



Australian
Aid 

Beyond Income

The Pandora's box of agency and what it really means

Seeds of Change Conference
Canberra, April 2019



About MDF

Who are we

What do we do



- We work with businesses, associations and governments in Asia Pacific to help farmers and workers thrive.
- MDF is funded by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and implemented by Palladium in partnership with Swiss Contact.
- Women's Economic Empowerment is central to our work on the ground.

MDF's approach to WEE

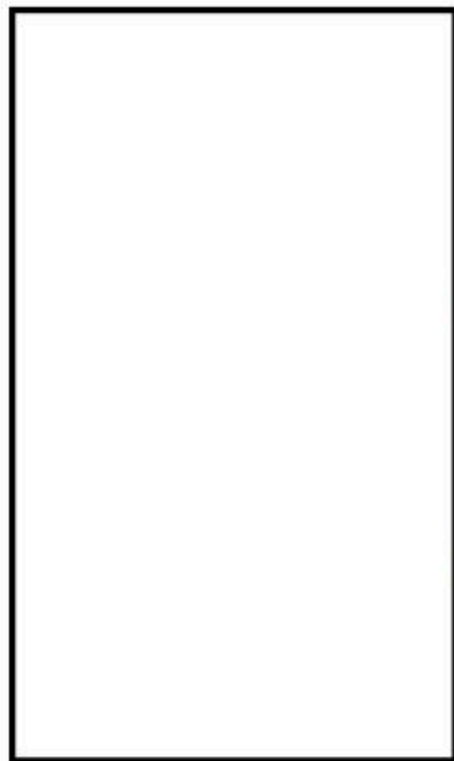
- Business Case
- Integration of implementation and Results Measurement
- MDF WEE framework
- WEE lens
- Feedback loop



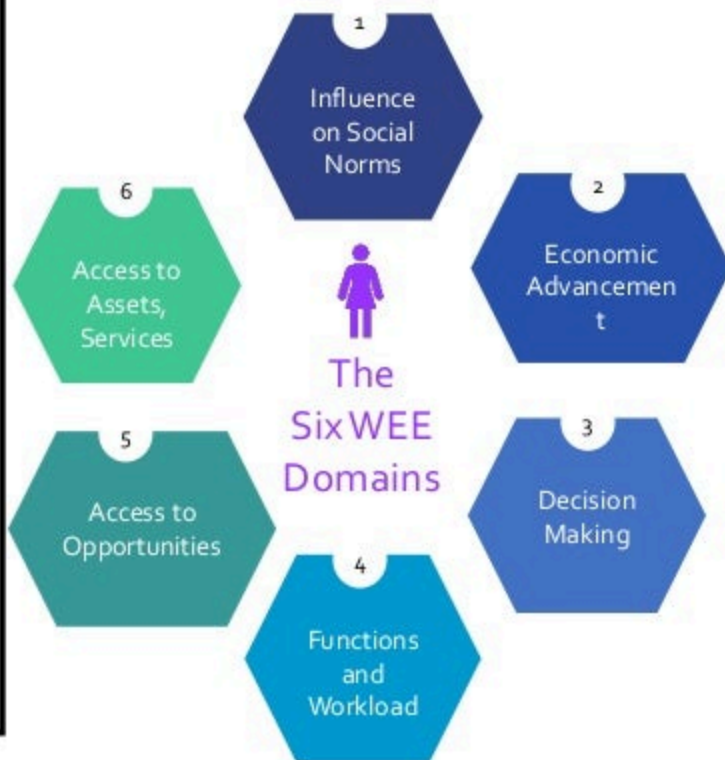
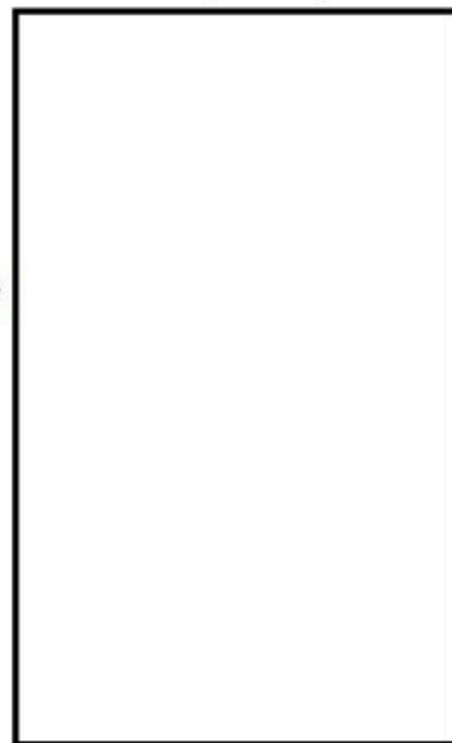
The six domains of WEE



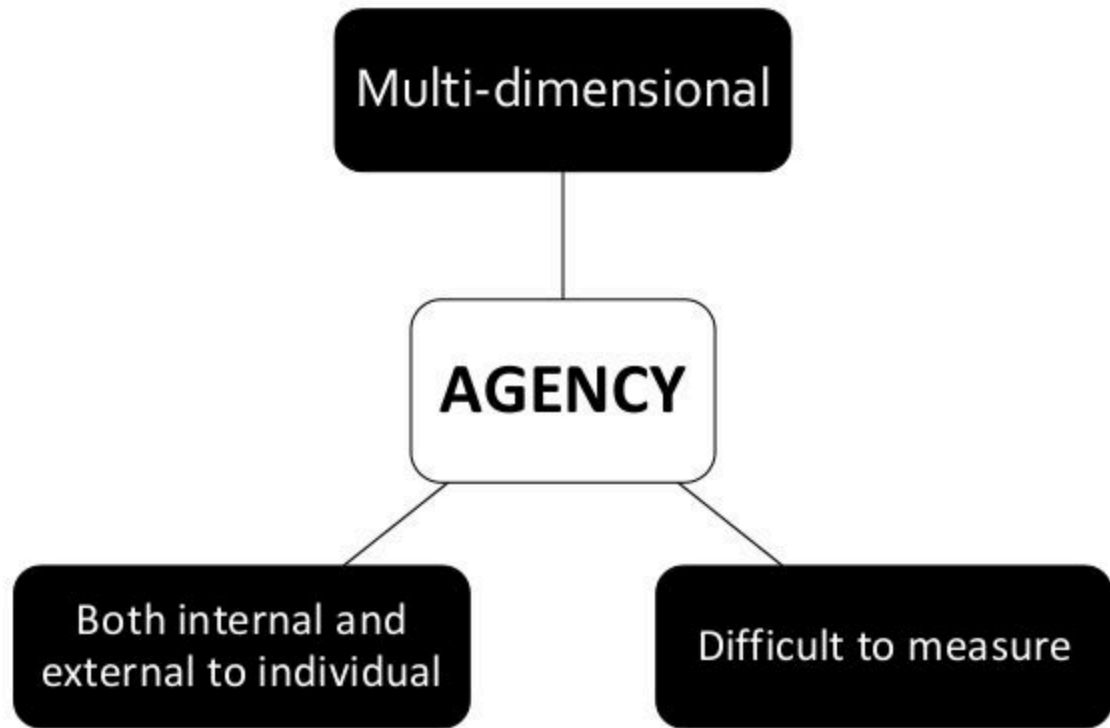
Access



Agency



Grappling with agency



Beyond Income: Introducing the Paper



Purpose

- How does increased household income impact WEE?
- How does access impact agency?
- How can these agency changes be measured?

Methodology

- Selection of interventions (5 countries, 14 interventions)
- Stocktake of previously available information
- Development of research plan & primary research (75 in-depth interviews)
- Analysis of data



Measuring Agency



When analysing the influence of household income on agency, three broad categories of inquiry emerged that were relevant:

01

- Whether a woman has the **ability and negotiation power to influence** decisions

02

- Whether there are **external factors limiting or enhancing** her agency

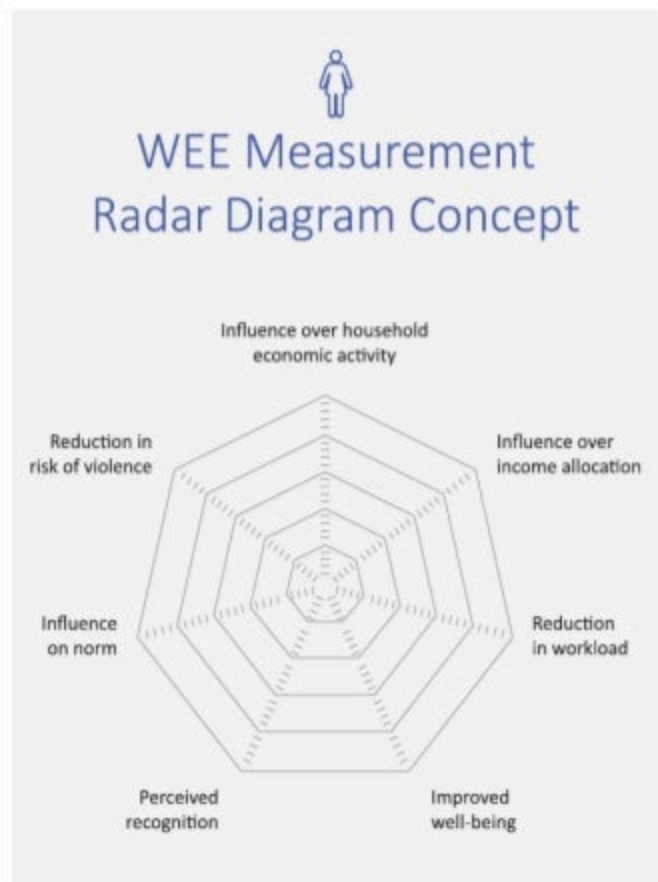
03

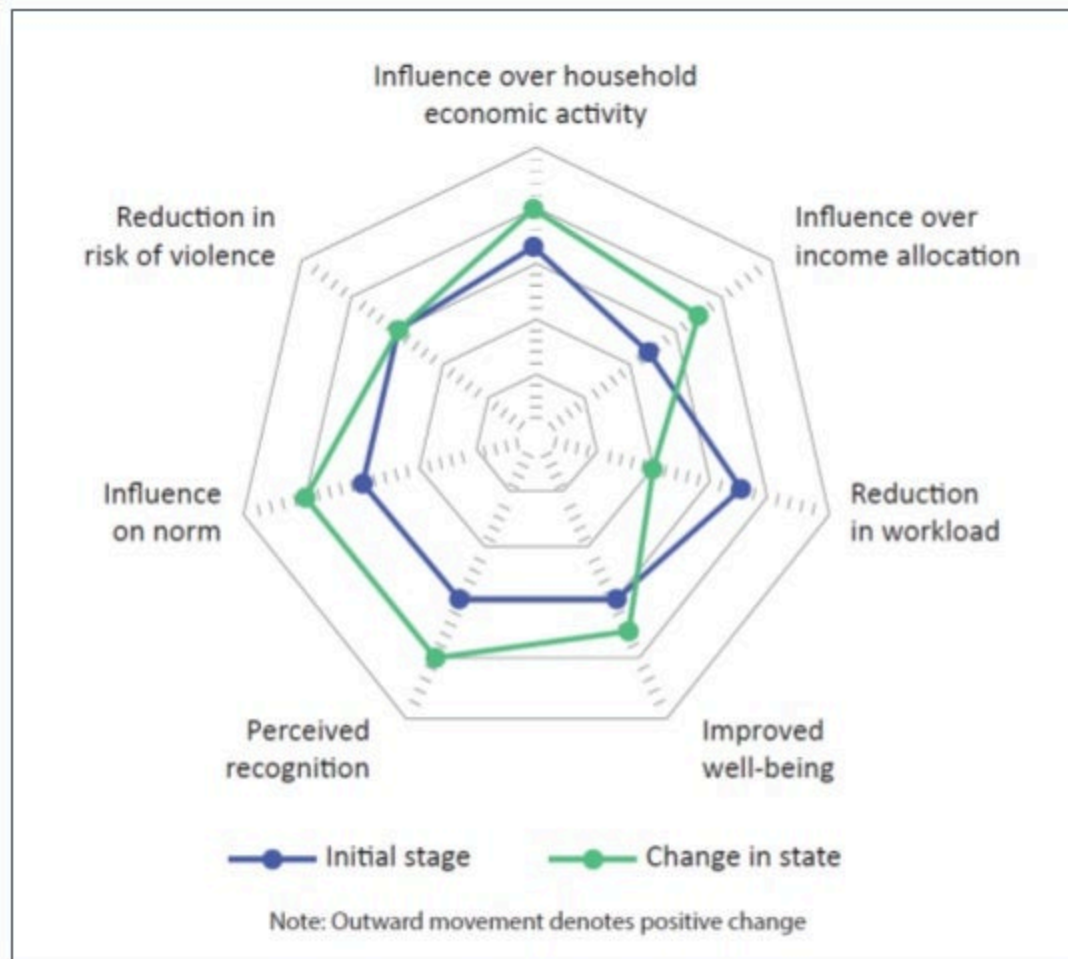
- Whether the change is **making a difference to her quality** of life.

Conceptual Tool & Framework



Capturing movement around women's agency through 7 dimensions





How Access Can Trigger Changes in Agency Dimensions



Australian
Aid 

Understanding the relationship between access to agency:

5 triggers were analysed across the different interventions to see how the movement of agency looked like

Access to
information

Access to goods
and services

Access to
opportunities

Access to
markets

Increased income (all
else remaining the
same)

Case Study: MDF Fiji



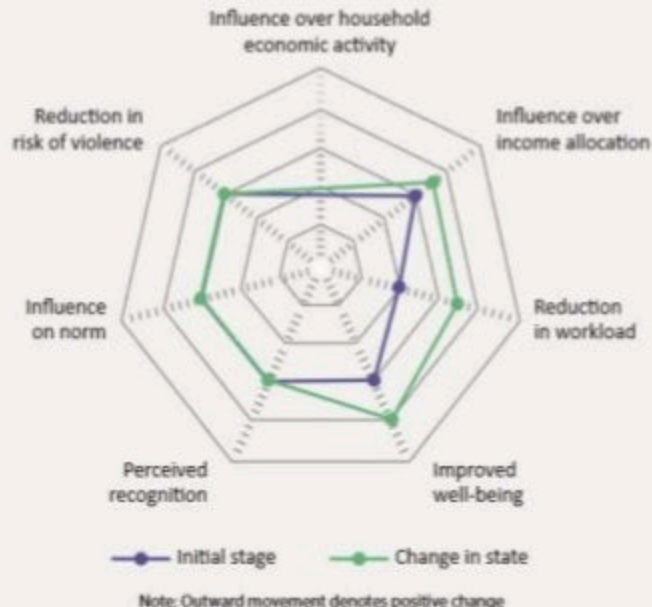
Access to goods and services

Sugarcane farming communities in Fiji:

- Key income-earning activity. Most households (HH) are involved in secondary economic activity.
- Women's contributions are less acknowledged (traditionally support roles)
- HH share financial decision making.

Partnership: C.J. Singh to introduce mechanical harvesting services

WEE changes in Fiji-based project led by MDF in partnership with Charan Jeeth Singh.



Changes:

Reduced workload and improved well-being for women

MDF Sri Lanka: Case Study



Change in HH income only, without other access triggers targeted at women

Fishing communities in Northern Sri Lanka

- Fishing is a key income-earning activity but most households involved in secondary economic activity
- Women have nominal roles in fishing
- Women have very high influence on decision-making for households

Partnership: Divron Bioventures



Changes:

Increased influence (income), improved well-being & recognition for women

Learnings



Thank you



Australian
Aid 



www.marketdevelopmentfacility.org



[@marketdevelopmentfacility](https://www.facebook.com/marketdevelopmentfacility)



[@MDFGlobal](https://twitter.com/MDFGlobal)



[@MDFGlobal](https://www.instagram.com/MDFGlobal)



[Market Development Facility](https://www.linkedin.com/company/Market-Development-Facility)

