



# DO NO HARM RESEARCH BOUGAINVILLE

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# ABBREVIATIONS

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| <b>BRA</b>  | Bougainville Revolutionary Army                        |
| <b>CLC</b>  | Christian Life Centre                                  |
| <b>DHS</b>  | Demographic and Health Survey                          |
| <b>NGO</b>  | non-government organisation                            |
| <b>DNH</b>  | Do No Harm   |
| <b>OECD</b> | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| <b>ODI</b>  | Overseas Development Institute                         |
| <b>PMV</b>  | Public Motor Vehicle                                   |
| <b>PNG</b>  | Papua New Guinea                                       |
| <b>WHO</b>  | World Health Organization                              |





# NOTES ON THE RESEARCH

## **The Do No Harm Research**

The project is a collaboration between the Department of Pacific Affairs (formerly the State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Program) at the Australian National University and the International Women's Development Agency (IWDA). Richard Eves is the principal investigator, lead researcher and author of this report. The research team in Bougainville comprised Richard Eves, Genevieve Kouro, Steven Simiha and Irene Subalik.

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## **Note on Names**

Apart from the acknowledgements above, all names used in this report are pseudonyms.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Today, women's economic empowerment has become an essential component of economic development programming. However, it is now known that improvement in women's economic situation often comes with heavy unanticipated costs to women. Violence, in particular, is too often a by-product, as our research and that of others elsewhere have shown. The Do No Harm (DNH) project addresses the question of how to improve women's economic agency and the security of their livelihoods without compromising their safety.

This report draws on primary qualitative research carried out in three districts (Kieta, Panguna and Tinputz) of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville (hereafter Bougainville) which shows that women's income generating activities brought increased violence against them as well as other problems. Our research found that the women of Bougainville, particularly those in the rural research sites of Panguna and Tinputz, endure heavy workloads. With a diverse range of income sources, from formal employment to informal marketing, they work exceedingly hard in difficult conditions to meet the needs of their families. Women value the opportunity to earn income and speak positively about its benefits, but they also face considerable negative impacts and difficulties, including the extra burden of work this entails, the difficulty of finding alternative care for children and problems of accessing markets. The researchers also often heard that extreme shyness (Tok Pisin — *pasin sem*) is an obstacle to women's income generation, especially that involving informal marketing of garden produce, cooked food or goods.

Many women spoke about the difficulty of meeting household expenses, such as school fees. In a country where the virtue of sharing with others is an imperative duty, many women found managing the many demands from extended family and in-laws challenging, particularly the customary demands and responsibilities that come with deaths and marriages. Some women commented that, because they are so difficult to refuse, requests for credit undermine their businesses, making them less viable, and a small number of women had even been forced to abandon their business ventures entirely.

We found that although many women are achieving forms of economic advancement, they are not often achieving economic empowerment because intra-household inequality seldom changes even when women bring money into the household. On top of their income-earning work, most women continue to bear the responsibility for the agricultural labour that ensures that there is enough food to eat in the household, and for the unpaid house and care work (such as carrying water and firewood to the house, cooking, cleaning and childcare). Despite a considerable number of women saying that their relationships with their husbands are good, the onus of this kind of labour falls overwhelmingly on them. Powerful norms play an influential role in determining whether women's greater earning capacity translates into more power for them in the household.

The research also found that women's increased financial resources often enable men to lessen their own contributions to the household, or in some cases to contribute nothing at all. This allows husbands to use their money for their own discretionary consumption (while continuing to enjoy the benefits of family life, including the food provided by his wife). In such circumstances, when men contribute little, either financially or by helping in the home, women's economic advancement means a large increase in their work burden.

The extent to which women are involved in household decision-making varies. Joint decision-making is a feature of some marriages and women value sitting down with their husbands to discuss things, as well as helping each other and working together. For some women, joint decision-making was a sign of a good marriage and of an ideal husband. Some of the male respondents interviewed during the research also considered joint decision-making an attribute of an ideal husband and said they practised this themselves.



Although the claim of joint decision-making may give the impression of a cooperative household where the woman has a degree of respect and power, both male and female respondents confirmed that this sometimes belies the fact that the wife actually has little power and is merely a rubber stamp for the man's decisions. In some cases, joint decision-making does not extend to important decisions, especially when it comes to significant resources.

Decisions about children's welfare, including their health and education, are sometimes jointly made, but women sometimes have exclusive power in these matters. This is partly due to the matrilineal descent system in Bougainville, where children belong to the clan of the mother, and it also reflects the gender norms that relegate women to the domestic sphere where they must take care of both the house and the children.

The research also found that considerable variation exists in financial management and decision-making between husbands and wives. Income pooling and cooperative decision-making are common, although even within those households that identified as such, the husband sometimes ultimately controlled decisions. Women respondents generally considered having autonomy over their earnings to be less of an issue because they saw joint decision-making as a sign of a good marriage.

While some women may have a fair degree of agency in decision-making, this does not always carry over to other aspects of their marriage. Some relationships appear to be cooperative when assessed by decision-making, but they are marred by violence.

Although some women described their financial decision-making as cooperative, others told us that their husbands seized total control of joint money and gave their wife no access to resources for the household. For women, equity requires that they not only control their own income, but also have access to their husband's financial resources for necessary household expenditure. We heard of a few extreme cases where women were refused all access to their husband's income or given only very limited access. We also heard examples of men not allowing their wives the opportunity to earn money, thus reinforcing the wives' dependency, disempowering them and negating their agency.

Conflicts often occur over men using their earnings for their personal expenditure to the exclusion of the household. Such resource-depleting behaviour is often contested by women and sometimes leads to violence, which is endemic in Bougainville (p. 8). However, considerable violence also occurs for reasons other than money. Our women respondents identified several reasons why men use violence against their wives, including sexual jealousy and failure of wives to satisfy their husbands' expectations, such as not doing their work or not doing it to their husband's satisfaction.

The most violence reported during the research was connected to men's alcohol consumption, which drains resources from the household and so is questioned by women. Some women said their husbands were violent for no apparent reason when they were drunk, but several reported that their husband became violent if they refused to give him money or questioned his spending on alcohol.

Besides controlling household income, some husbands engage in other forms of controlling behaviour. Several of the women spoke of the controlling behaviour of their partners, such as not allowing them to go out, often motivated by sexual jealousy.

Women often conceal marital problems — particularly physical violence — from their children and the wider community. Women have a strong sense of shame over being victims of their husband's physical violence and therefore are reluctant for this to become public knowledge. Not one of the women interviewed had ever had recourse to the law and justice system; they had never reported their violent spouses to the police.

Besides hearing stories of violence, marital problems and inequality in the domestic sphere, the research team also heard powerful stories of women's resilience and initiative. Several women who had been empowered through working with organisations such as NGOs, or through their experiences, wanted to help other women.

However, the most important conclusion of our research is that there is a need for interventions that work with men, especially to address the negative and violent masculinities which drive intimate partner violence and other negative outcomes for women.

In the last decade, gender programs have put considerable effort into working with men, though less so in relation to women's economic empowerment programming. Men often feel excluded from initiatives that seek to improve women's access to economic resources and this can result in backlash, which is one reason why women's economic empowerment programs need to embrace ways of working with men. However, a greater need exists beyond fear of backlash. The failure to recognise that women are not a separate category from men but are intimately bound in relations with them in the household weakens the empowerment potential of women's economic empowerment programming. But, above all, women should not be considered a separate category from men in the community either. Concentrating on men and women separately fails to address the need for community cohesiveness — that is, it fails to grasp the opportunity to build a strong, constructive and cooperative community.

It is recognised internationally that women's economic empowerment programming needs to be integrated more fully with community-based approaches that focus on violence against women. Community-based gender transformative programs are based on the understanding that women's ability to translate economic advancement into economic empowerment requires that norms that constrain and limit their agency must be addressed. After all, the normalisation of gender inequality and violence takes place within communities, which should therefore be the starting point for change. Community-based approaches recognise that violence against women is the community's responsibility, not a problem of individual women. Successful changing of social norms requires paying special attention to working with key initiators of change in communities, including church leaders, village court officials and other leaders.

### **Key Lesson — Working with Men is Necessary**

A major lesson to be drawn from the Do No Harm Bougainville research is the crucial importance of working with men.

Although good initiatives working with men already exist, an unfilled need remains for initiatives that are specifically relevant to women's economic empowerment and that highlight a different range of issues. Programs should include financial management and decision-making in the household, domestic labour and other caring responsibilities, workloads and the benefits to men and children of more cooperative gender relations. Since women are often in agreement with their own oppressive gender norms, there is also a need for broader gender programming that addresses both men and women. It is now recognised internationally that women's economic empowerment programming must be thoroughly integrated with community-based approaches, including violence against women programmes (Mejia et al. 2014; Taylor 2015).

### **Key Lesson — The Need for Community-Based Gender Transformative Programs**

Women's economic empowerment programming should embrace a fully comprehensive gender transformative approach.

Men are part of the community and a community-based approach addresses them as such rather than in isolation. It presents issues such as violence against women as the community's responsibility, not as the problem of individual women (Michau 2007:104). However, evidence suggests that shifting understanding or individual attitudes is often not enough to shift behaviour. Since the constraints imposed by social and gender norms are beyond the level of the individual, a community-wide approach to change is essential. This must be firmly rooted in the specifics of each locality — its particular characteristics, its challenges, strengths, weaknesses, cultural norms and beliefs.

## Key Lesson – Women’s Economic Empowerment Programming Needs to Adopt a ‘Do No Harm’ Approach.

To do no harm in working to promote women’s economic empowerment means ensuring that programs do not, at the very least, increase the maltreatment women suffer, mostly at the hands of their husbands.

A sound ‘do no harm’ approach is based on a thorough assessment of the local culture, especially its social norms, so that the risk of violence and other adversities is not actually increased due to women’s increased income.



Source: Richard Eves



# PART 1. INTRODUCTION

---

This report covers the research undertaken in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville as part of the much larger project, Do No Harm: Understanding the Relationship between Women's Economic Empowerment and Violence against Women in Melanesia. The Do No Harm research addresses the question of how to improve women's economic agency and the security of their livelihoods without compromising their safety. It sought to capture the diversity of ways that women endeavour to overcome economic disadvantage in contemporary Melanesia. Fieldwork for the Do No Harm research was undertaken in Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea, with a total of 485 interviews conducted, including 238 with women.<sup>1</sup> The interviews generated a large body of rich qualitative data on women's lives and the difficulties and challenges they confront as they seek to earn income in order to improve their lives and those of their children.

## Women's Economic Empowerment

Women's economic empowerment is now widely seen as a critical component of development initiatives and poverty reduction (Kulb et al. 2016:715). For the last decade, aid donors, international development organisations and non-government organisations (NGOs) have taken up the cause of women's economic marginalisation and poverty and have embraced their economic empowerment as the most effective approach to the problem. The Australian aid program, for example, places strong emphasis on addressing women's empowerment and especially women's economic empowerment (DFAT 2014:8, 16, 25; 2015). Australia's Foreign Minister, Julie Bishop, has stated that the empowerment of women and girls and increasing progress towards gender equality in our region is a key priority of Australia's foreign policy and aid program (DFAT 2015:1). Most recently, this commitment has been set out in the Australian Government's February 2016 document, *Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy*, in which promoting women's economic empowerment is one of three strategic objectives (DFAT 2016). Given this emphasis on women's economic empowerment as a key objective of Australian aid, it is important to reflect on the processes of economic empowerment and especially the factors that may facilitate this objective, as well as any factors that may counteract it.

In this report, we make a distinction between women's economic advancement and women's economic empowerment (Buvinić and Furst-Nichols 2014:2; Taylor 2015:16). By women's economic advancement we refer to women gaining increased income, access to employment and other activities that see their resources increased.<sup>2</sup> Many programs claim to be working on women's economic empowerment but are actually much more narrowly focused on increasing women's access to resources (Taylor 2015:16). For women's economic empowerment we espouse the definition given in a recent Overseas Development Institute (ODI) report:

*Women's economic empowerment is the process of achieving women's equal access to and control over economic resources, and ensuring they can use them to exert increased control over other areas of their lives.*

(Hunt and Samman 2016:7; see also Taylor and Perezniето 2014)

This definition embraces the idea that women need to advance economically as part of their economic empowerment and also that this requires an increase in women's power and agency if it is to truly qualify as empowerment. Thus, women's economic empowerment comprises two interrelated components: 1) economic advancement, and 2) increased power and agency, with both components being connected and necessary in order to achieve better lives for women and their families (Golla et al. 2011:4). Crucially, the concept of empowerment must be understood to include a process of social change towards greater equality; the agency we seek must be understood as a 'transformative agency' which can challenge and destabilise inequalities, rather than simply expressing and reproducing inequalities (Guérin et al. 2013:S90).

As Georgina Taylor argues, women's economic advancement differs from economic empowerment because, 'while women may be able to earn money and gain access to assets, they may not be able to retain control over economic choices if their power and agency and structures and social norms around gender equality remain unchanged' (Taylor 2015:16). Economic advancement does not automatically result in economic empowerment or broader empowerment for women. This understanding is reinforced by the Overseas Development Institute report, which says:

*there is no automatic 'win-win' between wider development outcomes and gender equality. While the latter is clearly good for growth, a gender equitable distribution of the economic gains of growth does not happen automatically ... And growth does not necessarily translate into gains in women's well-being.*

(Hunt and Samman 2016:7)

This suggests that it is necessary to integrate efforts to promote women's economic advancement in relation to increases in income, resources and assets with approaches that seek to increase women's power and transformative agency (Taylor 2015:19).

Indeed, it is often assumed that improvement of women's economic security through forms of economic advancement will automatically flow on to improvement in other dimensions of their lives. As Nitza Berkovitch and Adriana Kemp argue, the focus on 'initiatives to promote a wide range of income-generating activities are based on the belief that enhancing women's spirit of entrepreneurship is a precondition for their social and political emancipation' (2010:158). Thus, there has been a tendency to equate women's lack of power with lack of income and to pay insufficient attention to how the actual use of this income is affected by other forms of inequality in relationships (UNFPA 2007:11). The view that improving women's access to income generating activities automatically leads to more general empowerment is based on the theory that women's increased income improves their 'bargaining power' within the household. Some researchers have concluded that this increase in bargaining power would reduce the risk of intimate partner violence (Vyas et al. 2015:35). However, this assumption has also been questioned. Linda Mayoux, for example, challenges the notion that increasing women's access to financial resources would initiate 'a set of mutually-reinforcing "virtuous spirals" of increasing economic empowerment, improved well-being and social/political/legal empowerment for women' (1999b:959). Though Mayoux is referring specifically to the promotion of microfinance, her point also applies to initiatives intended to increase women's access to income. And, indeed, it has turned out that those seeking to promote gender equality through economic empowerment initiatives face the vexing issue that these sometimes have unintended consequences, improving one dimension of women's lives but undermining others (Haile et al. 2012:257).

Unfortunately, women's economic advancement too often comes at increased costs to women, including increased risk of violence and greater work burdens, as they continue to be responsible for domestic labour within the household in addition to economic contributions.<sup>3</sup> A considerable body of literature now exists discussing the impact of economic activity on women's lives and on gender relations. This literature identifies both positive and negative outcomes for women, including increases and decreases in levels of violence (Bradley 2011:9; Eves 2016b; Gammage et al. 2016:8; Haile et al. 2012:256; Haile et al. 2015; Kabeer 2016:315; Taylor 2015:10; Vyas and Watts 2009). The 2008 AusAID/Office of Development Effectiveness report, *Violence against Women in Melanesia and East Timor: A Review of International Lessons*, also found that while microfinance can sometimes strengthen women's ability to stand up to family violence, 'interventions aimed at empowering women can generate unintended consequences, often in the form of violent backlash. (As women increasingly demand equality, men increasingly assert their control over women)' (AusAID ODE 2008:17).

Several others have also observed that increased financial autonomy for women may simply mean that their husbands or partners opt out of contributing, or reduce their contributions to the household expenses so



that women are forced to meet these shortfalls (Haile et al. 2012:257, 258). According to Mayoux: 'There is considerable evidence that women's increased control over income may be accompanied by a withdrawal of male contributions for their own luxury expenditure, limiting the total increase in income going into household wellbeing' (Mayoux 1999a:2; 1999b:972). Further, the observation has often been made that in developing countries poor women tend to spend the income they control largely on family needs rather than on personal needs (Agarwal 1997:25; Mayoux 1999b:969). Some researchers suggest that women typically put an average of 90 per cent of their earnings back into the family, compared to the 30 to 40 per cent that men contribute (Porter 2013:4).

Thus the Do No Harm project addresses the question of how to improve women's economic agency and the security of their livelihood without compromising their safety. The research aims to capture the diversity of ways that women endeavour to overcome economic disadvantage, focusing on a range of economic inclusion and empowerment initiatives in various settings. In Bougainville, the focus has been on women's involvement in the informal economy. In this report we have placed particular emphasis on the views and stories of the women we interviewed so as to provide a good understanding of the factors that constrain or facilitate women's economic advancement and empowerment.

## The Research

The research was undertaken in Bougainville in October 2015 in three districts — Kieta, Panguna and Tinputz. This included the urban context of Arawa (in Kieta District) and the rural contexts of Panguna District and Tinputz District.

The research sought to gather detailed accounts of women's experience as they attempted to overcome economic disadvantage. In-depth qualitative interviews were used to explore marital relationships, how the domestic economy is managed within the family and what gives rise to conflicts. Rather than seeking to produce generalised results for the whole country, the Do No Harm research aimed to capture the individual experiences of women by encouraging them to tell stories of their lives: from when they were children to their married life. This allowed for rich case studies to be developed and women's voices to be heard, voices that are often obscured or unheard in larger country-wide and generalisable studies.

The team completed 43 interviews with women (Arawa, 10; Panguna, 11; Tinputz, 22), 20 with men, and 29 with key informants.<sup>4</sup> At all three sites our interview respondents were recruited by local research brokers who had strong community connections and so recruited respondents in their networks. The resulting tendency to recruit women who were active in their communities means that the sample of respondents is skewed towards mature women with awareness of gender issues. It does not include an equal proportion of young women, the youngest respondent being 23 years of age. If the sample of respondents had a wider age profile, more violence may have been reported, since violence appears to be more common in the early years of a marriage. However, older respondents are more likely to know of violence among younger relatives and are often more confident about speaking up. Still, the Bougainville Family, Health and Safety Study (see pp. 9–10) reports much higher levels of violence than the respondents of this study.

Table I gives some background demographic information on the respondents, including age range, how many had borne children and how many had dependants.<sup>5</sup> Most of the women interviewed were married, though a small number were widowed, divorced or separated.

**Table 1: Demographic information**

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| Age range (years)                       | 23–64 |
| Number of women who have borne children | 42    |
| Number range of children per woman      | 1–10  |
| Number of children                      | 184   |
| Number of women with dependants         | 12    |
| Number range of dependants per woman    | 1–6   |
| Number of dependants                    | 29    |

The majority of the women interviewed were members of the Catholic Church, with the next most common being the Seventh Day Adventist Church (see Table 2).<sup>6</sup>

**Table 2: Church affiliation**

|                                      |    |
|--------------------------------------|----|
| Catholic Church                      | 32 |
| Seventh Day Adventist Church (SDA)   | 7  |
| United Church                        | 1  |
| Restoration International Fellowship | 1  |

In addition to church membership, many of the women had roles in the community (including youth leader, community development worker, village women’s representative, land mediator, school board member, Sunday school teacher and female chief) or were involved in local community-based organisations, including village assemblies or women’s organisations (such as the Bougainville Women’s Federation, Central Human Rights Committee and the Catholic Women’s Association).

The women’s sources of income ranged from formal employment to informal marketing and business enterprises. Many were involved in the informal economy of selling garden produce, cooked food or purchased goods at markets, and those from the coastal sites of Arawa and Tinputz also earned money from the cash crops, cocoa and copra. Several of the women from Arawa owned successful businesses, including enterprises, such as guest-houses or stores. The diversity of income sources meant that the livelihoods of the women interviewed ranged from precarious to relatively secure.

## Research Methodology

The research used in-depth qualitative interviews to explore the ways that people manage their marital relationship and their household economy and what gives rise to conflicts. Respondents were recruited through brokers with strong links to the particular community.

The research was guided by the following key questions:

1. What are the effects of women’s economic empowerment activities on gender and power relationships in the family?
2. What is the relationship between women’s economic empowerment and their experience of family violence?
3. What lessons can we draw from the research in order to maximise the potential for positive gender equality outcomes?

These and a number of subsidiary questions were used as guides for interviewers in developing specific questions to ask in the individual in-depth interviews (see Interview Guide/Questions Url: [http://ssgm.bellschool.anu.edu.au/sites/default/files/uploads/2018-02/interview\\_guidequestions.pdf](http://ssgm.bellschool.anu.edu.au/sites/default/files/uploads/2018-02/interview_guidequestions.pdf)).

Importantly, the research sought to capture the experiences of women by encouraging respondents to tell stories of their lives from childhood to their present married life. This allowed rich case studies to be developed and women's voices to be heard. While the research is primarily about understanding women's experiences, men were also interviewed to facilitate a better understanding of the construction of gender and of the range of beliefs, attitudes and norms that underpin gender inequitable behaviour.

Semi-structured interviews with key informants and stakeholders were also undertaken to gather contextual information, particularly the cultural, economic and social factors affecting women's income generating activities, as well as gender relations more broadly. These interviews used thematic guides rather than standard questionnaires to enable a free elicitation style that would encourage respondents to talk in detail about particular themes.

The research is designed to capture and document the particular characteristics of each research site at a particular moment, providing rich accounts of the contexts in which women in rural and urban Bougainville live their lives and the constraints and challenges they face in becoming economically empowered. Development practitioners increasingly acknowledge that an understanding of the context in any given region or country is vital, so that the most appropriate programming interventions can be devised (Alexander-Scott et al. 2016:21; Gendernet 2011:18). This applies particularly to violence prevention because, while violence against women is widespread globally, it is founded in each locality upon the specific social and gender norms and constructions of masculinity and femininity that exist there (Lockett and Bishop 2012:6). Our research gives insights into the gendered power dynamics at play in marital relationships, the specific factors that act as barriers to women's income generating activities and, importantly, their economic empowerment, and the risk factors for violence. Given the importance of women's economic empowerment to donors, NGOs and governments, there is a critical need for research to provide a good understanding of the challenges to realising this goal and an evidence base from which development programming can proceed.

## **The Bougainville Conflict**

The almost ten years of violent conflict that occurred on Bougainville emerged quite unexpectedly in late 1988. It was not initially related to secessionist demands, but to mining-related concerns largely involving revenue shares and mine employment opportunities for Bougainvilleans (Regan 2010:17). From the early 1990s, the conflict took on two dimensions — a secessionist struggle between the BRA (Bougainville Revolutionary Army) and the PNG government, and an internal conflict between opposing Bougainvillean groups (Regan 2010:24). Among the terrible outcomes of the conflict was the great trauma resulting from some several thousand deaths. Probably well over 1000 Bougainvilleans died in armed conflict, many more from extrajudicial killings on all sides, and an unknown number from the PNG blockade of BRA-controlled areas, while many more were injured. Further trauma came from the deep divisions between Bougainvilleans, destruction of most public infrastructure and private sector productive assets, destruction of the capacity of the local state to govern, and large-scale dislocation of people, with up to 60,000 people living in refugee camps by 1996 (Regan 2010:26). Further, the economy was left in ruins; from a position of being the best performing province in Papua New Guinea, Bougainville fell to the bottom. The profound social and economic effects of what is often referred to as 'the crisis' continue to shape attitudes and opportunities (Eves and Koredong 2015:12).

## Bougainville Context

The study area comprises the Autonomous Region of Bougainville (hereafter Bougainville, see map p. 7), which is located in the Solomon Sea east of the Papua New Guinea mainland.<sup>7</sup> The population of Bougainville is estimated to be about 250,000–300,000.<sup>8</sup> The majority of the population live in rural communities, relying on subsistence farming for their livelihoods, with some cash income from the sale of copra and cocoa, and, increasingly, from alluvial and small-scale gold mining (Eves and Koredong 2015:12). A small percentage (roughly 3%) of the population live in the urban centres of Buka and Arawa.

As in other parts of Melanesia, Bougainville is characterised by considerable linguistic diversity with 20 or so languages. In the past, this linguistic diversity was accompanied by considerable cultural diversity, though this has lessened due to the movement of people, intermarriage and the social changes that accompanied colonialism, resource extraction and inclusion in the nation-state of Papua New Guinea. Historically, some places had hereditary chiefs, whereas others had leadership based on achievement — the so-called 'big man'.

Today Bougainville displays a 'developed north — underdeveloped south' (Scales and Craemer 2008:31). Major investment in the cocoa industry in North Bougainville since the late 1990s, including improved agriculture and transport infrastructure, has seen the production of cocoa by small farmers rise dramatically (ibid.:2), though this has been badly affected by the cocoa pod borer, which has ravaged cocoa production in Bougainville.<sup>9</sup> The north-east part of the mainland, including Selau/Suir, Tinputz and Wakunai, contains the main cocoa producing areas and this is by far the richest region (ibid.:19). South Bougainville contains about 50 per cent of Bougainville's population and is economically depressed. The restoration of economic activity there following the crisis has been constrained by low cocoa outputs, current yields being lower than in pre-crisis times (ibid.:2). Without a significant alternative crop, opportunities for earning cash income in the south have been limited compared to elsewhere in Bougainville. This poor economic development in the south since the end of the conflict in 1997 has resulted in significant levels of migration from Siwai and Buin to other parts of Bougainville and has been a contributor to tensions in the south between 2005 and 2009 (Regan 2010:122).<sup>10</sup>

## Gender Relations Prior to the Conflict

Predominantly, the societies of Bougainville have matrilineal descent groups and access to land is mainly through matrilineal ties, though among the Buin access to land is through patrilineal ties. It has been widely but erroneously assumed that women in matrilineal societies enjoy a high status compared to patrilineal societies. However, a matrilineal society is merely one in which descent is traced through females, so that children of both sexes belong to the same descent group as their mother. In matrilineal societies, it is far more common for men to occupy the position of leader of the group. It should never be assumed that because a society is matrilineal, authority within the group lies with the women or, indeed, that such women have more power generally (Eves and Koredong 2015:13). However, in the past in Bougainville, women's status was often rather better than in some other parts of Papua New Guinea. As elsewhere, men far more often were the leaders, though in matters of land they were expected to consult the women in the group.

In the past, Bougainvillean beliefs, norms and practices concerning gender were considerably diverse. Initiation rituals for boys were practised by some language groups, though few do so today. The status of women in Bougainville varied considerably; they were treated with great respect in some places but not in others. Some places had hereditary female leaders and others did not. So, for example, in the south of Bougainville, Nagovisi women were treated with considerable respect, whereas in Buin they were not. The anthropologist Jill Nash, who conducted fieldwork (1969–73) among the Nagovisi before the crisis, provides a clear insight into the complexity of gender there at that time:

**Figure 1: Map of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville.**

Courtesy of CartoGIS.



*Not only does the average woman have numerous rights and prerogatives, but certain women routinely occupy high-ranking positions as lineage and clan heads. Some of these women — in the present as well as in the past — are described by informants as female equivalents of 'big men' (1984:119).*

While women of the Nagovisi may have had substantial and important rights, these did not come at the expense of men's rights. Rather, Nash suggested, there was 'an equality between men and women' (1987:151). The powers and abilities of men and women were ideally seen as complementary, and a person's political destiny was very closely tied to his or her spouse's. The way in which women influenced group affairs was different from the way men did so, and women were seen as having different capacities and abilities from men (Eves and Koredong 2015:14).

Nash suggested that masculine and feminine were conceived as neither logically nor otherwise opposed, but followed a model of sameness (1987:150). Max and Eleanor Rimoldi suggested that things were not so different on Buka, saying that the 'male and female aspects of power on Buka are complex and mutual, as are the other relationships of power and leadership' (1992:43). Eugene Ogan argued along similar lines for the Nasioi-speaking people in central Bougainville, when he suggested that society was characterised more by equality than hierarchy. 'Women had status complementary, rather than subordinate, to that of men' (Ogan 2005:52). In contrast to other parts of PNG, Nasioi women had status and rights comparable to those of men (Eves and Koredong 2015:36; Ogan 1999:2).

### **Violence against Women — Pre-Conflict**

The anthropological record also shows considerable variation in levels of violence against women. Prior to the crisis, Jill Nash reported that for the Nagovisi in the south of Bougainville, physical violence between spouses was infrequent. During the two and a half years (1969–73) that she lived among them, she recorded only four cases of a husband assaulting his wife (Nash 1990:127). Arguments were more likely to descend into verbal abuse than physical abuse, and, if serious, insult could lead to litigation (ibid.:128). Nash reported that in the course of filling out a questionnaire for the Law Reform Commission of Papua New Guinea in 1971, she made enquiries about rape and, after much reflection, people recalled a single incident that had taken place 10 miles away in the late 1940s (ibid.:132). This led her to conclude that: 'Rape is practically non-existent' and 'group rape is unheard of' (Nash 1987:164; 1990:132).<sup>11</sup> However, it cannot be assumed that the equitable relations Nash reported for the Nagovisi in south Bougainville in 1969–73 were uniform across Bougainville. Certainly, historical records for other parts of the south show that brutality and physical violence towards women existed in other communities. For example, an early account by Hilde Thurnwald reported that women in Buin were subordinate to men, being held in 'poor esteem' and noted that the 'superior position of males ... often leads husbands to be overbearing and brutal. It is customary to beat women even for trivial reasons' (1934:170). She goes on to say that

*Even the good-natured husband is quick to seize his stick if the meal is not ready in the evening when he comes home, and if hungry and tired he is not disposed to curb his impulses. ... The frequent quarrels between husband and wife almost always culminate in thrashing the wife.*

(Thurnwald 1934:159)

### **Gender Relations During and After Conflict**

Gender relations were adversely affected by the Bougainville conflict. The crisis allowed young men to rebel against the traditional authority of leaders and to disregard the norms that regulated relations with others, especially women. Violence towards women increased dramatically during the crisis period, when women were



subjected to humiliation, physical and psychological violence, rape and other forms of sexual assault (Braithwaite 2006; Eves and Koredong 2015:14). The Leitana Nehan Women's Development Agency had files on thousands of cases of sexual assault, later destroyed by the PNG Defence Force. These files recorded more than 1000 victims of rape on Buka Island alone (Saovana-Spriggs 2007:128; Braithwaite et al. 2010:89). The *Family, Health and Safety Study* reports that one-third of the men who fought during the conflict and 13 per cent of women had witnessed a woman being raped during the conflict (Jewkes et al. 2013). One in five men had engaged in acts of physical violence against women, which involved rape or beating.

### Text Box 1: Findings of the Bougainville Family, Health and Safety Study

#### Intimate partner violence:

- » '85% of men had ever perpetrated physical, sexual or frequent emotional or economic violence against a partner, and three-quarters of women had experienced this.'
- » A very high prevalence of ongoing violence: '28% of women having experienced emotional abuse in the previous year, and 32% of men having perpetrated it.'
- » '23% of women had experienced economic abuse in the previous year, and 29% of men had perpetrated it.'
- » '22% of women had experienced physical violence in the previous year, and 19% of men had perpetrated it.'
- » '24% of women had experienced sexual violence from their partner in the previous year, and 22% of men disclosed having perpetrated it.'

Not only has the much of the respect that women held previously been undermined, but violence is now far more prevalent than previously (Regan 2000:290). Pre-crisis anthropological accounts such as those of Nash, make this very clear. The *Bougainville Family, Health and Safety Study* (see Text Boxes 1 and 2, pp. 9-10) confirms the magnitude of the problem, both in terms of violence against women, sexual violence and also violence by men against other men. Other research also confirms the magnitude of violence against women. For example, victims' surveys undertaken in Arawa and Buka in 2005 by the National Research Institute found that domestic violence was a common crime. Both surveys found alcohol or drug related crime the most common in both towns, and domestic violence the second most common crime in Arawa (Braithwaite et al. 2010:123; NRI 2005: 20).

The recent quantitative Bougainville Family, Health and Safety Study found that gender inequitable attitudes are widely held by both men and women, with men generally having more inequitable views than women (see Text boxes 1 and 2). For example, 72% of women and 85% of men agreed that a woman should obey her husband, and 45% of women and 60% of men agreed that if a woman does something wrong, her husband has a right to punish her (Jewkes et al. 2013:4).

There is considerable cultural pressure on people to conform to the culturally defined gender roles. For example, among the Nasioi there is a term, *amoko*, for a man who cannot discipline his wife (or who even listens to his wife), which basically means he is a lunatic. The term is also applied to women who do not behave in the manner deemed appropriate for a woman, or to men who do not behave in the manner deemed appropriate for a man. For example, an informant's uncle was labelled *amoko* because he did laundry and washed dishes.

Despite its deleterious effect on gender relations, or perhaps partly because of this, the conflict saw the

development of a vibrant civil society led by women's groups. Throughout Bougainville, women organised peace marches, pursued reconciliation and sought to restore normalcy to the island. Several years before the first round of peace talks, women, together with church leaders and chiefs, began building on the indigenous customs of conflict prevention, management and resolution. The many women leaders contributed a great deal to restoring peace.

One legacy of women's activism during the conflict was the formulation of a Bougainville constitution<sup>12</sup> stating that: 'All Bougainvilleans shall have the opportunity to attain leadership positions at all levels subject to this Constitution and customary practices' (section 14) and that there 'shall be fair representation of women and marginalized groups on all constitutional and other bodies' (section 19). The constitution also recognises the role of women in Bougainville society when it states: 'The role and welfare of women in traditional and modern Bougainville society shall be recognized and encouraged and shall be developed to take account of changing circumstances' (section 28) (see Eves and Koredong 2015:14).

### **Text Box 2: Further findings of the Bougainville Family, Health and Safety Study**

Rape of women who were not partners:

- » 40% prevalence of non-partner single perpetrator rape by men, with 15% of women having been a victim of such a rape.
- » 14% of men had been involved in a multiple perpetrator or gang rape — what is called *lainap* in Tok Pisin.
- » 12% of men had raped a non-partner woman in the last year.
- » 8% of women had been a victim of rape in the past year.
- » Patterns of non-partner rape:
  - » 'Two-thirds of men who raped did so for the first time as a teenager and more than half had raped more than once.' A third of men and a quarter of women became sexually active before the age of 18. One in five women were raped the first time they had sex, and this proportion was one in three among those first having sex before age 16.



## PART 2. FINDINGS – CASE STUDIES

As indicated above, research was undertaken in three districts of Bougainville, all located on the main island of Bougainville, with two on the coast and one in the mountainous interior. One of the three sites is urban, while the other two are rural. The diversity of the research sites gives a good a sense of the range of women’s sources of income in Bougainville and some of the different challenges they face.

### Case Study 1: Kieta District

This research was undertaken at Arawa in Kieta District. Arawa is the second largest town in Bougainville after Buka and prior to the crisis was the capital of the province. When the Panguna mine was operating, Arawa was a successful, vibrant and economically powerful centre, with all the necessary facilities of a modern town. Remnants of the crisis still remain, with some burnt out shops visible in the town centre. Arawa is recovering from the destruction wrought during the crisis and services are now increasingly available, including banking and telecommunications, and many thriving new businesses.

A total of 10 women were interviewed in Arawa. Of these women, the majority owned small businesses. On average, this group was much older than the women interviewed elsewhere, most being over 40 years of age, and had more dependants (see Table 3).<sup>13</sup>

**Table 3: Demographic information**

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| Age range (years)                      | 28–64 |
| Number of women who had borne children | 10    |
| Number of children borne               | 39    |
| Number range of children per woman     | 2–7   |
| Number of women with dependants        | 6     |
| Number range of dependants per woman   | 1–6   |
| Number of dependants                   | 18    |

As a cohort, these women were generally more educated and more experienced in the formal world of work than those of Panguna District and Tinputz District (see Table 4).

**Table 4: Highest level of education attended**

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Primary               | 1 |
| Secondary             | 2 |
| Tertiary              | 3 |
| Other — Bible College | 1 |

As Table 5 indicates, the majority of women interviewed were members of the Catholic Church.<sup>14</sup>

**Table 5: Church affiliation**

|                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Catholic Church                    | 5 |
| Seventh Day Adventist Church (SDA) | 4 |

Several of the women were very active in the community, either being involved or having leading roles in churches and other organisations (such as the Central Regional Human Rights Committee, Small and Medium Enterprises Association, Kieta District Women in Agriculture and Bougainville Tourism Association).

Some of these women had experienced marital problems, some having been married to violent men in the past. One woman was currently separated, two had been married twice previously, and one of them once before. Five of the women were currently widows or had previously been widows. Of the 10 women, seven were currently married. Only one woman's marriage had entailed the exchange of bride price. She was from Bana District (in the Nagovisi language area) and the amount exchanged was K300. All of the women had children, and six of the women currently had dependants. In addition to adults, the smallest household comprised two children and the largest four children and six dependants.

### **Women's Income Sources**

As indicated above, the majority of the surveyed women owned small businesses in Arawa. Two women were formally employed but also ran businesses. These businesses included vehicle hire, cocoa plantations, shops (coffee, hardware, stationery), guesthouses and property rental. Only two of the women were engaged in the informal marketing of garden produce and other goods that is a common source of income for many women in Bougainville (as well as Papua New Guinea more generally). Of these two women, one also had a store in her village near Arawa and another store in the town itself. The other woman also worked cocoa and copra to supplement her income from marketing. One woman was in formal employment until 2015, but had since purchased land and developed a cocoa plantation. Some of the women were very successful and ran more than one venture concurrently.

### **Household Decision-Making**

Women are often marginalised from decision-making in households in Papua New Guinea (see Eves and Titus n.d.), and the DNH research also found this to be common in Bougainville. Women's lack of involvement in household decision-making is often taken to be an indication of their lack of power and agency in the household, and so, when formulating indicators for empowerment, gender and development specialists have used participation in household decision-making as one key proxy for empowerment (see Hanmer and Klugman 2016:238–39; Kabeer 2012: 17).<sup>15</sup> As a result, decision-making agency is the form of agency appearing most frequently in efforts to measure empowerment (Kabeer 1999:445).

Household decision-making may occur in several different ways. At one end of the spectrum this may entail one spouse being responsible for most decisions, with this typically being the husband in Melanesia. At the other end of the spectrum, decision-making may be joint, with both parties cooperatively making decisions together. However, as Naila Kabeer has observed, 'few cultures operate with starkly dichotomous distributions of power with men making all the decisions and women making none' (1999:446). In fact, what is commonly found is a hierarchy of decision-making responsibilities which allocates some aspects to men as household heads and others to women (ibid.). The research did find examples of joint decision-making, though it is important to note that in some cases this appeared to be nominal, with the wife actually deferring to her husband's wishes.

Though some of the women had problems in their current or previous marriages, several others characterised their marriage as good, with a key aspect of this evaluation being that decisions were jointly made. For example, a 53-year-old woman with three children told how she and her husband would sit down and make decisions

together, though she was responsible for decisions about land. She was the only woman from the Kieta District cohort whose marriage had entailed the exchange of bride price (K300). Another woman, Dorothy, whose story is recounted in Life Story 1 (Appendix 1, p. 48), said that she and her husband made decisions about health and education but she alone was responsible for decisions about land. Another woman, a widow with four children, said that when her husband was alive they both made decisions together, but she made decisions concerning land, though in this example, unlike those above, she sought his advice. One woman, Rachel (Life Story 2, Appendix 1, p. 48), who was separated from her husband and had two previous marriages, said that in two of her marriages decisions were made with her husband. She described one of her former husbands as a patient man and talked about how they worked together well. In another case, a 48-year-old woman with three children explained that while she and her spouse made decisions about their children's education, she alone was responsible for disciplining the children.

However, it should be noted that while some women may have a fair degree of agency in decision-making, this may not apply to other aspects of their marriage. Some relationships appear to be cooperative when assessed by decision-making, but they are, nevertheless, characterised by violence. This was the case with Rachel, who described joint decision-making as the norm in two of her marriages, even though one of her husbands was physically violent and aggressive. So, while women may have a degree of positive agency, as evidenced by their involvement in decision-making, their agency in regard to other aspects of their relationship is sometimes eroded by violence.

Neither does joint decision-making necessarily mean that husbands contribute to the household. Certainly, this was the case with Dorothy (Life Story 1, Appendix 1, p. 48). Even though she and her husband made decisions together about their children's education and health, he did not contribute to the household financially, spending most of his money on alcohol. So again, while women's involvement in decision-making may be high and indicate degrees of empowerment in the household, this may be undermined and eroded by other aspects of the relationship.

### Financial Decision-Making

There are two main types of decision-making in regard to financial matters: 'household income management' and 'independent income management' (Kabeer 1997:273; see Eves and Lusby 2018; Eves and Titus n.d.). In the first type, the husband and wife contribute their earnings to a common pool. In the second type, the husband and wife manage their own earnings separately, but whether they both contribute to the household expenses or take responsibility for particular household expenses varies.

In absolute terms, household income management was less common in Arawa households because while they may have pooled some money, they also usually had exclusive control over other money. Only two of the 10 women interviewed pooled all their money together with their husband's and made joint decisions about its use. This included one 48-year-old woman and a 59-year-old widow, who said that when her husband was alive they had a joint account and made financial decisions together.

One businesswoman, who owned a guest house and store, said that she was responsible for the money from her businesses and her husband, who also had successful businesses, was responsible for his own money. Indeed, she said that she did not know much about his business. This couple did not have any problems with money, though she is subject to pressure from some of her adult male children (from her first marriage), who demand money from her when they are drunk.

In some cases, couples utilise both kinds of financial decision-making. For example, the 53-year-old woman with three children, mentioned above, said that her husband was a 'good husband', because they made decisions together, including financial decisions. This couple have a joint bank account in which they pool some money. If one of them wishes to spend money from this account, he or she must consult and get approval from the other

spouse. As well as the joint account, they each have their own separate account, from which they can spend money how they wish.

Some women use independent income management to keep control of the money they earn, lest their spouse wastes pooled money on their own discretionary spending. This was the case with one female respondent who ran two successful stores in Arawa, and this was her second marriage. Her first husband had been a violent drunkard, whom she left, remaining single for 15 years. Unfortunately, her second marriage was also to a man with alcohol problems, though he was not violent. Although she said that they sit down and make joint decisions about spending money from her businesses, she is the one who effectively controls the money and she spends money from the businesses on household needs and stock for her stores. To enable her to keep a reign on her husband's spending on alcohol, she pays him a wage for working in one of her stores.

Some couples have separate accounts in their own names, but decisions about spending money from them are made jointly. This applies to a 64-year-old woman who runs a number of businesses with her husband. She noted that some of the business accounts are in her husband's name and some are in her own, but when it comes to deciding on spending money from the accounts, they decide together.

## Violence

Four of the women interviewed in Arawa were, or had been, in relationships that involved conflicts over money, sometimes entailing physical violence (including Life Stories 1, 2, 3, Appendix 1, pp. 48–49). For example, all three of Rachel's marriages (Life Story 2, Appendix 1, p. 48) were marred by difficulties that included infidelity and violence. All three husbands were drinkers and conflicts over money were common, especially with her third husband, who she said was not good with money and could not budget. During this marriage they had many fights over money, including over his spending on alcohol. He was a violent and controlling man, not letting her move from the house or talk to others. He was also very abusive, subjecting her to verbal abuse, leading her to characterise him as a 'completely abnormal kind of man (*narapela kain man olgeta*)'.

Naomi (Life Story 3, Appendix 1, pp. 48–49), also reported her experiences of violence. Naomi lives in a village near Arawa and earns money by selling peanuts and vegetables at the market, as well as by harvesting cocoa and producing copra, the latter being a particularly arduous job. Her husband has a car repair workshop but spends all his income on beer and whenever he is drunk he always demands money from her. She recounted one time when she was pregnant with her second child and he demanded money, but she refused. He proceeded to grab their first-born child and swing him in the air, intending to smash the baby on the ground, but, fortunately, regained his sense and decided against it.

Dorothy, mentioned above, who had previously worked in the public service, reported that her husband, who also had an income from formal employment, spent most of his salary on beer and demanded money from her when he had spent his. When she refused he would destroy things in the house.

## Case Study 2: Panguna District

Like Arawa, Panguna bears the scars of the destruction wrought during the crisis, though this is much more palpable in Panguna, where the landscape is littered with destroyed and rusting mining equipment and buildings. For many years after the Bougainville crisis, Panguna was isolated from many government services, as it fell within the 'No Go Zone' controlled by the Mekemui, a group that formed from remnants of the BRA (Bougainville Revolutionary Army) which did not participate in the peace process. Only in the last few years have some government services returned and there is now a health centre and a primary school at Panguna. However, although Panguna now has some limited government services and several small trade stores, it has no large trade stores, wholesalers or banking facilities, so that people must travel to Arawa to access these services.

Eleven women, of a wide range of ages, were interviewed at Panguna (see Table 6).<sup>16</sup>

**Table 6: Demographic information**

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| Age range (years)                      | 25–62 |
| Number of women who had borne children | 11    |
| Number range of children per woman     | 1–10  |
| Number of children borne               | 43    |
| Number of women with dependants        | 4     |
| Number range of dependants per woman   | 2–3   |
| Number of dependants                   | 9     |

The education levels in Panguna were much lower than in Arawa (see Table 7).

**Table 7: Highest level of education attended**

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| Primary              | 6 |
| Secondary            | 3 |
| Vocational/Technical | 2 |

The majority of women were members of the Catholic Church (see Table 8).

**Table 8: Church affiliation**

|                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Catholic Church                    | 9 |
| Seventh Day Adventist Church (SDA) | 2 |

Like the women of Arawa, the women of Panguna were very active in their communities, though they were more focused on women's organisations (such as being the women's representative on the village assembly, members of a local women's federation or Catholic women's group) rather than business associations, as was the case with the women in Arawa. One woman represented the women as a chief, a role she inherited from her father, who was also a chief.

Ten of the women were currently married and one was a widow. Only one had had been married previously and had married again after the death of her husband. None of the marriages involved the exchange of bride price. All of the women had children, and four had dependants in addition to their children. In addition to adults, the smallest household comprised one child and the largest, 10 children and two dependants.

## Women's Income Sources and Challenges for Income Generation

One of the 11 women, a 62-year-old widow, reported having no income. Of the remaining 10 women, seven earned money by small scale marketing of goods, such as greens, cooked food (doughnuts and buns), ice-blocks and betel nut. Several of the women who earned an income in this way also earned money by other means. One woman was in formal employment with a company mining tailings in the Java River but also sold goods to supplement her income. Another woman receives her deceased husband's pension, but also sold greens at a roadside market. A third woman who sold doughnuts had also been lending money for interest, but stopped because people did not repay the loans. A fourth ran a PMV (Public Motor Vehicle) bus with her husband and the two earned money from small trade stores. A fifth woman reported having a trade store as a source of income in the past, but said other people performed magic so that the business would not make any profit and so now she earns money by selling ice-blocks at a roadside market.

Buying and selling gold was one woman's source of income<sup>17</sup> and another woman had earned money in this way in the past, but her husband squandered most of her capital. She had started with K90, first buying wholesale goods, which she then packaged up in quantities of six and sold, eventually building up enough capital to buy K6000 worth of gold. In the future she is hoping to establish a piggery and poultry project, so that she can eventually build up enough capital to commence buying gold again.

Two women said that they did alluvial mining — generally considered an extremely arduous task, which is mainly the preserve of men. One of these women mines with her husband, who digs gravel from the Java River, which she then washes. Another woman tried mining but said she used to get angry with her husband because she was unable to do the hard labour required, having worked previously in an office. This woman's income now came from selling food, which she also found difficult because of shame. While making a living is hard for many women at Panguna, one woman said that she could earn up to K200 at the market, selling ice-blocks and doughnuts to alluvial miners working the Java River bed.

Some of the difficulties faced by the women of Panguna were specific to their location. The establishment and development of the huge copper and gold mine meant that several communities were displaced from their land or their land was rendered unusable. Some women said that when the mine was established, the developer CRA used herbicides to clear vegetation and this rendered their land barren. Other women said that their land was covered with gravel and waste from the mine pit and so it is now impossible to use for agriculture. This means that people are unable to rely on the land for subsistence and must earn money to survive, with most of their income being spent on buying food. Not only did the environmental damage affect people's ability to produce crops for subsistence, it also meant that cash crops that grew previously at Panguna, such as coffee, were destroyed when the mine was established. Some of the affected communities were relocated to other areas. Such moves, however, have created other problems for the migrants, with the traditional owners of the land to which people were relocated now contesting the right of the migrants to use their land.

Other problems also ensue from alluvial mining. While some women commented that the arduousness of the labour prevented them doing alluvial mining, other women had stopped trying to earn money in this way because they had fears about their health. Some women cited back and urinary tract problems, the latter from standing around in water for prolonged periods. Some women reported that miscarriages and premature and overdue births were common problems for women alluvial miners. There was also concern about the use of mercury in the extraction process.

In addition to health problems, there were reports of conflicts among people mining in the Java River, which sometimes end in physical violence. Such problems are said to be particularly acute following rain, as the rain exposes gold at the surface and people who are not normally miners go in search of gold in areas where others are working.

## Household Decision-Making

As in Kieta District, joint decision-making between couples is common at Panguna, with several women saying this was so. However, in a number of cases this applied to general household matters with the exception of decisions concerning children, which were left to the mother. This was the case with a 55-year-old woman who reported that she and her spouse would sit down together to make joint decisions for most things, but she was responsible for child welfare and the discipline of their 10 children. A similar situation was evident with a 27-year-old woman who said that while she and her husband decide on financial matters together, she alone is responsible for decisions about their children. Women were also responsible for decisions about land in some cases, due to the fact that the husbands were resident on their wife's land.

As in the case study of Rachel in Kieta District (Life Story 2, Appendix I, p. 48) above, where joint decision-making coexisted with violence, some women interviewed at Panguna also experienced violence even though joint decision-making was practised in their marriages. For example, Miriam's husband Tony would beat her if she did not do her work or when he was drunk (Life Story 4, Appendix I, p. 49). Despite this, she and her husband would sit down together to make decisions, though she was responsible for decision-making about land, since they resided on her clan's land.

## Financial Decision-Making

### Household Income Management

A 63-year-old woman reported that she and her husband also make financial decisions together. This included not only how to spend money but also how to earn money, and they weigh up whether a particular income generating activity is the best way to make money and whether demand is there. Joint financial decision-making was also practised by another woman from Panguna, the 27-year-old mentioned above. Indeed, this woman considered that her marriage was 'good' because she and her husband made decisions together about household spending. This woman recounted how when she was a child her father worked for a small company and when he came home with his pay packet, he would give it unopened to his wife. He would do this every pay day, saying that she knew what the needs of the family were, and so she should have the control of it.

In some cases the control of money was left to the woman in the household — for example, a 38-year-old woman who described her husband as a good man, a non-drinker and '*man bilong stap isi* (quiet — doesn't cause trouble)'. She said that she and husband do not have any problems over money and while they sometimes decide together how to use the money, she is mostly responsible for this, though they jointly make decisions about their children's health and welfare. This woman related her difficulties in making ends meet because she and her husband do not have any arable land, and so have to spend most of their money on food, which means that meeting other costs, such as school fees for children is hard. A similar arrangement about money management was evident with a 25-year-old woman and her husband, who earned an income from running a PMV bus. While both she and her husband decide on how to use the money from the bus, she does the book-keeping and looking after the money.

A 47-year-old with five children, who is buying gold to earn an income, said that she and her husband decide together how they will spend the money they earn and it is used for the benefit of the family. This couple manage to save money by depositing it in her previous husband's superannuation fund, which is in their children's names.

Just as joint decision-making does not necessarily indicate a non-violent marriage, neither does a high degree of financial autonomy. Miriam (Life Story 4, Appendix I, p. 49) mentioned above, had considerable control over money. She was, for example, responsible for managing the money her husband made from the vehicle he ran and from the small trade store that she ran, but her husband was violent.



One of the men interviewed at Panguna said that while he gives most of the money he earns to his wife, he takes 'his share' out first, because he is a drinker and smoker. Although he said that she has sole responsibility for the use of the money, when it came to purchasing food, he advises her on how much to spend.

Independent income management was not common among the households at Panguna, with only one woman indicating that she had her own bank account that she herself controlled.

## Violence

Some women say violence against women is a problem at Panguna. One woman who did not experience violence herself told how violence arose when men earn money which they then spent on alcohol and when women query this the response is beatings. This woman also said that women hide the fact that they have been beaten, so that people are unaware of it.

A 58-year-old woman from Panguna with six children told how her particularly abusive and violent husband beats her for 'no reason' simply because he is drunk. Sometimes when he comes home drunk he abuses her and the children and, on occasions, destroys property in the house with a knife. He keeps a very sharp grass-cutting knife and had previously said to his wife, 'You see this grass knife, I've sharpened it and it awaits', if she dares to question his drunken behaviour. This man also squandered a large amount of her hard-earned money, she said, recounting how she had developed a gold buying business, which eventually collapsed because of his actions. Starting with K90, which she invested in goods to sell, she gradually accumulated enough capital to buy gold from alluvial miners working the tailings of Panguna and the Java River. Eventually, through her business acumen she had enough capital to purchase gold worth K6000. One day when she was unable to travel to Arawa to bank K4000, she foolishly allowed her husband to do the banking. He subsequently went to Buka, where he stayed at a guest house until he had spent all her money on alcohol and other women. Although she was very angry with her husband, he threatened her with physical violence. Today, this woman earns money by baking and selling at the market.

Another woman from Panguna, Miriam (Life Story 4, Appendix I, p. 49), 25 years old with three children, considered her husband 'good' because he gave her money to buy clothes, even though he beat her if she did not do her work, and also when he was drunk.



### Case Study 3: Tinputz District

Tinputz is located on the north-east coast of the main island of Bougainville, on the road that links Buka in the north and Arawa in the centre, and so is the nearest of our sites to the capital, Buka. Tinputz District comprises part of what Ian Scales refers to as the ‘developed north’, which has seen major investments in the cocoa industry following the crisis. While cocoa is grown in many parts of Bougainville, the north, including Tinputz, is the area that is most identified with cocoa and where it is most established.

We interviewed a total of 22 women at Tinputz. This included a small number of women who had migrated to Tinputz from the Cateret Islands because of population pressures and the difficulties of surviving on islands subject to the consequences of climate change. Another woman came from Panguna and had migrated to Tinputz with her husband after purchasing a cocoa block. The youngest woman interviewed was 23 and the oldest 59 years old (see Table 9).<sup>18</sup>

**Table 9: Demographic information**

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| Age range (years)                      | 23–59 |
| Number of women who had borne children | 21    |
| Number of children borne               | 102   |
| Number range of children per woman     | 1–8   |
| Number of women with dependants        | 2     |
| Number of dependants                   | 2     |

As in Panguna District, the level of education of the Tinputz women interviewed was much lower than those in Kieta District, with none having reached tertiary level and most having only attended primary school (see Table 10).

**Table 10: Highest level of education attended**

|                      |    |
|----------------------|----|
| Primary              | 15 |
| Secondary            | 4  |
| Vocational/Technical | 3  |

Like the women at the other research sites in Bougainville, the women of Tinputz were very active in their communities, though as in Panguna the focus was more on women’s organisations than business associations. Two of the respondents were chiefs, and one of these was also a land mediator. Several of the women were members of the Catholic Women’s Association or other local women’s groups and some were the women’s representative on the village assembly. Some women also identified as church workers, including a Sunday school teacher, and one was on the local school board. The majority of the women were members of the Catholic Church (see Table 11).<sup>19</sup>

**Table 11: Church affiliation**

|                                      |    |
|--------------------------------------|----|
| Catholic Church                      | 18 |
| Seventh Day Adventist Church (SDA)   | 1  |
| United Church                        | 1  |
| Restoration Fellowship International | 1  |

Seventeen of the women were currently married and only one of these had had a previous marriage. Three women were currently separated or divorced and two were widows. Nine of the marriages at Tinputz had entailed the exchange of bride price, with the amount ranging from K100 to K3000, with the latter also including some of the 'traditional' shell valuable — mimis. Of the nine women whose marriages had involved bride price, five had come from other locations, including from Rabaul (East New Britain Province) and Ambunti (East Sepik Province) and three from the Caterets. Only one of the 22 women had no children. Two of the women also had additional dependants in their household.

## Women's Income Sources and Challenge for Income Generation

While Tinputz is equated with cocoa, most women interviewed at Tinputz earned money by marketing garden produce (sweet potato, bananas, peanuts, greens, betel nut and tobacco), prepared food (tapiok pudding, buns, doughnuts, ice-blocks and biscuits) or fish, about a third of the women citing the latter was a source of income. A small number of women earned income from providing catering or accommodation for workshops held by a local NGO. One woman who currently sells cooked food at a roadside market, had sold second-hand clothes previously but stopped doing this because people would buy them on credit and then not pay. About half of the women cited cocoa as a source of income, though in some cases this had changed due to their cocoa trees being old and unproductive or being affected by cocoa pod borer, with some turning to processing copra instead. One woman indicated that she earned money by labouring for others.

The problem of cocoa pod borer, which has affected production for several years, poses a challenge for income generation in Tinputz for both men and women. A few of our respondents are successfully managing the problem, but most are not. One woman reported that because she and her husband have rehabilitated their cocoa block with new hybrid and budded varieties that are resistant to cocoa pod borer, they are making good money from cocoa. However, she said that because of their success they are extending their planting, which caused some jealous people to chop down some of their cocoa trees. In response to this, she and her husband have sought to help such people by supplying them with new budded cocoa plants, so that they can rehabilitate their own plantations.

Women in Tinputz face one problem that women elsewhere do not face. To facilitate selling, the women use market stalls built from local materials, or occasionally with store purchased materials such as galvanised iron for roofing. Such stalls serve both as a shelter from the sun, if they have a roof, and as a place for women to sit down and display their goods at a height that their customers can easily see. However, these stalls have been destroyed by young men drunk on 'home brew' (locally distilled alcohol), such drunken behaviour being a common problem in many parts of Bougainville (see Eves 2006:46–47).<sup>20</sup> While such actions are directed mainly at women who have relocated to Tinputz from the Cateret Islands, it has also affected women from Tinputz, since they use the same market stalls. Fortunately, at the time of fieldwork this problem had abated.

For some other women at Tinputz, the distance to market stalls was a challenge. One woman, for example, said that the best place to sell her produce was on the main road, which was some kilometres from her home, and she complained she does not have enough time for her children if she wants to earn an income.

Another respondent reported that her husband would not allow her to engage in income generating activities, because he does not want her to hold or have access to money. Not only does he prevent her from earning her own income, he refuses to give her any of his money. She recounted how in the past he would give her money, but has since stopped for some unspecified reason. This woman wanted to purchase an oven, so that she could bake scones for sale, but did not have the capital to start the business.

## Household Decision-Making

Of our three research sites, Tinputz District was the place where women were most marginalised from decision-making and we gathered fewer accounts of women being involved in joint decision-making than elsewhere.

One woman, 42 years old with six children, bemoaned that fact that decision-making in her house was largely dominated by her husband. She said that though some decisions concerning their children's welfare, health and education were sometimes made together, mostly her husband made decisions and she obeyed what he decided. When she tried to discuss things with him, she said he would get angry with her and say that she doesn't understand. As a result, this woman has lost confidence in herself. She underestimates and doubts herself, believing that she gives the wrong answers, or wrong advice, and that is why her husband refuses to listen or gets angry. However, although she was excluded from decision-making more generally, this woman had considerable financial autonomy, making her own money and controlling how it was spent.

A 36-year-old woman, who was active in a women's organisation, and who reported joint decision-making, confirmed that while she made some decisions together with her spouse, such as those about health and education of the children, when it came to control over resources, he made the decisions. This woman qualified the joint decision-making aspect, saying that it really depended on the type of decision and that sometimes he overrules her, and then she complies with what her husband decides. Another woman, with five children, found the joint decision-making in her household to be somewhat oppressive, remarking that 'every little thing we do we have to sit down and decide together'. If she dared to make a decision by herself, her husband would be annoyed and get angry with her, she commented.

A 33-year-old woman from Tinputz commented that she and her husband made decisions together and that they disciplined their three children during meal times when they were all together in the house. However, whether joint decision-making extends to all aspects of the household varies, as in the case of a 32-year-old woman, who said that she and her husband made decisions together about their children's welfare, but she was excluded from other decisions which were, he claimed, his sole responsibility.

## Financial Decision-Making

The greatest variation in financial decision-making occurred in Tinputz households. As evident from examples cited above, women may be involved in joint decision-making about some matters, such as the health and education of their children, but excluded when it came to money and resources.

Several women indicated that pooled income and joint decision-making occurred in their households, though there was some variation in who managed the money.

A 23-year-old woman, for example, said that the money the family earned is pooled, but is held by the husband and is spent on food, clothes for the family and other household needs. While she holds some of the pooled money, she must discuss with her husband any expenditure she wishes to make. This couple earned their money from cocoa, which is an income generating activity that men and women often engage in together, and so income is more likely to be pooled. The 59-year-old woman mentioned above, who found joint decision-making oppressive, also said that financial decisions are made together, noting that when she earns money, she sits down with her husband to decide how it will be spent, saying that most of their money goes to school fees.

As elsewhere (see p. 17), joint decision-making may occur in a marital relationship that is characterised by violence. This was the case with a 32-year-old woman who was subjected to physical violence by her husband for not doing housework well. Despite this, she and her husband made decisions together about school, money, health and the use of land.

Some households in Tinputz practised a form of independent income management which most often involved the income being pooled but with one spouse taking care of it and making decisions about its use. There were also cases where the male spouse had total control over money and restricted his wife's access to it. One woman, Alice (Life Story 5, Appendix 1, pp. 49–50), who had six children to care for and who is now a widow, reported that her husband, a soldier, kept total control over money and would not allow her to have any, justifying this by saying that: 'I earn the money and you are not supposed to hold any of it because you don't help me earn it.' If he sent her to the shops, Alice would have to record every expenditure and upon her return she would have to explain every purchase she had made.

A 49-year-old woman with six children also spoke of her violent and authoritarian husband's total control of money. Even though she works hard and brings in money, he controls it. This woman described her husband as rather fractious, arguing over small issues, but commented that one good thing about him was that he would give her money if the children needed to be taken to the health centre and he saves for the children's education. Despite this, she was resentful of the fact that he does not give money to his own children, but if he sees another family in need he gives money to them.

Very occasionally we heard of women being in sole charge of financial decision-making. A 54-year-old widow, for example, commented that when her husband was alive she was responsible for decision-making, including those about spending, because, she said, she did the work. He was partly disabled and unable to do garden work (though he did cook and wash dishes), but this did not prevent him from beating her up when he was drunk.

Another woman from Tinputz, a 35-year-old, also said that she holds the household money and is responsible for its expenditure. She and husband make decisions about their children together, but the use and control of money and resources is in her hands. She remarked that her husband contributes financially to the household, buying things in town, such as food and clothes. Another woman also said that she was responsible for making decisions about their money rather than her husband.

In some cases, women exhibited a high degree of financial autonomy and control over the money they earned, even when their agency in regard to household decision-making was restricted or minimal. For example, the 42-year-old woman, above, who bemoaned her exclusion from more general household decision-making, nevertheless made her own money and had complete control over its use.

## Violence

Eight respondents interviewed at Tinputz had experienced physical violence from their husbands and five (including two of the eight) indicated that they were subjected to controlling behaviour by their spouses. Although alcohol was a sometimes a factor, with five women indicating that their violent spouse was also a drinker, it was not the only trigger for violence. For example, a 32-year-old woman said that her husband beat her because she did not do the housework to his satisfaction and when she learnt to do it according to his demands he stopped being violent. She said that many women are beaten by their husbands because of sexual jealousy, as is clear in the case of a 32-year-old woman with five children who reported being beaten up by her husband who was filled with jealous rage because she played soccer and whilst there spoke to other men. He was especially jealous early in the marriage and subjected her to verbal abuse — telling her to go and *pamuk* (have sex) with her ex-partner — and accusing her of meeting men when she went to the garden.

Showing a member of the research team a scar on her back, a 54-year-old widow said that her husband used to beat her with the blunt edge of a bush-knife when he was drunk because he claimed she did not listen to him. A 35-year-old woman with five children also described life with her husband who was violent and a drunkard. When they were first married, her husband would divide the income he received from fishing equally between them but now he mostly keeps the money for himself, only occasionally giving her some. He spends the money



on beer and if she talks to him about meeting the needs of the family, he does not listen to her, and if she persists he beats her, claiming that since he does the hard work to earn it, it is his. This man also beats his wife if he goes out drinking and returns home to find no food, also sometimes destroying property in the house.<sup>21</sup> This woman went on to say it was a common problem many women face today, exacerbated by the drought which has affected food supplies.

The 49-year-old woman mentioned above, who spoke of her husband as violent and authoritarian, said that he is a drinker, who socialises with his friends and relatives. Once when he was drunk and was beating her, his brothers weighed into the conflict, kicking her when she was on the ground, dislocating some ribs and giving her back trouble which prevents her from doing heavy work. She is unable to seek medical attention because she does not have any money and if he comes home from work and see her lying down, he is angry with her. She recounted how he gets angry over any minor thing that annoys him.

Some husbands beat their wives regardless of whether they are drunk or sober. One woman, Vera (Life Story 6, Appendix 1, pp. 50–51), said her husband was violent when he was drunk and when he was sober and commented that she was mystified about why he beat her. He was an extremely controlling man, who wanted to know where she was and who she was with during the day. This man was an ex-combatant who owned a gun and, whenever he beat her, he would use the butt of the gun to hit her in the head. She told us of a number of times when he tried to shoot her and their children but missed.



Source: Richard Eves





Source: Richard Eyes



## PART 3. ANALYSIS

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### Challenges for Women's Income Generation

Women face a multitude of challenges in generating income, especially those outside the formal sector of waged employment. Men also face some of these challenges, though since women's income generation is generally more focused on meeting the needs of the family than men's, the impact of the challenges is felt particularly acutely by women and their children. Many of the women interviewed spoke about the financial hardship of meeting household expenses, such as school fees.

Some of the challenges are context specific, so that they are not necessarily felt in all three locations we visited. The people living in coastal regions, such as Tinputz and Arawa, face a particularly difficult situation since the cocoa trees that are their source of income have been badly affected by cocoa pod borer. Although cocoa pod borer can be successfully managed and far less susceptible varieties of cocoa tree are now available, many who are dependent on cocoa as a source of income are not taking the necessary measures (though it is unclear why) and are suffering financial hardship as a result. Processing coconuts into copra is an option for some in the cocoa pod borer affected areas, but it is an extremely arduous way of making money. Although some women mentioned this as a way of making money, they described it as very hard work and something they rarely did. It is worth remembering that these are women who work extremely hard in any case, especially in their gardens. The hard effort of making money from copra is compounded by its low price, with people having to work longer hours to meet their needs.

Generally, women value the opportunity to earn income and speak positively about its benefits. But income generation is not without negative impacts or difficulties, including the extra burden of work it entails, the difficulty of finding someone to look after children and problems of accessing markets.

For example, one woman from Tinputz complained of her heavy workload and having no time for the family, bemoaning the fact that the market is several kilometres from her village, which means a considerable walk to get there, carrying produce. She highlighted the difficulty of childcare when she markets with no one available to look after her children (she had five children and was pregnant at the time of interview). Occasionally her husband looks after the children, but mostly he does not. She said that if there are family needs, she forces herself to market, remarking that she tries not to think about the children. Long days at the market selling goods also impact on the other work responsibilities falling on her, such as going to the garden to collect food for the evening meal. This means that the children will be hungry when she returns home and will be fed late.

Women's income generating activities are subject to external constraints that frustrate their desire to earn an income or make it more difficult. Those who are dependent on informal marketing face constraints, such as the lack of adequate market infrastructure, costs of transportation to larger markets and lack of capital to start businesses. The women who ran businesses in Arawa highlighted uncertainty about access to land within the township as one issue impacting on their ability to expand businesses.<sup>22</sup> They also pointed to the insecurity and climate of fear existing in the lead-up to the referendum on Bougainville's status in Papua New Guinea and cited some incidents involving militants that reinforced their fears.<sup>23</sup>

### Shame

One of the issues that arose during the research concerned shame — called *pasin sem* in Tok Pisin. This is a pervading feeling of shame felt by many women of Papua New Guinea, including Bougainville. *Pasin sem* is also felt by men, though perhaps not in such an all-pervading way. As a norm, shame is a way of regulating and defining the boundaries and parameters of individual behaviour permissible in society, particularly in relation to the opposite sex. Shame is often coupled with respect, so that a person who breaches kinship etiquette,

for example, is considered to lack respect and her actions bring shame to herself and to her lineage and clan relatives. From early childhood, girls learn that they must respect and defer to men, not put themselves forward in any way, and that their bodies not only produce substances that are dangerous to men but can also sexually incite men to behave badly. Thus girls are taught to behave decorously, never to step over food that has been laid out on the ground, never to climb a tree, and to observe avoidance measures in regard to certain men. Women who flout these rules are disparaged as lacking respect and having no shame. Thus, especially for women, shame is built into the body. It inhibits women so that they avoid contexts that require them to interact and speak with other people, especially those they do not know well.<sup>24</sup> This extreme diffidence was often cited as an obstacle to women's income generation, especially that involving informal marketing of garden produce, cooked food or goods.

The problem of this overwhelming shame was especially acute at Tinputz, where the local economy had deteriorated significantly due to the cocoa harvest failure caused by the cocoa pod borer. Previously, we were told, women earned good money from cocoa, but now they are forced to do informal marketing to generate income. *Pasin sem* affects women regardless of education level or if they have been employed formally in the past. A 42-year-old woman from Tinputz said that she was a '*meri i sem long maket* (a woman who is ashamed to market)'. She was also excluded by her husband from decision-making in the household and consequently had lost confidence in her abilities. Even though her husband did not want her to bake buns because she was not making enough profit, she persisted because she wants to be self-sufficient. Some women respondents told us that some women are so crippled by shame they hide away, avoiding selling things even when they have produce that needs to be sold. A 50-year-old woman from Tinputz with seven children said she generally has plentiful supplies of fish to sell, but is too shy to market them and must depend on people coming to her house to buy them. Some women prevail upon other women to sell their products for them because they cannot themselves do so. A 23-year-old woman with four children, who would get her produce ready for market and then ask another woman to sell it, decided that the solution to her dilemma was to stop having children, since then she would not need to earn as much money. Following discussion with her husband who agreed with her about her wish to stop having children, she sought out local herbal medicines (*bus marasin*) for family planning.<sup>25</sup>

Shame was also an issue for some women at Panguna. A 27-year-old woman, for example, who is educated and has worked in an office in the past but is now dependent selling food, told how she found it difficult sell things. Her husband earned an income through alluvial gold mining and she was frustrated that she could not be involved in this venture because the labour was simply too hard. Instead, she had to sell things but was held back by *pasin sem*.

For some women, the fact that others avoid selling things at market is their gain, with one woman remarking that she made good money from selling doughnuts, largely because so many women are too ashamed to sell at the market and there is negligible competition. Another woman from Tinputz also said she made good money because other women forced into selling, due to the impact of the cocoa pod borer, are not skilled at it. Some women are especially ill-equipped for this kind of income generation, lacking both the confidence to deal with customers and the financial literacy necessary.

## **Demands from Relatives**

The practice of giving to others is generally considered a central characteristic of Melanesian cultures, including Bougainville, where giving is deemed to be a cultural and moral imperative.<sup>26</sup> People are encouraged to be generous and to share with family and other relatives who may be in need, with this system of helping '*wantoks*' (literally those who speak the same language but meaning members of one's clan or subclan) being seen as a social safety net and form of social protection.<sup>27</sup> From an early age, children are taught the virtue of sharing; several respondents, both male and female, when asked to describe growing up, emphasised that their parents taught them to share. Both women and men also remarked on sharing in response to questions about what makes a good wife/woman or a good husband/man.



However, while the ethos of sharing is valued and encouraged, it is also sometimes deprecated by respondents, and for good reason.<sup>28</sup> One woman from Arawa with four male adult children was subjected to demands from them when they had been drinking. All four are extremely violent and have been known to chase people with knives when drunk and she has had to resort to telling them to keep away from her store when they have been drinking.<sup>29</sup>

Women with teenage children going to school are under pressure for money, so that their children can have what other children have. Many women not only found managing the demands within the immediate family difficult, but also found it difficult to manage demands from extended family and in-laws, particularly when it came to 'traditional obligations', the customary demands and responsibilities that come with deaths and marriages. Such obligations are especially severe for business women and other women who are financially successful; some women even save especially for these contingencies. Indeed, one of the reasons why one woman established the successful guesthouse she has in Arawa was so that she could respond to the demands from her extended family.

Clearly a tension exists between the customary ethos of sharing, which make it very difficult to say no, and people's desire to improve the living standards of their immediate families.<sup>30</sup> Some women commented that requests for credit undermined their businesses, making them less viable, and a small number of women were even forced to abandon their business ventures entirely. One woman who had been selling second-hand clothes abandoned this way of making money because people would take stock on credit and not pay her. Another woman who made money by lending out money to others, stopped this because people would not repay their loans.

While everyone who earns money is under pressure from relatives and in-laws to share their resources, women are perhaps more vulnerable to this since women are socialised to be much more obliging than men. Men are also in a better and more powerful position to refuse such requests, just by virtue of being men, since they are socialised to be assertive, whereas women who are socialised to defer to others, are more likely to acquiesce to requests. Women are also more likely to be exposed to such requests, since their most common form of income generation is the sale of garden produce, cooked food and other consumables, a context where people can easily see that money is being made. Men's income is more likely to come from paid employment or from cash crops, like copra or cocoa, which are sold in bulk at depots, rather than in open marketplaces.

## Decision-Making

### Household Decision-Making

As the case studies illustrate, women's involvement in household decision-making varies.<sup>31</sup> There are examples of both men and women believing that the husband is the head of the household and should be the sole decision-maker — or at least the final arbiter of decisions. This reflects the traditional decision-making structure, in which men generally made most of the decisions and the only decisions left to women concerned selecting and preparing food. Bigger issues, such as where to make a garden or to build a house, were the man's responsibility. Such traditional notions have undoubtedly been reinforced by some forms of Christianity that privilege the male as the decision-maker. Indeed, some churches continue to uphold a hierarchical view of gender relations, which positions God at the apex, followed by men and then women, as one man interviewed during the research explained. This man was a pastor with the CLC (Christian Life Centre) who told us that it is according to Scripture that the man is the head of the household, using the analogy of a country having just one prime minister rather than two.

Despite support for the notion that the husband is the head of the household, considerable variation occurs in the everyday reality of decision-making. This became clear in the case studies where we found examples of women being involved in a range of household decisions. Even the pastor mentioned above did in fact leave

some decisions to his wife, particularly those concerning their daughters, who were advised by their mother about how to be a good woman and how they should behave. The pastor justified giving his wife responsibility for this decision-making by recourse to the fact that the daughters belonged to the same clan as their mother.<sup>32</sup> It is also clear that some women are unhappy with their husband's domination of decision-making — for example, the 42-year-old woman from Tinputz above (p. 26) who said that she had lost confidence in herself because of her husband's refusal to discuss things with her and his retorts that she did not understand.

Joint decision-making was a feature of some marriages and women valued sitting down with their husbands to discuss things, as well as helping each other and working together. For some women, joint decision-making was a sign of a good marriage and of an ideal husband. Some of the male respondents interviewed during the research also considered joint decision-making an attribute of an ideal husband and said they practised this themselves.

Although the claim of joint decision-making may give the impression of a cooperative household where the woman has a degree of respect and power, both male and female respondents confirmed that this sometimes belies the fact that the wife actually has little power and is merely a rubber stamp for the man's decisions. This was enunciated by one man who said both he and his wife are responsible for disciplining the children, taking them to the hospital if ill and making more general decisions about their development, but he qualified this by saying that, in reality, he makes most of the family's decisions, though he takes care to explain to his wife why he is making them.

Some men also said that while decisions were made jointly with their spouse, this did not necessarily extend to important decisions, especially when it came to significant resources. For example, one man from Tinputz said that while he makes decisions with his wife, he takes over critical decisions, such as responsibility for looking after their cocoa plantation, a significant source of income for the couple. This reflects the common practice within Papua New Guinea of men taking control of cash crops, particularly those that are lucrative, such as coffee and cocoa, seeing them as 'men's business'. Indeed, one key informant from Tinputz when speaking about cocoa expressed this in the following way in Tok Pisin: '*man i mas spearheadim ol wok* (men must spear-head or lead the work)'.

Moreover, although joint decision-making may give the impression of a cooperative and harmonious household, this may elide the fact that there is violence in the relationship. This was the case with two women we interviewed — one in Arawa and one in Tinputz — whose marriages were marred by physical violence, even though household decisions were jointly made (see p. 13 and p. 21).

Responsibility for decision-making about children's welfare, including their health and education, are sometimes made jointly by the husband and wife, but sometimes by either one of the parents. This is an area where women are sometimes given exclusive decision-making power. Indeed, there are cases where couples may practise joint decision-making about most household matters, but leave those concerning children to the mother. A typical example was the 55-year-old woman from Panguna (p. 17) who said that she and her husband would sit down together to make joint decisions about most things affecting their lives, but she was solely responsible for looking after and disciplining their 10 children.

However, in some cases the husband assumes responsibility for important decisions about the children, especially those involving the use of financial resources. This means that though some male respondents left decisions about the children's health and welfare to the mother, whether this included education varied, largely because this entails the payment of school fees. As one man from Panguna said, his wife is responsible for decision-making about the children and their health and well-being, including any customary rituals for them, but he is responsible for financial decisions, because: 'the man earns money not the woman'.

Women's inclusion in decision-making about children is partly due to the matrilineal descent system in Bougainville, since the children belong to the clan of the mother.<sup>33</sup> It also reflects the gender norms that relegate women to the domestic sphere and the types of labour associated with this, which requires women to look after not only the house but also the children. This is a product of traditional gender roles and of Christianity, for as the CLC pastor mentioned above claimed, women have the divine role to look after children.

One man we spoke with who considers his wife good because she always obeys his decisions and looks after their children well remarked that she is extra careful to ensure they do not get ill, since she knows that he would be 'very, very angry' if they did. Another male respondent also said his wife is responsible for looking after the children, emphasising the importance of her making sure they do not get sick. Thus, although these men allocate childcare to their wives, they do not do so unreservedly.

Many women we interviewed emphasised that their parents had followed the traditional gender roles, which entailed their mother being responsible for gardening, the house and children.<sup>34</sup> As girls, they were socialised to do gardening, cooking, washing and looking after the smaller children, while their brothers learned hunting or fishing and the types of labour that their fathers did, which was generally the heavy work of clearing forest for gardens and building houses and fences.

One area where women sometimes have more decision-making power concerns land and where to garden. Several women reported making joint decisions about matters such as the health and education for their children, but when it came to land they alone were responsible. However, this is determined by whose land they reside upon. A married woman may reside on land of her own clan or on her husband's land. If she resides on her own clan land, she is responsible for making decisions about the land, particularly when it concerns where to garden. However, if she wishes to sell land this requires consultation with other clan members, including male members. If a woman moves to her husband's land, she is excluded from decision-making about land.<sup>35</sup>

As noted above, there were some cases where women alone were responsible for most decisions, though this seemed to be rare. For example, the case we discussed above (p. 22), involved the woman making the decisions, including those related to household expenditure, largely because her husband was partly disabled, which meant she was responsible for most of the labour typically associated with men.

### Financial Decision-Making

Much as we found in other research conducted in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands as part of the Do No Harm project, considerable diversity occurs in how couples manage money in Bougainville, with both 'household income management' and 'independent income management' being used, as well as variations and combinations of the two (Eves and Lusby 2018; Eves and Titus n.d.).

Household income management generally entails members of the household pooling some or all of their income — putting it in 'one basket', as one male respondent put it (see also Eves and Lusby 2018). This common pool may be controlled and managed by one household member (male or female) or by both spouses together. Several women spoke of making decisions jointly over financial matters in their household. An ideal example was given by a 33-year-old woman from Tinputz who recounted how decisions were made with her husband (p. 21). This couple's income mainly came from cocoa, but as it was a seasonal crop it was not an income that flowed all year round. Whenever she and her husband get money they sit down together and prioritise the family needs and what goes first, second, third and so on. She emphasised that the first thing they think about is meeting the needs of the family, saying that they are aware of the difference between needs and wants. In fact, some couples not only decide together how to spend money but also weigh up which are the best options for earning money (see p. 17).

Perhaps a less ideal example was the man who used the image of 'one basket' and said that his spouse cannot keep the money she earns but must contribute it to the common household pool, without regard to whether she may have preferred a different arrangement. This suggests that some women have little autonomy over the money they earn themselves.

Overall, however, the need for financial autonomy is less of an issue for women because they see joint decision-making as a sign of a 'good marriage'. For example, a 27-year-old woman from Panguna said that her marriage is 'good' because of the joint decision-making (p. 17) — despite the fact that even though she has formal employment, she still has to do the housework, cook the food and care for the children. Her husband does not help out because his work entails considerable travel.

In some cases of household income management, the pooled money is controlled solely by one spouse, most often the husband, but occasionally by the wife. In cases where the income is controlled by one spouse, there may be joint decision-making, but sometimes there is not as in the case of the CLC pastor discussed above, who said that he is responsible for everything to do with finances, because he is 'the provider'. Another man was adamant that he alone was responsible for making decisions about spending, including what to spend money on and how much, claiming this was justified because his wife was uneducated and did not have good judgement. Similarly, another man also claimed that his wife was not on the 'same level' as him because he had been more exposed to the outside world and was more educated than she was. This man makes most of the decisions in the household, financial and other, and he expects his wife to be happy with the decisions since, as he remarked, they are the best decisions. This man uses violence against his wife if she does not obey his decisions, warning her that if she runs away after a beating, she must never return. In a similar case of absolute control of money, the 49-year-old woman from Tinputz (p. 22) said that even though she works hard to bring money into the household her husband controls it.

In other cases, while the income is held by the man, the couple decide together how it is spent. For example, a 51-year-old woman from Tinputz reported that when their household gets money, the husband controls it, but they make decisions about spending it jointly. Some of the money is for the family, including expenses for their children. She emphasised that the money they earn benefits the whole family, but said there is a great deal of pressure for money for customary obligations and to lend money to others, which is never paid back.

In a small number of cases, pooled income was controlled by women (p. 22), but we heard far less discourse about women being better managers of money than men, which was a feature of the Do No Harm research in Solomon Islands (see Eves and Lusby 2018). One woman from Tinputz said that her husband gives her money and that they have a bank account for family needs. She controls the money and determines how it will be spent, commenting that her husband is not selfish and when he gives her money he never asks for it back again, a reference to the common practice of men who drink asking for money back from their wives when they have run out of money and want to buy more alcohol (see below). One male respondent said that he gives his money to the wife to look after, including the income from his role as an executive officer for an organisation in the district. As he is a drinker, prior to giving his money to his wife he retains some for this use.

### Independent Income Management

Independent income management may result in women having little or no say in matters beyond their own income. So, for example, the woman previously mentioned (p. 21) who said that when she tries to talk with her husband his response is anger and to tell her she does not understand, nevertheless, earns her own income and spends it as she likes, with her husband not having input into the decision-making concerning it. As we noted above, examples exist of women making decisions alone, including financial decisions, such as the case of a 54-year-old woman from Tinputz, who commented that since she does the work, she is responsible for decision-making, including those about spending (p. 22).

In some cases, there is a combination of household income management and independent income management, with both spouses pooling resources for the household, but each keeping some of the income themselves, which they control and spend according to their own wishes.

In some examples of household income management, each spouse has some income which they use independently. For example, the 53-year-old woman from Arawa (p. 12) had a joint account with her spouse which required consultation about spending and her own separate account that did not. Another woman, a 36-year-old from Tinputz, said that she and her husband sit down together and budget when they earn income, but commented that she ‘doesn’t need his permission’ to spend the money she earns from selling peanuts.

## Spending

The observation has often been made that in developing countries poor women tend to spend the income they control largely on family needs rather than personal needs (Agarwal 1997:25; Mayoux 1999b:969). Sometimes this occurs out of necessity because the husband, seeing that his wife is earning, contributes little or nothing to the household (see Eves and Titus n.d.; Hailie et al. 2012:257; Mayoux 1999b:972).

Certainly, the Bougainvillean women’s stories support this view, showing that their income is mainly directed to household needs and especially to their children’s education, health and welfare, with virtually no reference to buying things for themselves. This applies especially to respondents in Tinputz District, whose income had diminished due to the cocoa pod borer. Several women there spoke of life being particularly hard, with some forsaking seeking medical attention for themselves because they could not afford it. One woman there bemoaned the fact that she was unable to seek healthcare for herself because the transportation by PMV (Public Motor Vehicle) cost K5 each way. Another woman at Tinputz said she was unable to save any money and the little income she earns is spent on soap and salt. Another woman at Tinputz (p. 20) also said that despite having no one to look after her children she forces herself to go marketing when necessary, especially if there is no salt or other basic needs.

## Financial Management

When asked about the financial management abilities of community members, some female respondents took this to mean the skills to manage businesses or other income generating activities. One woman, for example, highlighted the lack of product diversity among women who sell informally, saying that if one woman bakes scones, another woman will do the same and if one woman makes ice-blocks another will do the same so that none will be able to make a profit. This was an issue that also came up in the Solomon Islands Do No Harm research (see Eves and Lusby 2018).

Another woman thought that many women at Tinputz were not competent at managing money and spent their income unwisely, which she attributed to the fact that many women have not finished their education. The Bougainville crisis is often given as the reason why so many Bougainvilleans have not completed school, but this woman attributed it to the fact that when cocoa was thriving and the income from it was good, people did not see education as important or, indeed, necessary. But the decline in cocoa production has made people dependent on earning money by other means, which may require much more financial competence, as well as other skills that give women the confidence to sell, since shame inhibits many women (p. 25). She thought that although many people were earning money they look poor, because they do not spend their earnings wisely. In her view, if the husband earns money he spends it on himself and if the wife earns money she spends it on herself, without considering the needs of the family. However, this is a minority view that is unsupported by the evidence we collected which shows that most women spend the money they earn on the family and, as we mentioned above, we heard almost no mention of women spending on themselves.

## Conflicts over Money and Earning

Conflicts over money are common in Melanesia. Both the Do No Harm Solomon Islands research (see Eves 2017a; Eves and Lusby 2018) and the Do No Harm Coffee Small-holder research (Eves and Titus n.d.) draw attention to conflicts over money and the Do No Harm Bougainville research has made similar findings.

As noted in the section on financial decision-making, some men seize control of joint money and do not even give their spouse access to resources for the household. Restricting access to financial resources is a form of economic abuse that constitutes controlling behaviour according to the World Health Organization (WHO 2012:1; see endnote 3 below). However, more recent literature uses a far wider definition of economic abuse than the WHO. For example, the issue of what constitutes economic abuse is widely discussed, mainly in developing country contexts. A Scale of Economic Abuse has been developed, which lists a diversity of forms of this abuse under two broad headings — economic control and economic exploitation (Adams et al. 2008; see also Fawole 2008; Jury et al. 2017; Postmus et al. 2012; Sharp-Jeffs 2015).

For some women, it is not only a question of controlling their own income, but also of having access to their husband's financial resources, and in a few extreme cases women were either refused access to their husband's income or that access was limited. The most extreme case of this kind of behaviour recorded during the fieldwork in Bougainville was the example cited above of Alice, whose husband refused to give his wife any money because he earned it (Life Story 5, Appendix 1, pp. 49–50). According to some men, refusing to give money to their wives is very common. Indeed, one woman from Tinputz who does informal marketing said she hears many stories from other women who sell goods at the market about how their husbands mistreat them and refuse to give them money, and this is why they market.

There are also examples of men not allowing their wives the opportunity to earn money, reinforcing women's dependency on men. One woman from Tinputz spoke of her husband not only refusing to give her money (although he had done so in the past), but also not allowing her to earn income herself. This woman wanted to bake and sell scones, but her husband did not want her to and did not support her in her efforts to do so. Regardless of her husband's wishes, she is hoping to get some money from the district administration, so that she can buy an oven and start a business.

Some of the male respondents held negative views about wives' income generating activities and prevented their own from pursuing them. For example, the CLC pastor, mentioned above, said that he and his wife had not had any major problems in their marriage, except when he became a pastor and she wanted to earn an income by producing cocoa and informal marketing. As he did not consider money to be a problem, he was not happy with his wife earning money. Moreover, he thought women waste a lot of time marketing. This man also mentioned he had a major conflict with his wife because she was heavily involved in the Kieta Women's Council, which he considered a waste of time and meant that his wife spent too much time on other people's affairs. The result, according to him, was that she did not spend enough time looking after their own young daughters, one of whom was found to be drinking alcohol. He felt that his daughter's drinking did not reflect well on him in his role as a pastor and believed that his wife's proper role was as a housewife, whose responsibility it was to look after the children.

Given that women are usually responsible for maintaining the household it is not surprising that they are aggrieved about, and often contest, their spouses' failure to contribute.<sup>36</sup> Men's refusal to contribute to the household increases the precariousness of life for women and their children and leads to women being overburdened with work. Economic abuse that involves controlling women's income or barring them from income generation heightens women's dependency on men, making it even more difficult for them to leave the relationship (see also Adams et al. 2008:568).



## Violence

Conflicts over money sometimes descend into physical violence. However, it should be noted that physical violence also occurs for reasons other than money. The women respondents gave a variety of reasons why their spouses used violence against them, including jealousy (p. 22), not doing their work (p. 18) or not doing their work to their husband's satisfaction (p. 22). Fourteen of 43 women indicated that they were, or had been, in relationships that included physical violence from their spouse.

Conflicts over money often occur over men using their earnings for their own personal discretionary spending to the exclusion of the household. Such resource-depleting behaviour is often contested by women and gives rise to marital conflicts and sometimes physical violence.

By far the most physical violence reported by the women we interviewed was connected to men's use of alcohol, a common issue that has emerged in the Do No Harm research among coffee smallholders in Papua New Guinea (Eves and Titus n.d.) and Solomon Islands (Eves and Lusby 2018). Ten women indicated that their spouses who were violent towards them were also drinkers. According to key informants, men spending money on alcohol was particularly acute in Panguna District, among those digging or panning for gold, and in Tinputz District, among cocoa farmers. In Tinputz, in such a case people refer to the cocoa block as an '*SP Blok*', in recognition of the money being spent on beer produced by South Pacific brewery (SP). People also sometimes use the expression '*wara cocoa* (cocoa water)', a euphemistic way of saying that men are spending their money from cocoa on beer and then urinating.

Other research in Papua New Guinea and elsewhere has explored the links between alcohol and physical violence (Dernbach and Marshall 2001:30; Eves 2006:29–32, 46–48) and recent international research has found a strong link between alcohol and violence against women. For example, Hanmer and Klugman found that a wife's risk of violence at home was systematically related to the husband's use of alcohol (2016:258). When they reviewed Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) data for 22 countries, Hanmer and Klugman found that a husband's use of alcohol increases the likelihood that women will be subject to intimate partner violence and that women who report that their husbands are often drunk are five times more likely to be subject to this form of violence (ibid.:255–56). Certainly, there is a strong connection between drinking and masculinity; drinking by men in Papua New Guinea is often accompanied by displays of masculine bravado, especially when excessive amounts are consumed. Alcohol weakens the constraints of social conventions so that under its influence drinkers will disregard norms that usually govern behaviour (Eves 2006:47).

Some women said their husbands were violent for no apparent reason when they were drunk, but several reported that their husband became physically violent if they refused to give him money or questioned his spending on alcohol. Such men often do not contribute to the household and are held to account by their wives, who question their wasting money on themselves to the exclusion of the family. Several women who had not experienced violence themselves also stated it was decision-making about money, especially resource-depleting consumption of alcohol, which usually gave rise to physical violence. This led one woman from Arawa to advise her married daughters not to talk to their husbands when they were drunk because, as she remarked, 'the sense has gone out'.

Some men control their spending on alcohol by giving money to their wives to look after prior to drinking sessions. One woman remarked that her husband was 'good' because when he drinks he gives her the money to look after so he won't spend it all. However, in some cases men who adopt this strategy demand the money back when drunk (Life Story 3, Appendix 1, pp. 48–49) and will become abusive and physically violent if it is not forthcoming. Some women give their husbands a limited amount of money as a way to limit spending on alcohol. For example, one woman mentioned that she would give her husband only K50 for his drinking, while another, a successful businesswoman, paid her husband a wage rather than allowing him access to money from the business (p. 14).

## Controlling Behaviour

An aspect of violent behaviour not discussed in the case studies is controlling behaviour. Some husbands control not only household income, which we have discussed, but also engage in other forms of controlling behaviour. Seven of the 43 women across all the research sites reported experiencing controlling behaviour from a spouse, including one woman each from Kieta and Panguna and five women from Tinputz.<sup>37</sup> Much of men's desire to control their wives' movement is motivated by sexual jealousy and the fear that she is having affairs with other men, or will run away with another man. One woman at Panguna said that many husbands do not allow their wives to attend meetings as they suspect they might be meeting other men.

When one 59-year-old woman was newly married, her husband would not allow her to go to public places or community gatherings. Vera, whose husband beat her regardless of whether he was drunk or sober, was also subject to sexual jealousy and controlling behaviour, his suspicion of his wife causing him to demand to know who she had spent time with during the day. A similar situation was described by another woman who reported that whenever she goes to the garden, her husband suspects her of meeting other men. A 46-year-old woman from Panguna reported that her first husband did not allow her to be involved in community work, telling her that she was a housewife and was only responsible for the house. This woman's second husband is much more accommodating and lets her be involved in community work, and she is now a women's representative. Another woman whose husband does not trust her (Life Story 6, Appendix 1, pp. 50–51) told us he demands to know who she has spent time with during the day, while another woman reported that whenever she goes to the garden, her husband suspects her of meeting other men.

Sometimes the controlling behaviour of men degenerates into physical violence, as in the case of the woman mentioned above who was beaten up because she played soccer and while there spoke to other men. Sometimes a husband's sexual jealousy and the suspicions it arouses impacts negatively on a woman's income generating activities and thwarts her ambition to improve their standard of living. The 49-year-old woman from Tinputz whose husband is physically violent and authoritarian was successful at school and was selected to attend the police training college at Bomana in Port Moresby, but was prevented from attending by her jealous husband, who demanded to know what she was intending to find there (*'yu go findim wanem long hap'*). This woman is treated very badly by her husband, who often prevents her from going out, and she is contemplating divorce. His controlling behaviour also extends to financial management and he takes full control over their money because he claims he earns the income, even though she also works hard to bring money in. Despite being physically violent and controlling, this man does save money for their children's education.

## Marriage and Bride Price

The exchange of bride price is often given as the explanation for the unequal relationship between husbands and wives, and husbands often use it as a justification for their physical violence and other forms of violence towards their wives, including their attempts to control them. Rather than being seen as an exchange that creates a relationship between two social groupings, as it was in the past, with the bride's kin being compensated for her loss, the bride-price payment is now widely understood quite literally as a straightforward purchase. Having 'purchased' the woman, the man believes he owns her, as though she is little more than an object or a slave (Eves 2006:27; see Lewis et al. 2007:121). In the Papua New Guinea highlands, for example, some men use the Tok Pisin expression *'ful prais, ful bodi* (full price, full body) to say that bride price entitles them to the complete ownership of women (see Eves 2018).

Similar sentiments are also found in Bougainville, with the Bougainville *Family, Health and Safety Study* reporting that 67 per cent of men agreed with the statement that if a man has paid bride price for his wife, he owns her. That study also reports that 53 per cent of women agreed with this view (Jewkes et al. 2013:24). In such circumstances, the payment of bride price is used to justify the husband's authority over his wife, entitling him

to her labour, her sexual services and her full obedience. However, in contrast to our findings in Jiwaka and Chimbu in Papua New Guinea, we found no simple or direct correlation between bride price and physical violence.

Compared to the DNH research in the PNG highlands, the exchange of bride price does not appear to be such a common part of marriage in Bougainville, with only 10 of 43 respondents' marriages involving it. While 22 per cent is not an insignificant figure, this is considerably less than the 87 per cent for the highlands. Numbers for the various research sites were: Kieta District 1; Panguna District 0; Tinputz District 9. In the case of Kieta District, the one woman whose marriage involved the exchange of bride price was from Bana District (Nagovisi language group). A number of the marriages in the Tinputz District involved the exchange of bride price because some of the women had come from elsewhere, including from Rabaul (East New Britain Province) and Ambunti (East Sepik Province) as well as three from the Caterets, with the remainder being from Tinputz District. Compared to some places in Papua New Guinea, where bride price can cost several thousands of kina as well as other goods, such as pigs, the amounts exchanged in Bougainville are quite small. As we indicated above, our respondents' bride price ranged from K100 to K3000, with the highest amount also including an additional number of the shell valuable — *mimis*. None of the marriages of the five respondents from Kieta District who reported physical violence in their marriages had entailed the exchange of bride price. Similarly in Panguna District, two women reported violence in their relationship and one reported a controlling husband, but none these marriages had entailed the exchange of bride price. There is a greater association between bride price and physical violence in Tinputz District where, of the nine marriages that had involved the exchange of bride price, five involved physical violence and in two others the husband was controlling. A further four marriages involved physical violence, but not the exchange of bride price.

Nevertheless, our research clearly indicates that physical violence and controlling behaviour in a marriage is not confined to those where bride price has been exchanged (see Toft 1985).

## Relationships

Not only did many of our respondents experience physical violence at the hand of their spouses, but their relationships with their partners were characterised by other problems as well. A common issue faced by women in Bougainville is their partner's infidelity; several of the respondents (9 of 45 women) recounted their experiences of this and the effect it had on them and their children. It was the source of great anxiety and stress in their lives and could be considered a form of emotional abuse. Of these nine women whose marriages were marked by their partner's infidelity, seven were also marked by physical violence. Though the DNH research is not based on a representative sampling model, and is thus not generalisable, this does suggest a close relationship between physical violence and male infidelity.

Unlike other parts of Papua New Guinea, such as the highlands, where infidelity on the part of the husband may lead to him to establish a polygynous household, polygyny is rare in Bougainville. Rather, infidelity generally leads to the breakdown of the marriage, separation and divorce. Women then bear the financial and other responsibilities of raising the children, which can make their precarious lives even more difficult. Other financial strains also occur when men start relationships with other women and direct their resources to the new relationship at the expense of their existing marriage, so that their wife must make up the shortfall in household income.

The story of Alice (Life Story 5, Appendix 1, pp. 49–50) typifies the experience of several of the women who spoke to us during the research. Although Alice was successful at school and selected to go to teacher's college, she was forced to marry a man to whom she had been betrothed as an infant. Her husband, Paul, was in the army and she followed him on postings to Port Moresby and to other places in Papua New Guinea. During their marriage she had three children, but the relationship deteriorated in 2000 when, during one of his postings

to Port Moresby, he began to have affairs with other women and decided to marry one of them. When she discovered this, Alice decided to leave him; Paul gave her a ticket and sent her back to Bougainville with their three children.

Another woman, Rachel (Life Story 2, Appendix 1, p. 48), considered her marriage was 'good', since it entailed joint decision-making with a man who she considered understanding and patient. The marriage was free from physical violence, but broke down when her husband started having relationships with other women, with Rachel saying she could not cope with this. After a number of failed attempts at mediation, Rachel divorced him and went on to marry twice more, including to a man who was violent and another who was both unfaithful and violent.

A third woman, Vera (Life Story 6, Appendix 1, pp. 50–51), also spoke of her marriage being marred by her husband's infidelities. Vera was married to a former BRA combatant who was violent and controlling. Although Vera said she never knew where her husband was he would always insist on knowing where she was. One of the good things her husband did was to build a house for her and their children, but she said that this was spoiled when he brought other women back to the house to have sex with them. Eventually, he took another wife and brought her back to the house, enraging Vera who attacked her. According to Vera, her ex-husband has now reached his fourth wife and each new wife gets younger and younger. Vera surmised that young girls today wish to marry older men with money because they were not looked after by their fathers and she is careful never to allow her own daughters to go out without her.<sup>38</sup>

While it is common for men to have extramarital affairs, men often accuse their wives of being unfaithful, sometimes denying the paternity of their own children. This was the case with Vera whose husband denied that he was the father when she gave birth to her second and third children, beating her up and demanding to know who the father was, saying, 'Tell me and I will let you live.'

Sometimes the husbands of the women we interviewed had fathered children with other women. One woman recounted how she received a letter from another woman who claimed that she was made pregnant by her husband. When she confronted him, he falsely claimed he did not know the woman. Another woman recounted how her husband began an affair with a woman from another place and went on to have several children with her. She tried hard to stop him from having the affair and went so far as to contact the other woman and argue with her about it, but to no avail and she eventually gave up. She said that she is no longer angry with the other woman and they came to an understanding that neither of them is at fault, rather it is the man's fault and they even help each other out with each other's children.

Occasionally, speculation about infidelity can lead to women using physical violence against other women. One woman at Arawa told of a young woman she knows being beaten badly by another woman because she suspected her of having an affair with her husband. The attack happened on the street in Arawa, with onlookers goading the woman to beat the other woman, even though there was no basis to the claim. A 25-year-old woman from Panguna, who was subject to violence from her husband, attacked a girl her husband was having an affair with, breaking her hand in the process. Men's infidelity can also cause a wife to attack her husband; a 54-year-old woman with eight children from Tinputz told us that when she suspected her husband of having an affair with his secretary and confronted him about it, he denied it, but finally admitted two years later that he had married her. To prevent his wife from reporting him to the authorities, he threatened to kill her and then to abandon their children. He also burned the marriage certificate from his first marriage, so that his wife would not have evidence they were actually married if she did decide to report him. Eventually this woman hit her husband on the head with a piece of timber, splitting the skin on the head open and to avoid retribution she ran away to another province for two years.

## Dealing with Marriage Problems — Conflict Resolution, Justice

Women often react to marital problems, particularly physical violence, by concealing them, both from the wider community and their children. A woman from Panguna said that women hide domestic violence because they do not want others to know that they are being beaten by their husbands. Women have a strong sense of shame over being victims of their husband's beatings and therefore are reluctant for this to become public knowledge.

Concealing marital problems is the strategy of one woman who said she behaves 'humbly' and makes sure her children never know about the problems in her marriage by discussing things with her husband at night when the children are asleep and only in a low voice so that they cannot hear. Another woman whose husband is unfaithful, just 'thinks about her children'. As a devout Christian, she prays about the troubles in her marriage, forgiving her husband for the ill treatment he metes out to her.

Some women leave violent husbands — such as Naomi (Life Story 3, Appendix 1, pp. 48–49) who left her husband after several attempts at mediation. Others want to leave but are yet to do so. The woman from Tiniputz with the violent and authoritarian husband, mentioned above, expressed a wish to divorce her husband because of his ill-treatment, but had not yet done so. This man subjects her to considerable brutality and although she wants to leave him, she thinks about the church and her children and this inhibits her. Sometimes to escape his attacks she runs away to her natal village in another part of Bougainville.

No women had recourse to the law and justice system; not one of the women interviewed indicated that they had ever reported their violent spouses to the police. Two women remarked that they were too afraid of their partners to do this, fearing even more beatings. One woman, Vera (Life Story 6, Appendix 1, pp. 50–51), whose husband was particularly brutal, said she wanted to report him to the police but was afraid he would kill her. This man had also told her that she could not report him to the police because he was 'one of them'. Although he is only an ex-combatant and not a police officer, he was effectively saying that the police would support him rather than her. The second woman, despite not reporting her husband for his beatings, did eventually leave him and has remained single for the 15 years since. Naomi (Life Story 3, Appendix 1, pp. 48–49), said that she was fearful and reluctant to report her husband to the police, lest her clan relatives became aware of his violence and sought to enact the custom of *tekira*. *Tekira* is a form of plundering in which those seeking retribution against someone who has injured a clan member seize or destroy everything that person owns. If it were enacted in Naomi's case, her clan would seize or destroy everything that they had acquired during the marriage, which would impact negatively not only on her husband but on her as well.<sup>39</sup>

A woman who herself did not experience physical violence commented that some of the reluctance by women to report their husbands to the police was because they feared the police would come and beat the perpetrator, and in such circumstances wives feel sorry for their husbands. Miriam (Life Story 4, Appendix 1, p. 49) who had been regularly beaten by her husband, attended a human rights training course and when she returned home she told him it is a crime to beat her and he eventually stopped, though this took time.

Another woman's brothers beat her violent husband because of his behaviour. They were especially enraged because he was drunk and abusive to them, which is very contrary to the correct way to relate to his in-laws (*tambu*), which should be circumspect and respectful. She suspected that because her brother hit him on the head with a rock he became even more aggressive. One thing that seems to have slowed his beatings and threats is that when she tells other people about what he does, he becomes ashamed of his actions. While this has tempered his behaviour, it has not entirely stopped it.

According to one woman, men beat their wives at night or in the bush, so that other people do not know about it. Although she said that women never report such occurrences, when women sit down together they discuss such matters and that is how she knows about it. This was confirmed by a male respondent, a violent and

authoritarian man, who expects his wife to obey his decisions because they are always the 'right decisions'. This man recounted how his wife enraged him by swearing at him in front of some of his uncles while they were in town and he wanted to beat her then and there, but restrained himself because this would bring public shame to him, spoiling his reputation as a chief. At night when they were back in the village and their children were asleep, he took his wife's hand and told her he was going to punish her because of what she had done in town. He then proceeded to stab her repeatedly in the hand with a ballpoint pen. This man said that he beats his wife only at night because he does not like other people meddling with his marital problems.

## **Good Relationships**

Although many marital relationships were characterised by infidelity, alcohol abuse and violence in all its forms, many other respondents said that they had good relationships with their spouses. Several women reported sharing decision-making equally with their husbands. Such examples suggest that other, more cooperative and non-violent, forms of masculinity are possible. As we indicated, a number of the women referred to their marriage as good largely because it involved joint decision-making. Women's involvement in decision-making is, as we noted above, often used as a proxy for empowerment, since it indicates that women have the power and agency to enable them to participate as equal partners in decision-making.

There are also stories of men changing. The particularly jealous husband who beat his wife for playing soccer has gone through counselling run by the Catholic Church and is no longer violent. This man shares his money with his wife, helps her when she is tired, including helping with the children, cleaning and cooking, and while she was being interviewed by a member of the research team he was preparing dinner.

Despite having some quite negative views about women, such as the divine role of women being to look after children, the CLC pastor mentioned earlier said that since he had a peaceful upbringing he did not believe physical violence achieves anything. He never uses force against his wife or children, believing the best way to solve problems is through talk and compromise.

## **Workload and Gendered Division of Labour**

The women of Bougainville endure heavy workloads, particularly those in the rural research sites of Panguna and Tinputz. Not only do women bear the responsibility for the agricultural labour that ensures that there is enough food to eat in the household, but they also bear the burden of responsibility for the unpaid house and care work (such as carrying water and firewood to the house, cooking, cleaning and childcare). Despite a number of women saying that their relationships with their husbands and their marriages are good, the onus of this kind of labour falls overwhelmingly on them. Only two of the women interviewed indicated that their husband did housework. One woman who was partly disabled, unable to do gardening or plantation labour, said her husband, who died in 2015, had cooked and washed the dishes. The other woman said that, while she does housework, her husband is very understanding and helps when she is tired, looking after the children, cleaning the house and cooking.

A woman from Tinputz who is now widowed remarked that when her husband was alive he had all the power and authority and insisted that she just stay in the house and look after the children. A number of the women we interviewed who had either been or were currently in formal employment reported that they were also responsible for domestic labour. One woman, who described her marriage as good, as it entails joint decision-making, said that she does the cooking and looking after the children and if she is at work she has a babysitter who looks after them. She said her husband does not help much because he is often away at work on the roads.

Women in Panguna and Tinputz are mainly reliant for income on the informal selling of such things as garden produce, cooked food or store bought goods, and so carry a particularly heavy burden of labour. Labour



for income generation often includes the planting of the cash crops as well as the sale of the produce or its transformation into cooked food for sale.

What is sometimes referred to as a 'double burden' of work is used to describe the situation where women who are employed also have domestic and childcare responsibilities. However, in places like Panguna and Tinputz, the burden of work includes not only domestic labour and childcare responsibilities, but labour for subsistence and income generation. Some women reported that they were solely responsible for all the labour in the household — including both agricultural labour and domestic labour — and that their spouses spent most of their time in town or roaming around doing nothing. This was also a characteristic of other DNH research sites, both in Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea. The imbalance in workloads was a recurring refrain from respondents at every research site in the Solomons, but it was especially acute in Malaita. The women spoke of men as failing in their duties, since they said the men just stay home and 'story' (talk or socialise with friends) (Eves 2017b; Eves and Lusby 2018).

Despite the claims of one male respondent in Bougainville, who said that there are certain roles that God has given to women but who gave no biblical reference, women's sole responsibility for unpaid house and care work is a product of gender and cultural norms, which prescribe a particular gendered division of labour and gender roles. These gender roles learned as children are socialised.

As part of the in-depth interviews, we asked women about their childhood and specifically about the division of labour in place when they were growing up. Most of the women recounted learning from their mothers the types of labour women were responsible for, such as cooking, washing dishes and looking after the smaller children.

One woman from Arawa, Naomi (Life Story 3, Appendix 1, pp. 48–49), said her mother, who was married to a teacher, was responsible for looking after the children, house and gardening, and the female children learned how to carry out this work from her. Some women complained that their childhood was overburdened with work, with one woman saying her mother did not treat her well, resenting the fact that as a child she had to wash the dishes and go to the garden, both before and after school. A woman from Tinputz said her mother taught her to do housework because she said 'you will not always be with me' and told how when she was in primary school she had to get up early in the morning to help with the cooking. Another woman from Tinputz, who was born and grew up in another a province, recounted her experiences of growing up. Her father was violent and her parents divorced when she was in grade 3. Sometimes she and her other siblings would go and stay with their father who would order them to do household jobs. When she was at her mother's house, and her mother was often away, she had her mother's responsibilities and stopped school as a consequence. A further woman from Tinputz said her parents were very loving and treated the children equally. The boys were taught to work in the garden and go hunting, while the girls were taught to work in the garden as well as undertake household chores. If the children were disobedient, they were deprived of food and made to sleep outside.<sup>40</sup>

Men also learned gender roles from their fathers and many recounted that when they were boys they were taught to work in the garden and to hunt (or to fish if they were from the Cateret Islands). None of the male respondents mentioned doing chores associated with women. One man said that his father did not look after the children, but left that to the mother, whose primary role was gardening and caring for the children, noting that if the children got ill his father would be angry with his mother.

### Women's Empowerment and Agency

Besides hearing stories of violence, marital problems and inequality in the domestic sphere, we also heard powerful stories of women's resilience and initiative. This was especially evident in the interviews conducted in Arawa with businesswomen. For example, Dorothy (Life Story 1, Appendix 1, p. 48), a businesswoman in

Arawa, successfully built up a number of businesses after her husband's death, starting initially with K80 capital, which she used to buy large bags of clothes for sale.

We heard from several women who had been empowered through working with organisations such as NGOs, or through their experiences, and wanted to help other women. One such woman was Alice (Life Story 5, Appendix I, pp. 49–50), who left her unfaithful and controlling husband and became a local magistrate. Impressed by how well she was working, NZAID sent her to New Zealand for training and she is now a land mediator. Alice is keen to start a women's group in Tinputz and has collected 400 names of women who are interested in joining. She has also started a temporary market at Tinputz and is planning to start another to help women to generate income.

After her experience of three marriages, Rachel (Life Story I, Appendix I, p. 48) has decided to remain single. Although she is in formal employment, she is hoping to establish her own business. She has purchased a cocoa block and says that producing cocoa and other produce gives her the strength and courage to be enterprising. She thinks that she does not need a man to help — she can do it herself. Rachel speaks highly of the women getting together to achieve things, believing that when the women gather and share their experiences they become empowered, as there is a great deal mutual encouragement in these contexts. Today, Rachel is actively involved in the Central Regional Human Rights Committee and in peace-building initiatives.

For some women at least, the end of a marriage, whether through divorce or widowhood, removes some of the inhibitions that they had felt while married. One widowed woman remarked that while she was married she was very shy and when her husband died she became much freer and able to talk in meetings as well as to other people. She also started to socialise with others and became more generous and sharing towards them. She remarked that as a widow she can now do things and is encouraging others in her position to try to achieve in a way that she did.



Source: Richard Eves

## PART 4. WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH TELL US?

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### Women's Income Generation

The women of Bougainville work exceedingly hard in difficult conditions to meet the needs of their families. They have a diverse range of income sources, ranging from formal employment to informal marketing, though the great majority rely on informal selling for their livelihoods. The issues they confront in trying to generate income vary according to research site. Some women, particularly those at Panguna, are hampered by lack of access to productive land. Others, particularly at Tinputz, are hampered by the cocoa trees being badly affected by the cocoa pod borer. The Productive Partnerships in Agriculture Project is addressing the rehabilitation of cocoa gardens successfully but many cocoa producers are not availing themselves of this service.

Women's income generating activities, especially informal marketing, are hampered by a lack of product diversity, lack of capital and lack of adequate infrastructure. A need exists for business development initiatives that provide capital for women to establish micro-businesses and work with them to develop their basic business and financial management skills. A significant research finding was the overwhelming and inhibiting sense of shame (*pasin sem*) many women suffer when marketing goods, which prevented some women from participating in a market even when they had produce they needed to sell. Confidence-boosting measures for women should be a priority of business development programming.

The stories of violence we heard in Bougainville confirm that when women bring economic resources into the household, they do not inevitably become more empowered and they do not suffer less violence. An important implication of the research is that women's economic empowerment programs must avoid minimalist initiatives — that is, they must not aim simply to give women access to economic opportunities without any focus on gender and gender relations. If women are to be truly empowered, work on gender is required — in particular the role of gender norms and practices in the context of marital relationships. This must include an effort to address the excessive consumption of alcohol by male partners.

### Constraints to Bargaining in the Household

Despite women in Bougainville contributing financially to the household, they have rarely been able to negotiate a reduction of other responsibilities and, overwhelmingly, they remain responsible for domestic and caring labour. Gender and development scholars have often questioned economic theorists' assumption that if a woman increases her earning capacity she will be able to renegotiate the unpaid care work she has been performing at home. In her influential critique of bargaining in the household, Bina Agarwal argues that very little, if any, attention is being given to gender asymmetries or to the complex range of factors, especially qualitative ones, that might determine bargaining power within a household — for example, the influence of social norms and practices, or the role of beliefs in the bargaining process, or the role of gender differences (1997:2). Agarwal points out that inequality among family members places some members in a weaker position relative to others in intra-household bargaining, with gender being a very significant basis of such inequality (*ibid.*:9).

The DNH Bougainville research (and our other DNH research) shows clearly that whether women can negotiate a more equitable sharing of housework with their partners depends largely on the cultural and gender norms that specify which work is appropriate to women and which to men (Garikipati 2012:729; Hailie et al. 2012:258; Hanmer and Klugman 2016:240).

A recent ODI policy paper argues that achieving women's economic empowerment requires not only building women's capacities and skills but the removal of constraints that impinge on their empowerment (Hunt and Samman 2016:22). Elisabeth Porter argues similarly that programs seeking to empower women need to confront the obstacles that 'deny agents the capacity to make transforming choices, or block agents from acting on their

choices' (Porter 2013:10). Changing gender norms is not easy: even in OECD countries, women work on average over 20 hours per week more than men and continue to be disadvantaged by the amount of unpaid housework they do (OECD 2017). However, the situation in Bougainville is far more dire; there, gender norms impose constraints and demands on women that limit their choices, power and agency and also burden them with work to an excessive degree. Not only must they endure these harsh conditions, but their children suffer as well because they cannot give them the care and attention they should receive.

There is considerable pressure to conform to gender norms and roles; women (or men) who breach those norms are subject to sanctions, sometimes entailing the use of physical violence (see Jewkes 2002). In Bougainville, we found many instances of men beating their wives because they had not completed their domestic labour or had not done it to the husbands' satisfaction.

## **Violence Erodes Women's Agency and Power**

The definition of women's economic empowerment used in this report emphasises that to achieve equality women need not only increased access to income, but also greater power and agency in their lives. It is only through a combination of economic advancement and increased power and agency that women are able to leverage better outcomes for themselves and their families (Golla et al. 2011:4).

Personal freedom, including freedom from violence, is often used as an indicator for measuring empowerment and gender equality. As Jeni Klugman and colleagues argue: 'Freedom from violence is an essential domain of agency both for its intrinsic value in asserting fundamental human rights and for its instrumental value in promoting gender equality' (Klugman et al. 2014:63). If empowerment is about opening up options for women to exercise power and agency, then violence has the opposite effect. If freedom from violence is an essential domain of agency, then violence is a very clear example of the negation of women's agency and an indicator of disempowerment.

Although some women say they have a high degree of agency in making decisions in regard to the household and its finances, this does not always flow on to other dimensions of their relationship with their spouse. Often they are disempowered in other ways — especially through physical violence. Some women reported relationships that appeared to be cooperative, entailing joint decision-making, but these were sometimes marked by physical violence and the wife being obliged, in fact, to defer to the husband.

## **Conflicts and Triggers for Violence**

Conflicts over money are common. We heard many instances during the fieldwork of men seizing control of joint money. Given that men sometimes opt out of contributing money to the household if their spouse earns an income, at issue is not only women controlling their own money, but also having access to their husband's money. When men direct their income into their own discretionary spending rather than contributing to the household, women often contest this inequitable behaviour.

We found that men's alcohol consumption is a key trigger for physical violence. The women interviewed considered that alcohol consumption by their partners was a major resource depleting activity and was central to marital discord and violence. By far the most physical violence was connected to men's use of alcohol — usually in episodes of binge drinking. Several women reported that their husbands became violent if they refused to give them money for alcohol or questioned their spending on alcohol. Several women who had never experienced violence themselves also stated that issues of expenditure, especially resource-depleting consumption of alcohol, usually resulted in violence. Men become physically violent if reproached by their wives for wasting money on themselves and depriving the family.

Controlling behaviour, a form of violence, is also a way in which men curtail women's agency — sometimes by controlling household income and refusing access to it, but more commonly by seeking to control and restrict women's movement.

## Bride Price

Our research confirms that violence and controlling behaviour in marriage is not confined to situations where bride price has been exchanged (see Toft 1985). True, in some parts of Papua New Guinea, men use the exchange of bride price to as an excuse for their absolute control over women and their violence, but in Bougainville, where only roughly a quarter of marriages involve the exchange of bride price, we found no clear correlation with violence (see pp. 34–35). So, although in some places the exchange of bride price may appear to underlie men's control over women, to understand violence in the marital relationship, 'it is essential to see it in the context of relations between men and women in general, and between husbands and wives in particular' (Bradley 1985:33).

## Women's Access to Justice is Limited

The research shows that women's access to justice continues to be limited. As indicated in Part 3, not one of the women who experienced physical violence reported it to the police. The reluctance to report to the police is sometimes due to fear of their spouse, but many women prefer to keep violence and other marital problems secret. Women's experience of violence is enveloped by shame, and so they are reluctant make their ignominy public.

In the wake of the Bougainville crisis, a heightened awareness of violence and a strong civil society has developed, including a number of extremely active women's NGOs (such as Leitana Nehan, Bougainville Women's Federation and the Bougainville Human Rights Defenders Network) campaigning to end violence against women. While this activism has seen a shift in the acceptability of physical violence, and it is no longer considered normative, it continues to be seen as a private family issue — as something that the husband and wife need to resolve — rather than as illegal and indictable.

Even women sometimes see beatings as acceptable, as in the example of a woman from Panguna who was beaten by her husband if she did not do her work, but nevertheless considered him a good husband because he gave her money to buy clothes. Clearly, the inroads that Bougainville's civil society has made in challenging the acceptability of violence against women still has a long way to go.

## Key Lessons from the Research

- » Working with men is necessary
- » A need exists for community-based gender transformative programs
- » Women's economic empowerment programming must adopt a 'do no harm' approach.

### Key Lesson – Working with Men is Necessary

A major lesson to be drawn from the DNH Bougainville research is the crucial importance of working with men. Given the poor development outcomes for women and the high levels of violence they endure, a clear need exists for programs that work to improve the position of women. However, there are dangers if strategies are not in place to mitigate and manage male 'backlash'. Such 'backlash' includes the perception of being excluded from the benefits that accrue to women as a result of women's economic empowerment programming. The feeling of being left behind by development is particularly acute among the Bougainville generation often referred to as the 'lost generation' who were born or were young children during the crisis and so lack education. These men do not have the skills necessary for survival in the modern world and have not acquired the values and moral code needed to coexist in a village community (Eves 2006:46). While women also missed out on education during the crisis, men tend to channel their anger and frustration into antisocial and negative forms of masculinity, which are disruptive in their communities.



Negative and violent masculinities are, however, not unique to the men of the 'lost generation' but are common to many men in Bougainville. Men in Bougainville (and in other parts of Melanesia, such as Solomon Islands, see Eves and Lusby 2018, as well as Papua New Guinea, see Eves 2018) tend to view power as 'zero-sum game', where any gain in power for women is understood to result in a loss of power for men, and so must be resisted (see also Dworkin et al. 2012:103; Guérin et al. 2013:588; Mosedale 2005:250; Shefer et al. 2008:174, 176–77).

Given this resistance to gains for women, it is obvious that initiatives that work with men are indispensable (see also Slegh et al. 2013). In the last decade gender programming has paid considerable attention to working with men.<sup>41</sup> Although existing initiatives working with men are valuable, there remains an unfilled need for initiatives that are specifically relevant to women's economic empowerment and that highlight a different range of issues. Programs should include financial management and decision-making in the household, domestic labour and other caring responsibilities, workloads and the benefits to men and children of more cooperative gender relations. However, since women are often in agreement with their own harmful gender norms, there is also a need for broader gender programming that addresses both men and women. Indeed, there is increasing recognition internationally that women's economic empowerment programming needs to be more thoroughly integrated with community-based approaches and also with violence against women programs (Mejia et al. 2014; Taylor 2015).

### **Key Lesson – The Need for Community-Based Gender Transformative Programs**

Women's economic empowerment programming should embrace a gender transformative approach more fully. As a recent DFID Guidance Note says, gender transformative approaches should focus explicitly on tackling social norms concerning gender, power and violence, as well as broader ideas, attitudes and values about what it means to be a 'real man' or a 'real woman' (Alexander-Scott et al. 2016:10). Despite a long-term recognition of the role played by norms in justifying gender inequality and violence against women, it is only in the last few years that practitioners have focused on interventions aiming to transform these norms (Heise and Manji 2016:1). This new focus comes from the realisation that focusing on norms is much more effective than interventions simply targeting attitude and behavioural change (Alexander-Scott et al. 2016:17, 10).

Gender norms play an important role in determining whether women's economic empowerment can translate into broader empowerment. Gender norms constrain women and inhibit their capacity to use their agency effectively. They often limit where women are allowed to go and their movement. They often affect the ownership of physical assets, so that norms concerning land tenure and decision-making about land often marginalise women. Gender norms impede more equitable gender relations. In particular, the gender norms that give women disproportionate responsibility for domestic labour and caring in the household must be challenged, for they contribute heavily to the unequal work burden women carry.

Evidence suggests that shifting understanding or individual attitudes is often not enough to shift behaviour.<sup>42</sup> That is because norms are generally maintained by disapproval from key community figures (the reference group), so that transgressors are likely to be sanctioned or punished by this group, while those who comply are more likely to be rewarded or applauded (Alexander-Scott et al. 2016:8). That is, it is through the community and its leaders that negative social and gender norms gain their authority. This was acknowledged by a key informant during our research when she commented that though some men agree with women exercising their rights, society makes it difficult to change behaviour. Thus, since the constraints imposed by social and gender norms are beyond the level of the individual, a community-wide approach to change is essential. This must be firmly rooted in the specifics of that locality — its particular characteristics — its challenges, strengths, weaknesses, cultural norms and beliefs. Most, if not all, communities in Bougainville have governance structures in place, which can provide entry points for programs.

Such a community-based approach presents issues such as violence against women as the community's responsibility, not as individual women's problems (Michau 2007:104). It sees men as part of the community and addresses them as part of the community rather than in isolation. If there is to be a meaningful impact on the way women are seen and valued, Michau argues that a comprehensive community mobilisation is needed — an approach that engages with every level of the community in a systematic and structured process rather than making sporadic efforts. 'Changing community norms is a process, not a single event' (Michau 2005:4). This means engaging with community members on a regular basis and with mutually reinforcing messages from a variety of sources over a sustained period of time, since this contributes to changing the climate in the community and building momentum for change (ibid.).

Success means working 'not just with individual women and men, but with their friends and family, the institutions they rely on for services and support, the media which inform them, the opinion leaders who shape public opinion, and the government officials who design and implement policy and legislation' (Michau 2007:100). Interventions must create new beliefs within the opinion leaders, or reference group, so that the collective expectations of the people important to the community foster new behaviours in the community (Heise and Manji 2016:2). In short, although working to change social and gender norms requires concentrating on everyone in a community, it is important to identify key initiators of change who are willing to lead this process. Special attention should be paid to people such as church leaders, village court officials, youth leaders and others recognised as leaders in local communities who can show by example that change is good and desirable.

Our Solomon Islands DNH research shows that savings clubs are a useful convening vehicle for women's economic empowerment programming in communities, providing a potential pathway for community-based gender transformative programming (Eves and Lusby 2018). This model could be extended to Papua New Guinea where financial inclusion is low and conflicts over money are common. Savings clubs can, however, expose women to male backlash if gender transformative programming is not in place. To mitigate the risk of fracturing social capital rather than building it, holistic approaches that include everyone in the community are vital.

Gender transformative programming should stress that the aim is for equality between men and women, but that until this is achieved, women need special help. An ideal balance of power between men and women in the community would mean that special programs to assist women would not be needed and both men and women would have access to any support available. However, until that situation is brought about and the community is no longer so divided by gender, the disadvantaged group, women, needs special assistance. This makes it even more important that gender programming should be given equal attention.

Beyond addressing women's financial exclusion and promoting income generation, savings clubs are a potential vehicle for empowering women more generally, enabling them to improve a wide range of practical skills, such as business acumen, financial management and administrative skills. They provide a safe and enabling space for women to develop skills, allowing them to build confidence and collectively explore and define their needs (Brislane 2014:15; Hunt and Samman 2016:19). Moreover, in a society where women are generally excluded from leadership roles, savings groups offer a forum for them to develop a range of leadership skills, such as public speaking, chairing meetings and organisational administration.

Women's involvement in savings groups in Solomon Islands led to a broader acceptance by many men that women have organisational capabilities that have not been recognised or harnessed previously by the community. Even so, there remains an unrealised potential for women's broader participation and leadership that should be fostered. The development of strategies and programming are needed to provide wider opportunities for women to further build their confidence and leadership skills, so that their participation in savings groups can be extended into the broader community and translated into 'developmental leadership' — that is, leadership focused on development outcomes.<sup>43</sup> Savings clubs are also an ideal community development initiative because

they do not require external funding to be established or to be sustainable (Brislane 2014:7). Further, savings clubs promote self-reliance and are an effective form of community development since, through the shared enterprise of working together, they help build social capital among women in the community.<sup>44</sup>

Since Christianity is central to the way in which most Bougainvilleans make sense of the world and since the churches are a pervasive influence in people's daily lives, the churches are an obvious starting point for developing community-based gender transformative programs.<sup>45</sup> Several mainstream churches have participated in programs such as the Church Partnership Program which has led to the development of positive gender policies and programs in a number of the churches (Anderson 2012, 2015a, 2015b).

The communities where the research was undertaken possess considerable social capital, largely built up by local community-based organisations and governance structures, despite a continuing problem of violence. Local organisations and churches with such track records should always be the starting point for any community-based gender transformative programs. In Bougainville, the Catholic Church has been at the forefront of addressing violence against women, through institutions such as the Nazareth Centre for Rehabilitation.

One initiative that holds some promise as a starting point for the changing of community norms is the development of community laws, which has been done by many communities in Papua New Guinea (see Bal 2015; Eves 2017c). The development of community laws (and constitutions), as a response to some of the social issues and challenges faced by communities, has been encouraged by the Autonomous Bougainville Government.<sup>46</sup>

## **Key Lesson – Women's Economic Empowerment Programming Needs to Adopt a 'Do No Harm' Approach**

To do no harm in working to promote women's economic empowerment means ensuring that such programs do not, at the very least, increase the maltreatment women suffer, mostly at the hands of their husbands. Violence is, of course, the major harm to be avoided, but many other negative consequences can accrue from increases in women's earning capacity, including overwork, problems in juggling responsibilities such as childcare and housework, and men's failure to contribute their own income to the household.

The importance of addressing violence in the context of women's economic empowerment interventions has been especially highlighted recently in the international literature. As a recent DFID Guidance Note argues, programs to improve women's business performance or to increase women's incomes are threatened or diluted by the impact of violence. To defuse the risk and to optimise benefits of economic development, it is essential for programs focussing on women's business performance or increasing women's incomes, to address violence against women (Taylor 2015:5).

Our findings fully concur with this, showing clearly that focusing on economic factors alone does not prevent violence and often increases it, as well as other forms of detriment. Rarely does increased income give women more power and agency — so that, for example, they have more say in the household and so that work burdens are more equitably shared between wives and husbands. Neither has women's increased income often resulted in an equitable sharing of the family's entire resources — that is, too often husbands opt out of contributing to family support when their wife's income increases.

Based on our research, we advocate the holistic approach outlined above: the ultimate (though eventual) aim of women's economic empowerment programming should be the achievement of community-wide social cohesion and the building of community-wide social capital. This aim should never be lost sight of. Until this is ultimate aim is achieved, programming for women's economic advancement should give equal effort to changing the social norms and behaviours which work against any increase in women's power and agency. It must always be kept in mind that increasing women's income and assets does not alone do so; prevention, protection and response from the community is needed.

These observations are fully borne out by the DNH research, which points to a highly specific relationship between women's economic advancement and violence in Bougainville. Rather than relying on programming imported from other contexts, the DNH research points to the need for bespoke programming, which recognises the subtle and indirect aspects of the relationship between women's economic advancement and violence and other negative outcomes.

A sound 'do no harm' approach is based on a thorough assessment of the local culture, especially its social norms, so that the risk of violence and other hardships is not actually increased due to women's increased income. Strategies that on the face of it seem logical and worthwhile need to be considered from many angles — above all from the aspect of the people concerned. Once these strategies are in place, they must be monitored critically.



This DNH research has provided insights into the gendered power dynamics at play in marital relationships, the specific factors that impede women's income generating activities and their economic advancement, and the risk factors for violence in Bougainville. Given the importance placed on women's economic empowerment by donors, NGOs and governments, a critical need exists for research that provides a good understanding of the challenges to realising this goal of full empowerment and an evidence base from which development programming can proceed.

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## Appendix 1 – Life Stories

### Life Story 1

Dorothy, now 48 years of age, successfully completed grade 10, went to college in Rabaul, and gained employment in the public service. After 14 years of marriage, her husband died, leaving her with five children to support. During her marriage, Dorothy did most of the household labour and childcare, despite formal employment. Even though she and her husband made decisions about their children's education and health, he did not contribute financially to the household. All his money was spent on beer and he would often demand more money from Dorothy when drunk. If she refused, he would destroy things in the house. After her husband's death, Dorothy successfully started several businesses. She began with 80 kina which she used to buy 25 kg bags of clothes to sell. Today she has a guest-house, a stationery store, a flower business and a cocoa block.

### Life Story 2

Rachel is 54 years old. Her parents were both teachers so that she was able to have a good education. After completing high school, she studied economics at the UNPG. Unfortunately, she had only completed two years of her studies when her father died, and as the eldest child, she felt she must return to Bougainville to help the family. Rachel was married three times. Her first marriage was to David, from Nissan Island to the north of Bougainville. Initially she did not want to marry, but she became pregnant and was forced to marry him by her relatives, because pregnancy outside of marriage brought a great deal of shame to the clan. She and David made decisions jointly and she considered him an understanding and patient man. David was non-violent and she considered that, as a couple, they worked well together. However, the marriage broke down due to David having relationships with other women. After a number of failed mediations to repair the marriage, she divorced David and returned to live in Buka, with her three children.

Her second marriage was to Charles, a man who held several important positions in the government, including a senior management position in the Law and Justice Department while Rachel was married to him. He was already married when he and Rachel commenced their relationship and she became his third wife. He was an aggressive man who was violent when drunk. The marriage eventually broke down because Rachel could not cope with her husband's extramarital affairs, physical violence and drunkenness. She had a daughter with Charles.

Her third marriage was to Brian who was married to another woman when they met. He confided in her about his marital problems and eventually the two of them began a relationship. The third marriage was even more of a disaster than the second and was on and off for a period of four years. Brian was not good with money and could not budget, resulting in many arguments over his spending on unnecessary things, such as alcohol.

Like her second husband, Brian was a very aggressive and violent man and he subjected Rachel to both verbal and physical abuse, something that she was reluctant to talk about. He was also very controlling and would prevent his wife from moving from the house or talking to others. Brian worked for an NGO and thought he was superior to Rachel. His work with the NGO was the reason Rachel gave for not reporting him to the police for his beatings. She gave him many chances to reform his ways but as he refused to, she ended the marriage.

### Life Story 3

Naomi is a 28-year-old woman who lives in a village near Arawa in central Bougainville.

After completing year 12, Naomi attended a business school in Port Moresby but was unable to complete the course because she could not afford the fees. Returning to Bougainville, she married a man from Siwai in Bougainville's south, Paul, who runs a car-repair workshop. Like her mother before her, Naomi is responsible for all the household work and childcare responsibilities for their two children, as her husband spends most of his time in town.



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Naomi earns money by planting peanuts and vegetables and sells these at the market in Arawa. Since she lives some kilometres from Arawa, the cost of transporting her produce to market erodes her profits. Sometimes she even loses money. Further difficulties arise if she fails to sell everything and has to find a place to stay in town, to continue selling the next day. She sometimes also works on copra and cocoa, though the former is extremely strenuous work. She controls the money she earns, spending it on family needs. To save, she deposits money with the Microfinance Bank in Arawa.

Every weekend, Paul would get drunk and if he ran out of money he would demand it from his wife and beat her if she refused. She related a story about when she was pregnant with her second child and Paul was drunk and wanted money. She refused because the money would be needed when her second child was born. He became threatening and she managed to escape his grasp when he tried to grab her. He then seized the first born child, swinging him in the air. He wanted to smash the child on the ground but did not do so. She was reluctant to report Paul to the police for his violence, fearing that her clan members would carry out the traditional plundering custom, *tekira*, seizing everything in the house that they had acquired after their marriage. *Tekira* is a form of punishment of the husband in depriving him of his goods.

Following one violent attack Naomi's father told Paul to return to Siwai, which he did.

#### Life Story 4

Miriam is a 25-year-old woman from a village near the Panguna mine in the mountains of central Bougainville. She completed her primary education and was selected to go to one of Bougainville's secondary high schools. Life growing up was very hard as she was expected to do domestic labour to help her mother when she was not at school. She never had time to play with other children or visit town. After secondary school, she married Tony, a man from the village, who she thought would look after her well and would give her money to buy things, unlike her parents. Although she considered her husband 'good', she was responsible for all the domestic and agricultural labour, while he carried goods and passengers in his vehicle. Tony would beat Miriam if she did not do her work, and when he was drunk. Miriam attended a training course about human rights and when she returned home, she told her husband that such violence is crime and he eventually stopped beating her.

Despite the violence in their marriage, she and Tony would sit down to make decisions together. Because they lived on her land, she was responsible for making decisions about the land. She also had quite a lot of control over the money that came into the family — looking after the money from the vehicle as well as a small trade-store. Tony would sometimes buy food for the household. Miriam made money by selling doughnuts, ice-blocks and betel nut and could make up to K200 a day. She also used to lend money to people but stopped because people would not pay back the interest.

One time after a drinking bout he had an affair with a woman he was drinking with and when Miriam found out she beat the woman up, breaking her hand. Miriam ran away to Buka for a week, lest Tony beat her up. When she returned, some family leaders sought to resolve the conflict, telling Miriam she should return to her husband because they had two children. She wanted her husband to stop behaving in the way he had and he agreed.

Today, Miriam is a woman's representative for her village and believes that if more women knew about women's human rights they could help each other address violence.

#### Life Story 5

Alice, a 57-year-old woman from Tinputz, has six children. She completed primary school and was selected to go to Asitavi High School where she completed grade 10 and was selected to go to teachers college. As a child, she had been promised to a man in marriage for customary reasons, and so when she finished grade 10 she was given to her future husband, Paul. She did not want to marry him but was forced to by her family. Paul was in the

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army and they moved to Port Moresby, then to Lae, and then again back to Port Moresby. During their second time in Port Moresby, Paul started having relationships with other women. He was a very controlling husband. He did not allow Alice to have any money or have access to his money and he told her: 'I earn the money and you are not supposed to hold any of it because you don't help me earn it.' If he sent her to the shops to buy things, she had to write down every detail of the money she'd spent and explain it to him when she returned. Alice was a very submissive wife and never responded to the way he treated her, not daring to talk back to him largely because she was afraid of him. Although she was never allowed to hold any money, she remarked that one good thing about him was that he made sure that the house always had sufficient food and that no one in the family ever went hungry.

Alice said she was just expected to stay in the house and look after the children and he held all the power and authority in the family. She was also expected to accept the way he disciplined the children by forcing them to stand on one leg for hours, and if she tried to talk to him about this he'd get angry. Paul only ever struck Alice once, hitting her in the head so hard that she was disorientated for several days afterwards.

In the year 2000, Alice finally separated from her husband and returned to Tinputz because he had married another woman he had befriended. In 2012, he became ill and died and she went to Lae with her children to retrieve his body so that he could be buried back in Bougainville.

When she returned to Tinputz after her husband's death, she was made a magistrate and because she did such a good job, was sent to New Zealand to train women about land. Today Alice works as a land mediator and makes money from selling fish and cocoa. Inspired by women's stories of having to market because their husbands do not give them money, she wants to start a women's group and so far has collected 400 names. She has also started a temporary market at Tinputz and is planning to start another one.

## Life Story 6

Vera, 42 years old, is of mixed Morobe and Bougainvillean heritage. She completed grade 6 at Tinputz Primary School, but did not continue her schooling until she attended vocational school in 1990. However, due to the Bougainville crisis, she was unable to complete her studies and spent 1990–1994 hiding in the bush with her family, as did many others. In 1995, Vera married, John, a BRA combatant, who she believed had used some form of love magic on her, as she never had any inclinations towards him. She bore six children with him but found it very difficult as he did not help with the children or gardening, preferring to roam around. Though she never knew where he was, he was very controlling and always demanded to know where she had been and who she had been with. When John did come home, he would often beat her for no apparent reason, sometimes to the head with the rifle butt, his weapon of choice. While some of John's violence against Vera occurred when he was drunk, a lot occurred when he was sober.

One time when her father tried to intervene while she was being beaten, John tried to shoot him but missed. Twice he also tried to shoot Vera and her children, including once forcing her and her fifth child to sit on a bench as targets. Although the bench was quite close, he missed and they managed to escape. Vera wanted to report her husband for the beatings she received but was afraid he would kill her. One time when John beat her he told her that she could not report him to the police because he was 'one of them'. Vera said she never experienced a good time with her husband and described herself as a slave.

She was grateful to him for the one thing he did in the marriage which was building a permanent house on a block of land belonging to her, though this was eventually spoiled in her view as he would bring other women to the house to sleep with them. John somehow managed to buy a vehicle and would carry passengers on the Arawa-Buka route. Although he contributed food to the household, he would never give money to Vera. In 2003, John took another wife and brought her to the house to live, but Vera beat her up, and so John went

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with the new wife to her village. He married again in 2010 and again in 2012, each time choosing younger and younger women, his fourth wife being the same age as his first born teenage daughter.

Life is tough for Vera, as the demands on her, especially for her children's education, are great. She has thought about reporting John to welfare, so that he would pay maintenance but she is afraid of him. She dreams of starting a successful business but this is constrained by her lack of capital. A few years ago, she managed to earn 900 Kina from planting cabbages and wanted to buy goods to sell from her house. John saw her going to Buka and started demanding money from her, and so she stopped going. Today, she dreams of getting an oven so that she can bake scones, but doesn't have enough money. She would liked to get a loan but does not know how to go about it. Currently, she earns money by selling ice-blocks which she buys for 50 toea in Buka and then resells in Tinputz for 1 kina. Along with other women at Tinputz, Vera markets by the roadside, but this has been made difficult by young men, intoxicated on home brew alcohol or marijuana, destroying the temporary market shelter and benches. She says she makes good money selling ice-blocks and doughnuts because many women are too ashamed to sell things and so the market is not saturated.

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## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Besides the interviews with women, interviews were undertaken with men (112) and key informants, both male and female (135).
  - <sup>2</sup> Resources are the building blocks necessary for women to succeed and can exist at both individual and community levels and can include: human capital (such as education, skills, training); financial capital (such as loans, savings); social capital (such as networks, relationships in a community, mentors); physical capital (such as land, machinery, tools, inventory) (Golla et al. 2011:4).
  - <sup>3</sup> As the focus of the research was marital relationships and the dynamics of households, we use the term intimate partner violence, rather than gender-based violence, since this can refer to violence outside of the marital context. According to the World Health Organization, intimate partner violence is one of the most common forms of violence against women and includes physical, sexual, and emotional abuse and controlling behaviours by an intimate partner (WHO 2012:1). For the WHO, intimate partner violence includes:
    - » **Acts of physical violence**, such as slapping, hitting, kicking and beating.
    - » **Sexual violence**, including forced sexual intercourse and other forms of sexual coercion.
    - » **Emotional (psychological) abuse**, such as insults, belittling, constant humiliation, intimidation (e.g. destroying things), threats of harm, threats to take away children.
    - » **Controlling behaviours**, including isolating a person from family and friends; monitoring their movements; and restricting access to financial resources, employment, education or medical care. (WHO 2012:1)
- The accounts of violence cited here mostly concern physical violence, which is generally how respondents tended to conceptualise violence, though it is clear from the accounts that the women of Bougainville are subject to other forms of abuse, including emotional and economic abuse and controlling behaviours.
- <sup>4</sup> To provide an understanding of the context for the research, a total of 29 key informant interviews (11 female and 18 male) were undertaken with selected community members, including village leaders, church leaders, village court officials and women's group leaders. Rather than using a specific questionnaire, unstructured interviews were undertaken using a topic guide.
  - <sup>5</sup> As the DNH research is qualitative in scope, the figures presented here and elsewhere in the report are not based on random sampling and thus are not generalisable. The figures are merely presented to give the reader insight into the respondents' background history and circumstances.
  - <sup>6</sup> Church membership was not recorded in two cases. As Christianity has almost universal acceptance in Papua New Guinea, this is probably an oversight on the researcher's part.
  - <sup>7</sup> Bougainville is divided into three regions — North, Central and South. These regions comprise divisions for the purposes of electoral politics and do not constitute cultural or language regions. Each region is divided into districts: North Region comprises Tinputz District, Selau District, Buka District, Nissan District, the Atolls District and Buka Town Urban Council; Central Region comprises Kieta District, Panguna District, Wakunai District and Arawa Town Urban Council; and South Region comprises Bana District, Torokina District, Siwai District and Buin District.
  - <sup>8</sup> My colleagues Anthony Regan and Thiago Oppermann calculated these figures, based on previous census figures, population growth and the impact of the crisis.
  - <sup>9</sup> Cocoa pod borer (*Conopomorpha cramerella*) arrived in East New Britain Province in 2006 and in Bougainville in 2009, decimating production. While CPB can be managed by pruning and disposing of pod

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waste, CPB-tolerant hybrid strains of cocoa have been developed and cocoa clones have been planted, including in parts of Bougainville (McQuillan 16/6/2016). According to the World Bank, after the outbreak of CPB, cocoa production fell by more than 41% to reach its lowest level since the Bougainville crisis (World Bank 17/9/2014). Since 2011 there have been efforts since to rejuvenate the cocoa industry in Bougainville and other parts of Papua New Guinea where cocoa is grown. This has included the Productive Partnership in Agriculture Project (PPAP), a US\$50 million project supported by the World Bank, International Fund for Agricultural Development and the European Union in collaboration with the PNG Department of Agriculture and Livestock (World Bank n.d.).

- <sup>10</sup> This led to over 60 deaths (Regan 2010:95, 124–25).
- <sup>11</sup> Oliver, who carried out fieldwork among the Siwai in the south of Bougainville as well, also reported that rape was 'practically non-existent' (1955:82).
- <sup>12</sup> The Constitution of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville 2004 (<http://www.pacii.org/pg/constitution-bougainville-2004.html>).
- <sup>13</sup> The age profile comprised one woman in her twenties (28), four in their forties (44, 3 x 48), three in their fifties (53, 54, 58) and one in her sixties (64). In one case the age was not recorded. This older age profile was a reflection of the fact that we were especially keen to interview business women in Arawa.
- <sup>14</sup> One religious affiliation was not recorded.
- <sup>15</sup> Sometimes these indicators focus on a narrow category, such as 'household decision-making', which includes: 1) 'input in productive decisions' 2) 'input to other household decisions' (Bishop and Bowman 2014:259). Sometimes the indicators focus much more broadly the 'ability to make decisions and influence', which includes: 1) 'involvement in household investment decisions', 2) 'involvement in livelihood management decisions', 3) 'involvement in income-spending decisions', 4) 'involvement in general decisions', 5) 'degree of influence in community decision-making' (Bishop and Bowman 2014:261).
- <sup>16</sup> The age profile of the women interviewed comprised three in their twenties (25, 2 x 27), one in their thirties (38), three in their forties (43, 46, 47), two in their fifties (55, 58) and two in their sixties (2 x 62).
- <sup>17</sup> During fieldwork, gold was selling for K70/g. If people are in a group and work hard, the group can make 2g per day.
- <sup>18</sup> The age profile of the women interviewed comprised two in their twenties (23, 25), 10 in their thirties (34, 32, 36, 35, 33, 36, 35, 32, 35, 35), four in their forties (49, 40, 49, 42) and six in their fifties (54, 57, 59, 51, 50, 54).
- <sup>19</sup> There was one case where religion was not recorded.
- <sup>20</sup> Disruption in communities by drunken men is not a new or post-crisis phenomenon in Bougainville but dates back to the ending of prohibition in Papua New Guinea (see Ogan 1986).
- <sup>21</sup> This couple, nevertheless, make decisions together about the health and education of their five children.
- <sup>22</sup> Uncertainty about security of land use in Arawa arose in the wake of the conflict, which saw crown land and land that was leased to Bougainville Copper Ltd seized by locals.
- <sup>23</sup> The referendum on the status of Bougainville is set down for 15 June 2019. There is a concern that there will be a return to conflict if: 1) the referendum decides on independence and the PNG government does not heed the wishes of the Bougainvillean people, or 2) a majority wishes to remain a part of Papua New Guinea. At the time of the fieldwork, there was also considerable anti-Chinese sentiment in Arawa, which led a group of 'hardliners' to commandeer the vehicle belonging to a Chinese business in Arawa. The same group were also involved in a confrontation with the NGO Marie Stopes over the use of family planning in Bougainville (see Eves 2015). Such incidents create a climate of fear and insecurity, undermining business confidence.



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- <sup>24</sup> This issue also surfaced in the Bougainville Young Women's Leadership research which found that young women were also crippled by a sense of shame, embarrassment and shyness, which meant that they avoided contexts that required them to speak and participate (Eves and Koredong 2015:8, 25). While it may be accepted as normal for young people to feel shy or bashful at putting themselves forward, the fear of shame that has been constructed over young women's lifetimes far exceeds this in its inhibitory effects.
- <sup>25</sup> The preference for local herbs over family planning from the local clinic was driven by a lack of knowledge about the latter as well as a concern about reputed side-effects. There is considerable resistance to mainstream family planning in Bougainville (Eves 2015).
- <sup>26</sup> The ethos of sharing is said to be more common within the small island cultures of Bougainville, where food security can be unreliable and livelihoods are, as a result, much more precarious. Indeed, one respondent commented that if someone from the Cateret Islands went to the town of Buka and purchased a bale of rice (20 x 1 kg bags) and did not share this when they returned to the island, this would be considered very poor behaviour.
- <sup>27</sup> *Wantok* refers not only to those who share kinship ties, but, depending on the context, extends to people who share the same language, are from the same area, from the same island and the same region of the world (Brigg 2009:153; Nanau 2011).
- <sup>28</sup> This was also a feature of the Do No Harm Solomons Islands research, where the requests for credit in some cases bordered on harassment, especially when the requester was inebriated by alcohol (Eves 2017a; Eves and Lusby 2018).
- <sup>29</sup> One of her sons threw a saucepan of hot water over his wife and beat her up, and she subsequently suicided.
- <sup>30</sup> One woman, who ran her own business, embarked on a conscious strategy of sharing and giving as a counter to the jealousy directed at her because of her business success. This woman responded to jealousy by being a kind and generous person, who shared with others and donated books to the local school and medicine to the local hospital. Another woman said that her father shared out his wealth to his relatives as a way of stopping the jealousy directed at him.
- <sup>31</sup> Some of the research respondents came from families in which their mothers were marginalised from decision-making and where their fathers were solely responsible for decision-making. A woman from Tinputz who was brought up in a family in which her father regularly used physical violence against her mother reported that if her mother wanted to make a decision about something her father would beat her up. This was also the situation of another woman from Tinputz who reported that her parents would argue over the spending of money and if her father did not like a decision her mother had made he would beat her up.
- <sup>32</sup> He had only female children.
- <sup>33</sup> In the past the mother's brother, the children's uncle, would have played a much more important role, as is often the case with societies with matrilineal descent systems, but this is diminishing as a consequence of a much greater focus on the nuclear family, where the role of the father is privileged.
- <sup>34</sup> Most of the responsibility for gardening fell on women, and of the taro-producing Siwai in the south of Bougainville, Oliver (1955:131) estimated that women worked in the gardens four times longer than men (ibid.:103). Women were, and still are, highly valued for their role as gardeners. For the Nagovisi, work is considered an important determinant of female status. While a husband may be an important helper, the wife is the garden authority and is responsible for its management, something that is well understood by men (Nash 1984:100, 109; 2005:401). Indeed, Nash suggests that men are dependent on women's cultivation, since men are unwilling to make their own gardens (1984:109). Women's control of garden

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work was apparently widespread in Bougainville. The Nasioi also highly valued women's roles as gardeners (Ogan 2005:53). According to Eugene Ogan: 'After [cleaning] was complete, gardens became the exclusive province of the women ... a hungry man did not dare go into his wife's garden to get food without her permission' (1972:24).

- <sup>35</sup> However, this presents problems for their children when they become adults, since they are resident on another clan's land and do not necessarily have rights to land.
- <sup>36</sup> Other research in Bougainville has also found a significant degree of economic abuse. For example, the 2013 Bougainville Family, Health and Safety Study reported high rates of physical violence against women, and also high rates of economic abuse: 35.2 per cent of women reported that their male partner had taken their earnings against their will, 55.4 per cent of women reported that they had been subject to economically abusive acts, 21 per cent of women had been prohibited from working, 26 per cent of women reported that they had been subject to economic abuse many times and 23.7 per cent had been subject to economically abusive acts in the past 12 months (Jewkes et al. 2013:41). In addition to the male partner taking earnings against the woman's will and preventing her from working, economic abuse included the wife being ejected from the house, and the husband keeping money for his own use when his wife needed money to buy food and essential items (ibid.:41).
- <sup>37</sup> Some forms of controlling behaviour may well be normalised, so that women do not see them as an issue and do no comment on them.
- <sup>38</sup> Vera also believed that the men of her ex-husband's clan were notorious for leaving one woman for another and she speculated that they have a magical oil which they use to make the existing wife silent about the husband's behaviour.
- <sup>39</sup> It should be noted that just as it can mean women are reluctant to report their husbands to the police, it can also mean that men sometimes are wary of beating their wives for fear of this form of retribution.
- <sup>40</sup> A few respondents said that their parents, generally the father, withheld food from disobedient children. One woman reported that her husband punished their children by making them stand on one leg for hours and he would get angry with her if she disagreed with this form of punishment.
- <sup>41</sup> These initiatives initially focused on sexual and reproductive health and HIV (Caravano 1995; Foreman 1999; UNAIDS 2001). Considerable emphasis has been placed on working with men to end violence against women, both as a single issue (Barker 2001; Eves 2006; Flood 2001, 2002–3; Kaufman 2001; Medrado 2003) and within the context of HIV, because such violence and HIV have often been seen as interdependent epidemics (Barker and Ricardo 2005; Chege 2005; Eves 2010). There has been some focus on working with men more broadly in the relation to gender equality (Chant and Gutmann 2000; Cleaver 2002; Cornwall 2000; Correia and Bannon 2006; Esplen 2006; Eves 2009; UNDAW 12/1/2004), but the development of programs relevant to women's economic empowerment have received less attention.
- <sup>42</sup> This is perhaps best demonstrated by early models of HIV prevention which assumed that by providing information about AIDS to address knowledge deficits, people would engage in safe sex. Such a model has been found to be wanting and there has been a shift to community-based models of HIV prevention (see Beeker et al. 1998; Campbell and Cornish 2010).
- <sup>43</sup> Developmental leadership, according to Heather de Ver, 'is the process of organising or mobilising people and resources in pursuit of particular ends or goals, in given institutional contexts of authority, legitimacy and power' (2009:9; see also Ver 2008; Leftwich and Hogg 2007).
- <sup>44</sup> Development practitioners use the term social capital as an analytic concept to describe the importance of social relationships and the willingness of people to work for the collective good of the community. 'Unlike other forms of capital, social capital inheres in the structure of relations between persons and among

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persons' (Coleman 1990:302) with an emphasis on strong interpersonal ties, such as kinship and intimate friendship (Putnam 1993:175). Some scholars have argued that social capital is an important prerequisite of effective sustainable development. Francis Fukuyama, for example, argues in his 'Social Capital and Development: The Coming Agenda', that shared norms and values that promote social cooperation are central to successful development and economic growth. According to Fukuyama, social capital:

*directly affects the ability of people to organize for economic ends; it supports the creation of institutions and the rule of law; and is a vital underpinning of democracy, which is the source of legitimacy for the political framework in which development increasingly takes place*

(Fukuyama 2002:27)

<sup>45</sup> In a report prepared for AusAID, Rachel Stein-Holmes writes:

*Religious organisations in PNG form a core institution of development. They work largely at the grass-roots level and are a key aspect of the civil society network. ... Because of their close involvement at the local level, church organisations are in a unique position as a representative of people's interests, and as a provider of their needs. Church agencies are an essential component of civil society and can potentially work with aid agencies as a means for enhancing development ... They serve as a crucial component of PNG civil society fabric.*

(Stein-Holmes 2003:10)

<sup>46</sup> With the signing of the Bougainville Peace Agreement in 2001 and the establishment of Bougainville as an Autonomous Region of Papua New Guinea, with its own constitution, the governance leadership structures throughout Bougainville were reformulated. Currently, each district has a number of Councils of Elders, comprising both elected and appointed members, including a women's representative, church representative and an elected representative from each Village Assembly in its constituency. The Village Assembly plays a key role, with all eligible members of a village voting for their representative to the Council of Elders (Regan 2000). In June 2016, the ABG passed a Community Government Act which replaces the Council of Elders with Community Governments, these totalling 47 (including four urban Community Governments).

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