

# **‘There is no time for rest’: Gendered CSR, Sustainable Development and the Unpaid Care Work Governance Gap<sup>1</sup>**

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## **Abstract**

Unpaid care work, including child care, elder care and housework, is unremunerated work essential to human survival and flourishing. Worldwide, women disproportionately carry out this work, impacting upon their ability to engage in other activities, such as education, employment, or leisure. Despite a growing number of businesses engaging in ‘gendered CSR’, in the form of women’s empowerment projects, attention to unpaid care work remains little discussed in the literature, despite its importance to sustainable development. Applying Diane Elson’s feminist economic framework for alleviating unpaid care work inequality to a case study of gendered CSR in Ghana, I find that at present unpaid care work is a) unrecognised in business’ CSR, b) may be both reduced *or* exacerbated by CSR efforts and c) remains conceptualised as relevant only to the private sphere, therefore missing a unique opportunity for business to contribute to gender equality and sustainable development. Connecting unpaid care work and business responsibility contributes to a more expansive understanding of what CSR may be.

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Improving gender equality has in recent years been seen as an opportunity for governments, businesses, and global development, hailed as a gateway to national growth (Ward, Lee, Baptist, & Jackson, 2010), community development (Coles & Mitchell, 2011) and improved returns (Yeager & Goldenberg, 2012). Within development and finance institutions ‘Gender economics is smart economics’ (The World Bank, 2006) has become accepted doctrine (Prügl, 2015). Subsequently the last few years have seen a rise in ‘gendered CSR’ (Karam & Jamali, 2013), as businesses as diverse as Coca-Cola, Walmart, IKEA and Mars race to ‘empower’ women, particularly in the global South. In this paper, however, I argue that whilst ‘gendered CSR’ may go some way to aiding the sustainable development goal of gender equality (UNGC, 2015), it is fundamentally flawed unless it is viewed first considering the gendered macroeconomic context in which it operates, and second, that it recognises, reduces and redistributes unpaid care work inequalities.

Unpaid care work refers to childcare, elder care, caring work (e.g. for sick relatives), housework and related activities that are essential for household survival, but receive no remuneration (Carmona, 2013; The World Bank, 2011). More expansively, unpaid work can include working in family businesses without pay or benefits, engaging in subsistence farming, or volunteer work. The focus here, however, is on unpaid care work which specifically includes those activities that involve others’ needs, such as collecting firewood and water for the community or family, or taking children to and from school. Whilst men do perform unpaid care work, and to generalise risks essentialism, statistics show that worldwide women and girls perform up to 80 per cent of domestic work (The World Bank, 2011). It is a truly global phenomenon: from the apartments of Copenhagen to the plantations of

Chittagong, care work must take place. When family members fall ill, when there is a funeral to arrange, when there is a celebration to cook for: women most often shoulder these tasks.

Unpaid care work is gendered across all countries, although there are variations in who, when and why individuals perform unpaid work (UN Women, 2015). In the global South women's unpaid work can be more challenging than for women in the North, due to persistent inequalities in access to public services (e.g. water, sanitation, child and elder care, energy), resources (e.g. money towards transport) and stereotyped gender norms (e.g. women being forbidden from using public transport; or men being ridiculed for contributing to household chores) (ActionAid, 2013; Coles & Mitchell, 2011; Boserup, 1970).

Feminist economists have been at the forefront of theorisation of the importance of unpaid care work to economies, societies and individuals (Benería, 1999). They have rich insights to apply to the field of CSR and development (Pearson, 2007). In this article I incorporate feminist economic theory into CSR, and empirically apply Diane Elson's (2009) 3R framework to a case study of 'gendered CSR' in the Ghanaian cocoa value chain. My research question is: 'to what extent can CSR in the global South 'recognise, reduce and redistribute' unpaid care work?' I find that women's unpaid care roles are (a) unrecognised by CSR, (b) may be both reduced *or* exacerbated by CSR and (c) located firmly in the realm of the private sphere, therefore missing a unique opportunity to contribute to gender equality and sustainable development.

In so doing, I make two contributions. First, I contribute to the field of sustainable development and gender by empirically demonstrating the challenges and opportunities the private sector- as new governance actors - may bring to the global issue of unpaid care work, through CSR. However, for business to aid, rather than negate, equality efforts a more expansive conceptualisation of CSR is required. Thus I contribute to theories of CSR by arguing against 'malestream' CSR which privileges a dichotomy between 'public' and

‘private’, ‘home’ and ‘work, and largely views stakeholders as ‘rational’, atomised individuals. A feminist economic informed approach to corporate responsibility involves reconsidering these notions (e.g. Johnstone-Lewis, 2017) so that corporate responsibility extends beyond office walls, and includes those marginalised stakeholders who could most benefit from corporate social activity.

### **Gendered CSR: A Pathway to Development?**

CSR remains a chameleon concept (Gond & Moon, 2011). It remains mired in an understanding of businesses as large corporate hierarchies based in the global North (Spence & Painter-Morland, 2010). In the context of the global South, ‘responsible business practices’ may be a more suitable name, given the informal ways in which firms operate (Jeppesen & Azizi, 2017). Expanding the concept of CSR is necessary, because to focus only on MNCs, corporations or more traditional value chains would *de facto* erase the large swathes of women found in micro-businesses, as home-workers, or smallholder farmers, from analyses (Barrientos et al., 2003; Pearson, 2007). There is an over-representation of women in insecure, part-time roles, outside of ‘traditional’ MNC structures- both in the global North, and in sub-contracted supply chains in the South (Barrientos, 2001; Barrientos & Perrons, 1999). Gender is therefore a cross-cutting issue in CSR, necessitating studies beyond the constraints of the usual spaces in which we might see business engaging (Grosser, McCarthy & Kilgour, 2016). In this paper, therefore, CSR broadly refers to: "the expectation that business is responsible *to* society- in the sense of accountability... and *for* society- in the sense of compensating for negative externalities and contributing to social welfare" (Gond & Moon, 2011: 2). CSR also includes the management of these roles, chiefly through the management of stakeholder relationships (Gond & Moon, 2011).

By ‘gendered CSR’ (Karam & Jamali, 2013) I am referring to the recent proliferation of CSR policies, programmes, initiatives and partnerships which aim to contribute to gender equality in various contexts, but predominantly in the global South. Karam and Jamali (2013) put forward a number of ways in which businesses (in the context of the Middle-East) could contribute to gender equality. In the years following their piece, there has been a boom in such activity, with the most popular form of ‘gendered CSR’ being women’s empowerment programmes<sup>2</sup>. These programmes are usually situated within MNCs’ value chains, and seek to economically empower women by offering training and start-up resources such as microfinance, and thus ‘harness’ women’s latent power and confidence. Furthermore, ‘gendered CSR’ increasingly involves partnerships to fulfil its goals. For example, Coca-Cola partner with UN Women and international NGOs in order to deliver its 5by20 women’s empowerment programme (UN Women, 2014). These partnerships represent new configurations of global governance for gender equality (Grosser, 2009), and have received increasingly critical attention from feminist political economists, who have questioned the growing role of corporations in ‘delivering’ equality, and the decreased role of states in protecting women’s rights (Bexell, 2012; Roberts, 2015; Prügl & True, 2014), and the role of international institutions such as The World Bank in encouraging corporations to move into these new governance roles (Roberts & Soederberg, 2012).

Within CSR literature there has been until recently a paucity of studies on gender and CSR in the global South (Grosser, Nelson & Moon, 2017), and even less use of feminist theory (Grosser & Moon, 2017). Turning to the gender and development literature, my focus on ‘gendered CSR’ programmes is a departure from the majority of studies in this area, exploring the role of private-sector regulation: corporate, industry or broader multi-

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<sup>2</sup> According to one study, in 2016 over 31million USD was invested in 31 corporate women’s empowerment programmes (ICRW, 2016).

stakeholder codes of conduct, and initiatives; and their possibilities and constraints regarding gender equality (Barrientos et al., 2003; Tallontire et al., 2005; Hale & Opondo, 2005). These codes generally fall into the 'do no harm' form of CSR, in that they set minimum standards for businesses to reach, usually in the form of working conditions and pay. Private sector regulation has been critiqued for failing to incorporate workers' own views and capture the reality of their work, in particular those of women workers who may have particular needs and concerns (see Prieto-Carrón, 2008). Women are most often adversely affected by such codes which can push them out of newly regulated factories and into more informal, flexible work which better correlates with their unpaid care duties (de Neve, 2014). When this option is not available, CSR intervention may actually remove paid work as an option for women (Khan & Lund-Thomsen, 2011).

One reason for this may be that "women may be reluctant to pursue gender equality if they fear for the well-being of children and other dependents" (Folbre, 2006: 184). If we consider CSR, and especially 'gendered CSR' as attempts at equality, there remains a pressing need to incorporate unpaid care work into the field: theoretically and practically. In this vein, Ruth Pearson (2014; 2007) further calls out the ineffectiveness of private regulation in that it a) only pertains to workers during employment; b) fails to tackle the global linkages between different nodes in the global production network (i.e. they only 'regulate' small nodes of the value chain), and c) fails to take into account the unpaid care work, that predominately women engage in, and from which the global economy benefits massively. She concludes that "this is because they [business] are only concerned with employees for the time they actually spend in the production process, thus ignoring the time and resources that are devoted to growing and renewing the labour power required by that production process" (Pearson, 2014: 36). A feminist economic theoretical framework thus helps us explore further the linkages between new configurations of global governance, in the form of gendered CSR,

and the real-world impact on workers in developing economies. The principle tenets of the theory are introduced below.

### **Feminist Economic Perspectives on Unpaid Care Work**

For the purposes of this paper, there are three key issues which feminist economics brings to bear on mainstream approaches to CSR, including those that already focus on ‘gendered’ issues: (1) it questions the focus on individuals, and not collectives, as a central unit of analysis in economics, (2) it questions the assumed division between public and private life, and (3) it questions the notion that human beings always operate in their own self-interest (Schneider & Shackelford, 1998). Table 1 presents these three issues as approached by mainstream ‘malestream’ CSR, which is largely informed by classical approaches to economics, and contrasts this with a feminist economic approach. It also presents the three recommendations as proposed by Elson (2009), which we return to at the end of this section.

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#### *Questioning the Focus on Individual Actors*

Taking these points in turn, the first issue pertains to how we conceptualise the lives of actors working in the economy. Mainstream economics historically considers the effects of the individual on markets, or vice versa (Alderman et al., 1995). Households are representative of collective needs and wants, with any conflicts between different members erased from analysis (Alderman et al., 1995). Similarly, within mainstream CSR scholarship, policy reviews and impact assessments tend to focus on workers, employees, consumers, investors, and so on, as individuals- ignoring their collective agency, but also the intricacies of social

relations which impact upon individuals (Carswell & De Neve, 2013). A feminist economic view on market-based interventions holds the household (in all its complexity) at the centre of analysis, mindful that individuals experience different constraints and freedoms within these, often permeated by gendered power relations (Agarwal, 1997). For example, if a female worker receives a living wage via a CSR intervention, does this necessarily lead to personal wealth? Or is that wage shared with her family? Perhaps she is paying her wages to her parents who live in her hometown. Or is her husband controlling all finances, regardless of CSR policy? (De Neve, 2014). Others have pointed out that diverse collectives, such as communities, ethnic groups or villages, may all exercise constraints and enablers for individual working women (Rankin, 2002). That the effects of CSR might spread beyond these individuals, to their households, and communities, is important, especially when it comes to questions of social and environmental outcomes.

### *Questioning the division between public and private life*

The second issue pertains to what kinds of work are deemed relevant to business, and the economy in general. Unpaid work is physically, emotionally and economically challenging and fills governance gaps unfilled by government or private services. Yet in classical economic terms such work is not considered profitable, and therefore has been traditionally erased from discussions of economics (Waring, 1988). In many indicators of global economics, unpaid care work continues to be unaccounted for (UN Women, 2015; Hoskyns & Rai, 2007). This is echoed in the way we discuss business and their social responsibilities within mainstream CSR (Grosser, 2009; Pearson, 2007; Thompson, 2008). In some respects, this is because the ‘ideal worker’ is still often considered a man, who leaves his ‘home life’ at the office or factory door (Acker, 1990). Acker (1990) argues that this myth undermines individuals’ actual experience of workplaces (which are always affected by, and affect, home



lives)- and the equally important work done outside of the 9 to 5. Arguably such myths perpetuate in CSR: the work individuals do outside of 'employment' is not seen as relevant (Johnstone-Lewis, 2017).

A feminist economics lens reveals that this is a misplaced assumption, arguing that 'non-market' activities (e.g. elder care, childcare, reproduction, housework, caring for the sick) are just as important as 'market' activity (e.g. employment, commerce) (Ferber & Nelson, 1993). Without this work, formal economies could not function. For example, women bear and care for children (for free) and thus ready the next labour force (Engels, 1884; Folbre, 1994): they are responsible for the 'production and maintenance of human capital' (Folbre, 2006, p.185). They also cook, clean, tidy-up after and provide financial and emotional support to family members who in turn contribute to the formal economy. Clearly business and global trade systems profit from unpaid care work (Grosser, 2009). However, from a business perspective, incorporating non-market activities into planning can foster new opportunities: Rio Tinto acquired more awareness about their mining sites when women's 'non-market' environmental knowledge was incorporated (Rio Tinto, 2009). *The Body Shop* were perhaps the first business to experiment with paying women in their value chain for their unpaid care work, as part of the Fairtrade premium (Butler, 2014), citing not a business case, but a normative reason for doing so (Butler & Hoskyns, 2016), and potentially raising their social responsibility reputation.

### *Questioning 'Rational economic man'*

The third issue relates to assumptions made about how human beings in economies behave. Classical economics focuses on individuals in competition with each other, acting in their own 'rational' self-interest (Folbre, 1998). Again, this is echoed in mainstream approaches to CSR, where the interdependent and relational elements of human existence are often left out

in preference for focusing on different stakeholders as self-interested individuals (De Neve, Luetchford, & Pratt, 2008; Nelson, 2011). Feminist economics, in its appreciation of the collective, and caring for others, stresses the relationality of human existence, which includes conflict, but also cooperation and care (Schneider & Shackelford, 1998). This incorporates an appreciation not just for the exchange of goods and services but the valuation of less-tangible, emotional and 'non-rational' "things that human beings need to survive and flourish" (Nelson, 1995: 143). Relationality also runs through feminist ethics (Borgerson, 2007; Derry, 1996; Spence, 2014) and their approaches to stakeholder management, which argue that caring, relationships, and cooperation with others are at the core of a successful stakeholder approach (Wicks et al., 1994). Recent work on gender and CSR further argues for a re-conceptualisation of 'power' through a relational feminist lens (Karam & Jamali, 2017). In this sense, business would not seek 'power over' stakeholders (arguably a key trait of 'rational economic man'), but would enable individuals and groups to exercise their own 'power to' affect social change. Thus CSR becomes less about individualistic, top-down control, and more a form of facilitation for individuals' 'power to' enact change. As Nelson (2011: 35), argues, the demise of 'rational economic man' 'opens the way for serious new thinking about business ethics, responsibility, and care'.

*Why unpaid care work is problematic, and what can organisations and institutions do about it?*

In sum, feminist economics has challenged traditional concepts of what 'work' is and why we do it. It shows us that whilst individuals do care work out of love and enjoyment (Folbre & Nelson, 2000; Himmelweit, 1995) women's over-representation in these work tasks has a detrimental effect on gender equality in myriad ways. Unpaid care work can remove women from the workforce, or force them to work part-time, in low-status, lower-paid positions

(Nguyen et al., 2013). Whilst more women have moved into employment, worldwide, they continue to do the most unpaid care work (UN Women, 2015). Men are simply not meeting these needs halfway (Bergmann, 1986). Thus women often work what has become known as the ‘triple-shift’: engaging in paid employment, *as well as* performing the majority of child, household, and emotional care (Duncombe & Marsden, 1995). Care-givers themselves often lack leisure time and experience emotional stress and isolation (Folbre & Bittman, 2004). Unpaid care work can limit women’s opportunities for further training or entrepreneurial pursuits (Folbre, 1996; 2006). Some unpaid care work endangers women’s lives, for example the collecting of firewood in dangerous locations, or the burning of such wood in ways which causes respiratory damage.

Thus, not only do feminist economists challenge the androcentrist (Marshall, 2011) and mainstream economic assumptions underpinning mainstream CSR, but they seek practical suggestions for how we may reduce the negative externalities associated with women’s unpaid work, especially in the global South (Eyben, 2013; ActionAid, 2013). Diane Elson (2008; 2017), draws on feminist economics, but also feminist ethics and social justice theories (e.g. Fraser, 2008; 2010) to develop her now widely adopted 3R framework.<sup>3</sup> The framework recommends the following:

1. *Recognition* of the role of women in the provision of unpaid care, as well as its social and economic value.
2. *Reduction* in the drudgery and time burden of unpaid care, especially for women living in poverty.

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<sup>3</sup> Elson’s framework has been developed over time, first at a seminar for the UNDP in New York, 2009 (Elson, 2017). It has been taken up and used in diverse institutions, such as the OECD. Philosophically it appears to have been inspired by Nancy Fraser’s three-pronged approach to social justice: recognition (of the equally deserving respect of all peoples); redistribution (of material resources, including wealth, income, leisure time & so forth); and representation (of marginalised groups’ voice in political & institutional processes) (Fraser et al., 2004; Fraser 2010; 2008).

3. *Redistribution* of unpaid care work: from women to men, and from the family to communities and the state.

My point of departure is to explore whether these recommendations, ostensibly addressed to NGOs, large institutions, trade unions, and governments, can be met partially through CSR activity. Although in a recent piece Elson (2017) also calls upon businesses to close the gender gap, traditionally, the field of gender and development has looked upon corporate involvement in the area of gender equality suspiciously (Sweetman & Pearson, 2012) and its relation to unpaid work scarcely (Johnstone-Lewis, 2017). I draw upon Elson's 3R framework to empirically demonstrate the challenges and opportunities CSR affords, through a case study of 'gendered CSR' in the Ghanaian cocoa value chain, introduced below.

## **Methodology**

The examples in this paper are drawn from research which took place in 2013 and 2016. I studied a CSR partnership between a British chocolate company, their Ghanaian cocoa supplier (which is a cooperative), a British Fairtrade NGO and the smallholder cocoa farmers who were members of the cooperative. This value chain example demonstrates the complexity of many agri-value chains, whereby individual farming families sell their cocoa to buyers, or in this case, a cooperative, which then sells the cocoa on to multinational clients. Important to this case is the fact that cocoa farming is very much a family affair, with farmers growing the cocoa on their homestead, often near their own home (Tiffen, MacDonald, Maamah, & Osei-Opare, 2004). The chain can be further sub-contracted if larger land-owning farmers then hire migrant workers, or lease their land to tenants who work the land but give the profit to the land owner (Barrientos & Asenso-Owyere, 2008). All this means that the line between work and home is very much blurred, and thus demarcations between 'work' and 'home' lives become contested.

The larger research project from which my data is taken explored the gendered CSR elements of the company's CSR activities. In this paper, I focus on two: women farmers' leadership training, and 'alternative' livelihood training, such as batik-printing, soap-making and jewellery making.

### *Research Design*

A participatory research design was used in both studies (2013 and 2016), as a means of getting closer to participants' experiences of paid and unpaid work in the cocoa value chain. I used the Gender Action Learning System (GALS) methodology (Mayoux, 2010; Mayoux & Mackie, 2007) which has been used in value chains where a gendered analysis has historically been lacking. GALS primarily includes running a workshop where participants are asked to draw diagrams. This generated data on unpaid work, as participants were shown how to draw their own 'gender tree' (Figure 1). This diagram collected information on women and men's paid cocoa work, other forms of income-generating work, and unpaid care work (symbols drawn by the roots). The 'tree' also showed what women and men owned e.g. housing, land, (symbols drawn by the trunk) and what they were able to make decisions about, in terms of purchasing (symbols drawn on the branches).

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Figure 1 Goes About Here

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In each workshop GALS was supplemented with group discussions (separated into men and women's groups, and then in one large plenary) and individual interviews with women farmers. Interviews were conducted in Twi, translated with the aid of an interpreter. In total I ran 8 workshops (4 in 2013, 4 in 2016) in Central and Eastern Ghana. Each workshop lasted 3 hours and was attended by between 12 and 20 cocoa farmers. In total 152 farmers took part.

GALS' focus on participation, and the visual, privileges letting participants lead the discussion, and champions both verbal and non-verbal forms of data generation, which are especially useful in cases where the subject matter (gender roles) requires sensitivity and means very different things across different cultures. As I have argued elsewhere (The Author, 2016), whilst power imbalances exist between researcher and researched in all types of research design, the approach undertaken here is developed so as to champion participants' own understandings of culturally specific concepts (such as gender), and tries to facilitate discussion through playful drawing and often humorous commentary from participants.

To contextualise the programme I also interviewed 21 staff members from the UK business, Ghanaian supplier and UK NGO. Finally, information on the gender programme was found through documentary analysis e.g. policy documents and programme evaluation reports. Table 2 collates all data sources and methods used.

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### *Data Analysis*

The visual data from the 'gender tree' diagrams were analysed using content analysis (Rose, 2012). Symbols, reflecting different work tasks, as well as the items men and women spent their income on, were counted and collated to give indications of the work (paid and unpaid) done by men and women, using a symbol 'map' that had been created and then edited alongside cooperative staff and farmers (for more on the analysis of the visual data see The Author, 2016). The comparison of visual data from 2013 against 2016 gave a rudimentary insight into any changes CSR may have had on unpaid work roles. Importantly, interviews and group discussions offered qualitative data triangulation with the visual data, and offered

farmer and staff members' views on and experiences of unpaid care work. I analysed these texts through thematic qualitative analysis, first relating to first-order concepts around unpaid care work, paid work, the relationship between these, and CSR interventions. On a second round of analysis I then collated the first order concepts into second order themes pertaining to Elson's (2009) framework, relating to the recognition, reduction and redistribution of unpaid care within my case study.

### **Results: Recognise, reduce and redistribute?**

In the sections below I explore Elson's feminist economics-informed framework for considering unpaid care work, applied to the case of 'gendered' CSR.

*Does CSR recognise the role of women in the provision of unpaid care, as well as its social and economic value?*

A growing number of 'gendered' CSR approaches include economic empowerment projects. In Ghana, female cocoa farmers were offered training in batik, jewellery crafting, and soap and cassava processing, with the aim that these would supplement women's cocoa farming income. However, a number of problems came to light during the programme evaluation in 2013. First, the number of women signing up to such training was low. Second, the quality of the products made by women was low. Third, there was a limited market for the goods outside of a handful of tourists and visitors to the cooperative. Fourth, and relatedly, the income streams from such alternative livelihoods were poor (Evaluation Document, 2013).

Interviews and participatory workshops with supplier staff and farmers revealed that women were unwilling to sign up to training as they felt they did not have enough time to spend on projects that did not seem to have any market. Those who had signed up did not have the time or energy to perfect their crafts (with the exception of a few women who went

on the produce beautiful batik). The crucial aspect here is time: whilst the economic empowerment programme was well-intentioned, managers had over-estimated women's free time and thus their enthusiasm for the training:

Around this time with no harvest it becomes a bit challenging [taking part in the programme], because when you need rest, you have to do other work and you don't have the money, it becomes a bit challenging. (Aisha, farmer participant, 2016).

Managers had also made assumptions about how much women were *already* engaged in cocoa farming, other income work (such as tailoring, selling vegetables, tending to livestock, even preaching) and of course, their unpaid care work. Table 3 shows the breakdown of men and women's work in the cocoa value chain from the 2013 study.

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Reflecting existing time-use surveys in Ghana (e.g. Wodon & Blackden, 2006; Barrientos & Asenso-Owryere, 2008), women did almost all of the unpaid care work, in both 2013 and 2016. In smaller, rural communities, where clean water was some distance away, women's time was spent largely on household work, especially carrying water, and cooking, which also depends on the proximity of water sources. Women also seemed to engage in a much wider range of other income-generating work, even without CSR interventions (see Table 3). Thus, reflecting back on the design of the CSR women's empowerment programme, recognition of unpaid care work at the initial planning stages may have helped the businesses better tailor their activities. Unpaid care work is largely left unrecognised by CSR, including 'gendered CSR' which can have unintended consequences on both the programme outcomes, and the lives of the women it is meant to help.



*Does CSR reduce the drudgery and time burden of unpaid care, especially for women living in poverty?*

Some of the easiest ways in which CSR interventions could help reduce the drudgery and time burden of unpaid care would be with the provision of labour-saving devices, such as rice-milling machines, wheelbarrows for farming, bicycles for transport or water wells in safe and welcome positions. Such activities, echoing development strategies used for many years within developing economies, symbolise some of the ‘low-hanging fruits’ of ‘gendered CSR’. In Ghana, the businesses had initiated some of these ideas, such as water wells, and mobile hygiene clinics, but the positive gendered impacts (e.g. reducing women’s time going to water sources or clinics far away) were unintended, but welcome, consequences (Interview with UK Manager, 2013): ‘The mobile health centre thing was really good, ‘cos it went to where the women were (NGO staff member, 2013).’

The evaluation in 2013 revealed that women were working as much as men on cocoa farming, as well as on other income streams and domestic chores. Therefore to add on another ‘livelihood’ (in the form of alternative income training) to women’s already overburdened workload was problematic. The assumption that women were not as involved in cocoa and other income-generating work, and the under evaluation of their unpaid work, meant that ‘gendered CSR’ was contributing to women’s time burden. Thus what was meant to tackle gender inequality was actually doing more harm than good, by reducing what little rest or leisure time women may have had:

Some of them... feel they have not time to take up any of these programs or responsibilities because of household chores. There is no time for rest, they say (Interviewee 4, Supplier, 2013).

An example of how this was better managed in 2016 was with the inclusion of a literacy class for cocoa farmers (both men and women). Fearing that women would be unable to attend due

to unpaid care work responsibilities, the classes were held during the early afternoon, when older children were still at school, and when the majority of farming work had been completed. Patricia, a female local committee member added that:

My role as a board member does not interfere with my domestic duties in the sense that meetings are not held all the time. The meetings are scheduled. They plan ahead. If you know that you will have a meeting, I plan that. By the time I go to a meeting, everything at home is done so it doesn't conflict with my domestic duties (Patricia, female local board member, 2016).

Giving women ample notice to arrange care work around other duties enabled women like Patricia to take up leadership roles within the cooperative. Transportation, however, remained a problem, as women struggled to get to meetings without cars, bicycles or motorcycles, relying on local buses or shared cars, often at great expense:

When we close late [training meetings], by the time I have to go home, there is no car and I have to hire a moto... It's expensive. (Yaa, farmer participant and committee member, 2016).

One of the major challenges is that some of the women are far away. Some of them, where they are, the roads are bad. Others can go by car, but you know...it takes MORE time. (Joseph, Gender committee member, 2016).

This is important, since many women told us that they are often denied the income from cocoa farming by their male relatives, meaning that they are further marginalised from taking part in CSR activities because of the costs they may incur: be it the input needed for materials for micro-businesses, or the cost of the bus fare.

Gladys: The saddest aspect [of cocoa farming] is working with the husband and when the money comes, he won't even give me. So now I am thinking of just leaving everything on him. That is the saddest aspect: I work with the man and he doesn't give me anything when the money comes. So I just want to leave him to do it.

Interviewer: Why do you think the men keep the money?

Gladys: Because *they* lead and they are in possession of the land and *everything*.

Thus gender inequality remains a complex, multi-faceted phenomenon, encompassing the economic, social and political marginalisation of women. Reducing women's unpaid care work entails encouraging men to take up more of the tasks, and relinquish some of the

decision-making power they hold over household planning and finance, a key element of Elson's third suggestion for tackling unpaid care work.

*Could CSR help redistribution of unpaid care work: from women to men, and from the family to communities and the state?*

Perhaps more ambitiously, 'gendered CSR' could also be used to cultivate the softer, cultural changes required to transform strict gendered divisions of labour, and reduce women's workload through redistributing household chores between men and women. There was some evidence that training and development for women farmers might help shift traditional gendered divisions of labour in Ghanaian cocoa farming families. This training was focused on building up women's self-confidence to be leaders through workshops on leadership and business skills (e.g. planning, saving). The training was developed with the aid of an international women's NGO which had already developed a 'train the trainer' method of disseminating workshops. Thus, women could cascade information to each other through this method of communication.

Interviews with staff members and women farmers indicated that this training, whilst it may not have always resulted in more income or a higher role in the cooperative, was necessary first and foremost in building confidence in expressing opinions within what is still an industry heavily dominated by men:

To be able to accept leadership positions, we will need training. Because you know as women, we are challenged. We are taking care of the home and everything so we really need guidance and hope to be able to, come up (Agnes, Female farmer participant, 2013).

Gradually we will have a change. But it is not easy. Some women, very qualified, will want to ask permission from their husbands...So their coming up depends on their frames of their mind. (Interviewee 11, Supplier Staff, 2013).

As an NGO partner explained, ‘It’s not just about a gender programme... that’s just projects. The far more important part is the norms’ (Interviewee 22, NGO Partner).

Importantly, and echoed in other studies (Butler, 2014; Said-Allsopp & Tallontire, 2014), the *processes* of engaging in empowerment programmes, rather than the content, aided women in being more aware of their rights, and becoming more forthright and vocal, and in some instances enabled the expansion of women’s experiences: ‘Schooling and knowledge opens your mind’ (Alice, female farmer participant, 2016). For example, one older farmer explained how through the training programme she had been able to negotiate some of the housework with male members of the household, which had enabled her to join the cooperative farmer’s board. Training, in this case, through the social and political processes of empowerment, had opened up worlds beyond the cocoa farmstead: ‘Now I know places- I’ve met so many people.’ (Agnes, female farmer participant, 2013). Mary explained how her husband was now more willing to share work responsibilities, both at home and on the farm:

[In the past] when we would go to the farm the man would carry the baby and I would be weeding. If the baby cried, he would call for me to come and breastfeed. So for me, the training they gave me, helped me to be independent. I think that a woman leader [training] should tell you that you should not depend on a man. You should be independent.... Now he helps me. (Mary, female farmer participant, 2016).

In a particularly lively group discussion, women explained that the differences in unpaid care work roles were cultural and in a move that would make feminist economists proud, they demanded ‘payment for housework’:

The men should help with house chores. Men might wish to help at home but our culture is such that the women should do the house chores, so men stay away from helping, because if people see then they can take them to task and say you are a fool or... Because our society says that the women should do house chores, then they should give up more money so that will compensate. [Murmuring from men’s group] (Women’s Discussion Group, 3<sup>rd</sup> Workshop, 2016).

Men were also aware of women’s work burdens:

The women are also burdened with household chores...the women do double-work. Mean that, after assisting them with the farm work, when they come home they also do household

chores, so it is hard for the woman. So it is somewhat destroying the woman (Men's Discussion Group, 2<sup>nd</sup> Workshop, 2013).

Exchanges such as this, and the household diagrams, demonstrate that change is happening, especially amongst younger farming households. Yet change is glacially slow, and there was little difference in the sharing of unpaid care roles between the 2013 and 2016 studies. Indeed, in the 2016 study there appeared to be more resistance to men giving up their power in the household:

Some of the women, when you give them money and their status changes, they want to become the boss in the house. In our society we don't like that. We think that they should still be calm. (Men's Discussion Group, 3<sup>rd</sup> Workshop, Western Region, March 2016)

Indeed, for some cooperative staff and committee members, whilst there was more recognition of women's unpaid care work in 2016, this was still unproblematised:

God created a man and a women and essentially the woman is to support the man so we believe that women are very important. They support our work. (Male local committee leader, 2016).

Thus, the reason given for gendered CSR is to support women as primary caregivers who in turn support the 'true' cocoa farmers: men. This is despite evidence that women contribute to farming often just as much as men (Barrientos & Asenso-Owyere, 2008). The problem is, then, that the gendered divisions inherent in the cocoa industry remain fundamentally unchallenged. Men are not included- they are left to continue working in ways they are used to. Even if men are asked to take on more household chores, the redistribution of women's unpaid care burden is always instrumental to, or for, something or someone else. As a staff member explained:

One of the fundamental reasons why we help women is the fact that when we help one woman, we have helped almost the entire nation because if the family benefits, it trickles down to the whole nation. That's the reason that we value helping women or empowering women. (Male staff member, 2016).

Perhaps a truly responsible business approach to unpaid work would be to position it as unethical for women to work twice as hard as men, without the need for a business or development case.

Finally, a feminist economic perspective ultimately champions the State as a key actor in readdressing unpaid care work inequity, and thus promoting gender equality (Schneider & Shackelford, 1998; Pearson, 2014). In particular, Elson (2009) argues for unpaid care work to be redistributed away from the household towards the State, or state-funded community solutions (e.g. free childcare, elder care support and so forth). There appears to be little improvement, worldwide, of shifting women's unpaid care work onto the State, indeed the neoliberal turn in policymaking worldwide suggests the opposite (Fraser, 2013). Certainly, in the Ghanaian case study participants requested help and public services from the cooperative, outwardly rejecting the State as 'useless' or 'corrupt' (Male farmer participants, 2016). I explore the role of the State, business and unpaid care work in the final section, reflecting on what opportunities and challenges an era of new governance (Moon, 2002) and new actors affords.

### **Discussion and Concluding Remarks**

The role of governments in providing welfare and reducing the care load is crucial (Razavi, 2007), but they are seen by many to be in danger of either sharing welfare responsibilities with business (Moon, Crane, & Matten, 2005), or outsourcing duties to the private sector (Fraser, 2013). Yet 'gendered CSR' can only go so far to alleviate unpaid care work without economic support and resources from welfare systems, especially in cases where family members need round-the-clock care, or when income is extremely low. Critics of the individualistic rhetoric of women's empowerment programmes argue that 'gendered CSR' often puts the onus for change on women without due consideration of the social and cultural inequality structures at play around them (Roberts, 2014; Tornill, 2016). Furthermore, recent research has demonstrated how continued tax avoidance by local businesses and multinationals directly contributes to women's unpaid care work, since tax pays for relevant

State services (such as childcare or elder care support) (Moussie & McDonald, 2016). Thus, before embarking on gendered CSR one might argue that the first step would be to ‘do less harm’ by paying appropriate tax.

Notwithstanding the above, my contribution to the CSR, sustainable development and governance field is to argue for the inclusion of business as an important governance actor when it comes to tackling the inequalities of unpaid care work. Thus, whilst Elson’s 3R framework calls on NGOs and institutions to reduce, recognise and redistribute unpaid care work, in the development field there has been a shying away of consideration of the new development roles that corporations have taken on (Scherer & Palazzo, 2011). Many businesses have for some time filled ‘governance gaps’ (Detomasi, 2008). Thus whilst governments continue to be the *ideal* actor for providing support for unpaid care (Pearson, 2014), I argue that *pragmatically* we might wish to explore the opportunities gendered CSR could provide in addressing unpaid care work. This is because; first, unpaid work is too big a topic for any actors working in the field of sustainable development to ignore. The sustainable development goals are explicitly directed not just at governments but at business too, within which is an unambiguous goal on gender equality and a smaller sub-goal on unpaid care work equality (UN Global Compact, 2015). These goals ask business not just to help secure gender equality *within* employment, but asks them to ensure that their practices do not harm the flourishing of women and men in all areas of their life. Increasingly, businesses wish to go further than ‘doing no harm’, by promoting better gender equality for a wider range of stakeholders, including employees, but also those contributing to their value chains (Butler, 2014; Karam & Jamali, 2013; Grosser, 2009). Thus, businesses may wish to lobby governments to provide social welfare, or work with industry partners to provide free childcare facilities in industrial clusters.

Second, the potential role of business in the challenge of recognising, reducing and redistributing unpaid care work could be effective because of their reach, scale and resources (Moon et al., 2005). The ability for businesses, through CSR, to move more flexibly than governments means that they could provide both the tangible (resources, finance) and intangible (training, sensitisation) aspects needed to begin to challenge gendered unpaid care roles, and thus gender inequality. From an instrumental view, unpaid care work demonstrably has an impact on business, and social, performance. Had the cocoa supplier in my case study undertaken an evaluation of farmers' unpaid roles *before* designing the gender programme, they may have seen that women's time was already full to bursting with responsibilities, and saved themselves the cost of a failing CSR programme.

This sees business expanding its responsibility for gender equality beyond office walls. As we have seen, the inclusion of the concept of unpaid work is crucial for improving 'gendered CSR', and how it may meaningfully impact on sustainable development. Furthermore, the recognition of unpaid care work as a corporate responsibility issue requires CSR scholars to consider CSR in a more expansive way, as relevant to 'private' social relations in the home. Some may argue that this is a gross infringement of privacy, and a step too far for corporate power. However, I would argue that a feminist economics lens reveals that the dichotomy between 'work' and 'home', 'public' and 'private' within CSR scholarship is false, and it is a privileged few who are able to maintain that illusion. 'Malestream' CSR which continues to divide public and private experiences, and considers stakeholders as 'rational' 'ideal workers' (Acker, 1990) marginalises those that could benefit most from corporate social activities.

As my case study in Ghana shows, however, there are unintended consequences with 'gendered CSR' interventions, which may make things worse for the very women such programmes aim to help. Furthermore, the motivation for 'gendered CSR' tends to slip into



instrumental logic (women's empowerment helps men/the community), echoing the 'gender economics is smart economics' narrative that has become so common-place in development agendas (Roberts & Soederberg, 2012). Women's work (unpaid or otherwise) becomes commodified under this transnational discourse (Sklair, 2001), reaffirming masculinist neoliberal approaches to global economics which construct women, and the global south, as 'victims' (Nagar et al., 2002). Gendered CSR which emanates from such a tradition thus does little to challenge the status-quo when it fails to take into account localised accounts of resistance and power relations (McCarthy, 2017) and the hidden 'spaces and places' where women work (Clark, 1994; Nagar et al., 2002). Thus, there is a real concern that businesses attempting to tackle gender inequality are neither the legitimate nor the correctly skilled actors to do so (Bexell, 2012; Roberts, 2015). Furthermore, approaches to 'gendered CSR' tend to view women as a homogenous group in which differences between women, in terms of ethnicity, class, religion, ability, and the complex intersections of inequalities they experience (Walby, 2009), are ignored (McCarthy, 2017). This has long been a problem within development in general, now imported into CSR practice (e.g. Cornwall, 2007).

To begin to allay some of the problems described above, businesses may seek partnerships with experts, in the form of women's NGOs and development agencies. This would help secure a greater legitimacy of business action in this space (Prügl & True, 2014; Grosser, 2016) and potentially avoid some of the unintended negative consequences that may arise when addressing gender inequalities in developing economies (Metcalf, 2011). I would argue that partnerships might perhaps allay the deep-seated suspicion that resounds in some feminist scholarship around the role of business and development more generally (e.g. Roberts, 2015; Fraser, 2013). The key point here is that businesses could be development actors with regard to unpaid care work, but only if they work with informed partners. Then,

actors across all organisational forms must push to avoid the commodification of women's work- paid and unpaid- into neoliberal agendas.

Partnering with a range of governance actors, such as NGOs, would also impress the need onto businesses that gender is not synonymous with women, and men's roles and inclusion is equally important. In most cultures it is women who do most of the domestic work, and are represented as 'caring' and 'nurturing', and men as those who should seek employment, hide their emotions and so on and so forth. These stereotypical assumptions are changing, since social constructs such as gender change over time and place (Lorber, 1994). They are, however, seemingly very ingrained globally when it comes to unpaid care work and gendered roles. If part of securing gender equality means redistributing some of the unpaid care work burden from women to men, any interventions, be they State, development agency or CSR-led, need to design programmes so as to bring men on board, as it is extremely difficult to affect any kind of gender equality change without the inclusion of men (ActionAid, 2013). Therefore, as the participatory research methods in my case study showed, sensitisation of women and men is needed in order for domestic roles to begin to change. The recognition, reduction and redistribution of unpaid care work (Elson, 2009) operates on multiple levels: globally, in international policy; nationally, in domestic policy; organisationally, in business and CSR policy, and finally, in the very homes where it matters most. These levels are interconnected, and home to a great number of diverse, but important, stakeholders. Again, the 'personal is political' is an old slogan that continues to resonate. For whilst women across the world continue to shoulder unpaid care work alone, with the attendant economic, social, political and environmental consequences, the sustainable development agenda will struggle to be fulfilled.

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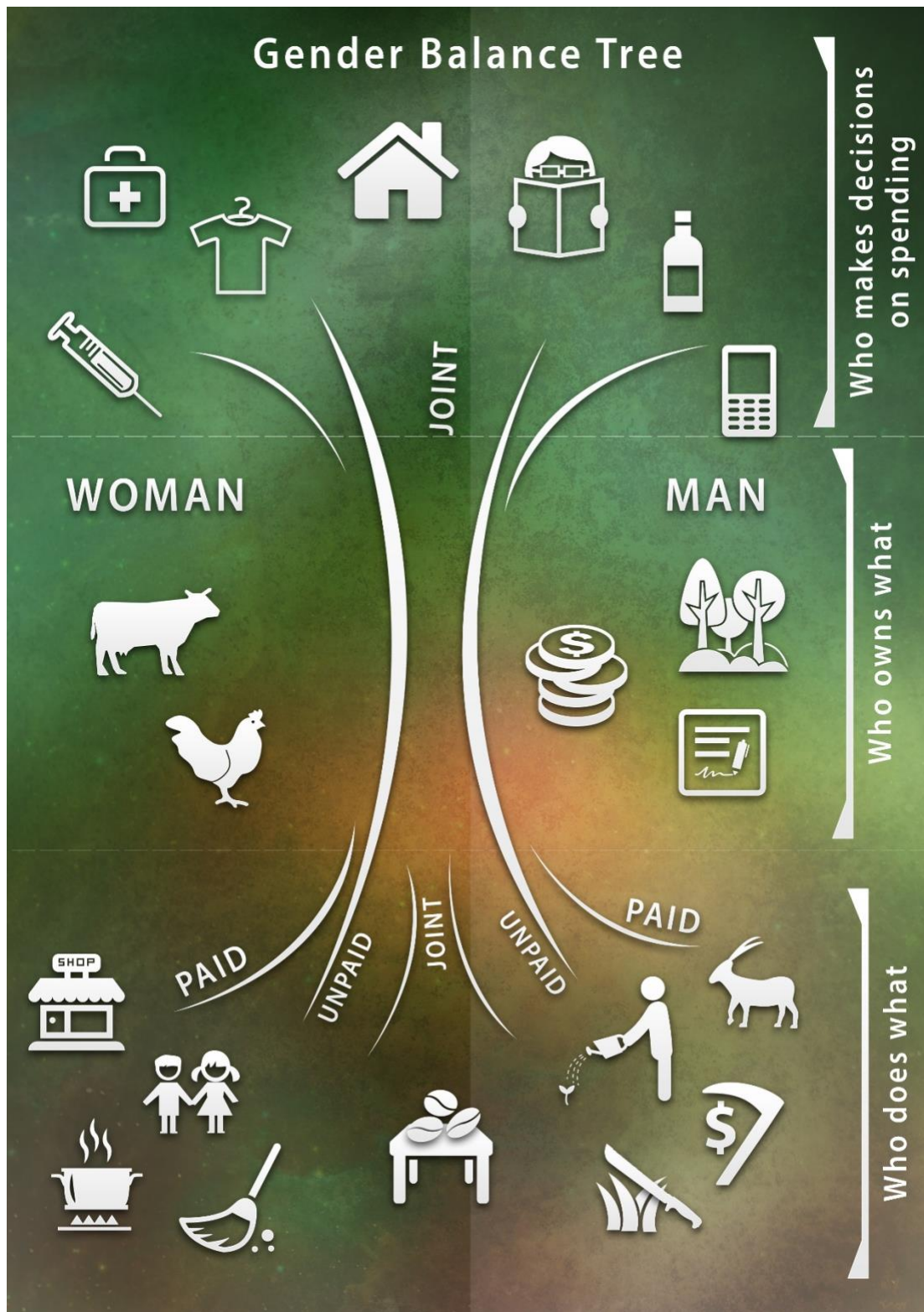
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Figure 1: Breakdown of the Gender Balance Tree Diagram.



Source: Author's Own, adapted from TWIN (2013) and Mayoux (2010).

Table 1: Mainstream CSR and Feminist Economic Approaches to Unpaid Care Work

	<b>Issue: Focus on the individual</b>	<b>Issue: The division between public and private life</b>	<b>Issue: ‘Rational’ behaviour</b>
<b>Mainstream ‘Malestream’ CSR</b>	Focuses on individuals as the unit of analysis e.g. stakeholders as workers, employees, customers (Carswell & De Neve, 2013).	Focuses almost exclusively on market activities, such as income, employment (i.e. codes of conduct applicable in the 9-5) (Pearson, 2014). Ignores workers’ care roles (Pearson, 2014).	Focuses on individual stakeholders acting in their own self-interest, usually in competition (De Neve, 2014). Draws on sentiment of ‘rational man’ (De Neve et al., 2008).
<b>Feminist Economics (informed by Schneider &amp; Shackelford, 1994).</b>	Explores economics through a household unit of analysis	Incorporates non-market activities (e.g. unpaid care work, reproduction) into economic analyses	Assumes human beings cooperate and care, as well as compete. Champions ‘unproductive’ work e.g. learning, leisure, as an element of human flourishing.
<b>Feminist-Informed Recommendations (Elson, 2009)</b>	<i>Redistribution</i> of unpaid care work from individual to collective tasks.  e.g. Care provided by the state; or shared between men and women.	<i>Recognition</i> of the role of women in the provision of unpaid care, as well as its social and economic value.  e.g. Measure and remunerate unpaid care work (e.g. The Body Shop- Butler & Hoskyns, 2014).	<i>Reduction</i> in the drudgery and time burden of unpaid care, especially for women living in poverty to allow them to flourish.  e.g. Incorporate women’s care responsibilities into plans and policies, offer help (e.g. Rio Tinto, 2009).

**Table 2: Data Collection Types and Amounts**

<b>Workshop</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Forms of Data Collected</b>	<b>Totals</b>
<b>1</b>	March 2013	Ashanti Region, Ghana	6 men 7 women	Household Drawings Gender Tree Diagrams Focus Group Discussions Observations	13 drawings 13 diagrams 1 hour 3.5 hours
<b>2</b>	March 2013	Ashanti Region, Ghana	4 men 6 women	Household Drawings Gender Tree Diagrams Focus Group Discussions Observations	10 drawings 10 diagrams 1 hour 3.5 hours
<b>3</b>	March 2013	Western Region, Ghana	6 men 6 women	Household Drawings Gender Tree Diagrams Focus Group Discussions Observations	12 drawings 12 diagrams 1 hour 3.5 hours
<b>4</b>	March 2013	Western Region, Ghana	6 men 7 women	Household Drawings Gender Tree Diagrams Focus Group Discussions Observations	13 drawings 13 diagrams 1 hour 3.5 hours
<b>5</b>	March 2016	Western Region, Ghana	19 men 13 women	Household Drawings Gender Tree Diagrams Focus Group Discussions Observations	32 drawings 27 diagrams 1 hour 3.5 hours
<b>6</b>	March 2016	Western Region, Ghana	14 men 11 women	Household Drawings Gender Tree Diagrams Focus Group Discussions Observations	25 drawings 23 diagrams 1 hour 3.5 hours
<b>7</b>	March 2016	Western Region, Ghana	11 men 11 women	Household Drawings Gender Tree Diagrams Focus Group Discussions Observations	22 drawings 22 diagrams 1 hour 3.5 hours
<b>8</b>	March 2016	Western Region, Ghana	13 men 12 women	Household Drawings Gender Tree Diagrams Focus Group Discussions Observations	25 drawings 25 diagrams 1 hour 3.5 hours
		<b>Totals:</b>	152 farmers (73 women; 79 men)		152 drawings 145 diagrams 8 hours discussion 28 hours observations

Table 3: Women’s, Men’s and Shared Work Tasks in the Ghanaian Cocoa Value Chain. Most time-consuming tasks are in bold (from 2013 study)

	Women	Men	Shared
Cocoa Work	<b>Fetching water, weeding,</b> planting, breaking pods, fermenting, drying.	Spraying pesticides/fertilisers, <b>clearing land,</b> selling cocoa, fermenting, breaking pods, drying.	Planting, <b>Weeding,</b> Breaking pods, drying, <b>harvesting.</b>
Other income generating work	Garden vegetable growing and selling (e.g. cassava, plantain and peppers); <b>Petty trading;</b> Livestock and fowl rearing; palm oil extraction; batik-making.	Rearing livestock; taxi-services; petty trading.	N/A.
Unpaid Work	<b>Cooking food, fetching water,</b> childcare, fetching firewood, <b>laundry,</b> sweeping,	N/A	Childcare, fetching water.