

GENDER ANALYSIS (SUMMARY)¹

A. Gender Situation and Key Challenges

1. Papua New Guinea (PNG) has made limited progress towards achieving the gender objectives defined in the government's Vision 2050; the Development Strategic Plan (DSP), 2010–2030; and the Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP), 2011–2015. These three overarching documents outline broad aspirations about gender equality but offer few concrete targets for mainstreaming gender issues across sectors and programs. International comparisons show that PNG's rank on the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Gender-related Development Index has fallen in the past decade: out of 146 countries, PNG ranked 106 in 2002, 124 in 2006, and 140 in 2011.²

2. **Health.** Health indicators have shown little improvement over the years. Maternal mortality, estimated at 733 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2006, is the highest in the Pacific region and the second highest in Asia and the Pacific.³ Women in rural areas face a greater risk of maternal death than those in urban areas because of limited access to reproductive health care. Only 47% of deliveries in rural areas are assisted by professional health staff, compared with 88% in urban areas; 55% of deliveries by rural women occur at home as opposed to less than 13% of deliveries by urban women.⁴ The poor health of rural women is also affected by excessive workloads, poor nutrition, a lack of access to safe water, a high number of pregnancies, and high rates of family violence. Women's education has a significant bearing upon health status; women with grade 7 or higher education are shown to have better health outcomes than women who have no education or lower levels of education. PNG has the lowest spending on health per capita in the Pacific region, with a ratio of only 0.58 health workers per 1,000 people, which contrasts to 2.23 in Fiji and 2.74 in Samoa.⁵ Provincial and local governments are largely responsible for delivering health services, but most provinces spend on average only one-quarter of what is needed to provide a minimum level of services, indicating low political priority accorded to the sector.

3. **Education.** Considerable progress has been made in increasing school enrollment, but gender disparities persist. Net primary enrollment has increased from 53% in 2007 to 75% in 2010; yet female enrollment continues to lag behind that of males (73% versus 77%). Completion rates to grade 8 remain low, especially for girls: only 59% of girls (versus 64% of boys) in 2007 completed a full primary cycle.⁶ For secondary education, the gross enrollment rate for females was only 39% in 2010, compared with 50% for males. The gender gap is especially salient among teenagers (age 15–17), with one in six girls never having attended school compared to only one in 14 boys. Gender inequalities persist through tertiary and technical and vocational education and training: university enrollments comprise 61% men and

¹ This summary is based on *the 2011–2012 PNG Country Gender Assessment*, prepared by the Government-Development Partners Gender Forum and supported by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank.

² UNDP. *Human Development Report*. Selected years. The Gender-related Development Index is a composite indicator of gender equality developed by the United Nations, along with the Human Development Index. It measures gender equality in three areas: life expectancy, education (adult literacy rate and combined enrollment ratio from primary to tertiary levels), and estimated earned income.

³ National Department of Health. 2009. *Ministerial Taskforce on maternal health in Papua New Guinea Report*. Port Moresby.

⁴ National Statistical Office. 2009. *Demographic and Health Survey: 2006 National Report*. Port Moresby.

⁵ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. 2011. *Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Pacific*. Bangkok. p. 171.

⁶ Department of Education. 2009. *Achieving Universal Education for a Better Future. Universal Basic Education Plan, 2010–2019*. Port Moresby.

39% women, and sex segregation is evident with females being concentrated in the fields of education, nursing, and commerce.⁷ Gender disparities in education contribute to gendered employment patterns and inequities in the formal sector, because fewer women would qualify for formal or wage employment such as skilled professional levels. Self-reported literacy also indicates a significant gender gap: 57% of women (as opposed to 69% of men) reported they can read and write.⁸

4. **Economic participation.** The 2009–2010 Household Income and Expenditure Survey shows that a similar proportion of women (62%) and men (61%) are employed among the population aged 15 and older. Yet men are much more likely than women to hold a wage job in the formal sector (66% of men versus 38% of women), while women are three times more likely than men to work in the informal sector (46% of women versus 15% of men). As a result, women have much lower access to cash income sources, and decent work opportunities. In the formal sector, women are more likely to work in the public sector whereas men are more likely to be in the private sector. For women in the formal sector, however, their average monthly pay is less than half that of men's (K682 for women versus K1,404 for men). Women traders are also more disadvantaged than men by unsafe and insanitary markets and poor transport infrastructure. Resource extraction industries dominate the PNG economy, but they have more negative social impacts on women; men in these industries often engage in socially risky behaviors such as transactional sex, spreading the risk of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections. There are some good models for giving women a share of the benefits from extractive industries but these are not applied across all sites and industries.⁹

5. **Gender-based violence.** Although it is difficult to quantify gender-based violence (GBV) in PNG, various historical small and mid-scale studies undertaken by nongovernment organizations and government-related agencies have attempted, to some extent, to do so. All of these studies point to the same picture: that GBV is pervasive, and continues to be a serious problem. For example, the Law Reform Commission of Papua New Guinea's (1992) research of 1,203 women and 1,192 men discovered that 67% of women in PNG had been hit by their husbands. The findings show high regional variation, with close to 100% of wives reporting that they had been hit by their husband in the Highlands Province, whereas in the Oro and New Ireland Provinces, it was closer to 50%.¹⁰ Recent reports suggest that more than half of PNG women have been subject to sexual violence at least once during their lives. The institutional response of the justice system to these crimes is generally weak.

6. **Infrastructure services.** Poor transport infrastructure and services is an important factor contributing to limited accessibility to education, health services, and market opportunities. Poor infrastructure in rural areas hinders the provision of adequate health services including quality health staff. Limited access to health facilities in rural areas also results in poor health outcomes for women, including low utilization of family planning and high infant and maternal mortality rates. Poor transport infrastructure and services also inhibit women's access to produce markets, a major source of income in many rural areas. The distance from school is a key factor

⁷ Office for Higher Education. 2009. *Papua New Guinea Higher Education Statistics*. Port Moresby: Commission for Higher Education.

⁸ National Statistical Office. 2012. *Papua New Guinea Household Income and Expenditure Survey 2009–2010: Summary Tables*. Port Moresby.

⁹ Macintyre, M. 2011. Modernity, Gender and Mining: Experiences from Papua New Guinea. In K. Lahiri-Dutt (ed.) *Gendering the Field Towards Sustainable Livelihoods for Mining Communities*. *Asia-Pacific Environment Monograph* 6. Australian National University E Press.

¹⁰ Law Reform Commission of Papua New Guinea. Final Report on Domestic Violence, Report Number 14, 1992. [http://www.paclii.org/pg/LRC/REP 14.htm](http://www.paclii.org/pg/LRC/REP%2014.htm) (Accessed 14 May 2014).

affecting female enrolment at secondary level. In rural areas, parents are particularly concerned about the safety of girls when they travel long distances to school. Better roads and more reliable transport services are likely to improve the school attendance and retention rates of girls. Furthermore, girls are more likely to attend schools if the schools have water and separate sanitation facilities for girls.

7. **Legal status.** The constitution of PNG provides for gender equity and equality, but customary law, recognized by the constitution, discriminates against women in relation to rights and property. Studies of GBV indicate that such violence appears to be widely accepted and “culturally condoned”.¹¹ The Law Reform Commission recently made several recommendations on gender issues related to adultery, prostitution, polygamy, succession and inheritance, and marriage and divorce. Some laws, based on gender considerations, have been amended or passed but law reform has had limited beneficial impacts on women so far. The justice and law enforcement systems are weak, and police and prosecution authorities continue to have difficulties in applying and enforcing the law. Village courts apply customary principles, which may discriminate against women.

8. **Participation in decision making processes.** PNG remains very low in the world’s scale for women’s parliamentary representation: of the 111 members of parliament elected as of November 2012, only three were women. In the previous parliament there was only one woman. Only two private corporate entities in PNG have women on their boards. Although laws allow female representatives to be nominated to provincial and local governments, their representation remains limited.

B. Government Gender Policy and Strategy

9. The National Policy for Women and Gender Equality, 2011–2015¹² describes the government’s mission to promote improved equality, participation, and empowerment of women. It refers to objectives for women’s empowerment and the establishment of a policy environment that translates government commitments to gender equality into reality, along with the required policies and mechanisms. While gender mainstreaming across government has resulted in some policies and strategies, few of these are budgeted or implemented.

10. Dozens of specific strategic actions are prioritized under 10 priority action areas drawn from the Beijing Platform for Action and National Platform for Action, and from extensive stakeholder consultations. The National Policy for Women and Gender Equality, 2011–2015 includes an implementation plan for each action area including objectives, implementation strategies, performance indicators, and key actors, along with an illustrative budget for the 5-year time frame. The Department for Community Development is identified as the focal department, but a strong emphasis is placed on the shared responsibility across government for mainstreaming the actions in the implementation plan.

11. The Government–Development Partners Gender Forum (which prepared the 2010–2011 PNG country gender assessment) found that most, if not all, of the gender issues identified in the forums have been articulated in national and sector policies to increase gender equity but have not been translated into funded programs. Similarly, legislation exists to uphold women’s rights as citizens and protect women from illegal acts but the justice system does not

¹¹ National Department of Community Development. 2011. *National Policy on Women and Gender Equality*. Port Moresby: Government of Papua New Guinea.

adequately apply and enforce the law. Only more robust attention to funding existing policies and enforcing existing laws would have a significant positive effect on gender equality in PNG.

C. ADB's Strategy

12. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) recognizes gender equity as an essential driver of change in achieving inclusive development and emphasizes gender mainstreaming in all ADB operations. ADB will support the government in implementing its national strategies to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. In particular, ADB will support the government's objective of increasing gender awareness and capacity development for gender mainstreaming across government agencies, especially in the executing and implementing agencies involved in ADB-financed projects. Through regional technical assistance, ADB will assist agencies in establishing baseline gender indicators and monitoring gender equality results based on gender action plans.¹³

13. ADB's priority assistance will focus on roads, energy, health services, and microfinance, which incorporate gender concerns into project planning, design, and implementation. The designs of the projects in these sectors will continue to incorporate the different needs of women and men. For roads, ADB recognizes that poor transport infrastructure and services are major constraints on women's access to health facilities, schools, and market places. Improved roads and road maintenance will be of particular benefit to women in rural areas. As for energy projects, improving rural access to electricity will significantly improve the lives of women and girls, who disproportionately share household chores such as collecting wood and cooking, while suffering health consequences of smoke inhalation while cooking. Improved rural health services will provide women with greater safety in giving birth. Improved services will also enable women to gain access to modern contraceptives, monitor the health of their infants and children, obtain treatment for illness in their families, and gain information on health and safety issues. Access to microfinance will directly support women's economic empowerment by enabling them to develop new income-generating opportunities or expand existing ones. Continued emphasis will be placed on gender sensitivity in project designs in the priority areas to ensure the promotion of gender equality while providing employment and training opportunities to women during project implementation.

14. In addition to gender mainstreaming in ADB-financed projects that are aimed at improving access to infrastructure and social services, additional efforts will be made to incorporate opportunities for technical and vocational education and training across priority sector operations. With the rapidly expanding economy in PNG, a skilled local labor force is extremely important for sustainable development. Having adequate skills training that can meet increasing demand is crucial for economic empowerment of women, as well as for national economic development. ADB operations will make efforts to incorporate skills training components into implementation processes which benefit both women and men. Although ADB will not directly support the prevention of and response to GBV through stand-alone projects, ADB projects will include measures to ensure that they do not encourage GBV and minimize the risks of GBV. Moreover, ADB projects will promote the economic empowerment of women, strengthening their ability to negotiate violence-free lives.

¹³ ADB. 2010. *Technical Assistance for Promoting Evidence-Based Policy Making for Gender Equity in the Pacific*. Manila. The activities on establishing gender indicators will be undertaken in collaboration with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific .

15. To ensure the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming in ADB operations, gender strategy will emphasize the preparation of quality gender action plans and the establishment of measurable performance targets, indicators, and monitoring plans during project design. The implementation of gender action plans will be regularly reviewed and closely monitored to ensure the achievement of gender equality results. The collection of sex-disaggregated data will be required for establishing baseline indicators, monitoring the progress of projects, and evaluating gender benefits.