

Gender Analysis for the Sustainable Financing of Papua New Guinea's Protected Area Network

Report for UNDP

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Photo Credit: Mrs Stephanie Tangole (seated on left)
Focus Group Meeting at Ewase Locally Managed Marine Protected Area in East Nakanai LLG.
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Section 1: Purpose of Study

The Situational Analysis for the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) project, Sustainable Financing of Papua New Guinea's (PNG's) Protected Area Network Project (Project), identified Gender as a high project risk (*Risk 5*), noting that gender equality in decision-making processes is likely to be very limited due to existing gender biases that favor men's participation in project activities. To address this risk, a participatory Gender Analysis was commissioned to inform a Gender Action Plan which will define actions to ensure that the Project is gender inclusive.

To contribute baseline information for the Gender Action Plan, this gender analysis provides limited context-specific insights into men and women's daily lives in three pilot project sites, including the barriers and constraints they face, and the capacities and opportunities that may or may not be available to them, especially related to sustainable, equitable management of natural resources. This information is useful to be able to understand the problems facing a community; to develop appropriate policies, programs, and initiatives to address those challenges; and to measure progress toward achieving goals. This data is also important for contextualising barriers to sustainable development and identifying key stakeholders and actors—including often-overlooked potential agents of change such as women and marginalised communities—who can and should be involved in project development and implementation.

To inform gender-responsive policies and programs in protected area financing, the research underpinning this report draws upon primary and secondary data collection, a gender sensitive qualitative and participatory methodology, and a wider thematic literature review. This report presents the major findings of the research and participatory gender analysis.

1.1 Structure of the Report

This report has been structured to reflect the different methods used throughout the study, alongside the corresponding findings and recommendations.

- Section 1 outlines the background to the study.
- Section 2 of the report focuses on the research methodology.
- Section 3 outlines the International Conventions for Gender Equality.
- Section 4 outlines National Programs and Policies for Gender Equality, and highlights PNG Women's Groups self-empowerment strategies.
- Section 5 includes a summary of the thematic desktop research findings on the main areas of investigation into gender dynamics in Papua New Guinea
- Section 6 provides summary insights and sex-disaggregated data from the survey questionnaire conducted in three pilot project sites (East Sepik Wetlands, Mt Wilhelm National Park and Kimbe Bay LMMAs).

1.2 Gender and the Environment

There is a strong gender dimension in how people and communities in Protected Areas access land and natural resources, engage in environmental management, and encounter vulnerability to environmental challenges. In relation to national biodiversity and sustainable natural resource governance, adopting a gender perspective involves understanding and integrating the relations and differences between men and women into conservation planning and protected area projects. This includes the different roles, rights and opportunities of men and women concerning access, use, management, and protection of natural resources.

In terms of inclusive community engagement in Papua New Guinea's protected areas, conservation and sustainable livelihoods activities need to be based upon approaches that are socially, and culturally appropriate, while acknowledging that it is often the broader political-economic context that generates environmental harm and inequality:

In the context of Papua New Guinea, where large international logging, mining, fishing, and agricultural companies are the main agents destroying the viability of customary lands, one would neither want to make a community feel it was simply their fault that their land was polluted nor expect them to carry a greater burden of responsibility for the environmental health of the planet than people in the developed world, when other forms of livelihood (let alone sustainable livelihoods) are not within their reach. Environmental education that simply preaches "take matters into your own hands" are liable to confirm that sense of personal or local responsibility without the capacity to enact change. Sustained, consistent, and thoughtful support for dealing with environmental problems that are having a direct impact on people's lives and livelihoods is required, along with appropriate approaches to identifying livelihoods that are not only environmentally sustainable but economically, socially, and culturally sustainable. (James et al 2012 p.378-379)

Gender-responsive conservation policies and programs are therefore those that seek to contribute to the equal participation and opportunities for women, men, and marginalised groups, while explicitly considering both men's and women's opinions, needs, aspirations and interests.

Women's groups, associations and cooperative societies have increased in PNG provinces and rural communities. A number of these groups or organizations are led by strong and active women leaders and are supported by development and donor partners who are committed to encourage and advocate for women's empowerment and increased participation in conservation and the sustainable use of natural resources and livelihood opportunities. It is important to utilise these groups through coordinated action to provide mentoring, training, and support to women in PNGs rural protected areas.

With the growing number of NGOs, CSOs, faith-based organizations (FBOs), private sector businesses, cooperative societies, etc., there is clearly a need to provide leadership and coordination at the national level for all activities targeted at improving livelihoods of both women and men in rural areas. In this sense, it is key to strengthen normative and legal frameworks and to ensure coordinated action to achieve gender equality and sustainable rural development. (FAO 2019, p.37)

To promote greater levels of gender-inclusive processes in Papua New Guinea's Protected Area communities, it is necessary to recognise that communities are the outcome of ongoing negotiated and contested historical processes. Similarly, in discerning the differences between men and women, it is important to acknowledge that men and women are not homogenous categories either, since there are distinguishing social factors within each gender category (i.e., age, ethnic group, socioeconomic status, marital status, migratory status, religion, location, and others). This is critical to consider because the factors that contribute to women's and girls' disadvantage do not operate in isolation.

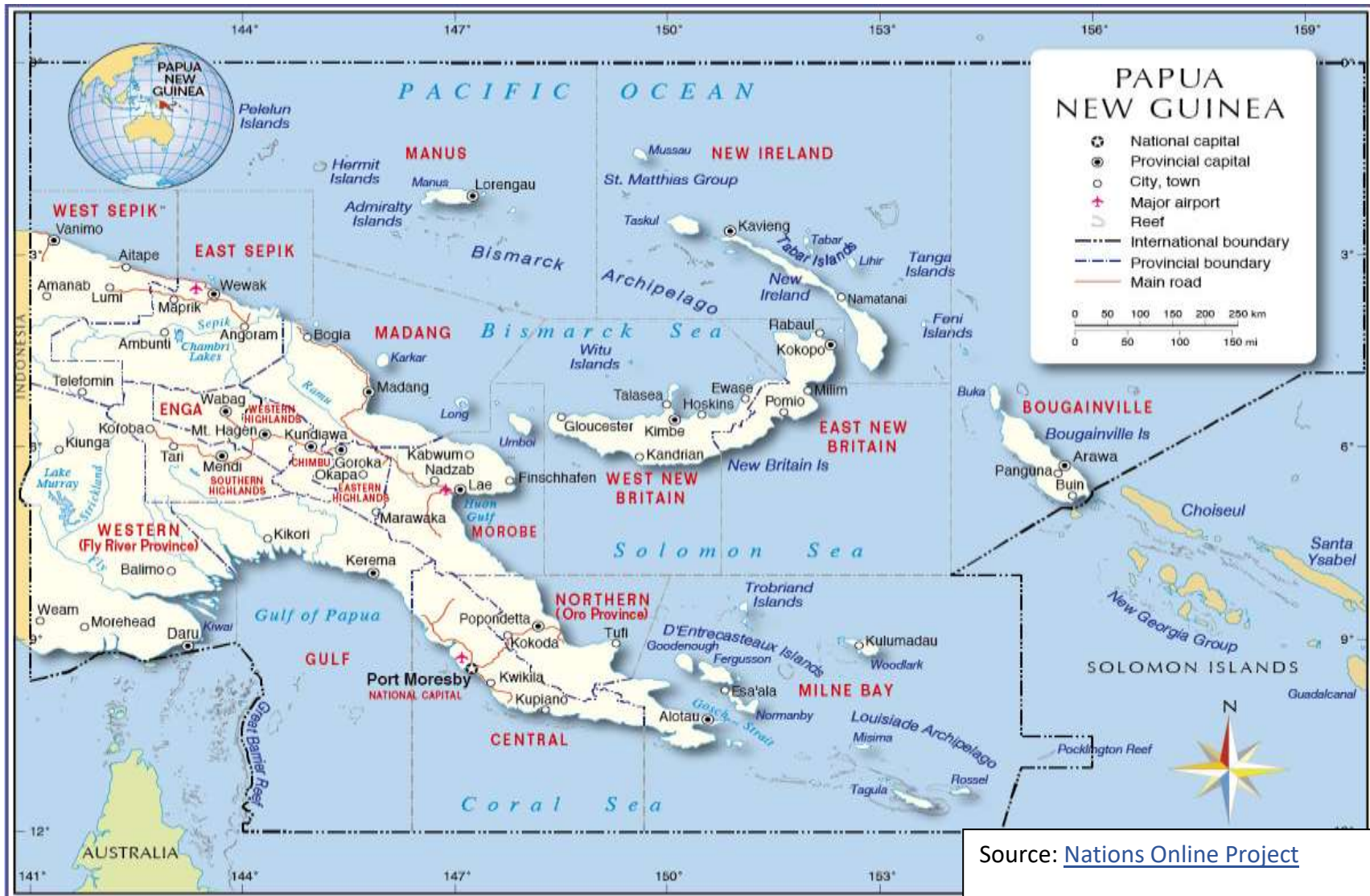
The inseparable web of relations in which an individual life is embedded defines their individual capacities through the debts, inheritances, obligations, and expectations of those relationships. As Cornwall and Edwards point out, a woman's lived experience of empowerment and disempowerment cannot be understood adequately by approaches that abstract women from the social and intimate relations 'that constrain and make possible their empowerment or disempowerment' (James et al 2010, p.4).

The intimate relations within the family household and the social context have a crucial impact on women's economic agency and broader empowerment in Papua New Guinea (Eves and Titus 2020).

Given these webs of relationships, it is thus useful to define 'community' more broadly '*as a group or network of persons who are connected to each other by relatively durable social relations that extend beyond immediate genealogical ties and who mutually define that relationship as important to their social identity and social practice*' (James et al 2012, p. xviii, italics added).

Viewing communities as networks or 'tapestries' rather than homogenous groups can enable advocacy groups in protected areas to weave a new tapestry of community life as they move toward inclusive forms of livelihoods built on increased participation of women and marginalised groups. Women and youth have a vital role in programs of action and learning that strengthen and support cultural values, social justice and advance community goals and aspirations for protected area futures.

Figure 1: Political Map of PNG



Section 2: Methodology

2.1. Research and Data Collection

The research enquiry that contributed to this participatory gender analysis involved a mixed methods approach which included:

- Thematic desktop review of gender issues and gender-based literature in Papua New Guinea and the Pacific.
- Interviews with stakeholders in PNG working in the field of gender empowerment, or specialist areas including GEF small grants, conservation groups and community organizations.
- Questionnaires, interviews and focus groups in the pilot project areas to obtain sex-disaggregated and gender data on women's and men's capacities, aspirations, challenges, and opportunities to contribute to sustainable development in protected areas.

This gender research was conducted through rapid assessment methodology which employed quantitative and qualitative data collection, as well as thematic literature review and analysis to develop an understanding of gender dynamics and issues. Primary data was obtained at sub-national levels involving the pilot project sites of East Sepik Wetlands, Mt Wilhelm National Park, and Kimbe Bay LMMA. The survey was conducted between October and November 2020.

The survey instrument involved 40 individual questions, including multiple-choice options. Respondents could add comments or examples in the textbox under specific questions. The questionnaire was provided in written form in English and Tok Pisin. With guidance from the gender consultant, the UNDP provincial coordinators facilitated the data collection and assisted with explaining concepts. A total of 268 respondents from the three pilot areas participated in the survey questionnaire (103 male respondents, and 165 female respondents). The inclusion of open-ended questions resulted, not surprisingly, in the submission of data that was difficult to analyse statistically but provided contextual information about values and aspirations.

To supplement the quantitative survey data, the UNDP provincial coordinators (assisted by community development officers) in each pilot project area held a series of focus group discussions (FGDs). These meetings involved women, men, and young people, both together and separately. FGDs provided an opportunity for context specific dialogue. FGDs allowed for a combination of small group and whole group discussion, in English and/or Tok Pisin. The FGDs highlighted not only differentiated socio-economic and gender power positions, environmental issues, concerns, and development opportunities, but also men and women's aspirations and desires for long term socio-economic benefits that are expected to contribute to sustainable livelihoods.

The resulting data reflects an approach that is as inclusive as feasible with the resources available.

A long-term data collection strategy to monitor baseline data on gender equality in the PNG Protected Area Network could be enhanced through training, coaching, and mentoring local people in the development of skills for conducting surveys in villages and nearby communities in protected areas with logistical constraints such as long distances, and poor infrastructure. Training local people to undertake surveys would enable a longitudinal program of monitoring and evaluation and create a process that builds on data and refines the relevant questions for each protected area context.

2.1.1 Literature Review

It is not the intent of this report to present a complete literature review on the topic, rather it aims to highlight some of the key intersecting issues compounding gender inequality in PNG. The broad desk-based review concentrated on literature relevant to women's empowerment in Papua New Guinea, to identify critical aspects of the current knowledge on the topic and reveal important questions requiring further research.

The review of literature examined scholarly works, including published research reports and unpublished reports on the websites of both government and non-government agencies. The review of gender issues in the literature contributed to a broad knowledge of:

- structural barriers for women's participation in decision-making.
- historical and contemporary nature of women's organising and advocacy for representation.
- women empowerment programs, and partnerships facilitating this support.

Section 3: Gender Equality in the International Policy Context

Gender equality and women's empowerment are globally recognized priorities, matters of fundamental human rights, and considered as essential prerequisites for sustainable development (IUCN, 2018; World Economic Forum, 2015). International human rights law recognizes equal rights, yet women globally remain marginalized, while their workloads and responsibilities have increased (FAO 2016).

Gender mainstreaming has been adopted and promoted by the United Nations, the World Bank, National Governments, Human Rights organizations, as well as the European Union institutions and Member States. As a Member State, Papua New Guinea is a signatory to International conventions recognizing women's equality, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (1995), Beijing Platform for Action 1995, Beijing +5, Pacific Platform for Action, and the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) points out that implementing commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment requires a range of tools and efforts, all underpinned by financial investments.

Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in developing countries requires significantly increased investments. Collectively, donors and partners need to maximise both the quality and quantity of financing to [Sustainable Development Goal] 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. (OECD Development finance for gender equality and women's empowerment)

The OECD further notes that "Financing that is dedicated to gender equality and women's empowerment in developing countries, as a main objective, is rare. It points out that dedicated financing should target areas with greatest need, and where other financing is not as effective. This includes support for women's voice and agency, and reaching those women and men, girls and boys that are the most at risk of being left behind" (OECD).

Key components of the international policy landscape that correspond to 'Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment' (*UNDP Principle 2*) include:

- Convention on the Political Rights of Women, 1953. The Convention's purpose is to codify a basic international standard for women's political rights. Recognizing that everyone has the right to take part in the government and desiring to equalize the status of men and women in the enjoyment and exercise of political rights, in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

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- Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1979: CEDAW is often considered the international bill of rights for women and is fundamental to advancing gender equality. Signatory governments are bound to take action to promote and protect the rights of women; they agree to include the principle of equality in legislation and ensure it is operationalised throughout their country. In Article 14, special attention is paid to discrimination against rural women, toward ensuring their access to rural benefit. BPfA (1995).
 - Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 1995: The notion of women’s empowerment was central to the *Beijing Platform for Action*, formulated at the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women, called to advance a gender equality agenda internationally. BPfA is still considered the most comprehensive set of guidelines for the development of gender statistics at the national, regional, and global levels.
 - Agenda 21, 1992: The Earth Summit, or United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), marked a pivotal moment embedding gender equality considerations in environmental decision-making on the global stage. Women have a vital role in environmental management and development. Their full participation is therefore essential to achieve sustainable development. The Rio Declaration recognizes the important role of women in environmental management and development, and Agenda 21 called for, among many other things, sex-disaggregated data and gender-sensitive databases (United Nations Sustainable Development, 1992). While not legally binding, Agenda 21 (UNSD, 1992) was for decades considered the blueprint for sustainable development, shaping national planning, donor investment and programming across the environmental sphere.
 - United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, 1996: Recognises women’s important role and participation in combatting desertification and mitigating the effects of drought. Parties have integrated gender into their decisions and evolved a Gender Action Plan—the latest version of which (September 2017) aims to accompany implementation of the UNCCD 1830-2020 strategic framework (UNCCD, 2017).
 - United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change: Implementation informed by more than 50 decisions on gender equality made over recent years. The efforts to mainstream gender equality across the development sector have also been significant in the past decades.
 - Sendai Framework, 2015-2030: The Sendai Framework for Action for Disaster Risk Reduction calls for stronger women’s leadership and participation in disaster risk reduction (DRR). This recognition provides a new opportunity to strengthen the capacities of gender machineries, women’s organisations and women at regional, national and community levels to shape how DRR and climate change are implemented in the coming 15 years (UNISDR, n.d.).

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- United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (2015): The 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, with 17 SDGs, recognize that the natural world and its life-giving services must be urgently protected in order to fulfil the needs of nine billion people by 2050. Gender Equality is a standalone SDG goal (SDG 5) in addition to being a cross-cutting issue across the other 16 goals. (Sustainable Development Goals Fund, n.d.). The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5, has specific objectives and measurable indicators to address gender equality, acknowledging that the compounded effects of gender-based disadvantage are multidimensional and multisectoral – from education and health care to clean water and food security.

SDG 5 Gender Equality

The United Nations SDG 5 Gender Equality is inextricably linked to the 16 other goals that make up the 2030 Agenda. The gender approach must therefore permeate all sectors and is a prerequisite for any transition to genuine sustainable development. The UN goal of achieving gender equality by 2030 is measured by the following indicators:

- 5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.
- 5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.
- 5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.
- 5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate.
- 5.5 Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.
- 5.6 Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences.
- 5.A Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.
- 5.B Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women.
- 5.C Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) emphasises that the significance of understanding the gender environment nexus, is not only key to understanding social and environmental inequities and barriers to sustainable development, but also to unlocking options for

transformative action (UNEP 2018 xiv). The UNEP¹ proposes eighteen gender-environment indicators for inclusion in the wider set of gender indicators used by the international community and national statistical offices.

The 18 gender-environment indicators cover four priority areas:

1. The right to land, natural resources, and biodiversity.
2. Access to food, energy, water, and sanitation.
3. Climate change, sustainable production and consumption, and health.
4. Women in environmental decision-making at all levels.

While these priority areas largely assume a top-down policy approach to improving the gender-environment nexus in national contexts, the UNEP Priority No.4: *Women in environmental decision-making at all levels* acknowledges that in order to contribute to a deeper understanding of societal roles and existing (in)equalities, there is a need to better understand the ways in which women and men are involved in environmental decision making processes, including at national and subnational levels, and in the implementation of environmental projects. UNEP Priority No.4: Women in environmental decision-making at all levels connects to the SDGs in a few important ways, particularly through SDG target 5.5 to ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life. It specifically recognizes that women's unique voice and agency are essential for the governance of natural resources because of their gender-differentiated and diverse experiences as farmers, fishers, household providers and entrepreneurs. However, women's perspectives are often unrecognized in decision making, including shaping, and applying environmental policy.

Section 4: Gender Equality in the National Policy Context

National programs aimed at improving women's capacities began several decades before Independence. These included government and church-sponsored welfare and community programs targeting village and church-based women's associations with home-life skills and activities such as cooking, sewing and nutrition. These programs were largely modelled on the European housewife ideal and considered inappropriate for PNG women given their central role in production (Lee 1985, p.223).

With self-government in 1972 came the announcement of the Eight Point Improvement Plan. The seventh of these aims called for "a rapid increase in the equal and active participation of women in all forms of economic and social activity". The Plan later helped to shape the National Goals and

¹ Gender and environment statistics: Unlocking information for action and measuring the SDGs, UNEP 2019. <https://www.unep.org/resources/report/gender-and-environment-statistics-unlocking-information-action-and-measuring-sdgs>

Directive Principles in the Independence Constitution of 1975. In 1973 the government's first attempt to address women's disadvantaged position involved the appointment of a woman's adviser to the Prime Minister. The role was to respond to international initiatives and advocacy by leading PNG women towards the establishment of PNG's 'national machinery' for women. In 1974, a National Women's Development Programme (NWDP) led to the appointment of twenty Women's Development Officers in the provinces.

The Independent Government of Papua New Guinea enshrined the concept of gender equity in its National Constitution, including the National Goals and Directive Principles which uphold Equality and Participation. The first two clauses of the Constitution relate specifically to gender equality:

First Clause: "We declare our first goal to be for every person to be dynamically involved in the process of freeing himself or herself from every form of domination or oppression so that each man or woman will have the opportunity to develop as a whole person in relationship with others."

Second Clause: "We declare our second goal to be for all citizens to have an equal opportunity to participate in, and benefit from, the development of our country."

4.1. National Institutions for Gender Equality

In 1979, the Papua New Guinea government enacted the *National Council of Women Act* thus institutionalizing the National Council of Women (NCW) as the government's partner with civil society in what the United Nations termed a "national machinery for women". The objectives of the NCW were to promote and encourage the views of women and to advocate for change, for public support and for legislative reforms to progress women's advancement. The NCW lobbied for women's rights and protection of women from abuse and violence. Its membership consisted mainly of rural church and community-based women from the Provincial Councils of Women. The NCW was the peak representative body for all women's organizations and was intended to provide a forum for women to express their views on issues affecting their lives. The national office was intended to be a coordinating body while each of the nineteen provinces had its own council to act as the action arm implementing projects and running courses. However, almost three-quarters of the budget was spent on national office expenses, salaries and travel, leaving little for the provinces (Lee 1985, p.225). In addition, the Papua New Guinea Millennium Development Goals Report notes that about 80 % of all projects devised to promote gender equality and empowerment of women that were endorsed by the National Council of Women (NCW) were not funded (Edwards 2015, p.3). It has been noted that the National Council for Women "does not receive any funds from government". "The government clearly placed an emphasis on 'integrating' women into mainstream development processes rather than supporting separate women's projects" (Lee 1985, p.223).

In 1982, the Department of Community and Family Services was disbanded. A new department called the Ministry for Youth, Women, Religion and Recreation was created. From 1983 to 1990, the government partner in the “national women’s machinery” was the Women’s Affairs Division² under the Office of Youth and Recreation, later the Department for Home Affairs and Youth, and now the Department for Community Development (DCD). The PNG National Women's Development Programme was introduced in 1984 to mobilize women and build a strong network of women's organizations from district level up to national level. This was followed with affirmative action in 1991, with the development of the first National Women's Policy to advance the position of women.

In 2005, the PNG government approved the establishment of the Office for the Development of Women (ODW) to address policy aspects of gender and development, particularly reporting on international commitments like CEDAW, the Beijing Platform and Gender in the MDGs. In 2009, the ODW became established under the PNG government's Department for Community Development.

The ODW was to be a stand-alone agency reporting directly to the prime minister, with functions to include i) policy advice, implementation and gender mainstreaming; ii) research, monitoring and evaluation; iii) coordination and monitoring of PNG’s commitments and implementation of its international obligations, conventions and treaties, and participation at international forums; iv) strengthened partnership with NGOs for women and other civil society organizations, government agencies and professional groups; v) provision of informed and representative advice to government on policy issues relevant to the diverse views and circumstances of women; and vi) enhancing the partnership between the government and the National Council of Women, and other women’s organizations.

Despite these objectives, an assessment report on gender and education in 2015 noted that the Office for the Development of Women (ODW) was allocated only 0.01% of GoPNG’s total government budget in 2010, providing only salaries for staff and no funds for activity implementation (Edwards 2015, p.vi).

4.2. PNG Government Policy commitments on Gender Equality

The Government of PNG has agreed to a range of policy commitments to support women’s equal participation in the development of projects and programs. These policies support the position that both women and men must be accorded equal rights and be able to participate in the development process, to ensure that their interests and needs are adequately protected and fulfilled. The PNG Protected Areas Policy on Protected Areas 2014 specifically targets gender equality and women’s empowerment. One of the guiding principles is that “the processes of selection and management of

² The Women’s Affairs Division was later renamed and re-organised as the Gender and Development Division.

protected areas recognise the contribution, rights and roles of women, and ensure that the voices of women are heard when decisions are made about the future of land”.

Key national policies include the National Policy for Women and Gender Equality 2011-2015³, the Strategic Plan 2010-2030, the Medium-Term Development Plan III 2019-2022, Vision 2050, as well as relevant national legislation and national policies for economic and social development, including:

- Revised Pacific Platform for Action on Advancement of Women and Gender Equality 2004
- Pacific Leaders’ Gender Equality Declaration 2012
- Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) policy 2013
- The National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender Based Violence 2016–2025
- The Sorcery and Witchcraft Accusation Related Violence National Action Plan
- The National Small and Medium Enterprise Policy
- The National Health Plan and Population Policy
- National Strategy on Gender Based Violence 2016-2025
- The National Research Agenda 2015–2025
- The National Policy on Disability 2015–2025
- PNG Policy for Integrated Community Development 2019–2028

The PNG National Policy on Women Equality and Women Empowerment (2011-2015) envisaged that by 2015, ‘women, men, boys and girls [will] have increased opportunities to access services, resources, rights and decision-making processes *through equal participation and benefits from the economic, social and political development of PNG*’ (*emphasis added*). The National Policy for Women and Gender Equality 2011-2015 states:

Gender equality is when the roles of women and men are valued equally. The definition has three aspects: equal opportunities, equal treatment, and equal entitlements ... Gender equality overcomes stereotypes, prejudices, and other barriers so women and men can contribute to and benefit from economic, social, cultural, and political developments in society at the same level. (Papua New Guinea National Policy for Women and Gender Equality 2011-2015)

Gender is a strategic focus area of PNG 2050 - the national overarching development plan, which envisages that gender equality will be achieved through women’s empowerment. Vision 2050 draws attention to gender disparities to be overcome, noting that while women form around 50% of the population, there are very few women in management, leadership, and decision-making roles in PNG.

³ Notably, despite initiatives to improve gender issues, including equal opportunities, equal treatment and equal entitlements “there has been a decline in the number of women involved in decision-making processes” (National Policy for Women and Gender Equality 2011-2015).

The Medium-Term Development Strategy 2011-2015 (MTDS 2010) acknowledged that: ‘gender inequality is a severe threat to future development in PNG ... PNG’s gender culture must continue to be unpacked and interventions must be sensitive to PNG ways. The Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP) 2018-22 outlines PNG’s development goals, which include (i) ensuring that all citizens, regardless of gender, race, culture, religion, or specialties have equal opportunity, (ii) increasing support to vulnerable or disadvantaged persons, and (iii) protecting PNG’s environment and biodiversity.

The 2010 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) report on Papua New Guinea’s interventions to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women outlined numerous concerns, including that the Constitution of PNG does not include sex as a prohibited ground, thereby allowing for lawful discrimination on the grounds of sex or gender. Addressing gender inequality and violence against women and girls in PNG, is critical to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals, and the economic and social future of the country. The Government has developed the Papua New Guinea National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender Based Violence 2016-2025, which is intended to prioritise and coordinate efforts to address GBV across the country.

In 2019, the Department for Community Development and Religion (DfCDR) established the Interim Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Secretariat as a key output of the National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence (2016-2025). The Secretariat’s role is to ensure there is high-level coordination and accountability by the government to GBV issues as well as ensuring that there is enhanced multi-sectoral GBV prevention and strengthened quality essential services for survivors of gender-based violence, both at the national and provincial levels. It is also responsible for the establishment of Provincial GBV Secretariats within provinces to mainstream and coordinate GBV prevention and response activities including Capacity Building and Training, Research, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, and Communication and Outreach. In November 2020, the Special Parliamentary Committee on GBV was established in Parliament to inquire into issues related to GBV and report back to the Parliament.

In terms of women’s representation and capacity for involvement in environmental decision-making at the subnational level, PNG’s *Organic Law on Provincial and Local-Level Governments 1995* (OLPLLG) provides for one nominated women’s representative on each of the 20 Provincial Assemblies and each Urban Local Level Government (LLG), and two representatives on each rural LLG, as well as district and ward councils. The *Women Make the Change* report (2019) notes that 10% of all LLG members are meant to be women, yet women’s representation on district and ward councils has remained a challenge with very limited work done to build the capacity of these women:

Out of the 6190 ward seats and 319 LLG seats, only 120 are currently held by women. *This is two percent.* The growing importance of District Development Authorities (DDAs) in service delivery may make it “harder for elected women representatives at the ward, village assembly and local levels to access resources for development projects and to gain

experience in local government". Moreover, women's representatives on DDAs and Provincial assemblies are operating in heavily male-dominated institutions, which demands that they navigate complex gendered power dynamics (UN Women in Papua New Guinea, 2019, p.4, *emphasis added*).

After more than forty years of effort, the promise of women's rights remains unfulfilled. Notwithstanding the history of national efforts to address gender inequality, in 2017, the PNG government's failure to improve gender equity was reflected in the Gender Inequality Index, with PNG ranked 159 out of 160 countries assessed (FAO 2019, p6). A report by the World Bank in 2012 concluded that since 1979, the effectiveness of PNG's "national machinery for women" has been severely constrained by:

- lack of adequate budgets to fulfil its mandate, which in turn has led to weaknesses in capacity.
- absence of an effective coordination mechanism policy level to ensure that national gender strategies and policies are implemented and monitored (World Bank 2012, p.112).

The World Bank review concluded that competition for very limited resources and political support has tended to undermine the cohesiveness of the civil society arm of the national efforts to improve women's capacities (World Bank 2012). Furthermore, women's economic insecurity contributes to their lack of control over their own development and that of their family. Significant structural and cultural barriers exist that continue to marginalise women, including colonial influences on traditional roles within the household and issues of land ownership (Bourke et al 2016).

4.3. PNG Women's Social Empowerment Strategies

It is valuable to learn from the self-organizing agency of women's social groups, which have, and if supported, will continue to play an important role in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in Papua New Guinea. Women's groups historically have been able to capitalize on new opportunities to increase status and capital, including strategies to subvert patriarchal power structures, and to assert new forms of autonomy. Some of these women's empowerment groups are discussed briefly below.

4.3.1 The Wok Meri Collective

A women's 'self-help' group in the Chuave district of Simbu Province arose in the 1960s and later spread into the neighboring Goroka District of Eastern Highlands Province. The Wok Meri collective in Simbu was understood to have developed out of long-standing conflict between men and women over the ownership and control of resources (Sexton 1982, p.13). Prior to the establishment of the Wok Meri movement in the Eastern Highlands, the discontent of women was played out in group strikes and protests strategically performed in public spaces.

The Wok Meri collective, comprised of women's groups from numerous villages, transformed women's collective labor and wealth exchange into social prestige, economic action, and socio-political influence. The movement arose in response to the perception of men as 'irresponsible and economically unreliable'. Women disapproved of men's expenditure of money for playing cards and drinking beer (Sexton 1993, p.131). In response, women organized themselves into Wok Meri groups and began saving a portion of their own money, mostly from coffee and vegetable sales. By doing so they demonstrated to the community their competence as money managers, and showed by example, how much money could be accumulated from the household income. Wok Meri women used strategies to actively gain a greater control over wealth, engage in prestigious exchange ceremonies, and participate in the emerging business sector.

Lutheran church women's groups in Simbu were active prior to the development of the Wok Meri groups. According to historical records, a missionary reported that in the early 1950s there was a short-lived mobilisation of women demanding increased political power on the grounds that Queen Elizabeth II had recently been crowned and if she could rule, they should be able to become *luluais* (government-appointed village chiefs). Eventually the women withdrew from church organizations to form savings groups of their own (Lee 1985, p.228). Wok Meri groups developed financial exchange relations with similar Wok Meri groups, comprised of frequent informal and structured cooperation of women from lineages who lived in the same village (Sexton 1993, p.130)⁴. These organizational units, based on established kinship structures, involved women who had worked collectively together for many years to organize ceremonial exchange payments and life-stage rituals.

Wok Meri Groups operated on exchange lines with 'mother groups' giving birth to 'daughter groups' through reciprocal payments. The concept of nurture was crucial to Wok Meri narratives, and as new groups were established, they became defined as 'daughters' in relation to the sponsor, or 'mother'. They created a women's networked banking system in which Wok Meri women from a wide area gave small loans to one another. The Wok Meri groups engaged in economic ventures that not only allowed them a greater control over household wealth, but also allowed them to engage in the male dominated activity of *bisnis*, which increased their social status without threatening men's power.

Most of the Wok Meri women tended to be over forty years of age, having established themselves in their community as a nurturer of children, pigs, gardens, and kinship alliances. Wok Meri 'mothers' provided loans to increase the work of their 'daughters', whose relationships were reinforced through birth and marriage rituals (Sexton, 1986, p.93). The women performed rituals re-enacting birth and

⁴ The early manifestations of this women's group in the Eastern Highlands was noted in the 1955 annual report for the Enga Lutheran Church. A Lutheran missionary in the Simbu region in 1955 by the name of H. Bergmann, observed the men "bitterly complaining about the behavior of their womenfolk" for neglecting their domestic responsibilities, such as cooking and gardening. Bergmann noted that the women "not only the girls, [were] dressed up, singing and dancing when we travelled from one place to another" and that women "wanted to be appointed Luluais" (government-appointed leaders). Bergmann's advice to the Lutheran teachers was to "quiet the men down ...[as] this movement would die out soon" (cited in Sexton 1993, p.131). Sexton suggests that the location of the movement in the Simbu region, the bodily decoration, and the singing and dancing indicate this may have been the early stages of the *Wok Meri* movement, facilitated by women who were "well organised and articulate in expressing their grievances" (1993, p.131).

included ceremonies surrounding marriage; held weekly meetings to collect savings; and activities culminated in a large “washing hands” ceremony attracting hundreds of visitors, where secret savings were displayed, loans received from guest groups and bride-wealth payments were given by daughter groups. The capital was then invested in such things as trucks, trade stores or shares in a plantation (Sexton 1982). Through these Wok Meri networks, women were able to build on established relationships and elicit new activities aimed at increasing savings. Every group had a recognized ‘big woman’ (*vena namba*), a title used only in the Wok Meri network. Wok Meri ‘big women’ were able to enhance their social status through recruitment skills by actively encouraging other women to save and establish larger networks. Notably, while the Wok Meri rituals were patterned on those of ‘traditional exchange’ they also created their own exchange system to access “all the roles that have been denied to them” (Sexton, 1986, p.88).

Men played supportive roles. Each group had a male *kuskus* bookkeeper and a *siaman* chairman selected from the lineage or sub-lineage. As most women had no formal education, young men with a primary school education were often appointed as bookkeeper, responsible for keeping written records of money accumulated by members, as well as money exchanged with other groups. The chairman, in his late thirties or early forties, was usually not the husband of the big woman, and was generally younger; his advice could be taken up or disregarded. In this way, men’s relationship with Wok Meri groups was one of partnership, rather than domination.

Wok Meri groups provided the women with opportunities to gain leadership skills through organizing meetings and public speaking. Although the Wok Meri investments did not become profitable, the Wok Meri network offered the possibility of mobilizing women for a broader range of community development schemes. Today there is a Simbu Women in Business Association and Meri Plus Savings and Loan Society Limited located in Kundiawa town. Meri Plus operates as a financial institution for rural women of Simbu province, providing loans and operating savings accounts for women to deposit and withdraw their money.

4.3.2 Gavien Women’s Development Group

The Gavien group developed as a response to a large government resettlement scheme in the East Sepik Province in 1967, which relocated communities living in villages over flood waters for up to nine months of the year, whose subsistence livelihoods depended on sago and fish. Resettled on hilly reforested land with no government support including agricultural assistance, the scheme was a failure. The government introduced a small-holder rubber cash crop production scheme, but this provided no income until the rubber grew, and without access to sago and fish, malnutrition rates rapidly increased. This was the impetus for the formation of the women’s group. With the assistance of an Australian volunteer, they organized themselves into four self-help agricultural extension groups which stressed a basic needs/quality of life approach.

The women built up a dynamic network, building bush material workshops, constructing water supplies and toilets, helping families to build solar driers and drum ovens, trialing improved methods of subsistence farming, planting large vegetable and fruit gardens, educating women in preventative health and training leaders from other parts of the country. They also linked into a wider Pacific network of women's groups and sent two of their leaders on a study tour of the Pacific to learn what other groups were doing (Cox 1983, p.13 cited in Lee 1985). The focus was food cropping and nutritional improvement, and women who learnt to drive, to mix cement, process foods and construct large buildings gained increasing respect in the community. The large *haus meris* (women's meeting houses) constructed by women, rivalled the traditional male spirit houses in scale, and provided tangible status to the group. The Gavien women's development group organized large social events, such as celebrating International Women's Day or World Food Day, and included drama, songwriting, slide shows, films and jewelry making (Lee 1985, p.231).

4.3.3 Goroka Women's Investment Corporation

The Goroka Women's Investment Corporation (GWIC) began in 1976 as a pilot project with technical and financial support from the International Labour Organisation (ILO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the PNG Department of Commerce. The aim was originally to set up collective businesses and train women in management. While setting up the GWIC the organisers were careful to approach male leaders first in order not to alienate men. Training courses included record keeping, leadership skills and business procedures, as well as practical skills in community organising. The corporation was overseen by a volunteer board of local female directors who offered their services as a means of learning more about business management and for representing the less-educated rural shareholders.

Part of GWIC's financial success is attributed to the fact that men generally look favorably on all commercial projects; and the low level of capitalization and small-scale nature of the venture did not threaten men's economic dominance. The location of the GWIC in Goroka, provided little employment for women in rural areas, and was regarded as diverting resources from rural to urban areas by using the capital of rural women to finance the urban service sector (Schoeffel 1982, p.24, cited in Lee 1985). This organizational model of gender empowerment was seen as too expensive to duplicate throughout PNG as it required a great deal of long-term financial and technical support. There was also a risk of women becoming coopted into small businesses such as catering, which were considered 'appropriate' for women, while men continued to dominate larger economic interests (Lee 1985, p.228).

Section 5: Gender Roles and Responsibilities in Papua New Guinea

In rural Papua New Guinea, the household is the basic unit of production, and women's lives tend to be heavily focused around their communities at local level. A lack of government services reaching rural households means that many women still rely on water carried from natural water sources such as rivers, ponds, and springs. Women often travel long distances to look for water and food crops, exposing them to risks of harassment and compromising their safety (FAO 2019, p.37). Women experience many barriers to entering positions of respect and authority and are challenged by their multiple roles in the family and domestic sphere. They often have the primary responsibility for ensuring the nutritional, childcare, and health needs of their families. Women also typically spend disproportionately more time on unpaid domestic and care work than men. This is in addition to the many community, social and cultural activities women engage in, as well as their involvement in agriculture-related activities. Given these multiple roles, rural women tend to lack the time to participate in other opportunities that could potentially contribute to enhancing their autonomy, knowledge, and skills (FAO 2019). Recognition of this work and a more equitable distribution of these activities between women and men would contribute significantly towards achieving gender equality and poverty reduction.

In the participatory gender survey conducted in three provinces, around half (53.7%) of female respondents in the survey sample reported some level of high school attendance. Males earn most of the family income and have greater capacity to make decisions freely. Men also have more opportunities to meet their needs and interests. Women have less access to services and bear most of the responsibility for the care of children and the elderly.

According to the majority of (male and female) survey respondents, men and women plan for savings and future events together. Most of the women who participated in the gender survey rely on the informal economy to supplement their subsistence livelihoods. Unlike formal (wage) jobs, the informal economy provides women with the opportunity to be more flexible in earning some money, such as when children are attending school. Moreover, the informal economy is effective at redistributing the benefits from other sectors. Women in the informal economy are subject to problems with public health, sanitation (clean water supply), and safety. A substantial group of women in the informal economy are producing a marketable surplus (garden produce, fish) on a semi-commercial basis or for market exchange. They are subject to a law and order environment that largely inhibits trade and transport. Women with disabilities are one of the most marginalised and vulnerable groups, facing discrimination on the basis of both gender and disability. For women working in the formal sector, an average monthly pay is less than half that of men's, according to Papua New Guinea's *Voluntary National Review 2020 Progress of Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals*.

Rural women sell their garden produce and other goods at local markets to generate income for their families, however, marketing of produce is hindered by poor infrastructure (Cammack 2007). Some have ventured into small to medium enterprise activities. Many own and operate a wide range of

microenterprises, mostly in the informal economy, which enable rural households to diversify and secure their income sources (FAO 2019). Indicating a positive trend in women's economic capacities, women's engagement in SME and financial inclusion has grown significantly. As of June 2018, it is estimated that around 1.9 million new bank accounts were opened of which 28% were by women (PNGs Voluntary National Review 2020).

5.1. Gender differences in access and control over resources

Due to cultural, social, institutional, and legal factors, the right to access and control natural resources, such as land and forests, is different for men and women, particularly with respect to ownership and access to land. Resource extraction industries dominate the PNG economy, and these activities tend to privilege men in terms of benefit sharing and generally have more negative social impacts on women.

Women in both matrilineal and patrilineal land inheritance systems acknowledge that there are limitations on access and decision-making over resources, however women in matrilineal clan-based societies say their voices were historically more central in critical discussions about land in their communities. Modern influences, including colonisation, the introduction of the church, western-style political system, and increasing presence of extractive industries, have eroded women's decision-making capacities in favor of men. Contemporary women's groups, such as the Wide Bay Conservation Association from East New Britain Province, are actively raising awareness of the importance of taking a whole of community consultation approach to making decisions about land.

Land is only one aspect of inheritance rights, and there are many inheritable assets that are traditionally considered as important as land, such as names (secret or public), political or religious status, and transmission of sacred artefacts, ritual secrets, knowledge of genealogies, as well as participation in local exchange systems and the fulfilment of obligations to exercise control over the distribution of important items of exchange. For example, women in Gende (Chimbu) society hold leading roles in rituals and can attain considerable social power through these roles (Zimmer-Tamakoshi 2020, p.305-310). Women may also build influence amongst other women and engage in activities that influence the male political arena (see for eg; Weiner 1976). Differences in knowledge between women and generational inequalities also depend on particular social class, age, and ethnic group. The intersection of gender, ethnicity, and class creates layered, multiple oppressions that interact and mutually shape one another. As a result of the differences in activities and levels of access, knowledge about the use of resources is also differentiated.

5.2. Gendered participation in household decision-making

Gender norms suggest that women in PNG generally have limited autonomy in financial decision making and income management, however a recent study into women's economic empowerment among coffee smallholders (Eves & Titus 2020) noted that in some areas of their lives, women had a high degree of autonomy in financial decision-making, especially in deciding how to spend money they

earned themselves. While many traditions of gender relations allow women little voice in political decision-making, the historical stability in male-female relations is built on collaborations and marital ties between kin-based groups, as well as intergenerational and brother–sister cooperation, as documented by anthropologists (eg; Zimmer, 1985; Faithorn, 1976; Goodale, 1983; Warry, 1986).

PNG women who contribute to the household income are also more likely to have control over household financial decisions (Fox, April 2021). The income that the women earn is generally distributed to cover the costs of immediate family needs such as school fees, health expenses, clothing and household goods, and community obligations like church contributions, funerals, feasts etc. While increasing women’s income may provide more influence in the household, women’s capacity to exercise leadership continues to be strongly influenced by the gendered and political dynamics of the institutions in which they are operating. Formal community leadership is generally taken up by men, women in rural areas are also organized in social groupings, often through their participation in church related groups, women’s groups’ law and order committees, educational boards, and a broad range of social organisations.

5.3. Gender Based Violence

Gender-based violence broadly refers to violence that is driven by gendered power relations. There is widespread consensus in the literature that gender-based violence (GBV), is a significant problem at all levels of PNG society (Coursen-Neff, 2005; Amnesty International 2006), with widespread domestic and sexual violence against women and children. The focus group discussions and the gender survey adopted a ‘do no harm’ approach and did not directly ask women in communities about their own experience of gender-based violence. Notably, scholars in GBV research highlight that violence is too often a by-product of the improvement in women’s economic situation, which often comes with heavy unanticipated costs to women (Eve et al 2018).

Much of the violence against women is perpetrated by intimate partners or close relatives (Bradley 1994; Lewis et al 2008; Toft, 1986). Male aggression in Papua New Guinea is well studied and documented, with some commentators suggesting that it has gained a measure of social acceptance or tolerance (Fife 1995; Sai 2005). Actual levels of violence are difficult to determine due to underreporting, however it is estimated that the prevalence of violence against women and girls is one of the highest in the world (PNG Facts 2013). A 2013 UN multi-country study (‘Partners for Prevention’) noted that more than half of women in PNG reported physical partner violence; according to Papua New Guinea’s Voluntary National Review 2020, 59% of women aged between 15-49 and 65% aged between 30-39 have experienced either physical or sexual violence. The health effects of violence are long term and cumulative.

The threat of gender-based violence, particularly sexual violence impacts on a woman's ability to move freely in the community, to use public transport, to access health and education services, and to travel to market or to the workplace (Amnesty International 2006). The PNG Law Society (PNG Facts 2020)

notes that training and on-going awareness campaigns on gender-based violence by relevant Government agencies, Civil Society Groups and Non-Government Organisations on pre-emptive strategies can be an effective way of educating against gender-based violence. Government, private sector, NGOs, CSOs, development partners, communities, and academic institutions have mounted different approaches and initiatives, however, much work is still needed to build effective responses to GBV at the provincial level. Since the constraints imposed by social and gender norms are beyond the level of the individual, a community-wide approach to change is essential. This must be firmly rooted in the specifics of each locality,

Gender equality is increasingly on the government's agenda, with GBV acknowledged as the single greatest development impediment for the country. At the First Annual Summit on Ending Gender Based Violence in Papua New Guinea (2020) a resolution was passed committing elected leaders to taking action to reduce GBV in their provinces and promote gender equality and respect through Action 4: "To adopt and implement strategies to seriously address GBV in our provinces and resource them to respond appropriately to the needs of survivors of GBV and work to prevent GBV from occurring in the first place" partnership (First Annual Summit on Ending GBV in PNG, 2020). The Special Parliamentary Committee on Gender-Based Violence is holding public hearings (24th May and 25th May) to discuss critical issues related to addressing GBV including: (1) Examining the amount and use of funding provided by the Government to address GBV; (2) The delay in establishing the National GBV Secretariat and how to activate that body to be more effective; (3) Challenges with investigating and prosecuting GBV cases across the country and how to address them; and (4) how women's reserved seats can be progressed as a strategy for ensuring women can co-lead the national GBV response.

5.4. Gender and Health

Gender issues cannot be separated from health issues. Women rarely suffer neglect or violation of rights and benefits in isolation (Hinton & Earnest 2009, p.180). The health of women includes reproductive health as well as their emotional, social, and physical well-being. This is shaped largely by the political and economic context of women's lives. The intersection between menstrual health and sexual and reproductive health creates challenges for girls and women that contribute to barriers to participation in education, work and community life, limits girls' social and economic prospects and perpetuates gender inequality. Unplanned pregnancy limits education and economic opportunities for women and girls, adversely affecting their livelihoods, health, and wellbeing. Lack of adequate toilets or water supply also disadvantages girls and women disproportionately to men.

The constraints of gender and social, economic, and cultural factors result in poor and often older women and girls being less likely to have access to appropriate care or to seek adequate treatment (Wyn and Solis 2001). Limited financial resources, and lack of social support are the main factors inhibiting older women's access to health services. Research indicates that the demands and restrictions that men imposed on girls and women and the threat of violence (if these are ignored or

challenged), are major factors limiting women's choices and right to health (Hinton and Earnest 2009, p.186).

5.5. Gender and Education

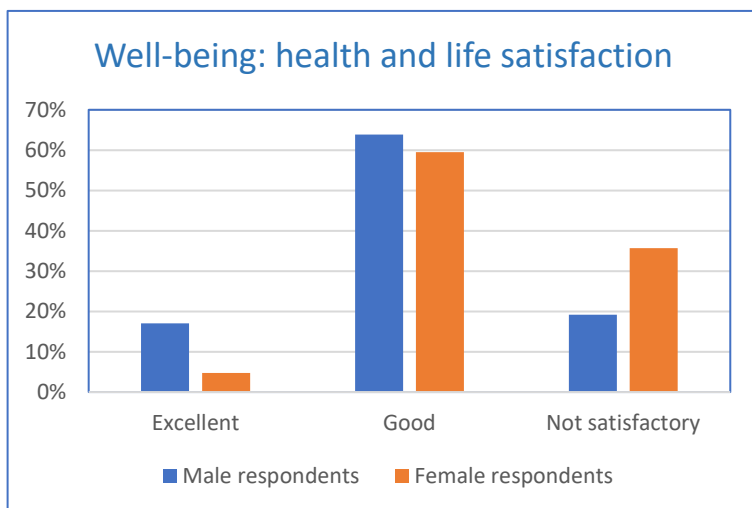
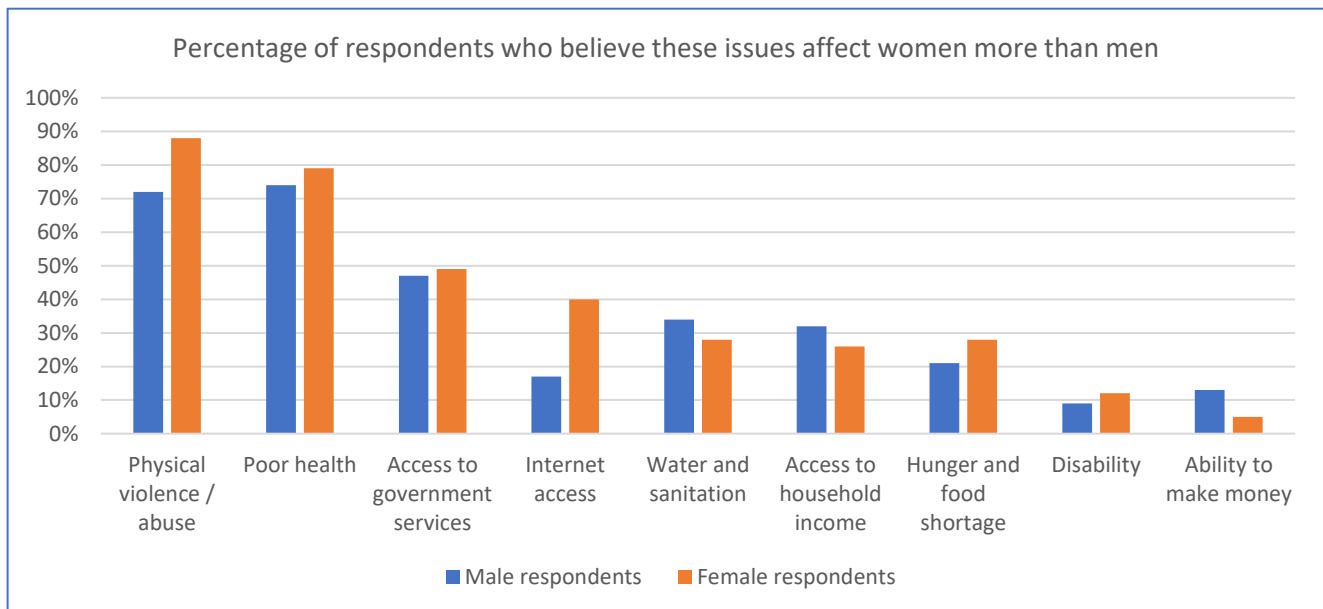
Literature on girls' education in Papua New Guinea (Edwards 2015, p.vii) indicates that a number of factors impact on the retention of girls in the education system, including harassment of girls by both teachers and male students as a reason for girls dropping out of school. Girls fear physical and sexual assault on a daily basis from a number of different threats, including bigger boys in the school, men from the outside groups and others, especially when they witness such incidents in their school or in their community.

A key problem with high school enrolment for adolescent girls is the lack of appropriate water and sanitation facilities. Girls may choose not to go to school because of the difficulty of managing hygiene in the absence of appropriate facilities (Paraide et al 2010). The distance from school is another factor affecting enrolment. In remote rural areas, where students often travel long distances to attend school, female enrolment and attendance is greatly affected because parents are particularly concerned about the safety of girls. These risks for girls are more critical at secondary level (World Bank 2012, p.22). A 2006 Demographic Health Survey estimated the rate of teenage pregnancy amongst 13 to 19-year-old students was around 13%. In addition, girls are more likely than boys to be needed at home to do household chores, look after younger children, and help to plant and harvest food crops (World Bank 2012, p.23). While the gender gap in primary school completion has narrowed over the previous decades (World Bank 2012) the gender disparity remains higher in secondary school, where men account for 63% of total national enrolments and women for only 37%. It is important to note that gender parity in education enrolments does not mean gender equality has been achieved, it is merely a first step in access to education. Notably, being enrolled in education does not actually mean that students are attending (Edwards 2015, p.14).

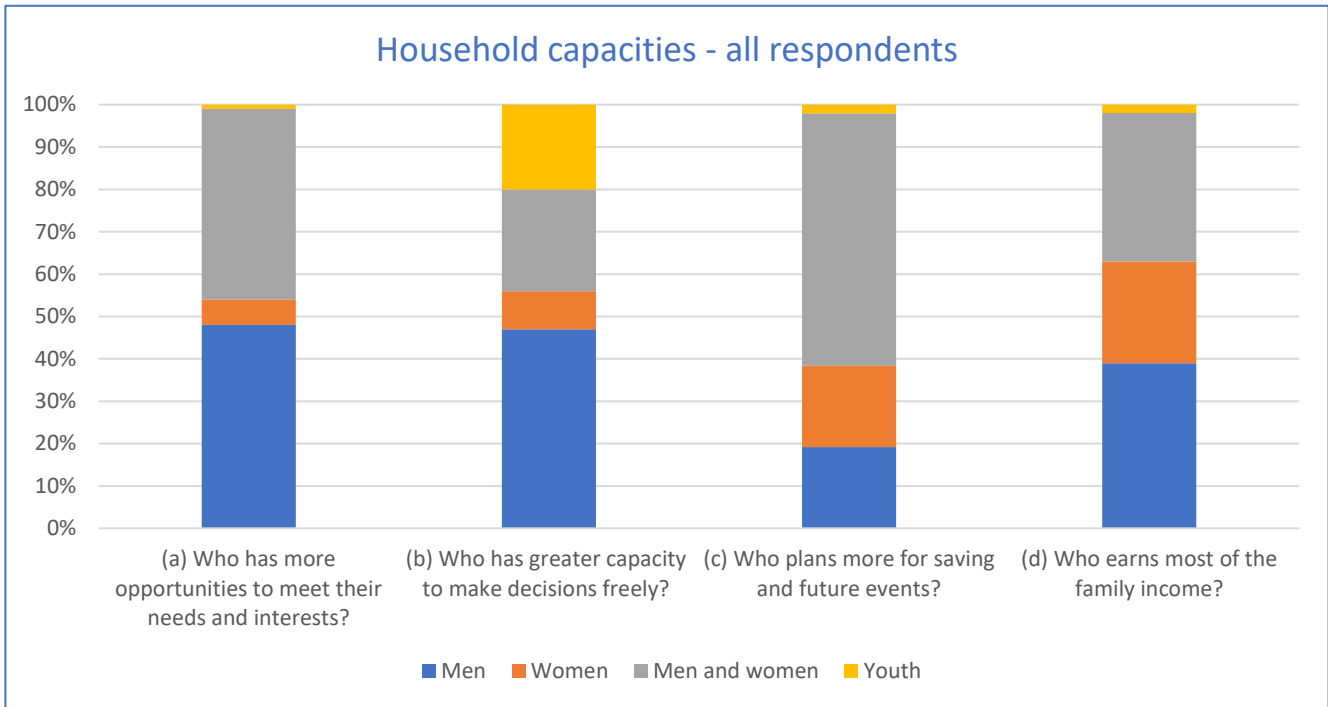
Section 6: Gender Research in Pilot Project Sites

This section provides an overview of aggregate responses from the gender survey conducted in the three pilot project sites (East Sepik, Kimbe Bay, Mt Wilhelm). Sex-disaggregated is provided for each of the survey questions in following sections. Challenges with sampling included the logistics of travel, which limited survey participants to those able to attend the meetings organised and facilitated by UNDP Provincial Coordinators.

In terms of issues which effect women and girls more than men and boys, male and female respondents in the three pilot project areas overwhelmingly identified “physical violence” and “poor health” as the main issues affecting women and girls more than men and boys, while “the ability to make money” was ranked less than “access to household income” by both males and females.

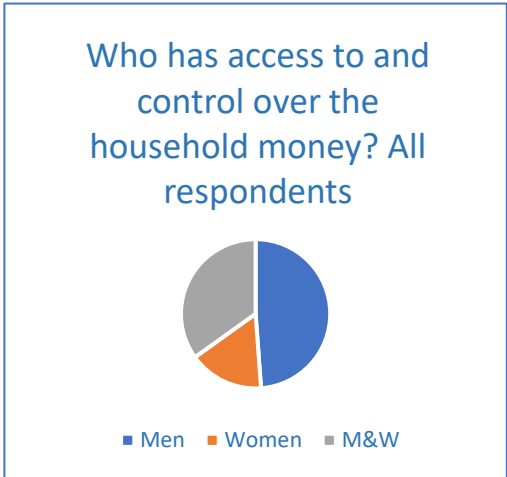


One-third (33%) of total female respondents rated their wellbeing (health and life-satisfaction) as ‘not satisfactory’, compared to almost 20% of male respondents.

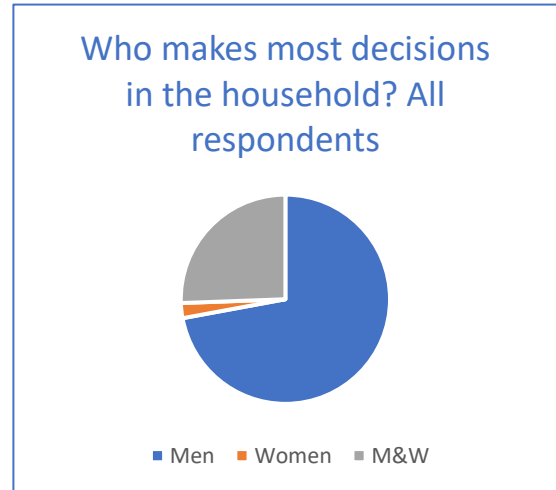


In terms of household capacities, 48% of total respondents from the three pilot project areas felt that men have more opportunity to meet their needs and interests, while 45% reported that both men and women have equal opportunity to meet their needs and interests. 47% of total respondents felt that men have greater capacity to make decisions freely, while 24% responded that both men and women are able to make decisions freely. 39% of respondents reported that men earn most of the family income; 24% claimed women earn most of the family income; and 35% said that both men and women earn most of the family income. 59% of the respondents in the survey sample said that men and women together plan for savings and future events.

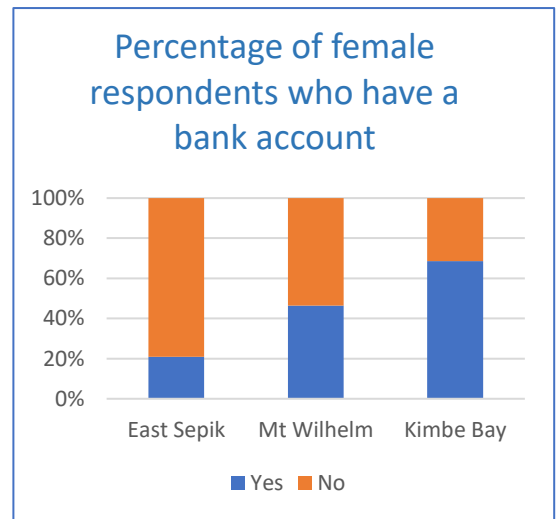
Almost half (49%) of total respondents reported that men have access to and control over the household money (figure right), while 35% claimed that men and women both have access to and control over household money.



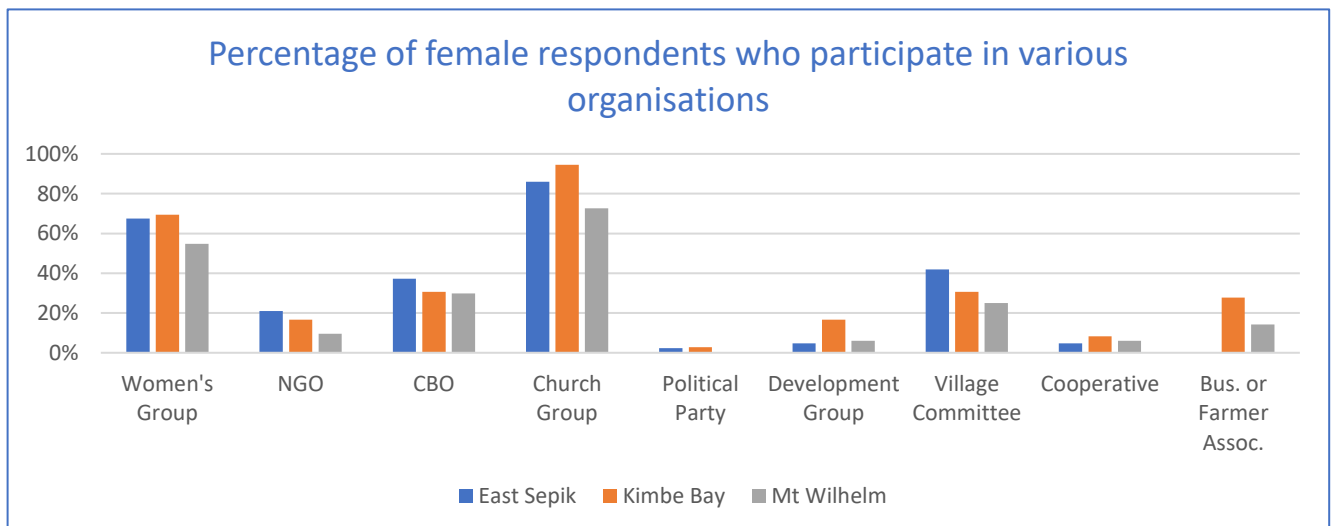
Almost three quarters (72%) of all those surveyed (males and females) stated that men make most of the decisions in the household (figure on right), while just over a quarter (26%) responded that men and women together make most decisions in the household. Response ratios differ in each province (see following sections).



Just over half (53%) of the total male and female respondents in the survey sample report having bank accounts. 44% of total female respondents in the 3 pilot project areas have a bank account. There is considerable variation for female in the three provinces (figure on right). For instance, in Kimbe, West New Britain, 69% of female respondents reported having a bank account, compared to 46% of female respondents in Mt Wilhelm area, and around 21% of female respondents in East Sepik. This may be due in part to the convenience of accessing banking services in the town of Kimbe, as well as a greater number of women engaged in the cash economy. In contrast, in the more remote rural areas of East Sepik, there are less opportunities to participate in the cash economy, as expressed by a female participant in the focus group meetings; *“there is a need to access markets to sell mats, baskets and fish”*.



At community level, women are organized in social groups; and many are involved in some form of community decision-making. As shown in the graph below, church and women’s groups have the highest participation of females in all three provinces in the survey sample.



6.1 Gender in East Sepik Wetlands Project Area

The Sepik Wetlands (East Sepik Province) covers an area of 2.4 million hectares. A large part of the district is subject to permanent or frequent flooding. There is one protected area – the Hunstein Range Wildlife Management Area (220,000 ha), and a number of proposed or informal PAs, including the proposed extension of Hunstein Range WMA.

The Sepik Wetlands Management Initiative (SWMI) is the Community Based Organization overseeing the crocodile management program, which is considered a successful example of ‘sustainable utilization’ where mechanisms for two crocodilian species⁵ are utilized in farming, ranching and captive breeding programs, combined with wild skin harvest. SWMI, based in Ambunti, East Sepik Province, was formed in 1998 to address fire-related wetlands degradation in the middle regions of the Sepik River. The crocodile egg harvest area covers approximately 75-80 km of floating vegetation along both sides of the Sepik River. The villages of Swagap, Kubkain and Baku are in the primary nesting sites.

SWMI’s main objectives are developing a community-oriented, self-help approach to conserve local wetlands, and in particular herbaceous habitats; halting the degradation of locally important wetland habitats, especially crocodile nesting areas, and rehabilitating sites where possible; enhancing the conservation of local biological diversity; and strengthening the sustainable utilization of local wetlands resources. SWMI has engaged around 50 villages in these regions while conducting awareness raising, trainings, and monitoring activities. SWMI has also spent time with these communities conducting Participatory Rural Appraisal exercises. The populations of these villages range from an estimated 300 to 1,500 persons. The work areas have involved approximately 50,000 people in the lower and upper Sepik regions.

There are currently two main mechanisms for generating revenue for the management of the protected areas as well as bolstering the livelihoods of the people living in the area. Firstly, there is tourism – which is primarily associated with the annual Crocodile (*pukpuk*) Festival and the guesthouse in Wagu (associated with the Hunstein Range WMA), and secondly the sale of crocodile eggs by people living in the Sepik wetland, and to a lesser extent a lesser extent, live crocodiles, and the production and sale of high-end leather products.

The ‘Sepik Livelihoods Project’, is working with SWMI to assess crocodile ranching potential, develop a Wetland Resources Management Plan, and directly assist local communities to improve existing crocodile facilities and build new ones. Some ranches were constructed after 2009 but were destroyed by heavy flooding. Improved designs and advanced management techniques are needed to promote profitable ranches.

⁵ New Guinea Freshwater Crocodile (*Crocodylus novaeguineae*) and Saltwater Crocodile (*Crocodylus porosus*).

There are also other natural resources (including, for example, raw tree bark and shrubs - “massoy” and “eaglewood”) that are harvested for trade in various markets; however, the value-chain analysis and value-addition for these other resources has not been carried out.

Women’s Community Membership

- Village Court
- Peace Officer
- Women’s Development Council
- Church Group
- Business Group
- Youth Group
- Sports Group
- WDC Women’s Rep
- Elementary Education
- Cooking Group

Women’s Economic Activities

- Guest house
- Aquaculture – Fishponds and fish sales (including smoked fish)
- Art and craft: basket and mat making
- Agriculture: Vanilla, Cocoa and Coffee
- Garden food
- Store goods and petrol
- Sewing and baking
- Sale of crocodile eggs
- Sale of gharu bark/wood

Problem Identification

The following issues were raised during Focus Group Discussions (FGDs):

- Women report widespread abuse by men.
- Consumption of drugs and alcohol by youths causes disturbance and threats to women and girls.
- Income from egg harvest and sales is not shared equally with women.
- Lack of access to market for women to sell woven mats, baskets, and fish.
- Transport cost to the market is very high.
- Lack of government support and services not reaching the people.
- No proper safe, clean drinking water.
- No basic health facility available at the community level to serve their needs of the women.
- No government support to mission run aid post to deliver services to women and girls.
- No early childhood learning facility at the ward level and kids are staying at home.
- Lack of knowledge on pregnancy control. Unwanted pregnancies and abortion from teenage girls.
- Women are not included in decision making process. High rate of illiteracy.
- No proper knowledge on cooking and food preparation.
- No connection to LLG and District women council. Women missed out on trainings and awareness conducted by the Women’s Council.

Institutional capacities from a gender perspective to facilitate and lead change

- East Sepik Council of Women
- East Sepik Disabled Persons Organisation
- District Health Authority
- Ward Development Committees
- LLGs, District and Provincial Govt.

Opportunities and entry points to facilitate change

Sepik Wetlands Management Initiative's (SWMIs) multi-stakeholder approach to conservation has involved maintaining strong relationships with both government agencies and non-governmental actors. SWMI has also partnered with Mainland Holdings Limited, a Papua New Guinea-based commercial crocodile egg collector.

The initiative's main activities are centered on providing adequate information to change community members' behavior, encouraging more sustainable harvesting of crocodiles and their eggs. A secondary focus has been on increasing awareness of the existence of invasive species and finding ways to minimize their expansion. SWMI has been active in raising awareness of the harmful effects of invasive species on crocodile habitats. Pacu (*Piaractus brachypomum*) and Javu Carp (*Puntius gonionotus*) destroy floating grass mats that serve as nest sites; Water Hyacinth and Bush Morning Glory plants intrude on nesting areas. In villages in the mid- Sepik region, SWMI has begun activities to combat the spread of these species. This has involved conducting surveys in villages to determine the extent of these species, collecting anecdotal evidence from community members on where and when exotic species have been found, and taking photographs to collaborate these reports. SWMI conducts awareness-raising in villages using posters. Actions have been taken in some villages to remove Bush Morning Glory and Water Hyacinth.

Concrete Actions for improving gender equality

The following suggestions were provided during Focus Group Discussions (FGDs):

- Training on financial literacy and bookkeeping
- Access to markets to sell their mats, baskets and fish
- Baking, sewing, and cooking skills
- Awareness on abuse and gender-based violence
- Training on small business management
- Awareness on family planning and birth control
- Transport subsidy cost
- Adult literacy training program
- Net mending training
- More awareness on family planning and birth control
- Clean water supply system
- Conservation protected area management training
- Ranger training for women
- Strengthen law and order to deal with crocodile egg poaching
- Health and nutrition training (Marasin man/meri)

In addition to the actions above to address social and economic constraints and inclusive sustainable livelihoods in the Sepik Wetland, a range of activities that would contribute to strengthening women's participation in project activities include:

- Identify experiential learning programs to develop strategies for gender-inclusive management practices.
- Generate a greater range of potential incomes sources that complement the activities of SWMI and contribute both economic and environmental benefits.
- Develop innovative social enterprises for women and marginalised groups.
- Strengthen women's regional social networks to encourage decision-making actions and promote communication, learning, identification of common problems, and coordination.
- Empower youth with training and support to take on leadership roles to address GBV.

6.1.1 Evaluation of Survey Data

A total of 90 respondents (43 females; 47 males) from Local-level Government (LLG) Areas of Ambunti, Hunstien/Tunap, participated in the survey questionnaire.

Survey Demographics

- Respondents were aged between 18-65; with the average age range between 35-44.
- 79% of female respondents are married, compared to 91% of male respondents.
- 100% of female and male respondents live in a village community.
- Women who married into the area identified Hauna, Yamanumbu, May River, Tongujamb, Boikin, Prukunawi and Sapande as their birth places.

Females in the survey sample represent a broad range of community groups including:

- Village Law and Order (Magistrate; Peace Officer)
- Women's Development Corporation
- Church groups
- Business groups
- Sewing and cooking groups
- Education
- Youth groups
- Sports groups

Males in the survey sample represent a broad range of community groups including:

- Education
- CBOS: Sepik Wetlands Management Initiative
- NGOS: CELCOR, UNDP, WWF
- Law and Order (Village Court)
- Sports groups
- Local government

Summary of Gender Insights in East Sepik Wetlands

- Physical violence, health, and access to government services are the most highly rated issues impacting females more than males, according to both male and female respondents.
- Female respondents report greater participation in church groups than males, but less participation in village committees, CBOs, NGOs, cooperatives, and political groups. Of the total number (37%) of females who participate in a CBO, a majority (63%) say they have a leadership role. 50% of female respondents participate in a village committee; 42% of those also have a leadership role. Male respondents participate more in village committees, NGOs, business and farmers associations, and development groups and are represented more in leadership roles.
- The ability to make money was rated as less of an impact effecting woman (by both women and men), than hunger food shortage, water and sanitation, and access to household income. 40% of female respondents rated internet as an issue affecting females more than males.
- Almost 72% of male respondents and 65% of females in the survey said that males made most of the decisions in the household. Both females and males plan together for savings and future events; however, the care and responsibility for children and the elderly is largely the responsibility of females.

Gender of the Head of the Household

- 83% of total respondents said males are the head of the household.
- 11% of total respondents reported that both men and women are the head of the household.
- 6% of total respondent reported that females are the head of the household.

Education

- 98% of female respondents and 96% of males attended primary school; the majority of men and women completed grade 6 or higher (93% and 92% respectively), however a greater percentage of women than men completed grade 9 (49% and 22% respectively).
- 48% of female respondents attended high school, compared to 40% of male respondents. The average grade completed for both females and males is grade 10.
- 93% of female respondents and 94% of males think it is important for girls to complete high school.

Health, Wellbeing, and Life Satisfaction

- 60% of female respondents rated their health as 'good' compared to 64% of male respondents.
- 36% of female respondents rated their health as 'not satisfactory', compared to 19% of male respondents.
- 5% of female respondents rated their health as 'excellent' compared to 17% of male respondents.

Community Decision-making

- 71% of female respondents say they are involved in community decision-making.
- 96% of male respondents say they are involved in community decision-making.

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- 98% of female respondents and 94% of males think more services for women are needed in the community.

Women's Organizational Participation and Leadership

- 86% of female respondents participate in a church group; of those participants 62% have a leadership role.
- 67% of female respondents participate in a women's group; of those participants 66% have a leadership role.
- 37% of female respondents participate in a CBO; of those participants 63% have a leadership role.
- 42% of female respondents participate in a village committee; of those participants 50% have a leadership role.
- 21% of female respondents participate in an NGO; of those participants 22% have a leadership role.
- 5% of female respondents participate in a cooperative; and none have a leadership role.
- 5% of female respondents participate in a development group; of those participants 50% have a leadership role.
- 2% of female respondents participate in a political party; of those participants 100% have a leadership role.
- No female respondents participate in a business or farmer association.

Men's Organizational Participation and Leadership

- 72% of male respondents participate in a church group; of those participants, 65% have a leadership role.
- 55% of male respondents participate in a CBO; of those participants 46% have a leadership role.
- 53% of male respondents participate in a village committee; of those participants 76% have a leadership role.
- 36% of male respondents participate in an NGO; of those participants 47% have a leadership role.
- 28% of male respondents participate in a women's group; and 11% have a leadership role.
- 21% of male respondents participate in a development group; of those participants 50% have a leadership role.
- 13% of male respondents participate in a business or farmer association; of those participants 33% have a leadership role.
- 2% of male respondents participate in a cooperative; of those participants 100% have a leadership role.
- 4% of male respondents participate in a political party; of those participants 100% have a leadership role.

Issues affecting women and girls more than men and boys in the community

- Physical violence (according to 88% of female respondents and 72% of male respondents).
- Poor health (according to 79% of female respondents and 74% of male respondents).
- Access to government services (according to 49% of female respondents and 47% of males).
- Internet access (according to 40% of female respondents and 17% of males).
- Hunger and food shortage (according to 28% of female respondents and 21% of males).
- Water and sanitation (according to 28% of female respondents and 34% of males).
- Access to household income (according to 26% of female respondents and 32% of males).
- Ability to make money (according to 5% of female respondents and 13% of males).

Gender in the Household

Bank Accounts

- 21% of female respondents have bank accounts, compared to 47% of male respondents. The majority of bank accounts are with the Bank of South Pacific (BSP).
- 48% of female respondents and 55% of males in the sample group think separate bank accounts are best for the husband and wife.
- 52% of female respondents and 45% of males think joint bank accounts are best for husband and wife.

Who makes most decisions in the household?

- Mostly men (according to 65% of female respondents and 72% of male respondents).
- Women and men together (according to 26% of female respondents and 23% of males).

Who plans more for savings and future events?

- Women and men together (according to 63% of female respondents and 53% of males).
- Mostly men (according to 19% of female respondents and 19% of male respondents).
- Mostly women (according to 16% of female respondents and 21% of male respondents).

Who takes responsibility for the care of children and the elderly?

- Mostly women (according to 72% of female respondents and 51% of male respondents).
- Women and men together (according to 19% of women respondents and 43% of males).
- Mostly men (according to 1 female and 1 male respondent).

Who has access to and control over the household money?

- Mostly men (according to 44% of female respondents and 49% of male respondents).
- Women and men together (according to 33% of female respondents and 34% of males).
- Mostly women (according to 7 of female respondents and 7 male respondents).

Who has more opportunities to meet their needs and interests?

- Mostly men (according to 49% of female respondents and 47% of male respondents).
- Women and men together (according to 44% of female respondents and 45% of males).
- Mostly women (according to 2 female respondents and 3 male respondents).

Who has greater capacity to make decisions freely?

- Mostly men (according to 44% of female respondents and 49% of male respondents).
- Women and men together (according to 21% of female respondents and 28% of males).
- Youth (according to 19% of female respondents and 21% of male respondents).
- Mostly women (according to 6 female respondents and 2 male respondents).

Who earns most of the family income?

- Mostly men (according to 26% of female respondents and 49% of male respondents).
- Women and men together (according to 37% of female respondents and 32% of males).
- Mostly women (according to 30% of female respondents and 17% of male respondents).

6.2 Gender in Kimbe Bay LMMAs

The coastal communities of Kimbe Bay (WNB), particularly those living on the islands are largely dependent on marine resources for subsistence and income. Women in coastal areas contribute to household subsistence by shellfish gathering/clam gleaning in intertidal areas. Fish and shellfish are major dietary items, alongside garden produce for both terrestrial and marine communities. Villages which are relatively remote from towns and markets are more dependent on marine resources for their subsistence needs and cash incomes than those with high market accessibility.⁶ Many of the land-based communities derive income from economic activities, including cash cropping from oil palm and cocoa smallholder development. Informal markets are another key component of the economic environment where women earn a regular income through marketing garden produce, tree fruits, betel nut, coconuts, and marine products. Although the money earned is not a lot, income from local markets provides cash to purchase household items like rice, tinned fish, kerosene, and soap⁷. Tourism provides limited economic returns to local communities.

Problem Identification

Primary threats to the effective management of the LMMAs identified through the stakeholder consultation process (including focus groups) are population growth (especially in coastal areas); development activities (in coastal and upstream areas) and related impacts including increased runoff and habitat fragmentation and degradation; overexploitation of resources, particularly fisheries resources; unfairness in distribution of any benefits, which causes law and order problem in the communities, lack of market facilities and the failure of local government to implement legislation at the provincial level to give effect to the operations of the conservation under LMMAs. The poaching of marine resources by 'outsiders' was also considered to be an important factor explaining declining stocks of marine resources. Marine resources and export crops are also strongly influenced by the degree of market accessibility of each village. Women selling garden food or marine products are often disadvantaged by the high cost and availability of transport, and lack of accessible markets.

Villagers involved in a diverse range of cash income activities for livelihoods,⁸ rely on highly variable household labour availability, the seasonal abundance of particular resources, prices, transport costs and cash demands (e.g., school fees and brideprice) and many other factors. As Koczberski et al (2006, p.63) note, a shift in the factors affecting one livelihood strategy can be expected to influence how other types of resources are utilised.

⁶ Beche-de-mer and sales of fish at local markets provide an income source for both men and women in coastal communities.

⁷ Koczberski, G., Curry, G.N. and Gibson, K. (2001). Improving productivity of the smallholder oil palm sector in Papua New Guinea: A socio-economic study of the Hoskins and Popondetta schemes. Canberra: The Australian National University.

⁸ Women's income activities include: Selling small goods, garden produce, agriculture – oil palm, copra harvesting, fish and marine sales (including sea cucumber), poultry farming, public service (including teachers), betelnut and mustard seed sales, arts and crafts.

The following issues were raised during Focus Group Discussions (FGDs):

- Lack of access to markets.
- Family domestic violence.
- Law and order problems hinders government services reaching people.
- Water supply and electricity, health services not reaching the most remote areas.
- Infrastructure, especially road maintenance is a big issue causing lack of access for marketing produce.
- Overcrowding and population increase putting pressure on marine resources. Declining numbers of marine food sources.
- High cost of transport restricts income generation.
- Need income generating opportunities for families to engage in due to increase in population.
- Land disputes, unfairness in distribution of benefits causes a lot of law-and-order problem in the communities.
- Poaching of resources and overlapping marine-use rights.
- Lack of resources to support the management of the LMMAs, and internal disputes regarding the management plan.
- Lack of government coordination and activities not aligned to LLG plans, Provincial Govt., and National policies on the Biodiversity of marine resources.

Institutional capacities to facilitate and lead change

Locally based organisations with women's membership in the Kimbe Bay LMMAs include:

- Mahonia Na Dari Research, Education & Conservation Centre (MND)
- Local NGOs and CBOs
- Women's Groups
- Village Committee
- Church Groups
- Women in Agricultural Group
- Youth Groups

Concrete actions for improving gender equality

The following suggestions were provided during Focus Group Discussions (FGDs):

- Skills training (cooking, sewing, financial literacy etc).
- Health services and nutrition training.
- Boats and vehicles for transporting produce.
- Empowering the youths by educating and training them to take on leadership roles. This will also contribute to improving law and order.
- Fresh produce markets and facilities to sell garden produce, chicken eggs, fish, kina shells, handicrafts etc.
- Availability of sea transport to sell produce.
- Small and medium business enterprise (SMEs) and financial literacy skills.
- Poultry projects and animal farming / stock feed.
- Vegetable production using improved technology.
- Aquaculture and technical training on sea farming activities.
- Sewing, marketing, catering, cooking (and ovens) Women in agriculture; cocoa and coconut plantation. Small business activities; improved agricultural practices.

Actions to address social and economic constraints and facilitate the application of gender-inclusive development that will contribute to inclusive sustainable livelihoods in Kimbe Bay require bespoke practices and various experiential interactions (face-to-face) which create a sense of community leadership. These include:

- Implement experiential learning programs to explore strategies to develop productive forms of management that contribute both conservation and social objectives.
- Subsidise transport for agriculture and marine produce sales.⁹
- Strengthen research partnerships with local NGOs and develop collaborations with national and international research organizations that are fee-paying and provide training to local women and vulnerable groups to assist with research programs.
- Develop innovative social enterprises for women and marginalized groups.
- Empower youth with training and support to take on leadership roles to address GBV.
- Empower women with training in leadership and self-confidence.
- Strengthen women's regional social networks to encourage decision-making actions and promote communication, learning, identification of common problems, and coordination.

6.2.1 Evaluation of Survey Data

A total of 82 respondents (36 females, 46 males) from the Local-level Government (LLG) Areas of Hoskins, Talasea, Cenaka, and East Nakanai in West New Britain Province, participated in the survey questionnaire.

Survey Demographics

- The average age of female respondents is between 35-44 years.
- The average age of male respondents is between the 45-54.
- 83% of female respondents are married; 89% of male respondents are married.
- 100% of female and male respondents live in a village community.
- Madang, Milne Bay, Kilu, Biella, Ulamona, East Nakanai, Central Province

Females in the survey sample represent a broad range of community groups including:

- CBOs / Pokili WMA; Papavulabaka LMMA; Bubu LMMA; Vilauma LMMA
- Ward Councilors / Village Committee
- Church groups and NGOs
- Women's groups / Widow Association
- Ewase CRC Youth Group
- Pulabe Women in Agriculture

Males in the survey sample represent a broad range of community groups including:

- CBOs / Pokili WMA; Papavulabaka LMMA; Bubu Landowners Assoc. / Bubu LMMA; Ewase LMMA; East Nakanai

⁹ This may involve agreements with local companies, hotels, supermarkets and wholesalers to provide free transport for market vendors from LMMAs to sell fish, shellfish, other marine products, and garden food.

- Law and Justice / Village Magistrate
- Community Development: Ward Development Committee / Rural Alliances Integrated Ltd. / Water & Sanitation
- Church groups / Bible School
- Youth groups: Doruru Youth Eco-tourism & marine conservation; Kulungi Youth D'ment Assoc.
- Education
- Fishing groups: Vilauma Fishing Group

Summary of Gender insights in Kimbe Bay Project Area

Around one third (34%) of female respondents rated their health and wellbeing as 'not satisfactory'. Physical violence, health, ability to make money, water and sanitation, and access to government services are issues impacting females more than males, according to both male and female respondents. Rated as less significant of an impact effecting women and girls is hunger and food shortage, and access to household income.

Female respondents report greater participation in church groups than males, but less participation in village committees, CBOs, NGOs, cooperatives, and political groups. Of the total number (31%) of females who participate in a CBO, 45% say they have a leadership role. 36% of the female respondents who participate in a village committee and 31% say they also have a leadership role. Male respondents report greater leadership roles in village committees, NGOs, business / farmers associations, and development groups.

54% of males and 43% of female respondents reported that males make most decisions in the household. 53% of female respondents and 30% of men state that women and men together, make most of the decisions in the household. Both females and males plan together for savings and future events, according to 56% of female respondents and 54% of male respondents. The care and responsibility for children and the elderly is largely the responsibility of females.

Gender of the Head of the Household

- Male (according to 83% of female respondents and 72% of male respondents).
- Female (according to 11% of female respondents and 26% of male respondents).
- Both (according to 6% of female respondents and 2% of male respondents).

Education

- 94% of female respondents and 96% of male respondents attended primary school.
- 61% of female respondents attended high school, compared to 70% of male respondents. The average grade completed for both male and female respondents is grade 10.

Health, Wellbeing, and Life Satisfaction

- 40% of female respondents responded with 'good' compared to 61% of male respondents.
- 34% of female respondents responded with 'not satisfactory', compared to 13% of male respondents.
- 26% of female respondents rated their health as 'excellent' compared to 26% of male respondents.

Community Decision-making

- 74% of female respondents are involved in community decision-making.
- 87% of male respondents are involved in community decision-making.
- 92% of female respondents and 98% of males say that more services for women are needed in the community.

Women's Organizational Participation and Leadership

- Church group: 94% of female respondents participate in a church group; of those participants 59% have a leadership role.
- Women's group: 69% of female respondents participate in women's groups; of those participants 64% have a leadership role.
- Business or Farmers Association: 28% of female respondents participate in a farmers' association; of those 40% have a leadership role.
- Community Based Org: 31% of female respondents participate in a CBO; of those 45% have a leadership role.
- Village Committee: 31% of female respondents participate in a village committee; of those 36% have a leadership role.
- Development group: 17% of female respondents participate in a development group; of those participants none have a leadership role.
- NGO: 17% of female respondents participate in an NGO; of those 33% have a leadership role in an NGO.
- Cooperative: 8% of female respondents participate in a cooperative; of those none have a leadership role.
- Political party: 3% of female respondents participate in a political party; of those none have a leadership role.

Men's Organizational Participation and Leadership

- Church group: 80% of male respondents participate in a church group; of those 49% have a leadership role.
- Village Committee: 67% of male respondents participate in a village committee; of those 68% have a leadership role.
- Development Group: 46% of male respondents participate in a development group; of those 43% have a leadership role.
- Community Based Org: 70% of male respondents participate in a CBO; of those 75% have a leadership role.
- Cooperative: 33% of male respondents participate in a cooperative; of those 47% have a leadership role.
- NGO: 22% of male respondents participate in an NGO; of those 40% have a leadership role.
- Business or Farmers Association: 17% of male respondents participate in a farmers' association; of those participants 38% have a leadership role.
- Political Party: 11% of male respondents participate in a political party; of those participants 40% have a leadership role.

Issues affecting women and girls more than men and boys in the community

- Physical violence (according to 78% of female respondents and 67% of male respondents).
- Poor health (according to 58% of female respondents and 48% of males).
- Ability to make money (according to 50% of female respondents and 54% of males).
- Water and sanitation (according to 39% of female respondents and 43% of males).
- Access to government services (according to 31% of female respondents and 50% of males).
- Hunger and food shortage (according to 31% of female respondents and 20% of males).
- Access to household income (according to 25% of female respondents and 41% of males).
- Disability (according to 19% of female respondents and 15% of males).
- Internet access (was not rated as an issue by any female respondents).

Gender in the Household

Bank Accounts

- 69% of female respondents hold bank accounts, compared to 82% of male respondents. Most are with the Bank of South Pacific (BSP); other banks include Peoples Micro Bank, Westpac, PMB, ANZ and Kina Bank.
- 27% of female respondents think joint bank accounts are best for husband and wife, compared to 20% of male respondents.
- 73% of women respondents think separate bank accounts are best for husband and wife, compared to 80% of male respondents.

Who makes most decisions in the household?

- Women and men together (according to 53% of female respondents and 30% of male respondents).
- Mostly men (according to 42% of female respondents and 54% of male respondents).

Who takes responsibility for the care of children and the elderly?

- Mostly women (according to 75% of female respondents and 57% of male respondents).
- Women and men together (according to 25% of female respondents and 37% of male respondents).
- Mostly men (according to 7% of male respondents).

Who has access to and control over the household money?

- Women and men together (according to 39% of female respondents; 35% of male respondents).
- Mostly men (according to 28% of female respondents; 35% of male respondents).
- Mostly women (according to 33% of female respondents; 28% of male respondents).

Who has more opportunities to meet their needs and interests?

- Mostly women (according to 36% of female respondents; 26% of male respondents).
- Youth (according to 31% of female respondents; 30% of male respondents)
- Women and men together (according to 19% of female respondents; 26% of male respondents).
- Mostly men (according to 14% of female respondents; 20% of male respondents).

Who has greater capacity to make decisions freely?

- Mostly men (according to 44% of female respondents; 41% of male respondents).
- Women and men together (according to 39% of female respondents; 43% of male respondents).
- Mostly women (according to 17% of female respondents; 9% of male respondents).
- Youth (according to 8% of female respondents; 9% of male respondents).

Who plans more for savings and future events?

- Women and men together (according to 50% of female respondents; 54% of male respondents).
- Mostly women (according to 31% of female respondents; 20% of male respondents).
- Mostly men (according to 17% of female respondents; 26% of male respondents).

Who earns most of the family income?

- Women and men together (56% of female respondents; 50% of male respondents).
- Mostly men (according to 31% of female respondents; 28% of male respondents).
- Mostly women (according to 14% of female respondents; 11% of male respondents).

6.3 Gender in Mount Wilhelm National Park

The summit of Mt Wilhelm marks the junction of the Bismarck Range (Running NW and ESE of the summit) and the Sepik-Wahgi divide (to the NW). The Mt Wilhelm National Park (71,364 ha) contains the highest mountain in PNG (Mt. Wilhelm, or Enduwa Kombuglu, 4,509m). The estimated population of the Mt Wilhelm PA is about 37, 000 (*National Census will be updated by 2021*). The population has increased rapidly since 2010. It is estimated that 60% of the population are female. Most of the older women have not completed primary or high school, but around 70% of the girls are now in schools as education is valued in the community as “females with education are respected and recognized by their male counterparts in the community” (Focus Group Summary, 9th Nov. 2020).

The main cash crops include potato, bulb onion, and other vegetables¹⁰ which are farmed on smaller scales. The staple food is sweet potato. Women from Mt Wilhelm say that “agriculture is everyone’s business, wellbeing, part of their life and their living” (Focus Group Discussion, Oct. 2020). Most of the women are actively involved in agricultural farming for income and consumption. Around 10% are working mothers employed in the private or public sectors and earn fortnightly wages/salaries (Office of the LLG Manageress, Kundiawa/Gembogl District, 9th Nov. 2020). Other initiatives involving local groups include ecotourism facilities along the Pindaunde valley, the most popular route to the summit at 4510m from the road head at 2850m. Lodges were built with locally collected funds, and official guides were employed. Tracks were improved, funded from guide fees.

Problem Identification

The following issues were provided during Focus Group Discussions (FGDs):

- Family Violence and abuse. GBV is an issue for women and girls. No safe houses for victims.
- Lack of access to market to sell fish. Lack of suitable markets for vegetable sales outside of the province.
- Lack of government support and services not reaching the people. No basic health facility available at the community level to serve their needs of the women.
- Limited tourism organisation, facilities and services and minimal on-ground ranger engagement: There are tracks leading to the summit and these are partly managed by the customary landowners as the on-ground ranger service was discontinued in the 1990s. Tourism and research facilities have fallen into disrepair.
- When it comes to paying school fees and other bigger financial requirements in terms of money, it is often very difficult to produce the money expected at once.
- Animal farming, (eg; pig farming) is the only source that brings large sums of money in times of need.
- Pig raising contributes to women’s health issues due to carrying sweet potato in bilums across large distances. To fulfill customary obligations, each family unit is required to raise pigs. Pig raising is considered a major contributor to the deteriorating health conditions of village women. Physical impacts include loss of hair and scars on the head due to head carrying bilums with sweet potato,

¹⁰ Garlic, Irish Potato, Carrot, Broccoli, Cauliflower, Cabbages, Asparagus, Parsley, Celery, Strawberries, and varieties of Beans.

also creating strain and damage to legs. To address this significant contributor to health problems, women suggested introducing improved breeds that can be fed on local and manufactured foods in an enclosure.

Institutional capacities from a gender perspective to facilitate and lead change

- Madang Council of Women
- Madang Disabled Persons Organisation
- District Health Authority
- Ward Development Committees

Women's Organizational Participation

- Women's Resource Centre located at the base of Mt Wilhelm (past Gembogl Station).
- Simbu Women in Business Association, and Meri Plus Savings and Loan Society Limited.
- Technical vocational school at Denglagu in Mitnande LLG - skills training for girls.
- Women Council / Women's Groups
- Church Groups
- Ward Development Committees
- LLGs, District and Provincial Govt.

Strategic opportunities and entry points to facilitate change

- **The Binatang Research Centre** – BRCs proposed research program to explore the ecological cline from 200m to the summit of Mount Wilhelm at 4500 metres,¹¹ with the potential for generating revenues. BRC and the local communities have established a research transect comprising eight study sites at 500 m elevation increments, spanning from 200 to 3700 m asl.¹² This transect is now open for research. The proposal builds on the success of the financing mechanism for the Wanang Conservation Area. This will pave the way for researchers to visit and work in the area – and pay research fees which will then contribute to the protection and management of the area. Part of the work will also include the establishment of a community-owned conservation area that will protect the areas surrounding the transect; these community conservation areas will abut the national park, thereby creating a contiguous protected area. A recent injection of government funds (PGK500,000) in 2017 to develop Mt Wilhelm Resource Centre, including an office for national park rangers¹³, may strengthen opportunities for women to participate in ranger training through the Binatang Research Centre.
- **The Wildlife Conservation Society** - strengthening and diversifying local livelihoods. Long term strategy is to preserve the Bismarck Forest Corridor. With funding from the European Union's Sustainable Wildlife Management programme, the UK government's Darwin Initiative and the Australian government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Wildlife Conservation Society is supporting four community-based organisations to undertake conservation and

¹¹ The transect to explore this cline is already established but investment is necessary for some infrastructure and local expertise (Para ecologists) to facilitate the research. It is one of the few in that tropics that encompass complete rainforest elevation range.

¹² As early as 1966, a field station was established by the Australian National University beside the lower Pindaunde Lake at an altitude of 3480 m on the southeast flank of Mt Wilhelm, ¹² contributing to the body of research about the climate, botany, vegetation, and unique attributes of the area (for eg' Wade and McVean, 1969; Smith,1977b).

¹³ Assessment of management effectiveness for Papua New Guinea's protected areas 2017. Final Report. SPREP, Apia, Samoa

livelihood projects in three provinces and plans to expand to support more communities in future years. WSC could become a strong partner in working with women's CBOs to support sustainable livelihood projects in Mt Wilhelm.

- **USAid Lukautim Graun Project** - livelihood programming¹⁴ and gender training. Involved in community engagement in the Bismarck Forest Corridor. The Program aims to strengthen national and provincial level governments to better manage conservation areas, strengthen capacity and coordination at the provincial-level and build linkages to the National Coordinating Committee, and strengthen coordination through the Provincial Development Planning Process. The Lukautim Graun Project provides an opportunity to leverage on the livelihood programming and gender training in the Bismarck Forest Corridor and extend the benefits to the Mt Wilhelm conservation areas.

Concrete actions for improving gender equality

The following suggestions were provided during Focus Group Discussions (FGDs):

- Women's safe house and counselling services for victims
- Community Based Laws (CBL) relaxing customary expectations of women daily activities.
- Agriculture: Introduce seeds for improved varieties of crops and provide training in soil fertility enrichment.
- Introduce different livestock breeds as alternate meat sources – as well as improved breeds of pigs that can be fed can be raised on local and manufactured foods in an enclosure.
- Support for baking and sewing, cooked food sales, trade stores / table markets and mini goods
- Resource Centre where women's issues are discussed, and training of all aspects is provided
- Small credit scheme loans to assist with farming equipment and materials.
- Training for women in all sectors, including adult literacy, financial literacy, women's leadership
- Internet access for rural women's mobile banking.
- Skills and knowledge for healthy families (eg; sewing and cooking, nutrition etc).
- Community business project and credit scheme for mothers to access loans. Funding support to establish SMEs (eg; flower business, piggery, poultry, sewing, catering and handicrafts,).
- Handicraft Centre to support niche markets (cut flower sales etc).
- Provision of markets for vegetable farmers (including out of province market for farmers). Market linkages outside the province would stimulate greater production of fresh vegetables to meet demand. Women see expanded vegetable marketing as an opportunity to earn money profitably from vegetable sales, where money earned can be used to hire labor to ease some of the work carried out by women daily.
- Develop a community health and nutritional plan and assist marginalised people and others to participate.

Actions to address social and economic constraints and facilitate the application of gender-inclusive development that can contribute to inclusive sustainable livelihoods in Mt Wilhelm require bespoke practices and various experiential interactions (face-to-face) which create a sense of community leadership. These may include:

¹⁴ Under the White House's Women's Global Development and Prosperity Initiative (W-GDP).

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- Identify experiential learning programs to develop strategies for gender-inclusive management practices.
 - Strengthen women's regional social networks to encourage decision-making actions and promote communication, learning, identification of common problems, and coordination.
 - Identify a greater range of potential incomes sources that complement existing tourism activities.
 - Strengthen research partnerships with Binatang Research Centre and collaborations with national and international research organisations that are fee-paying and provide training to local women and vulnerable groups to assist with research programs.
 - Develop innovative social enterprises for women and marginalized groups.
 - Empower youth with training and support to take on leadership roles to address GBV.

6.3.1 Evaluation of Survey Data

A total of 92 respondents (84 females, 8 males) from Mount Wilhelm participated in the survey questionnaire. (Note) As the number of male respondents is not a large enough sample to provide reliable insights, only female responses are provided below.

Survey Demographics

- Female respondents; aged between 18-64, with the average age between 35-44.
- 83% of the female respondents are married.
- 99% of female respondents live in a village community; 1% live in a provincial township.
- Women who married into the area identified Danbagl, Bulolo, kerowagi, Gembogl, Gambuk, Toromabuno, Womatne, Duglpagl, Moromabuno, Kerowagi, Minmuglo, Sitnigle, Ponbomeri, Maiglak, Wandike, Dummun, Bogo, Kagai, Kimbe, Jiwaka, Raicoast as their birth places.

Women in the sample group represent a broad range of community groups including:

- Church groups
- Women's groups / Women's Council
- Women farmers (fresh vegetables) / Fresh Produce Development Association
- Education
- Youth representatives
- CBOs, NGOs / TN4PCCR / Eco Habitat NGO

Summary of Gender insights in Mt Wilhelm Project Area

- One third of female respondents (33%) rated their 'Health, Wellbeing and Life Satisfaction' as "not satisfactory". Physical violence, poor health, ability to make money, access to household income, water and sanitation, and hunger and food shortage reportedly impact females more than males. Only 6% of females rated internet as an issue affecting females more than males, and 4% of females rated access to government services as an issue affecting females more than males. Almost half (47%) of female respondents have bank accounts, and 85% of female respondents feel that separate bank accounts are best for husband and wife. 68% of female respondents said that males were the head of the household, however more than half (52%) of female respondents reported that women and men together make most of the decisions in the household. Only 23% felt that males make most decisions in the household.
- More than half (57%) of the female respondents are involved in community decision-making. A large percentage (73%) are involved in church groups and 64% of those women have a leadership role. Almost a third (30%) of female respondents participate in a CBO, and more than half of those women (52%) have a leadership role in the CBO. One quarter (25%) of female respondents participate in a village committee, and 62% of those women have a leadership role.
- Both women and men plan together for savings and future events according to 46% of female respondents, however the care and responsibility for children and the elderly is largely the responsibility of females.

Gender of the Head of the Household

- Male (according to 68% of female respondents)
- Female (according to 21% of female respondents)
- Both (according to 11% of female respondents)

Education

- 86% of female respondents attended primary school; 48% attended high school. The average grade completed was grade 10.
- 100% of respondents think it is important for girls to complete high school.

Health, Wellbeing and Life Satisfaction

- 56% of female respondents rated their health as 'good'.
- 33% of female respondents rated their health as 'not satisfactory'.
- 11% of female respondents rated their health as 'excellent'.

Community Decision-making

- 57% of female respondents are involved in community decision-making.
- 98% of female respondents say more services for women are needed in the community.

Women's Organizational Participation and Leadership

Respondents selected as many groups as applicable:

- 73% of female respondents participate in a church group, of those participants, 64% have a leadership role.

- 55% of female respondents participate in a women's group; of those participants 61% have a leadership role.
- 30% of female respondents participate in a CBO, of those participants 52% have a leadership role.
- 25% of female respondents participate in a village committee, of those participants 62% have a leadership role.
- 10% of female respondents participate in an NGO, of those participants 38% have a leadership role.
- 14% of female respondents participate in a business or farmer association, of those participants 50% have a leadership role.
- 6% of female respondents participate in a development group, of those participants none have a leadership role.
- 6% of female respondents participate in a cooperative, of those participants 20% have a leadership role.
- None of the female respondents participate in a political party.

Issues affecting women and girls more than men and boys in the community

Respondents selected as many issues as relevant:

- Physical violence (according to 74% of female respondents).
- Poor health (according to 69% of female respondents).
- Ability to make money (according to 68% of female respondents).
- Access to household income (according to 39% of female respondents).
- Water and sanitation (according to 38% of female respondents).
- Hunger and food shortage (according to 29% of female respondents).
- Disability (according to 8% of female respondents).
- Internet access (according to 6% of female respondents).
- Access to government services (according to 4% of female respondents).

Gender in the Household

Bank Accounts

- 47% of female respondents have bank accounts. The majority are with the Bank of South Pacific.
- 85% of female respondents think separate bank accounts are best for husband and wife.
- 15% of female respondents think joint bank accounts are best for husband and wife.

Who makes most decisions in the household?

- Women and men together (according to 52% of female respondents).
- Mostly women (according to 25% of female respondents).
- Mostly men (according to 23% of female respondents).

Who takes responsibility for the care of children and the elderly?

- Mostly women (according to 54% of female respondents).
- Women and men together (according to 42% female respondents).
- Mostly men (according to 5% of female respondents).

Who has access to and control over the household money?

- Women and men together (according to 46% of female respondents).
- Mostly women (according to 43% of female respondents).
- Mostly men (according to 11% of female respondents).

Who has more opportunities to meet their needs and interests?

- Women and men together (according to 54% of female respondents).
- Mostly women (according to 30% of female respondents).
- Mostly men (according to 15% of female respondents)

Who has greater capacity to make decisions freely?

- Women and men together (according to 44% of female respondents).
- Mostly men (according to 32% of female respondents).
- Mostly women (according to 23% of female respondents).

Who plans more for savings and future events?

- Women and men together (according to 46% of female respondents).
- Mostly women (according to 35% of female respondents).
- Mostly men (according to 19% of female respondents).

Who earns most of the family income?

- Mostly women (according to 40% of female respondents).
- Women and men together (according to 37% of female respondents).
- Mostly men (according to 21% of female respondents).

Conclusion: Insights from the Gender Analysis

Drawing conclusions for Papua New Guinea as a country based on a limited sample size from just three provinces would be difficult, however the sex-disaggregated data in the pilot project areas demonstrates that socio-economic and gender relations are differentiated according to a wide range of contextual variables, such as proximity to urban areas, transport and infrastructure, availability of markets, opportunities for income generation, and banking services. Key indicators of gender inequality in the three pilot project areas, include physical violence, poor health, ability to make money, access to household income, water and sanitation, and hunger and food shortage: issues which effect women and girls more than males. As the root causes of gender inequality are deeply entrenched, long-term interventions are needed to create lasting change. Genuine social change will take a number of years and may need to be addressed over generations.

There is a clear expectation among survey respondents (both males and females) that conservation will bring development and partnerships to deliver the goods and services that people desire and need for sustainable livelihoods. There are distinct overlaps in the challenges and the impact of these challenges, and a need for cross-sectoral and holistic strategies that can be scaled up if found to be affective. Findings from the participatory gender analysis highlight significant barriers to achieving gender parity, particularly the prevalence of physical violence. The research also presents opportunities for transformative action.

The Gender Action Plan will include a framework which presents a participatory way of engaging with the issue of gender equality. The use of gender-transformative approaches must be complimented with community mobilisation interventions to empower women, engage with men, and change gender stereotypes and norms at a community level. Community mobilisation interventions can take the form of participatory community workshops, peer training, and localised creative campaigns aimed at shifting attitudes and behavior by challenging prevalent norms. Such interventions need to work across multiple levels to challenge and transform the gendered norms, practices and structures that perpetuate gender inequality. A long-term strategy that can contribute to real equality for women, is for policymakers to take account of women's interests in 'hard' policy areas such as economic growth, development, transport networks, infrastructures and technology, where gender impact has traditionally received little attention.

Real and sustainable improvements toward gender parity will also require removing the obstacles and barriers to participation by women in decision making and leadership in all levels of the community, from the Village level to Ward and LLG. As noted previously, according to *Women Make the Change* report (2019), 10% of all LLG members are meant to be women. Out of the 6190 ward seats and 319 LLG seats, only 120 are currently held by women. *This is two percent.*

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