

Leadership, Women and Literacy: Narratives from Women in Papua New Guinea.

Diana Mandui Mirio¹ and Donald Gumbis²

Abstract:

In the last 37 years since Papua New Guinea (PNG) became an independent state, there have been observable changes in the status of women. The apex is highlighted in the 2012 General Elections where three women were historically elected as parliamentary representatives for their respective electorates, but more so representing the PNG womenfolk through their successes. The authors thereby pose this question: How does literacy contribute to women's development in PNG in the 21st century? In attempting to answer this question, this paper discusses a number of issues. It begins first, with narratives of three PNG women groups in different settings and backgrounds. The discussion focuses on the challenges these women face and their views on leadership and literacy. One impediment for women is the high illiteracy level as statistics indicate and its impacts on them as a gendered group in the country's development. The narratives also tell their stories about their wishes to progress in a Melanesian setting without discrimination from society. Second, it addresses international and domestic policies and the country's education system as catalysts to prepare future women leaders. The section discusses key principles of PNG's Constitution, Liberalism, Millennium Development Goals, Feminism and human security among others. An important and perhaps pertinent issue in this discourse is that of women's representation in the different spheres. These issues are fundamental to human development and progress. Third, the article discusses the current social, political and economic challenges for PNG. The status of the nation in gender-sensitive issues such as gender violence, rape, health and HIV prevalence has drawn considerable domestic and international attention. The disparities experienced between the rural and urban womenfolk also shed light into the hardships they encounter. The paper concludes with key suggestions and strategies to address these issues.

Key words: gender, education, empowerment, leadership, literacy, policies, violence

Acknowledgements: We acknowledge the generous support of the following institutions and organisations: AusAID, Austraining, Alfred Deakin Research Institute @ Deakin University, Lowy Institute for International Policy, New Britain Palm Oil Limited and Leadership PNG Inc.

¹ Community Engagement and Development Officer, New Britain Palm Oil Limited, Kimbe, Papua New Guinea email: Diane.Mirio@nbpol.com.pg; dianemanduimirio@gmail.com

² Lecturer, University of Goroka, Papua New Guinea email: gumbisd@uog.ac.pg; gumbis13@yahoo.com

A: Introduction

As this Symposium is held here, all are reminded of the horrific death in February this year of a Papua New Guinean woman branded as a '*sanguma meri*'³. Kepari Leniata's brutal torture and public execution sparked domestic and worldwide condemnation on gender violence and calls for stiffer penalties.⁴ Further, Leniata's case exposes the country's superficial democratic and constitutional principles, observance of the rule of law, and tribal justice. It portrays the cultural connotations regarding women's disparity to men: being vulnerable, mediocre and subservient. *Contrastingly*, this paper narrates another side of the story: the increasing numbers of well-educated and learned Papua New Guinea women, their professional and leadership characters attest to greater participation as nation builders. These are attributed to education, literacy, accessibility and individual perseverance.

First, this paper expresses accounts of certain groups of women. One cluster had no formal education; the second had some level of education, and the third completed tertiary education and hold professional positions. Their perspectives on literacy and leadership illustrate their understanding of many issues affecting women. The high illiteracy rate for women as statistics indicate draws light to education and literacy.⁵ This has resulted in women's minimal contribution in the country's development.⁶ Their views also indicate key challenges and mitigations they deemed important.

Second, it discusses how international and domestic policies address women's education and literacy status. The hypothesis is that education is a catalyst for grooming future women leaders. Certain national and global policies such as Papua New Guinea Constitution's principles, Liberalism, Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Feminism and human security are also discussed. An important and perhaps pertinent issue in this discourse is that of women's different representative roles. These issues are fundamental to human

³ 'Sanguma meri' is Tok Pisin for sorceress or witch.

⁴ <http://www.postcourier.com.pg/20130207/thhome.htm> 'Burnt alive' February 7 2013
<http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/world/un-demands-end-to-witch-deaths-in-png-20130209-2e58k.html>
'UN demands end to 'witch' deaths in PNG'; <http://www.theglobalmail.org/feature/its-2013-and-theyre-burning-witches/558/> 'It's 2013 and they're burning witches'

⁵ <http://www.literacyportal.net/png/literacy-situation/> 'Literacy situation – this report cites the National Census (2000) statistics that around 43.8% of population is illiterate.

⁶ http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_2011_EN_Table4.pdf 'Gender Inequality Index and related indicators'

development and progress. Due to inaccessibility by most women in rural communities, illiteracy levels are greater there than in urban communities. However, there are special cases in resource provinces where community driven projects prove successful.

Third, the paper discusses a smorgasbord of social, political and economic challenges for Papua New Guinea. The nation's worrying status in issues such as gender violence, health and HIV prevalence has drawn considerable domestic and international responses. Disparities experienced between the rural and urban womenfolk also shed light into their hardship. The paper concludes by suggesting key strategies to address these issues.

B: Background

Papua New Guinea experienced considerable change in the last three and a half decades. Since Independence, these changes were political, social, infrastructural and economic. The last, economic, is the most robust today and predictably in the next two decades.⁷ Transnational investments in multiple extractive industries have resulted in substantial injection of foreign capital into the national economy. This has translated into the increase of 4 per cent gross domestic product (GDP) annually.⁸ The statistics below summarise the robustness of the country's position.⁹

<i>Recent economic indicators:</i>	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011 (a)	2012 (b)
GDP (US\$bn) (current prices):	6.3	8.0	8.1	9.9	12.7	15.4
GDP PPP (Int'l \$bn) (c):	11.9	13.0	13.9	15.2	16.9	18.5
GDP per capita (US\$):	1,047	1,291	1,279	1,521	1,900	2,255
Real GDP growth (% change yoy)	7.2	6.6	6.1	7.6	8.9	7.7

- *Source: Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (2012).*

Since 2007, Papua New Guinea's GDP more than doubled, its cumulative foreign reserves enhanced its position to purchase essential commodities and its *per capita* doubled remarkably. These are the upsides of the country statistically.

However, the downsides are evidenced in national decline of the many sectors responsible for progress. Health, education and infrastructure have deteriorated to conditions where

⁷ Papua New Guinea Strategy, <http://www.adb.org/countries/papua-new-guinea/economy> 'Papua New Guinea Economy'; <http://www.pngbuai.com/300socialsciences/379x-Literacy-Programs/CRITLIT1.pdf> 'Critical and development Literacy'

⁸ <http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/fs/png.pdf> 'PNG Factsheet' accessed 15.03.13

⁹ <http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/fs/png.pdf> 'Papua New Guinea Fact Sheet' accessed 15.03.13

rural dwellers experience glaring disparities. Ironically, urban infrastructures are in comparable deprived conditions. Furthermore, the exacerbating poverty, high levels of armed crime and sporadic social unrest has a disproportionate impact on women in large parts of the country, particularly in urban and peri-urban areas. Reports indicate an increasing trend that women's economic survival is dependent on exchanging sex for money, goods or favours, either through informal transactional sex or regular sex work.¹⁰ This is alarming within the context of HIV/AIDS. Just over a decade ago, PNG ranked fourth in the Asia-Pacific region having reached a generalised epidemic. Since 2005, more infections have been recorded among women and girls than among men.¹¹ The above present the background scenarios in Papua New Guinea.

The picture however, does not look as bad as it may seem. Papua New Guinea has very committed development partners who have invested substantially in developmental programs. There are investments in school institutions; road, bridge and wharf projects; health and hygiene; literacy programs¹²; law and justice; and in human capacity building and training.¹³ These are marks of confidence by international partners.

C: Contextualizing Papua New Guinean women's scenario:

Generally, ethnic and cultural diversity in Papua New Guinea limits the reports of women's changing roles and development issues. Reports of disparities, violence, and social atrocities against women are generally present in large parts of Papua New Guinea. One past report established that two out of three women experience gender violence as a national

¹⁰ <http://www.undp.org.pg/UNDP-PNG.php> 'Papua New Guinea National HIV/AIDS Support Project 2005' accessed 15.03.13;

¹¹ National AIDS Council of Papua New Guinea 2006a

¹² <http://www.jica.go.jp/png/english/activities/01.html> 'The Project for the Urgent Rehabilitation for the Markham Bridge'; <http://www.usaid.gov.au/HotTopics/Pages/Display.aspx?QID=841> 'Changing lives through literacy' accessed 13.03.13

¹³ http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/png/png_brief.html 'Papua New Guinea Country Brief'; <http://www.usaid.gov.au/countries/pacific/partnership/Pages/png.aspx> 'Papua New Guinea-Australia Partnership for Development'; http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDS/IB/2013/02/27/000333037_20130227115054/Rendered/PDF/755800WP0PNGOC00Box374338B00PUBLIC0.pdf 'Papua New Guinea Country Gender Assessment 2011-2012.' The information above portrays the involvement of the international community, international and multilateral organisations in pursuing improvements in PNG conditions by the activities they are involved in. accessed 13.03.13

average.¹⁴ A 2006 report on provincial household surveys for the National Capital District (NCD) and Southern Highlands Province (SHP) indicates 18 per cent and 26 per cent of females experience gender violence at home respectively.¹⁵ Furthermore, a report two decades ago suggests that 50 per cent of women have experienced forced sex and rape.¹⁶

It will be amiss not to include police reports of gender and sexual violence. According to a provincial police crime report register, sexual violence and rape of women contain alarming monthly statistics. The register report from 2011 to 2012 contains 41 sexual penetrations, 29 rapes, and 2 pack rape cases among other crimes.¹⁷ These are reported cases from *one* police station on gender and sexual violence. Presumably, if the aggregate figure from all police stations is compiled, the national indicator would be higher and this paints a bleak picture for the country. Police, media reports and many independent researches call attention to the severity of gender violence and inform policy makers of the issue.

Meanwhile, certain domestic and international initiatives communicate different narratives of mitigations and proactive methods to reduce violence. The AusAID model of promoting gender equality and eliminating violence is one.¹⁸ The Yumi Lukautim Mosbi and Meri Seif Ples initiatives are locally driven with backing from multiple stakeholders. These initiatives shelter many vulnerable women who experience family and sexual violence in urban settings.¹⁹ Other similar women-safe community centres and initiatives have been established as well. As a case in point, this paper showcases NBPOL as a non-state actor participating and promoting of mitigation against gender- based violence and harassment at the company's operational sites and the communities.

¹⁴ PNG Law Reform Commission, 'Final Report on Domestic Violence' Boroko: PNG Law Reform Commission. 1992 Report No. 14

¹⁵ Richard Eves, 'Masculinity matters: Men, gender-based violence and the Aids epidemic in Papua New Guinea' 2011. http://www.engagingmen.net/files/resources/2011/REves/Eves_Masculinity_Matters_2010.pdf This Report was done by Haley and Muggah (2006) but compiled in the Report by R. Eves. accessed 15.03.13

¹⁶ National Sex and Research Reproductive Team, 'United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Gender Equality: Ending Widespread Violence Against Women' 1994, <http://unfpa.org/gender/violence.htm> accessed 21.03.13

¹⁷ Kimbe Police Station Code 037 Crime Reports Register 2011-2012.

¹⁸ AusAID, 'Promoting gender equality and the elimination of gender-based violence' <http://www.aisaid.gov.au/countries/pacific/png/Pages/initiative-promoting-gender-equality.aspx>; AusAID, 'A Safe Place: AusAID's support to end violence against women' January 2013

<http://www.aisaid.gov.au/aidissues/gender/Documents/a-safe-place.pdf> accessed 21.03.13

<http://www.aisaid.gov.au/aidissues/gender/Documents/a-safe-place.pdf> accessed

¹⁹ <http://www.yumilukautimmosbi.org.pg/msp> 'YLM Meri seif ples' accessed 15.03.13;

<http://www.digicelpng.com/en/about/news/alotau-joins-meri-seif-ples> accessed 15.03.13

As a precursor, this paper begins by illustrating torture and murder of women [suspected of sorcery] as one distinctive feature of gender violence in Papua New Guinea.²⁰ When comparing with other parts of the world, women in Papua New Guinea are disadvantaged in many ways. Economic deprivation due to lack of land rights in a mostly patrilineal cultural setting and little independent access to cash income entrap women thus transferring their economic survivability to men. These reinforce expectations of male dominance and control, centered on customary practices such as ‘bride-price’ and polygamy. The 2011 United Nations Development Programme’s (UNDP) gender-related development index report ranks Papua New Guinea 140 out of 187 countries.²¹ This statistic is alarming for a country with abundant natural resources. The table below outlines this scenario.

Indicators	Papua New Guinea
HDI Rank	153/187
Gender Inequality Index (Rank 2011)	140/187
Gender Inequality Index (Value 2011)	0.674
Maternal Mortality Ratio (2008)	250
Adolescent Fertility Rate (% 2011)	66.9
Seats in National Parliament (% female)	(0.9-2007 : 2.7-2012)
Population with at least secondary education (female % 25 yrs+)	12.4 (2010)
Population with at least secondary education (male % 25 yrs+)	24.4 (2010)
Labour force participation ratio (% female)	71.6
Labour force participation ratio (% male)	74.2
Contraceptive prevalence rate (any method % married women (15-49 yrs)	32.0
At least one antenatal visit (2005 – 2009 %)	79.0
Births attended by skilled health personnel (2005 – 2009 %)	53.0
Total fertility (2011)	3.8

Source: United Nations Development Program (2011), *Gender Inequality Index and related indicators*.

The high level of domestic and sexual violence in Papua New Guinea contributes to the rapid spread of the epidemic. On women’s political participation, Papua New Guinea has only 2.7 per cent of female representatives. Only six women have ever been elected to Papua New Guinea’s national parliament in the 37 years. At the provincial, district and ward levels, the picture is dismal. A National Research Institute (NRI) report expresses that there is a great need for women’s empowerment in the decision making process and expressed electoral

²⁰ Jo Chandler, ‘It’s 2013 and they’re burning witches’ Global Mail, February 15 2013

<http://www.theglobalmail.org/feature/its-2013-and-theyre-burning-witches/558/> accessed 15.03.13

²¹ http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_2011_EN_Table4.pdf ‘Gender Inequality Index and related indicators’ accessed 12.03.13; ‘Social Institutions and Gender Index, Papua New Guinea 2012’

<http://genderindex.org/country/papua-new-guinea> accessed 26.03.13

options for women representation at the local, provincial and national levels.²² Despite women's population composition being almost similar to men, there is little support for women political representation by the government. The national machinery for women (National Council of Women) and the Gender Division of the Department for Community Development (DCD) have opined strong advocacy for women's rights, and the level of awareness on human rights are gaining domestic and international recognition. Although Papua New Guinea ratified and acceded to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1995, it has yet to submit its first country report.²³ However, there are many success stories of women who have excelled in attaining responsible positions. The next section looks at the success stories and progress women have made.

D: Success stories

To begin the historical narrative of the successes of Papua New Guinean women, the pre-independence era is the time to begin. Forty-one years ago, political history was made when Dame Josephine Abaijah was elected to the then House of Assembly representing Milne Bay Province in 1972. In today's equivalence, she would be a provincial governor. She was the national female representative, was re-elected in 1977 alongside another first-timer – Mrs. Nahau Rooney. Mrs. Rooney too was later reelected in 1982. Dame Josephine expressed:

"I maintain that I will not give money to somebody to vote for me. So I think that's one big reason. The men can get money, the men can bribe. We are finding it very difficult for women to go around bribing people. I think this is where [why] the country is going nowhere because here there is a lot of bribes, there is a lot of corruption, something that women don't want in this country."²⁴

²²Ray Anere, 'Options for increasing women's representation at the national and local-level governments: The need for a comprehensive analysis' Spotlight with NRI, Development Issues, Policies and Trends, The National Research Institute, 2009 Vol. 3 No. 3

<http://www.nri.org.pg/publications/spotlight/Volume%203/Spotlight%20Vol.%203%20No.%203.pdf>

²³PeaceWomen, 'Papua New Guinea: Papua New Guinea apologises for CEDAW record' August 2 2010, http://www.peacewomen.org/news_article.php?id=1408&type=news accessed 26.03.13

²⁴Helen Vastikopoulos, 'Papua New Guinea: Under the spell' *Pacific Journalism Review* 1995 Vol. 2 No. 1 <http://www.asiapac.org.fj/PJR/issues/back95/95sbs.html> accessed 11.02.13

Her words have now taken a new meaning in Papua New Guinea where publicly coordinated campaigns against corruption are annually organised events.²⁵ Another astute and prominent MP, Dame Carol Kidu commendably served with distinction for three-terms from 1997 to 2012. These women's leadership roles as parliamentarians present them with the distinct challenges in a predominantly patrilineal society.

The 2012 National General Elections was historical for women. Of a total of 3435 candidates registered, 135 females (3.93 per cent) contested and only *three* (0.08 per cent) were elected as parliamentary representatives.²⁶ It was history for Papua New Guinea too, as one of the three automatically qualified as Governor of Eastern Highlands Province - a constituency of more than two hundred thousand people. The second was elected as Lae Open member - the largest industrial city in Papua New Guinea with a population close to one hundred thousand. The third was elected as member for Sohe Open with a population fewer than fifty thousand.²⁷ The acting Australian High Commissioner to Papua New Guinea – Margaret Adamson remarked on the three women's election success, *"Each of their election victories is a remarkable feat in a country that has traditionally has some of the lowest rates of political representation in the world."*²⁸ That is 2.7 per cent of Papua New Guinea's current parliamentarians. Globally, Papua New Guinea ranks amongst the lowest at 136 out of 144 countries for women's representation in parliament in 2011.²⁹

All *three* women have something in common. These *three* women served their country in different capacities prior to ascendancy to current political responsibilities. All *three* women have interacted with individuals, families and communities in their previous lines of duty.

²⁵ <http://www.transparencypng.org.pg/> 'The coalition against corruption' accessed 15.03.13
<http://www.transparencypng.org.pg/index.php/coalitions/community-coalition-against-corruption> accessed 15.03.13

²⁶ http://www.pngec.gov.pg/pngec/nomination_close_2012.pdf 'Media Statement: Record number of female and male candidates nominated to contest 2012 National General Elections' accessed 11.03.13

<http://www.pngec.gov.pg/declared.html> 'Election results summary' accessed 11.03.13

<http://www.ausaid.gov.au/HotTopics/Pages/Display.aspx?QID=757> 'A third woman is elected for the 2012 PNG elections' accessed 11.03.13;

²⁷ <http://www.pngec.gov.pg/declared.html> 'Electoral Commission of Papua New Guinea – 2012 General Elections Results'; http://www.pngec.gov.pg/pngec/Return_of_Writs_Election_2012.pdf

<http://www.pngperspective.com/news/two-women-get-elected-into-male-dominated-png-parliament/> 'Two women get elected into male-dominated PNG parliament' accessed 11.03.13

²⁸ <http://www.thenational.com.pg/?q=node/46610> 'The National-Envoy: Women rise' accessed 12.03.13

²⁹ AusAID, 'Papua New Guinea Annual Program Performance Report' June 2012, p.2

<http://www.ausaid.gov.au/countries/pacific/png/Documents/png-appr-2011.pdf> accessed 21.03.13

Today, these *three* women are stalwarts: resolute, spirited and responsible for larger constituencies and greater challenges. The numerical *three* is repeated frequently to spotlight the breakthrough in a predominantly male arena – the National Parliament of Papua New Guinea. Osmar White’s book *Parliament of a Thousand Tribe*³⁰ undoubtedly captures what the three women MPs are: proxies for diversely fragmented societies unified collectively under the Westminster arrangement.

More so is the fact that in only 37 years, Papua New Guinea underwent sweeping political reforms. The portrayal of the Papua New Guinean women politicians does not end here. There are other encouraging and successful stories. There are women lawyers (one recently graduated with a law doctorate), diplomats (a female judge was recently appointed as High Commissioner to Solomon islands), CEOs, departmental heads, professors (one an Executive Dean at a university), nurses, medical doctors, academics, pilots, technocrats, bureaucrats, disciplinary officers (one a captain in the army), teachers, engineers, bank managers (one recently promoted and heads a Highlands branch) carpenters and mechanics too. Their experiences provide the opportunity to understand challenges women encounter through education, literacy and leadership.

UNICEF reports that basic education account just a little over 52 per cent of enrollment rate.³¹ This reflects the low enrollment in school at the correct age. Students in elementary and primary schools amount to only 298 223 in 2009. This is an increase of 31 per cent from 2006. One UNICEF program that promotes girls education, ‘Accelerated Girls Education’ aims at informing the community on the importance of enrolling girls in school. UNICEF reports that, nine months after the program’s launch in March 2004, 1180 girls returned back to school in six provinces.³² The number has increased due to many stakeholders inputs and is a success story for girls.

³⁰Osmar White, *Parliament of a Thousand Tribes: Papua New Guinea: The Story of an Emerging Nation*. Clayton: Victoria, Wren Publishing, 1972.

³¹ UNICEF, ‘Papua New Guinea Education’ http://www.unicef.org/png/activities_4369.html accessed 26.03.13

³² UNICEF, ‘At a glance - Papua New Guinea: Papua New Guinea aims to accelerate girls education’ http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/papuang_25037.html accessed 26.03.13

E: Narratives from three clusters of Papua New Guinean women

The narratives encompass responses obtained from questionnaires administered to 13 women in 3 clusters. These women originate from different parts of Papua New Guinea. Clusters one and two comprise of four women respectively and cluster three comprises of five. The responses from the three clusters describe the women's perception of education, literary and leadership. These reflect the challenges, understanding of policies and perceptions of advancements that policymakers should initiate to improve women's livelihood.

Women in *cluster one* are unschooled but indicated profound understanding of challenges women face. They expressed sentiments of never having the schooling opportunities but regard education highly. Here are some of their views (English translation).

"In my time, I did not go to school, but now ...education is good. I'm old now but I wish I could go to school. I know our women in isolated areas are concerned too because of inaccessibility but they can't do much. Like me, they will only wish (that they could go to school)". Hedwig

"We never knew about education in the past. When I heard about education, my father discouraged me. He said women who went to school wore short skirts. Now I can say that education is important". Betty

"Women going to school is good". Balbina

"Education is good. If girls/women can go to school, they will learn a lot of things that will assist them in their daily lives". Marytress

These views provide some key indications. One is that education should be universally accessible to all. The Papua New Guinea Constitution's Preamble expresses what these women think: *Integral Human Development and Equality and Participation*.³³ These are fundamental universal principles for Papua New Guinea but are sadly unattainable after 37 years of self-rule. Further, MDG 2 – *Achieve Universal Primary Education* and MDG 3 *Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women*³⁴ are reflected also in these statements by

³³ Government of Papua New Guinea, 'Constitution of the Independent State of Papua New Guinea. Papua New Guinea Consolidated Legislation Preamble' 1975, p.2

³⁴ <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/mdgoverview.html> 'The Millennium Development Goals – 8 Goals for 2015'

these women. Despite their lack of formal education, their view of girls' education is significantly high.

One challenge these women face is caring for their families. Being uneducated, their sources of income include selling betel-nuts, doughnuts and sewn '*meri blouse*'. Their understanding of financial literacy is low but they indicate careful management of monies from their informal sales well. These monies are budgeted for food, children's daily school allowances and keeping surplus for the rainy days. They view the provision of government services and infrastructures such as schools, hospitals, water supply and transport modes as essential to improve community livelihoods. They are very supportive of girls' education and indicate that when more girls attend school, their economic, social and political positions improve.

On Leadership, the women express their perspectives that they are domestic managers responsible for their households, families and finances. They premised that women managers perform responsibilities equally with men but also highlight that males demonstrate many traits that amount to diminutive work ethical standards. On laws and policies that protect women, they indicate knowledge of these as multimedia disseminates and they hear from people.

Views regarding national policies on women education are interesting to note. The women strongly stressed *legalizing* compulsory and *subsidised* education for all. Prime Minister Peter O'Neill's continued free education policy commitment is a positive step in that direction. O'Neill's government recently deposited PGK238 million as the first tranche of PGK652 million for 2013 in school accounts.³⁵

Women in *Cluster two* (three self-employed mothers, one office assistant) have some level of education and indicate understanding the challenges women face. Their perception of women empowerment is based on their marketing skills. Despite lack of higher education opportunities, these women sustain their livelihoods economically through informal sales

³⁵ Post Courier, 'Government releases K238 million for subsidies' January 30 2013
<http://www.postcourier.com.pg/20130130/news02.htm> accessed 11.03.13

[food, betel-nut, sewn clothes and fabrics, and tobacco brands]. They view women's education and construction of schooling infrastructures highly. Interestingly, other priorities these women expressed are access to social and humanitarian services. Some of their responses (English Translation) include:

"I don't support the belief that women should marry and raise children. We women have knowledge....Government should build schools for sewing, cooking, weaving and small businesses, establish markets....Government should subsidise the transport cost" – Philomina

"Water is one challenge, when it rains the water is dirty and our men in the village underestimate women" – Sophie

"It's not fair that men only get educated, women also have their needs, so it's better they get educated. Both gender should be educated" - Anna

"Government should assist in providing resources for schools such as library and computers for students, clinics in the communities....transportation of women to health centers." - Maria

These women strongly oppose the myth that women should only marry and rear children. They collectively proposed in their responses that women should receive decent education, contribute to the formal/informal labour employment and provide support for their families. Current research trends illustrate girls' enrollments to boys in primary schools are gradually equalizing but lag behind in higher education.³⁶ A media report indicate that research on girls' access and participation in education shows that best practices have supported and enhanced girls' education in Papua New Guinea. It notes key practices such as parental support, community attitude and security among others.³⁷ The responses from the cluster above strongly support girls' education.

³⁶ Papua New Guinea National Policy for Women and Gender Equality 2011 – 2015

³⁷ Post Courier, 'Extra activities will help girls' – Focus 16 May 2008

<http://www.postcourier.com.pg/20080516/focus.htm>

Cluster *Three* consist of five highly education and qualified women. These women are decision-makers in their various professions and lead others in effecting change and progress. A key message that resonates from this group is that when women’s education level and status increase, their livelihoods and contributions to the national development agenda become more pronounced. This is what each wrote:

“...government must put up incentives to schools that enrol most girls...get extra funding or provide special scholarship/incentives for girls to complete their education...” Sila

“Decrease schools fees and build more education facilities for women who missed out on formal education.” Maxwelline

“The government to enact that all girls who reach the schooling age should go to school until they complete their formal education.” Lillian

“Legal[ise] reforms to make it compulsory to have all girls above the age of 10 years to be in school, regulate early marriage, increase penalty on cases relating to violence against women.” Sathishar

“Empower churches and NGOs to facilitate literacy classes and this means providing the necessary resources to enable them to effectively function.” Jennie

The World Bank reports that, “Gender equality and women empowerment are important for improving reproductive health. Higher levels of women’s autonomy, education, wages, and labor market participation are associated with improved reproductive health outcomes”.³⁸ These perspectives impinge on gender health. The relationship between health and education in Papua New Guinea is significant and should not be given second class treatment as is the case. Interestingly, the report also notes that female literacy rates for 15 years or older is 56 percent and most of the adult females engage in agricultural labour. The more educated females are, the more they will participate in tangible economic activities.

³⁸ <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPRH/Resources/376374-1303736328719/PNGhealth42211web.pdf>
‘Reproductive health at a glance – Papua New Guinea’ p.1 accessed 18.03.13

Cluster three's views on education evidently highlight that gender education is lacking and many women fail to benefit due to miss-opportunities. Limitations, inaccessibility and cultural obligations add to current statistics. This cluster further expressed that more women will participate and contribute to nation building through compulsory education.

The Papua New Guinea National Policy for Women and Gender Equality 2011-2015 expressed succinctly that gender equality amounts to equal value sharing between the roles of women and men. It defines three distinctive aspects: *equal opportunities*, *equal treatment* and *equal entitlements*.³⁹ The Report note a *narrowing gap* in the primary school level but observes a *persistent gap* in the enrolment of boys to girls in the secondary, tertiary and training institutions. These indications are favorable for girls in lower education but disappointing for the higher education institutions. There is urgency for government investment in female education as the professional women cluster responses expressed.

The reflections above focus on key international and domestic policies. Compulsory education is the way forward for girls. The views encapsulate MDG 3 – '*Gender equality and empowering women* and the constitutional preambles of *Integral Human Development and Equality and Participation*. The provision of schools facilities, subsidy and incentives are crucial concerns. However, past experiences have shown that not all these are successful because of poor management and delivery practices.

In 2003 the Papua New Guinea Education Department developed a Gender Equity in Education Policy and a strategy paper to implement this policy. The framework of principles and practices aim to improve the lives of all children and promotes gender equality between girls and boys. The policy intends to improve the status of women and to contribute to raising the quality of the labour force.⁴⁰ The basic premise to increase the number of female access to education has been supported by international partners such as AusAID, European Union, JICA, NZAID, UNICEF, UNDP and the World Bank in building sound education facilities

³⁹ Papua New Guinea National Policy for Women and Gender Equality 2011 - 2015

⁴⁰ http://www.globalpartnership.org/media/library/Country_Documents/Papua-New-Guinea/Universal_Basic_Education_Plan-2010-19_Papua-New-Guinea.pdf 'Universal Basic Education Plan – 2010 – 2019' 2009 p.21

for women, enabling those with greater intellect to access domestic and international education and training facilities,

F: Application of Policies

This year marks the twelfth year of MDGs existence. Papua New Guinea agreed on the MDG principles and since then produced its inaugural Millennium Report in 2004 and concluded that the country has made little progress.⁴¹ National targets were developed and aligned with the MDGs. Furthermore, these targets were then ‘tailored’ into the Medium Term Development Strategy (MTDS) 2005-2010. The report concludes that the MDGs were not achieved. The relevance of MDG 3 *Promote Gender Equality and Empowering Women* is significant to note. Gender disparities in education and literacy are not as great as often assumed.

However, PNG’s gender culture places women in a disadvantaged position. In particular gender-based violence is widespread and this is one factor that drives the HIV and AIDS epidemic. This poses an enormous threat for future development and must be considered as a cross-cutting challenge for the achievement of all MDGs. Moreover, PNG’s high level of maternal mortality is another clear indication of lack of empowerment of women’s health status.⁴² The challenge for MDGs 3 and 6 therefore are critical in improving women’s status in education and health. But this is unachievable because Papua New Guinea’s MDG story is a disappointing one.

Another key policy platform for Papua New Guinea is **Vision 2050 (PNGV50)**.⁴³ PNGV50 is the country’s National Strategic Plan which maps out Papua New Guinea’s progress for the next four decades. It incorporates and utilises a number of universal indicators such as Human Development Index (HDI), GDP, population and poverty indices as assessing instruments. By increasing literacy levels, building infrastructures, reducing poverty, diseases and inaccessibility it is possible to achieve this vision. Further, PNGV50 has *critical*

⁴¹ http://www.undp.org.pg/docs/publications/EXECUTIVE_SUMMARY_MDG_report.pdf ‘Second National MDG Progress Summary Report 2009 – pdf’ p.1

⁴² *ibid* p.2

⁴³ http://www.treasury.gov.pg/html/publications/files/pub_files/2011/2011.png.vision.2050.pdf accessed 24.03.13

enablers of which one focuses on ‘effective leadership and good governance’ and another on ‘healthy, educated and skilled citizens’. These enablers are reflected in this paper’s discussion. The focus on women’s leadership and responsibilities are critical for nation building. The paper discusses substantially on it through the women’s narratives.

One of the *key pillars* ‘human capital development, gender, youth and people empowerment’ is absorbed in the many national departments’ guidelines and policy frameworks. The paper expresses discussions on this pillar as fundamental to Papua New Guinea’s progress. The nation has aligned its many national policies to international policies and receives substantial international assistance to improving its domestic conditions.

The quest for higher education is contained in the numerous policies and plans. The National Education Plan (NEP) 2005-2014 is one which will shortly outlive its duration. The Plan aims to provide basic education for students from Elementary to Grade Eight with maximum retention rates of both girls and boys. Its basic principle is derived from the constitutional preambles of ‘Integral Human Development’ and ‘Equality and Participation’ calling for ‘education to be based in mutual respect...promote awareness of human potential and motivation to achieve our national goals through self-reliant efforts’.⁴⁴ This is what the government aspires to achieve nationally.

However, the above is not restricted to education provided by government alone. There are private providers as well. The case of Institute of Business Studies (IBS) illustrates the commitment of private education providers in specialised fields. The National Newspaper reports that IBS has significantly contributed to training educated citizens, contributed to policy implementation such as fulfilling the PNGV2050, MDGs and NEP collectively. The IBS graduates now work in both public and private sectors and contributing immensely to PNG’s economic development.⁴⁵ Gender equality in education has received international backing

⁴⁴ Department of Education, ‘National Education Plan 2005 -2014 Achieving a better future’ 2004

⁴⁵ Dennis Orere, ‘The Quest for Higher Education’ The National, November 23 2012.

<http://www.thenational.com.pg/?q=node/41673> accessed 25.03.13

as well. The Gender Equity in Education Strategic Plan 2009-2014⁴⁶ and the Gender Equity in Education Policy (2009)⁴⁷ promote equitable education. Their underlying principles entail promoting equal education opportunities for girls and women alongside boys and men. The Papua New Guinean education system has roles and responsibilities to 'contribute to a socially just society'.⁴⁸ International support and assistance are linked through such national policies. Another case of policy implementation is demonstrated by New Britain Palm Oil Limited (NBPOL) and is discussed below.

The case of New Britain Palm Oil Limited (NBPOL) - West New Britain

The following discussion showcases NBPOL's compliance and implementation of international and domestic policies. It is a company that has all its operations certified under the Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil Principles and Criteria.⁴⁹ Thus, NBPOL as a non-state actor adheres to promoting MDGs 3, 6 and 8. NBPOL has in place different policies such as: Sexual Harassment Policy, HIV/AIDS Policy, Human Rights Policy, Employee Rights and Equal Opportunities Policy and Grievance Procedures for Stakeholders Issues.

The **Sexual Harassment Policy (Reviewed 2012)** outlines the company's prerogative in preventing sexual harassment and other forms of violence against women and men. The company is aware of gender-based violence within its jurisdiction and policy changes are in place to protect everyone from the threat of violence. The company regards sexual harassment as a gross misconduct. Penalties include termination from work and court proceedings. Apart from the main grievance procedure there are three specific procedures in place which directly address Sexual Harassment, Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence and Abuse. These procedures guide all women employees, dependents and/or men who require assistance. The procedures include Reporting, Receiving and a Responding section to all complaints raised.

⁴⁶Department of Education, 'Papua New Guinea Gender Equity Strategic Plan 2009-2014' 2009 http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Papua%20New%20Guinea/Papua_New_Guinea_gender_equity_strategic_plan.pdf accessed 25.03.13

⁴⁷Department of Education, 'Papua New Guinea Gender Equity in Education Policy' (Reprinted 2009) http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Papua%20New%20Guinea/Papua_New_Guinea_gender_equity_guidelines.pdf

⁴⁸ ibid p.3

⁴⁹ **Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO)** was established in 2004 to promote production and use of sustainable palm oil for people, planet and prosperity. RSPO consist of multiple stakeholders: growers, investors and civil society focusing on oil palm sustainability. See www.rspo.org for details, accessed 22.03.13.

NBPOL has a **HIV/AIDS Policy (Reviewed 2012)** and share similar concerns with other private companies in PNG on HIV/AIDS epidemic. Its policy outlines employees and dependents protection. Counselling and health care is provided on site. NBPOL discourages all forms of discrimination. All medical staff display duties of care and sworn to maintain confidentiality. A HIV/AIDS Committee functions to coordinate and implements the policy and programs. Employees with HIV/AIDS have no obligation to inform NBPOL about their status.

NBPOL also developed a **Human Rights Policy (Reviewed 2011)** which recognizes the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). The company policy focuses on three core areas: (1) *Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC)*. FPIC is a step-by-step process whereby NBPOL conduct community awareness with stakeholders, NGO's, CBO's and the government before any development occurs. This process allows communities to make informed decisions and participate on economic development of their land. (2) *Right to Health* - The company supports the safety and health of its employees, their dependents and communities through a comprehensive health and safety improvement plan. This is annually reviewed and external audited. (3) *Rights for Workers* - The Company's labour standards are benchmarked against the ILO labour standards which include all employees' rights in affiliating and form organizations of their own choice, no bonded or forced labour and non-employment of children under 16 years of age. The company provides equal opportunities for employees irrespective of gender. Discrimination based on any grounds in recruitment, dismissal or promotion is strictly banned. The social impact assessments are reviewed every 5 years.

NBPOL's **Employee Rights and Equal Opportunities Policy (Reviewed 2012)** is committed to the elimination of unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, gender, religion, disability, age, ethnic/national origins, and marital status, religious or ethical beliefs. The Company does not support and disallow corporal punishment, mental or physical coercion and verbal abuse. All employees are encouraged to use the Grievance Procedure to raise their grievances.

The company also has in place a **Grievance Procedures for Stakeholder Issues (2008)**. Under the Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil Principles and criteria, the company is obligated to

deal with issues transparently and openly. This procedure ensures that any interested parties understand the communication and consultation processes in issues they have which require the company's attention and action. The grievance procedure covers both internal and external stakeholders from villages and communities who have agreements with NBPOL, NGOs, CBOs, government agencies and minority groups.

The **NBPOL's Women Empowering Women (WEW) Committee** is a group made up of likeminded women executives from senior to management positions within the company. The WEW committee formation was the result of organising and participating in the 2010 and 2011 Elimination of Violence against Women Day activities. The activities and messages during the EVAW was the impetus for these women to engage in coordinated campaigns against female/gender violence. WEW objectives are aligned with NBPOL's overall objectives with the aim of creating, maintaining and promoting safe, healthy and peaceful environment for all its employees and dependents throughout NBPOL, but the target groups for WEW are women and young girls.

WEW coordinate campaigns and disseminate information on issues affecting women and their families. It facilitates key activities recognizing rights of women and children such as the EVAW⁵⁰ and Children's Day, World Aids Day, World Environment Day and other occasions that tie in with harmonious and peaceful environments for community participation. WEW enhances and strengthens partnerships between families and communities affected by the Oil Palm industry, working together with identified partners both internally and externally to alleviate sexual harassment and domestic violence. WEW promotes 'Community coalition on violence against women'.

WEW's constitution (adopted in August 2012) sets out the rules of conduct and awareness activities. A newsletter produced bimonthly features WEW's community engagements and achievements. Furthermore, members have participated in external conference and shared their experiences upon returning. Expenses for the conference trips are co-funded by WEW and NBPOL as part of its corporate social responsibility.

⁵⁰ Elimination of violence against women

WEW executives have been tasked to sit on Hearing Committees mostly with relation to Domestic Violence, Adultery, Sexual Harassment and other social issues that were/are reported to Management. This indication shows that the Management has trust and confidence with WEW objectives. All WEW activities are self-funded through fundraisings headed by a sub-committee. All projects are planned out with the primary aim of reaching and educating more women on social issues that impacts their lives.

The discussions above clearly portray a company that is totally committed to practices of international and national conventions and policies. NBPOL policies are community focused and have resulted in successful implementation of community projects.

G: Theorising development and gender

Papua New Guinea fits quite well into the **developing state theory**. It possesses abundant natural resources, an 85 per cent population almost entirely without financial and economic accessibility and its greatest challenge is for the central government to stimulate economic growth. Current government practised indicate extensive interventions in most sectors of service provision. This tends to promote rent seeking and therefore minimises the attention and activities of economic agents, in this case the private sector. As one writer notes, extraordinary economic growth experiences of the East Asian states of Taiwan, South Korea, Hong Kong and Singapore lifted their economic status from poor income countries to successful economies.⁵¹

The economic reliance on the central government shifted to private sector led-growth which then provided market incentives. The growth of private sectors enabled the government to collect tax revenues and invest in national development. The Singaporean growth modality through education is one that PNG is showing early signs of adopting. Singapore prioritised citizens' education which propelled the country's economy. Papua New Guinea should follow that model in prioritising citizens' education which would lead to national progress. Educating men and women irrespective of gender increases growth in the middle class's labour inputs. Their contribution to the economy will increase revenue thus resulting in growth.

⁵¹ Ziya Öniş, 'The logic of the developmental state' Article review, *Comparative Politics*, 1991Vol. 24, No. 1, pp. 109-126

When discussing gender equality, the theory to take into account is **liberalism**. The tenets of liberalism suppose that all human beings irrespective of gender, colour, and religion are equal and should free themselves from any form of oppression. Papua New Guinea's Constitution details out liberty principles in human development, freedom from every form of oppression and exploitation.⁵² International conventions such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, CEDAW, Children's Rights and others imply that by achieving total freedom under the laws enable Papua New Guineans to free themselves from all from of oppression. These are great challenges for the country that is undergoing rapid economic, social, political and cultural changes.

Adding to that, Liberalism doctrines assume that governments are necessary to protect individuals from harm by other. However, Papua New Guinea's 'witch burning case' present a damaging story in this regard. State apparatuses such as the law, police, and judiciary represent the state in executing its ideals but can turn against individuals coercively as police brutality cases illustrate.⁵³ Further, governments can also be threats to societies if they do not deliver 'public goods'. Papua New Guinea's case of deteriorating public infrastructure is testimonial to that.⁵⁴

Robert Hunter Wade writes that with advances of globalisation conforming to the **neoliberal theory**, "...more open economies are more prosperous, economies that liberalize more experience a faster rate of progress, and people who resist further economic liberalization must be acting out of vested or "rent-seeking" interests."⁵⁵ This indication is far reaching for Papua New Guinea to achieve as its economy relies heavily on the extractive

⁵² Government of Papua New Guinea, Constitution of the Independent State of Papua New Guinea. Papua New Guinea Consolidated Legislation Preamble 1975, p.2

⁵³ ABC Radio Australia, 'PNG police take tough stance on officer brutality, 2013'

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-02-28/png-police-take-tough-stance-on-officer-brutality/4545908>

accessed 25.03.13; ABC Radio Australia, '87 police in Papua New Guinea dismissed for misconduct'

<http://www.radioaustralia.net.au/international/radio/program/asia-pacific/87-police-in-papua-new-guinea-dismissed-for-misconduct/1095218> accessed 25.03.13 ; Human Rights Watch, 'Still making their own rules – ongoing impunity for police beatings, rape and torture in Papua New Guinea' 2006 Vol. 18 No. 13 (c)

<http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/png1006webwcover.pdf>

⁵⁴ <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/EASTASIAPACIFICEXT/EXTEAPREGTOPTRANSPORT/0,,contentMDK:20768397~menuPK:2069483~pagePK:34004173~piPK:34003707~theSitePK:574066,00.html>

⁵⁵ Robert Hunter Wade, 'Is Globalisation reducing poverty and inequality?' *World Development* 2004, Vol. 32 No. 4 p.567

industries which channels 60 per cent of revenue to the government. The agriculture sector is largely underutilised. Large plantation estates of coffee, coconut and copra are left to neglect. Most rural communities cultivate small holder projects but collapse due to lack of substantial capital investment and lack of financial literacy.

The success story of the oil palm industry in Papua New Guinea is gaining momentum as more land is now being earmarked for oil palm development. If this modality is also applied to the other cash crop commodities, Papua New Guinea stands to benefit greatly. In a way this will liberalise the country's economy as Wade alluded to. One of the greatest challenges is land ownership. The Papua New Guinea state owns only 5 per cent of the land whilst 95 per cent is customarily owned. This alone hinders economic progress.

The government must now consider appropriate measures to acquire customary land for economic development. The Special Agriculture and Business Lease (SABL) of the government is a way forward in this endeavour. It has since been met with stiff opposition from international and nationally based environmental NGOs, CBOs with the support of the rural communities. The argument is that, as forests are logged and land is converted to large scale plantation agriculture, the ecosystems suffer and people are alienated from their land if they sign deeds of agreements for development.⁵⁶ The Forestry and Development website reports that the government leased more than 5 million hectares in the last five years.⁵⁷

There are two sides of such stories. One is that when communities use land for rudimentary subsistence agriculture, the gross contribution to the nation economically is relatively nil. The other is that when land potentials are maximised for large scale-agricultural investments, these generate economic prosperity resulting in improved livelihoods and living standards. Large scale agricultural investments are the way forward for Papua New Guinea. This argument then challenges the legitimacy of the Papua New Guinean state as a 'realist' in harnessing domestic resources, its ability as patron for citizens' welfare, the performance

⁵⁶ Forest and Development, 'NGOs preparing to fight PNG's Special Agriculture & Business Lease' 2011 <http://forestryanddevelopment.com/site/2011/04/12/ngos-preparing-to-fight-png%E2%80%99s-special-agricultural-business-leases/> accessed 25.03.12

⁵⁷ <http://forestryanddevelopment.com/site/2011/04/12/ngos-preparing-to-fight-png%E2%80%99s-special-agricultural-business-leases/>

of its public sector and the sustainability of its investments. Current practices indicate otherwise and warrant considerable reforms.

This leads to the last theoretical discussion on **human security**. Matt McDonald observes that the 1994 Human Development Report defines human security as “safety from chronic threats such as hunger, disease and repression” and “protection from sudden and harmful disruption in the daily patterns of life”.⁵⁸ Human security can also relate to the quality-of-life issues in general. All discussions above indicate the human face of security. Keparri Leniata brutish death, poor quality of public services such as education, health, transport and social services speak volumes on the state’s concern for human security and its capabilities to act.

And so a lot of questions need answers. What role does the state play in ensuring the security of its citizens? Is the state a unitary rational actor, a realist who promotes state interests more than its citizens? Is the state’s prioritizing education and especially girls’ education? Is the state concerned about improving women’s status as equal partners in nation building? Is human security its priority or extractive industries as current investments indicate? The recent border skirmishes challenge the state as a realist and its apprehension for security and sovereignty of its border and the local people. The undisciplined conducts of disciplinary forces personnel exhibit a negative image on the state as security provider. Reports of gross police brutality, rampaging soldiers challenges the state’s security arrangements.⁵⁹ These are challenges for the state leaders, stakeholders and the community at large to deal with.

⁵⁸ Matt McDonald, ‘Human Security and the Construction of Security’, *Global Society*, 2002. 16(3) p.279

⁵⁹ ABC Radio Australia ‘PNG police take tough stance on officer brutality’ 2013

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-02-28/png-police-take-tough-stance-on-officer-brutality/4545908>

accessed 25.03.13; ABC Radio Australia, ‘87 police in Papua New Guinea dismissed for misconduct’

<http://www.radioaustralia.net.au/international/radio/program/asia-pacific/87-police-in-papua-new-guinea-dismissed-for-misconduct/1095218>

accessed 25.03.13 ; Human Rights Watch, ‘Still making their own rules – ongoing impunity for police beatings, rape and torture in Papua New Guinea’ 2006 Vol 18 No. 13 (c)

<http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/png1006webwcover.pdf>; Travetz Mabone, ‘Soldiers terrorise

civilians in Pom’ Post Courier September 12 2012 <http://www.postcourier.com.pg/20120912/news05.htm>

accessed 26.03.13

H: Conclusion

The paper begins with the brutal killing of a woman to highlight the atrocities committed against vulnerable members of the community. It noted the types of violence that women are subjected to and the impacts on their lives. This paper discussed the key challenges of leadership and the cultural, social, economic and political barriers women face. The narratives of women in the three clusters express their observations of women's roles. Despite differences in levels of education, all agree on certain key issues that the state should address. They see women's education as key to development. Roles of women in professional careers, leadership and administrative positions highlight their significance in contributing to their organizations and institutions must be given prominence.

International and domestic policies are well meaning but cannot work without a government backing, productive workforce, resource capacity and sustainability. Contributions of international development partners are praised for the positive impacts in Papua New Guinea. The government should not continue to rely on these international gestures but must vigorously embark on programs that alleviate and minimize the challenges. Gender violence and education are great challenges and with diversely scattered rural populations, it is fatefully challenging for service delivery. However, current community engagements and coordinated campaigns on women's issues by non-state actors, private companies, NGOs who operate outside of state machinery should be praised and given more support by the government. This calls for greater political reforms on policies.

There are domains of enterprises such as the public-private partnerships that the state has formulated. These are deemed as way forward for inclusive development approaches. On the other hand, such partnerships are indicative of the state's inability to deliver on its goals using the under resourced public sector, faltering monitoring and evaluation processes and a low-morale workforce for productivity.

Women's participation in nation building is fundamental and can be recognized through dynamic government initiatives. Accelerated girls education is a way forward. Investment and incentives to keep girls in schools are worthy initiatives for consideration. Current

practices still illustrate the slow absorption of women into nation building capacities. And issues such as witch burning in the 21st century should be a thing of the past, not in 2013.

Recommendations

The authors hereby put forward these recommendations for consideration by the Government of Papua New Guinea, Development Partners, NGOs, Churches, CBOs and Aid Agencies in planning and implementing gender based programs and activities for women.

1. Engagement of Local Level Governments and Ward Councilors' to coordinate advocacy on gender- based violence in LLG wards.
2. The Court Systems must impose tougher penalties for all gender based violence.
3. Provincial Governments in collaboration with the Department of Community Development & other stakeholders, to establish and manage safe havens (Meri Seif Ples) in all centres outside of Port Moresby and Lae.
4. National Government provides resources to support community based organizations and independent entities who are involved with women's groups to fund activities focusing on enhancing self-empowerment and basic literacy.
5. National Government to pass laws for all women to access basic compulsory literacy and education.
6. National Government should enact laws protecting young girls forced out of school to engage in prostitution or other illegal activities.
7. National Government in partnership with financial institutions facilitates micro credit schemes to assist women in small scale business enterprises.
8. Government and relevant authorities to prosecute employers who discriminate against equal employment opportunities for women.

References:

ABC Radio Australia 'PNG police take tough stance on officer brutality' 2013 <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-02-28/png-police-take-tough-stance-on-officer-brutality/4545908> accessed 25.03.13

ABC Radio Australia, '87 police in Papua New Guinea dismissed for misconduct' <http://www.radioaustralia.net.au/international/radio/program/asia-pacific/87-police-in-papua-new-guinea-dismissed-for-misconduct/1095218> accessed 25.03.13

ADB, 'Papua New Guinea Economy' 2011, <http://www.adb.org/countries/papua-new-guinea/economy> accessed 26.02.13

AusAID 'Papua New Guinea Annual Program Performance Report' June 2012, p.2 <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/countries/pacific/png/Documents/png-appr-2011.pdf> accessed 21.03.13

AusAID, 'Changing lives through literacy in Papua New Guinea' October 19 2012 <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/HotTopics/Pages/Display.aspx?QID=841> accessed 28.02.13

AusAID, 'Papua New Guinea-Australia Partnership for Development' December 5 2012, <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/countries/pacific/partnership/Pages/png.aspx> accessed 01.03.13

AusAID, 'Promoting gender equality and the elimination of gender-based violence' Reviewed June 28 2012, <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/countries/pacific/png/Pages/initiative-promoting-gender-equality.aspx>

AusAID, 'A Safe Place: AusAID's support to end violence against women' January 2013 <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/aidissues/gender/Documents/a-safe-place.pdf> accessed 21.03.13

Digicelpng, 'Alotau joins Meri Seif Ples' <http://www.digicelpng.com/en/about/news/alotau-joins-meri-seif-ples> accessed 15.03.13

DFAT, 'Papua New Guinea Country Brief' February 2013, http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/png/png_brief.html accessed 28.02.13

DFAT, 'PNG Factsheet' 2012, <http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/fs/png.pdf> accessed 15.03.13

Forest and Development 'NGOs preparing to fight PNG's Special Agriculture & Business Lease' 2011, <http://forestryanddevelopment.com/site/2011/04/12/ngos-preparing-to-fight-png%E2%80%99s-special-agricultural-business-leases/> accessed 25.03.12

Global Partnership, 'Universal Basic Education Plan – 2010 – 2019' 2009, p.21 http://www.globalpartnership.org/media/library/Country_Documents/Papua-New-Guinea/Universal_Basic_Education_Plan-2010-19_Papua-New-Guinea.pdf accessed 21.02.13

Government of Papua New Guinea. *Constitution of the Independent State of Papua New Guinea. Papua New Guinea Consolidated Legislation Preamble*, 1975, p.2

Heken Vastikopoulos, 'Papua New Guinea: Under the Spell' *Pacific Journalism Review* 1995 Vol 2, No 1, <http://www.asiapac.org.fj/PJR/issues/back95/95sbs.html> accessed 11.02.13

Human Rights Watch, 'Still making their own rules – ongoing impunity for police beatings, rape and torture in Papua New Guinea' 2006 Vol. 18 No. 13 (c) <http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/png1006webwcover.pdf> accessed 25.03.13

Issues, Policies and Trends, The National Research Institute, 2009 Vol. 3 No. 3 '<http://www.nri.org.pg/publications/spotlight/Volume%203/Spotlight%20Vol.%203%20No.%203.pdf> accessed 25.03.13 JICA, 'The project for the urgent rehabilitation for the Markham Bridge' <http://www.jica.go.jp/png/english/activities/02.html>

Jo Chandler, 'It's 2013 and they're burning witches' *The Global Mail*, February 15 2013, <http://www.theglobalmail.org/feature/its-2013-and-theyre-burning-witches/558/> accessed 15.03.13

Kimbe Police Station Code 037 Crime Reports Register 2011-2012

Literacy Initiatives for Empowerment, 'Literacy situation – this report cites the National Census (2000) statistics that around 43.8% of population is illiterate. <http://www.literacyportal.net/png/literacy-situation/> accessed 18.03.13

Matt McDonald, 'Human Security and the Construction of Security', *Global Society*, 2002. Vol. 16 No. 3 pp. 277-295

National Aids Council of Papua New Guinea, 'National HIV/AIDS Support Project' 2005

National AIDS Council of Papua New Guinea 2006a

NBPOL, Employee Rights & Equal Opportunities Policy (Reviewed 2012) www.nbpol.com.pg

NBPOL, Grievance Procedure for Stakeholder Issues (2008) www.nbpol.com.pg

NBPOL, Human Rights Policy (Reviewed 2011) www.nbpol.com.pg

NBPOL, HIV/AIDS Policy (Reviewed 2012) www.nbpol.com.pg

NBPOL, Sexual Harassment Policy (Reviewed 2012) www.nbpol.com.pg

Nick Cumming-bruce, 'UN demands end to 'witch' deaths in PNG' *Brisbane Times*, February 10 2013, <http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/world/un-demands-end-to-witch-deaths-in-png-20130209-2e58k.html> accessed 20.03.13

Osmar White, *Parliament of a Thousand Tribes: Papua New Guinea: The Story of an Emerging Nation*. Clayton: Victoria, Wren Publishing, 1972.

Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission, 'Media Statement: Record number of female and male candidates nominated to contest 2012 National General Elections' http://www.pngec.gov.pg/pngec/nomination_close_2012.pdf accessed 11.03.13

Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission, 'Election results summary' <http://www.pngec.gov.pg/declared.html> accessed 11.03.13

Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission, 'Electoral Commission of Papua New Guinea – 2012 General Elections Results' <http://www.pngec.gov.pg/declared.html> accessed 11.03.13

Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission, 'Return of Writs' http://www.pngec.gov.pg/pngec/Return_of_Writs_Election_2012.pdf accessed 11.03.13

Papua New Guinea Electoral Commission, 'Two women get elected into male-dominated PNG parliament' <http://www.pngperspective.com/news/two-women-get-elected-into-male-dominated-png-parliament/> accessed 11.03.13

Papua New Guinea National Policy for Women and Gender Equality 2011 – 2015

PeaceWomen, 'Papua New Guinea: Papua New Guinea apologises for CEDAW record' August 2 2010, http://www.peacewomen.org/news_article.php?id=1408&type=news accessed 26.03.13

PNGbui, Critical and development literacy <http://www.pngbui.com/300socialsciences/379x-Literacy-Programs/CRITLIT1.pdf> accessed 18.02.13

PNG Law Reform Commission, 'Final Report on Domestic Violence'. Boroko: PNG Law Reform Commission, 1992 Report No. 14.

PNG Treasury Department, 'Papua New Guinea Vision 2050' http://www.treasury.gov.pg/html/publications/files/pub_files/2011/2011.png.vision.2050.pdf accessed 24.03.13

Post Courier, 'Government releases K238 million for subsidies' January 30 2013 <http://www.postcourier.com.pg/20130130/news02.htm> accessed 11.03.13

Post Courier, 'Burnt alive' February 7 2013 <http://www.postcourier.com.pg/20130207/thhome.htm> accessed 15.02.13

Post Courier, 'Extra activities will help girls' Focus Page May 16 2008 <http://www.postcourier.com.pg/20080516/focus.htm> accessed 25.03.13

Ray Anere, 'Options for increasing women's representation at the national and local-level governments: The need for a comprehensive analysis' Spotlight with NRI, Development Social Institutions and Gender Index, 'Papua New Guinea 2012' <http://genderindex.org/country/papua-new-guinea> accessed 26.03.13

Richard Eves, 'Masculinity matters: Men, gender-based violence and the Aids epidemic in Papua New Guinea' 2011. http://www.engagingmen.net/files/resources/2011/REves/Eves_Masculinity_Matters_2010.pdf accessed 15.03.13

Robert Hunter Wade, 'Is Globalisation reducing poverty and inequality?' *World Development* 2004 Vol. 32 No. 4 pp. 567- 589

Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) was established in 2004 to promote production and use of sustainable palm oil for people, planet and prosperity. RSPO consist of multiple stakeholders: growers, investors and civil society focusing on oil palm sustainability. www.rspo.org accessed 22.03.13.

The National, 'Envoy: Women rise' March 11 2012, <http://www.thenational.com.pg/?q=node/46610> accessed 12.03.13

Transparency International PNG, 'The coalition against corruption' <http://www.transparencypng.org.pg/> accessed 15.03.13

Transparency International PNG, 'Community coalition against corruption' <http://www.transparencypng.org.pg/index.php/coalitions/community-coalition-against-corruption> accessed 15.03.13

Travetz Mabone, 'Soldiers terrorise civilians in Pom' Post Courier September 12 2012 <http://www.postcourier.com.pg/20120912/news05.htm> accessed 26.03.13

UNDP, 'Human Development Report 2011 - Gender Inequality Index and related indicators' 2011, http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_2011_EN_Table4.pdf

UNDP, 'UNDP in Papua New Guinea' <http://www.undp.org.pg/UNDP-PNG.php> accessed 15.03.13

UNDP 'Gender Inequality Index and related indicators' 2011 http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_2011_EN_Table4.pdf accessed 15.03.13

UNDP, 'The Millennium Development Goals – 8 Goals for 2015' <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/mdgoverview.html> accessed 11.03.13

UNDP, 'Second National MDG Progress Summary Report 2009' p.1 http://www.undp.org.pg/docs/publications/EXECUTIVE_SUMMARY_MDG_report.pdf

UNFPA, 'Gender Equality: Ending Widespread Violence Against Women' <http://unfpa.org/gender/violence.htm> accessed 21.03.13

UNICEF, 'Papua New Guinea Education' http://www.unicef.org/png/activities_4369.html accessed 26.03.13

World Bank, 'Reproductive health at a glance – Papua New Guinea' 2011 p.1 <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPRH/Resources/376374-1303736328719/PNGhealth42211web.pdf> accessed 18.03.13

World Bank, Papua New Guinea Country Gender Assessment 2011-2012. http://www.wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2013/02/27/000333037_20130227115054/Rendered/PDF/755800WPOPNGOC00Box374338B00PUBLICO.pdf accessed 13.03.13

YLM, 'YLM Meri seif ples' <http://www.yumilukautimmosbi.org.pg/msp> accessed 15.03.13;
AusAID, 'A third woman is elected for the 2012 PNG elections' <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/HotTopics/Pages/Display.aspx?QID=757> accessed 11.03.13

Ziya Öniş 'The logic of the developmental state' Article review, *Comparative Politics*, 1991 Vol. 24, No. 1 pp. 109-126