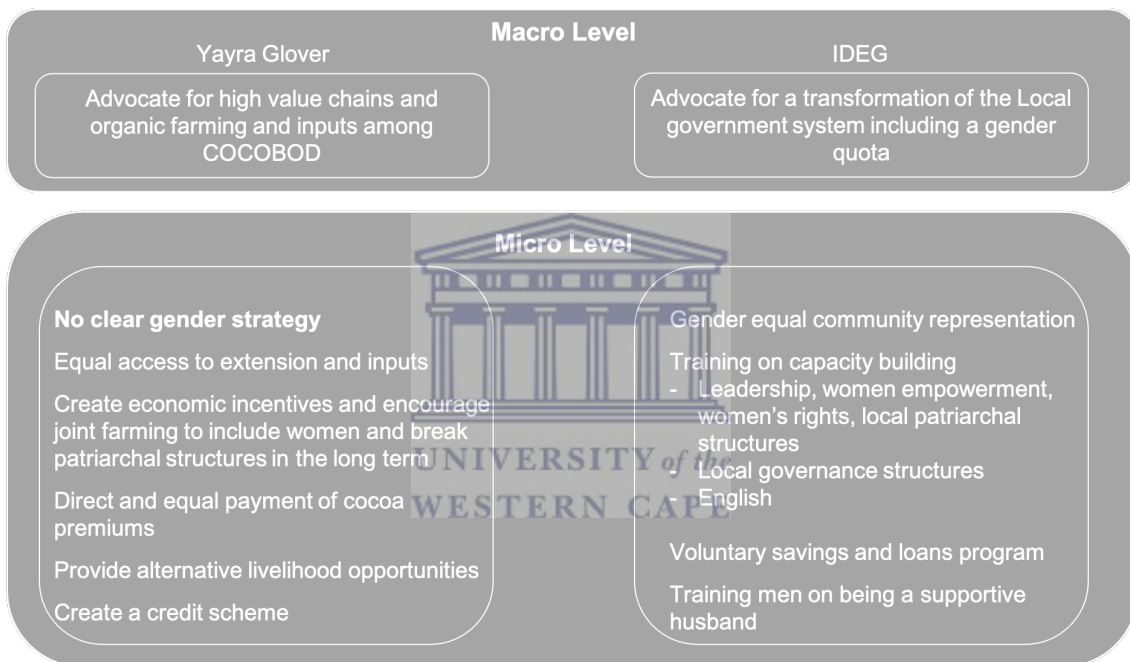


Figure 4: Strategies of local organizations on the macro and micro level

6.3.1 Macro level strategies

On the macro level, the Yayra Glover cooperative follows the strategy to advocate for high value agricultural chains on the national level and to link small-scale farmers in Ghana with high-value chains, which can especially benefit women. COCOBOD, which is the main provider of agricultural extension services and inputs for cocoa farmers in Ghana, is largely focusing on conventional cocoa production without value adding for farmers, based on the assumption that organic agriculture is less productive than conventional agriculture (Key informant 1). The Yayra Glover cooperative is therefore advocating among COCOBOD to increase their support for organic cocoa production, because it

can provide farmers with additional income due to the value that is added to their cocoa beans when they adhere to certain market standards. They follow a holistic business approach, following organic standards to respect the environment, meanwhile the organic quality adds value to the cocoa beans and ensures additional income through premiums to the farmer, which can especially benefit women. To ensure that farmers can earn additional income, one strategy is to work closely together with farmers and to provide access to information through market-oriented agricultural advisory services and training to link them with high-value chains.

“That is why we have employed [...] new field officers, cause you have to give market oriented agricultural advisory services. [...] What does the market want? Who gives the farmers that orientation towards what the market wants? Because the farmer sometimes is illiterate, [...] he’s got no access to the market. [...] The market wants something specific. And this must be produced by farmers that you really know. [...] Extension officers go, and they show them these things in pictures that “look, these are the standards, people want this, the market wants this, but you have to do this to get to what they want”. [...] So, part of the premium goes to the farmer, part goes into that training” (Key informant 1).

Small-scale farmers in general face challenges such as a lack of access to information, extension services, markets and financial means (Kariuki 2006, 45–47; La Cruz 2006, 70; Lyon 2003, 342; Swinnen et al. 2013, 297; Van der Meer 2006, 213–14; Manchón and Macleod 2010, 375). However, extensive literature on the gender gap in agriculture proves that female small-scale farmers are disproportionately disadvantaged (see Chapter 2.1). Therefore, there is indication that participation in high-value chains, especially those of cash crops such as cocoa, can in particular benefit women through access to agricultural extension and knowledge, increased income and financial independence, decision-making power, self-esteem, and more gender equity within their households and communities (Chiputwa and Qaim 2016, 1253; Farnworth and Hutchings 2009, 27–28; Uttingchamorro 2005, 595; Le Mare 2012, 99; Lyon et al. 2010, 93; Meemken and Qaim 2018, 39; Setboonsarng and Gregorio 2017, 8; Verhart and Pyburn 2012, 75–76; Hill and Vigneri 2014, 326; IFPRI 2002, 4; AGSF 2005). According to one key informant, this additional income especially benefits female farmers because it allows them, amongst other things, to cover costs for farm labour to compensate for work they cannot do themselves due to a lack of physical strength.

“Sometimes when it’s too difficult for them [the women], they need to have premiums to be able to pay laborers to work for them. That is also why most of them are in this certification program because they want to earn extra money to take care of their farms” (Key informant 1).

Because of that, the cooperative is trying to encourage more women to join organic cocoa production in order for them to benefit from additional income. *“We don’t have a lot of women doing direct cocoa business. But we can encourage more”* (Key informant 1). Since COCOBOD is the only authorized provider of agricultural inputs such as fertilizer or pesticides in Ghana, another strategy of the cooperative is to lobby for the interests of organic farmers among COCOBOD to strengthen support for the provision of organic inputs that can support organic farmers to increase their yield and incomes. This has been explained to be quite of a challenge due COCOBOD’s focus on conventional farming.

“I have to really go lobby seriously before they buy what we really need. Because anybody can just bring the organic fertilizer or organic insecticide, but the question is whether these things are certified by Control Union or EcoCert. [...] People just think that organic means that well, it is not synthetic. But it doesn’t mean like that. It must be certified. [...] COCOBOD doesn’t care about this. [...] The market wants something, and the market tells exactly how these things must be produced. So that must be respected in the value chains. [...] They [COCOBOD] also contribute, in a way, to our success, but the challenge is that you must always go and be talking and be talking till one man is listening to you” (Key informant 1).

Furthermore, the cooperative is planning to provide additional inputs such as cutlasses for weeding to the farmers. Even though these inputs are provided to male and female farmers in the cooperative equally, providing inputs to female farmers especially contributes to closing the gender gap in agriculture since female farmers are more constrained in terms of access to and control over agricultural inputs and equipment (see Chapter 2.1).

IDEG’s strategy on the macro level refers to a transformation of the local government system to encourage development at the local level.

“We, as an institute, are leading the national advocacy for local government reform in the country. [...] At the moment, mayors are not elected from political parties. [...] The mayors are appointed by the president. [...] What we have seen throughout the years is that, the position of mayorship is one of reward for party people, like, those who support the party, they are rewarded. So, you realize that most of the mayors are not competent, number one. Number two, most of them are not accountable to the people because [...] they were not selected by the people” (Key informant 2).

The current local government system combined with a lack of political education might be one of the reasons why many women have the understanding that political participation has to come with direct rewards and sometimes leads to insults and fear to engage in politics among women. Further research could provide a clearer picture and investigate how transforming the local government system can address this issue. Another major part

of the local government transformation related to women is the introduction of a gender quota in local assemblies.

“Over the years, the numbers of women in leadership of public offices have dwindled and so, one of the proposals that we are making is what we call “mixed member proportional representation” whereby at the local level, 30% of all assembly member positions will be reserved for women to compete. So out of about [...] hundred seats in the assembly, now thirty will be reserved for women, strict for women. [...] Seventy here is open for both male and female [...]. So, what it means is that, at the end of the election, you would have at least 30% women if out of these 70% no woman wins at all [...]. So, this is the proposal that we have put in strongly on the table to ensure that at least women get [...] a fair representation in governance at the local level” (Key informant 2).

Also Bawa and Sanyare (2013, 285) as well as Bauer and Darkwah (2020, 101) criticize that Ghana does not have a constitutional guarantee for women’s representation in its local structures and lags far behind in women’s representation in parliaments compared to other African countries such as Mozambique, South Africa, or Rwanda who are among the world leaders in terms of women’s parliamentary representation (Dahlerup 2005, 145; UNDP 2018, 38–41). Therefore, women’s movements in Ghana are advocating for gender quotas that will improve their inclusion in decision-making processes (Ako-Nai and Obamamoye 2018, 61). There is an ongoing discussion around whether a gender quota and increased numbers of women in parliaments are sufficient to influence the political agenda and policy changes towards enhancing women’s opportunities (Bauer 2008, 362). In Ghana, one argument is that a quota system alone will not address the issues of internalization and socialization of gender roles and women's subordination. Due to society’s belief that women are born subordinate and not leaders, women are still not accepted in political leadership positions even if they have access to them, face insults and verbal abuse and constraints to influence political agendas (Bawa and Sanyare 2013, 289). Nevertheless, in countries like Rwanda, South Africa or Mozambique, there have been considerable legislative accomplishments and contributed towards a change in the perception of women’s roles in politics and society as a result of increased women’s representation by using gender quotas (Bauer 2008, 362). Furthermore, electoral gender quotas have helped to mitigate the impact of negative consequences of standing for office in many African countries. Bauer and Darkwah (2020, 114) argue that without gender quotas, Ghana will likely to remain with fewer women willing to consider electoral politics despite their aspirations.

6.3.2 Micro level strategies

Moving to the strategies on the micro level, it can be summarized that the Yayra Glover cooperative is yet to develop a clear gender strategy. However, there are certain approaches and ideas they are implementing or planning to implement in the future. The cooperative is aiming to challenge gender roles and break patriarchal structures by providing equal access to organic extension services and inputs regardless of gender. They encourage all women to attend the training and to make themselves and their husbands see them as farmers in their own right and as an individual person who is not a subordinate, does not need permission from a male person to attend training sessions and does not have to be represented by him. They are trying to encourage joint farming and joint training attendance in order to improve farming management.

“A man and a woman, they [both] go to the farm, so the two of them have to go to the training. [...] You tell them [the men], [...] the women are always with you on the farm and they have to also come for the training, so that you can increase your premium. Because the two of you will understand the same thing. If one is forgetting something, the other one is telling. So, you can have a perfect farming system” (Key informant 1).

The same key informant explained that male domination is very deeply rooted in the culture, and in order to break patriarchal structures and change unequal power relations between men and women, different steps were necessary. The further inclusion of women in the economic sphere should be linked to economic incentives for the whole household, including the men, so that in the long run, women can increasingly earn independent income and gain more decision-making power in their households.

“It must be hooked to something. [...] When they see that it’s profitable, they do it. The women must know what it is, and the men must know that when the woman is doing that, it’s good for him also. [...] The men here, they are very... [...] they dominate. And that is the culture. [...] [But] it will change [when men realize that women contribute to the wealth of the household]” (Key informant 1).

Furthermore, the premium for the cocoa beans is paid equally according to the amount of beans sold and paid directly regardless of the gender of the farmer.

“The premium, we make sure it’s given to everybody that has really sold cocoa. [...] On our side, what we [...] must do, [is] to make sure that everybody gets the premium equally for what he [or she] has done or delivered. [...] This is what we have to be driving at actually. [...] And this year, we are going to pay the premiums [...] directly to the people” (Key informant 1).

As mentioned in the previous section on macro strategies, the linking of small-scale farmers with high-value chains can specially benefit women through this additional income.

As described in the previous section, women confirmed that, especially the direct payment of the cocoa premium to women, without a middle person such as a purchasing clerk or her husband, gives women direct access to individual income that they are in control of and allows them to be financially more independent and to provide for their families. In turn, this increases their self-confidence to recognize themselves as farmers in their own right and as breadwinners in their households.

One strategy that has not yet been implemented but was high on the agenda of the cooperative by the time when the study was conducted was to provide alternative livelihood opportunities for farmers, especially women, that can support them in the cocoa low season. With a processing center and a chocolate factory, they want to create auxiliary businesses in addition to cocoa and create more opportunities for women to be included in the cocoa value chain through the creation of interdependent industries. *“You need to create interdependent industries. [...] Cocoa must lead to auxiliary [businesses]... So, Kakao [cocoa] should bring a Kettenreaktion [chain reaction]”*. This will allow women to overcome financial constraints, become financially more independent and become recognized as breadwinners in their households through earning independent income that is under women’s control. An example for such an interdependent industry and part of the cocoa chain reaction could be the production of alcohol or sweet drinks using so-called cocoa sweatings.

“We are going to introduce collection of the sweatings, the white water that comes from the cocoa. So, the women had to strain these and put them in the [...] pots for [...] producing alcohol or sweet drinks” (Key informant 1).

Another alternative livelihood opportunity as part of a cocoa chain reaction can be the production of soap with cocoa pods. *“I think they have to do byproducts, like soap that comes from the cocoa pods” (Key informant 1)*. In addition, they especially want to focus on drying and processing of organic fruits such as banana, guava, pineapple and mango or other products such as citronella grass in order for women to be able to sell additional agricultural products to the processing center to receive additional premiums. These would then either be sold as dried products or used in the chocolate factory for flavors.

“What we try to do in that sense is that we try to give them alternative livelihood opportunities. [...] I went to Germany now try to look for a machine to be able to process citronella grass, [...] things that they can plant quickly, within two weeks they harvest, whiles they wait for the new cocoa season” (Key informant 1).

Because the fruits grow on the organic certified cocoa farm, they can earn higher revenues by selling their organic products to the processing center than selling them on local markets where there are not premiums for organic products.

“How much is a woman going to get from a banana sale? But if we introduce a system where we say that “Look, the woman goes to the farm with you, she’s collecting the banana, she’s bringing it to the processing center here for processing” [...], they can earn more when they sell to the factory to process. [...] Banana is big there or guava is big and [can be] brought to the factory” (Key informant 1).

Furthermore, part of the cooperative’s strategy is to provide products such as coconuts or patchouli that can be grown farmers, especially women for production into oil.

“We also gave some coconuts to the farmers, so that in the future when cocoa is off season, they can actually sell coconuts to the factory for processing into oil. Patchouli [a plant to produce essential oil] [...] could be grown in the water bodies, [...] swampy areas” (Key informant 1).

Furthermore, they want to encourage women to engage in the processing of snails which is a business only possible with organic agriculture.

“People eat a lot of snails here. [...] So, [...] the women here, the local women can process that, we send it to Accra, they buy, they have good money. So, when you spray dangerous chemicals, you can’t get the snails” (Key informant 1).

Additional independent income in the control of women aside income from cocoa can further strengthen their financial independence, their self-confidence and lead to further recognition of women’s contribution to household income and change intra-household power relations with regards to decision-making.

Another strategy that the cooperative is planning to implement is to create a credit scheme for farmers in order to overcome financial constraints. This could benefit all farmers regardless of their gender but would disproportionately benefit female farmers since they face even more constraints with regards to accessing financial resources and credit (FAO 2011, 38; UNDP 1995, 39; The World Bank 2001, 52; Malapit et al. 2014, 36).

“What we could do is that we could have a Credit Union. [...] “You borrow five Cedis, you bring back five Cedis, fifty Pesewas at the end of the season”. [...] Five Cedis, fifty Pesewas is no money, but it means that we are helping people to grow slowly, to put up their own capital. So, “you bring the cocoa, we buy it, but we deduct the fifty pesewas, because we have taken the cocoa for the thing, we deduct fifty, we give you balance”” (Key informant 1).

According to one key informant, one of the biggest obstacles for small-scale farmers to receive credit is that they don’t keep good records of their farming revenues.

“Most farmers [...] do not keep good records. [...] For you to give credit you need to know how much is coming regularly. You also need to be assured that, the fund, [...] that they will receive, [...] they will get regular income and pay you [back]” (Key informant 2).

The cooperative’s strategy to overcome this issue is to further consolidate their database with the records about the regular yields of each individual farmer.

“A normal LBC cannot do that but only an LBC that has got a farmer-based organization with a list of farmers knowing the size of the farms and how many bags of cocoa each farmer is bringing at the end of [the season]. So, what we have here at Yayra Glover is a data base, and now, I have employed a lot of people [...] because [...] I want to consolidate that data base” (Key informant 1).

The micro-level strategy of IDEG’s CECA program mainly includes training in cocoa growing communities on various aspects that fall under the overall topic of capacity building, whereby they set a specific focus on building the capacities of women.

“IDEG’s role [...] is to build the capacity of citizens in cocoa communities, so that they can advocate for [...] their own development. [...] And here, we are looking at [...] two main objectives. One, building the capacity of women or helping women move up within [...] the leadership structure in the community. [...] So, one area of the project [...] is trying to build the capacity of women. In the second place, it’s trying to build the community, so that they are also able to advocate for their own development needs” (Key informant 2).

Training sessions are carried out on a quarterly basis on the district level with four representatives from each community, whereby each community has to select equal numbers of men and women as their representatives for the training. Representatives will then carry the information from the training sessions into their respective communities.

„For each community we have representatives that we train. And the idea is for them to receive the training and then go back to the community and share what they have learned” (Key informant 3).

“In each community, we select [...] an average of four people, whom we call governance issues forum network [GIFNET]. These are people that we train to champion and lead advocacy in each community. [...] We make sure that in the selection of the people from this GIFNET, we select equal number of male and females. [...] So, from each community, you select two male, two female” (Key informant 2).

Training sessions for example address aspects such as leadership and advocacy for community development and give women the opportunity to moderate sessions to provide them with a space where they can become more comfortable speaking in public (Key informant 2). One major objective is to empower women to engage in decision-making, but also to inform women about local patriarchal structures and about women’s rights.

“One of the [...] key pillars of the intervention is to empower women and get them more involved in decision-making [...] and generally development in their communities. [...] Empowering the women also involves informing them” (Key informant 3).

Some of the key achievements of the program are that women have become more confident, informed and outspoken, take up leadership roles in their communities and in the local government which challenges patriarchal structures as this key informant explains:

“They have evolved. They are no longer timid. [...] We have experiences of people [women] who said they couldn’t even stand before a crowd and now are aspiring to be assembly members in the local governance structure there. [...] So, the program [...] builds them up. [...] The program has an add on some of the capabilities in some of the women. [...] Even in a very typical men dominated area, you find women that are now able to, in spite of the men being around, stand up and then address a gathering or even lead. [...] And when you ask them “who can do this?”, they willingly stand up without having to be coursed into those things. And we have, [...] women taking up leadership roles. [...] Some of them broad out talents that they didn’t know they [...] had in the first place” (Key informant 3).

Furthermore, society’s perception of appropriate roles for women in the public sphere is changing. Women are increasingly seen as champions to lead development in their communities which makes them happy and improves their self-esteem and self-confidence. This positive impact is not only seen among the women who are trained, but also trickles down to other women in the community.

„Hitherto, they were [...] so timid, [...] they didn’t except that, but now they are able to lead many things in their [...] communities and then, now, at the assembly level, too, they have become popular because they are seen as champions in their communities and the feeling of being able to lead the community and also be able to lobby at the district level makes them very happy. At least, they are no more timid, they are no more uninformed, but now they are informed. They know what [...] information to get, where to get it. [...] And it’s not just those that we train, but those that we train carry the message to their community members” (Key informant 2)-

Another major aspect of the training is to inform communities about local government structures and the government business cycle, about how to engage with local governments and assemblies, and to provide an interface between communities and local governments (Key informant 2). *“We create a platform for them to interact with various stakeholders in the community. So that could be [...] a district chief executive, [...] the police commander, [...] the director of education” (Key informant 3).* Some of the key achievements of this part of the training is that community members, especially women, better understand local government structures, are now able to engage with the local

assembly and have “transformed [...] from being passive to become more active” (Key informant 2).

“Communities which hitherto, they didn’t know much about governance, [...], could not engage with the assembly, [...] they didn’t even know what the role of the local government was, now understand their role. [...] We built the capacity of the people to the level that they are now able to engage effectively. [...] and then how the community members have become actively engaged citizens. [...] And most of them have actually become agents of change in their community because they’re able to champion issues of development in their communities. They bring out issues and issues are addressed” (Key informant 2).

According to another key informant the interaction with different community stakeholders through the platform provided by IDEG also contributes to an increase of women’s self-confidence.

“When you bring such people and then they are able to interact with them, it builds up their confidence, too, cause they see them no to be so far away from them. [...] We bring them closer to them, they are able to interact” (Key informant 3).

Furthermore, IDEG has advocated to use one of the local languages during meetings, so women who have problems with the English language are not excluded and disadvantaged. In addition, women who have been less vocal in public because they have problems with the English language, have got the possibility to be taken through basic English classes, to become more confident to speak up in the public sphere when meetings are held in English. For example, other women in the communities who are teachers are engaged by the IDEG program to offer English classes to other women in their communities (Key informant 2).

Beyond this, IDEG collaborates with other organizations to provide cocoa farmers, especially women, with access to credit through a voluntary savings and loan program, called VSLE (Key informant 2). This has supported them to make small savings and mobilize funds within their communities to get loans to invest in a business.

“Training them on how to do these voluntary savings [...] that’s really doing a lot of money in the communities. That’s really helping them mobilize funds from themselves to do business. [...] It’s helping them address the issues of limited access to credit” (Key informant 2).

Another important strategy, implemented by an organization that IDEG collaborates with, is to actively involve men in challenging gender norms, patriarchal structures and in empowering women through training on gender issues and being a supportive husband.

According to one key informant, the training contributed to an increasing change of behaviors among men who become more supportive for the empowerment of women.

I remember recently we had a meeting with one of them. [...] I was asking her if... [...], it was getting a bit late, if her husband wouldn't be bothered and she said "no, when it comes to [...] [IDEG] meetings, he is even the one who says "hurry up and go", so it's fine with him"" (Key informant 3).

“Across differences of class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, age and religion, one of the few commonalities that men share, as a ‘distinct group’, is their gender privilege. [...] Yet men, regardless of their positioning in other hierarchical structures, generally have a strategic common interest in defending and not challenging their gender privilege” (Greig et al. 2000, 1). Among men in Ghana, this defense and perpetuation of the status-quo of unequal power relations is often based on the preservation of cultural traditions (Dery 2020). This stresses the importance of the inclusion of men in interventions toward achieving gender equality in the Ghanaian context. “Not having to think about gender is one of the patriarchal dividends that men gain from their position in the gender order. Men tend not to think of themselves as ‘gendered’ beings, and this is one reason why policy makers and development practitioners, both men and women, often misunderstand or dismiss ‘gender’ as a woman’s issue” (Greig et al. 2000, 1). Therefore, there is a growing global discussion stressing the importance of the inclusion of men as the advantaged group and power holders in actions towards achieving gender equality (Connell 2005, 1805–6; Sweetman 2013; United Nations 2008). Greig et al. (2000, 1) argue that without a focus on men and a change in men’s lives and without examining questions of men’s responsibility for women’s disadvantage, achieving gender equality is not possible. Current interventions of transformative change include the deconstruction of gender roles and gender identity, not only in relation to women, but also in relation to men and traditional norms of what it means to be a man and what is seen as masculine. Their focus lies on a construction of nondominant masculine identities, also called the “new” man with “new” and gender equality-oriented masculinities (Bach 2019, 338; Greig et al. 2000, 1–2; Ratele 2015, 144; Sweetman 2013, 4–8; United Nations 2008).

6.4 Recommendations to develop a clear gender strategy

This section brings the empirical results regarding the challenges, participation in decision-making and strategies in relation to each other in order to provide recommendations as to how the Yayra Glover cooperative can improve their strategies to overcome gender-based inequalities and contribute to the eradication of the gender gap in agriculture. Two different streams of recommendations have emerged from the data as two sub-themes:

First, recommendations that can be given based on the suggestions made by the women in the cooperative; and second, recommendations based on the experiences of IDEG's CECA program. Recommendations from these two streams are discussed and complemented by further recommendations that emerged from the literature review. Furthermore, within those sub-themes, two categories of recommendations have developed as sub-sub-themes: first, recommendations related to providing equal access to agricultural extension services, inputs and high-value chains; and second, recommendations that go beyond extension, inputs and access to high-value chains, whereby the cooperative might seek for support from other organizations. The Yayra Glover cooperative already has some strategies in place and ideas that are yet to be implemented in order to tackle gender inequalities in cocoa growing communities in Ghana. Women are up to a certain degree actively involved in activities and decision-making in their households, the economic, communal and political sphere. However, women still face severe challenges in all the domains studied due to gender-based inequalities in agency and empowerment. Against this background, and based on the suggestions given by women themselves, I strongly recommend adopting a participatory approach to develop a clear gender strategy, as has also been recommended by other scholars (The World Bank 2010, 4; 2001, 241–42; Doherty 2018, 151–52; Sexsmith 2019, 39; Nakazi et al. 2017, 14; Mudege et al. 2016, 300; Farnworth and Hutchings 2009, 6; The World Bank et al. 2009, 70). The gender strategy should include existing strategies and should be complemented by the implementation of other planned ideas and further recommendations based on women's suggestions, experiences from IDEG's CECA program, and literature. The following figure summarizes the recommendations for the Yayra Glover cooperative to develop a gender strategy through a participatory approach.

Adopt a participatory approach to develop a gender strategy

- 1) Improve communication between field officers and women to ensure equal access to training
- 2) Increase share of female extension officers and facilitate gender sensitization of staff
- 3) Support the formation of female-only FBOs
- 4) Ensure gender equal representation in all levels of the cooperative structure
- 5) Provide additional gender-friendly inputs and ensure that inputs and premium come on time
- 6) Develop alternative livelihood opportunities
- 7) Create a credit scheme to support women for weeding their farms and investing in alternative livelihoods
- 8) Facilitate capacity building among women in communities to strengthen their self-confidence and get them more involved in decision-making and leadership roles
- 9) Facilitate gender sensitization training for the whole community with one focus on men
- 10) Facilitate training on local governance structures

Figure 5: Recommendations to develop a clear gender strategy

6.4.1 Recommendations given based on suggestions made by women

The first stream of recommendations is based on suggestions that have been given by women during interviews when they were asked about how the cooperative could further support women in cocoa growing communities. One category of these recommendations relates to the facilitation of equal access to extension services and inputs. The first recommendation that was identified based on those suggestions in this category is for the cooperative to increase communication between their field officers and women in the cooperative through organizing the women and enter into a dialogue about the challenges they face and how they can be supported. In particular, this was mentioned in relation to women's challenges regarding their various activities, time-conflicts and inability to attend training regularly. In particular, women suggested assessing which days are the best for organizing training, so they will not clash with their activities, such as on market days.

“What they can do to help is that they could meet with them [women] and ask “What can we, the organic people, do to help so that our meeting days do not clash with your market days to enable you attend the meetings?” What days will be the best for organizing the meetings so they can attend” (Respondent 1).

Furthermore, women often mentioned that, in order to be able to coordinate and manage their activities and incorporate training attendance, it would be helpful for them if field officers would communicate the days and times for training earlier.

“Whenever they want to come, they can send the information early. For instance, if it is Thursday that they will come, then the information should come like Sunday, then we will be able to prepare. Sometimes, if they are coming

for instance tomorrow, the information comes today. In this case, you would've already scheduled other things to do. In that case, there's nothing that can be done. But if the information comes early enough, you will be able to adjust your time and attend the training" (Respondent 12).

Women also stated that they felt the need for women to organize themselves as a group using the expression *"we, the women, have to organize ourselves"* (Respondent 4, Respondent 5) and also to encourage more women to join the cooperative (Respondent 5). One woman suggested that women should meet and join forces to start a joint business, for example to jointly invest in a plot of land or the like that they can use as additional source of income (Respondent 6). Some women were also in favor of organizing separate training sessions for women only. *"In my opinion, I will say that it be organized only for women [...]. As for me, the one for the women should be organized separately from that of the men"* (Respondent 6). Reasons mentioned for why women felt this would be helpful were for example the complex issues of women around their farming work that could be given specific attention to, which would give women valuable information and encourage them to attend frequently. *"Because women, our issues are complicated, so when we get such a support it will help, so that we can be serious with our work"* (Respondent 5). Another woman stated:

"If the meeting is held [for only women] and the women are summoned, the things that would be discussed and taught are what would encourage us. [...] Women will attend; we would attend. [Pause] Maybe all I know is to weed the cocoa, but since at the meeting I would be taught what else to do after weeding that would enrich my work, I would attend. So, for the meeting, if you summon us [women], we will be there" (Respondent 9).

Women clearly stated what difference it would make for them if they were able to attend training every time it is conducted and personally obtain information.

"I will have the opportunity to go and listen myself and that will help more than someone else relaying the information to me because the person might not give accurate information" (Respondent 3).

Personally obtaining information will also increase women's agency and decision-making power within their households in relation to decisions regarding farming activities. Women would be less dependent on information and knowledge from their husbands, would be more regarded as farmers in their own right and take their own decisions regarding their farms without having the need to be advised by husbands, or will have more decision-making power in joint decision-making situations.

"When I attend, I will know what has been said, and when I hear that, I will get some lessons out of it. [...] So, both of us can sit down and decide on

things that this or that, when done this or that way will be helpful/successful.”
(Respondent 8).

These suggestions given by women strongly confirm the recommendations given by other studies to farmer organizations carrying out agricultural extension and training. They recommend to adopt a participatory approach and communicate with women to identify and address challenges that prevent women from joining FBOs and from attending trainings, to organize trainings at times that make them more accessible for women and to promote the formation of FBOs made up only by women (The World Bank 2010, 4; Sexsmith 2019, 34–39; Quisumbing and Pandolfelli 2010, 586). Against the background that all field officers in the Yayra Glover cooperative are male, additional recommendations for designing extension and training in a more gender-sensitive manner, are to increase the share of female extension officers to carry out training and to facilitate gender sensitization among all staff (The World Bank 2010, 4; FAO 1993, 63; The World Bank et al. 2009, 282; Mudege et al. 2016, 300; Gotschi et al. 2008, 655; Cahn and Liu 2008, 143; Percy 2000, 25–26; Saito et al. 1994, 75; Meinzen-Dick et al. 2011, 62; Due et al. 1997, 723; Moore et al. 2001, 98; Lahai et al. 1999). Many studies showed that the employment of female extension officers had improvements for female farmers, not only because it can overcome cultural barriers of communication between males and females, but also because female agents are better able to identify and understand complex challenges and preferences specific to female farmers (Saito et al. 1994, 75; Meinzen-Dick et al. 2011, 62; Moore et al. 2001, 98; Due et al. 1997, 723). Lahai et al. (1999) showed that women farmers in Nigeria who were supervised by female extension officers had more access to extension services than women farmers who worked with male officers. They had higher levels of awareness and participation of the extension activities organised, adoption of and technical knowledge of recommended practices and satisfaction with the quality of agents' services and credibility. Gender sensitization training of staff can challenge extension officers' stereotypical views regarding gender roles in communities, of women who are not seen as farmers in their own right and create awareness on the role of women in agriculture and their specific challenges and needs (FAO 1993, 62–63; Mudege et al. 2016, 303; The World Bank et al. 2009, 282; Cahn and Liu 2008, 143; Percy 2000, 25–26; Gotschi et al. 2008, 655). Furthermore, scholars recommend to ensure that male and female farmers have equal chances of being recruited as members and also into key decision-making and leadership roles at all levels of the cooperative, for example through women's quotas for equal representation (The World Bank 2010, 4; 2001, 241–42; Doherty 2018, 151–52; Sexsmith 2019, 39; Nakazi et al. 2017, 14; Mudege et al. 2016,

300; Farnworth and Hutchings 2009, 6; The World Bank et al. 2009, 70). Such gender quotas and equal representation in cooperatives and group activities have resulted into increased gender equality and women empowerment among members of the Kuapa Kokoo cooperative (Doherty 2018, 151–52) and in cocoa growing communities participating in IDEG’s CECA program (Key informant 2; Key informant 3).

Another suggestion given by women was that the cooperative could support them by providing further inputs in addition to organic fertilizers and insecticides, as well as financial support to be able to weed their farms. Inputs that were needed most, according to women, are machetes, rubber boots, so-called ‘wellington’ boots, and machines, such as a spraying machine.

“If you could help us with cutlasses, machines, or money that we can be able to use for the work, that will help us. [...] Particularly, I need a ‘wellington boot’. [...] For us women, if our shoes come off at a point and we take it to be repaired, we don’t have anything to cover our feet with. If you can assist by providing some for us, it will help us” (Respondent 10).

As mentioned in the section on strategies, the cooperative is planning to provide more farming implements to farmers. However, against the background that farm implements are often inappropriate and too heavy for women, and that women are therefore often not able to utilize them or the use results in back pain, the cooperative could especially provide women-friendly farm implements to women. This could make much of the farm work less tedious for women, could reduce women’s dependency on male strength and labor and therefore also reduce their labor costs and financial constraints and increase farm productivity (Hope et al. 2009, 72; Ferguson and Moosa 2011, 27; Singh et al. 2006, 230; 2019, 54; The World Bank et al. 2009, 289; Hansda 2017, 191–92). Also Singh et al. (2006, 242) advocate for women-friendly farm tools that have to be made more known and available among farm women for their awareness and utilization. Furthermore, in order to assist women with the weeding of their farms, another suggestion by women was to provide access to credit to women during low cocoa season.

“Sometimes, they [women] complain that that is the time [low season] that they should get some money not as grant but as loan so that when the cocoa comes, it can be deducted from the proceeds that the farmers will get from selling their cocoa” (Respondent 11).

This suggestion very much coincides with the idea of the cooperative to create a credit scheme for farmers in which the debt is deducted from the cocoa proceeds. As mentioned in the previous section, this could benefit all farmers regardless of their gender but would disproportionately benefit female farmers since they face even more constraints with

regards to accessing financial resources and credit (FAO 2011, 38; UNDP 1995, 39; The World Bank 2001, 52; Malapit et al. 2014, 36) and are more dependent on hiring labor to get their farms weeded due challenges related to physical strength. In relation to financial constraints to weed farms and with regards to farming inputs, it was often suggested by women that the cooperative should ensure the timely provision of the cocoa premium and the organic inputs in order to optimize farming activities and yields, because the premiums are often used to hire labor.

“We observe that usually the premium delays. This season, that there is no cocoa, is the ideal time we should receive it, so we can use it to start work on the farm [...]. But most times, there are delays. So, it will be good if that can change because it also delays our work. If they change it and make it ready by at least July or August, that will be fine” (Respondent 7).

The delay in the provision of the organic inputs such as fertilizer and insecticide strongly related to the challenges with regards to the lack of support from COCOBO for organic farming in general and the provision of inputs for organic farmers mentioned by the key informant in the cooperative. Therefore, macro level policy recommendations for the Ghanaian government and COCOBOD in response to these challenges will be formulated at the end of this section.

The second category of recommendations refers to strategies that go beyond providing equal access to extension services, inputs and high-value chains. For the implementation of some of the recommendations the cooperative could partner with other organizations. The first recommendation in this category is for the cooperative to develop a livelihood diversification strategy for women in order to overcome the lack of alternative livelihoods. Hereby they should adopt a participatory approach by organizing women in order to assess their individual strengths and which alternative livelihoods are the most suitable for the individual women.

“If you call all women, it will be helpful, because knowledge isn’t resident in only one person. Maybe, there could be other persons who have ideas to share. When you call us together, others could also make suggestions. [...] Not all of us are traders. Some might have different ideas to share and those of us traders can also share our ideas. [...] So, when all the women are called together and listened to, probably someone might have another idea. [...] So, when you call us and we come together, everyone has ideas. Through that you will be able to tell what to do” (Respondent 8).

As mentioned in the previous section, the cooperative is working on providing alternative livelihood opportunities for women, such as selling dried fruits, processing snails, collecting cocoa sweating for production of drinks, and soap-making from cocoa pods.

Especially learning vocational skills to diversify livelihoods aside from agriculture can have benefits for women to become financially more independent.

“For a woman, it is helpful if she has something small that she can use to trade, so as not to be in need [for money from the man]. If she can make some little income for her child or her grandchild if they are in need it will prevent poverty. [...] Like some handiwork [vocational skills] [...] like soap-making and the like” (Respondent 10)

As explained in the section on challenges, a self-employed non-agricultural business that is not dependent on fixed market days can also improve women’s access to training sessions. Women have more freedom in managing their time schedule which allows them to manage their time more effectively and arrange business activities and training alongside each other. Furthermore, women suggested that the cooperative should support them with additional credit to be able to invest in a new business and expand existing businesses (Respondent 7; Respondent 8). In correspondence with this suggestion, the cooperative could assist with the implementation of a voluntary savings and loans scheme such as implemented by IDEG’s CECA program, where such a scheme has helped to mobilize funds in cocoa growing communities to invest in alternative livelihoods (Key informant 2).

6.4.2 Recommendations given based on strategies used in IDEG’s CECA program

Other recommendations arising from the experiences by IDEG’s CECA program are to facilitate different types of capacity building and training for women and men in cocoa growing communities in order to challenge internalized gender roles and unequal power relations. Many of the recommendations above only seem to improve strategies in a way that help women adapt to existing patriarchal structures but do not directly challenge the internalized stereotypical thinking of gender division of labor and appropriate roles for women in decision-making in the private and the public sphere in society. Besides giving women better access to productive resources such as farming inputs, extension services, credit, and additional income, it is necessary to address the deeply internalized gender roles and unequal power relations between men and women in society. Capacity building among women in the CECA program has proven to improve their self-confidence and self-esteem, overcome language barriers, and improve their ability to engage in decision-making and in leadership (Key informant 2; Key informant 3). Furthermore, many scholars have recently highlighted the importance of the inclusion of men in achieving gender equality and deconstructing gender roles and patriarchal structures through gender sensitization and training on new gender-equality oriented masculinities (Connell 2005, 1805–

6; Sweetman 2013, 4–8; United Nations 2008; Bach 2019, 338; Greig et al. 2000, 1–2; Ratele 2015, 144). Only with such an approach, gender roles, gender division of labor and women’s time-conflicts can be challenged, as well as the non-recognition of women’s contributions to the household through domestic work and various economic activities. Only when internalized gender roles about women and men are addressed and challenged, women will have the possibility to be recognized for their contributions and gain power in decision-making in their households. Furthermore, stereotypes about appropriate roles for women in the public sphere have to be challenged, in order for women to be able to not only participate more, but also have better access to leadership positions in the communal and political sphere, without being victims of insults and verbal abuse. Especially in the political sphere, this can be accompanied with training on the local governance structure. Experiences in IDEG’s CECA program have shown that such training can empower communities, especially women, to champion the development of their communities and to take up leadership roles in local assemblies (Key informant 2; Key informant 3).

Many other scholars have argued that, in order to establish a larger structural change in a context where cultural values constrain women’s ability to make choices, the role of farmer organizations has to go beyond delivering technology and knowledge and linking farmers with high-value chains. Equally important for women is the delivery of non-technology services in the form of women and community empowerment programs, such as capacity development for livelihood diversification, trainings on political participation and leadership, marketing and negotiating skills, and gender sensitization campaigns in communities to challenge social gender norms and patriarchal structures (Gladwin et al. 2001, 199–200; Gotschi et al. 2008, 655; Jafry and Sulaiman 2013, 483; Lahai et al. 1999; Lambrecht et al. 2016, 863; Meinzen-Dick et al. 2011, 62; Mudege et al. 2016, 300; Ragasa et al. 2013, 466; Sulaiman and Hall 2004; The World Bank 2001, 241; The World Bank et al. 2009, 67–283; Nakazi et al. 2017, 14; Wrigley-Asante 2012, 359; Gyimah 2008, 75–76; Tagoe and Abakah 2015, 379; Osman and Abdulai 2018, 132; Utting-chamorro 2005, 597; Doherty 2018, 160; Kabeer 1999, 457). Only if farmer groups adopt clear gender strategies, can women’s benefit go beyond improved access to assets and income. Benefits from gains in decision-making power, control over agricultural activities, self-esteem, self-confidence, greater awareness and advocacy for their rights, financial independence, negotiating, marketing and leadership skills and overall transformed gender-power relations in their households and communities can even be of more

significance to women than the direct economic benefits (Burchi and Vicari 2014, 359; Ferguson and Kepe 2011, 425–26; Manchón and Macleod 2010, 379–82; Nakazi et al. 2017, 14; Doherty 2018, 151–52; Quisumbing and Pandolfelli 2010, 589; Smith 2015, 417; The World Bank et al. 2009, 63–68). It has especially been emphasized by women to adopt a participatory approach on all levels of the development of strategies to support women’s empowerment and to organize women in order to find out about the challenges they face and how women can be supported individually. This has also been stressed by Sexsmith (2019, 29) who recommends to “conduct research with local women to understand what empowerment means to them and how it would be realized from their points of view”. She argues that women’s understanding of empowerment is diverse in terms of the areas in which they want to be empowered and can vary between different women who have different needs, goals and desires. From a theoretical point of view, this reflects the different capabilities of women, the freedoms they have reasons to value, and of which capacity building and training can help them to acquire the agency to turn them into actual achievements (functionings).

Further macro level policy recommendations can be given to the Ghanaian government, especially to COCOBOD. First, the Ghanaian government should strengthen equal access to education in rural areas in order to reduce women’s dependency on male education and increase women’s independence, self-confidence and agency in the private and the public sphere. Second, the introduction of a gender quota system in national and local governance structures has the potential to increase women’s opportunities to engage in political decision-making and leadership and to influence the political agenda towards women’s interests and gender equality (Bauer 2008, 362; Bauer and Darkwah 2020, 114). Third, COCOBOD should strengthen their support for organic farming methods and for cooperatives to link small-scale farmers, especially women, with high-value chains. They should make sure that they do not further contribute to a delay in the provision of inputs such as fertilizer and insecticides to organic farmers. Fourth, COCOBOD should increase awareness and availability of women-friendly farming tools among female farmers in Ghana in order to make farm work less tedious for women, reduce women’s dependency on male strength and labor, reduce their labor costs and financial constraints and increase farm productivity (Hope et al. 2009, 72; Ferguson and Moosa 2011, 27; Singh et al. 2006, 230; 2019, 54; The World Bank et al. 2009, 289; Hansda 2017, 191–92).

This chapter provided an extensive presentation of the findings and discussion of the data according to the main themes i.e. the internalization of gender roles and patriarchal

structures; women's participation in decision-making; strategies used by local organizations; and recommendations to develop a clear gender strategy. These main themes had several subthemes which were interrelated across the main themes and visually illustrated by figures 2-5. The next chapter presents an overall summary of these findings with conclusion, limitations of the study and recommendations for future research.



Chapter 7

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations for further research

This chapter provides a summary of the results of the study, some concluding remarks, as well as a summary of the limitations of the study and recommendations for further research that these limitations imply.

7.1 Summary and Conclusion

The primary aim of the study was to explore the experiences of female small-scale organic cocoa farmers in rural Ghana with regards to gender-based inequality in agency and empowerment in their households, community, economic and political spheres against the background of SDG 5. In particular, one objective was to explore the extent to which women are engaged in decision-making within the household, community, economic and political spheres in rural Ghana. Another objective of the study was to explore existing strategies that local farmer cooperatives follow in order to bridge the gender gap in agriculture, as well as to provide recommendations to improve farmer cooperatives towards addressing SDG 5. The study was conducted among women in the Yayra Glover cooperative in the Suhum District, a rural area in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The Yayra Glover cooperative is the only cooperative in Ghana that is also an LBC focusing on organic cocoa production by providing organic inputs, extension services and training on organic production to farmers to link them with high-value chains. They were working with 1290 farmers in 9 communities at the time of conducting the research, out of which 12 women from 4 communities were purposefully selected as participants for the study and with whom a semi-structured in-depth interview was conducted. Furthermore, two key informant interviews with three key informants with one of the leaders of the Yayra Glover cooperative and a project manager and officer of IDEG's CECA program were conducted for data triangulation.

Summarizing the major results concerning research questions 1, main challenges for women to become active agents in all the spheres studied (household, economic, communal and political) are related to the internalization of gender specific roles and patriarchal structures embedded in the local culture. Gender roles result in a clear gender division of labor and responsibilities as well as unequal power relations, women's subordination and male superiority, in the household and the public sphere. Typical female gender roles make women responsible for all unpaid domestic and care work, to go to the market to sell produce from her own and her husband's farm and to buy food for the home. The 'typical' gender division of responsibilities is that the male is the household head and the

main breadwinner who has to disburse money for household expenses and women are subordinated and only assist their husbands with money to cover household expenses. At first sight, it looks like women only contribute little to household income and expenses and are financially dependent on their husbands because men are seen as responsible to provide housekeeping money to the woman. In reality, those financial dependencies appear to be socially constructed and maintained through an internalization of gender roles. Women themselves shared the traditional image of gender division of labor, in which they are responsible for domestic work and men are the only breadwinners, thereby not recognizing their own crucial contributions to household income. However, in fact, women perform various economic activities outside their homes and expenses are jointly managed by both, husband and wife. It seems as if women contribute in the same way to covering expenses, even if they indicated that their role was only to “assist” their husbands with money and that they only “add a little” to the male income. It is rather women’s perception than reality that they only contribute little to household income and expenses. Women’s work is seen as inferior to the men’s, which makes them see their contributions as a ‘naturally’ given responsibility to assist men rather than an own job and achievement. Furthermore, the study found that recognizing women’s crucial contributions to household income would disgrace and embarrass husbands because they have to be the successful breadwinners of the household according to male gender roles. Therefore, many men prefer to maintain the status quo of unequal power relations because an economically successful woman that is a main breadwinner in the household threatens their masculinity. Furthermore, the study identified large differences between Ghanaian households in managing common or separate budgets and therefore differences in women’s access to and control over household income, not only between regions but on a much smaller scale between households in the same village.

Unlike women who are obliged to spend a lot of their time on domestic tasks according to gender roles, men enjoy a high degree of choice with regards to assisting in the household. Women stem household chores and perform multiple agricultural and non-agricultural activities at once, which puts a heavy work burden on them and results in various time-conflicts and exhaustion. This keeps women from actively participating in politics and regularly attending training organized by the cooperative. This gets further complicated by a lack of communication by male field officers to announce times when training is conducted early enough and a lack of knowledge among field officers about women’s various activities and time-constraints.

Furthermore, women are not seen as farmers in their own right. They are not seen as capable to manage their own farm and to deal with farming related aspects and decisions such as buying equipment, hiring labor and manage farm income. Women are not supposed to prioritize their farming activities or attending the organic training sessions. In contrast, for men, who are perceived to be the main income earners, going to the farm and participating in training is expected to be a priority. Meanwhile for women, it is not a matter of choice which activities to prioritize because women are expected to prioritize 'female' activities that benefit the whole household, i.e. going to the market to sell and buy food and to do house chores. Furthermore, women were often denied the capability to be their own farm managers, wherefore husbands were put in charge of farming issues such as receiving and sharing cocoa proceeds, buying farm implements, hiring labor, planting crops and receive training. If women missed out training on market days or because they were not seen as capable to receive training, they relied on the information passed on to them by their husbands which reinforces gender roles and women's dependency on the male. One reason for this patriarchal hierarchy that puts men in charge of most farm issues and does not recognize women as farmers in their own right, is that many men like to maintain the status-quo of unequal power relations in their households. Cocoa represents power to men, and they fear to lose power and control over women when women engage in cocoa trade and earn income independently.

Women lack access to financial resources through a lack of access to credit and a lack of alternative livelihoods, especially non-farming livelihoods in particular in the cocoa low season. Furthermore, women often lack the physical strength to carry out strenuous farm work, which makes them dependent on male help from husbands and male labor. One reason for this is that farming tools are often designed for men as standard users and are inappropriate for female users, for example in their weight, which further supports the argument that women are not seen as farmers in their own right. The lack of access to financial resources and credit and reduced physical strength result in a vicious cycle that disproportionately affects women. If a woman does not have the strength to weed and neither the financial resources to hire labor, cocoa yields and earnings will be reduced and reinforce financial constraints and the inability to hire labor. Financial constraints also restrict women to engage in politics because they tend to focus on income generating activities and lack the resources to run electoral campaigns.

Women lack basic education, such as basic English skills, political education and knowledge about their rights, which disempowers women from participating in

community activities and politics and to take up leadership positions. It increases their dependency on the male in terms of education and knowledge which reinforces unequal power relations and largely erodes women's self-esteem and self-confidence.

Unequal gender power relations and women's subordination in the political sphere have been found to be expressed through insults and verbal abuse that result in a lack of self-confidence and self-esteem and the fear to participate in politics among women. As a consequence, women become increasingly disinterested and actively dissociate themselves from politics. In the private and communal sphere, women often had to consult their husbands in order to seek permission or advice before taking a decision or at least they felt that they needed the support of their husbands in order to become active agents. This was partly a result of women's perception to be dependent on their husbands in terms of education and in terms of social security in case of failure or difficulties. Women largely have internalized gender roles that determine that women have to consult husbands and need advice because men seem to be better positioned to take a decision or take care of certain things or because women are dependent on men in terms of education, social security and physical strength. Therefore, it is taken as natural that women have to consult their husbands, meanwhile men do not necessarily consult wives to ask for permission.

Concerning research question 2, results indicate that women are to a certain degree actively engaged in activities and decision-making with varying degrees between the different spheres and from woman to woman. If women are engaged in activities and decision-making, gender roles and unequal power relations determine the type of work that seems to be appropriate for them and restrict their access to leadership positions or to have a 'final say' in decision-making. For example, joint decision-making in households concerning decisions about the farm, major investments and children's schooling was very common, and women also took decisions independently when their husbands were not around. However, sometimes even when decisions were discussed between the husband and wife, the husband always had the final say, illustrating how men pretend to give women more space to engage in and influence household decision-making but prefer to maintain the status-quo of unequal power relations. Overall, the degree of decision-making power in household decision-making and women's agency seems to differ between women and results around decision-making power are not completely clear. Some women on the one hand emphasize the importance of joint decision-making and are able to take day-to-day decisions alone. On the other hand, they feel the need to consult their husbands

and seek advice when it comes to more significant decisions regarding the farm, investments into a new business, savings and banking related issues because they are dependent on their education, physical strength and social security. Furthermore, in the economic sphere, the degree of agency among women differs to some extent. Meanwhile some women internalized their status of not being a farmer in their own right who is obliged to prioritize 'female' responsibilities, some women had an increased degree of agency and autonomy in setting priorities. They prioritized their farming before 'female' activities and always attended training and managed farming related issues themselves. Furthermore, some women were engaged in economic associations related to their work, communal work and political activities. However, women were given 'typical' female positions and tasks such as the treasurer, women's organizer, gathering women to clean the town and gather rubbish or cooking food for workers and were less likely to be found in leadership and key decision-making positions. Since women have internalized these gender roles and unequal power relations to a high degree and do not necessarily challenge them, they contribute to their reinforcement and persistence.

The strategies that the Yayra Glover cooperative has in place to contribute to the achievement of SDG 5 and to bridge the gender gap in agriculture refer to two different levels. On the macro level, the Yayra Glover cooperative follows the strategy to advocate for high value agricultural chains on the national level and to link small-scale cocoa farmers in Ghana with high-value chains, which can especially benefit women. On the micro level they provide equal access to extension services and inputs and pay cocoa premiums equally and directly irrespective of the farmer's gender. They further create economic incentives to encourage joint farming to include women and break patriarchal structures and are planning to provide alternative livelihood opportunities and access to credit to farmers, which can specifically benefit women.

Against the background that women still face severe challenges in all the domains studied due to gender-based inequalities in agency and empowerment, I strongly recommend that the cooperative adopts a participatory approach to develop a clear gender strategy. The gender strategy should include existing strategies and should be complemented by the implementation of planned ideas and further recommendations based on women's suggestions, experiences from IDEG's CECA program, and literature. As part of the strategy, communication between field officers and women should be improved to ensure equal access to training, for example by organizing training sessions at times that do not conflict with 'female' activities. Against the background that all extension staff is male, an

increase of the share of female extension officers and gender sensitization of staff is recommended. Furthermore, the cooperative could initiate the formation of female-only FBOs and should ensure gender equal representation at all levels of the cooperative structure. Building on the strategy of providing inputs, it is recommended to provide additional gender-friendly inputs and farming tools and to ensure that inputs and premiums come in time to ensure effective farming management. To be able to realize those recommendations, policy recommendations to COCOBOD are to strengthen their support for organic farming methods and for cooperatives to link small-scale farmers, especially women, with high-value chains. They should make sure that they do not further contribute to a delay in the provision of inputs such as fertilizer and insecticides to organic farmers. Additionally, COCOBOD should increase awareness and availability of women-friendly farming tools among female farmers in Ghana. Going beyond the provision of agricultural inputs and extension services, I recommend realizing the idea to develop alternative livelihood opportunities and to create a credit scheme to support women in weeding their farms and in investing in new businesses to become more self-sustaining and independent. Building on the experiences of IDEG's CECA program, I recommend facilitating capacity building among women in communities to strengthen their self-confidence and get them more involved in decision-making and leadership roles in the private and the public sphere. Facilitating gender sensitization training for the whole community with an active engagement of men and facilitating trainings on local governance structures should also be important components of a gender strategy. For such training, the cooperative might seek for support from other organizations.

In conclusion, major challenges among female small-scale cocoa farmers are related to the internalization of gender roles and patriarchal structures that are embedded in the local culture. Even though women are to a certain degree actively engaged in activities and decision-making in all the spheres studied, gender roles determine the tasks 'appropriate' for women and limit their access to leadership and key decision-making positions. Against this background, I recommend that the local cooperative adopts a participatory approach to develop a clear gender strategy going beyond the delivery of extension services and inputs. Capacity building and gender sensitization training should be facilitated to challenge gender roles and patriarchal structures in rural cocoa growing communities. This will be necessary to achieve the targets of SDG 5, to empower female cocoa farmers, achieve gender equality in cocoa communities and to bridge the gender gap in agriculture in rural Ghana.

7.2 Limitations of the study and Recommendations for further research

A limitation of the study is that it could not clearly identify patterns of access to and control over household income among women. The study found varying degrees of income pooling and decision-making power over household income between households. However, who has access to which and how much income could not be fully grasped in the frame of this study. Therefore, it could be subject to further research focusing on women's access to and control over household income considering different degrees of income pooling within households.

Another limitation of the study is that the aspect of gender-based inequalities in land ownership among women in rural Ghana could not be covered. This could be subject to further investigation. In this context, it would specifically be interesting to study 'invisible' women in the Ghanaian cocoa sector. This includes women who don't own or manage a cocoa farm themselves because they neither hold ownership rights of a farm and neither are caretakers of someone else's farm but often work as unpaid labor on their husband's cocoa farms. Presently, an estimated 25 percent of cocoa farm owners or operators in Ghana are women. However, due to unreported unpaid family labor on cocoa farms of their husbands, the number of women working in the cocoa sector is often much higher. It is estimated that women account for almost half of the cocoa workforce in West Africa (Kiewisch 2015, 502). These underreported working women in the cocoa sector were not subject to this research because the target group were women who own or operate a farm. Another group of women that was not studied in the context of this research, were single female headed households because the focus of this study lied, amongst other things, on intra-household decision-making and gender power relations. Therefore, the challenges and experiences of female farmers in single female-headed households with gender-based inequalities in agency and empowerment could be subject to further research. Moreover, against the background of IDEG's advocacy for a transformation of the local government system, further research could investigate how transforming the local government system can address the issues of a biased understanding of political participation and the politics of insults in Ghana and how women can specifically benefit from such a transformation.

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Annex 1: Targets and Indicators from MDG 3 and SDG 5 in comparison
 ((United Nations 2017; UNDP 2020b)

	Targets	Indicators
MDG 3	3.A Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than by 2015	3.A.1 Ratios of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education 3.A.2 Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector 3.A.3 Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament
SDG 5	5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere 5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation 5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation 5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate	5.1.1 Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex 5.2.1 Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age 5.2.2 Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by age and place of occurrence 5.3.1 Proportion of women aged 20–24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18 5.3.2 Proportion of girls and women aged 15–49 years who have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting, by age 5.4.1 Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location

<p>5.5 Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life</p> <p>5.6 Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences</p> <p>5.A Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws</p> <p>5.B Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women</p> <p>5.C Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels</p>	<p>5.5.1 Proportion of seats held by women in (a) national parliaments and (b) local governments</p> <p>5.5.2 Proportion of women in managerial positions</p> <p>5.6.1 Proportion of women aged 15–49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care</p> <p>5.6.2 Number of countries with laws and regulations that guarantee full and equal access to women and men aged 15 years and older to sexual and reproductive health care, information and education</p> <p>5.a.1 (a) Proportion of total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land, by sex; and (b) share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land, by type of tenure</p> <p>5.a.2 Proportion of countries where the legal framework (including customary law) guarantees women’s equal rights to land ownership and/or control</p> <p>5.b.1 Proportion of individuals who own a mobile telephone, by sex</p> <p>5.c.1 Proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women’s empowerment</p>
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Annex 2: Interview guide for semi-structured interviews with women

Interview guide for semi-structured interview with women

Study topic: Gender-based inequalities among female small-scale organic cocoa farmers in rural Ghana

Introduction and Information: Hello! I am a postgraduate student from the Institute for Development Research and Development Policy of the Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany and the Institute for Social Development at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa. For the preparation of my master thesis, I am currently conducting interviews among women in farming households in selected villages of the Suhum District, Eastern Region on the topic of gender inequality. The information that you may provide will be kept strictly confidential and will be used for academic purposes only. The interview may take about 60 minutes.

Verbal Consent

Would you like to participate in this interview?

Verbal consent was obtained from the interview participant

Verbal consent was NOT obtained from the interview participant

Name:

Village:

Age:

Number of Household members:

Section A: Unpaid domestic and care work, Time Allocation

1) Can you describe how your daily life looks like and what activities you are performing around the day?

Follow-up:

- differences between high and low season? Market days and other days?

- Is she performing other economic activities too? (trading, sewing etc.)

For each activity: do you perform it alone? do you perform it together with your husband?

Checklist: Prepare Breakfast, Prepare Kids for School, Give Kids Chop money (Household money?),

Do Dishes, Clean the House, Do Laundry, go to farm, go to the market, (How do you get

there?), Prepare lunch, Do dishes, do grocery shopping, take cocoa to purchasing clerk, taking

care of kids in the afternoon, prepare supper, do dishes, take kids to bed,

- Are you satisfied with your time available for yourself/ to rest/ for leisure activities such as visiting friends or relatives, going to church, listening to the radio etc.?

Section B: Participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life

B.1: Control over productive resources, use of income and other household decisions

2) How do you take your decisions regarding your farm? (E.g. which crops to grow, farming inputs and labor, harvest, when to take to the market)

Follow-up: If decision is not made by the respondent alone: To what extent do you feel you can take these decisions regarding [...] yourself? Why (not)? If yes, why do you involve someone else?

3) How do you as a household organize your money and expenses?

Follow-up:

- Is it shared collectively? Is some or everything kept to yourself?

- Are decisions for big investments made jointly?

- If she has to buy farming equipment or hire labor, how is decision made on how much money is available for her? (Jointly? Individually? Is money shared equally/respectively for the two farms?)

- If decision is not made by the respondent or jointly: To what extent do you feel you can take these decisions regarding [...] yourself? Why (not)? If yes, why do you involve someone else?

4) What are major decisions that you take in the household in your daily life? How do you take your decisions regarding these aspects?

Checklist: Minor household expenditures, how work is shared among household members, what to do if any of the household members has a health problem, children's education, if you work outside the home, children's education, if money is invested or saved etc.

Follow-up: If answers is different than respondent, to what extent do you feel you can make your own personal decisions regarding these issues if you want to?

B.2: Community and Political Decision-making

5) To what extent do you feel that people like yourself can generally change things in your community if they want to?

Follow-up: Can you elaborate a bit more on that? Is there anything specific that you are involved in? Would you like to be more or less involved in the community? How would you describe your role in the community?

6) How would you rate your ability to actively participate in political decision-making (e.g. participate in elections, interests represented through YGL?)

Follow-up: Why not? Would you like to be more involved in politics? What are constraints? Can you elaborate a bit more on that? Through which form are you participating? Where do you take information about politics from?

B.3 Control over decision-making on participation

7) Have you heard about the trainings provided by YGL? Do you participate in the trainings provided by YGL?

Follow-up:

- What do you think about it?

- Would you like to participate more often? What are the reasons why you don't participate?

- If they send their husband to the training: Do you think you would be capable yourself to receive the trainings? Why (not)? If yes, what are the reasons why you don't participate yourself?

8) What do you think has to change to make female farmers in your community (even) more encouraged to participate in the trainings?

Follow-up:

- How do you think YGL can support you in achieving this?

- Would you feel more encouraged / would it be easier for you to participate if YGL would organize special trainings for women only and/or female FBC's?

- Why(not)? How do you think it would affect your life?

- What are other aspects were you think how the cooperative could support women?

9) Is there anything that you would like to add?

Annex 3: Interview guide for expert interview (Key informant 1)

Interview guide for semi-structured interview with key informant I

Study topic: Gender-based inequalities among female small-scale organic cocoa farmers in rural Ghana

Introduction and Information: Hello! I am a postgraduate student from the Institute for Development Research and Development Policy of the Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany and the Institute for Social Development at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa. For the preparation of my master thesis, I am currently conducting interviews on the topic of gender inequality. The information that you may provide will be kept strictly confidential and will be used for academic purposes only. The interview may take about 90 minutes.

Verbal Consent

Would you like to participate in this interview?

Verbal consent was obtained from the interview participant

Verbal consent was NOT obtained from the interview participant

- 1) What does organic production mean for Yayra Glover?
- 2) How does Yayra Glover fit into the government system (COCOBOD) and is the government giving enough inputs to support organic production?
- 3) What are market challenges that you are facing as a cooperative? Are you able to sell all the cocoa to certified buyers or is a part sold to conventional buyers without receiving a bonus? Why do you think this is and how does it affect the farmers? What can/should be done on consumer and buyer side to handle this issue?
- 4) How is the cooperative organized in terms of responsibilities and internal quality control? How are you engaging with the farmers? (Regional Officers, Technical officers in each community, how is the community chief involved? how is the buyer of beans in the community who dries the beans involved?)
- 5) What are currently the biggest problems cocoa farmers and their families are facing and how is Yayra Glover supporting them to overcome these problems? (climate change, poverty prevalence/ low income, quality requirements, access to financial markets and credit, bargaining power and institutional capacities)
- 6) How are women usually involved in cocoa production among farmer families in the communities? How is Yayra Glover specifically addressing or supporting these women?

Annex 4: Interview guide for expert interview (Key informants 2 and 3)

Interview guide for semi-structured interview with expert 2

Study topic: Gender-based inequalities among female small-scale organic cocoa farmers in rural Ghana

Introduction and Information: Hello! I am a postgraduate student from the Institute for Development Research and Development Policy of the Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany and the Institute for Social Development at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa. For the preparation of my master thesis, I am currently conducting interviews on the topic of gender inequality. The information that you may provide will be kept strictly confidential and will be used for academic purposes only. The interview may take about 90 minutes.

Verbal Consent

Would you like to participate in this interview?

Verbal consent was obtained from the interview participant

Verbal consent was NOT obtained from the interview participant

1. Can you introduce yourself and tell me about your responsibilities in the institute?
2. What are, from your experience, the major difficulties in cocoa communities and how is the program addressing them: What are the major activities and goals of the program?
Follow-up, if not yet answered:
 - What are your experiences with women concerning their major difficulties they were or are facing?
 - How is the program addressing these? What are the major activities and goals of the program related specifically to the empowerment of women?
3. What are your major achievements of the program so far? Related to women empowerment?
4. What I observed during my interviews was: women struggle attending trainings regularly due to time constraints (economic and household activities); or they have the perception the husband is the one that receives training and is passing on information to her. Have you made any similar experiences?

Questions to add wherever it fits best:

- I experienced women demanding empowerment programs that teaches them alternative livelihood skills (producing soap, baking, sewing) that can give them some extra income so they can sustain themselves and their families better and be more financially independent from their husbands. Have you experienced similar opinions among female farmers? Have you experience with such programs and how do you evaluate them?
- During my interviews, I perceived land ownership to be a problem for farmers as land is very scarce and shares with landowners seem to be very unfair (50/50 or 2/3 1/3). Have you made a similar experience and is it affecting community empowerment?

Annex 5: Anonymous list of respondents

	Category	Interview Location	Position	Interview date	Age	Number of Children
Key Informant 1	KI 1	Suhum	Manager, Yayra Glover Limited	12.08.2019	n.a.	n.a.
Key Informant 2	KI 2	Accra	IDEG, Acting Program Lead for Civic Empowerment for Community Action (CECA)	13.08.2019	n.a.	n.a.
Key Informant 3	KI 3	Accra	IDEG, Project Officer CECA program	13.08.2019	n.a.	n.a.
Respondent 1	R1	Ateibu	Member at YGL	02.08.2019	56	2 children
Respondent 2	R2	Ateibu	Member at YGL	02.08.2019	45	2 children
Respondent 3	R3	Ateibu	Member at YGL	02.08.2019	44	4 children
Respondent 4	R4	Ateibu	Member at YGL	02.08.2019	64	5 children
Respondent 5	R5	Kokotesua	Member at YGL	05.08.2019	40	4 children
Respondent 6	R6	Kokotesua	Member at YGL	05.08.2019	52	6 children, 2 grandchildren
Respondent 7	R7	Kokotesua	Member at YGL	05.08.2019	56	4 children
Respondent 8	R8	Nsuta Wawase	Member at YGL	06.08.2019	52	4 children, 3 grandchildren
Respondent 9	R9	Nsuta Wawase	Member at YGL	06.08.2019	60	2 children, 1 grandchild
Respondent 10	R10	Nsuta Wawase	Member at YGL	06.08.2019	50	1 grandchild
Respondent 11	R11	Adimadim	Member at YGL	14.08.2019	47	3 children
Respondent 12	R12	Adimadim	Member at YGL	14.08.2019	54	1 child, 4 grandchildren

Annex 6: Code Tree

Code Group	Codes	Frequency
Alternative Live- lihoods	Alternative Livelihoods	37
	Mobilize funds to do business	1
	Organize trainings for women to learn other livelihoods	3
	Support for setting up trading business	3
COCOBOD	Challenges with COCOBOD	10
	COCOBOD	12
	COCOBOD does not care	1
	COCOBOD imposes regulations	1
	Conventional agriculture	2
	Dependency on COCOBOD	3
	Do not consider local challenges	6
	Extension services	6
	Inputs delay	3
	Insecurity about organic inputs	2
	Lobbying for organic inputs	3
	Organic inputs	3
	Premium delays	3
	Residues	1
	Support local companies	2
	Synthetic inputs	3
	Communal par- ticipation	Able to engage in community activities
Advocating for the interest of the community		12
Community development		9
Community empowerment		4
Group activity stopped		4
Not taking up leadership positions		6
Women championing development in their communities		3
Women taking up leadership positions in communities		18
Disempower- ment	Afraid not to fulfil expectations in politics	1
	Ask husband for permission	1
	Husband takes decision	5
	Lack of self-confidence	5
	Lack of self-esteem	5
	Not empowered to engage in political leadership	4
	Not taking up leadership positions	6
	Women can't decide without husband	1
	Women can't do anything when the man is not around	1
	Women have to consult husbands	8
	Women have to seek advice from husband concerning farm	1
	Women need backing of husband	5
Women seek advice from husband concerning finances	1	

Economic activities	Cocoa main economic activity	4
	Does farm work for others	1
	Engage in banana business	20
	Engage in cassava business	2
	Engage in fish business	5
	Engage in mango business	1
	Engage in orange business	1
	Engage in palm oil business	7
	Engage in plantain business	9
	Engage in trading business	8
	Go to farm	17
	Hairdressing business	3
	Husband in palm oil business	1
	Income from trading for household shopping	12
	Market days	10
	Pay laborer from cocoa proceeds	20
	Premiums paid directly	1
	Sell fish at the market	1
	Supervise laborer	2
	Uses own money for cocoa farm	3
	Wage labor	2
	Wage labor for household expenses	1
	Woman sells produce from husband	8
	Women involved in economic activities	36
	Women sell produce at the market	24
	Women sell to traders	16
Education	Early marriage	1
	Lack of education	12
	Lack of knowledge about rights	3
	Language barriers	4
	Men more educated	3
	Overcome education barriers	6
	Overcome lack of education	1
	Problems with English	3
	Provide access to education	1
	School dropout	1
	Teaching English	3
	Teenage pregnancy	1
	Training on rights	1
Empowerment	Able to engage in community activities	27
	Able to engage in political leadership positions	7
	Advocating for the interest of the community	12
	Become agents of change in their communities	1

	Brought out talents	1
	Build up confidence	4
	Can engage with the assembly	8
	Can take decisions alone when husband is not around	12
	Capacity building	11
	Community development	9
	Community empowerment	4
	Does not wait for husband	8
	Financially independent	4
	Group activity stopped	4
	Joint decision-making	45
	Monitor projects in the community	1
	No more timid	4
	No more uninformed	3
	Opportunities to moderate sessions	1
	Provide interface between government and citizens	2
	Ripple effect	7
	Savings culture developed in community	1
	Secretary	2
	Self-confident	4
	Taking own decisions regarding money	1
	Training for men	1
	Training on facilitation	1
	Training on leadership	2
	Training on local structures	2
	Training on rights	1
	Training on savings and credit	1
	Treasurer	5
	Women are now outspoken	1
	Women championing development in their communities	3
	Women empowerment	2
	Women involve in decision-making	22
	Women taking up leadership positions at the assembly level	7
	Women taking up leadership positions in communities	18
	Women's organizer	4
Equality	Equal representation	5
	Gender quota	4
	Number of women in leadership positions declining	1
	Premiums equally distributed	3
	Put man and woman on the same level	1
Female gender roles	Children assist in domestic work	25
	Cleaning the town	5
	Depreciation of domestic work	2

Rely on information from husband	9
Structures embedded in culture	4
Subordinated role of women	1
Wait for men to respond to issues	3
Woman and children collect plucked cocoa	5
Woman assists with money	9
Woman brings food to the farm	3
Woman cannot weed farm	3
Woman does not buy farm implements	2
Woman gives chop money	2
Woman is planting plantain	1
Woman sells cocoa	1
Women are compassionate	1
Women are entrepreneurial	1
Women are hesitant	1
Women are less respected than men	1
Women are more efficient	1
Women are not ashamed of failing	1
Women are the go-getters	1
Women are trustworthy	4
Women bear the problems	2
Women buy groceries at the market	15
Women can do by-products	2
Women can't decide without husband	1
Women can't do anything when the man is not around	1
Women do domestic and care work	74
Women do not own land	2
Women follow the rules	2
Women go to farm with their husbands	4
Women have to consult husbands	8
Women have to seek advice from husband concerning farm	1
Women issues complex	1
Women need backing of husband	5
Women not directly involved	3
Women not seen as capable	2
Women seek advice from husband concerning finances	1
Women sell produce at the market	24
Women sweep and gather rubbish	3
Women take care of children	3
Women take children along to farm	1
Women work on other crops	1
Women's work on farm not recognized	1
Access to high-value markets	4

Financial constraints	Additional income	10
	Create a credit scheme	12
	Dependent on freebies	6
	Farmers do not have collateral	1
	Farmers do not keep records	3
	Farming activities not predictable	2
	Farming not seen as a business	3
	Farming sector risky for credits	1
	Financial constraints	28
	Help not to be in need	1
	Help people curve a living	1
	Income dependent on weather	2
	Low levels of income	2
	Low season	10
	Microfinance for women	1
	Mobilize funds to do business	1
	No access to financial markets	5
	No profit from business	2
	No regular income	3
	Overcome limited access to credit	4
	Overcome poverty and financial constraints	5
	Poverty	31
	Premium delays	3
	Provide assistance to weed farms	8
	Provide farm implements	13
	Savings culture developed in community	1
Seasonal crop	2	
Support for setting up trading business	3	
Intra-household decision-making	Ask husband for permission	1
	Can take decisions alone when husband is not around	12
	Decide with husband	6
	Decision-making	42
	Does not wait for husband	8
	Encourage joint farming and training	2
	Husband consults wife	1
	Husband informs wife when taking money	1
	Husband takes decision	5
	Joint decision-making	45
	Shared responsibilities	16
	Taking own decision regarding the cocoa farm	4
	Taking own decisions regarding money	1
	Women can't decide without husband	1
Women can't do anything when the man is not around	1	

	Women have to consult husbands	8
	Women have to seek advice from husband concerning farm	1
	Women involve in decision-making	22
	Women need backing of husband	5
	Women seek advice from husband concerning finances	1
Intra-household relations	Being a supportive husband	1
	Break patriarchal structures	5
	Create economic incentives to include women	7
	Encourage joint farming and training	2
	Farm separately	5
	Farm together	18
	Financial dependency on male	21
	Harvest together	6
	Harvesting independently	2
	Help each other	3
	Help not to be in need	1
	Husband helps when he is not on the farm	1
	Husband helps with fetching water	1
	Husband helps with fire food collection	1
	Husband takes children along to the farm	1
	Keep cocoa earnings separate	5
	Keep household money separate	5
	Make savings	1
	Man keeps money separate	3
	Money doesn't go to the woman	2
	Money is given to the man	1
	Pay inputs from cocoa proceeds	9
	Pay inputs separately	4
	Pay inputs together	3
	Pay laborer separately	9
	Pay laborer together	5
	Pay school fees	6
	Pool farm income	7
	Pool income	21
	Responsibility is with woman	4
	Sell cocoa separately	3
	Sell cocoa together	2
	Sells cocoa when husband is not around	1
	Shared household expenses	29
Shared responsibilities	16	
Uses own money for cocoa farm	3	
Woman does not need a guardian	1	
Woman keeps money	1	

	Work Together	12
Issues related to farming inputs	Farming tools inappropriate for women	1
	Inputs delay	3
	Premium delays	3
	Provide assistance to weed farms	8
	Provide farm implements	13
	Wellington boots	3
	Woman cannot weed farm	3
Land	Inherited farm from father	1
	Land issues	1
	No access to land	3
	Women do not own land	2
Male gender roles	Cocoa is men's crop	4
	Households headed by men	1
	Husband helps a little	6
	Husband helps in care work	11
	Husband helps when children are not present	2
	Husband helps when he has time	2
	Husband helps when he is not on the farm	1
	Husband helps with cooking	2
	Husband helps with fetching water	1
	Husband helps with fire food collection	1
	Husband helps with sales	2
	Husband in palm oil business	1
	Husband is inquisitive	1
	Husband takes children along to the farm	1
	Man allocates household chores	1
	Man buys farm implements	6
	Man buys groceries from the market	4
	Man cannot shop	1
	Man comes to help	1
	Man does not cook	1
	Man does not go to the market	3
	Man does not sell	1
	Man does not sweep	1
	Man does not wash clothes	2
	Man gives housekeeping money	25
	Man has more strength	2
	Man is the elder	1
	Man is the head of the house	2
	Man is weeding	3
	Man knows problems of the house	2
	Man plucks cocoa	9

	Man put in charge of cocoa sales	4
	Man put in charge of farm issues	10
	Man takes care of things	2
	Man takes the lead to the farm	5
	Man takes the money	2
	Men are ashamed of failing	1
	Men are wicked	1
	Men do not consult wives	2
	Men do not follow the rules	2
	Men dominate	5
	Men fear to lose control and power	3
	Men have more voice	1
	Men look after women	1
	Men more educated	3
	Men spend money at bars	1
	Money is given to the man	1
	Structures embedded in culture	4
Organic and fair standards	Additional standards	1
	Contamination	1
	Environmental protection	1
	Fair pay	1
	killing organisms in soil	2
	Lean on ethics	2
	Polluting water bodies	1
	Produce according to quantity specifications	1
	Sustainability	2
Organic training	Access to high-value markets	4
	Access to information	5
	Additional income	10
	Always attends training	6
	Announcement comes late	6
	Communicate with women to find out when the training does not clash with their activities	2
	Does not attend training because husband attends	1
	Does not attend trainings	1
	Eager to receive training	1
	Encourage joint farming and training	2
	Encourage more women to join	2
	Extension services	6
	Female only group not effective	2
	Husband always attends trainings	5
	Husband keeping women from training	1
Information can be diluted	2	


	Lack of communication between field officers and women	6
	Lack of knowledge about female activities among field officers	1
	Leave other activities to attend trainings	1
	Market-oriented agricultural advisory services	4
	Organic agriculture	6
	Personally receive information	12
	Rely on information from husband	9
	Rely on information from others	2
	Supervise laborer	2
	Training clashes with farming activities	4
	Training has helped	11
	Usually attends training	3
	Women miss out training on market days	9
	Women-only training	7
Organize women	Communicate with women to find out when the training does not clash with their activities	2
	Encourage more women to join	2
	Lack of communication between field officers and women	6
	Organize trainings for women to learn other livelihoods	3
	Organize women to assess what their difficulties are	1
	Organize women to assess what their strengths are	2
	Organize women to share knowledge and ideas	2
	Participatory approach	1
	Women have to organize themselves	4
	Women issues complex	1
	Women learning from each other	1
	Women-only training	7
Political participation	Advocacy	2
	Afraid not to fulfil expectations in politics	1
	Afraid to engage in politics	2
	Bringing stakeholders together	1
	Centralized governance system	2
	Complicates following politics	1
	Disappointed from politics	1
	Does go to vote	6
	Does not want to engage in politics	11
	Engaging in politics does not bring rewards	1
	Insults and verbal abuse in politics	6
	Issues with the church concerning politics	1
	Mayors not accountable	6
	Mayors not competent	2
	Mayors not democratically elected	4
	Not concerned about politics	1

	Not empowered to engage in political leadership	4
	Not old enough to engage in politics	1
	Polarized on party-lines	1
	Politics end up in quarrels	1
	Provide interface between government and citizens	2
	Reforming the local government system	7
	Silent about politics	1
	Training on advocacy	3
	Training on governance	3
Time-constraints	Free time	6
	Need time to rest	2
	No energy to engage in politics	2
	No time to rest	3
	Supervise laborer	2
	Time to rest	1
	Time-constraint	21
	Training clashes with farming activities	4
	Various activities	16
Women miss out training on market days	9	
Work physically demanding for women	Body pains from activities	1
	Farming tools inappropriate for women	1
	Hire laborer	26
	Man plucks cocoa	9
	Need time to rest	2
	No energy to engage in politics	2
	No longer strong	5
	No time to rest	3
	Support to ease stress	1
	Time to rest	1
	Weeding the farm	4
	Woman cannot weed farm	3
	Woman weeds when she is able	1
Work physically demanding for women	17	

Annex 7: Ethical clearance and support letter Ruhr-University Bochum

To be filled by IEE-Management
Ethical consent granted to TAMARA KASCHER
(ethical clearance self assessment form submitted 26/05/2019)

without further recommendations including further recommendations and/or stipulations (see separate letter)

Date: 12/06/2019 Signature: 

IEE-Stamp:
Ruhr-Universität Bochum
Institut für Entwicklungsforschung
und Entwicklungspolitik
2. Etage / Universitätsstraße 105
D-44789 Bochum

Next steps:

Please send a signed and scanned copy to your mentor and madm-papers@rub.de. We seek for issuing the ethical approval within five working days. Also, await for the approval of your mentor concerning the methodological field research design. **No field research activity shall take place prior the ethical approval of the IEE-management as well as the methodological approval of your mentor.**



UNIVERSITY of the
WESTERN CAPE

Re: Ethical Clearance Approval for Field Research of Ms. Tamara Kaschek (MA Development Management)

To whom it may concern,

I herewith confirm that Ms. Tamara Kaschek graduated in the MA Programme in Development Management (Bochum Programme) in November 2019, and that the Institute of Development Research and Development Policy (IEE; Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany) granted ethical consent for the related field research of the Master thesis. The topic of Ms. Kaschek's Master thesis is "Impacts of private standards on poverty reduction, investment decisions, and risk preferences: A case study of small-scale organic certified cocoa farmers in the Eastern Region of Ghana". The ethical consent of the IEE is based on a detailed ethical clearance provided by Ms. Kaschek, which fulfils the requirements of the European Union.

The international English-language MA Programme in Development Management is offered by the IEE in collaboration with the Institute for Social Development (ISD) and the School of Government (SOG) from the University of the Western Cape (UWC; Cape Town, South Africa). Well performing and committed students who register for the MA in Development Management of Ruhr-University Bochum can obtain a second degree of the partner university, the University of the Western Cape (UWC), South Africa. Ms. Kaschek is one of these students and is currently enrolled for the second degree. As part of the second degree option, students are required to write a second full thesis. For this purpose, it is usually strongly recommended to use data collected as part of the first Master thesis project.

Yours sincerely,



Anne Siebert

Annex 8: Ethical clearance UWC



UNIVERSITY of the
WESTERN CAPE



16 November 2020

Ms TS Kaschek
Institute for Social Development
Faculty of Economics and Management Sciences

Ethics Reference Number: HS20/7/5

Project Title: Exploring the experiences of female small-scale cocoa farmers about gender based inequality in agency and empowerment in light of the Sustainable Development Goal 5: A case study from rural Ghana.

Approval Period: 27 August 2020 – 27 August 2023

I hereby certify that the Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Committee of the University of the Western Cape approved the methodology and ethics of the above mentioned research project.

Any amendments, extension or other modifications to the protocol must be submitted to the Ethics Committee for approval.

Please remember to submit a progress report by 30 November each year for the duration of the project.

The permission to conduct the study must be submitted to HSSREC for record keeping purposes.

The Committee must be informed of any serious adverse event and/or termination of the study.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patricia'.

Ms Patricia Josias
Research Ethics Committee Officer
University of the Western Cape

NHREC Registration Number: HSSREC-130416-049

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FROM HOPE TO ACTION THROUGH KNOWLEDGE.