



Stocktake of the gender  
mainstreaming capacity of  
Pacific Island governments  
- Papua New Guinea -



**Stocktake of the gender mainstreaming capacity**

**of**

**Pacific Island governments**

***PAPUA NEW GUINEA***

**Edited by**

**Treva Braun, Gender Equality Adviser at the Secretariat of the Pacific  
Community**

**Secretariat of the Pacific Community**

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*Secretariat of the Pacific Community*

## List of abbreviations and acronyms

AIDS	Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
AV	Alternative vote
BPA	Beijing Platform for Action
CAT	Convention Against Torture
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CLRC	Constitution and Law Reform Commission
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSO	Civil society organisation
DCD	Department of Community Development
DOE/TDD	Department of Education/Teacher Development Division
DNPM	Department of National Planning and Monitoring
EFA	Education for All
EU	European Union
GAD	Gender and Development (Branch)
GDD	Gender and Development Division
GFP	Gender focal point
GO	General orders
GoPNG	Government of Papua New Guinea
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICERD	International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

LTDS	Long term development strategy
MMR	Maternal mortality rate
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MTDS	Medium term development strategy
NCW	National Council for Women
NEC	National Executive Council
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
NWM	National women's machinery
NZAID	New Zealand Agency for International Development
ODW	Office for the Development of Women
PIFS	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
STIs	Sexually transmitted infections
TSM	Temporary special measures
TOR	Terms of reference
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
WIADU	Women in Agriculture and Development Unit

# INTRODUCTION

It is now widely recognised that development and governance processes will not be effective or sustainable until women and men participate in and benefit from such processes on a basis of both formal and substantive equality. Despite this, women continue to be significantly under-represented in governance and development processes and experience discrimination and diminished opportunity in virtually all development sectors. Contrary to a wide range of commitments that Pacific Island governments have made to achieving equality between men and women, women’s needs, issues, perspectives and contributions continue in many cases to be on the periphery of development and governance dialogue.

‘Mainstreaming’ a gender perspective across all multi-sectoral development and governance work was universally recognised in 1995 at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China as a critical strategy for achieving government commitments to gender equality and sustainable development. The Beijing Platform for Action (BPA) states that:

Governments and other actors should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programmes so that, before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects on women and men, respectively (UN Women 1995: para 202).

Gender mainstreaming was also recognised in the BPA as key to addressing the enjoyment of human rights (ibid. para 229) and the overarching objective of gender mainstreaming should thus be to ensure that all multi-sectoral development processes — which might otherwise be acting, advertently or inadvertently, to perpetuate gender stereotypes and inequalities — are instead actively contributing to the realisation of gender equality in all spheres of life.

**Definition of gender mainstreaming**

*...the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.*

*(ECOSOC 1997)*

The Committee tasked with monitoring implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which is the principle international human rights treaty that defines and firmly embeds equality of women and men as a core element of the international legal order, and which has been ratified by 97 per cent of UN member countries, has explicitly called on States Parties to adopt a policy of gender mainstreaming as a strategy for achieving gender equality. For all Pacific Island countries and territories that have undergone an examination before the CEDAW Committee, the committee has either commended existing efforts at gender mainstreaming (where such efforts were actively in place) or, more commonly, urged the State Party to develop or strengthen its gender mainstreaming policies and capacity where they were absent or



insufficient (UNCEDAW 2010). Linked with this are the Committee's recommendations to strengthen the government machinery for gender equality (national women's machinery – NWM) with adequate human, financial and technical resources and the authority and decision-making powers that are necessary for them to coordinate and work effectively for the promotion of gender equality and gender mainstreaming.

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## **1. Objectives and methodology**

While gender mainstreaming gained significant momentum in the Pacific in the lead up to and early years following the Beijing Conference, perceptions are that the momentum was not maintained and that national governments do not have the necessary capacity to systematically integrate gender perspectives, including the provisions of CEDAW, into multi-sectoral development processes as part of their strategy to achieve national, regional and international commitments to gender equality.

This stocktake was designed to determine the extent to which capacity for effective gender mainstreaming exists in national governments, and to identify potential areas of strategic intervention to strengthen such capacity. It is an initiative of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), in collaboration with national governments and with support from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).<sup>1</sup> It is being carried out in phases throughout the Pacific region in response to a call from Pacific island ministries responsible for gender equality and the advancement of women for support to strengthen the institutional capacity of governments to meet their stated commitments to gender equality.

The underlying premise of the stocktake is that national women's machineries (NWMs) are key catalysts for the mainstreaming of gender and women's human rights but they are not the sole agency responsible for achieving it. To be effective, NWMs need both strong internal capacity and a wider government structure that is supportive of gender equality and mainstreaming. That wider structure must include a strong legal and policy framework supportive of gender equality and mainstreaming,

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<sup>1</sup> Now UN Women.

genuine government commitment, a supportive organisational culture, clear accountability mechanisms, strong technical capacity and adequate resources — in short, an enabling environment. SPC's initiative is thus designed firstly to take stock of that enabling environment, and secondly to collaborate with national governments and other development partners in the design and implementation of concrete, evidence-based strategies for enhancing it.

The stocktake does not review or assess the work of government or specific efforts at mainstreaming; rather it simply analyses the degree to which there is an enabling environment for such mainstreaming to take place.

The stocktake process involved desk research combined with in-country structured interviews and focus groups. The in-country research was undertaken from 22 June to 10 July 2009. In total 18 structured interviews were conducted with 16 ministries/departments, including a representative range of both central and line ministries. Most informants were senior government officials, secretaries and deputy secretaries, with direct responsibility for policy development and programme implementation in their respective departments. In addition, two focus group discussions were held, one with civil society representatives and the other with development partners. The Appendix contains a list of organisations interviewed or consulted.


This stocktake covers only the national government. Provincial governments, which play a significant role in matters of concern to gender equality, particularly in light of wide sub-national variations in the social and cultural context of women's lives, were not included due to funding constraints.


#### **Enabling environment requirements for gender mainstreaming**

1. Legal and policy framework: The extent to which gender equality and mainstreaming commitments are in place by virtue of ratification of relevant international human rights treaties, existence of constitutional and legislative provisions, and existence of government policy mandates
2. Political will: Demonstrated political will means that action is taken on stated gender equality commitments and action is formalised within systems and mechanisms to ensure mainstreaming is sustainable
3. Organisational culture: The extent to which the attitudes of staff and institutional systems, policies and structures support or marginalise gender equality as an issue
4. Accountability and responsibility: The ways in which action on commitments to gender mainstreaming can be traced and monitored within organisations, and the mechanisms through which individuals at different levels demonstrate gender equality-related results
5. Technical capacity: The extent of skills and experience that organisations can draw on to support gender and human rights mainstreaming initiatives across and within their operations and programmes
6. Adequate resources: The allocation and application of human and financial resources in relation to the scope of the task of mainstreaming

## 2. Country overview

### a. Facts and figures

PAPUA NEW GUINEA 	
<b>Population</b>	5,190,786
<b>Urban/Rural %*</b>	13%/87%
<b>Land area</b>	462,840 km <sup>2</sup>
<b>EEZ</b>	3.12 million km <sup>2</sup>
<b>Geography</b>	Papua New Guinea occupies the eastern half of the island of New Guinea and numerous offshore islands (the western portion of the island is a part of the Indonesian provinces of Papua and West Papua).
<b>Political System</b>	Constitutional parliamentary democracy
<b>Economy</b>	Natural resources exploitation (mining, gas, petrol, forestry); Subsistence agriculture; Fisheries
<b>Ethnic composition</b>	Melanesian, Papuan, Negrito, Micronesian, Polynesian: one of the most heterogeneous populations of the world with several hundred different ethnic groups.
<b>Main languages</b>	Tok Pisin, English, Hiri Motu and over 800 indigenous languages
<b>Life expectancy M/F*</b>	53.7/54.8
<b>Labour force participation rate M/F*</b>	74.1%/71.8%
<b>Human Development Index</b>	Value: 0.541 (rank 148) in 2007 Value: 0.530 (rank 145) in 2005 Value: 0.523 (rank 139) in 2004 Value: 0.523 (rank 137) in 2003 Value: 0.535 (rank 133) in 2000
<b>Gender Development Index**</b>	Value: 0.529 (rank 124) in 2005 Value: 0.521 (rank 103) in 2004 Value: 0.518 (rank 103) in 2003 Value: 0.530 (rank 110) in 2000
<b>Gender Empowerment Measure</b>	Value: 0.254 (rank 91) in 1995 Value: 0.252 (no rank) in 2002†



\*GoPNG NSO 2000

\*\*UNDP Human Development Reports

† SPC-HDP:10th Triennial\_agenda Item 3\_Paper 3.3.1\_Annex1

### b. Key gender issues

The following is a brief overview of some of the key manifestations of gender inequality in Papua New Guinea (PNG), a country where there are wide sub-national variances in women's status. This overview is far from exhaustive; it is meant to provide the contextual basis for a proper understanding and appreciation of the need for gender and women's human rights to be thoroughly and systematically integrated across all government law and policy making, programming, planning, budgeting and

monitoring. More detailed information on the status of gender equality in PNG can be obtained from a range of resources, including those listed in the bibliography.

### **Health**

PNG has one of the highest global rates of maternal mortality. The Millennium Development Goals Progress Report (2009) reported that the national maternal mortality rate (MMR) was 733 per 100,000 live births in 1994 (GoPNG and UNDP 2009) although there are great variances at the provincial levels and between geographic sectors. Total fertility rate (TFR) is high at 4.3 per cent; in 2000 it was estimated there were 4.5 births per woman between 15 and 49 years (ibid.). The rate of teenage pregnancies is also high. Family planning implementation is weak. Only 37 per cent of deliveries were supervised in 2008 (DNMP 2010), a situation reflected in the high MMR; the majority of maternal deaths occur in homes outside the formal health system (GoPNG and UNICEF 2006). To address these challenges, the government has waived all fees for antenatal and childbirth services.

PNG now has a generalised epidemic of HIV. Routine surveillance data show that young women aged between 20 and 24 years had the highest proportion of positive HIV diagnoses among new infections detected among women in 2008. Among men, the largest proportion of new HIV infections diagnosed was in the 25–29 year age group. Unequal gender relations and stereotyping prevent girls and women from seeking information and treatment, and negotiating for safer sex. Women are also disproportionately burdened in HIV through care-giving, greater levels of stigma and discrimination, and partner/husband violence.

Community health services are poor. According to the National Health Plan 2001–2010, staff are frequently harassed, female staff are raped, equipment is stolen and facilities are vandalised (GoPNG 2001).

### **Education**

In the decade since the major national education reform of 1993, PNG has seen a dramatic expansion in its education system. Girls, however, continue to be disadvantaged in education for historical, cultural and economic reasons. As of 2000, the ratio of girls to boys in primary education was 0.86 and in secondary education it was 0.67.<sup>2</sup> The 2010 Papua New Guinea Development Strategic Plan states that the male enrolment rate in primary education is 53 per cent, while the female rate is a low 47 per cent. In higher levels of education, male gross enrolment was 63 per cent while the female rate was 37 per cent. Neither primary nor secondary school is compulsory for boys and girls.

Gender differences in adult literacy are large with a strong bias towards boys. In line with its Gender Education Policy, government is making every effort to accelerate girls' education, focussing on six provinces. This is particularly challenging when the non-enrolment or dropping out of school, especially for girls, is influenced by socio-economic factors beyond the control of the Department of Education (DOE). Some of these factors include lack of school fees, poverty and safety concerns. Increasing poverty makes payment of school fees a growing problem for many parents, with many families unwilling or unable to pay, especially for girls, since it is assumed they will become homemakers. The physical location and conditions of schools have a negative impact on the enrolment and retention of

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<sup>2</sup> SPC PRISM (2009, January 26). Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Available from <http://www.spc.int/prism/>.

girls, especially in provinces where secondary schools are far from students' homes. And poor sanitation and unfriendly environments do not encourage retention of girls in schools, where some girls are subjected to abuse from both boys and teachers (GoPNG 2008).

### ***Employment***

As of 2000, the labour force participation rate was relatively even at 74.1% for men and 71.8% for women. However, 74.3% of women were subsistence workers compared with 60.8% of men. The share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector was only 5.3% (GoPNG and UNDP 2004), the lowest in the Pacific region. This low representation is a function of low education levels amongst women, safety and security issues, cultural attitudes and the emphasis of national development in industrial employment that is heavily biased towards men (Brouwer, Harris and Tanaka 1998). Labour intensive industries including informal micro-enterprise activities that could particularly benefit women are not highly developed.

### ***Land***

More than 90% of land in PNG is under customary ownership. Although women have access to land, they have limited control, as men determine most, if not all, decisions pertaining to its use. In some areas, land ownership follows matrilineal principles, but even then a brother of the female land owner is likely to make all the decisions. In patrilineal societies women are often excluded from owning registered land. PNG's 2009 CEDAW Report states that women cannot enforce rights to land and property nor claim income from cash crops or land leases such as for mining, logging and infrastructure construction.

### ***Decision making***

Women's representation in parliament has been negligible. Currently, only one woman sits in the 109 member parliament. Only a small number of women have been elected or appointed to other levels of government although, in the capital Port Moresby, the Governor recently appointed 50 per cent women councillors in an effort to increase women's political representation. There are no women as provincial governors and only three women are National Court Judges. The legal profession is 90 per cent occupied by men. Other important decision-making structures, including in the customary, religious and private spheres, are male dominated. This not only violates women's right to political participation, it directly impacts on their enjoyment of human rights in all other social, economic and cultural fields in which they have little decision making influence. The 'big man' system, founded on the notion of masculinity, strength, power, influence, wealth and exchange, contributes to the lack of visibility of women in public life. Other key barriers include cultural attitudes, including a persistent belief that 'a woman's place is in the home'; low education levels, especially for women; lack of political knowledge amongst women; lack of training; lack of support and financial resources for potential women candidates; and the perception of women themselves that politics is the domain of men.

A number of programmes have been held to address these issues, including the 2007 voter awareness programme conducted nationally with the assistance of civil society organisations (CSOs), and the PNG Women in Politics and the Gender Equality in Political Governance programmes supported by UNIFEM. In 2009 the move to implement Section 102 of the Constitution, where up to three women can be nominated to Parliament, was defeated after the National Executive Council (NEC) had approved a

process to enable three women members to be nominated. In early 2010, a new move for a temporary special measure bill (TSM) gained momentum with the support of PNG's 20 provincial governors, who agreed that there should be an additional seat in each province for women alone to contest, plus a seat representing the National Capital District. The National Executive Council approved the Equality and Participation Bill which provides for 22 reserved elected seats for women and the Bill has been tabled in Parliament.

### ***Religion and tradition***

Historically, women played a complementary role to men in the sphere of work and family and the responsibilities of each were given recognition and value. However, over time and with outside influence the patriarchal system has become predominant and plays a significant role in the formal and informal systems of power. This was reinforced by applications of Christian ideology that confined women to the private sphere and domestic duties, effectively removing them from public decision-making forums. Patriarchy has become entrenched even in traditionally matrilineal societies. The transition to cash-based economies and the emphasis on formal structures and processes have served to perpetuate these perceptions, in which women's work of looking after families has been devalued.

Historically, the practice of 'bride price' was seen as contributing to 'stabilising and promoting positive inter family and inter group relations' (Brouwer et al. 1998). Today, the practice has become commercialised and in some cases exploited by tribes with different customs. The transition to cash-based economies has not only altered the medium of exchange, but has also resulted in the cost of marriages in most groups rising significantly as a result of the commodification of bride price. Consequently there is now a pervasive belief that 'women are something to make money on' (GoPNG 2008).

Polygamy is still widespread. In addition to violating principles of gender equality, this traditional practice, coupled with promiscuous behaviour and unequal power relations between women and men, is a key contributor to the endemic of HIV.

### ***Violence against women***

While violence against women is known to be common and pervasive, the exact dimensions of the problem are not known, due to a lack of systematic data collection. There was an attempt by the Law Reform between 1982 and 1986 to research intimate partner violence and in 2006 Amnesty International also carried out research on gender-based violence in selected parts of PNG. Few variations were found between socio-economic groups, but considerable variations existed between the 16 provinces researched. While on average it was found that 75 per cent of women were hit by their partners, the rate was almost 100 per cent in the Chimbu and Western Highlands. A 2001 report commissioned by the Family Violence Action Committee confirmed these earlier findings that 'the majority of women and children in PNG are the direct or indirect victims of some form of family or sexual violence' (Amnesty International 2006). Reported incidents are often ignored by the authorities and rarely addressed as it is seen as a private matter. Women are often afraid to report violence for fear of being further harassed by police or being blamed for the crime.

Women also continue to suffer widespread abuse based on allegations of 'sorcery'. Amnesty International (2007) reported that in Chimbu province alone, approximately 150 women are believed to be killed each year for allegedly practising witchcraft.

Institutional responses to gender-based violence are often muted or non-existent. Law enforcement agents are incapable of dealing with the problem due to lack of special training, awareness and resources, besides the fact that they are often perpetrators themselves.

## **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

### **1. National women's machinery**

This section describes the history and current organisation of the national government department responsible for gender equality issues, as well as any other main government and non-government machinery that are or can be used to promote equality and mainstreaming.

#### **a. Structure**

In 1974 a women's adviser was appointed to the Office of the Prime Minister to coordinate events relating to the 1975 International Year for Women. A Women's Unit was established in the Department of Decentralisation, followed by the appointment of women's activity officers in all 20 provinces. In response to the criticism levelled at government for its lack of resource allocations and concrete plans to guide its commitment to women's issues, in 1983 the Unit underwent further reorganisation and was upgraded to the Women's Affairs Division under the Office of Youth and Recreation. In 1982 a National Women's Development Programme (NWDP) was endorsed which also led to the appointment of 20 Women's Development Officers in the provinces.

The Women's Affairs Division was later replaced by the Gender and Development Division (GDD), which was located in the Department of Community Development (DCD). Major restructuring undertaken in 2002 negatively affected the GDD, with financial resources diverted away from its core activities. Structurally and functionally, the GDD was downgraded to a branch within the DCD. The newly formed Gender and Development (GAD) Branch became the focal point for women's affairs, including gender mainstreaming activities across the whole of government, and was mandated to work with the provincial and district administrations and NGOs. The GAD Branch was unable to deliver on its mandate because of its lack of technical and financial capacity and lack of authority to direct policy and programme responses in the various sectors of government. Progress made on addressing gender issues was mainly attributed to the influence and support of donors. Poor performance was attributed to lack of leadership within the GAD Branch and the absence of performance indicators to enable evaluation and monitoring of its activities.

The new Office of Development for Women (ODW) was established in 2005 as a 'stand-alone structure' for enhancing the participation of women in contributing to and benefiting from development in PNG, with a focus on whole-of-government policy making. Its official mission is to increase the participation of women as both beneficiaries and agents in the social, economic, political and cultural development process for improvement in the quality of life for women and all (GoPNG 2008: 68).

The separation of the ODW from the GAD Branch was seen as a necessary step towards an effective mechanism for policy analysis and to influence decision making in the various levels of the government. This section, therefore, focuses on the ODW as the principal government department for the promotion of gender equality, women's human rights and gender mainstreaming.

The 2011–2015 National Policy for Women and Gender Equality was launched in 2011. It will form the basis of the Office for the Development of Women's overall mandate.

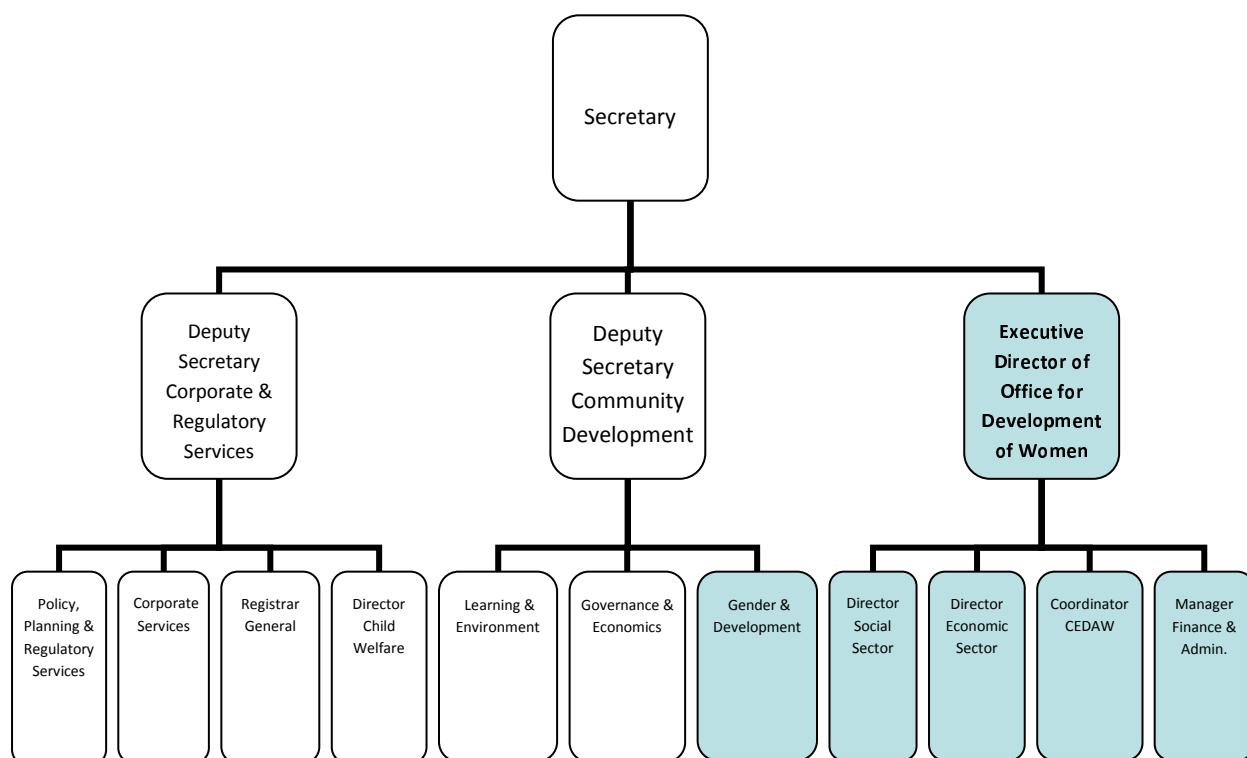
The 2008 CEDAW report (GoPNG 2008: 69,70) describes the functions of the ODW, summarised as follows:

1. Policy advice, implement and gender mainstreaming;
2. Research, monitoring and evaluation;
3. Coordinate and monitor PNG's commitments and implementation of international obligations, conventions, and treaties; and participate in international forums;
4. Strengthen partnerships with women's NGOs, CSOs, government agencies and professional groups;
5. Provide informed and representative advice to government on policy and development issues relevant to the diverse views and circumstances of women;
6. Enhance partnership between government and the NCW and other organisations by providing technical and financial support to increase their input in government decision making and conduct regular targeted consultations forums on priority issues, providing opportunities for women's organisations to raise issues of concern directly with the Government.

The reporting mechanisms of ODW include reporting to the senior management team on progress, briefs to the secretary and minister responsible and, at the international level, the CEDAW reporting mechanism. There are monthly reports to senior management; quarterly progress reports; and annual reports on the implementation of activities, progress and outcomes to the government.

ODW comprises two sectors: the Social Sector (covering Health, HIV Aids, Education, Governance, Law and Justice), and the Economic Sector (covering Mining, Transport, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water, and Environment). The staffing level for ODW is 14: six women and eight men.





**Figure 1: Location and structure of the government department responsible for gender: Department of Community Development (DCD)**

**Table 1: Budget of the Office for Development of Women (Kina)**

	2009	2010
Total government budget	576,520,000	624,680,000
Total Department for Community Development budget	8,890,000	8,633,300
Total ODW budget	531 700	609,300
ODW % of total government budget	0.009%	0.01%
<b>Allocation of ODW budget</b>		
Salaries and overheads	380 100	
Programme costs	151 600	
Gender mainstreaming	0	

The budget for ODW for the two last years (2009 and 2010) is outlined in Table 1.

The total budget allocated for ODW in 2009 was K 531,700 (approx USD 204,000) to cover office and staff establishment costs, and operational and development programmes. Of that, K 380,100 (approx. USD 146,000) was allocated to establishment costs. Of the total amount allocated, no funds were earmarked for gender mainstreaming work.

In 2008, DCD was given a rating of 'B' by the Department of Finance. Prior to this the rating was 'D', the lowest rating for financial provision. This change signifies an upgrading in the priority of the government and more funding, but ODW has not received any increase in funding since this upgrade.

### ***Other government machinery***

The creation of gender focal points (GFPs) within various ministries is one way to assign responsibility for gender mainstreaming. To be effective, they need a clear mandate, authority, technical skills, allocated time and a budget for gender mainstreaming work. A number of GFP desks or units were set up in various government departments and tasked with the responsibility of mainstreaming gender issues into policies and programmes. This includes the Prime Minister's Office, the Department of National Planning and Monitoring, the Department of Education, the Department of Mining, the Department of Fisheries, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Health and the recently established Department of Justice and Attorney General's Office. The track record of these GFPs is not encouraging. Most have struggled with lack of funding and are functionally weak and structurally marginalised. They lack the authority to influence both vertical and horizontal decision making structures. They have no clear terms of reference, are not qualified and in many cases are assigned gender responsibilities in addition to other work responsibilities. There is lack of commitment by senior executives to the work of the GFPs. Those in the Prime Minister's Office and the Department of National Planning and Monitoring have been removed. The GFP position within the Department of Education has been left vacant since 2005 and in 2010 was merged with the Human Resource section of the department. The Department of Agriculture recognised that the GFP is not functioning effectively and provides little more than a token gender mechanism to add to the list.

In 2011, the National Strategy to implement the concluding observations from the United Nations CEDAW Committee proposed the establishment of a CEDAW Core Committee and a CEDAW Reference Group. The CEDAW Core Committee is composed of representatives from the Department of National Planning and Monitoring, the Department of Justice and Attorney General's Office, the Department of the Prime Minister and National Executive Council (NEC), the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Department of Community Development, and the Office for the Development of Women. Responsible for directing work on the implementation of the concluding observations and PNG's reporting process, its role is to coordinate and oversee the submission of PNG reports to the NEC and UNCEDAW Committee; oversee and coordinate the implementation of the UNCEDAW concluding observations; and regularly report to the government and relevant donor partners on the progress of the implementation at the national level.

The CEDAW Reference Group is composed of representatives from the law and justice sector, the Department of Education, the Department of Health, the Department of Agriculture and Livestock, the Office of Higher Education; the Department of the Prime Minister and NEC, the Department of Justice and Attorney General's Office, the Department of Provincial and Local Government Affairs, the Department of Community Development, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Department

of Labour and Employment, the National Cultural Commission, the National AIDS Council, the Constitutional and Law Reform Commission, the National Development Bank, the Police, and the Office for the Development of Women. The CEDAW Reference Group will oversee and direct data collection efforts of the sectors and will meet every two months. Its roles are to oversee and coordinate data collection by key government agencies, ensure timely compilation of data and information on the implementation of the concluding observations from the UNCEDAW Committee, advise the Core Committee on the progress of data collection, and provide the Sex Disaggregated Database Coordinating Committee with relevant statistical data for verification by the Committee for entry into the database.

There is a parliamentary committee on family and welfare, where gender issues are supposed to be discussed and monitored. However, members of the committee have not been sensitised about gender issues and rarely discuss them. There exists also a Special Parliamentary Committee on Community Development but neither women nor gender is mentioned as an area of concern for the committee, except as part of the Integrated Community Development Policy.

There is no national human rights institution yet, although it was proposed that a project for its establishment will be submitted to the parliament for the deliberation session of May 2011. That has not eventuated.

There is an independent Ombudsman Commission whose mission, among others, is to 'help in the improvement of the work of governmental bodies and the elimination of unfairness and discrimination by them, and to help in the elimination of unfair or otherwise defective legislation and practices affecting or administered by governmental bodies.' The Commissioners are not lawyers or human rights experts. A woman was appointed as Commissioner for the first time in 2010 — she had previously been a member of the CEDAW group.

### ***Civil society***

The role of women's NGOs and CSOs was acknowledged as important to the work of gender equality. The National Council of Women (NCW) was established in 1979 by an Act of Parliament. Under the Act, the NCW is mandated to represent and coordinate the concerns of all women, to facilitate an exchange of views with regional and international organisations on matters pertaining to PNG women, to be the focal point for all NGOs and to conduct, on behalf of women and communities, any business activity for their benefit. The NCW has established branches in the 20 provinces and there are 89 district councils of women. However, due to lack of resources and difficulty in coordinating and operating, they have not yet provided the expected outcome of establishing an effective network of women.

Other women's organisations focusing on promoting women's issues and concerns are the 22 provincial councils of women, Papua Hahine (which focuses on development issues such as political and voter awareness, sexual violence, drug abuse, and HIV and AIDS), and a business and professional women's organisation that targets disadvantaged female students and raises funds for school fees to assist in their education. Soroptimist International, Women in Business, the YWCA, Women in Agriculture and women's church groups such as the United Church Women's Fellowship, the Lutheran Wokmeri, the Catholic Women's Federation and the Anglican Mothers' Union are other active NGOs working to address gender issues.

## **b. Assessment**

This section reviews the main government department responsible for the promotion of gender equality, women's human rights and gender mainstreaming, namely the Office for the Development of Women (ODW). It covers ODW's basic capacity, working environment and relationship with other relevant stakeholders, and how those influence its ability to act as a catalyst for the mainstreaming of gender and women's human rights across the whole of government.

### ***Establishment of the ODW to be operationalised***

The review and separation of ODW from the GAD Branch signaled an important step in government's political commitment to gender equality. Officially established in 2005, but operational only since 2009, it is too early to fully assess its ability to act as a catalyst for mainstreaming gender and women's human rights across government. Its authorised location in the Prime Minister's Office should have increased ODW's influence across the policy, programming and resource allocation spectra. However, it has been decided by the DCD very recently that such a move would not necessarily have the expected outcome. Other institutions have been moved to the Prime Minister's Office and were marginalised before they were closed. Therefore, the decision to remain under the DCD was considered more appropriate for executing its mandate. However, its position under an institution dedicated to community development may seriously hamper its capacity to work in a cross-cutting way and influence the central and sectoral government institutions.

While the rationale for establishing ODW is grounded in an acknowledgement that previous gender and development efforts have been slow and challenging, its success in not repeating the past will be contingent on a number of factors, including the sustained availability of both financial and human resources appropriate to the nature and extent of gender inequalities in PNG, and on the technical expertise of its staff. Establishing a clear vision and high level mandate in the revised policy and plan of action for mainstreaming gender and women's human rights will also be critical for the achievement of gender equality goals.

### ***The necessity to improve mechanisms***

Access to sex disaggregated data and having a strong research division with statistical support is also fundamental to the mainstreaming work. The capacity to effectively analyse gender issues across sectors and to monitor and evaluate progress is central to the mandate of any effective national women's machinery.

With its mandate for policy advice, research, monitoring and evaluation, ODW plans to establish an information and sex disaggregated data management system to support its capacity to conduct gender analysis in different sectors. This database should be operational in 2012.

ODW is also mandated to monitor progress towards gender equality and report to national and international institutions. Monitoring and reporting processes will need to include clear indicators of progress. The preparation of PNG's initial CEDAW report has provided a basis for monitoring and evaluation the government's implementation of its commitment under CEDAW, and more regular and systematic analysis and reporting will be important. The CEDAW Reference Group and the Sex Disaggregated Database Coordinating Committee proposed in the national strategy to implement the

concluding observations from the UNCEDAW Committee (2011–2014) should contribute to establishing a strong monitoring mechanism.

### ***Strong support from development partners***

The contribution of donors and development partners' programmes towards advancing gender equality in PNG was confirmed by a number of informants. The NGO focus group discussion ranked this support as high. It has provided the much-needed catalyst for gender mainstreaming work. While commendable, this nonetheless raises the issue of ownership by government, an issue that was raised by some of the departments interviewed, including DCD. To some extent, this is related to the issue of capacity within the departments or sectors that are recipients of development assistance. In delivering programmes, donors and development partners should focus on developing the technical capacity of sectoral staff to ensure gender and women's human rights form a central part of the design, implementation and monitoring of programmes or projects. This was highlighted as an area of intervention that is necessary to bring about greater accountability of gender equality issues. Donors should also ensure long-term funding support to ODW so that it has both the resources and the time to develop into a strong, skilled catalyst for the mainstreaming of gender and women's human rights.

### ***Coordination with government departments***

While the role of women's NGOs and CSOs was considered vital to the work of ODW, and their contribution to promote women's human rights largely recognised, their collaboration with other government departments is minimal. This restrains the capacity of government institutions to reach out to women — especially in a strong patriarchal cultural context — and to address their needs effectively. It also hinders the capacity of women's NGOs and CSOs to influence the policies and decision making, notably to influence where and how financial resources are invested; it limits NGOs' and CSOs' access to resources for addressing women's needs and reducing gender inequalities.

### ***Capacity building critical to its leadership role***

To be effective in fulfilling its mandate to promote gender equality and support the government in its mainstreaming efforts, ODW needs to build its capacity at different levels. The capacity assessment for three women's machineries (GoPNG and UNDP 2010) conducted by UNDP in 2010 identified the core issues as: 1) institutional development (strategic planning, coordination, mechanisms, monitoring and evaluation); 2) leadership (strategic visioning, policy formulation and gender analysis); 3) Human resources and knowledge (career development plan and capacity development work plan, information and sex disaggregated data management and research dissemination, advocacy capacity, gender mainstreaming capacity, understanding universal standards on gender equality, and management and implementation capacities); 4) Financial resources (resource mobilisation strategy and gender responsive budgeting).

Building technical capacity in gender mainstreaming, advocacy and management is not only essential to achieving progress towards gender equality in the overall PNG society, it is also critical in order to establish ODW's credibility in the line and central departments and for increasing the capacity of ODW to mobilise resources for implementing its mandate.

## 2. Enabling environment overview

### a. Legal and policy framework

PNG has a relatively strong legal and policy framework to support the mainstreaming of gender and women’s human rights across the whole of government. Most of the main human rights treaties are in force, constitutional precedence is given to non-discrimination over custom, and the national policy recognises the importance of mainstreaming. To achieve a stronger framework, specific anti-discrimination legislation must be enacted. Much greater effort is also needed to ensure that the existing legal and policy framework is widely understood and that it systematically informs the work of government across the political, economic, social and cultural spheres.

#### ***Core human rights conventions ratified***

PNG has ratified five core international human rights conventions of particular significance for the human rights of women and girls, as summarised in Table 2. It has also endorsed a number of key international and regional policy frameworks containing commitments to gender equality, including the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action (BPA), the 2000 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005–2015, the Revised Pacific Platform for Action on Advancement of Women and Gender Equality 2005–2015 (RPPA) and the Pacific Plan (2005, revised 2007). However, reporting under these treaties has been irregular.

**Table 2: Status of ratification and reporting of key international human rights treaties**

	ICCPR	ICESCR	CAT	CEDAW	CRC
Ratification date	21 July 2008	21 July 2008	8 December 1988	12 January 1995	2 March 1993
Reporting date(s)				22 May 2009	21 July 2003
Examination date(s)				22 July 2010	22 January 2004

Article 55(1) of the Constitution (GoPNG 1975) stipulates that that ‘all citizens have the same rights’ irrespective of, among others, sex. Article 55(2) provides that sub-section (1) ‘does not prevent the making of laws for the special benefit, welfare, protection or advancement of [among others] females’. The Constitution does not, however, define discrimination. Nor does it have a specific antidiscrimination clause that guarantees substantive equality between men and women.

### ***Existence of legislation protecting women's rights***

There is no stand-alone anti-discrimination legislation covering sex discrimination in PNG. The Discriminatory Practices Act 1963 limits the prohibited grounds of discrimination to 'colour, race or ethnic, tribal or national origin' but does not mention sex.

There are two positive examples of equality-friendly legislative action. The Criminal Code (Sexual Offences and Crimes against Children) Act 2002 provides extensive protection against the exploitation of children, recognises the various ways in which women are sexually violated, includes marital rape as a crime, and removes the requirement for corroboration in sexual assault cases. Secondly, amendments to the Evidence Act (2003) provide that court hearings in sexual offences may be closed to the public, that victims can have a support person whilst giving evidence, that the accused is not allowed to cross-examine the victim, that no evidence may be admitted as to sexual reputation, and that medical evidence of rape is not obligatory since most people live in remote areas where accessibility for medical examination is almost impossible.

Currently, the Law Reform Commission has submitted references for the review of domestic violence legislation, a Sorcery Bill and a Polygamy Bill. The Law and Justice Department is also in the process of reviewing village courts legislation to include women magistrates. Despite some good laws being in place, enforcement of those laws, particularly in relation to sexual and gender-based violence has been very weak in PNG.

### ***Legislative gaps***

Ongoing legislative gaps include marriage laws that set the minimum age for marriage at 18 for men and 16 for women and, in exceptional circumstances, allow the court to permit marriage below these ages<sup>3</sup> (well below the marriageable age recommended by CEDAW);<sup>4</sup> and sorcery laws that, among other things, recognise and punish acts of sorcery with up to five years imprisonment. The Employment Act contains no anti-discrimination provisions and in fact discriminates against women; there are provisions prohibiting women from working at night in mines and from engaging in heavy labour, and the maternity leave provisions accord public service employees only 12 weeks of maternity leave (less than the ILO recommended minimum of 14 weeks) of which only six weeks are on full pay. Private sector employees receive only 12 weeks of unpaid maternity leave, and female employees are liable for dismissal if, at the end of the approved maternity leave period, they need or choose to take further leave. In addition, while the legislation creates a general duty on the part of the employers to create a safe working environment for employees, PNG has not introduced any specific health protection for pregnant workers. There are, however, allowances of half an hour twice daily for breast-feeding mothers. Protection from sexual harassment is not provided for in the Act, although public sector workers have protection from sexual harassment under the Public Service General Orders, which specifies the victim's recourses and clearly mentions that perpetrators will be dismissed.

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<sup>3</sup> One study calculated that at least 3870 children aged between ten and fourteen years had been married and were living in the rural areas in 2000, and 633 in the urban areas (GoPNG and UNICEF, 2006). Another study reported that female children as young as 13 years old are given in marriage by parents, other family members or village chiefs on behalf of families (UNICEF, UNESCAP and ECPAT, 2004).

<sup>4</sup> The CEDAW committee considers that the minimum age for marriage should be 18 years for both men and women. (See CEDAW General Recommendation No. 21 (13th session, 1994), Equality in marriage and family relations, para. 36. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations/recomm.htm#recom21>.)

### ***A gender policy that engages the government to mainstream gender***

The first PNG national women's policy was endorsed by the National Executive Council (NEC) in 1990 (GoPNG 1990). The policy made it the responsibility of government departments to mainstream women's issues into their policies and programmes (UNDP 1991). However, the policy was very prescriptive and grounded in a welfare and integrationist approach. In 1995 the Women's Five Year Management Plan was endorsed. It had the effect of shifting towards a gender and development approach. Furthermore, the 1995 Platform for Action 1995–2000 (GoPNG 1995) provided a framework for engaging women in the development process of the nation; it was the implementation plan of the Women's Policy. The emphasis of the new Women and Gender Equality Policy launched in 2011 is gender and development. Although the new policy provides strategies for implementation, it does not include gender mainstreaming.

### ***Moderate awareness about legal and policy frameworks***

Out of 16 informants, most were aware of at least one international, regional or national legal or policy framework that is supportive of gender mainstreaming. Of those, only seven cited CEDAW, three referred to the MDGs, four identified the Convention on the Rights of the Child, three mentioned the Constitution and two quoted the Public Service Commission's equal employment opportunity policy. A number of instruments specific to each sector were referred to by the informants, including Education for All (EFA), international Labour Organization conventions, the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the PNG Population Policy. Overall there is only moderate awareness across sectors of the legal and policy framework for mainstreaming gender and women's human rights in the work of government.

## **b. Political will**

### ***PNG's commitment to gender equality***

A measure of a government's political will for gender equality and mainstreaming is the extent to which national and sectoral policies recognise, prioritise and seek to address gender imbalances. In 2005 PNG launched its Medium Term Development Strategy (MTDS) 2005–2010, which identified gender as a cross-cutting issue, stating that 'the protection of the vulnerable and disadvantaged, and the promotion of gender equity, is both a moral and constitutional obligation for government' (DNPM 2004). Despite this, gender was not integrated throughout the MTDS and instead appeared primarily in sections on health and education.

The Government's new Medium Term Development Plan 2011–2015, which aims to give all citizens equal opportunities to participate in and benefit from the development of the country, proposes programmes for addressing women's needs in both urban and rural areas. It focuses on three themes: 1) access to resources through education, health and entrepreneurship; 2) access to rights through legal and social empowerment (including the power to address gender-based family and sexual violence); 3) access to voice through participation in decision making (GoPNG 2011).

The Papua New Guinea Development Strategic Plan 2010–2030 mentions gender as a crosscutting issue but fails to suggest any strategies for implementation.



Several sectoral gender policies have been developed, including a Gender Equity in Education Policy and a Law and Justice Gender Strategy. The latter is currently receiving only K 20,000 (approx. USD 7,600) for implementation, which is considered wholly insufficient to address gender issues adequately.

The National Strategic Plan (NSP) on HIV/AIDS (2006–2010) recognises that gender is a key factor in shaping both the epidemic and the national response to tackling it, and promoted gender equality in, amongst other areas, access to prevention, treatment and care; strengthening the leadership of women; and improving the ability of women and youth to protect themselves with less reliance on men's choices. A National Policy and Strategic Plan on Gender and HIV/AIDS 2006–2010 was developed alongside the NSP.

A Graduate Trainee Development Programme is in place under the Public Sector Workforce Development Programme (PSWDP), with gender as a main focus.

The Steering Committee on Family and Sexual Violence, chaired by the Department of National Planning and Monitoring (DNPM), has developed a draft Family and Sexual Violence Strategy for endorsement.

Despite this overall good mix of policy statements, gender-specific policies endorsed at both the national and sectoral levels tend to 'evaporate' or are too broad and general. The MTDS Performance Management Framework (MTDS/PMF) carried out in 2007 to evaluate the success of the MTDS revealed that in respect of gender 'on aggregate no significant discernible development had taken place since year 2000' (DNPM 2007) although the latest evidence showed some performance improvements. Most notable programmes and activities undertaken in support of gender equality have been driven by a few individuals. This includes both the Minister and Secretary for Community Development, who spearheaded the TSM Bill.

### ***Proactive initiatives to eliminate gender inequalities***

The Law Reform Commission has developed and submitted before the National Executive Council a policy paper on domestic violence and, supported by UNFPA, is engaged in talk-back shows on the topic of polygamy, which affects the spread of HIV and AIDS. It has prepared and submitted for endorsement terms of references (TORs) on polygamy and sorcery, with a view to legislating on these issues.

The Department of Education and the Teacher Development Division were able to point to tangible results, supported by statistics, such as the increasing national enrolment rate from 46 per cent to 56 per cent and the increased number of female students who are enrolling at the lower levels of school.

The Department of Education emphasised that gender, as part of the education policy, is acknowledged as important at the ministerial, national and provincial board levels, even though there are practical challenges in terms of implementation. In 1999 a gender desk was created within the department and a gender focal point appointed to conduct gender awareness programmes. However, since 2005 the position has been vacant. At the operational level, a gender committee is established to focus on policies: the implementation programme developed with technical assistance from AusAID is gender focused, some gender awareness workshops have been conducted, and efforts are now being made to target the teachers' colleges to integrate gender into the curriculum.

The Department of Health noted its collaboration with DOE to promote the 'human face' of development, including mothers and children.

The Department of Environment made reference to surveys carried out within the logging and mining sectors that include gathering women's views on development initiatives, and referred also to micro finance projects for women in adjacent villages that contribute to their economic empowerment and to the well-being of the community as a whole.

Fisheries noted an extension programme through which provinces are encouraged to take up 'women in fisheries' projects and the establishment of micro projects such as *kaibus* (small fast food outlets) and 'outboard motor' projects to economically empower women and benefit both women and men.

The Department of Agriculture and Livestock established its gender focal point known as the Women in Agriculture Development Unit (WIADU) in 1996. Its specific role is to coordinate, facilitate, disseminate and encourage through inter-sectoral consultation women's participation in agriculture in formal and informal activities, the recognition of women's contribution to food security and networking and dissemination of information to households. The achievements of WIADU are evident in the integration of gender issues in the National Agriculture Development Policy and Strategy 2001–2012, the National Agriculture Development Plan 2007–2016 and the Agriculture White Paper 2008–2010. The Consultative Implementation and Monitoring Council has set up an Agriculture Sectoral Committee (CIMC), which has been instrumental in setting up and supporting an NGO called Women in Agriculture (WIA) in the initial stages. WIA is based in Lae and is supported by the National Agriculture Research Institute (NARI). Other initiatives were introduced, including the Integrated Training Agriculture Programme through the University of Vudal and gender mainstreaming within the Fresh Produce Development Agency (FPDA) based in Goroka.

Despite those positive initiatives, PNG's 2008 CEDAW Report notes that women have little access to training, improved technology and resources.

### ***Political will ratings***

Perceptions of the political will for gender equality and mainstreaming is another, albeit less concrete, measure of actual political will. Probably based on the previous initiatives cited, political will is perceived overall to be medium to high. Of the 16 departments/divisions interviewed, four rated high the commitment to gender mainstreaming, three ranked it medium to high, five ranked it medium and one assigned a low to medium ranking, while two departments ranked commitment as low.

Despite this perception, little is concretely done to address gender inequalities. Some of the factors identified as barriers to higher political will for gender mainstreaming include lack of awareness and lack of gender sensitivity. These were cited by seven of the 15 departments and divisions interviewed. Nine of the departments/divisions interviewed cited cultural factors and attitudes. Some referred to the perceptions of women themselves, who have been indoctrinated to believe that they are second class citizens.

### ***Personal leadership is important***

Individuals were the most cited key factor in support of higher political will for gender mainstreaming, with nine of the 15 departments interviewed ranking this support between moderate to major. Thirteen of the departments interviewed were able to identify individuals at the senior executive levels who were aware of gender issues and supportive of gender equality. While these 'champions' could be used to capitalise on potential entry points to establish or strengthen gender mainstreaming initiatives, the extent of gender equality training and the time available to commit to gender mainstreaming work was not determined.

The contribution of NGOs was also considered significant in advocating and supporting gender equality and mainstreaming initiatives.

Few informants mentioned the role of the Gender and Development Branch and the development partners in support of generating high political commitment to gender mainstreaming. The Office for the Development of Women was not mentioned since it was newly created at the time of the gender stocktake.

### ***Gender mainstreaming not considered mandated***

Neither Finance nor Treasury considered gender mainstreaming part of their mandate. Treasury indicated that it is focused only on 'higher economic indicators' and that it is up to departments and divisions to integrate gender equality goals and projects within their budget and planning documents.

### ***Lack of resources and capacity hinder gender mainstreaming***

Other actions identified that could strengthen political support for mainstreaming of gender and women's human rights include increased and more effective co-ordination, increased financial resources for the work of gender mainstreaming (seen as a continuous challenge given the competing priorities of government), and capacity building through attachments and specialised gender training.

## **c. Organisational culture**

Organisational culture refers to the extent to which the attitudes of staff and institutional systems and structures support or marginalise gender equality as an issue across sectors. A supportive organisational culture encourages a gender lens during all policy dialogues, establishes good lines of communication with the national women's machinery, ensures sex disaggregated data collection and analysis, has organisational systems in place to guide and inform staff on integrating gender within their technical area, strives for gender balance at all levels of the organisation's staffing, and has gender-sensitive human resource management policies in place.

### ***Efforts are made to increase awareness***

Various positive impacts that were reported to have resulted from greater exposure to gender issues include increased awareness, the establishment of gender desks, the development of a national gender policy, the development of gender policies for each division within the Department of Education, an increased intake of female students and, within the Law and Justice programmes, the development of the Law and Justice Sector Gender Strategy, which sets out the objectives, strategies and indicators to guide gender mainstreaming within the departments.

### ***Gender equality and development partners***

Gender equality is increasingly acknowledged as a development issue in PNG. Development partners and donors have played a crucial role in promoting gender equality as a development consideration in policy dialogue. Twelve of the departments/divisions interviewed confirmed attending meetings with other ministries, donors or development partners where gender issues were raised as a development issue. This includes meetings with ADB, AusAID, NZAID, the European Union, UNICEF, UNIFEM and UNDP in the areas of human rights, human trafficking, discrimination against women, HIV/AIDS, women in mining, gender in education, health, family and sexual violence, sorcery and the juvenile forum.

Inter-ministerial meetings where gender was reported to be raised include meetings of the Steering Committee for the Technical Working Group on Higher Education, national development plan meetings, National Research Institution meetings on various gender-related topics, the sector-wide meetings in the Education Sector Improvement Programme and, naturally, inter-sectoral meetings coordinated by the Department of Community Development for the purposes of CEDAW reporting. The frequent references to the programmes/projects that prioritise gender and are supported by donors and development partners signals the important role they play in maintaining gender equality on the policy agenda. However, this can also be indicative of the lack of full ownership by government, despite its commitments at the international, regional and national levels. Impacts are yet to be significantly felt because gender mainstreaming as a strategy to achieve gender equality requires a whole of government approach, which is yet to happen.

### ***More interactions with ODW***

Interaction with ODW or the Gender and Development Branch varied across the departments interviewed. Eight departments cited regular formal and informal interactions, four departments reported no interaction, and two noted only occasional interactions. With few exceptions, such as in the case of the CEDAW reporting process, most interactions cited have been instigated, as already mentioned, by development partners or donors.

### ***Many ministries produce and use sex disaggregated data***

Nine of the ministries interviewed reported collecting sex-disaggregated data as a matter of government policy and to inform planning and policy development. In addition, the Department of Justice and the Attorney General's Office is currently setting up a database of magistrates and a proposal is in the pipeline to include databases of juveniles; the National Statistics Office is now producing data at the village level; the Department of Health under the National Health and Information Systems (NHIS) is producing monthly reports that are directly linked to provinces, and based on which analyses are carried out on types of disease and reproductive health figures; and the Department of Education collects environmental data with social impact analyses carried out that integrate women's issues. Although sex-disaggregated data are produced they are not necessarily used for gender analysis and for a greater understanding of gender disparities.

### ***Absence of guidelines and tools for mainstreaming gender***

Although many departments have a gender strategy in place, it seems that no ministry or department interviewed had tools or systems to guide and inform staff on how to integrate gender and women's human rights into their technical area of work.

### ***Few instruments exist to promote equal employment opportunities***

The human resources management policies of the public service are governed by the Public Service Management Act and administered by the Department of Personnel through General Orders (GO). While there is an equal employment opportunity policy in place, hiring procedures and standards are stated to be based on merit, often masking the biased nature of how merit is defined when it is based on patriarchal norms. While the Public Service GO includes sexual harassment provisions, the Public Service Act and GO are currently being reviewed, providing a window of opportunity to review and possibly strengthen the gender dimensions. The Department of Justice and Attorney General's Office, through a programme on governance and accountability, has created an Equal Employment Opportunities Coordinating Committee, and the newly established Legal Policies and Governance Division is empowered to address equal opportunity issues.

### ***Women in high decision-making positions in government***

The male/female breakdown at the top three levels within the ministries interviewed is summarised in Table 3:

**Table 3: Men/women breakdown in top three positions in PNG ministries**

<b>Post</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>
Highest	12	2
2 <sup>nd</sup> Level	21	10
3 <sup>rd</sup> Level	67	34

Table 3 shows that the three top levels of decision making are all significantly male dominated. Nine of the departments interviewed reported that efforts are being made to encourage women into decision-making levels and technical positions. This includes both formal and informal mechanisms. Given that women are still largely excluded from political and decision-making levels across government, community and household spheres, significant public awareness about gender equality is essential. As highlighted by the government informants and the development partners' focus group, what is required to push the gender equality agenda forward at the national level is to create society-wide demand. The HIV and AIDS strategies were cited as examples, where the collaborative efforts of government, development partners, private organisations, the media and NGOs were harnessed to make the issue of HIV prominent. Improving the gender balance in central and sectoral ministries through affirmative action may be necessary to accelerate progress.

#### **d. Accountability mechanisms**

Accountability mechanisms ensure that action on commitments to gender mainstreaming can be traced and monitored within organisations, and that individuals are held to account for gender equality-

related results in their area of work. There are virtually no national accountability mechanisms for gender mainstreaming in place in PNG.

### ***Gender mainstreaming rarely part of TORs***

Eight ministries/departments stated that they had no posts that include gender-related responsibilities, while six reported that gender is part of the terms of reference and job descriptions of specific positions, such as for the staff of ODW, the GAD Branch and some designated sectoral gender focal points. Only the Department of Education reported having executive gender-related responsibilities linked to the management of positions responsible for gender equality and gender mainstreaming.

In addition, there are no systems for monitoring individual performance in achieving gender-related results, and no gender-related performance evaluations are carried out, even in departments where a gender sectoral strategy exists.

### ***Capacity building and accountability***

Lack of awareness was identified by the respondents as a main barrier to gender mainstreaming. Gender awareness was suggested as a critical means to increase the overall commitment of the government to mainstream gender. It was further suggested that there is a need for technical gender training if gender-related responsibilities are to be properly carried out and measured. The ministries interviewed indicated that having more staff with technical qualifications in gender would add value to their work.

In addition, the Department of Personnel reiterated the need for gender accountability to be included in annual plans and within the monitoring and evaluation outcomes of departments and officials. A number of systems already in place that could be adapted to improve accountability for gender mainstreaming were cited by the informants, such as reviewing recruitment policies and building gender responsibility into job descriptions. Policies could be reviewed to provide direction for developmental work on gender. Corporate plans can include monitoring and evaluation of gender strategies and outcomes. As a prerequisite, systems and procedures for gender mainstreaming must first be put in place.

## **e. Technical capacity**

Gender and women's human rights cannot be properly mainstreamed without a pool of technically qualified experts in these areas, whose skills and experience can systematically be drawn on by line and central ministries. Lack of budgetary provisions, attitudes towards gender equality, and lack of coordination and networking were some of the constraints identified to increasing technical capacity within government.

### ***Overall weak technical capacity***

No line or central ministries interviewed has staff with the necessary technical qualifications or capacity to properly understand gender equality issues and how to mainstream them into their work. Training opportunities and skills development in gender-related analysis, planning and budgeting are non-existent. Most of those interviewed expressed the view that the non attention to gender equality issues

is due to the lack of technical expertise and awareness of gender, and they expressed the need to be trained to a functional level of expertise.

Of the 15 departments/divisions interviewed, ten indicated that technical capacity of staff in gender is low, while four gave it as medium. Eleven departments confirmed that their staff have not been provided with training in the area of gender. The Department of National Planning and Monitoring has had one of its staff members trained in gender planning, and a National Statistics Office staff member was trained in the field of gender analysis. In these few cases, it was reported that there has been no real impact within the organisations to validate the usefulness of this training. The Department of Community Development confirmed that, except for some short courses, none of its staff have been technically trained.

### ***Weak transfer of skills from technical expertise***

While a number of consultants have been engaged in a number of departments for specialised sector work, significantly fewer consultants have been specifically engaged for technical expertise in gender. The DCD, the Department of Education, and the National Fisheries Authorities all reported having had some gender consultancy work carried out. An AusAID consultant attached to the Department of Education is focussed on curriculum development and other gender issues in education. The DCD identified a number of projects that are supported by development partners/donors, including a project on eliminating violence against women with the support of UNDP, women in political leadership and a national consultancy on the gender policy. Regarding these projects, the issue of ownership and transfer of skills and knowledge to local staff and counterparts was raised.

## **f. Adequacy of financing for gender equality**

Ensuring reliable financing requires that gender mainstreaming across the whole of government be built into the government's budgeting processes. The national budget should allocate specific and sufficient resources to both ODW and individual agencies to engage in systematic results-based gender analysis, planning, implementation and monitoring.

### ***Inadequate resources for mainstreaming gender***

The PNG government does not provide adequate resources for mainstreaming gender and women's human rights. At present, only 0.01% of the total government budget is allocated to ODW. In addition, no budget has yet been allocated for implementation of the national strategy to implement the concluding observations from the UNCEDAW Committee, nor for implementation of the first year of the new National Policy for Women and Gender Equality, as was the case with the previous National Women's Policy.

A number of sectors have gender-related policies. As noted earlier, the Law and Justice Gender Strategy is currently allocated only K 20,000 for its implementation. There is no information available on the budget allocated for supporting gender sectoral policy/strategy.

Of the 15 departments interviewed, seven stated that government and development partners do not provide adequate funding for gender mainstreaming, three were not certain and the Department of Finance did not respond. The DCD noted the substantial contribution made by development partners

and donors to support gender-related activities and stated that only in the last three years has government increased its budgetary allocation for addressing gender issues. This is reflected in the establishment of ODW and its budgetary allocations to focus on the enabling framework, including policy and legislation.

Most of the gender-related programmes are donor funded. Among the 13 departments interviewed, none was able to identify specific budgetary allocations targeting gender equality or women's empowerment. Only DCD and the Department of Health were able to identify aspects of the general budget that impact gender equality. The Department of Health cited a family health and maternal health project. DCD, while having a specific GAD Branch, noted that the level of resources provided by government was negligible, as demonstrated in its achievements towards its CEDAW and CRC implementation and the country's non-adherence to international reporting obligations: it has taken 13 years for the government to report under CEDAW.

All the departments interviewed reported that there are no measures in place to verify government's financial commitment towards gender equality and towards meeting its international, legislative and policy commitments. The GAD Branch received one million kina in development aid for gender equality work in 2011, which is inclusive of the gender based violence project of the government.

A number of factors were cited as constraints to increasing budgetary allocations for gender mainstreaming, including the lack of financial resources devoted to gender equality overall, the lack of awareness and priority accorded to gender equality issues, the lack of gender capacity within the central agencies (Finance and Treasury) and the lack of accountability, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place, linking programmes and activities to tangible gender-equality results or impacts. Raising awareness was most frequently cited as a way to reduce these constraints and increase funds. Only the Department of Health highlighted the MTDS Intersectoral Committee as a potential mechanism to facilitate improved gender analysis of budgets for gender mainstreaming and the need for continued advocacy, networking and collaboration to help improve financial support to gender equality issues.

## **g. Additional factors**

### ***Women's role in food security***

PNG is extremely culturally diverse, with vast differences in development status among provinces and between urban/rural locations. As the 2008 CEDAW report notes, the economy is 'highly dualistic, with a natural resource-based export economy supporting a small number of people, and a subsistence/semi-subsistence rural economy supporting the livelihoods of more than 80 per cent of the population. Rural livelihood activities, including agriculture, support the majority of the population.' The majority of women are engaged in subsistence livelihoods. They play a major role in food crop production and local food crop marketing. In these roles they play a significant part in the economic survival of their families, although they are frequently disadvantaged, their contribution is rarely recognised and they are rarely systematically targeted for improved development and government services.



### ***Lack of coordination among stakeholders***

A large number of development agencies have a presence in PNG and are working on a range of development issues, including gender and women's human rights. Any intervention should be closely coordinated with a wide range of government, civil society and development partner stakeholders and should be very highly targeted for achievable results.

## **POTENTIAL STRATEGIC APPROACHES**

The following are potential starting points for increasing the capacity of the PNG government to mainstream gender and women's human rights in an effective and sustainable way.

### **1. Capacity development**

The newly established ODW will be critical to the effective mainstreaming of gender and women's human rights. In the actual ODW team few have participated in any gender training and most staff have very little understanding of gender analysis and gender mainstreaming. The whole ODW team needs to build its capacity.

The capacity assessment for the three women's machineries conducted by UNDP in 2010 (GoPNG and UNDP 2010: 48, 49) has exhaustively identified areas where ODW needs to build its capacity to accomplish its mandate effectively. Those related to gender mainstreaming are summarised below.

### **2. Strengthening policy formulation for gender**

In order to be effective in advancing women's human rights and gender equality, ODW needs partners who have strong capacity in policy development, gender analysis, gender mainstreaming and advocacy. The GAD Branch, with its responsibility to mobilise and work with women in communities and promote a gender perspective in community governance programmes, and the National Council of Women, with its role to represent and relay women's concerns to government institutions and coordinate the efforts of civil society in promoting gender equality and women's human rights, are two important partners. Increasing their capacity is crucial to forming a strong and effective national mechanism for promoting gender equality.

The UNDP assessment also looked at the capacity of the GAD Branch and NCW; their needs are similar to those of ODW. Therefore, it would be strategic to include GAD and NCW in the capacity building initiatives of ODW, as this would contribute not only to building capacity but also to improving and strengthening their collaboration.

Finally, capacity building initiatives targeting the line ministries are also essential. They need to have a better understanding of gender issues affecting their sectors and how to make a difference. They must be able to use basic gender analysis tools to quickly identify gender issues in relation to their sector of intervention and be able to mainstream gender throughout their whole programme — instead of planning separate activities for women.

There is a need to revive the gender focal points in most sectors by building their technical capacity in gender mainstreaming and developing a coordination mechanism with ODW.

### **3. Tools and guidelines development**

Since there are few existing tools or systems in place to assist ODW or the various sectors in mainstreaming gender and women's human rights, such tools could be developed either broadly or for specific sectors. These could include user-friendly handbooks, guidelines and analytical tools. It will be important that the use of these tools be mandated and monitored. ODW has to identify which type of tools are needed for the overall government (e.g. in the planning, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting process) and which ones are needed for specific sectors.

In addition to building capacity, organising capacity building initiatives and providing technical support for developing guidelines for the central and line agencies could strengthen the relationship and collaboration between ODW and those government institutions.

### **4. Gender statistics**

There is insufficient collection, compilation and analysis of sex disaggregated data and gender indicators across sectors. Such data are critical to the identification, understanding and addressing of gender inequalities. Building on SPC's ongoing gender statistics initiative, the government could be accompanied through a process of compiling key gender indicators in one comprehensive framework, developing user-friendly 'situation of women' statistical reports, conducting policy analyses based on the priority indicators with relevant government agencies, and collaboratively developing policy responses. This will directly complement and support all other strategic approaches discussed here and support the mandate of ODW in research, monitoring and evaluation and policy advisory.

# APPENDIX

## *List of organisations interviewed or consulted*

### ***Government***

Constitution and Law Reform Commission  
Department of Agriculture  
Department of Community Development  
Department of Education  
Department of Environment  
Department of Finance  
Department of Health  
Justice and Attorney General  
Department of National Planning and Monitoring  
Department of Personnel Management  
Department of Prime Minister and National Economic Committee (NEC)  
Treasury Department  
National Fisheries Authority  
National Statistics Office  
Office for the Development of Women  
Gender Development Branch

### ***Development Partners***

ADB  
JICA  
World Bank  
NZAID  
UNIFEM  
UNCHR  
Civil Society  
CIMC  
National Council for Women  
Papua Hahine  
Social Action Forum

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