

LEFTEMAP SISTA II: PROMOTING WOMEN'S ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS IN VANUATU

Formative Evaluation Report

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ACRONYMS

ANCP	Australia NGO Cooperation Program
CAVAW	Committee against Violence against Women (Vanuatu Women's Centre)
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
EVAWG	Ending Violence Against Women and Girls
FFM	Family Financial Management
FL	Foundational Leadership
FPU	Family Protection Unit
GBV	Gender-based violence
GEF	Gender Equality Framework
GET	Gender Equality Together project
GRFV	Good Relationships Free from Violence
LS 2	<i>Leftemap Sista II</i> project
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NGO	Non-government organisation
TCC	Tafea Counselling Centre
TOR	Terms of Reference
VSLA	Village Savings and Loans Association
VWC	Vanuatu Women's Centre
WEL	Women's Economic Livelihoods

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Evaluation Objectives

The *Leftemap Sista II* (LS2) project has been implemented by CARE Vanuatu since 2017 with funding from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Australia NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP). The **project purpose** is “to support women, young women and girls, including those with disability, in rural and remote areas of Vanuatu to realise their rights to live free from violence, have increased economic opportunity and capacity to participate meaningfully in decisions that affect their lives in peace time and disaster.”¹ **CARE International in Vanuatu (CARE Vanuatu) commissioned a formative evaluation of the project in November 2021.** The formative evaluation was required to assess progress against project outcomes for promoting women’s economic empowerment and reducing tolerance of VAWG and to produce actionable recommendations to inform the design of follow-on programming in line with the CARE Australia ANCP Design Framework.

Overview of the LS2 Project

The LS2 project has been implemented in Tafea - the southern-most province of Vanuatu – in 11 communities on the islands of Tanna and Futuna. The Tafea islands are characterised by their **geographical isolation, environmental vulnerabilities**, including a high risk of natural and geological hazards as well as slow onset hazards such as drought, **strongly traditional culture**, and **limited service delivery by national government across all sectors** – especially on the outer islands. Since the project Mid-Term Review in 2019, the LS2 project has been implemented to deliver two long-term outcomes, focussed on:

Outcome 1 – Women, young women and girls in Women’s Economic Livelihoods (WEL) groups in Tafea have increased access to and control over decision-making on economic resources at the household level.

Outcome 2 – Reduced tolerance of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) and better access to services for survivors.

Key project activities for the delivery of these outcomes have included:

- Technical support for WEL groups in 10 communities to encourage women’s engagement in IGAs;
- The establishment of Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) in 6 communities;
- Confidence and leadership workshops for women;
- Family Financial Management (FFM) workshops for WEL group and VSLA members and their male partners or relatives;
- Community dialogues on issues of youth sexual and reproductive health and VAWG; and
- Life skills training with young women and young men on building healthy and equal relationships for the prevention of VAWG (Good Relationships Free from Violence workshops).

LS2 project activities have been delivered in partnership with a local non-governmental organisation with expertise in agriculture and livelihoods support, and local service providers involved in VAWG prevention and response, including the Tanna Counselling Centre (TCC), Tafea Hospital and the Tanna Police Family Protection Unit (FPU).

Evaluation Methodology

The LS2 formative evaluation followed a **mixed methods** approach involving the collection of both secondary and primary data. Data collection for the LF2 evaluation began with a **desk-based review of secondary data** available from LS2 project documents. The desk review generated a preliminary mapping of the available quantitative and qualitative evidence for project outcomes and associated indicators and informed the development of data collection tools and the sampling strategy for primary data collection.

A total of **nine key informant interviews were carried out with CARE project staff and staff from partner organisations** based on a semi-structured interview checklist which was tailored as necessary to explore the experiences and perspectives of the different organisations. **A reflection meeting was held with seven members of the LS2 project team** to provide a space for those staff to share their knowledge, experiences and perspectives regarding the

¹ CARE International in Vanuatu (2017). *Leftemap Sista II – Women and Girls Empowerment Program*. Project design document, 71pp.

project's progress and outcomes. **Eight Focus Group Discussions were carried out with small groups of project participants across four communities** in the Whitesands and Middle Bush districts of Tanna, including the two new communities where project implementation began in 2020. Mixed sex FGDs were held in two communities with young women and young men participants of GRFV workshops, while sex-segregated FGDs were held in three communities with adult women project participants and adult men who were either project participants or the husbands of project participants. The FGDs included **discussion of the customised Social Norms Analysis Pilot (SNAP) vignette** that was used during the 2019 Mid Term Review (MTR) of the LS2 project as a tool for exploring social norms relating to VAWG. In addition to the FGDs at community level a total of **ten KIIs were carried out with community chiefs, women leaders and youth participants of the GRFV workshops.**

The formative evaluation collected quantitative data from **a total of 81 respondents including LS2 project participants and non-participants in four communities** using a survey questionnaire. The questionnaire was **designed to measure selected project indicators for the project outcomes to assess what has changed for project participants** and included questions consistent with the CARE International global indicators of change relating to women's participation in household economic decision-making and tolerance or rejection of Intimate Partner Violence. Survey respondents were selected by **a purposive sampling process** which involved enumerators going house to house in each community and prioritising interviews with project participants. Consequently, **the majority of survey respondents were women (59% adult women and a further 21% young women aged 15 – 25 years old), with project participants (including some male participants) making up 77% of the overall sample.** The sample included relatively low numbers of adult men or young men respondents, and one respondent (an adult) who reported as non-binary.

Limitations of the evaluation included the following:

- **Trade-offs in breadth and depth of coverage of thematic issues:** The evaluation dataset is stronger in its coverage of issues relating to women's engagement in economic activities and access to savings and loans, as well as in its coverage of attitudes relating to VAWG than it is in its coverage of issues relating to women's voice and leadership and participation in household decision-making.
- Some gaps in coverage of the qualitative data set were a reflection of the **compressed timeframe for in-country data collection** and **practical constraints** due to bad weather conditions on Tanna and the difficulties of mobilising communities at a busy time of year before Christmas.
- The **lack of quantitative baseline data for the outcome indicators** specified in the project MEAL framework.

These limitations were addressed as far as possible by triangulating the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data collected to assess progress against project outcomes and indicators.

Progress Against Outcome 1 – Women's Economic Livelihoods

The evaluation found compelling quantitative and qualitative evidence showing that **WEL group and VSLA members have increased their engagement in diversified IGAs and have increased access to savings and loans.** Women and men respondents from the communities reported that these positive changes in women's agency are contributing to improved household well-being. **Membership of the WEL groups and VSLAs has contributed to positive changes in women's relations** within the groups and at household level. FGD and KII data collected for the evaluation suggested that women's participation in household financial decision-making has increased. The quantitative survey data however did not show a difference in the levels of participation in decision-making reported by women project participants as compared with women non-participants. The FGD and KII data also showed that **men increasingly recognise women's improved financial management skills,** while **women reported men helping more with household chores.**

The quantitative survey data showed that women are still less likely than men to hold leadership roles at the community level but that **the establishment of community level structures such as the CDCC, WEL groups and VSLA has provided new spaces for women to take on leadership roles.** Participation in LS2 project activities was positively associated with women holding leadership roles. **Women reported improved access to information and improved confidence and communications skills** due to their participation in Foundational Leadership and Family Financial Management workshops, as changes that have enabled them to raise their voices more in their homes and communities. **Changes in the attitudes and behaviours of community leaders and male partners** towards greater

acceptance of and support for women taking up leadership roles and accessing services were also reported by CARE programme staff.

The LS2 project's **integrated implementation approach based on multiple project activities targeting different stakeholder groups** (women, men, youth and community leaders) with mutually reinforcing impacts for building agency, changing relations and transforming structures has been a key enabling factor for these positive changes. The combination of VSLA with the FL, FFM and GRFV workshops targeting women and men has – for some couples - supported changes in relations enabling women to benefit fully from their increased engagement in economic activities. The project's **explicit focus on engaging men and boys in processes of reflection, dialogue and learning** has been an important aspect of the integrated implementation approach. The **strategic framing of WEL activities in terms of their potential benefits for families and communities** rather than in terms of rights-based approaches for promoting gender equality has also proved to be an effective approach for engaging community gatekeepers to support processes of change associated with women's economic empowerment.

However, the evaluation also found **some indications of unintended negative changes associated with women's participation in project activities**, including the **risk of social backlash** against empowered women, the **risk of increased workloads** for women who are WEL group and VSLA members, and in some cases the **risk of increased conflict and violence** for women associated with activities through the WEL groups and/or VSLAs. Although these **unintended negative impacts** were not widely reported they can be understood as **reflecting the influence of traditional social norms** defining gender roles in Vanuatu, including the widespread expectation that men are likely to resort to the use of violence to exert their dominance over women. **Environmental factors** – including the location of some communities in the disaster zone affected by volcanic ashfall and difficulties of access to and management of water – were also identified as presenting significant challenges for women's effective engagement in economic activities.

Progress Against Outcome 2 – Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG)

LS2 project activities for EVAWG included the facilitation of community dialogues and delivery of a life skills training programme on building healthy and equal relationships among young people for the prevention of VAWG. Based on qualitative data from FGDs and KIIs the evaluation found that young women and young men who had participated in the GRFV workshops reported **improved awareness and understanding of healthy relationships and how to prevent and respond to VAWG**, including increased awareness of service providers where survivors experiencing violence can access support. Young women and young men participants of the GRFV workshops also consistently reported that **they were using the knowledge and skills they had gained from the workshops to build positive relationships with their partners, families and the wider community**. Young people of both sexes reported **changes in behaviours**, with women and men working collaboratively together, men sharing chores, and reduced violence and/or healthier relationships. Responses from young people to the SNAP vignette also suggest that **the GRFV workshops are widely recognised as enabling participants to develop skills for resolving conflict in relationships**.

At the level of the wider community, the quantitative data collected for the evaluation showed that **27% of all survey respondents rejected the use of violence under all five situations assessed by the survey** but that there was no statistically significant difference by gender or participant status in the % of respondents rejecting violence. Qualitative data from FGDs and KIIs however suggested that delivery of the GRFV workshops has resulted in improved awareness and understanding of VAWG, laws for VAWG prevention and response, and service providers among both women and men community members and leaders. Service providers and community leaders reported that increased awareness has led to **increased reporting of VAWG and increased demand for counselling services**, as well as **increased uptake of SRH services**. Women and men commented in FGDs that their **relationships with their spouses and/or families had improved** as a result of their learning from the GRFV workshops and referred to **behavioural changes**, including women's increased participation in decision-making, men helping more with household chores, and women and men engaging in economic activities together. **Community leaders highlighted the usefulness of the FFM and GRFV workshops and VSLA s for women and young people in their communities**, and chiefs also commented on the reduced incidence of VAWG at the community level as a positive change.

Responses to the SNAP vignette showed that **the norm for men to use violence to dominate women and maintain control of financial resources remains widespread but that a process of social norm change has begun**. Men and women both identified **circumstances under which it would be acceptable for a woman to refuse to give up her**

earnings to her male partner either if the woman was a member of a savings group and needed the money for her savings or if the couple were able to communicate well, work together and understand each other. Women and men in all three communities identified improved communications and understanding as being due to women and men's attendance at the workshops delivered by CARE. Overall, the SNAP data suggest that **women's involvement in the VSLA savings scheme and men's appreciation of the importance of those activities** together with **women and men's participation in the FFMT and GRFV trainings** delivered by the project are **key factors contributing to the weakening of the social norm for the use of violence to control financial resources earned by women**.

At the same time, **kastom beliefs and practices remain a dominant influence on day-to-day life** in the rural communities where the LS2 project has been implemented, and *kastom* practices for community governance and conflict resolution sometimes undermine the effectiveness of legal processes of reporting and referral in response to incidents of VAWG. In one FGD, a male respondent identified the **tension between kastom and formal reporting systems** as a problem for chiefs – a response suggesting a negative perception of women's increased agency as a threat to traditional governance structures. These findings highlight the importance of project activities for engaging men and community leaders in community dialogues and trainings to support the changes in relations and structures needed to promote and sustain women's social, economic and political empowerment. Women project participants consistently highlighted the importance of men's participation in trainings and workshops to ensure shared understanding of issues being discussed. Overall, the evaluation findings show that **social norms remain a key factor influencing progress towards gender equality and EAWG in the LS2 communities**, and that future programming will need to include a continued focus on promoting social norm change based on processes of community dialogue and men engage activities in future programming.

Recommendations – Project components to continue, adapt or expand

Recommendation 1 - Continue the delivery of programming for gender equality based on an integrated approach:

The LS2 project's integrated implementation approach combining activities to promote Women's Economic Justice with activities for Women's Voice and Leadership and activities for Ending Violence Against Women and Girls is effective and should be continued in future gender equality programming by CARE Vanuatu.

Recommendation 2 - Expand the coverage of VSLAs as a key entry point and delivery platform for integrated GE programming:

The establishment of VSLAs by the LS2 project has been effective as approach for promoting financial inclusion and improved access to savings and loans for women in remote rural communities, including women who have had limited formal education. There is high demand from women and men for the continuation and expansion of VSLA activities in the LS2 communities. Expanding the coverage of VSLAs to the outer islands of Tafea and other provinces of Vanuatu will require the adaptation of the model, perhaps by means of a Training of Trainers based approach, to ensure a realistic level of cost per beneficiary.

Recommendation 3 – Continue delivery of FL and FFM workshops for VSLA members and their male partners or relatives:

The experiences of the LS2 project clearly highlight the importance of engaging men and boys in the implementation of an integrated programming approach for gender equality. The combination of FFM workshops with project activities to promote women's economic livelihoods (including establishment of VSLAs) has been an effective approach for encouraging men to support women's engagement in economic activities. The LS2 project's experience with delivery of the FL training for women has shown the need to engage men similarly in the leadership training through a designated module for reflective dialogue with male partners and relatives.

Recommendation 4 – Monitor the gender dynamics of VSLA programming to understand the nature and level of male involvement and influence in the functioning of the VSLAs:

The findings of the LS2 evaluation show that men have become increasingly appreciative of the benefits of VSLA membership, often reporting the use of VSLA savings and loans to cover the costs of *kastom* ceremonies. Some findings of the evaluation raise the question as to what extent male partners are influencing and controlling women's economic activities through the VSLA. With increased numbers of men also showing interest in becoming members of the VSLAs, it will also be important for CARE Vanuatu to monitor and understand how the gender composition of the VSLAs affects their intended outcomes in terms of promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.

Opportunities for strengthening alignment to CARE's frameworks and programming

The integrated implementation approach of the LS2 project is well-aligned to CARE Gender Equality Framework. The evaluation found that the LS2 project has made notable progress towards building women's agency, and some progress in changing relations and transforming structures. The findings highlight the need for a continued focus on promoting social norm change in CARE Vanuatu's future programming for gender equality to include:

Recommendation 5: Ensure a strong, continued focus on engaging men and boys/ young men as key stakeholders and potential allies for promoting gender equality: The LS2 evaluation found evidence of progress towards changes in the relations at household and community level that shape the opportunities available for women to engage in economic activities and to participate meaningfully in household decision-making. However, the evaluation findings indicate that the process of social norm change needed to create an enabling environment for women's economic, social and political empowerment in the Tanna communities is still in its early stages. Future programming for gender equality by CARE Vanuatu will need to continue and build on the work done by the LS2 project for engaging men and boys/ young men in reflection, dialogue and action for gender equality at the community level and beyond.

Recommendation 6 - Strengthen engagement with opinion leaders (including chiefs, community & church leaders) in community awareness-raising, dialogue and action for gender equality and EVAWG: The LS2 evaluation findings highlight the importance of *kastom* governance structures and processes in enabling or constraining progress towards gender equality and EVAWG at the community level. CARE Vanuatu could build on the work done to date with community gatekeepers by extending the use of participatory methodologies for community activism by and with local-level opinion leaders. A strengthened focus on creating an enabling environment for EVAWG would link well to an agenda for strengthening community governance structures and processes to enable increased participation by women and youth in community-level decision-making.

Recommendation 7 – Continue to support and promote the strengthening of women's leadership at household and community levels: The LS2 evaluation found some evidence that women project participants are exercising greater leadership at the household level and are more likely to hold leadership positions at the community level. In particular, the WEL groups and VSLAs have provided spaces for women to take on and practice leadership skills. However, most community leadership structures are still largely dominated by men and there is a clear need for future programming by CARE Vanuatu to continue to focus on promoting women's active and meaningful participation in decision-making processes within and beyond the household level.

Recommendation 8 – Engage local (district) level service providers (e.g. health post staff) in awareness-raising and capacity strengthening activities for EVAWG: Future programming interventions for EVAWG need to include awareness-raising and capacity-strengthening activities with local level service providers such as district health posts to ensure that the staff of those structures are able to better support reporting and referral processes for survivors of VAWG. A stronger focus on working with primary care providers could help to bridge some of the resource and capacity constraints identified as limiting outreach by service providers from the provincial capital.

Recommendation 9 – Integrate a reflective learning MEL approach with project staff, partners and participants into processes of ongoing project implementation: The design and implementation of future integrated GE programming interventions needs to allow time for staff reflection to internalise the change processes that they are working to facilitate. Integrating a reflective learning approach for project MEAL such as stories of change and/or outcome harvesting into project implementation would strengthen the capacity of programme staff and partners to facilitate those change processes, as well as generating an evidence base to inform adaptive project management.

Opportunities for strengthening partnerships

Recommendation 10 - Explore opportunities to formalise the collaborative relationships with partner organisations developed through the LS2 project to ensure the clearly defined division of roles and responsibilities between CARE and partners: With the exception of the formal partnership with *Nasi Tuan*, the LS2 project has been delivered on the basis of informal, collaborative partnerships with organisations such as TCC, the police FPU and Tafea Hospital. These partner organisations consistently expressed interest and commitment to the continuation and strengthening of their partnerships with CARE but did not specify what strengthened partnerships would look like in practice. CARE programme staff highlighted the need for greater clarity as to how CARE Vanuatu works with and supports partner organisations. The establishment of formal partnerships with key stakeholders would enable the joint planning and coordinated delivery of project activities with and through those partners in future GE programming.

Recommendation 11 - Identify possibilities for linking WEL groups and VSLAs to government programmes for small businesses: To support WEL group and VSLA members in developing their IGAs further, CARE Vanuatu should explore the possibility and relevance of linking members of WEL groups or VSLAs to the Vanuatu Chamber of Commerce to access business trainings and business development opportunities provided by that structure.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Evaluation Purpose and Objectives

The *Leftemap Sista II* (LS2) project has been implemented by CARE Vanuatu since 2017 with funding from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Australia NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP). The **project purpose** is “to support women, young women and girls, including those with disability, in rural and remote areas of Vanuatu to realise their rights to live free from violence, have increased economic opportunity and capacity to participate meaningfully in decisions that affect their lives in peace time and disaster.”² **CARE International in Vanuatu (CARE Vanuatu) commissioned a formative evaluation of the project in November 2021.** The formative evaluation was required to assess progress against project outcomes for promoting women’s economic empowerment and reducing tolerance of VAWG and to produce actionable recommendations to inform the design of follow-on programming in line with the CARE Australia ANCP Design Framework (see Annex 1 for the evaluation Terms of Reference - TOR). As such, **the formative evaluation was commissioned as an accountability and learning exercise** based on a participatory process of reflection and analysis with CARE, project partners and participants. This report documents the findings and recommendations of the formative evaluation to provide an evidence-based analysis of LS2 project achievements and learning.

1.2 Project Context

Vanuatu is a **geographically dispersed and culturally diverse archipelago of 83 Pacific islands** running north to south across a distance of 1,300 km with a population of 270,000 people distributed in small population centres. The country is **highly vulnerable to natural disasters**, including cyclones, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, **and to the effects of climate change**³. Vanuatu ranked 140th out of 188 countries in the 2019 Human Development Index (HDI) with 12.3% of population living below the poverty line⁴. The country ranks 131st on the Gender-Related Development Index (G)DI, which is above Kiribati, Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea but below the rest of the Pacific.

Gender inequality is pervasive in Vanuatu as a result of **deeply rooted traditional social norms, values, beliefs and practices (referred to as *kastom* in Bislama)** that dominate community life in what is characterised as a predominantly patriarchal society⁵. Despite national policies and legislation intended to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment, **women and girls continue to face significant inequalities in terms of their economic, social and political participation.** Women and young women in rural areas in Vanuatu are **largely dependent on subsistence agriculture and face multiple barriers to meeting food security requirements and producing a surplus.** Barriers to women’s economic justice⁶ include limited participation in decision-making regarding land use and/or household financial resources, environmental challenges, women’s lack of technical knowledge and limited access to markets and extension and financial services, as well as poor financial literacy and low levels of educational attainment. Women and girls in Vanuatu are **marginalised from decision making and leadership at household and community levels, as well as from formal governance structures** at all levels, and are **highly vulnerable to violence committed by men.** Vanuatu has one of the highest prevalence rates of violence against women and girls (VAWG) globally, including intimate partner violence, incest, early marriage and the swapping of girls as compensation in disputes resolved by customary justice. The 2011 *Vanuatu National Survey on Women’s Health and Domestic Violence* found that 60% of ni-Vanuatu women aged 15-49 experience physical and/or sexual violence, with 30% of women having been sexually abused as girls under the age of 15⁷. The survey also found risk and incidence of VAWG increases significantly in times of response to disaster and that survivors’ access to psychosocial, health and legal support services is very limited.

² CARE International in Vanuatu (2017). *Leftemap Sista II – Women and Girls Empowerment Program*. Project design document, 71 pp.

³ *Ibid*

⁴ [hdr_2020_overview_english.pdf \(undp.org\)](#)

⁵ Note however there are some matrilineal societies in some of the northern and central islands of Vanuatu (CARE Vanuatu 2017).

⁶ Women’s economic justice is defined as “the fulfilment of women’s fundamental human right to economic resources – including the time and opportunity to engage in economic activities – and the power to make decisions that affect their lives.” See CARE Australia (2022). “*Pacific Partnerships for Gender Equality*” CARE Australia ANCP Program Framework 2022 - 2027

⁷ VWC & Vanuatu National Statistics Office (2011). *Vanuatu National Survey of Women’s Lives and Family Relationships*. Report published by VWC, Port Vila, 246pp.

The LS2 project has been implemented in Tafea - the southern-most province of Vanuatu. Tafea province comprises the five islands of Tanna, Aniwa, Futuna, Erromango and Aneityum, which cover an area of approximately 1,628 square kilometres with a population of 45,714⁸. 44% of the population of Tafea are under 15 years of age. The Tafea islands are characterised by their **geographical isolation, environmental vulnerabilities**, including a high risk of natural and geological hazards as well as slow onset hazards such as drought, **strongly traditional culture**, and **limited service delivery by national government across all sectors** – especially on the outer islands⁹. Most service providers, including the police, hospital and Vanuatu Women's Centre are located on Tanna. The **resident populations are fluid** as people travel and move to other islands at different times of year for reasons including work, school, training, family obligations and/or to access healthcare and other services.

1.3 The LS2 Project Design

Previous to the LS2 project, CARE implemented the **Leftemap Sista I project from 2014 – 2017**, as an intervention designed to address the underlying causes of gender inequality in Vanuatu with a focus on Tafea province. **The LSI project worked at national, provincial and community levels to promote women and girls' leadership, skills development and economic empowerment** focussing on the disadvantages and inequities that women and young women face. The 2016 formative evaluation of LSI highlighted the positive value of the life skills training delivered by the LSI project as an entry point for the prevention of VAWG and recognised the value to women of women's groups established for purposes of food production and income generation¹⁰. The LSI formative evaluation also highlighted the need for CARE Vanuatu to ensure the mainstreaming of gender-based violence (GBV) risk management and response in existing and future gender equality programmes and recommended a strengthened focus on engaging men and boys by means of community dialogues and a family-based approach for economic empowerment. The evaluation proposed the involvement of local partners such as the Vanuatu Women's Centre (VWC) in future interventions for engaging men and boys and tackling the root causes of VAWG.

The LS2 project was accordingly designed to build upon the achievements and learning of LS1, with the overall project goal that: *Women, young women and girls with and without disabilities in rural and remote areas in Vanuatu are realising their rights to live free from violence, have increased economic opportunity and capacity to participate meaningfully in decisions that affect their lives in peace time and disasters.*

Implementation of the LS2 project since the Mid-Term Review (MTR) in 2019 has focussed on delivery of the following long-term outcomes¹¹:

Outcome 1: Women, young women and girls in Women's Economic Livelihood (WEL) groups in Tafea have **increased access to and control over economic resources and decision-making at the household level**; and

Outcome 2: **Reduced tolerance for VAWG and better access to quality services for survivors.**

Activities under Outcome 1 targeted 200 adult women in WEL groups and their male partners in 10 communities, while outcome 2 targeted 200 young people (100 young women and 100 young men) in the 15-25 years age category as well as community leaders and gatekeepers. The LS2 project was implemented to deliver these long-term outcomes from 2017 to 2019 based on a combination of activities with Women's Economic Livelihoods (WEL) groups in combination with activities for engaging men and community leaders and respectful relationships workshops with young women and young men in 12 communities on Tanna and Futuna. Implementation of the LS2 project has involved the delivery of activities with WEL groups and Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) in combination with activities for engaging men and community leaders and respectful relationships workshops with young people and adult community members in 12 communities on Tanna and the outer islands of Aniwa and

⁸ Vanuatu National Statistics Office (2016). *2020 Population and Housing Mini-Census*. <https://vnso.gov.vu/index.php/en/census-and-surveys/census/2020populationhousingcensus>.

⁹ Whitfield, S. (2015). *Gender Analysis – CARE Vanuatu Resilience Program*. Report for CARE Vanuatu, 105pp.

¹⁰ Brown, H. and Huxtable, J. (2016). *Leftemap Sista Women and Girls' Empowerment Program Review*. Report for CARE Vanuatu, 46pp.

¹¹ The original LS2 project design included a third long-term outcome that Women, young women and girls have increased access to decision-making. The findings of the project MTR in 2019 led to the simplification and streamlining of the LS2 project design to focus on the two outcomes referring to increased economic opportunities and improved access to and control over resources and reduced tolerance of VAWG, with activities to promote women's voice and leadership being integrated as a cross-cutting element for the delivery of those two outcomes. The findings of MTR also resulted in a shift in the project working area to enable delivery of technical support to the members of WEL groups and VSLAs based on a formal partnership with Nasi Tuan - a local NGO with expertise in agriculture and sustainable livelihoods.

Futuna (see Table 1 for summary of key interventions). Activities for the EVAWG component of the project have been implemented by CARE working in partnership with Tafea Counselling Centre (TCC) – the Tafea branch of VWC, Tafea Hospital, and the Tanna Police Family Protection Unit (FPU). These partnerships have involved the collaborative delivery of project activities rather than formal, funded partnership relationships.

Table 1: Key interventions of the Leftemap Sista 2 project

Key Activity	Relevant project outcome(s)
<u>Support for Women’s Economic Livelihoods (WEL) groups:</u> Has included the provision of technical training and extension support to previously established WEL groups for economic activities (handicrafts, agriculture, food processing), provision of good governance training to enhance group functioning, accountability and sustainability and complementary trainings (see below).	Outcome 1 (WEL)
<u>Establishment of Village Savings and Loans Associations:</u> Has involved training and ongoing support for VSLAs following CARE’s VSLA programming model over the course of at least one 12-month savings cycle.	Outcome 1 (WEL)
<u>Confidence and leadership workshops for women:</u> Foundational Leadership (FL) trainings delivered to women WEL group and VSLA members with the aim of building self-esteem, confidence and communications skills in safe spaces (sex and age-specific groups), prior to delivery of FFMT and GRFV activities.	Outcome 1 (WEL) & Outcome 2 (EVAWG)
<u>Family Financial Management (FFM) workshops:</u> delivered to WEL group and VSLA members and their partners or relatives. A 5-day training covering topics such as communications, conflict management, division of household labour and workloads, decision-making and household budgeting and developing household action plans.	Outcome 1 (WEL) & Outcome 2 (EVAWG)
<u>Community dialogues with male gatekeepers:</u> Structured discussions integrating the use of Social Analysis and Action (SAA) tools to inform and engage key adult stakeholders (including chiefs, church leaders, women leaders, parents and service providers) on issues of youth sexual and reproductive health and VAWG, prior to the delivery of GRFV workshops.	Outcome 2 (EVAWG)
<u>Good Relationships Free from Violence (GRFV) workshops:</u> Training on building healthy and equal relationships for the prevention of VAWG delivered to young women and young men aged 15 – 25 years. In response to the findings of the 2019 MTR, the GRFV workshops have also been delivered to adult women and adult men in some communities.	Outcome 2 (EVAWG)

1.4 Project Relevance: How is the LS2 project aligned with wider programming and policy frameworks for gender equality?

The LS2 project design proposed **an integrated, multi-dimensional approach** for delivering a combination of interventions focussed on building women’s agency (through the WEL groups, VSLAs and FL trainings); promoting changes in women’s relationships within and beyond their households (FFM and GRFV workshops); and working to challenge and change social norms that perpetuate gender-based inequalities at individual, household and community levels (all components). The project included a **strong focus on engaging men and boys** and **working with kastom governance structures and service providers** to address the relational and structural barriers to women’s empowerment. As such, the LS2 project design included components to address all three domains of change of the CARE Gender Equality Framework.

The LS2 project design is closely aligned with CARE Vanuatu’s Long-Term Program Strategy which aims “to bring about lasting impact at scale and inclusive development for women and girls in remote, rural and disadvantaged areas experiencing multiple denial of rights in equitable access to services, resources, economic opportunities, participation in governance, freedom from violence and the effects of disasters and climate change”¹². The project **contributes directly to two of the four change outcomes** defined in the long-term program strategy, namely that:

- Women and girls have access and control over secure and resilient economic opportunities, resources and services (Change Outcome 1); and

¹² CARE Vanuatu (2018). *CARE Vanuatu Long-Term Program Strategy 2018 – 2033*.

- Women and girls have control over their own bodies and live free from violence (Change Outcome 3).

The focus of the LS2 project on strengthening women's voice and leadership is also relevant to the long-term program change outcome that Women and girls have legitimate voice in policy-making, implementation and institutional structures (Change Outcome 2). LS2 project activities for strengthening women's agency, leadership and decision-making skills at the individual and household level were expected to enable women's increased participation in leadership at the community level. As such, **the LS2 project was designed to link and intersect with the implementation of CARE Vanuatu's Gender Equality Together (GET) project** which focuses on strengthening women's collective leadership, capacity and coordination for the promotion of gender equality and EVAWG in Vanuatu¹³.

The **LS2 project outcomes and interventions also align directly with the strategic areas of the Vanuatu National Gender Equality Policy** for: Eliminating discrimination and violence against women and girls (Strategic Area 1); Enhancing women's economic empowerment and skills development (Strategic Area 2); and Advancing women's leadership and political participation (Strategic Area 3)¹⁴. **The LS2 project was similarly well-aligned with DFAT priorities for empowering women and girls, including EVAWG**, in place at the time of the project design process. Empowering women and girls was one of ten strategic targets for the Australian aid program to 2020¹⁵, while EVAWG was one of three priority strategies for DFAT's Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment strategy¹⁶, with support in that area being enshrined in the Vanuatu Investment Plan for 2015 – 2019. The DFAT funded Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development Vanuatu work plan also prioritised support for reducing gender-based violence and promoting women's leadership and provided support to VWC as a service provider for survivors of violence. In short, **the LS2 project design was closely aligned with, and remains relevant to wider programming and policy frameworks for gender equality both within and beyond CARE.**

¹³ CARE International in Vanuatu (2017). *Leftemap Sista II – Women and Girls Empowerment Program*. Project design document, 71pp.

¹⁴ Government of the Republic of Vanuatu (2020). *National Gender Equality Policy 2020 – 2030*, Department of Women's Affairs.

¹⁵ DFAT (2014). *Making Performance Count: enhancing the accountability and effectiveness of Australian aid*, DFAT strategy document. Cited in *Leftemap Sista II* project design document.

¹⁶ DFAT (2016). *Gender equality and women's empowerment strategy* February 2016, DFAT. Cited in *Leftemap Sista II* project design document.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

The LS2 formative evaluation adopted a **mixed methods** approach based on the collection of both secondary and primary data. Table 2 presents an overview of the data collection methods that were used to address the objectives and key evaluation questions specified in the TOR for the evaluation consultancy.

Table 2: Summary of Data Collection Activities for LS2 Formative Evaluation

EVALUATION OBJECTIVE 1: To assess project progress against outcomes	
EVALUATION QUESTIONS	DATA COLLECTION
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent are the expected changes on track to being achieved? Are there any unintended impacts (both positive and negative)? What are they? What are the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of project outcomes? To what extent have the different project components been effective in contributing to progress against each outcome? To what extent are the benefits of the project expected to continue? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of project documents & secondary data. Reflection meeting with CARE project staff 9 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with project and partner organisation staff Quantitative survey of project participants & non-participants in 4 communities Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with women, men and youth project participants in 3 communities KIIs with community leaders in each of 4 communities
EVALUATION OBJECTIVE 2: To produce actionable recommendations to inform the design of follow-on programming in line with the CARE Australia ANCP Design Framework	
EVALUATION QUESTIONS	DATA COLLECTION ACTIVITIES
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> What aspects of the project components should be continued? Why and how? What opportunities are there for evolution or expansion? What opportunities are there to strengthen alignment to CARE's frameworks (such as the Gender Equality Framework) and programming? How could programming connect and collaborate more actively/effectively with partner organisations and other actors working on economic justice and EVAWG in Vanuatu? How could programming best contribute towards strengthening civil society organisations who are active in these programming spaces? How could the project best align and support key government initiatives around gender equality, economic empowerment and VAWG? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflection meeting with CARE project staff FGDs & KIIs with project and partner organisation staff, project participants and community leaders Sense-making workshop with project stakeholders (CARE & partner organisation staff)

2.1 Approach

The overall approach for the LS2 formative evaluation was grounded in the principles of:

- **Adopting a participatory and inclusive methodology to explore the experiences and perspectives of different stakeholder groups engaged with and by the LS2 project.** The evaluation used a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods to measure project outcome indicators and to encourage project stakeholders at

multiple levels - including community and government actors, women, men, young women and young men - to discuss the changes and outcomes – both intended and unintended - that they had experienced as a result of their participation in LS2 project activities. Information collected by different methods from different sources was triangulated as far as possible to provide a robust analysis in response to the evaluation questions.

- **Promoting engagement in and ownership of processes of data collection and analysis by CARE Vanuatu project staff, partners and participants** to enable reflection on and learning from project experiences and the co-creation of actionable recommendations. In-country data collection was carried out by a national consultant fluent in Bislama with the support of a small team of CARE Vanuatu programme staff.
- **Using CARE conceptual frameworks (e.g. the Gender Equality Framework and/or Women's Voice and Leadership framework etc.) to incorporate a focus on gender and power analysis at all stages of the evaluation.** The evaluation was designed to contribute to the evidence base for the effectiveness of CARE Vanuatu's programming to promote women's economic empowerment and ending violence against women and girls (EVAWG) in Vanuatu and to promote learning for the design and implementation of future programming addressing those thematic areas.

2.2 Review of Secondary Data

Data collection for the LS2 evaluation began with **a desk-based review of secondary data** available from LS2 project documents. Documents reviewed include: the project design document, logframe and MEAL framework, six-monthly project progress reports and case studies, training manuals produced to support delivery of key project activities, the Mid Term Review report and associated data collection tools, the CARE ANCP design framework and CARE International Gender Equality framework, as well as key policy documents produced by the Government of Vanuatu. The desk review generated **a preliminary mapping of the available quantitative and qualitative evidence for project intermediate outcomes and associated indicators** and informed the development of **quantitative and qualitative data collection tools and the sampling strategy** for the primary data collection for the evaluation.

2.3 Qualitative Data Collection

The coverage of the qualitative data collected for the formative evaluation is summarised in Table 3 and was based on a combination of:

Key informant interviews (KIs) and a reflection meeting with LS2 project staff and partners: A total of nine KIs were carried out with **CARE project staff** who had been involved in the implementation of the LS2 project and **staff from the partner organisations** of Nasi Tuan, Vanuatu Women's Centre / Tafea Counselling Centre, the Police Family Protection Unit (FPU), and Lenakel Hospital (in Tanna). Key informants for those interviews were identified in consultation with CARE and partners. KIs with CARE project staff were carried out remotely by the lead evaluation consultant while the KIs with local partners were carried out in-country by the supporting national consultant. **A semi-structured interview checklist was used** to guide the discussions with CARE staff and partners, using a tool which was tailored as necessary to explore the experiences and perspectives of the different organisations (see Annex 2, Tool 1). In addition to the KIs, **a reflection meeting was held with seven members of the LS2 project team** to provide a space for those staff to share their knowledge, experiences and perspectives regarding the progress of the project in promoting women's economic justice and ending violence against women and girls. The reflection meeting involved a participatory process of facilitated discussion based on a tool developed by the lead consultant (see Annex 2, Tool 2).

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with Project Participants: Eight FGDs were carried out with **small groups of project participants across four communities** where the LS2 project has been implemented: including the communities of Enkatelei and Ikurup from the Whitesands area of Tanna where the project has been implemented since 2017 and the communities of Lamalu and Lenaken from the Middle Bush area of Tanna where project implementation began in 2020. **Mixed sex FGDs** were held with young women and young men participants of the GRFV workshops in the communities of Ikurup and Lenaken. **Sex-segregated FGDs** were held in the communities of Enkatelei, Lamalu and Lenaken with:

- **Adult women members of WEL groups and/or VSLAs** and

- **Adult men**, including adult men who were the husbands of VSLA or WEL group members and a few men who were themselves VSLA members.

Table 3: Coverage of qualitative dataset for the LS2 evaluation by community/ stakeholder group, type of information and sex of informant

Community or Stakeholder group	FGDs	Kills	Total no. informants
Enkatelei, Whitesands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult women (n = 5): 3 WEL group & VSLA members, 2 non-members • Adult men (n = 8) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief • Woman leader 	15 (6F; 9M)
Ikurup, Whitesands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth – GRFV participants (n = 2): 1 young woman, 1 young man 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief • Woman leader • Male youth GRFV participant 	5 (2F; 3M)
Lamlu, Middle Bush	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult women (n = 8): 5 VSLA members, 3 non-members • Adult men (n = 4) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief • Woman leader 	14 (9F; 5M)
Lenaken, Middle Bush	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult women (n = 6): 4 VSLA members, 2 non-members • Adult men (n = 4) : 2 project participants, 2 non-participants • Youth – non-participants (n = 6): 2 young women, 4 young men 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief • Male youth GRFV participant 	18 (8F; 10M)
CARE Vanuatu programme staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection meeting with 7 LS2 staff (3 women, 4 men) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LS2 EVAWG & WEL coordinators • Gender Equality Program Manager • Gender Adviser • Programme Director • Country Director 	12 (8F; 4M)
Partner organisations	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nasi Tuan (M) • Tafea Counselling Centre (F) • Tafea Hospital (F) • Tanna Police Family Protection Unit (M) 	4 (2F; 2M)
All stakeholder groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 FGDS + 1 reflection meeting with CARE programme staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 19 Kills (11F; 8M) 	68 (34F; 33M)

The FGDs were facilitated by the supporting consultant for the formative evaluation, working together with a member of CARE Vanuatu staff as note-taker, and were documented using a standard reporting template. The checklists used for the FGDs were designed to explore the perceived changes experienced by those target groups associated with their participation in LS2 project activities, with a particular focus on changes in access to economic resources and household dynamics and attitudes relating to VAWG (see Annex 2, Tool 3). The FGDs included **discussion of the customised Social Norms Analysis Pilot (SNAP) vignette** that was used during the 2019 Mid Term Review (MTR) of the LS2 project as a tool for exploring social norms relating to VAWG (see Box 2).

The SNAP methodology developed by CARE based on social norms theory is designed to identify if a social norm exists; how strong or influential certain norms are for specific behaviours; and if or when norms are shifting and weakening¹⁷. The starting point for the methodology is the definition of a social norm as the unspoken rules within a group about what is typical or approved behaviour. A social norm is made up by one's beliefs about what others do, and by one's beliefs about what others think one should do. The SNAP methodology provides an approach for understanding and measuring social norms in terms of five key elements as follows:

- The **empirical expectation** (what I think others do)
- The **normative expectation** (what I think other people think is appropriate)
- The **sanctions** (the opinion or reaction of others I care about to the behaviour)
- The **sensitivity to sanctions** (the impact of sanctions on the behaviour)
- The **exceptions** (the circumstances under which it would be acceptable to break the norm).

¹⁷ CARE USA (2017). *Applying Theory to Practice: CARE's Journey Piloting Social Norms Measures for Gender Programming*.

Box 1: The Social Norms Analysis Plot (SNAP) vignette for the LS2 evaluation

Sharon and Peter are in a relationship. Sharon is part of a savings group that is supporting women with small loans to start activities that will earn them an income. Sharon's kitchen garden is doing well and she is selling the vegetables she grows in the nearby market. One day she comes home after selling her vegetables in the market and Peter is home with his friends. Peter tells Sharon she should give him all the money she has earned that day. Sharon refuses.

- a) How would most other husbands like Peter in your village react to this situation? (**Empirical expectation**)
- b) What would most of Peter's friends tell him to do? (**Normative expectation**)
- c) What would Peter's friends' think of him in this situation? What would they say about him in this situation? (**Sanctions**)
- d) Would Peter's response to Sharon be different if his friends weren't there? (**Sensitivity to sanctions**)
- e) Are there any circumstances where it would be considered more or less acceptable for Sharon not to give Peter the money she has earned? (**Exceptions**)
- f) Who would be the most influential in deciding how Peter reacts? (**Reference group**)
- g) If Sharon and Peter had attended the Family Finance Management Training or the Good Relationships Free from Violence workshop, how do you think Peter would react? Would he react the same way? (**Exceptions**)

Individual Kils with community members: In addition to the FGDs at the community level a total of **ten Kils were carried out with community chiefs, women leaders and youth participants of the GRFV workshops**. The individual Kils were designed to explore individual perspectives and experiences of project implementation and processes of change associated with project activities (see Annex 2, Tool 4). The Kils with youth GRFV participants also included discussion of the SNAP vignette.

2.4 Quantitative Data Collection

The formative evaluation also collected quantitative data from **LS2 project participants and non-participants in four communities** using a short survey questionnaire. The survey questionnaire was designed to measure selected project indicators for the intermediate outcomes to assess what had (or had not) changed for project participants (See Annex 2, Tool 5). The questionnaire was structured in seven sections to collect information on: respondent and household characteristics; participation in LS2 project activities; economic activities of the respondent including access to savings and loans; participation in household decision-making and attitudes on VAWG. The questionnaire included questions designed to collect **outcome-level data** consistent with the **CARE International global indicators of change** relating to women's participation in household economic decision-making, tolerance or rejection of Intimate Partner Violence, and agency. Response options for all 27 questions on the questionnaire were pre-coded, although some questions were asked as open questions.

The questionnaire was administered by **a gender-balanced team of two enumerators** using the Kobo Collect software interface on tablets. The questionnaire interviews lasted between 45 minutes to 1hr. The quantitative survey was originally designed to ensure coverage of **24 respondents in each of the four communities**, i.e. giving an expected total sample of 96 respondents, to allow for some representation of project participants and non-participants by age-sex category. The timeframe and resources available for the in-country data collection did not allow for the development of a random sampling strategy that would generate data for a representative population-based sample. In actual practice, the survey team managed to collect data for **a total sample of 81 households across the four communities**. In the absence of a formal sampling frame such as a complete list of households for the target communities, survey respondents were selected by **a purposive sampling process which involved enumerators going house to house in each community and prioritising interviews with project participants**. In households which did not include any household members who had participated in LS2 project activities, enumerators interviewed either the head of household or spouse (for representation of adult non-participant women and men) or a young woman or man in the 15-25 years old age category who had not taken part in either a GRFV workshop or any other project activity.

The composition of the survey sample by community, age-sex category, participant status and presence of a person with disability in the household is shown in Table 4. It reflects the purposive sampling approach followed for the selection of survey respondents, which means that it is not a statistically representative population sample. Using the short list of Washington Group questions, 14% of households surveyed were identified as including a person with disability, although people with disabilities were not purposively targeted as a separate sampling category of respondents for the questionnaire survey. **The majority of survey respondents were women (59% adult women and a further 21% young women aged 15 – 25 years old), with project participants (including some male participants) making up 77% of the overall sample.** The sample included relatively low numbers of adult men or young men respondents, and one respondent (an adult) who reported as non-binary. As such the survey data is likely to be more reflective of the experiences and perspectives of female project participants (particularly adult women participants) than the experiences and perspectives of male project participants and non-participants.

Table 4: Composition of LS2 survey sample by community, age-sex category and participant status of respondent and whether household includes a person with disability (PWD)

Community	Adult women	Young women	Adult men	Young men	Participants	Non-participants	HH with PWD
Enkatelei (n=25)	48% (12)	20% (5)	20% (5)	12% (3)	64% (16)	36% (9)	28% (7)
Ikurup (n = 14)	71% (10)	14% (2)	7% (1)	0% (0)	93% (13)	7% (1)	14% (2)
Lamlu (n = 23)	65% (15)	30% (7)	9% (2)	0% (0)	83% (19)	17% (4)	9% (2)
Lenaken (n = 19)	58% (11)	16% (3)	5% (1)	16% (3)	74% (14)	26% (5)	0% (0)
All communities (n = 81)	59% (48)	21% (17)	11% (9)	7% (6)	77% (62)	23% (19)	14% (11)

2.5 Data Analysis

Qualitative data from the reflection meeting, KIIs and FGDs were coded according to the thematic focus of project outcomes, synthesized and mapped in relation to the evaluation questions. The findings of the qualitative analysis were triangulated across different sources and types of data as far as possible given the limitations of the dataset. Descriptive analysis of the quantitative survey data was carried out in Excel. Some **bivariate statistical analyses** were carried out using the chi-squared test to test for differences in patterns of response by gender and participant status of the respondent. The quantitative data were analysed to measure the outcome indicators defined by the project MEL framework as far as possible. However, the limitations of the dataset (e.g. limited representation of participants of GRFV workshops in the 15 -25 years age category and limited representation of the male partners of women WEL group and/or VSLA members) precluded measurement of some quantitative indicators – most notably those for the intermediate outcome referring to young women and young men (aged 15 – 25) participants of GRFV workshops promoting healthy relationships within the household and in the community (intermediate outcome 2.2).

The **lack of quantitative baseline data for the indicators of the project MEAL framework** also presented a challenge for the measurement of indicators that had been defined in terms of changes in income levels, participation in decision-making and tolerance of VAWG¹⁸. While it was not always possible to measure the indicators as they had been defined in quantitative terms, **the evaluation team were able to use a combination of quantitative and qualitative data to assess or infer progress against most outcome indicators.** SNAP data collected for the formative evaluation are compared with the data that were collected using the same methodology for the 2019 MTR as a qualitative baseline for assessing tolerance of VAWG at the community level. The evaluation report uses **a system of traffic lighting** to summarise the project's progress against the outcome indicators based on the findings of the combined quantitative and qualitative analysis. Levels of progress are categorised as compelling (green), moderate (amber) or limited (red) and the traffic-lighting reflects the consultant's combined assessment of whether there is supporting evidence of progress and the nature and quality of the evidence available. Where data was not available for measurement of an indicator, the traffic light is left blank.

¹⁸ The LS2 project baseline was carried out as a desk-based study in recognition of community fatigue due to previous intensive data collection exercises associated with response activities for Tropical Cyclone Pam and the LS2 evaluation.

2.6 Limitations of the Evaluation

Travel restrictions due to COVID-19: The lead consultant was unable to travel to Vanuatu due to restrictions associated with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and so was unable to observe any project activities or engage with project stakeholders in person. Her interactions with the other members of the evaluation team during the process of data collection and analysis were inevitably more limited than would have been the case during an in-country visit. This presented a challenge for the iterative development and detailed documentation of the in-country qualitative data collection, which was resolved to some extent by a series of debriefings held remotely with the supporting consultant.

Trade-offs in breadth and depth of coverage of thematic issues: The LS2 project is a complex intervention which has been implemented at multiple levels with a diverse range of target groups (women, men, youth, community leaders and four different partner organisations). The scope of work for the formative evaluation required the evaluation consultants to explore a range of issues relating to the various project interventions with different stakeholders in a short timeframe. Collecting both quantitative and in-depth qualitative data across all the thematic areas addressed by the project, which include engagement in economic activities, access to savings and loans, participation in household financial decision-making, voice and leadership, attitudes and behaviours for EVAWG proved challenging, and resulted in **some trade-offs between breadth and depth of coverage of those issues** that was possible for the evaluation.

The evaluation dataset is stronger in its coverage of issues relating to women's engagement in economic activities and access to savings and loans, as well as in its coverage of attitudes relating to VAWG than it is in its coverage of issues relating to women's voice and leadership and participation in household decision-making. The limited representation of the experiences and perspectives of people with disabilities as a target group for the LS2 project must also be recognised as a reflection of the limited timeframe and resources available for the evaluation.

Compressed timeframe for in-country data collection: The design and data collection for the formative evaluation was carried out in a timeframe of just four weeks from mid-November to mid December 2021. The compressed timeframe for the early stages of the evaluation - the review of secondary material, development of data collection tools and in-country data collection – meant that there **were limited opportunities for planning and preparatory work and training of data collection team**, nor did **the schedule for in-country data collection allow for the pre-testing of tools**. Some questions from the tool for the questionnaire survey would have benefited from being adjusted and adapted more specifically for the Vanuatu context. An iterative process of adjustments to the questions asked during FGDs and KIs with partner organisations and community members would also have strengthened the quality and coverage of the qualitative dataset.

Challenges of using the SNAP methodology: Data collection using the SNAP vignette proved interesting and challenging as the methodology involves a series of subtly nuanced questions designed to distinguish between empirical and normative expectations. As there was no opportunity for a formal training of the evaluation team in the use of the SNAP methodology, **the team found it challenging at times to facilitate a discussion that went beyond the personal beliefs and behaviours of FGD respondents** to explore what FGD respondents thought other people would do in the scenario of the vignette (the empirical expectations) as distinct from what other people would think appropriate behaviour in that scenario (the normative expectation).


Practical constraints: Conditions on Tanna during the seven-day period of in-country data collection were challenging due to a combination of **bad weather which complicated access to the more distant communities of Enkatelele and Ikurup** and the **difficulties of mobilising communities** at what was a very busy time of year just before Christmas and limited communications. Some of the resulting gaps in coverage of the qualitative data collection (limited representation of young people who had taken part in the GRFV workshops and of the perspectives of community leaders, including women leaders) were addressed in a subsequent round of qualitative data collection by CARE project staff. The extent to which the data collection by CARE project staff may have been influenced by a degree of confirmation bias is unknown.

Lack of quantitative baseline data: The absence of a quantitative baseline data for the outcome indicators specified in the project MEAL framework meant that **measurement of indicators defined in terms of changes was challenging**. For some indicators this was addressed by asking questions about perceptions of change, for others the assessment of the indicator was inferred from a combination of quantitative and qualitative data collected for the evaluation.

3.0 PROGRESS AGAINST OUTCOME 1 – WOMEN’S ECONOMIC LIVELIHOODS

This chapter of the report presents the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data gathered by the evaluation for Outcome 1 of the LS2 project referring to women and young women in WEL groups in Tafea having increased access to and control over economic resources at the household level. The evaluation found compelling quantitative and qualitative evidence showing that WEL group members are practicing improved income generating activities (Intermediate Objective - IO 1.1) and have improved access to savings and loans through the VSLAs (IO 1.2). The evaluation found consistent qualitative evidence across a range of project stakeholders (including women and men project participants, partner organisations and CARE programme staff) of increased understanding and improved skills for joint financial decision-making by women with their male partners at the household level as a result of participation in LS2 project activities such as the FFM workshops, indicating positive progress in terms of IO 1.3 referring to WEL group members’ meaningful participation in household financial decision-making. There was also some qualitative evidence of changes in the gendered division of household labour associated with women and men’s participation in project activities. The evaluation also found that women project participants were more likely than non-participants to hold leadership roles at the community level, with qualitative data suggesting women’s participation in project trainings and workshop has contributed to improved access to information, enhanced confidence and strengthened leadership skills (IO 1.4). Overall, **the findings of the evaluation indicate that the LS2 project has achieved substantive positive progress towards the outcome for promoting women’s increased access to and control over economic resources at the household level** (Outcome 1).

3.1 WEL group members practice improved income generating activities (Intermediate Outcome 1.1)

Indicators:	Progress	Evidence
❖ % of WEL group members who report improved practices for income generation		Quantitative & qualitative data

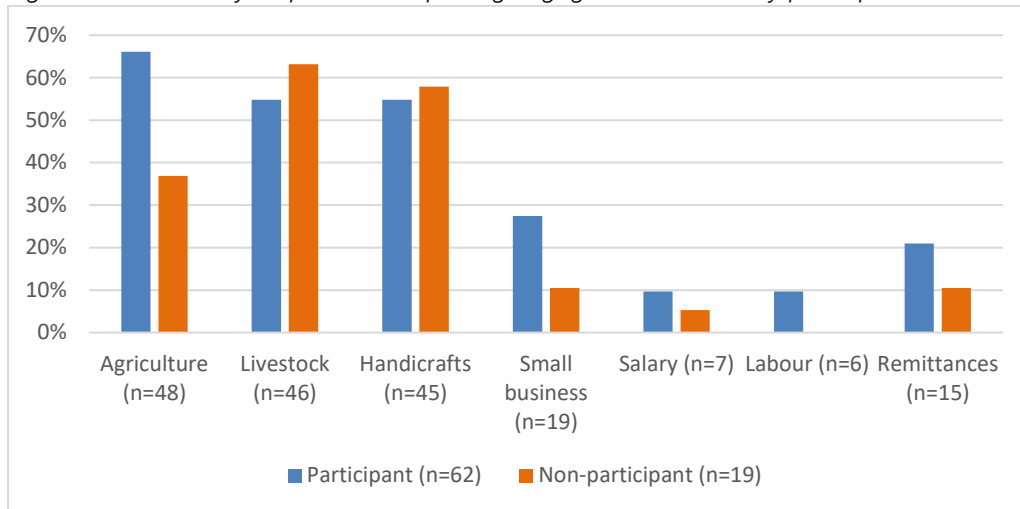
Project activities: The LS2 project has provided **technical support on handicrafts** (fabric painting & sewing) **and agriculture** (production, value addition techniques and market linkages) to 248 WEL group members in 10 groups in 2019/2020 and 104 WEL group members in 5 (target of 9) groups in 2020/ 2021¹⁹. The project has also provided good governance training to 135 WEL group members and 58 other community leaders (2F, 56M) to strengthen the management structures of the WEL groups and clarify the roles and responsibilities of group members. Some WEL group members have also received Foundational Leadership (FL) training, Family Financial Management training (FFMT), and Good Relationships Free from Violence (GRFV). A high proportion of WEL group members have also become members of Village Savings and Loans Associations, which have been established in six communities in response to the findings of the project MTR in 2019. The FFM and GRFV workshops delivered by the project have also targeted the male partners and relatives of women participants.

Quantitative analysis: The survey for the formative evaluation included questions about the respondent’s sources of income and perceived changes (increase or decrease) in income over the period of project implementation in their community. Responses to these questions were used for measurement of the outcome indicator referring to improved practices for income generation. **Project participants – the majority of whom were WEL group and/or VSLA members - were significantly more likely than non-participants to report engaging in income generating activities (IGAs) of agriculture and small business activities** (see Figure 2)²⁰. Project participants also tended to report **engagement in a higher number of IGAs** – the mean number of IGAs reported by project participants was 2.63 (Standard Deviation = 1.11) as compared with the mean of 1.89 IGAs reported by non-participants (SD = 0.73), although this difference was not tested for statistical significance.

¹⁹ ANCP 2020-21 Performance Report.

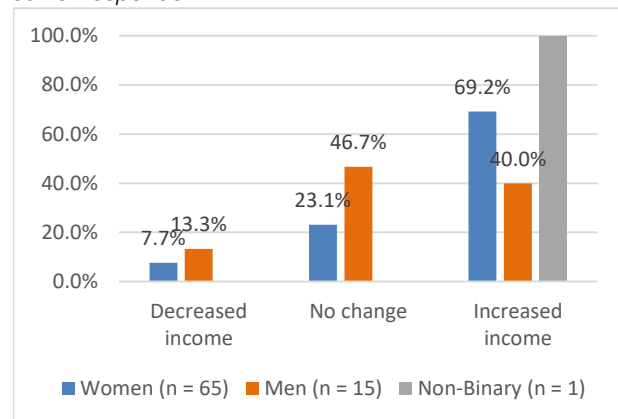
²⁰ The observed difference between participants and non-participants’ engagement in agriculture was statistically significant at the $p < 0.05$ level, while the observed difference in engagement by the two groups in small business was a trend at the $p = 0.12$ level.

Figure 2: % of survey respondents reporting engagement in IGAs by participation status



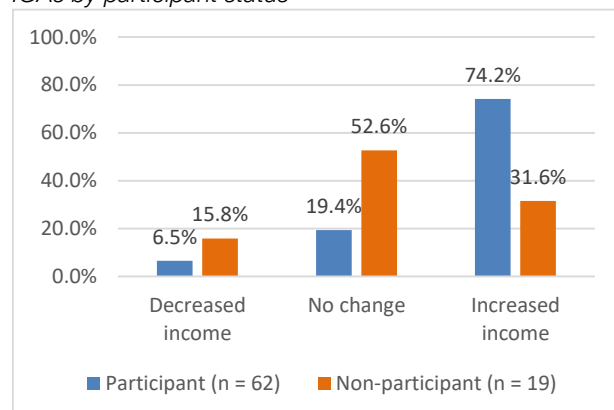
Across the sample as a whole, **64% of survey respondents (n = 81) reported that their income had increased**, 27% reported no change and 9% reported decreased income. There were marked differences in patterns of response by gender and participant status to the question exploring perceived changes in income. **Women respondents - the majority of whom were project participants - were more likely than men to report increased income**, and less likely to report no change or decreased income, while **project participants were more likely than non-participants to report increased income** and less likely to report no change or decreased income²¹. The single survey respondent (a project participant) who identified as non-binary also reported that their income had increased.

Figure 3: Perceived changes in income earned from IGAs by sex of respondent



The most frequently reported **reasons for increased income were that the respondent had started a new IGA** (19% of all respondents), was using new skills and knowledge (44% of all respondents) or for other reasons (13% of all respondents), which response category included responses referred to VSLA savings and more effective management of spending.

Figure 4: Perceived changes in income earned from IGAs by participant status



Overall, the findings of the quantitative analysis show that project participants, including **WEL group and VSLA members, have achieved improved IGAs in terms of both the diversification and effectiveness of their economic activities.**

²¹ The observed difference between women and men reporting increased income as against decreased income or no change was statistically significant at the $p < 0.05$ level (chi-squared = 4.51, d.f.=1), and the observed difference between participants and non-participants reporting increased income as against decreased income or no change was statistically significant at the $p < 0.001$ level (chi-squared = 11.49, d.f.=1).

Qualitative analysis: The formative evaluation explored the perspectives of women WEL group members in the community of Enkatelei²² in an FGD that included questions relating to their participation in project activities, and the changes, benefits and challenges they had experienced as a result of their participation. A separate FGD was held with men – including project participants and non-participants – in Enkatelei to explore male perspectives on these questions. The findings of the qualitative analysis are consistent with and support the findings of the quantitative analysis and show that:

Membership of the WEL group has contributed to positive changes in women’s agency and relations within the group and at household level: Women and men who took part in the sex-segregated FGDs in Enkatelei reported that membership of the WEL group had increased women’s agency through building women’s knowledge and skills and enabling women to engage in improved IGAs resulting in increased spending (see Box 2). **Both women and men also recognised the social benefits of WEL group membership** in that the group provides a space where women and young women can come together to share their experiences and ideas and learn from each other. In this way, the establishment of the WEL groups has provided a new structure at the community level which enables increased solidarity – a change in relations – among women. These changes were highlighted as being particularly important for women who have had limited formal education, as is the case for many women in rural communities in Vanuatu. **Women’s involvement in the WEL groups and increased engagement in economic activities, including savings, was identified as contributing to improved household well-being** through better nutrition and enabling families to meet the costs of customary social obligations.

Box 2: Perspectives from women and men regarding the positive impacts of WEL group membership

“If I had not joined the WEL group, I would not be able to sew island dresses and learn how to save money”.
Woman project participant, Enkatelei.

“My wife learned how to sew and paint dresses to sell and earn an income”.
Husband of woman project participant, Enkatelei.

“WEL groups are important because they make it possible for women and mothers in the community to complete certain community tasks together. It is important to train young girls in the community on how to save and take care of their homes”.
Woman project participant, Enkatelei.

“The WEL group helps a lot of mothers who did not go to school and have little knowledge due to lack of education”.
Woman project participant, Enkatelei.

“When mothers come together with WEL groups, they encourage and empower themselves with their experiences – this helps them get new ideas to change the diet that their family is on”.
Male FGD respondent, Enkatelei.

“Spending has increased, there is more money and income generating activities including cooking and selling kato at the school and in the community. Purchasing power has increased”.
Male FGD respondent, Enkatelei.

However, FGD respondents in Enkatelei also highlighted factors constraining the effectiveness of WEL group members’ engagement in economic activities, which included:

The challenging environmental context: Women and men who took part in the Enkatelei FGDs reported that **the location of the community in the disaster zone, which is affected by ashfall from the Mount Yasur volcano, is a significant constraint on the opportunities for engagement in IGAs.** Enkatelei community also experiences difficulties of access to water as there is no source of clean water in the community and women and girls have to walk a considerable distance to collect water for their household needs. In the communities of Lamalu and Lenaken which are outside the disaster zone, issues of water management were also identified as environmental factors that present significant challenges for the establishment and maintenance of successful IGAs. The LS2 project attempted to navigate these environmental challenges by supporting handicraft production in the Whitesands communities but the impacts of COVID-19 on the provincial tourism sector since 2020 have inevitably curtailed demand for those

²² The LS2 project has worked in 10 communities with WEL groups that were established during the earlier 2014-2017 phase of implementation of *Leftemap Sista I*. However, WEL groups have not been established in the communities of Lamalu and Lenaken, where the project began implementation following the 2019 MTR.

products. These findings of the evaluation therefore highlight the influence of contextual factors which it has been beyond the scope of the LS2 project to fully address as constraints on progress against the project’s objective for women’s economic livelihoods.


Increased workloads for women participating in WEL activities: Most comments from men who took part in the Enkatelei FGD regarding women’s participation in the WEL group were positive – a finding which was consistent with the conclusion of the project MTR that the LS2 project has successfully engaged men on women’s participation in WEL groups. However, **one male respondent from Enkatelei commented that women’s empowerment through their engagement in WEL group activities means that women do not have enough time to meet their household or family responsibilities.** The implications of this comment are firstly, that women’s workloads may have increased due to their participation in the WEL groups, and secondly, that not all men are wholly supportive of the ongoing process of women’s economic empowerment. While some women respondents in FGDs reported that their male partners are taking up increased responsibilities for household chores and childcare (see discussion of IO 1.3 in section 3.3 below) and these unintended negative impacts of WEL group membership were not substantiated by other Enkatelei FGD respondents (either men or women), the risks that women project participants may face increased workloads and social backlash associated with the uptake of new economic opportunities are likely to reflect traditional social norms relating to women’s roles and responsibilities that are widespread and dominant in Vanuatu culture. This finding echoes the finding from the MTR that women project participants mentioned that their male partners and family members ask them to prioritise household and *kastom* work²³. This apparently negative male perspective highlights the need for gender equality programming in Vanuatu to include activities designed to address the structural and relational barriers to gender equality, and in particular the gendered division of household labour. This was recognised and addressed in the LS2 project design and implementation and will need to be an ongoing focus of future gender equality programming by CARE Vanuatu.

Box 3: Perspectives from women and men regarding constraints and challenges of WEL group membership

“I was unable to secure a means of making an income so I had to withdraw from the scheme.” **Woman WEL group member, Enkatelei**

“Women have been empowered to a point where they neglect their family responsibilities because their time is spent on WEL group activities”. **Male FGD respondent, Enkatelei.**

3.2 WEL group members have improved access to savings and loans – VSLAs (Intermediate Outcome 1.2)

Indicator:	Progress	Evidence
❖ Up to 50% of women in WEL groups are active members of VSLAs		Quantitative & qualitative data

Project activities: VSLA activities have been an important component of LS2 project implementation since early 2019. The VSLA approach was initially piloted by CARE with WEL group members in four communities reaching a total of 156 members (145 women, 11 men) to address the challenge of limited access to financial services in remote, rural communities on Tanna²⁴. The four pilot VSLAs completed their first cycle of savings in 2020 with total savings of VT 980,850 (equivalent to USD 8,917). One of these groups completed their second cycle of savings in December 2021 with total savings of VT 338,930 (USD 2,984) and average of VT13,035 (USD 115) per member²⁵. Two additional VSLA groups were then established in early 2021 in two new communities (Lamlu and Lenaken) in the district of Middlebush with 68 members (53 women, 15 men)²⁶ and completed their first savings cycle in

²³ CARE Australia (2019). *Leftemap Sista II Mid-Term Review Final Report*. Project document.

²⁴ ANCP 2019-20 Annual Performance Report

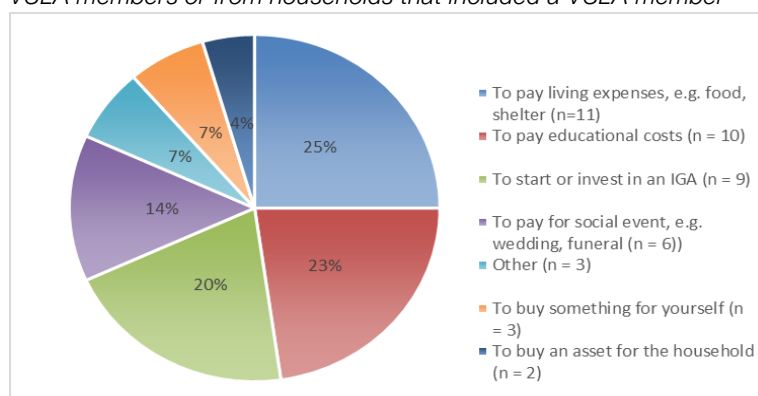
²⁵ Volcanic ashfall affected Whitesands communities in early 2021 and delayed commencement of the second cycle for one VSLA group (shareout to be completed in April 2022). Two communities did not commence the second cycle due to continuing impacts of volcanic ashfall and Covid-19.

²⁶ ANCP 2020-21 Annual Performance Report..

December 2021 with total savings of VT842,850 (USD 7,419) and average of VT 20,067 (USD 177) per member²⁷. The Lamlu and Lenaken VSLAs are receiving technical support for agriculture economic livelihoods activities from the partner organisation of *Nasi Tuan*. FL training has been delivered to 52 women and girls (including one person with disability) in the two new communities, while an FFM workshop has been delivered to 36 people (22F, 13M, 1M with disability) in one of new communities.

Quantitative analysis: Survey data collected for the formative evaluation showed that 63% of all respondents surveyed (n = 51); 63% (n = 43) of women respondents; and 47% (n = 7) of men respondents reported that they or someone from their household was a VSLA member. All 24 WEL group members interviewed in the communities of Enkatelele and Ikurup for the survey were VSLA members, which finding suggests that **uptake of VSLA membership has far exceeded the 50% target set for the outcome indicator**. Most (65%) of the VSLA members surveyed had completed at least one membership cycle, i.e. 12 months or more and **all but two reported weekly savings of 600 VT²⁸**. As such, all could be considered as active VSLA members. **86% of VSLA members surveyed had taken a loan from the VSLA**, with the most frequently reported uses of loans being to pay for living expenses, to pay educational costs, to start or invest in an IGA or to pay for a social event (see Figure 5). Furthermore **60% of VSLA members surveyed for the evaluation reported that they had not previously had access to savings or loans**. Respondents from households including VSLA members were more likely than households without VSLA members to report increased income. In short, the quantitative survey data provide compelling evidence of progress against the outcome of improved access to savings and loans for WEL group members.

Fig 5 – Use of VSLA loans reported by survey respondents who were VSLA members or from households that included a VSLA member



Qualitative analysis: The experiences of project participants and non-participants involved in the VSLA activities of the LS2 project were a dominant theme of FGDs and KIs with community members. The qualitative data gathered from project stakeholders at multiple levels clearly showed that **VSLA activities have been an effective strategy for promoting women's economic empowerment and increased engagement in economic activities**. CARE project staff, partner organisations and community members consistently reported that **the VSLA enables financial inclusion for women and men who would not otherwise be able to access formal financial services** due to barriers of distance and limited education. **CARE programme staff have themselves established a VSLA** which is an unintended positive outcome of the project. A key informant from CARE identified the security of the VSLA as a savings vehicle and the increased access to savings and loans that it offers as significant benefits of VSLA membership. In the communities visited for the formative evaluation, **women VSLA members from both older and more recently established groups reported that they had been able to use VSLA savings and loans to invest in IGAs, to cover household needs including education costs and payments for *kastom* ceremonies**, which are seen as essential investments in social capital. These findings of the evaluation are consistent with experiences of VSLA members documented in the project case study of Lawenata village²⁹.

²⁷ Note that at cycle completion total members had reduced to 42.

²⁸ Approximately USD 5

²⁹ Garae, R. (2020). *Case Study 2020 – Village Savings and Loans Associations*. Leftemap Sista II case study.

Box 4: Women and men's perspectives on changes in agency associated with VSLA membership

"Many of the women in community are not educated and are unable to open bank accounts in the banks at Lenakel. The VSLA has made it possible for them to save their money in the village without opening a bank account." **Woman VSLA member, Lamalu**

"I am not well educated and know nothing about banking so the VSLA group helps me save money – I am happy for this service." **Woman VSLA member, Enkatelei**

"My wife now knows how to manage the funds we have for our home as well as savings." **Male VSLA member, Lenaken**

"CARE has helped me to better understand the importance of saving money in my home and reserving funds for business, income generating activities and savings. My daughter and I saved under the scheme and I managed to start my own store." **Woman VSLA member, Lamalu**

"I am involved in the savings scheme ... I was able to make a loan of 8,500vt to purchase enough flour and ingredients to make 'Kato' and sell." **Woman VSLA member, Enkatelei**

"VSLA has helped in a big way to save money to pay for school fees and support the kitchen." **Male community member, Enkatelei**

"The participation of women in the VSLA/WEL has been beneficial for families as well as the community. Some have been able to start canteens so they are now providing a service to their households and to the community." **Male community members, Lamalu**

Project stakeholders at all levels also consistently highlighted that **the integrated delivery of VSLA and FFM workshops is a powerful approach for promoting changes in agency and relations for women and men**. VSLA provides a space for building and practicing the use of financial literacy knowledge and skills. Women and men from all three communities where FGDs were held for the evaluation reported **increased confidence and capacity for effective financial planning** as a result of their participation in the VSLA, as well as increased – and sometimes joint – engagement in IGAs, joint decision-making and increased support from men for women's VSLA activities.

Box 5: Women and men's perspectives on changes in relations due to VSLA membership

"I was part of the VSLA savings scheme as well as the Nasituan Seedbank initiative. It was beneficial to my family as both my husband and I were part of the trainings we both had an understanding of the importance of savings and making decisions together." **Woman VSLA member, Lenaken**

"My wife and I now know how to save and benefits of saving. Being more aware of the benefits of savings, we have been able to work together on different household projects." **Male VSLA member, Lamalu**

"I let her join the VSLA activities and each week when the women go together to save money, I take care of the children while she goes to the savings and loans program." **Male participant of FFMT and GRFV trainings, Lamalu.**

Men are increasingly recognising the positive value of participation in the VSLA: FGD respondents consistently reported that – after initial scepticism regarding the VSLA approach – men are becoming increasingly appreciative of the benefits and supportive of their wives'/ partners' involvement, particularly following the end-of-year share-out in December 2021 in Lamalu and Lenaken. As well as commenting on the benefits of improved IGAs and increased capacity for covering household costs using VSLA savings and loans, **men and women across all three communities highlighted the contribution of VSLA as mechanism for covering costs of kastom ceremonies**, which are a central aspect of Vanuatu culture and social life. Women in some communities reported that more men are now also interested in participating as VSLA members. While engaging men and boys to support the activities of the VSLAs and their members has clearly been an effective positive focus of LS2 project activities, **it is important that the VSLAs continue to provide safe spaces for building women's confidence, skills and collective solidarity**. Research by CARE based on women's economic empowerment programming in other contexts indicates that groups with mixed sex

membership and women leaders are most likely to achieve positive outcomes for women's empowerment³⁰. Given the existence of strong social norms supporting male dominance and control in the Vanuatu context, these findings highlight **the need for careful monitoring of the gender dynamics of CARE Vanuatu's existing and future VSLA programming interventions**, including levels of representation and influence by male community members in the groups.

Box 6: Changes in men's attitudes towards the VSLA

*The men in the village have become more and more supportive of the VSLA and some have even joined and started saving along with their wives. **Woman VSLA member, Lamlu***

*"I attended CARE workshops in the past. My husband would always disagree with my involvement in CARE activities. He later decided to attend some CARE associated events which is when his perception changed. This resulted in a change in behaviour and attitude towards savings and improving our living at home." **Woman VSLA member, Enkatelei***

*"Initially, I stopped my wife from joining the scheme because I did not believe in the savings and loans idea. It was not until she borrowed money from the scheme to help us with a custom ceremony for our son that I saw the benefit in taking part in the savings scheme." **Husband of VSLA member, Enkatelei***

Women and men respondents of FGDs in both the Whitesands and Middle Bush areas reported that establishment of the VSLA had motivated them to find ways of earning income to enable their participation in savings. FGD respondents from Enkatelei reported access to savings was helpful as a coping strategy for managing the impacts of ashfall. However, the qualitative data also suggests that **there are challenges and potential risks associated with VSLA membership**, particularly in the disaster prone Whitesands area. Women and men who took part in the FGDs in Enkatelei village identified **the difficulty of establishing successful IGAs in the disaster zone affected by ashfall**, with one woman respondent reporting that she had had to withdraw from the VSLA as a result of that challenge.

One of the women VSLA members present for the Enkatelei FGD also reported that her **participation in the VSLA was causing increased conflict with and violence from her husband**. The evaluation team also heard from informal conversations that **women sometimes resort to hiding money from their male partners to be able to repay their VSLA loans**. Women and men's responses to SNAP vignette (see discussion of outcome 2.2 in Chapter 4) also revealed that **men are widely expected to use violence against women as a mechanism for exerting control over household-level economic resources**. These findings of the LS2 evaluation are consistent with the gender dynamics observed for CARE's VSLA programming in other contexts³¹. They highlight the critical importance of integrating couple-based approaches such as the FFM workshops as complementary programming activities to enable information to be shared and concerns to be addressed regarding the social outcomes of men and women's participation in the VSLAs, and to explore and address norms relating to household decision-making and the division of household labour.

Box 7: Challenges and unintended negative impacts of participation in the VSLA




*"There has been a challenge of women's absence from the savings scheme (VSLA) due to lack of initial income generation to kick start the savings. This area is a disaster zone so women have difficulty finding enough food to feed the family let alone sell to make an income and contribute to the savings scheme." **Male community member, Enkatelei***

*"My husband and his friends often come and ask me for money. Although he disagrees with me joining the scheme, he brings his friends with him to the house to ask me for money. When I don't give him the money he beats me up and we end up in huge arguments." **Woman VSLA member, Enkatelei***

³⁰ CARE USA. *The role of collectives in achieving Women's Economic Empowerment: A cross-project analysis*. See careevaluations.org

³¹ For example, see CARE Rwanda (2012). *Mind the Gap: Exploring the Gender Dynamics of Village Savings and Loans (VSL) programming in Rwanda*.

3.3 WEL group members make decisions with their partners to manage household finances and livelihoods (Intermediate Outcome 1.3)

Indicator:	Progress	Evidence
❖ Up to 70% of female WEL group members report that they are able to meaningfully participate in household financial decision-making		Mixed findings - Quantitative & qualitative data
❖ Up to 70% of male partners of female WEL group members report increased participation by WEL group members in household financial decision-making		Qualitative data only
❖ Types of joint financial decision-making reported by female WEL group members and their male partners		Limited qualitative data

Project activities: The LS2 project has delivered **FFM workshops to 256 WEL group members and their family members (165 women and 91 men) across the 9 WEL groups** that have been participating in project activities since 2017. With the shift in geographical focus of project implementation since the MTR, **FFM workshops have also been delivered to VSLA members and their families in two communities in Middle Bush** reaching a total of 96 people (69 women and 27 men) at those sites. The FFM workshop is a participatory training designed to give couples and families in Vanuatu the knowledge, tools and experience to plan for and manage their family's income in ways that encourage equal decision-making and control over income³². The training is delivered over five sessions of approximately 4 hours duration which focus on Exploring our household (Session 1); Exploring how we work together (Session 2); Managing money and business activities (Session 3); Decision making and household budgeting (Session 4) and a final Summary and planning for change session (Session 5). Each session involves a series of experiential and reflective learning activities giving training participants the opportunity to explore their own values and attitudes³³.

Quantitative analysis: The survey carried out for the evaluation included a question on participation in household financial decision-making based on the **CARE International global indicator of change for Women's Economic Justice**³⁴. As such the question was designed to measure **levels of participation in household economic decision-making across five domains** referring to:

- Spending income earned by the respondent
- Spending savings made by the respondent
- Spending on major household purchase such as land, livestock, tools or agricultural inputs
- Spending on children's education
- Accessing healthcare for the respondent or another family member.

Pre-coded response options for the questions reflected three possible levels of participation in decision-making: Sole responsibility meaning the respondent was able to decide by her-/himself; Joint responsibility meaning the respondent would decide with her/ his partner or family; and No responsibility meaning the respondent was not able to influence the decision.

Most of respondents surveyed – both project participants and non-participants - reported that household financial decisions were taken jointly, with relatively limited variation in patterns of response for the different domains of decision-making (see Table 4). Between 22% and 30 % of all respondents (n = 80) reported that they were able to take sole responsibility for different decisions. **A composite decision-making score was calculated for each respondent** as the sum of item scores across all five domains of decision-making where No responsibility responses scored 1; Joint responsibility responses scored 2 and Sole responsibility responses scored 3. Decision-making scores up to 10 were categorised as indicating a moderate level of participation in household financial decision-

³² CARE Vanuatu (2018). *Facilitator Handbook: Tugeta Yumi Mekem Jenis Family Financial Management Training*. Training manual, 103 pp.

³³ Note FFMT has been adapted from the successful CARE Papua New Guinea's 'Family Business Management Training' which is run primarily with coffee growing families in PNG.

³⁴ See CI guidance for indicator 14 - # and % of women who have actively participated in economic decision-making in the household.

making, scores higher than 10 were categorised as indicating a high level of participation in household financial decision-making.

Table 4: Responses to the survey question regarding level of participation in household financial decision-making (% of all respondents male and female)

Domain of decision-making	No responsibility	Joint responsibility	Sole responsibility
How to spend income you have earned (n = 81)	1% (1)	69% (56)	30% (24)
How to spend your savings (n = 81)	1% (1)	70% (57)	28% (23)
Major household purchases, e.g. land, livestock, tools (n=81)	1% (1)	77% (62)	22% (18)
Spending on children's education (n = 81)	1% (1)	75% (61)	23% (19)
Accessing healthcare for yourself or another family member (n= 81)	1% (1)	75% (61)	23% (19)

The distribution of decision-making scores shows that **68% of women project participants (n = 50) reported a moderate level of participation in decision-making and 32% reported a high level of participation in decision-making.** There was no difference in the levels of participation in household decision-making reported by women project participants as compared with women non-participants, or with men (see Table 5). The survey data appear to indicate moderate to high levels of participation in household decision-making for all women surveyed, and do not provide supporting evidence for any positive impact of LS2 project activities on women's participation in decision-making. These are surprising findings which are not consistent with the findings of earlier analyses by CARE Vanuatu³⁵, or with the findings of the project MTR³⁶ or indeed with the findings of the analysis of the qualitative data gathered for the formative evaluation which are discussed below.

Table 5: Levels of participation in household financial decision-making by sex and participation status of respondent

Respondent type	High participation	Moderate participation
Women participants (n = 50)	32% (16)	68% (34)
Women non-participants (n = 15)	33% (5)	67% (10)
Men participants (n = 11)	27% (3)	73% (8)
Men non-participants (n = 4)	0%	100% (4)
Non-binary participant (n = 1)	0%	100% (1)

It seems likely that **the hard-to-explain survey findings to some extent reflect the inherent challenge of trying to measure a nuanced concept such as level of participation in decision-making using quantitative methods with a small sample size** and the limitations of the standardised questions used in the survey for the LS2 formative evaluation. Using a set of questions on domains of decision-making that are specifically contextualised for Vanuatu, e.g. by including questions about decision-making on household expenditure for *kava* and tobacco, and decision-making for setting prices on the sale of livestock and produce at the market, would perhaps provide a more nuanced and meaningful approach for measuring different levels of participation in household decision-making by means of a survey approach in the LS2 communities in future.

Qualitative analysis: By contrast with the survey findings, **the qualitative data collected for the formative evaluation suggest that women's participation in household financial decision making has increased.** CARE project staff and the staff of partner organisations consistently highlighted the positive contribution of FFM and GRFV workshops to increased awareness and understanding of the need for women to participate in household decision making; improvements in communications between couples; and the development of practical skills for joint planning, budgeting, and decision-making. **The FFM workshop was explained as an effective "gender training by stealth"** based on a process that involves challenging gender norms but that is couched in terms of understanding and

³⁵ Whitfield, S. (2015). *Gender Analysis – CARE Vanuatu Resilience Program*. Consultancy report for CARE Vanuatu.

³⁶ CARE Australia (2019). *Leftemep Sista II Mid-Term Review Final Report*. Project document.

meeting the wants and needs of all family members. Key informants from CARE and partner organisations also reported that **women's strengthened agency for participation in economic activities and household-level financial decision-making is contributing to women's increasing involvement in broader decision-making spheres relating to SRH/ access to healthcare.**

Box 8: Changes in women's participation in decision-making – perspectives from CARE and partners

"The FFMT has been one of the most successful aspects of LS2 programming because it works with all family members especially husbands and wives to unpack the wants and needs of each family member. It involves a process of challenging gender norms without using gender terms." **Key informant, CARE program staff**

"With the capacity building activities available to women and men through CARE and other initiatives, there are more and more instances of shared responsibilities at the household level and an increased awareness of the need to create space for women to be heard in terms of decision making. This is a huge positive change." **Key informant, TCC.**

"The Women's Economic Livelihoods (WEL) activities under this initiative by CARE are beneficial for women and young girls. Women and girls are being empowered to be part of income generating activities and with the GRFV training, they are also empowered to make decisions about reproductive health." **Key informant, Tafea hospital**

"The Good Relationships Free from Violence training was probably the training that resulted in the most important change. It has resulted in men and women realising the value of shared decision making and having a common understanding on income generation and how funds should be used at the household level." **Key informant, Nasi Tuan**

At the community level, **women and men respondents for FGDs also reported increased understanding of and improved skills for joint decision-making at the household level following their participation in CARE trainings and workshops**, with both sexes referring to examples of couples who had started and were managing IGAs together using their VSLA savings and loans. The value of couples being able to talk and plan their earning, saving and spending activities together to cover household needs – including costs of children's education and participation in *kastom* ceremonies - was consistently recognised, and was also a theme of discussion relating to the SNAP vignette (see discussion of outcome 2.2 in Chapter 4).

Men in all three communities expressed appreciation of the improved financial management skills women had developed from their participation in WEL groups, VSLAs and associated trainings. Some women respondents **reported improved intra-household relationships with male partners** becoming more supportive and helping more with household responsibilities for cooking, cleaning and childcare. These shifts in the household division of labour were highlighted as a highly significant change by CARE and partner organisation staff given the strongly patriarchal social context of Tanna.

Box 9: Changes in women's participation in decision-making – perspectives from community members.




"My wife and I now know how to save and benefits of saving. Being more aware of the benefits of savings, we have been able to work together on different household projects." **Male project participant, Lamalu**

"The seed provisions with Nasituan helped us to be able to make gardens and strengthen our relationship with each other. This is in terms of being able to make decisions together, communicate out plans to our children as well as a plan on how to achieve our plans. With the money that I was able to save, my husband and I managed to invest in a small shop that generates income for our family. Both my husband and I attended the GRFV." **Woman VSLA member, Lenaken**

However, as identified previously (see the discussion of progress against outcome 1.2), **some women also reported ongoing problems of conflict and violence in their relationships with their partners**, which in one case was linked to a woman’s membership of the VSLA. Women from all three communities where FGDs were held also consistently highlighted the need to ensure that their partners and/or male relatives are involved in project workshops as a means of building men’s understanding and support for women’s engagement in economic activities and financial decision-making. The importance of effectively engaging men and boys in project activities involving community dialogue and couple-based approaches to mitigate the risk of backlash against what is an ongoing and sensitive process of social change towards greater gender equality is also recognised by CARE staff as a key element of the LS2 project’s integrated implementation approach.

“There is a need to run trainings that involve both partners. Workshops on management at the household level will be useful. Workshops on making decisions at the household level will also be beneficial. Fathers need to learn how to support and help mothers in their homes.” **Woman VSLA member, Lenaken**

3.4 WEL group members take on leadership and decision-making roles (Intermediate Outcome 1.4)

Indicator:	Progress	Evidence
❖ Number of Life Skills graduates (Foundational Leadership) who have increased confidence and take on leadership roles.		Mostly qualitative data
❖ Types of leadership roles reported by female WEL group members and their male partners		Quantitative data only
❖ Up to 70% of female WEL group members report that they have increased self confidence		Data not available

Project activities: The LS2 project has delivered a total of 229 **Foundational Leadership (FL) trainings to 93 women WEL group members, 84 young women** who were the prospective participants of GRFV workshops³⁷, and a further **52 women participating in project VSLA and WEL activities from the two new communities** included in the project since the 2019 MTR³⁸. The FL training is a participatory training which targets the adolescent girls and women participants of CARE’s programming in Vanuatu. The **FL training aims to strengthen the agency of adolescent girls and women** based on a reflective learning approach that builds confidence and self-esteem and the development of communications and leadership skills. The FL training involves the delivery of four half-day modules which focus on Knowing Yourself (module 1); Finding your Voice (module 2); Communicating with Others (Module 3) and Being the Leader you want to be (module 4)³⁹.

Quantitative analysis: The survey data collected for the evaluation showed that **18% of all respondents (n = 14) across the sample reported holding leadership roles, of whom 9 were women (14% of female respondents), 4 were men (27% of male respondents) and 1 was the respondent who reported as non-binary**. The leadership positions held by women included roles as a church leader, as a member of the CDCCC, as the community leader for women and/or youth groups (including WEL and VSLA) and for school or Sunday school committees. The leadership positions held by men were as chiefs (2 respondents) as the vice president of the community (1 respondent) and as the chairman of the tribe council (1 respondent). **All women who reported holding leadership roles at the community level were project participants** (18% of women project participants, n = 50). No women who were non-participants of the project held any leadership positions.

These findings show that **women are still less likely than men to hold leadership roles at the community level** but that **the establishment of community level structures such as the CDCCC, WEL groups and VSLAs have provided new spaces for women to take on leadership roles**. The findings also show that **participation in project activities is**

³⁷ ANCP Annual Performance Report June 2018

³⁸ ANCP Annual Performance Report June 2021

³⁹ CARE Vanuatu (2017). *Finding Your Voice: Confidence building and leadership training for women and girls in Vanuatu*. Training manual, 81pp.

significantly associated with women holding leadership positions⁴⁰. The qualitative data discussed below provide some basis for understanding the project's contribution to that association, and for exploring whether women who participate in project activities are more likely to become leaders or whether women leaders are more likely to be project participants.

Qualitative analysis: The fact that – as a result of LS2 project activities - **women participants are attending project trainings and workshops** was in itself reported by CARE programme staff as a positive change given the highly patriarchal cultural context of Tafea in which traditional social norms define very limited roles for women in public life. **Women's improved access to information** as a result of their participation in project trainings and workshops, **was identified as an enabling factor for building women's confidence and developing leadership skills** at individual level (e.g. starting IGAs, accessing services), at the household level and beyond (in WEL groups and VSLAs). Improved access to information for women, men and community leaders regarding the Vanuatu legal and policy context on gender equality issues of VAWG, family planning and SRH represents a significant change for rural communities on Tanna where the lived reality for most people is largely defined by *kastom* beliefs and practices. Post workshop evaluations by the LS2 project found that almost 100% of women participants said that their self-confidence had increased after attending the workshop⁴¹.

CARE programme staff, partner organisations and community members (both women and men) consistently reported that **women's participation in the FL training has enabled women to raise their voices in their homes and communities**. The 'Finding my Voice' Case study prepared by the LS2 project team in 2020 documents experiences of women who participated in 2018 FL training. The case study shows several examples of individual women using knowledge and skills from workshop to speak up within their own homes and to participate more in community events and public life at the community level⁴².

These **changes in women's agency have been supported by the establishment of WEL groups and VSLAs as community-level structures** which provide safe spaces where women can practice the communications and leadership skills developed through the FL training. Comments by women WEL group members (see Box 2) highlight the value of those groups as spaces that provide increased social support and enable the sharing of experiences between women as the basis for collective learning. **Changes in attitudes and behaviours of community leaders and male partners** towards greater acceptance of and support for women taking up leadership roles and accessing services were also reported by CARE programme staff.

Box 10: Positive Perceptions of Project Stakeholders regarding Changes in Women's Leadership

"Coming together through CARE programs has empowered women in terms of public speaking and has given them the courage to speak their minds." Male community member, Enkatelei

"There have been a lot of changes at the community level: before the community didn't have information about anything. They never had women speak out or get involved in workshops because Vanuatu culture is dominated by men and so workshops are seen as being for men. Women like the FL training and report changes in relationships within their households and being more able to speak up and take on leadership roles in their communities." Key informant, CARE programme staff

"The training on 'Finding your voice' by CARE was most useful as it empowered women to be confident speakers and they learned how to use their voices to empower other women." Key informant, Nasi Tuan partner organisation

"Community leaders are now expressing awareness and openness to conversations around women's voice and leadership and gender equality. There is more acceptance of women taking up leadership roles and accessing service providers." Key informant, CARE programme staff

Project stakeholders at all levels consistently highlighted the importance of engaging men and boys in activities to support women's leadership journeys. CARE programme staff and community members recommended that this

⁴⁰ The observed difference between women project participants and women non-participants who reported holding leadership positions at the community level was statistically significant at the $p < 0.10$ level (chi-squared value = 3.13, d.f. = 1).

⁴¹ Thomas, L. (2020). *Case Study 2020: Finding My Voice*.

⁴² *Ibid.*

should involve parallel sessions for men as part of the FL trainings for women – an approach that is now being implemented by CARE Vanuatu in other projects on Tanna. Comments by male FGD respondents in one community also suggested a perception held by some men that women’s empowerment presents a potential threat to the functioning of customary governance processes by traditional chiefs. These comments highlight the importance of creating spaces for men and community gatekeepers to reflect on what gender equality means and what the potential benefits of building more equal relations and structures can be for women and men, their families and communities.

3.5 Effectiveness and sustainability of the LS2 project approach for WEL

Figure 6 maps the areas of progress against the outcome for WEL identified by the evaluation, as well as unintended or negative impacts, in relation to the three domains of change of CARE’s GEF. This mapping shows that **there have been a range of positive changes in terms of women’s agency and relations, and some positive changes in structures focussed around social norm change**. The observed changes in agency relate to both the non-formal and formal spheres, while most of the changes in relations and the changes in structures relate to the non-formal spheres.

Figure 6: Mapping of Areas of Progress and Unintended Negative Changes for WEL in relation to the GEF Domains of Change

Agency	Relations	Structures
<p>Non-formal sphere</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased confidence • New aspirations for savings, establishing IGAs <p>Formal sphere</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New knowledge & skills • Improved IGAs & increased income • Strengthened financial literacy • Increased access to savings and loans • Use of savings and loans for IGAs, hh needs & <i>kastom</i> ceremonies • Improved communications skills <p><i>Challenge: Context limits IGA opportunities in some communities (ashfall, problems of water supply)</i></p>	<p>Non-formal sphere</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women share experiences & ideas • Men appreciate women's economic contribution • Men taking on more domestic responsibilities (e.g. childcare) • Women's increased participation in hh decision making <p>Formal sphere</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WEL groups & VSLAs are (mostly) women-led spaces <p><i>Unintended: Improved social cohesion</i></p> <p><i>Unintended: Men joining and taking up leadership roles in VSLAs</i></p> <p><i>Negative: Possible increase in women's workloads</i></p> <p><i>Negative: Potential risk of violence linked to women's VSLA activities</i></p>	<p>Non-formal sphere</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in attitudes & behaviours of community gatekeepers for gender equality <p><i>Negative: Backlash against women's increased empowerment due to traditional social norms</i></p>

A key enabling factor for these positive changes has been **the LS2 project's integrated implementation approach** based on multiple project components/ activities targeting different interest groups (women, men, youth, community leaders), which have mutually reinforcing impacts for building agency, strengthening relations and transforming structures. For example, the introduction of VSLA activities has been effective for building agency by strengthening women’s financial management skills and enabling access to economic resources through savings and loans, while also providing a safe space (a structural change) for women to meet and learn from each other (a change in relations). The combination of VSLA with the FL, FFM and GRFV trainings targeting women and men has – for some couples - supported the changes in relations necessary to enable women to benefit fully from their increased

engagement in economic activities. The project's **explicit focus on engaging men and boys in processes of reflection, dialogue and learning** has been an important aspect of the integrated implementation approach. The **strategic framing of WEL activities in terms of their potential benefits for families and communities** rather than in terms of rights-based approaches for promoting gender equality has also proved to be an effective approach for engaging community gatekeepers to support processes of change associated with women's economic empowerment.

There were also **indications of unintended negative changes** associated with women's participation in project activities for WEL, including the risk of social backlash against empowered women and increased workloads and risk of violence for women engaging in economic activities through the WEL groups and/or VSLAs. The common underlying factor for these unintended negative changes is the persistent influence of traditional social norms that define and maintain male dominance and the subordination of women in Vanuatu society. Environmental factors (ashfall and/or water supply issues) were also identified as presenting significant constraints on progress towards WEL in the communities visited for the evaluation.

The focus of the LS2 project focus on awareness raising, capacity-strengthening and skills development at the community level potentially provides a solid foundation for the sustainability of many of the observed changes relating to women's agency. The extensive body of evidence from CARE's programming for women's economic justice in other contexts that suggests the VSLAs established in the communities are likely to become self-sustaining on completion of two or more saving cycles. The observed changes in intra-household relations and in the attitudes and behaviours of community gatekeepers are however likely to be the early stages of a process of social norm change which will need to be encouraged through ongoing reflection and dialogue at the community level and beyond.

4.0 PROGRESS AGAINST OUTCOME 2 – ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS (EVAWG)

This chapter of the report presents the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data gathered by the evaluation for Outcome 2 of the LS2 project referring to reduced tolerance of VAWG and better access to services for survivors. Based on a limited set of qualitative FGDs and KIs with the project target group, the evaluation found that young people aged 15-25 years who had participated in GRFV workshops reported improved awareness and understanding of healthy relationships and how to prevent and respond to VAWG and were using the knowledge and skills they had gained to build positive relationships with their male partners and families, indicating positive progress towards IO 2.1 referring to young people promoting healthy relationships within the household and community. The available qualitative dataset however does not allow for definitive quantitative measurement of the outcome indicators in terms of the % of female and male participants reporting reduced tolerance of VAWG for IO 2.1. Qualitative data collected from FGDs with adult female and male project participants in three communities and KIs with community leaders provided evidence of progress towards the intermediate outcome that community members in target locations are challenging cultural norms that support gender inequality, which included changes in awareness and understanding of VAWG, as well as changes in attitudes and behaviours. Data gathered using the SNAP vignette indicate that the social norm for the use of violence by men in a situation concerning a woman's control over financial resources is beginning to shift, and that this process of change has been influenced by women's participation in the WEL groups and VSLAs and participation by women and men in GRFV workshops delivered by the project.

Overall, the evaluation findings suggest that the project has made progress towards the outcome for ending VAWG while also highlighting the importance of long-term programming interventions for promoting changes in traditional cultural norms that define and maintain inequitable gender relations in Vanuatu society.

4.1 Young women and young men (aged 15-25) who participate in the Life Skills series (Good Relationships Free from Violence) promote healthy relationships within the household and in the community (Intermediate Outcome 2.1)

Indicators:	Progress	Evidence
❖ At least 30% of female participants in the 15-25 age group report reduced tolerance to violence against women and girls in the household		Data not available
❖ At least 30% of male participants in the 15-25 age group report reduced tolerance to violence against women and girls in the household		Qualitative data only
❖ At least 30% of female and male participants in the 15-25 age group know where they can access support if they are experiencing violence after attending the GRFV workshop.		Limited qualitative data
❖ At least 30% of female and male participants in the 15-25 age group report having skills to resolve conflict in relationships after attending the GRFV workshop.		Qualitative data only

Project activities: The GRFV life skills training programme delivered by the LS2 project focusses on building healthy and equal relationships among young people for the prevention of VAWG⁴³. In addition to building the confidence and knowledge of young women, the GRFV training integrates a focus on engaging young men and boys to build an enabling environment for gender equality in their households and communities. The training is delivered as a series of four modules covering issues relating to Gender Equality (Module 1), Violence in Relationships (Module 2), Skills for Building a Healthy Relationship (Module 3) and Family Planning (Module 4). The GRFV workshops are co-delivered at the community level with partner organisations (TCC, Tafea Hospital and the Police FPU), such that partners facilitate sessions on VAWG and family planning thereby enabling service providers to build stronger

⁴³ CARE Vanuatu (2018). *Good Relationships Free from Violence – A manual for training young people in Vanuatu on the prevention of violence against women and girls*. Training manual, CARE International in Vanuatu, Life Skills Series, 180 pp.

linkages with the communities. GRFV workshops have been held by the LS2 project in **6 communities with 165 women participants and 119 men participants across all age groups** including the original target group of young women and young men aged 15-25 years old specified in the LS2 project design⁴⁴.

Quantitative analysis: The quantitative dataset collected for the formative evaluation included only five respondents who were young women and young men participants of the GRFV workshops aged 15 – 25 years old, and so did not provide a basis for robust measurement of the quantitative indicators for outcome 2.1⁴⁵. **The discussion of progress against outcome 2.1 is accordingly based on an analysis of qualitative data** from two mixed-sex FGDs held with young women and young men in two communities and individual KIIs held with three young people who had taken part in the GRFV workshops (1 young women, 2 young men). The traffic lighting assessments of progress against the quantitative indicators are drawn from the qualitative analysis below and take account of the limited coverage of the data set. The qualitative FGD and KII data provide the basis for assessment of three out of the four quantitative outcome indicators, with the exception of the indicator referring to reduced tolerance to VAWG for young women GRFV participants for which data is not available.

Qualitative analysis: Young women and young men who had participated in the GRFV workshops consistently reported that **the training had improved their awareness and understanding of healthy relationships and how to prevent and respond to VAWG**, including increased awareness of service providers where survivors experiencing violence can access support. Young women and young men participants of the GRFV workshops also consistently reported that **they were using the knowledge and skills they had gained from the workshops to build positive relationships with their partners, families and the wider community**. Young people of both sexes reported **changes in behaviours**, with women and men working collaboratively together, men sharing chores, and reduced violence and/or healthier relationships. Responses from young people to the SNAP vignette also suggest that **the GRFV workshops are widely recognised as enabling participants to develop skills for resolving conflict in relationships**. These findings indicate that there has been positive progress against outcome 2.1 as a result of delivery of the GRFV workshops to young people through the LS2 project. CARE programme staff and partners also identified these positive changes as well as highlighting improved outreach and access to SRH services by young women through the co-delivery of GRFV workshops with partner organisations.

Box 11: Positive changes experienced by young women and young men GRFV participants

“I learnt that when you are facing violence you need to seek help in places as Tafea Counselling Centre (TCC) or the police and so on.” Young woman GRFV participant, Lenaken

“This training has changed young men and women in the community. ... I have been working together with my partner and we discuss our thoughts and we cooperate. After the long training, my husband helped me to wash the clothes and wash the plates as we work together.” Young woman GRFV participant, Lenaken

“There have been changes in my relationships with my family: We all acknowledge that we have to share our thoughts and ideas and agree together. Our mother does not scold/ argue with us anymore. I contribute thoughts and ideas in my home and we work together in our home - we share responsibility with chores and roles.” Young woman GRFV participant, Ikurup

“Before the training came in our community. I did not help my wife with kitchen loads (household work). However, after the trainings of GRFV now I help her doing everything - I can now even wash our clothes. I do this because I want to avoid violence at home at all costs and help my wife to promote a healthy relationship. I sometimes ignore my friends to avoid some unnecessary social obligations.” Young man GRFV participant, Lenaken

“If Peter and Sharon had attended the GRFV workshop, they would discuss and agree together whether Peter needs to use the money or not.” Young woman GRFV participant, Ikurup

⁴⁴ *Leftemap Sista II* Project Cumulative Beneficiary Tracker

⁴⁵ The sampling strategy for the survey proposed data collection for a sub-sample of 48 young women and young men in the 15-25 years age category (24 F, 24 M). Difficulties of mobilising young people for the data collection meant however that the majority of respondents surveyed by the data collection team were adult women and men.

Most young people interviewed for the evaluation reported that **communities are generally supportive of the delivery of the GRFV workshops**, with one male respondent reporting that **the voices and concerns of young people are now being heard more by elders at the community level** as an unintended positive outcome of the workshops. However, one young male GRFV participant commented that his friends had reacted by *“seeing me with ignorance”* which comment suggests that he experienced some **social backlash from his peers** due to his participation in the training. Another young male GRFV participant, who otherwise expressed very positive views regarding the impacts of the training for himself personally and his family, commented that **some community elders perceived a tension between issues discussed at the GRFV workshops and kastom beliefs and practices**. The **incidence of teenage pregnancy** was also highlighted as an ongoing challenge at the community level by a young woman GRFV participant, and by partner organisation staff from TCC and Tafea Hospital.




Box 12: Challenges experienced by young people who participate in GRFV workshops

“Every afternoon when we are meeting up in the nakamal our chiefs and parents say there are many changes and development in our community that custom has delayed. We must be able to do away with some of these traditional practices, especially after the training and awareness that CARE has been delivering in our community” **Young man GRFV participant, Lenaken**

“One huge challenge for girls is teenage pregnancy resulting in an end to their education. The community does not support them to complete their education and the young girls themselves are not empowered to say NO in the first place.” **Partner organisation staff, Tanna Counselling Centre (TCC)**

These comments regarding constraints and challenges suggest that **traditional cultural and social norms still present barriers for young women and men who are trying to promote healthy relationships in their households and communities**. As such they highlight the importance of ongoing investment in interventions for promoting community dialogue and couple-based approaches as key elements of programming for GBV prevention and response.

4.2 Community members in target locations are challenging cultural norms that support gender inequality (Intermediate Outcome 2.2)

Indicators:	Progress	Evidence
❖ % of women and men who report reduced tolerance to VAWG in the community		SNAP & qualitative data
❖ # of men and women who report supporting survivors of violence by providing information on services available		Data not available
❖ # Chiefs promoting positive gender equal social norms		Qualitative data

Project activities: Community sensitisation sessions have been held with 455 community members (212 women, 243 men) across 11 communities⁴⁶, including the two communities where implementation began following the MTR. Two community sensitisation sessions were delivered in each community - one before and one after the roll-out of the GRFV workshop. The sessions were designed to inform and engage key adult stakeholders (including chiefs, church leaders, women leaders, parents and service providers) on issues of youth sexual and reproductive health and violence against women and girls (VAWG), and to provide an overview of the issues and content addressed in the GRFV workshops. The community sensitisation sessions were delivered as mechanism for raising awareness and promoting acceptance of the GRFV workshops as a key component of project implementation, which involved discussion of a range of issues perceived as being sensitive. The GRFV workshops originally targeted young women and young men aged 15-25 years old. In the later stages of LS2 project implementation however, **GRFV workshops have also involved the participation of adult women and men participating in project activities such as the VSLA.**

Quantitative analysis: In the absence of quantitative baseline data for tolerance of VAWG for communities in the LS2 working area, **the questionnaire survey for the formative evaluation included a question exploring attitudes to VAWG based on the CARE International global indicator of change for the % of people of all genders who reject intimate partner violence**⁴⁷. The CI indicator assesses the level of support for the belief that there are no situations under which a man is justified in hitting or beating his wife (or intimate partner). The question asked was as follows: *"I am going to read you a series of statements (about relationships between men and women) and I would like you to tell me how much you agree or disagree with what each statement says:*

- It is alright for a man to beat his wife if she goes out without telling him;*
- It is alright for a man to beat his wife if she refuses to have sex with him;*
- It is alright for a man to beat his wife if she argues with him;*
- It is alright for a man to beat his wife if she neglects the children; and*
- It is alright for a man to beat his wife if she burns the food.*

Survey data collected for the formative evaluation showed that **there was some variation in the tolerance of VAWG for different reasons** with neglect of children being the most widely accepted reason for a man to beat his wife (see Figure 7). **27% of all survey respondents did not agree with the use of violence under any of those circumstances and so were categorised as rejecting VAWG.** There was no statistically significant difference by gender or participant status in the % of respondents rejecting violence. The limitations of the quantitative dataset generated for the evaluation – i.e. a small sample that was not necessarily a representative population sample – mean that these findings, which do not align with the logic of the project theory of change, cannot be considered as conclusive. Use of a subset of the questions/ attitudinal statements measured in national surveys such as the *Vanuatu National Survey of Women's Lives and Family Relationships* to assess tolerance of VAWG across a larger and statistically representative sample of respondents is needed to provide a rigorous basis for measuring the progress and outcomes of future programming interventions focussing on EVAWG.

Qualitative analysis: Qualitative data for assessing progress against outcome 2.2 was gathered from KIIs with CARE staff and partners and from the use of the SNAP vignette in discussions with adult women project participants and with adult men in sex-segregated FGDs, and with young women and young men during mixed sex FGDs. Issues of VAWG were also explored as and where possible during KIIs with community leaders in response to questions about

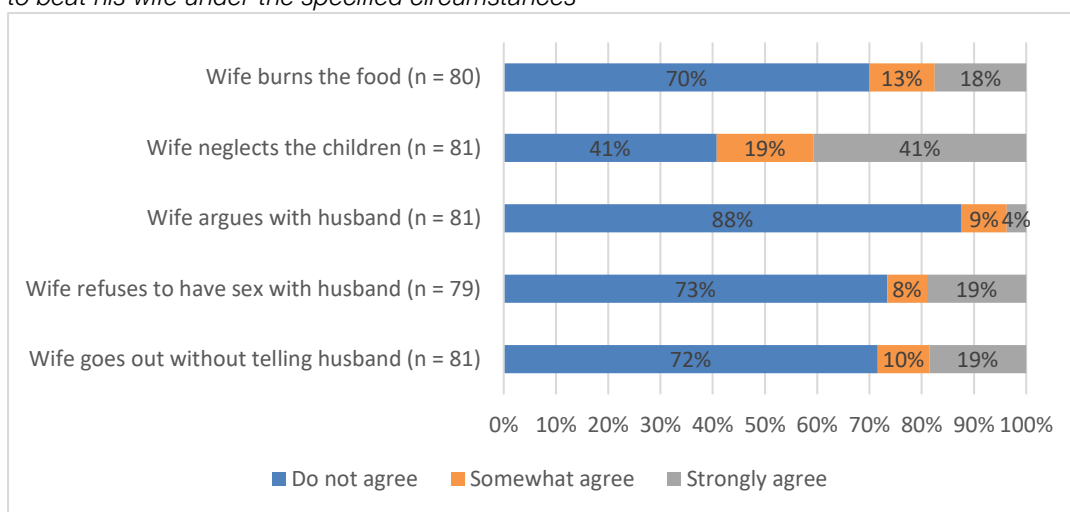
⁴⁶ *Leftemap Sista II* Project Cumulative Beneficiary Tracker

⁴⁷ See CARE International guidance for Global Indicator of Change 2 - % of people of all genders who reject Intimate Partner Violence.

changes experienced at the community level from participation in LS2 project activities. Positive changes identified from this body of qualitative data include the following:

Improved awareness and understanding of VAWG has contributed to some changes in behaviour at the individual, household and community levels: Project stakeholders at all levels consistently reported that delivery of the GRFV workshops has resulted in improved awareness and understanding of GBV, GBV laws and service providers among both women and men community members and leaders. Service providers and community leaders reported that increased awareness has led to **increased reporting of incidents of VAWG and increased demand for counselling services**, as well as **increased uptake of SRH services**. Women and men commented in FGDs that their **relationships with their spouses and/or families had improved** as a result of their learning from the GRFV workshops and referred to behavioural changes, including women’s increased participation in decision-making, men helping more with household chores, and women and men engaging in economic activities together. The key informant from TCC also highlighted the linkage between reduced violence and women’s increased engagement in IGAs and economic empowerment.

Figure 7: Distribution of all responses from women and men survey respondents for whether it is alright for a man to beat his wife under the specified circumstances



Community leaders are generally supportive of project activities for EVAWG: Community leaders – both men and women – consistently expressed **appreciation of the benefits of participation in project trainings**, often highlighting the usefulness of the FFMT, GRFV and VSLA trainings for women and young people in their communities (see Box 13). Chiefs also commented on **reduced incidence of VAWG** at the community level which was seen as a positive change. CARE programme staff commented that **chiefs have become more supportive of women survivors of VAWG** with some examples of chiefs supporting referrals and the reporting of perpetrators of VAWG to the Police FPU. These were highlighted as significant changes in *kastom* practices mandated by social norms that traditionally emphasize male leadership and control.

However, ***kastom* beliefs and practices remain a dominant influence on day-to-day life** in the rural communities where the LS2 project has been implemented. *Kastom* practices for community governance and conflict resolution can undermine or constrain the effectiveness of formal reporting and referral processes according to the legal system. This challenge was identified by CARE programme staff and partners, as one that is compounded by the resource and capacity constraints of the police and health service providers (see comments in Box 14 below). At the community level, a male respondent in one FGD identified the **tension between *kastom* and formal reporting systems** as a problem for chiefs. This respondent’s apparently negative perception of women having greater agency as a threat to traditional governance structures highlights the importance of project activities for engaging men in community dialogues and trainings to support the changes in relations and structures that are also needed to ensure women’s social, economic and political empowerment. The partner organisation of *Nasi Tuan* also identified the importance of strengthening community level governance structures and processes with a view to promoting wider participation by women, youth and people with disabilities in decision-making at that level.

Box 13: Attitudinal and behavioural changes in support of gender equality reported by project stakeholders

"In my opinion I see many young people have benefited from the trainings such as VSLA, FFM, GRFV. I have also noticed that in my village the police have not had to arrest anyone lately or last year because maybe young people know the law and are afraid to go to jail." **Male community leader (Chief), Ikurup**

"Most of the CARE projects have helped my community one way or the other. The relationship workshop (GRFV) has helped many young people to realise law and human rights." **Male community leader (Chief), Enkatelei**

"A lot of men help their wives at home and in working together and are cooperative with their thoughts and ideas at meetings. I am happy to see that there are some men who are willing to change with realisation to respect women. Based on my experience I think that in the future my community will improve with improved healthy relationships." **Woman leader, Lamlu**

"Community leaders no longer challenge us (CARE) about providing information to women to become leaders. They have understood the challenges that women face. Those challenges are the kastom barriers which shape the mentality of society in terms of gender inequalities – the scales for men and women are not balanced." **CARE programme staff.**

"Financial violence and financial dependency has been a contributing factor to ongoing violence against women. Many of the victims we counsel at the centre are victims of financial violence. ... TCC has a huge appreciation for CARE and how the organisation has been able to work together with TCC to reduce violence through financial empowerment." **Partner organisation staff member, TCC**

Box 14: Challenges and constraints for prevention and response to VAWG

"Normally it takes two weeks to process a case (of reported VAWG). During this two week period it is possible for kastom ceremonies for resolution of the dispute to take place." **Partner organisation staff member, Police FPU**

"GRFV for young boys and girls has good and bad impacts on the community. It has enabled young women to be more aware of the law especially in terms of their rights when they have experienced acts of violence. Once these women are more empowered, they know their rights and overlook customary law and the local community governance system. It then becomes challenging for the chiefs to deal with the issue." **Male community member, Enkatelei**

The norm for men to use violence to dominate women and maintain control of financial resources remains widespread but there is also evidence that it is beginning to change. Most responses by women and men FGD respondents to the SNAP vignette reflected the widespread empirical expectation that Peter – the male character of the vignette – would beat Sharon for refusing to give him the money she had earned (see Box 15). Different views were expressed by a small minority of FGD respondents in some FGDs – particularly amongst young people. For example, a woman in the Lenaken FGD commented *"If there was proper management in the home, even when Peter's friends were gone, Peter and Sharon would sit down and discuss why she refused to give him the money"*.

The SNAP data for normative expectations (what I think others expect me to do) show less homogeneity of response. The expectation that **Peter would face social pressure from his friends to either impose sanctions on Sharon or exert his control over Sharon by violence if necessary** was identified in the FGDs with men in the communities Lamlu and Lenaken, as was also identified from SNAP data collected for the project MTR. However, the SNAP data collected for the evaluation included alternative responses expressing the expectation that **some of Peter's friends would be supportive of Sharon's refusal to give up her earnings** were reported in FGDs with women in Enkatelei and Lamlu and by some men in the FGDs in Lamlu and Lenaken. Those alternative responses were usually linked to the expectation that Sharon would need to use her money for savings. Lenaken youth expressed the view that Peter's friends would tell him to discuss the use of the money in private with Sharon, which response reflects the expectation of a more collaborative decision-making approach at the household level.

The finding that **empirical and normative expectations are linked to some degree** indicates that there is a social norm in place for men to use violence as a controlling behaviour. While the SNAP data collected for the 2019 MTR showed a strong link between empirical and normative expectations, the SNAP data collected for the evaluation showed differences between the empirical and normative expectations and differences in normative expectations, which suggest that this norm is changing and that **men and women recognise that there are circumstances under which it would be acceptable for Peter and Sharon to break the norm** (exceptions).

Box 15: Typical responses to the SNAP vignette for the five elements of the social norm for a man to use violence

COMPONENTS OF A NORM	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE RESPONSES – LS2 COMMUNITIES
Empirical Expectations (EE)	What I think others do	<i>“Peter will be very angry with Sharon as he requested the money from his friends and she refused him in front of his friends. The shame of this is unbearable.”</i>
Normative Expectations (NE)	What I think others expect me to do (what I should do according to others)	<i>“Peter’s friends will tell him to force Sharon to give him the money.”</i> <i>“Some of Peter’s friends will support Sharon and some will support Peter. The friends who support Sharon will agree to her refusing to give Peter money. The friends who support Peter will think that Sharon should give Peter the money he asked for.”</i>
Sanctions	Anticipated opinion or reaction of others (to the behaviour) – specifically others whose opinions matter to me	<i>“Peter’s friends will laugh at him and swear at Sharon.”</i> <i>“Peter’s friends will say that Sharon is a very bad person for refusing to give Peter money.”</i>
Sensitivity to sanctions	Do sanctions matter for behaviour?	<i>“In the instance where Sharon is the type of person who wants to be seen as a good person, she will give money to Peter because he requested in front of his friends.”</i> <i>“If Peter and his friends have agreed on something, Peter will work very hard to persuade Sharon about it.”</i> <i>“If Peter’s friends were not there, he would beat Sharon up.”</i>
Exceptions	Under what circumstances would it be okay for the main character to break the norm (by acting positively)?	<i>“Sharon will not give him the money because she may have loans to repay - she will tell him that she worked very hard to earn the money. If Peter is a good man then he will understand where Sharon is coming from. He will tell his friends that he cannot get the money from Sharon.”</i> <i>“The reaction would be different (if Peter had attended the FFMT or GRFV trainings) and he would understand the importance of saving and working together with his wife.”</i> <i>“Before Sharon left for the market, she and Peter should have discussed the use of the income from the sale of her market produce.”</i>

The most commonly and widely reported sanctions were that Sharon would become the subject of malicious gossip because of her refusal to obey Peter, although some groups also identified the possibility that Peter would experience social sanctions such as being laughed at by his friends or his friends refusing to go and visit his house. These findings are consistent with the SNAP data collected for the MTR which identified sanctions relating to Peter’s conformity to the expectations of dominant masculinity. **Responses from FGD participants suggest that sensitivity to sanctions is still high.** Men from Enkatelei and Lenaken and Lenaken youth frequently expressed the view that Peter would beat Sharon if his friends were not there, while women respondents from two groups reported that Sharon would give Peter the money so that he would not look bad in front of his friends. These responses suggest

that the norm for men to use violence in private to control women is a persistent influence on the behaviours of both sexes and that the shame or embarrassment of a man at being “disrespected” by a wife’s refusal to comply with a request is a strong potential trigger for violence.

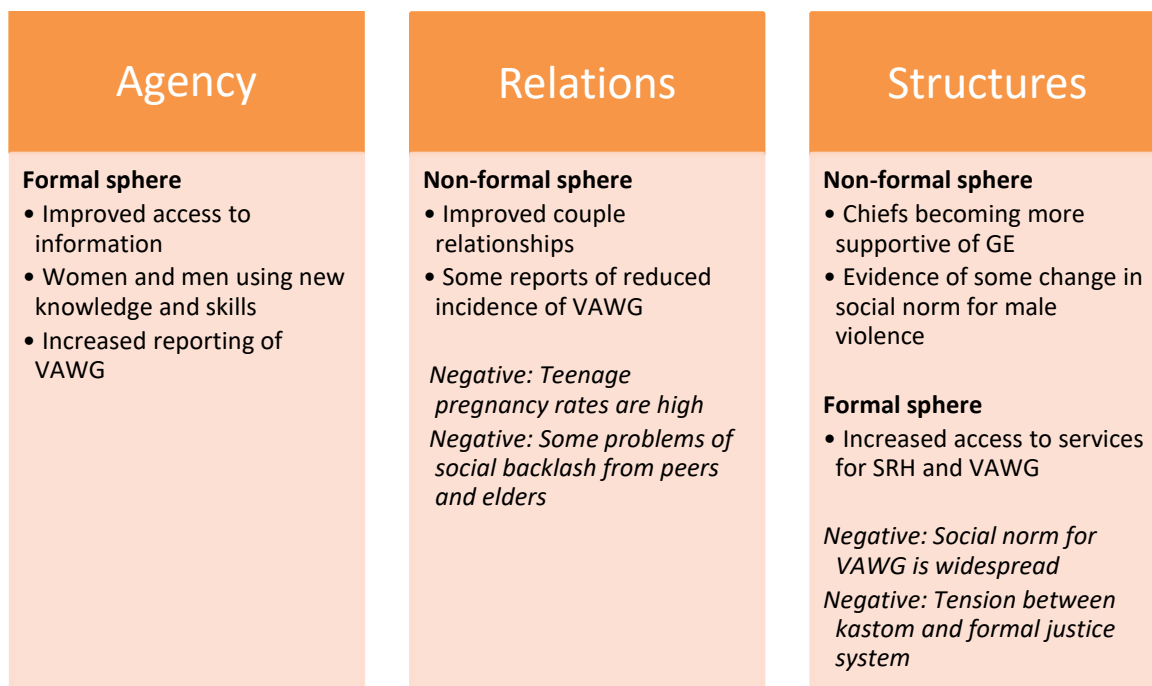
Two exceptions to the norm were consistently reported across all groups. Women, men and youth thought that it would be acceptable for Sharon to refuse to give Peter the money if she was a member of a savings group and needed the money for her savings. The other widely reported exception to the norm was that couples who communicate well, work together and understand each other would be able to resolve the disagreement without violence. The second exception is consistent with the exception identified from SNAP data collected for the MTR that prior agreement on expenditure creates an opportunity to go against the norm. The SNAP data collected for the evaluation showed that women and men in all three communities identified improved communications and understanding as being due to women and men’s attendance at the workshops delivered by CARE – a response which is also consistent with the findings of the MTR and which underscores the importance of those project activities.

The SNAP data collected for the formative evaluation therefore suggest that women’s involvement in the VSLA savings scheme and men’s appreciation of the importance of those activities together with women and men’s participation in the FFMT and GRFV trainings delivered by the project are key factors contributing to the weakening of the social norm for the use of violence to control financial resources earned by women. As such, the SNAP data provide supporting evidence of progress against the outcome indicator referring to women and men reporting reduced tolerance of VAWG in the community.

4.3 Effectiveness and sustainability of the LS2 project approach for EVAWG

Figure 8 maps the areas of progress against the outcome for EVAWG identified by the evaluation, as well as unintended or negative impacts, in relation to the three domains of change of CARE’s GEF.

Figure 8: Areas of Progress and Unintended Negative Changes for EVAWG mapped to the CARE Gender Equality Framework



Activities focussing on engagement with community leaders and men have been important and effective components of LS2 project implementation for both project outcomes, and particularly the project outcome for EVAWG. These activities have contributed to changes in relations between women and men at the household level and are also contributing to processes of structural change in terms of social norms and the attitudes and behaviours

of community leaders. Women project participants consistently highlighted the importance of men's participation in trainings and workshops to ensure shared understanding of issues being discussed. The **VSLA component** of the LS2 project is also contributing the progress against EVAWG outcome as **community gatekeepers increasingly recognise the benefits of women's increased economic engagement** for household well-being (including the contribution of women's income and savings to important socio-cultural *kastom* ceremonies), which is **an enabling factor for an ongoing process of social norm change**.

Delivery of GRFV workshops in partnership with service providers (FPU, TCC and Tafea hospital) has been an important factor enabling increased awareness and understanding of VAWG and the legal referral process, and improved access to service providers. Partner organisations, who are also service providers, expressed appreciation of CARE's support through LS2 project which has enabled **increased outreach and building relationships with remote and under-served rural communities**.

However, **the integrated delivery of project activities to women participants and their male partners or relatives has proved challenging in practice** in the LS2 communities in which many households are reliant on livelihood strategies which involve **seasonal migration of youth and male household members** to other islands or overseas. The challenge of ensuring consistent participation in project activities has been a constraining factor for some couples, although some women participants whose partners had been absent from FFM or GRFV workshops reported that they were nonetheless trying to practice the skills learnt from those trainings with their partners who were away from the community.

The **LS2 project's focus on capacity-strengthening** to build knowledge and skills of project target groups (including women, men, youth and community leaders) provides a foundation for sustainability of the progress against the outcome for EVAWG identified by the evaluation, as do the **positive working relationships that have been established by CARE with partner organisations**. It seems unlikely however that the increased outreach by partner organisations would be sustainable in future in absence of external project resources – this is an important gap that will need to be addressed in future GE programming by CARE Vanuatu. The evaluation findings also highlight the need for long-term programming approaches to promote processes of social norm change. Social norms remain a key factor influencing progress against the EVAWG outcome of the LS2 project and there will be a need for ongoing/ further investment in processes of community dialogue and men engage activities in future programming.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 What project components should be continued, adapted or expanded?

Recommendation 1 - Continue the delivery of programming for gender equality based on an integrated approach:

The LS2 project's **integrated implementation approach** combining activities to promote Women's Economic Justice with activities for Women's Voice and Leadership and activities for Ending Violence Against Women and Girls is effective and should be continued in future gender equality programming by CARE Vanuatu. **The different components of the LS2 project can be delivered as stand-alone programming interventions but they are most effective when delivered as an integrated package** that builds on synergies between the different activities and trainings. Activities for promoting women's economic livelihoods are linked to and grounded in the building of women's confidence, voice and leadership skills. The strengthening of women's voice and leadership is critically important for empowering women to claim their rights, including their right to a life free from violence and – for VAWG survivors – their rights to access appropriate support and services in terms of healthcare and justice. The integrated implementation approach needs to continue and strengthen a strong focus on engaging men and boys as key stakeholders and potential allies for promoting gender equality (see Recommendation 5 below).

Recommendation 2 - Expand the coverage of VSLAs as a key entry point and delivery platform for integrated GE programming:

The establishment of VSLAs by the LS2 project has been effective as an approach for promoting financial inclusion and improved access to savings and loans for women in remote rural communities, including women who have had limited formal education. **There is high demand from women and men for the continuation and expansion of VSLA activities** in the LS2 communities. Improved access to savings and loans through the VSLA has enabled women's increased engagement in IGAs thereby generating tangible economic benefits in terms of increased income and household well-being, which are appreciated by men and community leaders. The VSLAs provide spaces for women to develop and practice financial management skills, and skills for communications and leadership. As such, the VSLAs are community-level structures that enable the building of social capital and solidarity amongst VSLAs members based on the sharing of experiences and learning, which over time can provide the basis for women to take collective action together. The fact that VSLAs meet weekly – and that their members have a strong economic incentive to continue meeting - means that the groups provide a structure that can be readily used for the delivery of capacity-strengthening and messaging on a wide range of sectoral issues.

The findings of this evaluation documenting the effectiveness of the VSLAs as a vehicle for promoting women's economic and social empowerment in Tafea are consistent with the global body of evidence from CARE's VSLA programming. In this context it is proposed that **the VSLA model should be scaled up as a foundational component of future GE programming by CARE Vanuatu**. Expanding the coverage of VSLAs to the outer islands of Tafea and other provinces of Vanuatu will require the adaptation of the model, perhaps by means of a Training of Trainers based approach, to ensure a realistic level of cost per beneficiary for the provision of regular support to VSLAs established in remote locations.

Recommendation 3 – Continue delivery of FL and FFM workshops for VSLA members and their male partners or relatives:

The experiences of the LS2 project clearly highlight the importance of **engaging men and boys in the implementation of an integrated programming approach for gender equality**. The combination of FFM workshops with project activities to promote women's economic livelihoods (including establishment of VSLAs) has been a powerful and effective approach for encouraging men to support women's engagement in economic activities and associated positive changes in intra-household relations. The integrated delivery of FFM workshops with VSLA activities is also an important strategy for mitigating risks of increased conflict and violence due to women's participation in VSLAs.

The LS2 project's experience with delivery of the FL training for women has shown the need to engage men similarly in the leadership training through a **designated module for reflective dialogue with male partners and relatives** to be run in parallel to the sessions for and with women. The experiences of other CARE Vanuatu projects which have been implementing sensitisation sessions with male partners and relatives as part of the FL training process should inform any future adaptation of this approach for promoting WVL. **Patterns of seasonal migration to and from rural communities targeted for gender equality programming may present a challenge** in terms of ensuring that women

participants and their male partners or relatives are able to attend parallel sessions. The challenge of ensuring participants' availability for training activities by CARE and CARE partners is one that was identified by communities during the evaluation, with the suggestion that **this could be mitigated by a process of participatory planning of project activities by CARE with the communities involved**. A participatory planning process of that kind could in turn contribute to the strengthening of local-level governance systems.

Recommendation 4 – Monitor the gender dynamics of VSLA programming to understand the nature and level of male involvement and influence in the functioning of the groups: The findings of the LS2 evaluation show that men have become increasingly appreciative of the benefits of VSLA membership, often reporting the use of VSLA savings and loans to cover the costs of *kastom* ceremonies. Encouraging men and community leaders to understand and be supportive of women's engagement in the VSLA has been an important area of positive progress for the LS2 project. However, some findings of the evaluation (e.g. comments from men that empowered women cannot meet their household responsibilities; the report from one woman VSLA member of increased conflict and violence as a result of her participation in the group) also raise questions as **to what extent male partners are influencing and controlling women's economic activities through the VSLA**. With increased numbers of men also showing interest in becoming members of the VSLAs, **it will also be important for CARE Vanuatu to monitor and understand how the gender composition of the VSLAs affects their intended outcomes in terms of promoting gender equality and women's empowerment**.

The design of any future scale-up of VSLA programming by CARE Vanuatu will need to include strategies to ensure that the VSLAs provide safe spaces for promoting women's empowerment and to mitigate the potential risks of social backlash and/or increased intra-household conflict and violence that could be experienced women VSLA participants due to the ongoing influence of social norms supporting male dominance and control. This is likely to involve building on the couple-based approaches and community dialogues implemented by the LS2 project to date.

5.2 Opportunities for strengthening alignment to CARE's frameworks and programming

The integrated implementation approach of the LS2 project is well-aligned to CARE Gender Equality Framework as it includes a combination of activities designed to promote changes in agency, relations and structures. The evaluation findings show that **the LS2 project has made notable progress towards building women's agency, and some progress in terms of changing relations and transforming structures**, while overall highlighting the need for a continued and strengthened focus on promoting social norm change in CARE Vanuatu's future programming for gender equality. Future GE programming interventions designed to ensure a continued and strengthen focus on changing relations and transforming structures will need to consider the following:

Recommendation 5: Ensure a strong, continued focus on engaging men and boys/ young men as key stakeholders and potential allies for promoting gender equality: The LS2 evaluation found evidence of progress towards changes in the relations at household and community level that shape the opportunities available for women to engage in economic activities and to participate meaningfully in household decision-making. The project's activities for engaging men and young men through couple-based approaches and community dialogue have clearly contributed towards those changes. It is nonetheless clear that the process of social norm change needed to create an enabling environment for women's economic, social and political empowerment in the Tanna communities is in its early stages. **Future programming for gender equality by CARE Vanuatu will need to continue and build on the work done by the LS2 project for engaging men and boys/ young men in reflection, dialogue and action for gender equality at the community level and beyond**.

Public events such as the 16 Days of Activism provide valuable opportunities for awareness-raising of gender equality issues in ways which challenge social norms relating to gender roles and gender relations – as illustrated by the example of the men's cooking competition on Tanna highlighted for the evaluation team by one key informant. It may also be useful for CARE Vanuatu to **consider the option of identifying and supporting a cadre of Role Model Men based at the community level** to support delivery of future programming for engaging men and boys. The establishment of a network of Role Model Men could perhaps be linked to the existing network of Male Advocates of VWC. CARE's experiences of working with Role Model Men for gender equality and GBV prevention and response

programming in the Great Lakes sub-region may provide a model that could be adapted and developed for the Vanuatu context in partnership with VWC⁴⁸⁴⁹.

Box 16: The CARE Uganda Role Model Man approach for Men Engage activities

The Role Model Man (RMM) approach developed by CARE Uganda involves mobilising and engaging men and boys, who are selected by their communities, in a process of structured and self-critical reflection and facilitated dialogue to understand and support concepts of positive masculinity and gender equality. The approach initially targeted the spouses of women participants of VLSAs to ensure their support for their wives' participation in those groups and changes in intra-household relationships but has increasingly evolved into an approach targeting individuals and groups of households that have psychosocial challenges. Each RMM is responsible for facilitating peer-to-peer reflective dialogue and providing male mentorship with a support group of ten neighbouring households identified as being vulnerable to problems of GBV, alcohol abuse, extreme poverty etc. By working on a regular basis with both the male and female members of support group households the RMM's activities are designed to address the psychosocial distress issues of both men and women, as well as promoting changes in attitudes and behaviours relating to gender roles and power relations. Impacts from the implementation of the RMM approach in Northern Uganda include reduced tolerance for GBV at community level, men abandoning violent behaviours and women and girls achieving increased levels of economic, social and political empowerment.

Source: CARE Uganda. 2016. Northern Uganda Women Empowerment Programme: Description of the Engaging Men and Boys (EMB) Model. Learning brief, CARE Uganda.

Recommendation 6 - Strengthen engagement with opinion leaders (including chiefs, community & church leaders) in community awareness-raising, dialogue and action for gender equality and EVAWG: The LS2 evaluation findings consistently highlight the importance of *kastom* and customary governance structures and processes (traditional chiefs and other community leaders, the *nakamal*) in enabling or constraining progress towards gender equality and EVAWG at the community level. The structured community sensitisation sessions introduced by the LS2 project have been an important starting point for engagement with community gatekeepers to ensure their support for CARE's introduction of the GRFV workshops exploring sensitive topics such as family planning and VAWG with young people.

CARE Vanuatu could build on the work done to date with community gatekeepers by extending the use of participatory methodologies such as Social Action and Analysis or SASA!⁵⁰ for community activism by and with local-level opinion leaders. Opinion leaders to take on the role of community activists could include community and church leaders, community focal points, young women leaders, graduates of the GRFV who are interested in becoming role models in their communities. A strengthened focus on creating an enabling environment for EVAWG would link well to an agenda for strengthening community governance structures and processes to enable increased participation by women and youth in community-level decision-making. Identifying potential opinion leaders would require CARE Vanuatu to explore and build on linkages with other programme interventions such as the Pacific Girl Project, the Gender Equality Together project and the work of CARE's Resilience team. This could start with a mapping exercise to identify where project participants of those projects are present in the target communities for CARE Vanuatu's future GE programming through the ANCP.

Recommendation 7 – Continue to support and promote the strengthening of women's leadership at household and community levels: The LS2 evaluation found some evidence that women project participants are exercising greater leadership at the household level and are more likely to hold leadership positions at the community level. In particular, the WEL groups and VSLAs have provided spaces for women to take on and practice leadership skills.

⁴⁸ Gillingham, S. (2018). *A Life Free from Violence – An evidence-based value proposition for CARE's Gender-Based Violence programming in the Great Lakes region.*

⁴⁹ Gillingham, S. and Huxtable, J. (2019). *Community-based GBV mobilisation and prevention – Lessons learned from CARE International in Uganda.* Knowledge model paper for the Women and Youth Resilience Project (WAYREP), September 2019.

⁵⁰ SASA! (the KiSwahili word for "now") is a community mobilization methodology developed by Raising Voices - a Ugandan NGO - for addressing the link between violence against women and HIV/AIDs. The SASA! methodology provides an approach for changing the social norms that perpetuate women's vulnerability to violence and HIV. It is structured around four stages of community mobilization (Start, Awareness, Support, Action) that enable organisations to effectively and systematically facilitate a process of behaviour change in the community.

However, most community leadership structures are still largely dominated by men and there is a clear need for future programming by CARE Vanuatu to continue to focus on promoting women's active and meaningful participation in decision-making processes within and beyond the household level. As outlined in recommendation 6 above, this should involve exploring and building linkages between and across the various programming interventions of the country office portfolio, including programming being implemented with young women and adolescent girls, and the support climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction.

Recommendation 8 – Engage local (district) level service providers (e.g. health post staff) in awareness-raising and capacity strengthening activities for EAWG: Key activities of the LS2 project's EAWG component have been co-delivered in partnership with the Police FPU, Tafea Hospital and the Tanna Counselling Centre. The LS2 project's partnership approach has enabled improved outreach by service providers for GBV prevention and response to remote rural communities. **There is however a need for future programming interventions for EAWG to engage in awareness-raising and capacity-strengthening activities with local level service providers such as district health posts** to ensure that the staff of those structures have the information and skills they need to better support reporting and referral processes for survivors of VAWG. A stronger focus on working with primary care providers, which could include **working through or with the CAVAWs and male advocates of TCC**, could help to some extent to bridge the resource and capacity constraints that were identified as limiting outreach by service providers based in the provincial capital of Lenakel.

Recommendation 9 – Integrate a reflective learning MEL approach with project staff, partners and participants into processes of ongoing project implementation: The integrated programming approach that has been developed by the LS2 project is complex and resource intensive. Much of the cost of the approach is associated with building the understanding and facilitation skills of project personnel for enabling and supporting processes of social change at the community level. **The design and implementation of future integrated GE programming interventions needs to allow time for staff reflection to internalise the change processes that they are working to facilitate.** Integrating a reflective learning or story-based approach for project MEAL such as stories of change and/or outcome harvesting as an ongoing element of project implementation would strengthen the capacity of CARE and partner programme staff to facilitate those change processes. A strong focus on story-based approaches for MEAL would have the additional advantage of generating a convincing base of evidence to inform adaptive project management.

5.3 Opportunities for strengthening partnerships

Recommendation 10: Explore opportunities to formalise the collaborative relationships with partner organisations developed through the LS2 project to ensure the clearly defined division of roles and responsibilities between CARE and partners: With the exception of the formal partnership with *Nasi Tuan* established in response to the findings of the MTR, the LS2 project has been delivered on the basis of informal, collaborative partnerships with organisations such as TCC, the police FPU and Tafea Hospital. **CARE's relationships with these partner organisations are positive and partner organisations consistently recognised the validity and relevance of the LS2 project's approaches** for promoting WEL and EAWG. Having partner organisations actively involved in delivery of GRFV workshops has been advantageous in terms of ensuring the credibility of project activities for EAWG and promoting increased access by community members to those service providers. However, there have also been challenges: **partner organisations are juggling heavy workloads with competing demands on staff and time** and so have not always been available to take part in the co-delivery of LS2 project activities.

Key informants from the partner organisations consistently expressed interest and commitment to the continuation and strengthening of their partnerships with CARE but did not specify what that strengthening of partnerships would look like in practice. The more formal partnership established with *Nasi Tuan* has involved CARE leading on GE work while *Nasi Tuan* provides technical support for agriculture and livelihoods-based activities. **CARE programme staff highlighted the need for greater clarity as to how CARE Vanuatu works with and supports partner organisations**, while also recognising that many local NGOs in Vanuatu are already working at full capacity in terms of their programming commitments. CARE Vanuatu should nonetheless explore the opportunities for establishing formal partnerships with key stakeholders such as VWC, the FPU and Tafea Hospital, with a view to enabling the joint planning and coordinated delivery of project activities with and through those partners in future GE programming. A more formal, structured partnership relationship with VWC would be essential if CARE Vanuatu decides to

prioritise the further development of a community activism-based approach for EVAWG as this would need to involve working with and through the existing CAVAW and Male Advocate networks.

Recommendation 11 - Identify possibilities for linking WEL groups and VSLAs to government programmes for small businesses: The evaluation findings show that the WEL groups and VSLAs have provided a starting point for the establishment and development of small-scale IGAs by women and men in rural communities, in the face of considerable environmental, economic and social challenges. To support WEL group and VSLA members in developing their IGAs further, CARE Vanuatu should explore the possibility and relevance of linking members of WEL groups or VSLAs to the Vanuatu Chamber of Commerce to access business trainings and business development opportunities provided by that structure.

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ANNEX 1: Evaluation Terms of Reference

Project:	Leftemap Sista II - Formative Evaluation
Place of Assignment:	Vanuatu / Remote
Reporting to:	Tegan Molony, Gender Advisor
Duration:	30 days
Dates:	To be completed by early January

CARE INTERNATIONAL IN VANUATU

CARE Vanuatu is part of the global CARE International confederation, which helps poor and vulnerable people in more than 93 countries around the world. CARE has been in Vanuatu since 2008, working with communities to build resilience to disasters and climate change shocks and increase women and girls' involvement in community and national leadership.

Leftemap Sista II (July 2017-June 2021)

From 2014 to 2017, CARE implemented the Leftemap Sista I (LSI) project, designed to address the underlying causes of gender inequality in Vanuatu with a focus on Tafea Province. The project worked at national, provincial and community levels to promote women and girls' leadership, skills development and economic empowerment focusing on the disadvantages and inequities that women and young women face. Based on a 2016 formative evaluation⁵¹ of CARE's gender equality work, a second phase, Leftemap Sista II (LSII) was designed which built upon the successes and learning of LSI. A Mid-Term Evaluation of LSII⁵² was conducted in December 2019 which produced findings on progress-to-date against selected indicators and provided recommendations for remaining implementation.

LSII aims to support women, young women, and girls, including those with a disability, in rural and remote areas in Vanuatu to realise their rights to live free from violence, have increased economic opportunity and capacity to participate meaningfully in decisions that affect their lives in peace time and disaster. The first outcome area⁵³ focusses on women's access to and control of decision making of economic resources and the second focusses on reducing tolerance of violence against women and girls. Key interventions under these outcomes include:

Outcome 1:

- Support for women's economic empowerment groups through a variety of approaches including a partnership with Nasi Tuan and connecting with technical trainers
- Confidence and leadership workshops for women
- Family Financial Management workshops for group members and their intimate partners
- Support for Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA)

Outcome 2:

- Community dialogues with male gatekeepers
- Confidence and leadership workshops for women

⁵¹ Brown, H. and Huxtable, J. Leftemap Sista, Women and Girls Empowerment Program Review, December 2016, CARE Vanuatu

⁵² Mundkur, A. et.al. Leftemap Sista II Mid Term Review, December 2019, CARE Vanuatu

⁵³ Note that there is a third outcome which focusses on work in the broader Pacific region and is implemented with partners by CARE in the Pacific through CARE Australia.

- Good Relationships Free from Violence workshops with both men and women
- Violence and Women and Girls (VAWG) prevention and response workshops with CARE staff, community members and service providers.

The current LSII project is coming to an end (June 2022) and CARE is undertaking a formative evaluation that will reflect on how LSII has achieved progress against outcomes, and to produce recommendations on priorities for taking forward work within the context of CARE Australia’s ANCP Design Framework.

PURPOSE

This Formative Evaluation will support CARE Vanuatu to assess progress against outcomes implemented in Vanuatu to date and to produce actionable recommendations to inform follow on programming.

KEY OBJECTIVES AND EVALUATION QUESTIONS⁵⁴

Key Objectives	Evaluation Questions
To assess progress against outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To what extent are the expected changes on track to being achieved? - Are there any unintended impacts (both positive and negative)? What are they? - What are the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of project outcomes? - To what extent have the different project components been effective in contributing to progress against each outcome? - To what extent are the benefits of the project expected to continue?
To produce actionable recommendations to inform the design of follow-on programming, in line with the CARE Australia ANCP Design Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What aspects of the project components should be continued? Why and how? - What opportunities are there for evolution or expansion? - What opportunities are there to strengthen alignment to CARE’s frameworks (such as the Gender Equality Framework) and programming? - How could programming connect and collaborate more actively/effectively with partner organisations and other actors working on economic justice and EAWG in Vanuatu? - How could programming best contribute towards strengthening civil society organisations who are active in these programming spaces? - How could the project best align and support key government initiatives around gender equality, economic empowerment and VAWG?

EVALUATION APPROACH

The evaluation emphasises a multi-stakeholder approach: to ensure diverse perspectives provide a depth and breadth of learning and the triangulation of data to strengthen confidence in findings. Asking the same questions of different stakeholder groups and exploring cases from multiple perspectives will also strengthen review findings.

The evaluation approach is mixed method: quantitative data will primarily come from existing project monitoring data and annual progress reports. The collection of qualitative data will add richness and context to quantitative outcomes and provide an assessment of program outcomes for achieving positive and sustainable change.

METHODOLOGY

⁵⁴ To be further refined with the evaluation team

The evaluation team will design the methodology based on the following broad guidelines:

- Desk review: relevant project documentation will be reviewed to better understand project implementation as it relates to design, learnings, challenges and achievements to date. The document review will also inform the development of both the formative evaluation plan and the data collection tools. Documents to be reviewed will include but not be limited to: project design, project MEL framework; six-monthly interim donor reports; project activity tracking data; Mid Term Review report, CARE International Gender Equality frameworks and program approaches; as well as the CARE Australia ANCP design framework.
- Primary Data collection: this will include:
 - Semi-structured key informant interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) – some of which should include a custom designed vignette in order to apply CARE’s Social Norms Analysis Plot (SNAP), a framework that helps to determine what social norms exist, what sanctions exist, what the sensitivity to sanctions is and whether there are any exceptions. This will build on the data captured in the MTR using the vignette to measure social norms change. Key stakeholders to be consulted include (but are not limited to) men and women participants in target communities of diverse ages, community leaders, staff from partner organisations (Nasi Tuan, Vanuatu Society for People with a Disability (VSPD), Tafea Counselling Centre (Vanuatu Women’s Centre) VWC, Vanuatu Police - Family Protection Unit, Tafea Hospital, Department of Women’s Affairs - Tafea Province, and other provincial government actors.
 - Survey with project activity participants to capture project progress against outcome indicators.
 - Staff reflection workshop with LS2 and other CARE Vanuatu staff (from both Gender Equality programs and Resilience and Recovery) – to capture staff knowledge and experiences of change and ideas for future directions.

Note that sampling will be determined in the inception phase but is likely to be purposive and representative (for example: geographic, older vs newer communities etc.)

- Sense making and validation workshop – held with CARE staff, partners and community representatives, to share evaluation findings and the recommendations for further programming. Input and verification will be sought at this workshop and final adjustments made to the formative evaluation report. This will inform the preliminary design of the next phase.

SCHEDULE, WORKPLAN, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The assignment is expected to commence in October and end in December/early January 2021, for up to 30 working days. CARE will assign one Gender Advisor from the CARE Australia office to provide support on the SNAP tools, and to support with developing the methodology, and analysis of findings if needed. The estimated number of days required from the consultant/s to complete this work is here detailed as an indication:

Activity	Totals Days
Evaluation methodology development and finalisation (including inception meeting and development of plan) and inception report	3
Desk Review	2

Preparation for data collection	2
Data collection and entry (including translation as needed)	15
Data analysis and draft preliminary findings for workshop	3
Sense making and validation workshop	1
Report writing (first draft)	3
Collate feedback and final report	1
TOTAL days	30

KEY DELIVERABLES

Deliverables:

- A brief inception report (no more than 10 pages) to be submitted one week after the beginning of the evaluation detailing the methodology and plan for the evaluation.
- A draft report (maximum 25 pages excluding annexes outlining findings and recommendations)
- A final report to be submitted at the end of the evaluation which incorporates feedback on the draft (maximum 25 pages excluding annexes outlining findings and recommendations)

Payment

Payment will be made based on submission of an invoice on signing a contract up to 40% of the value of the services. Final payment up to 60% of the value of the services will be paid upon completion of the services and submission of a report, timesheet and invoice.

Selection Criteria

- CARE encourages applications from either individuals or teams of consultants.
- Expertise and demonstrated experience in Gender Equality and Women's Economic Empowerment and/or Violence Against Women and Girls programming women's leadership programming, preferably in the Vanuatu or Pacific context
- Proven experience in participatory evaluation and MEAL processes
- Proven experience with project management and activity planning
- Preferred knowledge and experience working in Vanuatu, including ability to speak Bislama

Expression of Interest

Expressions of Interest should include:

1. A maximum 1-page cover letter including a statement of capability and provide an example of evaluation completed.
2. Current CV of everyone included in the Expression of Interest
3. Daily fee rate

Expressions of interest and requests for further information should be submitted to Sylvain Malsungai at the following email address: sylvain.malsungai@careint.org.

Applications close 25th of October 2021 at 17.00 (Vanuatu Standard Time).

Approved by: Bridgette Thorold, Country Director

ANNEX 2: Data Collection Tools

See supplementary document

ANNEX 3: List of Key Interview Informants

KII Reference	Name	Organisation	Role	Location
1	Amy Green	CARE Vanuatu	Gender Equality Program Coordinator	Port Vila, Vanuatu
2	Lisa Thomas	CARE Vanuatu	LS2 EVAWG Coordinator	Tanna, Vanuatu
3	Sharon Alder	CARE Vanuatu	Program Director	Port Vila, Vanuatu
4	Mala Kenneth	CARE Vanuatu	LS2 WEL Coordinator	Tanna, Vanuatu
5	Bridgette Thorold	CARE Vanuatu	Country Director	Port Vila, Vanuatu
6	Ruth Yavilu	Tafea Counselling Centre	Project Officer	Tanna, Vanuatu
7	Ruth Moise	Tafea Hospital	Remnaka Project Officer	Tanna, Vanuatu
8	McKenzie Tameta	Tafea Police	Head of Family Protection Unit	Tanna, Vanuatu
9	Daniel Joshua	Nasi Tuan	Training Officer	Tanna, Vanuatu
10	Lency Kahi	Ikurup village	Chief	Tanna, Vanuatu
11	Bob Robert	Lamlu village	Chief	Tanna, Vanuatu
12	Kilna Yesul	Enkatelei village	Chief	Tanna, Vanuatu
13	Jif Yokaim	Lenaken village	Chief & church elder	Tanna, Vanuatu
14	Marie Noelle Topi	Ikurup village	Youth GRFV participant	Tanna, Vanuatu
15	Grace Lulu	Lamlu village	Chair of women's group	Tanna, Vanuatu
16	Mayline Tom	Enkatelei village	WEL group secretary & Sunday school teacher	Tanna, Vanuatu
17	Maukura Lokaim	Lenaken village	Male GRFV participant	Tanna, Vanuatu
18	Tobi Namri	Ikurup village	Male GRFV participant	Tanna, Vanuatu