

**Caritas Australia**

***Exploring the Role of Men and Masculinities in  
Papua New Guinea in the 21st century  
How to address violence in ways that generate  
empowerment for both men and women***

**Richard Eves**

**Why do all the men in Papua New Guinea want to become iron men?**

**Man in Kiunga**

**The worst thing you can be in Papua New Guinea is black and female. Really. I suppose that nearly every woman expects that she's going to get abuse at some time in her life.**

**Father John Ryan**

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### ***List of Abbreviations***

AIDS - Acquired Immune-Deficiency Syndrome	
AI – Amnesty International	
ANU – Australian National University	
BRA – Bougainville Revolutionary Army	
CEDAW – Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	
DEVAW - Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women	
FSVAC - Family and Sexual Violence Action Committee	
GBV – Gender-Based Violence	
GRC – Gender Relations Centre	
HIV - Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus	
HRW – Human Rights Watch	
LLG – Local Level Government	
LRC - Law Reform Commission	
NACS – National AIDS Council Secretariat	
NCD – National Capital District	
NHASP – National HIV/AIDS Support Project	
NRI – National Research Institute	
PNG – Papua New Guinea	
SHP – Southern Highlands Province	
SSGM - State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Project	
UN – United Nations	
UNFPA - United Nations Population Fund	
UN DAW – United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women	
UNDP – United Nations Development Programme	
UNDSS – United Nations Department of Safety and Security	

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## Part One

### Introduction and Background

#### **1.0. Introduction**

A recent United Nations Secretary-General's report affirms that "Violence against women persists in every country in the world as a pervasive violation of human rights and a major impediment to achieving gender equality" (UN 2006: 9). "As long as violence against women continues," the report adds, "we cannot claim to be making real progress towards equality, development and peace" (UN 2006: 9). The issue of violence against women has thus become a major item of concern in the field of human rights and development, partly under the influence of the women's movement, but also because gender equity has come to be seen as an essential basis for sustainable development.

Not only women but men also have a lot to gain from a more equitable and constructive relationship with women. Caught in a cycle of violence and reaction, men suffer violence from other men, expose themselves and their families to health risks, endure family conflict, and waste their own resources as they try to live up to and maintain particular masculine ideals. To be added to the significant economic and social costs of inequity and violence is the loss of the potential contribution of the women whose capacities are thwarted.

However, to deal successfully with the issue is very far from easy. Pointing to the many difficulties involved, the UN report suggests that "Eliminating violence against women remains one of the most serious challenges of our time" (2006: 9). As women's advocates have pointed out, violence against women does not result from "random, individual acts of misconduct." Rather, it is "deeply rooted in structural relationships of inequality between women and men" (UN 2006: 13). The Secretary-General's report locates three sites of violence against women: the family, the community and that perpetrated or condoned by the State.

The issue of violence against women has now become a regular part of the agenda of international forums so that international legal and policy frameworks for addressing it have been developed. Landmark achievements to this end include the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (1993), the Dakar Platform for Action (1994), the Beijing Platform for Action (1995) and UN Resolution 1325 on Women Peace and Security (2000).<sup>1</sup> Violence against women was identified as one of the twelve critical areas of action in the Beijing Platform for Action, and at the eleventh session of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (1992), General Recommendation No. 19 was formulated specially to address the issue. This Recommendation describes gender-based violence as "a form of discrimination that seriously inhibits women's ability to enjoy rights and freedoms on a basis of equality with men" (CEDAW General Recommendation 19, point 1). These rights and freedoms, it states, include:

- (a) The right to life;

- (b) The right not to be subject to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;
- (c) The right to equal protection according to humanitarian norms in time of international or internal armed conflict;
- (d) The right to liberty and security of person;
- (e) The right to equal protection under the law;
- (f) The right to equality in the family;
- (g) The right to the highest standard attainable of physical and mental health;
- (h) The right to just and favourable conditions of work.

The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (DEVAW) states that violence against women is a “manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women, which have led to domination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of the full advancement of women” (UN General Assembly Resolution 48/1084). The Declaration is sensitive to the fact that particular groups of women are especially prone to be targeted for violence, including minority, indigenous and refugee women, destitute women, women in institutions or in detention, girls, women with disabilities, older women and women in situations of armed conflict. The Declaration sets out a series of measures to be taken by States to prevent and eliminate such violence. It requires States to condemn violence against women and not to invoke custom, tradition or religion to avoid their obligations to eliminate such violence (UN 2006: 15).

These forms of progress at the international level have not generally been matched by progress at the national level, which remains insufficient and inconsistent in all parts of the world (UN 2006: 9). This has been particularly so in Papua New Guinea, where the good work of the Law Reform Commission (LRC) in the 1980s and 1990s. This formulated recommendations for legislative reforms and for the broader action required to address violence against women, but these were largely ignored by politicians.<sup>2</sup> This failure, and many others since, has led Amnesty International to conclude recently that the Papua New Guinea state “is doing very little to promote and fulfil the realisation of women’s rights or to protect women from human rights abuses. In fact, State agents themselves are often directly implicated in perpetrating violence against women” (AI 2006: 3; see also HRW 2005 & 2006).<sup>3</sup>

The PNG Constitution has a stated commitment to equal human rights and PNG is a signatory to CEDAW.<sup>4</sup> PNG is also a signatory to other relevant international and regional platforms for action committing the government to promoting the advancement of women by eliminating family and sexual violence.<sup>5</sup> However, as Abby McLeod comments, women in PNG enjoy neither freedom of movement nor equal protection by the law (2005: 115). Many women live under the threat of violence, which affects that their ability to move freely in the community, to use public transport, to access health and education services, and to travel to market or to the workplace (AI 2006: 1).<sup>6</sup>

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Moreover, the threat of violence from intimate partners and husbands means women often are unable to earn an income, or if they do, to control its use, rendering them financially dependent. Neither do women have control over their bodies and their sexual and reproductive health, very often being unable to determine whether, when and with whom they have sex and whether or not they become pregnant.

The lack of political will of the PNG government to translate international commitments into action is revealed by the inadequate resources devoted to addressing violence against women and the failure to promote a climate where violence against women is not tolerated. Women are ill-served at all levels of the male dominated law and justice sector, ranging from the village court system to the police, where cultural assumptions about male superiority are readily embraced and issues that affect women, such as sexual and domestic violence, are either ignored totally or not seriously pursued. Police fail to pursue complaints, and village courts demonstrate “excess traditionalism” when dealing with cases (McLeod 2005: 115; see also Garap 2000).<sup>7</sup>

### ***1.1. Assessing the Problem in Papua New Guinea***

Assessing the extent of the problem in PNG is difficult. Factors which impede our attempts to quantify the extent of gender-based violence, both in the PNG context and more generally, include under- and non-reporting, the lack of data collection on certain types of violence and methodological questions concerning what actually constitutes violence.<sup>8</sup>

#### ***1.1.1. Violence Normalised***

In PNG, much gender-based violence against women is socially and culturally sanctioned, occurring in the private context of family or household, and perpetrated by intimate partners or close relatives. Violence within the confines of a household is commonly considered private and is ignored by others, such as neighbours or kin, or it is considered such a mundane part of everyday life that it goes unnoticed. This is often the case with “wife beating,” which is given legitimacy through bride-wealth transactions and a prevailing ideology which holds that violence is an appropriate corrective for wives (and children) who fail in their prescribed obligations and duties (something we return to later). Indeed, the research by the Law Reform Commission found high levels of acceptability of wife-beating, though there was some difference of opinion between men and women and between rural and urban populations (LRC 1987: 14; 1992: 19-20).<sup>9</sup> This ranged from 17% of men in New Ireland to 95% of men in the Eastern Highlands agreeing that it was acceptable to hit one’s wife in certain circumstances. However, only 7% of New Ireland women viewed wife-beating as acceptable, whereas 98% of the Eastern Highlands women thought that it was acceptable. Overall 65% of rural husbands thought it acceptable to use violence against their wives in some circumstances and 55% of rural wives concurred with this (Toft & Bonnell 1985: 14). In urban areas, the majority of opinion was against wife-beating, though whether this ideal translated into reality is another question, since there is often a disjuncture between what people say and what they do.

### *1.1.2. Lack of Data*

Since the vast majority of victims of this kind of violence do not seek redress through the judicial system (aside from possibly the village court system), their experiences go largely unreported. Thus, police crime statistics do not cover much family and sexual violence, such as domestic violence, sexual harassment, or most child abuse (Bradley 2001a: 7; Macintyre 2000).

A further issue impeding attempts to ascertain the scale of the problem in PNG is the lack of ~~effort~~ *desire* on the part of the authorities to collect relevant data. As Christine Bradley notes, apart from police crime reports, which are limited, there are no national statistics for cases of family and sexual violence compiled from the agencies that provide medical, legal and social services to the victims (2001a: 7). This is most marked in the health-system, where despite large numbers of injuries being treated, the causes of those injuries are rarely adequately documented. This is especially the case with out-patient records where there is often no break-down beyond the broad category of "accidents and injuries." Although the in-patient records of hospitals and health centres are slightly better and distinguish the types of "accidents and injuries" (soft tissue injury, axe wound, knife wound, laceration, deep laceration, trauma), they rarely shed light on the primary cause or whether they result from the actions of another person. Thus, an axe wound could equally be the result of an accident while chopping firewood or of an attack by another person. Of course, as Christine Bradley notes, cases that do appear in official records represent only the more extreme examples (1985: 40). Obviously, many instances of violence require no medical treatment, or do not receive it in any case.

## **1.2. Problems in Defining Violence**

There is also considerable variation in what is included in the definition of violence, not only by researchers, but also by respondents to research questions. Local understandings of what constitutes violence do not necessarily mirror the definitions that have been developed by international bodies such as the UN. While physical injuries, such as a broken arm or a knife wound, fall fairly clearly into the area of violence, other things, such as threats, coercion and verbal abuse, are not always included, even though they may be used to terrorise a person. This narrow focus on the physical echoes a criminal justice perspective which defines violence in terms of a subset of crimes and excludes acts that may well be injurious, such as psychological or emotional abuse, deprivation and neglect (Tjaden 2005: 3; Walby 2005). The respondents during our field research tended overwhelmingly to define violence in this narrow physical way.

The definition of violence has important implications for data collection and significant ramifications for what interventions should be developed. Narrow definitions of violence can lead to omissions. For example, if a researcher asks only about being hit or beaten, the respondent may not mention that they been raped, kicked or burned (Ellsberg & Heise 2005: 91).<sup>10</sup>

### *1.2.1. Defining Gender-Based Violence*

Gender-based violence simply refers to violence that is driven by gendered power relations (Spees 2004 cited Edbrooke & Peters 2005: 6). While gender-based violence is often aimed at females, it can target other men and boys. Adult males for example

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can use their position of power as heads of families or households to abuse women, younger men, and children of either sex. Thus, the ways in which men realise their gender identity can mean that men, as well as women, suffer from gendered violence (Edbrooke & Peters 2005: 6; see also UN DAW 2005: 31).<sup>11</sup> Even though the main purpose of this study has been to examine men's violence towards women, the question of male (and female) socialisation is important and needs to be taken into account as far as possible while pragmatically keeping in mind the need to produce achievable recommendations.

The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (DEVAW) adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 20 1993 defines violence against women as: "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life" (UN General Assembly Resolution 48/104; see also Edbrooke & Peters 2005: 9; Heise et al 1994: 1165). Importantly, the Declaration states that such acts violate a woman's fundamental human rights and freedoms and that the international community has an obligation to protect and promote those rights. The forms of violence mentioned in the document include battery, dowry related violence, sexual abuse of children, marital rape, rape, female genital mutilation, sexual harassment, trafficking and forced prostitution. Despite some criticisms, the UN definition is significant in that it recognises that violence against women is a generalised "terror tactic that controls all women, violating their human rights to liberty and freedom from fear" (Manderson 2001: 7).<sup>12</sup>

In prevention work, the term "gender-based violence" precisely relates violence to gender and points to the need to examine gender socialization and gender roles to understand how these may be conducive to violence (UN DAW 2005: 31). From this perspective, gender-based violence is a tool for defining and maintaining strict gender roles and unequal relationships. In other words, gender based violence is a policing mechanism to "keep women (or different types of men) in their place," to assert "who makes the decisions" in a relationship or "who holds the power" (UN DAW 2005: 31).

### *1.2.2. Masculinity and Violence*

Violence, of course, exists on a continuum, from that experienced in the home to violence as a weapon of war. But, in any case, the perpetration of violence is strongly gendered in that men are far more likely to be the perpetrators of violence, regardless of the sex of the victim. Masculinity, thus, has a role in promoting and legitimising the use of violence; in many prevailing models of masculinity, violence is seen as a normal and entirely justified way of resolving conflict or expressing anger. While there is considerable cultural variation, generally speaking men are socialised from when they are young to interact assertively and actively with others. Moreover, risk and aggressivity are not something to be avoided, but are relished in everyday life (Medrado 2003: 2; see Section 3.1.2).

Since the problem of violence, and particularly violence by men towards women, is clearly a category of gender, then male socialization and what it means to be a man becomes a central aspect of any solution. It appears that many men see their manhood as dependent on their control over women and they use violence to achieve this. Since

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not all successful and many men are aggressive, and many positively reject and condemn violence, it cannot be argued that violence is an essential aspect of the male identity (Medrado 2003: 4). The rejection of violence by some men clearly suggests that alternative models of masculinity exist and, indeed, in some traditions for a man to strike a woman is considered most unmanly. Among the Bena Bena of the Eastern Highlands there is an expression meaning that if a man beats his wife her blood will cover him up, he will not be able to see and will behave like an animal.<sup>13</sup>

### **1.3. Extent of the Problem in Papua New Guinea**

The full extent of the problem of gender-based violence in PNG today is difficult to gauge, since there has been no nation-wide generalisable research undertaken since the Law Reform Commission's pioneering research on domestic violence in the 1980s.<sup>14</sup> This found widespread violence against women in the form of wife-beating and reported that 67% of wives in PNG had been beaten by their husbands (Bradley 2001b: 33). When broken down into rural and urban figures, 67% of women in rural areas and 56% of women in urban areas had been abused by their husbands (Bradley 2001a: 7). There was considerable regional variation, ranging from a maximum of 100% in the Western Highlands Province to a minimum of 40% in Oro Province. For urban-dwellers, the surveys showed that 56% of wives of low income earners and 62% of elite wives had been physically assaulted by their husbands (LRC 1987: 2).

Despite the lack of recent comprehensive data, the available evidence suggests that gender-based violence, and especially violence against women, is still widespread and of epidemic proportions. The available statistics from the police, reports in the media and anecdotal evidence tend to confirm this. Week after week, horrific reports appear in the national media, of women being killed by intimate partners or cases of violent rape. Other violent crime also appears to be at epidemic proportions and this may indicate the emergence of a masculine ethos which sees violence as a legitimate means to an end.

### **1.4. Violent Crime**

Over 40% of recorded crime involves violence. National data compiled from available crime statistics by the UNDSS indicates that in the 15 months to March 2005 a total of 11,766 crimes were reported — 9456 in 2004 and 2310 in the first quarter of 2005 (UNDSS 2005). However, such national data does not represent a true picture of crime, since the levels of reporting are very low, and this includes not only petty but also violent crime.<sup>15</sup> Much rape is not reported or disclosed publicly. The UNDSS data does, however, provide a sense of the extent of violence in PNG, since 43% of the reported crimes were serious violent crimes which included murder, serious sexual offence, grievous bodily harm, and armed robbery (UNDSS 2005).

Recent victimisation surveys also indicate very high levels of crime and high levels of violence. A household survey in the National Capital District, undertaken in 2004, reported that two thirds of households had been victims of crime at least once in the past year and 57% indicated that they had been victims of multiple crimes (two or more crimes of any sort) (NRI 2004: 1, 2).<sup>16</sup> While stealing was the most common form of victimisation, affecting 28% of households, 9% of households were affected by the use of firearms (NRI 2004: 3).

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More recently research, as part of the *PNG Armed Violence Assessment*, reports that 50% of households surveyed in the NCD were the victims of violent crime in the six months to May 2005 (Haley 2005: 28; Haley & Muggah 2006: 170). Of those, slightly more than a quarter had been victimised more than once (Haley 2005: 28; Haley & Muggah 2006: 170). High levels of crime characterise not only urban centres like Port Moresby, but are also common in rural PNG, this research reporting victimisation rates for the households surveyed in SHP at 51%; with 28% reporting have been victimised more than once (Haley 2005: 28; Haley & Muggah 2006: 170). The survey revealed that 80% of instances of victimization involved the use of a weapon. While a higher proportion of these involved an axe or bush knife, firearm use was also considerable (Haley & Muggah 2006: 170, 165).

Data from offenders also confirms high levels of violent crime. In a study commissioned by UN HABITAT and UNDP that undertook research in many of Port Moresby's settlement communities, nearly half of those who admitted committing crimes said they had involved violence (UN HABITAT & UNDP 2004: 52).<sup>17</sup> Close to a quarter of the respondents had committed serious crimes, such as murder, rape and car jacking (UN HABITAT & UNDP 2004: 21). A large proportion (42%) of first offences also involved the use of violence, and the threat of violence accompanied many crimes, since 61% of offenders used a weapon (UN HABITAT & UNDP 2004: 52).

### **1.5. Violence in the Household**

Recent research also confirms that a significant proportion of the violence that occurs in communities in PNG occurs in households among intimates and kin. Evidence from household surveys conducted in the NCD and the SHP, as part of the *PNG Armed Violence Assessment*, suggests that serious domestic violence is rising and that it is a primary contributor to insecurity, though other factors such as social conflict and armed criminality are also considered important (Haley 2005: 30; Haley & Muggah 2006: 166). The researchers found that in the six months prior to the survey, domestic and family violence affected 18% of surveyed households in the NCD and 26% in the SHP. Moreover, they argue that there is considerable under-reporting, since the respondents made clear to them that they only reported the more serious cases, such as those that resulted in injury or trauma of some kind (Haley 2005: 30; Haley & Muggah 2006: 170, 171). Significantly, they also found that domestic violence was not evenly represented in all areas of the NCD, with a greater number of cases occurring in the settlements. They also found a correlation between the provincial origins of NCD households and the preponderance of domestic violence. For example, domestic violence marked 24% of the householders originally from the Highlands or Gulf Provinces and 23% of those from Central Province. This contrasts with those households with origins in the Momase and Islands regions, who reported no domestic violence (Haley & Muggah 2006: 172).

#### **1.5.1. Sexual Violence**

Sexual violence is also a major problem in PNG and has been for many years (NSRRT & Jenkins 1994; UN HABITAT & UNDP 2004; Bradley 2001: 13). Like domestic violence, accurate and up-to-date figures on the extent of sexual violence in PNG are hard to come by. The *PNG Armed Violence Assessment* confirms that it is still a major concern in PNG. In the six months prior to the survey, over 8% of the respondents in

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SHP and 3% of respondents in NCD reported that someone in their household had been the victim of sexual assault or rape, which often involved the use of a weapons, such as firearms and bush knives (Haley 2005: 35; Haley & Muggah 2006: 170, 174). The majority of the incidents (89%) in the SHP occurred in the Hela region, while the majority of those that took place in the NCD occurred in the settlements (60%) (Haley 2005: 35). In rural PNG, the majority occurred in the village, often in the home, and the perpetrators were generally known to the victim (Haley & Muggah 2006: 174).

### **1.6. Methods and Scope of this Study**

This section outlines the aims and objectives of our study, conducted during June 2006, and describes the research methodology employed, the research sites, some of the limitations of the study and problems encountered.

#### *1.6.1. Aims and Goals of Research*

The research was commissioned by Caritas, Australia, as an attempt to explore the role of men and masculinities as a possible cause of gender-based violence, and therefore as the key to a solution. The intended outcomes:

- An overview of men's roles and masculinities in PNG society in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (how and why this has changed).
- What both men and women view as possible strategies in addressing the link between *masculinities and violence*. Can these strategies realistically be employed?
- Identification of who (what agencies or CBOs both within and outside the Church network) would be ideally placed to facilitate/implement possible strategies/initiatives towards reducing violent behaviour by working with men.

Additional work to be undertaken by the Team to include collection of:

- Data from men and women about the incidence of GBV in communities and what forms it takes
- Data about why people think GBV exists
- Data about how GBV impacts upon the lives of the family and community unit.

Following a literature review and discussions with several experts (mentioned in the Acknowledgements), the consultant developed a research design that could meet the intended research outcomes. The use of standard quantitative data collection methods was rejected at the outset as unsuitable for achieving the research outcomes. While these are suited to measuring the extent of violence, they do not provide insights into the contextual and cultural factors giving rise to violence. To achieve this more sensitive and probing understanding, qualitative research methodologies were employed.

#### *1.6.2. Research Methodology*

A series of research questions for interviews and discussions was prepared but these were intended to be used flexibly so that more interactive and responsive conversations could develop between the researchers and the respondents (See Appendix 1 for an example of a topic guide used). This more participatory process meant that the issues

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and concerns of the community could be given voice and not excluded in the research process.

With this emphasis on participation, the research utilised established qualitative research methods, in particular the techniques associated with rapid assessment research, including focus group discussions, in depth interviews and observations (Morgan 1997; Manderson & Aaby 1992). These modes of research have been widely used in primary health care programs, for example, to provide information vital to the design of successful intervention programs (Scrimshaw & Hurtado 1987; Annett & Rifkin 1988). The aim of qualitative research is to see the social and cultural world from the point of view of the participants and is a means of uncovering cultural meanings and social issues which may explain why people adopt particular behaviours or attitudes (Rice & Ezzy 1999).

The local culture and context is being recognised widely as the essential starting point for interventions aiming to promote development and improved health in the developing world. It is also recognised that in seeking to build appropriate interventions to reduce and eliminate violence, these should be grounded in analyses of local understandings of what constitutes violence and what are seen as the causes (see also Bradley 1985). Not only should the specifics of the culture be considered, but also the context in which violence occurs (Banks 2000: 85).

During our field research, information was collected from male and female adults and teenagers in each location. The group meetings usually began with an introductory exercise or icebreaker, in which participants were asked to list the problems they saw confronting the community, before the question of violence was raised. This showed whether violence was considered a problem and how it was rated against other problems. It also served to indicate the types of issue that communities in PNG are confronting, and thus the broader context in which violence is situated. This was important, since violence rarely occurs in a vacuum free of other contributory factors.

While we planned to segregate focus groups according to gender and age, this ideal was not always achieved. Local communities were not always adequately informed of our requirements, so that on a number of occasions we had to conduct mixed group interviews. In such contexts the more outspoken men invariably tended to dominate to the exclusion of women and youth. As the research was often conducted in public spaces, it was also sometimes hard to maintain an adequate level of privacy, and this affected respondent's willingness to speak freely and openly. This was particularly noticeable for women and youth, who tended to remain silent when men were around.

In addition to focus group discussions, in depth interviews and observations, key informant and community profile interviews were conducted with important service providers and stakeholders in the community, such as local councillors, church workers and health care providers. These were often used to obtain economic and demographic information about the communities. To gain an appreciation of the health problems occurring in communities, and the extent of violence with injuries requiring treatment, health centre records were consulted (though these were not always adequate). Overall, a total of 28 group discussions and 27 individual interviews were conducted (Table 1.)

Table 1. Group and Individual Interviews by Province.

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Location	AM Grp	TM Grp	AF/TF Grp	AM/TM Grp	Mixed Grp	AM Ind.	AF Ind.
Chimbu		1	1		10	3	5
Western	1		3	2	3	4	3
Bougainville		2	3	1	1	9	2

AM – Adult Male; TM – Teenage Male; AF – Adult Female; TF – Teenage Female; Ind. – Individual; Grp – Group.

### 1.6.3. Field-Sites

The field research was conducted in three provinces — Chimbu, Western and the Autonomous Region of Bougainville. In Chimbu Province, it was undertaken in the Denglagu Parish, in the Diocese of Kundiawa. Denglagu Parish is located in Mitnande LLG, Gembogl District. Discussions were held with people in the following villages and hamlets: Mondia Bris, Hiruk, Kekesuko, Engremambono, Bomkane, Kengri and Toramabuno.

In Western Province, field research was undertaken in St. John Parish and St. Gerard's Parish in the Diocese of Kiunga, in North Fly District. In St. John Parish, in the Nigerum LLG, discussions were held with people in the following villages and hamlets: Matkonnai, Kasrenai, Gerehosore and Yengkenai. In St. Gerard's Parish, in Kiunga Urban LLG, discussions were held at the settlements of Misin Kona, Michael Kona and Salemmat Kona.

In the Autonomous Region of Bougainville field research was undertaken in Hanahan Parish, in the Diocese of Buka. Hanahan Parish is located on Buka Island in the Halia constituency. Discussions were held with people in the following villages and hamlets: Talinga, Kiopan, Ketstkets, Yelilina, Hahalis, Kotopeli, Makoma and Bosena.<sup>18</sup>

The field research was complemented by interviews with stakeholders and service providers in Port Moresby, Goroka, Kiunga, Buka Town and Arawa. A further two days were spent in Mt Hagen consulting men involved in men's groups there.

### 1.6.4. Limitations and Constraints

Several factors imposed constraints on the quantity and quality of the information collected during the field research. Given the rapid nature of the fieldwork, approximately a week in each province, the research has some limitations, both practical and methodological. On the practical side, some of the field sites visited were not perhaps the most ideal, since they were chosen for pragmatic reasons rather than for how much light they were likely to shed on the issue of gender based violence. For example, the fieldsite in Chimbu, Denglagu was chosen by the Diocesan HIV/AIDS Co-ordinator who comes from there. While no community in PNG seems to escape violence, the extent of violence varies considerably, and a number of the field sites visited were comparatively peaceful compared to other places where the problem was far more pronounced. Thus, for example, when I mentioned to the Bishop of Kundiawa

that we were researching men and violence in Denglagu Parish, he wondered why we had chosen this parish since in his view this was a very peaceful one.

People also had a tendency to represent their village in rather idealised terms as problem-free.<sup>19</sup> This meant that respondents sometimes even denied the existence of violence within their own community, despite evidence to the contrary. One outspoken man in a village in Denglagu Parish, for example, claimed there was no violence in his village, seemingly forgetting, for example, that in the previous week a woman accused of adultery had her arm broken by a disgruntled husband and that a woman received a severe laceration the previous year for similar reasons (see endnote 22).

The success of the research basically depended on how pro-active the designated local contacts were in facilitating the fieldwork by organising meetings. The research in Chimbu turned out to be the most successful, despite the field site being chosen at the last minute, since a local councillor worked very hard to organise meetings for us in several nearby villages and hamlets. In a number of places, the designated local contacts did very little of this kind of organisation, with the result that the short time available was not always put to best use.

Methodologically, rapid research of this nature makes it difficult to verify and cross check information. Although there were some opportunities for observation during the fieldwork, these were extremely limited compared to those available in long term fieldwork where “participant observation” is the preferred research method. This meant the researchers were reliant on people’s verbal accounts of gender relations and gender roles. Ideally, such accounts are best verified by witnessing them first hand, but given the limited nature of the fieldwork this was not possible. People often present rather idealised accounts of their behaviour and beliefs, sometimes very different from their actual practice. So, while we were able to collect descriptions of the gender roles of men and women, in relation to something like gardening, say, we were unable to observe how accurately these descriptions represented reality.

## Part Two

### Extent, Causes and the Social Context of Violence

#### **2.0. Extent of Violence**

As we have noted, without properly designed quantitative surveys, we could not determine the full extent of gender-based violence in the communities we visited. Talking to people there, we did gain a general sense of the extent of the problem, and we concluded that the problem is greater in Chimbutan in Western or Bougainville.

Although, as mentioned, one community in Chimbu denied that violence ever happened in their village, other Chimbu communities were largely in agreement that it was a big problem. A mixed group meeting at St Theresa Denglagu Primary School considered domestic violence (*marit pait*) to be the predominant form of violence in the community, followed by fights over land and fights due to theft. Domestic violence and marital conflicts appeared to dominate the time of the Village Court, for, as one man said, “There are a lot of court cases, there isn’t any other kind, there are only court cases over marriage. ... These kinds of problems are big.” Chairman of the Gembogl Village Court agreed, saying that conflicts between married couples were a very common problem that came regularly to the attention of the court. Indeed, with some exasperation, he said this was problem they saw every day:

Every day men do wrong to their wives. Every day. Every day when we hear these problems at the court, from Monday, Tuesday until Friday, eight hours a day we listen to these kinds of cases. Every day, Saturday, Sunday, as well. Only marriage problems. Marriage problems we hear and we give orders and demand compensation. In the village court we hear marriage problems a lot of the time. Every day we hear it in the court. Lots of times men do wrong to their wives. The women are okay, they think about their children, the children they have given birth to.

Even so, the actual degree of marital violence is probably even greater, since many are reluctant to take such matters before the court for various reasons. The widespread acceptance of marital violence is sustained by what Abby McLeod refers to as “excess traditionalism,” or *kastam* (2005: 115). Perhaps the most significant customary tradition is the system of brideprice which is discussed below (Section 2.2.1.). Other reasons include fear that male partners will bribe the court officers and the shame people feel of admitting their marital problems.

Some who experience domestic violence require medical attention for the injuries they have sustained, and in one recent case, a women died.<sup>20</sup> The quality of the data collection Denglagu Sub-Health Centre is insufficiently detailed to give a true picture of just how many of the considerable number of accidents and injuries are due to domestic violence or gender-based violence. A nurse there said she had seen seven cases in the five months she had been working there.<sup>21</sup> Many people were believed to lie to the staff about the cause of injuries, since there is a “fight fee” of 20 Kina, levied on anyone involved in a fight regardless of whether they are the victim or not (see Photo 1). The common excuse being, as someone remarked, “mi brukim firewood na mi pundaun” – I was cutting firewood and fell over.<sup>22</sup>

Photo 1: Denglagu Sub-Health Centre fees. Note: *paif fi* (fight fee).



Compared to some other communities in Chimbu Province, where “tribal” warfare appears to be a common problem, those in upper Chimbu appeared to be relatively free from this kind of violence.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, one of the local councillors said that he had never heard a gun shot or seen a house burnt down as a consequence of a conflict during his life time (he was in his late forties).<sup>24</sup> Village leaders are very keen and quick to resolve conflicts which could result in wider conflicts.

In Bougainville, reports varied about the extent of violence against women, opinions ranging from epidemic to rare. One man at Hanahan said that no family escaped this kind of problem, whereas a teenage girl, also from Hanahan, said it was not very common. A nurse at the Hanahan Sub-Health Centre said that from one to three cases per week were women injured through domestic violence. Unlike the Catholic Health Centres, this government-run clinic does not charge a “fight fee.” Since not all women injured through domestic violence will attend the clinic, these figures suggest a quite high rate of violence. This nurse also said that ruptured spleens were a fairly common injury women received from severe beatings by their husbands, and she estimated there had been two to three a year over the last few years.

During the Bougainville Crisis on Buka a number of cases of rape occurred, including five women being taken hostage and raped by BRA fighters. In 2004, two rapes occurred in the Halia constituency of Buka, including the rape and murder of a seven year old elementary school student.<sup>25</sup>

There was general agreement that men's violence towards other men was also common, much of this being attributed to fights when drunk on "home brew." During 2006, a man killed another with a crow-bar in a conflict over access to timber and, in another case, a man killed his mother, though neither of these involved alcohol.

In Western Province the picture of violence is similar to Bougainville, with varying opinions about the extent of violence, but evaluations from service providers that it is a regular occurrence.<sup>26</sup> Nursing sisters in both St Kiunga and Matkomnai said that it was a big problem.<sup>27</sup> Importantly, it seems that violence is less acceptable now and there has been some success in reducing it, according to those working in the diocese.<sup>28</sup> Previously, when a man was hitting a woman others would stand around and cheer, but this appears to be diminishing.<sup>29</sup> A useful initiative that appears to be having a positive effect on the relations between men and women was the promotion of particular values, such as respect and equality in the diocese. For example, during 2006 the value of equality, with the subvalues of being fair and sharing, was being promoted and was causing people to reassess their behaviour.

The settlement of Salemmat Kona, in Kiunga, was one place that was relatively free from violence and the other social problems that give rise to it, though a girl from there had been raped in recent years by men from elsewhere in the town. The trouble-free nature of Salemmat Kona was a result of the circumstances in which the people there lived. Being refugees from West Papua who were resident on Catholic Church land, they were fearful of being evicted if any social problems, including "home brew," arose there.

## **2.1. Causes of Domestic Violence**

As Christine Bradley points out, several difficulties confront researchers seeking to ascertain why domestic violence occurs. As she writes:

One is the problem of distinguishing between the triggering cause and the underlying cause, for many violent incidents are sparked off by a trivial event ... although the situation may have been building up for a long time previously. Moreover, husband and wife often disagree on what caused particular instances of violence. Perhaps the thorniest problem is the level of causality (Bradley 1985: 59).

In describing the causes of violence this section, our over-riding aim is unravel these levels of causality — that is, to distinguish between the particular of triggering causes and the generality of underlying causes (see also LRC 1992: 125).

### *2.1.1. General Acceptability of Violence*

As noted above, the Law Reform Commission found a high acceptance in PNG of the use of violence by husbands against their wives (1987 & 1992). This has been confirmed as continuing right up to the present day by many commentators on domestic violence, including those we cite below (see also Counts 1999: 76). In rural communities in 1987, 65% of husbands and 55% of wives thought it legitimate for a man to hit his

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wife and the evidence is that these figures remain little changed. However, this does not signify an unlimited approval, for such violence is seen as legitimate only if the woman is perceived to have failed to behave in the manner proper to a wife. Accordingly, when we asked our respondents why men hit their wives, the commonplace response was that men do not hit their wives for no reason. As one man remarked, “We don’t fight for nothing, there must be a reason” (*mipela no pait nating nating, i mas got as*). Women were also generally in agreement with this view; as one woman said, “Husbands don’t hit their wives for no reason” (*man i no paitim meri nating*). Thus it seems that though violence is condoned, unprovoked violence is not.

### 2.1.2. “Triggers” for Violence

The research by the Law Reform Commission found that the wife’s failure to carry out her duties was stated by 63.2% of men as leading to problems in marriage (this was followed by sexual jealousy at 62.1%) (Toft & Bonnell 1985: 20, 45, 46).<sup>30</sup> According to the literature, this reasoning remains widespread in PNG. For example, it underlies Tolai domestic violence: “The general rationalisation for coercive violence against wives is that it is ‘corrective’, ‘educational’, ‘informative’, or ‘for teaching a lesson’” (Bradley 1985: 50).<sup>31</sup> It exists also among the Abelam of East Sepik Province, where the men believe that “occasional beatings are sometimes ‘necessary’ in order to socialize women properly” (Scaglione 1990: 189). Among the Bun, also in East Sepik Province, the reason men gave for hitting their wives was that the wife did not prepare food or did not carry out her work (McDowell 1990: 180). Similarly, the Kewa of the Southern Highlands say that a husband hits his wife when she disobeys him or fails to do his bidding (Josephides 1985: 94).

The WHO and PATH sponsored book on *Researching Violence Against Women* refers to the kinds of “triggers” that give rise to men’s violence against women more generally as including, “not obeying the husband, talking back, not having food ready on time, failing to care adequately for the children or home, questioning him about money or girlfriends, going somewhere without his permission, refusing him sex, or expressing suspicions of infidelity” (Ellsberg & Heise 2005: 25). Other examples we have heard include not looking after the pigs, playing cards, gossiping, embarrassing the husband in public, not paying due respect to his relatives or paying too much to her own, or even speaking English.<sup>32</sup>

One woman referred to the kinds of event that could give rise to beatings as “mistakes.” She gave the specific example of answering back and not following her husband’s instructions closely enough. Playing cards instead of working was mentioned a number of times as a common mistake. As one respondent said:

... The husband will be angry and beat her, if she doesn’t look after the pigs and doesn’t behave like a village wife, hanging around near the road playing cards. The husband is the head of the family and he wants to have renown in the village and the community. If his wife is arrogant and plays cards instead of looking after the pigs he will be angry, beating her to discipline her and change her ways.

Such “offences” seem extremely trivial. However, the real misdemeanor to be inferred is that the wife was off doing something that she wished to do rather than what her husband thought she should be doing.<sup>33</sup>

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### *2.1.3. Refusing Sex as a “Trigger” for Violence*

By far the commonest “mistake” in Chimbu is for a wife to refuse her husband sex.<sup>34</sup> One woman, involved with an interdenominational women’s group in Denglagu Parish, who often counsels women who have experienced domestic violence, suggested that regardless of what men may say in public about the causes of violence, the main one from her experience was women refusing their husbands sex. She went so far as to say that there wasn’t a night that went by when such violence did not occur.

Some men at a mixed group meeting in Denglagu Parish disputed this, but others agreed that this was the case, one man stating categorically that:

If there is a married couple and the husband asks his wife and she responds by saying she is tired or simply saying no, this is when the man will smash her face, beat her badly or cut her with a knife. This is the reason, the only reason, there are no others. When you hear talk about attacking a wife with a knife, this is the reason.

However, another man, who disputed that most domestic violence could be attributed to women refusing their husband’s demands for sex, got closer to a more fundamental cause when he explained the violence in the following way:

In PNG we have a culture in which we buy our wives and in which the women work. The man comes first and the pigs second and all problems come down to this. If a woman doesn’t submit to her husband by working in the garden, looking after the pigs or other kinds of work around the village that increase his renown, he will be angry and beat his wife. It isn’t just about the body. There are lots of reasons behind it.

### *2.1.4. Maintaining Men’s Authority*

There is no doubt that the prevailing gender ideology embraces the view that violence is an entirely appropriate corrective to any failure of wives to fulfil their perceived marital duties. The reasons given for this violence are often of the most trivial kind. If we were to take such reasons at face value, we would have to conclude that the men of PNG are extremely delicately balanced, easily upset and unable to follow a path of reason. We suggest, rather, that domestic violence is driven at a deeper level by men’s desire to maintain their power over women, a point that many commentators have made previously. More generally, as we argue below, the men are concerned to maintain their power in the world.

Far from being simply impetuous and irrational, the violence that men inflict on women is an execution of power which has the effect of keeping women in their place, subservient to men. As the recent UN Secretary General’s report notes: “Violence against women serves as a mechanism for maintaining male authority. When a woman is subjected to violence for transgressing social norms governing female sexuality and family roles, for example, the violence is not only individual but, through its punitive and controlling functions, also reinforces prevailing gender norms” (2006: 29). Several scholars who have written on the subject of domestic violence in PNG concur with this analysis, situating domestic violence in the context of the relations of power and the control that men seek to assert over women. For example, Cyndi Banks suggests that violence by men against women seems to arise mostly when men perceive that they have lost control over women, when women are believed to have breached expectations of

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conduct and when there are believed to be unresolved problems or wounds within the family that haven't been dealt with (2000: 95; 1997).

Some commentators have put the view that male angst and confusion in the face of rapid change and acculturation has led to violence against women. Lisette Josephides, speaking of the Kewa of the Southern Highlands, refines this view, saying that these changes are giving rise to a comparative lessening of male power in relation to women which sees women slipping from men's grasp (1994: 187). The changes, such as the Constitutional recognition of rights of equality, the availability of education and new career opportunities, that have brought a new independence to women, disturb the traditional gender roles. Much violence against women is motivated by fear because of the resultant weakening of men's ability to control them (Josephides 1994: 190). Writing about the Tolai in East New Britain, Christine Bradley also highlights the control aspect of domestic violence, arguing that men's violence is coercive, a question of men exercising control, while women's is defensive (1985: 50, 67). Susan Toft, who carried out research in urban Port Moresby, found that even though the wives in the marriages she studied were educated and capable of earning a large proportion of the household income, the husbands did not treat them as equals, but as subordinates from whom they wanted complete submission (1985: 30). Wives in these marriages were viewed as possessions over which the husband wanted absolute control. Regardless of whether the violence was provoked by the wife's failure to live up to expectations in a specific situation, or by the husband's jealousy or by her opposition to him, the issue was profoundly one of male dominance and control. Violence, as Susan Toft comments, occurred when this was threatened (1985: 30).

Although the observations above are drawn from fieldwork done in the 1980s and 1990s, their relevance continues today. It is clear from our fieldwork that men's violence is triggered whenever their desires, wishes and demands are not met by their wives. "What seems to be a very strong theme is that men are the bosses, if you don't do what the man wants you pay the price."<sup>35</sup> In other words, the underlying and general objection is to any exercise of agency on the part of a woman. What is at issue, then, is the traditional relations of power and the continuation of the control that men have traditionally held over women.

## ***2.2. Legitimizing Domestic Violence: Marriage and Brideprice***

Violence against women is by no means confined to wedlock; rather, it is simply that many of the issues to do with power and control over women are given added weight by marriage.<sup>36</sup> To understand marital violence, "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).

According to the LRC, the major obstacle to providing protection for women is a set of cultural attitudes, "prejudices and misconceptions," about the role of women in marriage. These attitudes, shared by women and men alike and including the officials who have the responsibility of offering support and assistance to abused women, are as follows:

- (i) that bride-price gives a man the right to bash his wife;
- (ii) that men are superior to women, and women must therefore obey them;

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- (iii) that no-one can interfere between husband and wife;
- (iv) that wife-beating is customary in many parts of Papua New Guinea, and therefore it must be legal;
- (v) that a man can do whatever he likes inside his own home;
- (vi) that if a woman is bashed, she must have done something to deserve it;
- (vii) that if a woman really minded about being bashed, she would leave the man or prosecute him (LRC 1987: 13-14).

### 2.2.1. Brideprice

Women's subordination is most clearly marked in the marriage relationship, since a woman is bound to obey her husband by virtue of the bride-price that has been transferred to her relatives from her husband's relatives (Bradley 1985: 34). The payment of brideprice is used to justify the husband's authority over his wife. It entitles the man to the woman's labour, her sexual services, and her full obedience. In PNG, the payment of brideprice is seen as having the logical consequence of legitimating violence, since having authority means exercising authority and, ultimately, using punitive means to enforce this.

Tok Pisin expressions, such as "baim meri," probably do not do justice to the complexity of the exchange relationship and have the effect of reinforcing the belief that the woman now becomes the property of the man. It appears that under various modern influences, perhaps especially the commodification of exchange, the traditional meaning and practice of brideprice has been eroded and largely forgotten, a simplified version taking its place.<sup>37</sup> Rather than being seen as an exchange creating a relationship between two social groupings, the brideprice exchange is now understood quite literally by many as a simple property transaction, in which a woman becomes the property of the man. This is expressed by women, for example as: "em baimim pinis, em ownim mi, mi properti bilong en."<sup>38</sup>

Having "purchased" a woman, a man believes he owns her, as though she is little more than an object. As Laura Zimmer-Tamakoshi remarks, men have variously portrayed women as men's "hands," "tradesstores," "tractors" and "capital assets" (1997: 541). Such de-humanising designations point to women's roles as labourers and assets for the creation of wealth. One woman in Chimbu explains this: "When a man has exchanged brideprice (*baim em*), he is the boss now. So he claims her as his property, or something like that, and the woman will be his labourer until he dies." Speaking of men in the Highlands, Hona Javati, of Family Voice, noted that men who have paid brideprice "think that they have the right to do what ever they want to their female counterparts. They have this attitude of ownership."<sup>39</sup>

Some, however, see some advantages in the brideprice system, even some who have been subject to physical abuse by their husbands. One woman in Chimbu who had been beaten by her husband and separated from him, saw brideprice as strengthening the marriage. She thought women would more readily seek new partners and dissolve the marriage if brideprice was not exchanged. This is true enough, as Naomi Yupae of Family Voice explains: "when she's in an abusive relationship, one of the things that she

would consider before she breaks that relationships is that she was paid brideprice, so he has a right to hit me. That is very common. So how do you unlearn that for a woman?" So, what this 'strengthening of the marriage' means is that women have to endure abuse, which it is not satisfactory for them or for the children of these abusive relationships. Moreover, the positive advantages the Chimbu woman alludes to are rather one-sided because brideprice does not stop men from seeking other partners or taking other wives.

According to Sharon Walker and Bessie Maruia, who were involved in some recent research sponsored by the National HIV/AIDS Support Project, many of the women interviewed wanted the practice of brideprice ended, and they were surprised at how strongly women felt on the matter.<sup>40</sup> The women respondents felt that brideprice made them powerless and made it difficult to have domestic violence seriously addressed by the authorities. They described instances of women going to the police only to be sent home with their husband when he arrives and claims he has paid brideprice.

Even so, there is no doubt that many cases of physical abuse occur in relationships where brideprice has not been exchanged (see Toft 1985). This indicates that while brideprice is used to legitimate violence, there are also other reasons for the violence. Violence against women is legitimated not only by the exchange of brideprice but also by men's general domination over women (Strathern 1985: 4). Take brideprice away and that general power over women remains and so does the violence.

### *2.2.2. Appealing to Tradition*

Although men appeal to tradition to justify violence against women, PNG is far from a place of pure tradition. As elsewhere, traditional gender roles are constantly challenged and undermined in the context of modernity as new ideas and practices are adopted. Over the course of the colonial and the post-independence periods a great deal of change has occurred in gender roles, the marriage relationship, family structure and property holding. In terms of their beliefs and practices, the people of PNG are not the same people as they once were (nor are people almost anywhere in the world). Although we believe that, in general, tradition is to be respected, so much of the tradition surrounding gender relations has been eroded, that the claim that justifies violence against women can only be considered an empty claim — *toktok nating*.

## **2.3. The Change in Marital Relations**

One woman thought that the way men behaved had changed, that they don't have the patience they had in the past and are less likely to listen to their wives nowadays. Some husbands lack interest in the family and fail to take any responsibility for their children's welfare. Some say this even extends to not building houses or doing garden work. This is usually attributed to young men, especially those who have attended high school and who lack the skills, knowledge and attitudes needed in the village, where they are likely to remain if their education does not bring employment.

### *2.3.1. Polygamy*

Similarly, the responsibilities which came with male polygamous marriage in the past are not being embraced by the current generation.<sup>41</sup> Previously, polygamy was not common

to all areas of PNG.<sup>42</sup> Now it has spread to regions where it did not exist previously. Moreover, in the past it was restricted only to wealthy and powerful men whereas now it is practiced by any man who wishes it, rich or poor, including young men.

As one service provider noted, in the past:

men who had several wives were generally wealthy, they were the powerful men, they were leaders in their own right and people would listen to them. But now that is not the case anymore. ... People are just getting married for the sake of it and they think, they don't seem to worry, they don't seem to care, even after they are married they don't provide for them.<sup>43</sup>

This was expressed by another in the following way:

the polygamy thing is very big here. But what's happened is, in times past before the white fellas came, they had the chiefs, it was almost like a social welfare thing as well. It was a way of saying that they are wealthy and could afford this. But they say everyone now – the bank teller, everyone wants a second wife. But what they do is they bring them into the same house, which wasn't done before. They give the first wife's things to the second wife. They ignore the first wife's children. Now, if they can't afford it, they either pick on the younger sister of the wife or her eldest daughter instead. They say what's happening to children is just a whole thing you don't want to know about.<sup>44</sup>

Polygamy brings women into conflict, as co-wives fight with each other. Sometimes the husband uses violence against whichever wife he considers to be at fault. This problem is not new, as ethnographic descriptions from early anthropologists and missionaries make clear that wives were not happy with polygamy and the advent of other wives led to quarrels in the family.<sup>45</sup> However, in the past men sought to mitigate some of the dissension by making sure that they built a separate house and prepared a garden plot for each wife, something that does not happen consistently today, as the quotation above indicates. In the past in some places, such as the Western and the Southern Highlands, a house was built in a different village (Ryan 1972: 703).

### *2.3.2. Serial Monogamy*

Today, what is labelled polygamy is closer to serial marriage, since the husband abandons one wife for another, sometimes without the knowledge of the first wife. This occurs particularly when husbands move to another place for work, but do not take their wife with them. There, they take another wife, have children and abandon one or the other depending on circumstances and their desires. Women are increasingly seen as disposable. It is easy to see why a woman might refer to herself as "like waste paper," as one woman who had been abandoned by her husband remarked to us. Service providers such as Family Voice in Goroka are increasingly finding that a large proportion of their cases concern neglect and desertion of women and children by men.<sup>46</sup>

## **2.4. Alcohol**

In PNG, violence, and especially household violence against women, is often attributed to the consumption of alcohol (Dernbach & Marshall 2001: 30).<sup>47</sup> In its urban survey, the Law Reform Commission found that although 71% of women respondents believed that alcohol was a major cause of problems in marriage, only 26% of those who had been hit

said that the violence was due to alcohol (Toft 1985: 27; LRC 1992: 21). In the rural survey, a much lower percentage of men (16.7%) and women (16.8%) thought that alcohol caused problems in marriage, though figures for those who had been hit are not given (Toft & Bonnell 1985: 47).

Among the Tolai, Christine Bradley reports that alcohol was seen as the single most common cause of problems in marriage by students and adult informants (1985: 52). Alcohol was seen both as a direct cause of wife-beating, when men in drunken states hit their wives for no obvious reason, and as an indirect cause, when drunken behaviour led to other problems, such as damage to property, shortage of money, infidelity and other conflicts (1985: 60). The Tolai case appeared to differ from other parts of rural PNG, where alcohol was not seen as such an important cause of domestic violence (Toft & Bonnell 1985: 47). However, the Tolai could afford to buy alcohol, being more affluent than many other groups, with a high proportion earning regular incomes from jobs or small businesses and with a more even spread of income from cash-cropping. In many other places, seasonal variation means that income is available only periodically (Bradley 1985: 61).

Today, with the widespread availability of "home brew," a form of distilled alcohol, alcohol is more readily available, even to those with very little money.<sup>48</sup> While those who can afford it prefer store-bought alcohol, such as beer, it is not difficult to obtain enough money to buy "home brew" (generally about K5). Sometimes people express this difference in the cost of alcohol when they refer to beer as "bikpela moni, liklik spak" (large amount of money, small amount of drunkenness) and to homebrew as "liklik moni, bikpela spak" (small amount of money, large amount of drunkenness).

The popular understanding that alcohol is a causal factor in domestic violence also appears in recent research. For example, Nicole Haley reports in the *PNG Armed Violence Assessment* that drug and alcohol abuse are highly rated as a causal factor among both men and women informants. Women, she says, "attributed domestic violence to polygamy and/or promiscuity and to drug and alcohol abuse, while men considered jealousy, gambling, alcohol, marijuana and adultery as causal factors" (Haley 2005: 44).

Despite the popular assumption that alcohol consumption is the cause of domestic violence, there is a complex relationship between the two. Although there is a strong correlation between drinking and violence, this correlation should not be confused with causality (Iamo & Ketan 1992: 13).<sup>49</sup> As Christine Bradley explains:

Take for example the common case where a man comes home drunk and hits his wife. One's first assumption would be that the violence was caused by the alcohol. Then we find out that the beating commenced when the wife began complaining about her husband's behaviour, from which we might infer that the beating was brought on by the wife's complaining. We then discover that the wife's complaints concerned the fact that as well as drinking away the family's food money, the husband was going around with another woman while out drinking. This might lead us to conclude that the causes were the husband's adultery, and money problems. Going deeper still, we might discover that the couple had had several children close together, that they had very different educational backgrounds, were married very young due to parental pressure and had never been happy together. What then are the 'real' causes of violence in this case?

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Clearly each of these factors is relevant at some level, and several of them are interconnected, but without a thorough exploration of each couple's background it would be impossible to come to any meaningful conclusion about the 'real' causes of violence in a particular marriage (Bradley 1985: 59-60).

Thus, although many women among the Tolai reported being hit by their husbands only when they were drunk, it does not mean that if these men were prevented from getting drunk they would never hit their wives (Bradley 1985: 60). "Not all drunken men hit, and not all men who hit are drunk. Drink may well be a catalyst for wife-beating, but it is unlikely to be the sole cause" (Bradley 1985: 60). Violence against women of this nature existed prior to the advent of colonialism and access to alcohol.

This agreed with information we collected from women during our fieldwork. For example, two of the women we interviewed in depth in Chimbu, both of whom had been subject to domestic violence, said that their husbands were only occasional drinkers and their violence was simply because they were prone to anger. One woman, when asked whether husbands hit their wives after drinking, remarked: "It is not very many. Some men when they drink beer they don't talk much and don't get enraged, they simply go to sleep. There is the occasional man who drinks beer or 'home brew' and all the things in the house will start to fly (be thrown about)."

Some suggest that alcohol causing domestic violence is a myth which provides a convenient excuse for men to escape responsibility. As Naomi Yupe, of Family Voice, explained:

I think men are capitalising on [the causal relationship between alcohol and violence], it's a sort of a myth. ... people say "I was under the influence and I belted my wife up." But whenever this thing comes up, I say "ok, if we have two men and you sit them down and they have one carton of beer each and you have one man going home, there's not a noise, he goes home, he has his dinner and he goes to sleep. The other one goes home and belts up his wife and chases the kids out of the house. So you see alcohol doesn't do this, the man does this (*alcohol i no mekim, man em i mekim rod*).<sup>50</sup>

Women who have experienced violence also sometimes concur with the excuse offered by alcohol, some saying in "he's a good man but he drinks."<sup>51</sup> Often the consumption of alcohol is opposed by wives and marital conflicts ensue. This is especially the case with store-bought alcohol which many wives see as a frivolous waste of valuable household resources, when they find it difficult to find money for school and hospital fees. This conflict is a result of women being economically dependent on their husbands and having little say in household expenditure.

The assumption that alcohol is the direct cause of domestic violence often gives rise to rather simplistic solutions, such as the suggestion that alcohol should be banned.<sup>52</sup> Prohibitory approaches are notoriously difficult to police, especially in PNG, where the reach of the state into the lives of many people is severely limited. In addition, knowledge about how to produce "home brew" is widespread and it's production is a source of income for many in difficult economic times.<sup>53</sup> Moreover, such solutions do not really address the root of the problem which in our case is gender constructions and gender relations.

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However, despite the relationship between alcohol and violence being far more complicated than many people realise, alcohol and marijuana consumption are indeed major problems affecting many communities in PNG. They are generally seen as problems because of disorderly behaviour in public and petty crime, rather than because of violence, even though drunken fights among young men are not uncommon.

Excessive alcohol and marijuana consumption was a recurring theme in many of the communities we visited during our fieldwork. How much of a problem these were seen as causing varied, with regional variation in availability have an impact. For example, due to the ideal growing conditions provided by the mountainous terrain, marijuana was readily available to adolescent males in Chimbu Province. By contrast, marijuana was not so frequently used on Buka Island, since it had to be imported from Rabaul and the mainland, and the police were effective at cutting off the flow at the ports Kimbe and Lae. Some, however, was grown at Tinputz in the mountains on the main island of Bougainville, where the climate is more temperate.

## **2.5. Modernity and Tradition: The Clash of Cultures**

In her 1985 contribution to the Law Reform Commission volume *Domestic violence in Papua New Guinea*, Susan Toft speculated that violence would increase both in extent and degree in the context of modernity as women's understandings of their role changed and they objected to being hit by their husbands (1985: 31; see also Lateef 1990: 53-54).

It is not easy to know whether Susan Toft's speculation has proved correct, since as we have noted, nation-wide data on domestic violence over a long period of time is simply not available. Some commentators say that domestic violence is increasing, whereas others say it is not. The intuitive opinion of Richard Scaglione, based on research in 1975 and 1987 is that the frequency of spousal violence had increased in the more recent years (1990: 2002). He reports that this often involves the woman not only defending herself, but going on the offensive against her husband, something that was unheard previously. Others have found no evidence that the violence towards women has increased in the wake of other changes that have accompanied modernity (Josephides 1985: 92).

### *2.5.1. Is Violence Increasing?*

The service providers with whom we spoke in the course of the research tended to say that violence against women was increasing and that it was becoming more severe.<sup>54</sup> One Catholic priest, Father John Ryan, who has been in PNG for thirty-one years, including sixteen years in Mt Hagen, responded to our questions about the current situation: "I've seen men killing their wives. I remember the first time I saw a man cutting his wife's head off. He then jumped into the river and tried to commit suicide. It was before Christmas, 1979. She had fed him during her period. That was the reason. And he cut her head off ... We've had many more murders. It's getting vicious now."<sup>55</sup> He thought the situation was "absolutely" getting worse, a somewhat telling comment given what he had been witness to in the past.<sup>56</sup>

Although many people in the communities we visited believed the situation today is much worse than pre-colonially, it is hard to confirm the accuracy of such statements,

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particularly when they often revealed a tendency to idealise the past as a time of complete happiness and no problems. Many people commented that violence was an everyday occurrence today. Surprisingly, when asked about cases of sexual violence, such as rape, people said they were rare — generally one or two cases over the last few years. However, this ignores cases of marital rape, which is likely to be considerable, particularly since women's rejection of their husband's sexual advances was given as a major reason for marital conflicts (see Section 2.1.3.). Such community speculation about the extent of sexual violence also disregards the many instances of sexual assault on young girls, which invariably go unreported by the victim, since there is a general shame associated with sexuality and disclosure of such things in public forums.

### *2.5.2. Lack of Development as Cause of Violence*

Many people we interviewed saw domestic violence as attributable to modernity. This was not so much in Susan Toft's sense, of women's understandings of their role changing, but much more a question of the failure of development and the dire economic circumstances that many in PNG find themselves. However, the two issues are connected aspects of modernity; women today may be more forthright in challenging their husbands use of household funds than they were in the past. Women do complain vociferously about money being wasted on alcohol when there are other more pressing demands on the family finances (see Iamo & Ketan 1992: 45).

In all the areas where we conducted field research, it was common for people to attribute domestic violence to poverty and the lack of money or "cash flow," as someone in Chimbu referred to it. Each of the places we visited in the three provinces had local conditions which made it difficult for people to achieve prosperity. Often there was inadequate infrastructure, such as roads, limited access to land, or poor advice in the type of cash crops that being planted. Too often, even when people had good land or had cash crops, the means of getting it to market was lacking.

While domestic violence cannot be reduced to poverty, it does put a heavy burden on people as they try to cope with the financial demands and pressures of modern life. Particularly noteworthy in this is the issue of school fees, which is repeatedly singled out as the source of considerable hardship in communities.<sup>57</sup> The inability to provide adequately for their families creates considerable anger and frustration for men who are shamed by being unable to fulfil their designated roles as breadwinners and heads of households. This shame often results in self-destructive behaviour in the form of excessive consumption of alcohol and drugs, and in conflict within households.

One service provider, recounting her discussions with men in settlements in Goroka, saw school fees as a "huge issue" and expressed it in the following way: "the men that I've spoken about so far, it's that they don't have work and they come home and she gripes about food and the kids school fees and his drinking. He will either whack her then or goes out and drinks and comes back and whacks her."<sup>58</sup>

Similarly, a woman in Denglagu Parish, who had been subjected to considerable domestic violence by her husband, saw a lot of the conflict in her marriage as arising from the need to pay school fees. This woman was a widow, with two children from her previous marriage, when she married this man and even though he was employed, he refused to contribute to looking after them. As another woman remarked during a group

meeting about school fees increases: “We mothers have got huge worries for our children. How will we live? These thoughts preoccupy us. Now the road is ruined, how will we get by?”

This situation has created a sense of despondency and people who in the past were producing vegetables for sale have given up, since the costs of getting them to market have increased so much as to make it uneconomic. As the local councillor explained: “The road is a problem now, it isn’t any good. The PMV fares have gone up and we’re tired of it. We farmers and villagers we’re tired of it.”

We’re tired of marketing and we don’t plant food for sale anymore. We are ruined now. Who is going to support us? Our member doesn’t support us, we live just like villagers now. From Kundiawa you come on top to here, the road is ruined and the bridges are no good as well.

### 2.5.3. *It’s the Government’s Fault*

Many believe that the source of the problem of violence is the government. “Everybody thinks the same on this problem, the blame lies with the government for all violence.”

There is a reason why there is violence. During the time of our ancestors there wasn’t much violence. Western influence came and now there is plenty of violence. Why is this? – because of money. ... It is Western influence. During the time of our ancestors there wasn’t any violence, life was good and people were happy. They had local foods to eat and they lived a happy life. There were tribal fights, but there wasn’t the problem of men beating their wives. Before there wasn’t a reason for men to hit their wives. Now money has arrived and this kind of violence is a big problem in Papua New Guinea. That is the cause. It is like a crisis. There is a crisis and the value of the money in Papua New Guinea has gone down very low. One result of this is that husbands leave their wives and wives leave their husbands. ... It is the result of the money problem. The cause of violence is money.

This account is tinged with a nostalgic reconstruction of the past, for it is an exaggeration to suggest that there was no violence in the past, something the speaker modifies as he speaks, mentioning tribal fights. According to early anthropological reports, there was a great deal of tribal fighting. Indeed, according to Father Nilles, before the administration gained control, people in upper Chimbu were engaged in tribal fights almost without interruption (1943/44: 117). The causes of these were innumerable in Father Nilles’ view, but the chief amongst them were wives, pigs, ownership of land, thefts, or old tribal disputes (1943/44: 117).<sup>59</sup> When he refers to the value of the Kina being very low, the speaker above is alluding to the economic restructuring that has taken place in recent years. The structural adjustment programs instituted in the 1990s saw the devaluation of the Kina, and had profound effects on many communities in PNG since the prices of goods in stores sky-rocketed, while the prices for their own produce remained low. Coupled with the imposition of a user-payers philosophy that saw the introduction of fees for schools and hospitals, this meant great increases of poverty.

One man suggested that if the “living standards” in upper Chimbu were improved and people had better, more permanent houses, they would be disinclined to get involved in conflicts, since they would be concerned about protecting their assets. He saw the improvement of the road by the government as vital to this, as it would enable people to

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get their vegetable produce to market. Under such circumstances they would be too busy to worry about “smoking marijuana” and going to dances, since this would be seen as “wasting time.”

In our research, the concern with the failure of development was not restricted to the more isolated rural communities, such as in upper Chimbu, but was felt also in villages adjacent to relatively good roads with easy access to towns, such as the communities we visited in St John Parish in Western Province, where a road, built by OK Tedi Mining Limited, connects Kiunga with Tabubil. This is a good road compared to the one connecting upper Chimbu with Kundiawa, but had not brought much development to the people living nearby.

Other reasons for poverty exist besides school fees and poor roads. For example, many of the people we spoke to in the villages of Matkomnai, Yangkenai, Gerehosore and Kasrenai are settlers from the hinterland far from the road, where their means of income was limited. They are now near the road, but live on the land of others and are forbidden to plant cash-crops, or to develop small businesses, such as tradestores, which could bring them an income. This is not uncommon, for residence rights are usually conditional in this way. These settlers have often been advised to plant rubber on their own land, but as this is located many hours walk from the Kiunga-Tabubil road and rubber is exceedingly heavy to transport, they are reluctant to pursue this source of income as the returns are very minimal compared to the effort expended.<sup>60</sup>

Some of the beliefs in the communities we visited concerning how easily access to money can solve the problem of violence are often unrealistic.<sup>61</sup> This was especially the case in Chimbu, where there was a belief that the government should be held responsible for all the problems in the community. Indeed, in Chimbu there was such a profound disenchantment with the PNG government that many longed for a return of the Australian colonial administration.

#### *2.5.4. Will More Money Mean Less Violence?*

While a better “cash flow” will obviously remove some of the stress and hardship people are enduring, this will not automatically see an end to violence, since the causes of violence are complex. Some of the service providers we spoke to were sceptical whether domestic violence could be reduced to poverty, since there are many poor countries where the level of violence is not as high as in PNG. This argument was put by Sharon Walker of the National HIV/AIDS Support Project, who also suggested that a lack of control over one’s life was probably an issue for those in settlements, but that overall the level of domestic violence is a consequence of gender relations. For her, men have grown up thinking they have the right to beat their wives and this has largely gone unchallenged: “I think it’s what men think they can do. I just think that they think it’s their right. They grow up with it, their role models do it. They see their dads and their uncles do it. ... And they think that it is their right.”<sup>62</sup>

Writings on the disposal of money earned from coffee sales in the Highlands confirm that violence against women is present in a context where there is money available. As Marie Reay noted, “there are frequent squabbles, which the husband usually wins, over the disposal of money earned from the sale of coffee” (1982: 171; see also Dernbach & Marshall 2001: 27).<sup>63</sup> In the communities we visited, domestic violence was just as likely

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to occur in families with money as those without. This appeared to be particularly so when the husband was employed. For example, a woman we interviewed in Western Province was physically abused by her husband who worked for Ok Tedi Mining. Such cases are not unique, and seem to arise when men who are working fail to give their wives access to any of their wages. Increasingly, men having access to money translates into men seeking other wives or sexual partners, which in turn becomes a source of discord and conflict, leading to violence. These examples indicate that when money is available, a major issue is the control of its disposal. This points, yet again, to the broader issue of unequal gender relations within marriage, and the issue of gender more generally.

## Part Three

### Gender

#### 3.0. Gender

In the methodology section (Section 1.6.2.), we explained that we usually began group discussions during fieldwork with a free listing exercise to find out what social problems and issues people thought were most significant in their community. This allowed the issue of violence to be situated in a wider context and helped determine to what extent violence itself was considered a social problem. There was some regional variation in the types of problem people mentioned during this exercise, though lack of development and the resulting lack of money was a common element. Significant gender differences were also apparent. Men were more likely to emphasise issues concerning access to money, while women more often drew attention to such issues as family violence and alcohol, the latter often being seen as a causative factor in violence (see Section 2.4.).<sup>64</sup>

To some extent, these gender differences mirror a conventional divide between issues considered political and the domain of men, and those considered domestic and the domain of women. This effectively renders the second category as “‘small troubles’, as trivial and insignificant and is one way that they are managed” (Strathern 1985: 2). However, as Marilyn Strathern suggests, such a classification should not be taken at face value and is usually offered by men, with women finding their affairs trivialized in this way (1985: 2). Thus, in their free listing women are seeking to overturn this trivializing and to assert that violence is an issue that is just as important as development and should not be relegated to the private realm.

##### 3.0.1. Exacerbating Gender Disparities and Violence

We have noted that people often think that domestic violence is a result of a lack of development (Section 2.5.2). In that section, we argued that, although poor economic conditions may exacerbate the situation, domestic violence also occurs frequently under better economic conditions. We argued that the cause must be sought at a deeper level. In the discussion of “triggers” above (Section 2.1.2.), we pointed out that domestic violence is generally concerned with keeping women in their place and reinforcing the prevailing gender norms, and that domestic violence is to be situated, therefore, in the broader context of gender relations and questions of power. More recently, the UN Secretary General's report also cautions about attributing violence against women to factors like poverty. As it states:

Acts of violence against women cannot be attributed solely to individual psychological factors or socio-economic conditions such as unemployment. Explanations for violence that focus primarily on individual behaviours and personal histories, such as alcohol abuse or a history of exposure to violence, overlook the broader impact of systemic gender inequality and women's subordination. Efforts to uncover the factors that are associated with violence against women should therefore be situated within this larger social context of power relations (UN 2006: 29).

The Secretary General's report nevertheless recognises that other larger issues also play a role in exacerbating violence against women. It especially singles out the “large-

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scale inequities and upheavals associated with globalization,” suggesting that many of the policies associated with this, such as structural adjustment, deregulation of economies and privatization of the public sector, have tended to reinforce women’s economic and social inequality, especially within marginalized communities (UN 2006: 32). In these circumstances, women are economically dependent and conflicts arise over the use of the limited resources available.

### 3.0.2. “Sexual Antagonism”

Gender in PNG is a very complex issue, as elsewhere, and there is a large anthropological literature which addresses its many dimensions.<sup>65</sup> Some of this literature is based on accounts attained long ago, which are not always entirely appropriate for today, given many of the changes that have occurred. These include Christianisation, Western education, development, the cash economy and rural-urban migration. More recent accounts of gender in PNG taking these changes into account are much harder to come by.

In the past, relations between men and women were often characterised as marked by “sexual antagonism,” that is, a fundamental opposition between male and female. This perspective obscured the complexity of gender and to gloss over the considerable regional variation in PNG (see Herdt & Poole 1982; Brown 1988: 123). Though a little more accurate in the case of Highlands societies, it still tended to gloss over the diversity there and to ignore change. As Paula Brown remarks of the highlands; “Male domination, sexual polarity and gender asymmetry take different forms” (Brown 1988: 124).

Early accounts of gender in the Highlands often highlighted a rigid role dichotomy, residential segregation, strict division of labour, and distinct spheres of inter-personal life, experience and ritual activity (Read 1952; Herdt & Poole 1982: 150). Early accounts from lowland and coastal cultures describe similar kinds of dichotomous relations between men and women, though they also found some features of complementarity, which was not detected in the Highlands. However, as some feminist-inspired anthropological studies of the Highlands have shown, elements of complementarity between women and men, especially in the area of subsistence production, did exist (see Brown & Buchbinder 1976: 4; Lederman 1986; Strathern 1981;).

The ethnographic literature for Bougainville, and especially Buka, is not as detailed as that for Chimbu. For the Halia area on Buka Island, where we worked, accounts like Father Nilles’ or Paula Brown’s writings on the Chimbu do not exist.<sup>66</sup> The most detailed writings on gender are by Jill Nash on the Nagovisi in the south of Bougainville where there is much more gender equality than in Chimbu, for example (1987). She suggests that masculine and feminine, like other cultural pairs, are conceived as neither logically nor otherwise opposed, but follow a model of sameness (Nash 1987: 150). Women among the Nagovisi have substantial and important rights, but these do not come at the expense of men’s rights. Rather, Jill Nash suggests, there is “an equality between men and women” (1987: 151).<sup>67</sup> Max and Eleanor Rimoldi suggest that things are 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).

Nash reports that physical violence among the Nagovisi between spouses is infrequent. During the two and half years that she lived amongst them she recorded only three cases in which a husband assaulted his wife in the village where she resided and one case from a nearby village (1990: 127). Arguments were more likely to descend into verbal abuse than physical abuse, and if serious insult results may lead to litigation (1990: 128). Sexual violence was also rare: "Rape is practically non-existent" and "group rape is unheard of" (Nash 1987: 164; 1990: 132).<sup>68</sup>

Nevertheless, it should not be assumed that the idyllic-sounding relations of equality that Nash reported in 1987 for south Bougainville are uniform across Bougainville today. Given the brutalising effects that the Bougainville crisis had on young men, it is doubtful whether gender relations have remained so equitable in the south. Certainly, historical records show that brutality and violence towards women existed there. For example, in 1934 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-nature 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" (H. Thurnwald 1934: 159).

### *3.0.3. Changing Gender Relations*

All of our field work showed that a great deal of the past rigid dichotomy of the sexes has disappeared. For example, virtually all men live together with their wives and children, a living arrangement unheard of prior to the colonial period.<sup>69</sup> In the past, men avoided women at certain times, such as before an important ceremony, or before hunting, because they were considered to have a dangerous power that was antithetical to male power. Western observers have usually misunderstood this male avoidance of female bodies as due to a belief that these were unclean. For example, Father Nilles writes:

The women's sex as such is considered by men as dangerous; and the woman as a person because of her sex is thought mentally inferior to men. Menstruation blood is regarded as highly infectious to man but not to woman. ... Even the sight of this blood has a deadly effect. If a woman were seen by a man cleansing her body close to the water, she was liable to be killed or at least had to give a pig to the man in compensation. ... Everything a woman steps over becomes defiled for a man, such as tools, building material and even firewood. A man should not sit on the same place a woman has occupied unless he cleans that spot before he sits down (Nilles 1950/51: 48).

Father Nilles uses terms that imply a Western-style fear of filth or contagion, but in fact female bodies and their secretions were, and in some places in PNG still are, avoided because of fear that a man's abilities — to fight, to hunt or to enact powerful magic — will be impaired by the powerful emanations of the female body. While many of the rigid rules of avoidance of women are no longer followed today, and gender relations may be said to have improved in the sense that they are less dichotomous, it is likely that the antithetical power women have been reputed to possess continues to be dreaded today.

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It might reasonably be surmised that this contributes to the great antipathy men show to any sign of agency on the part of women.

The situation for Bougainville differed in that menstruation was not seen in the same terms as the Highlands. There were no huts where women were secluded when menstruating, as was common in many places in the Highlands. Menstrual blood, according to Douglas Oliver's account from Siuai, was not considered dangerous, though it was associated with shame and avoided for that reason (1955: 204). Despite the absence of the stark antagonism evident in the Highlands, women were excluded in many ways on Bougainville, including initiation ceremonies and certain kinds of men's houses.

#### *3.0.4. Gender Division of Labour*

The widespread traditional gendered division of labour has generally endured, the accounts from Chimbu in the 1950s and from Bougainville in the 1920s below remaining reasonably accurate today:

Building houses, erecting fences and the killing and cutting of pigs however remain the work of men only. House and fence building are helped along by the women who carry and bring in the required material. The planting, tending and harvesting of certain kinds of vegetables is done by women; men take care of others. The planting and harvesting of the sweet potatoes, the staple food of the Kuman people, is entirely women's work. Sugar cane and bananas are taken care of by men. Taro and corn may be planted and harvested by either sex. Although the weeding of the garden is usually women's work, a man might join in without offending against the social code (Nilles 1950/51: 49).

The Bougainville account is similar, though it seems that men and women were not associated with particular crops as they were in Chimbu and other parts of the Highlands. Here, Beatrice Blackwood describes Bougainville gardening in the late 1920s:

The staple is taro ... its cultivation involves the constant clearing of fresh patches of bush. This is done by the men, in the olden days with stone implements, nowadays with trade knives and hatchets, which they call tomahawks. The men also erect the wooden palisade which is necessary to keep out the pigs. A new patch of any size will be cleared by communal effort, though it is then divided into plots which belong to different individuals. ... On a appointed day, when the greater part of the space has been cleared, the whole village will assemble for the planting. ... Both men and women make the holes for putting in the stalks, using sharpened poles which they thrust into the ground with all their strength. The actual planting is done by women only, and theirs is the subsequent task of keeping the plots reasonably clear of weeds, and of taking up the grown roots as they are required for consumption (1931/32: 203-4).<sup>70</sup>

Today in Chimbu, heavy work, such as building houses and fences and cutting and moving trees when clearing gardens, is generally done by men, while women are responsible for clearing up the smaller garden debris. This persists in Bougainville and Western also. In Chimbu, the division in what is planted continues with slight variations, women planting and caring for sweet potato, while men now plant the taller crops, such as sugarcane, banana and taro. Women are said by men to be unable to climb trees when necessary, nor to maintain crops like sugarcane. As one man put it, "The women

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aren't fit to climb up and wrap up the banana." In Bougainville, planting largely follows Blackwood's early description.

Absent from the accounts cited above is the raising and care of children and pigs, a responsibility which falls solely on women, and for which they are valued. This is especially so for pigs, which have a high cultural value in many parts of PNG. Indeed, in attempting to get people to reflect on gender roles, we asked what constituted a "good woman." The Chimbu answer invariably included looking after pigs and working in the garden. As one woman said:

A woman is a good woman if she looks after the pigs, as well as working in the garden. Husbands are happy with this and will say to their wives you are increasing my renown. If this is the case then the man won't have reason to talk to his wife (chastise her). A man will respect his wife if she does this and remains under his control and listens to him.

This continuing acceptance of traditional thinking suggests that despite some of the more extreme antagonistic elements of gender stereotyping fading away, a great deal of work remains to be done to get people to appreciate the meaning of equality.

Traditionally, hunting was everywhere a prerogative of men and remains so today, though the literature offers few explanations for this. We heard one rationalisation during our fieldwork in Chimbu where men said women are incapable of hunting because they are too scared and, in any case, they must be protected from the threat of rape by *raskols* or attack by *masalai* (bush spirits). Hunting continues today at all of our fieldwork sites, though probably not to the same extent as in the past. Hunting is quite time consuming, often with small returns for the amount of energy expended and many of the skills are not being passed on to the young.

### 3.0.5. *Non-adherence to Gender Roles*

In each place we visited, we found some instances of men not adhering rigidly to their gender roles and helping their wives in tasks properly defined as women's. However, such examples were atypical. Whether a man helped his wife in non-traditional ways depended on the example he had learnt from his family and also on the extent to which the women complained, as occurs in Western, where a husband may properly help his wife with firewood if she complains. Less women appear to be taking on traditional male gender roles, though this does occur by default.<sup>71</sup> Indeed, much as Father Nilles noted for the Chimbu of sixty years ago, there are cases where the entire food production is left to women (1950/51: 49). This continues to occur today, not, however, as a challenge to the gendered division of labour, but because women have been deserted by their husbands, or their husbands are neglectful and spend their time doing other things.

### 3.0.6. *Seeking Renown*

While the simple dichotomy which assigns the public arena to men and relegates women to the domestic arena is in reality far more complex.<sup>72</sup> Nevertheless, it is true that the public arena is an important forum for the display of male identity and accomplishment. Men must prove themselves, economically, socially and politically, which usually requires assertive public performance, whether in the form of oratory, conspicuous displays of wealth, politicking or other visible achievements. The "big man,"

who has achieved renown, is respected, while the man who has not, is contemptuously labelled *rabis man* (rubbish man).

People are valued in PNG for their achievements. This applies to both men and women, but the woman's role is designed to assist the man to achieve renown. Women are valued for their role of raising children and of producing the kinds of wealth (like pigs and garden produce) that are exchanged during ceremonies and presentations, where men to gain political power and prestige.<sup>73</sup> In Chimbu, as Paula Brown says, women raise pigs and men decide how they should be dispersed (1988: 126). Women have an important role in maintaining social relations between groups, since the exchanges on which men build their prestige depend on kinship relationships gained through the marriage (Brown 1988: 125). Paula Brown characterised women in Chimbu as self-sufficient, "while appearing to comply with men's assertion of dominance and group allegiance" (1988: 137). She thought that over time there had been less "subordination of women and more assertion of individuality among younger women" (Brown 1988: 137). However, despite such opportunities for women to exercise agency, women still tend to be passive and obedient and those that are not are often negatively labelled, as well as punished.

On Bougainville, while physical strength has been a highly valued masculine characteristic, women also had valued characteristics. In contrast to men, women were considered to be "strong in the mouth," with an inclination to talk and make things happen through talk. This meant that women played an essential role in group discussions and decisions about the distribution of pigs, land use and compensation (Nash 1987: 158). More recently, women played important roles in conflict resolution, starting peace groups and peace initiatives that helped bring an end to the Bougainville crisis (something they have also been involved in the Highlands) (see Hakena 2000; Tonissen 2000; Garap 2004a).

While modernity has relaxed gender roles and opened some new opportunities for women, it has also given new opportunities to men which often reinforce or reinscribe their power. While the opportunity to become educated, to gain paid employment, to travel and to participate in politics is open to both men and women, in the main such opportunities have gone to men and have provided new outlets in which men can realise power, which often has negative consequence for gender relations. Paid work and travel have provided men with more sexual opportunities, which has not only seen a proliferation of polygamous marriages, but is also fuelling the HIV epidemic, which increasingly has a female face.<sup>74</sup>

Opportunities for leadership are available today to a much younger generation of men and these are not based on the political skills essential in the past. In the past, leadership was based on respect, which in turn was based on impressive achievement in the arenas of exchange, warfare and local politics. It required a life-time to develop the relationships which enabled a man to harness resources at strategic times, in the form of people for warfare or wealth for exchange, and so no young man could achieve this. While today's positions of leadership are sometimes based on educational achievement, they are increasingly based on corrupt or coercive politics. Those with

money use bribery to achieve election as village court magistrates or ward councillors, while guns are used to intimidate people into giving their support (Garap 2004b: 5).

### **3.1. Men and Masculinity**

Any discussion of masculinity poses potential problems, not the least of which is to rely on taken-for-granted and universal conceptions of “men” across cultures, regardless of histories and contexts. The rapidly increasing literature on masculinity has moved beyond such narrow conceptions to show that the nature of masculinity is fluid, depending on its setting, which of course is everywhere constantly reshaped by new influences. In PNG, the rituals associated with transition from childhood to adulthood have been a major focus for anthropological studies of masculinity (see Section 3.1.).<sup>75</sup> These rituals confirm the point that gender, in this case masculinity, should not be taken as given, but is cultivated through ritual and other means.

While this particular type of masculine behaviour has been studied in PNG, insufficient effort has been made to understand the broad significance of masculinity, including its changing nature and the factors contributing to these changes (but see Brison 1995; Clark 1997; Knauff 1997; Wilde 2003). Little attention has been paid, either, to the role of masculinity in gender violence.

Much recent writing on masculinity suggests that within any society there are ways of being a man that are dominant and considered exemplary, while others are seen as less than ideal. The former are usually referred to as “hegemonic masculinities,” and the latter as “subordinate variants” (Cornwall & Lindisfarne 1994: 3; Connell 1995). These concepts are intended to point to and differentiate the various forms of masculinity. Since particular forms of masculinity are culturally elevated above others at various times and places, there is obviously considerable variation (Cleaver 2002: 7). However, the more interesting and useful conclusion we draw is that subordinate masculinities emerge when dominant masculinities become incompatible with socioeconomic conditions.

#### *3.1.1. Reconciling the Contradictions of Masculinity*

When the dominant models of masculinity are incongruent with social and economic conditions, the question arises of how a man is to negotiate his gender identity. For instance, how does a man reconcile the modern democratic conception of respect for others with the hard-line masculine conception that the husband must be the absolute head of the household? How can he reconcile the Christian notion of kindness, or turning the other cheek, with maintaining his position as head of the household? More pertinent still, how does a man maintain his masculinity when he is out of work and his wife is the breadwinner? Such questions point to some of the contradictions of being a man in today’s PNG, where conditions make it impossible, or at least very difficult, to realise traditional and hegemonic masculine ideals. Some young men expressed this in terms of being in between western culture and tradition: “mipela ol yangpela stap namel nau.”

The common response to reconciling these contradictions seems, unfortunately, to be negative: anger, frustration and violence. However, the positive possibility is to change one or both of the incompatible elements. For example, in the pertinent case of

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unemployed husbands, either the dominant model of masculinity or the economic conditions need to be changed, or perhaps some of both. As we have just mentioned, subordinate masculinities emerge when dominant masculinities become incompatible with social and economic conditions. This can be observed in other parts of the world; for example, in the emergence of progressive men's movements in western nations when women's movements demanded change, women became more independent, and women's paid employment became widespread. The result was a masculinity which was comfortable with being more sensitive and more proactive towards women's and children's emotional and practical needs.

### *3.1.2. PNG Masculinity: Valuing Assertiveness and Strength*

At the forefront of the characteristics that make up the dominant, exemplary form of masculinity in PNG, are assertiveness and strength. Traditionally, the male ideal, as Paula Brown has suggested, is "a strong warrior and orator, a 'big man' directing and leading a group of men in warfare and ceremony" (Brown 1988: 128). Even though men are no longer socialised to become warriors, they are still socialised to be extremely assertive, to the point of aggressiveness (McDowell 1990: 174). Consequently, anger and violent redress are considered natural and appropriate responses to insult or challenge. There is a general inclination to avenge insults or attacks, whether perceived or real, through violence, since they are considered to be injuries to one's person that need to be reciprocated.<sup>76</sup> Anger, then, is valued in certain circumstances, since it enables things to be done that could not normally be done.

Such attitudes remain general both in the Highlands and in the lowland coastal areas, such as Bougainville and Western. The Nagovisi of Bougainville regard anger as a motivating and energizing force, which have made possible men's great acts of warfare (Nash 1990: 138). In the past, these could be facilitated by the ingestion of a magical powder, which included human bones and had the effect of turning the man into an angry killer, a *pikonara*, with great strength. Any boy child who showed unusual belligerence was regarded as likely to grow up to be a *pikonara* (Nash 1990: 135). That this positive evaluation of male anger and violence remains common was borne out by one of the men we interviewed during the fieldwork in Buka, when he said that forms of magic like this were used during the Bougainville conflict.<sup>77</sup>

### *3.1.3. Tempering Assertiveness with Respect*

In the context of people's own community, and with their own kin, assertiveness is tempered by notions of respect. Thus, although people perceive anger and violence as natural and normal, they expect it to be controlled within their community (McDowell 1990: 173). This does not apply, though, within the household, where challenges to a man's authority are often met with violence, as we have noted above in relation to women not following their husband's instructions (Section 2.1.2.).

In the past, respect in the community was maintained by recourse to various customary measures and sanctions. Though the village courts today endeavour to enforce many of these customary measures, they are not always successful in dealing with some of the consequences of the frustration and anger among youth.

### **3.2. Disenchanted Young Men**

Given that a man's status is based on forms of achievement and that the contemporary context is not providing opportunities to attain these ideals, it is easy to see why so much anger and frustration is being expressed in various negative or destructive ways by young men. The theme of frustration was raised repeatedly in the field-sites.

As Kenneth Read noted (writing of the Gahuku of the Eastern Highlands): "in the final analysis, the idea which men hold of the themselves is based on what men do rather than what they have at birth" (1982: 70). Increasingly, however, many of the arenas where men have proved themselves in the past are no longer available to young men (such as warfare, rituals and ceremonies). While some new possibilities for leadership have opened up, as we noted above these are not necessarily beneficial (Section 3.0.6.). One consequence of this is that many young men are becoming disenchanted and as a consequence disruptive in their communities.

PNG has a growing youth population, which currently comprises nearly 20% of the population.<sup>78</sup> This young age profile of the population will ensure that the thwarted expectations and aspirations of young people will have a big impact on the country for the foreseeable future (see Mitchell 2004: 363). Given that a large proportion of the youth wishing to find paid employment will be unable to do so, there is a growing potential to breed the kind of anger and frustration that fuels crime and other anti-social behaviour. It is estimated that of the nearly 4 million available workers by 2015, only six percent will find employment in the formal sector (NZ Herald July 2006). Indeed, one respondent in Chimbu likened the unfolding of the youth crisis to the Bougainville crisis, a tragedy which will end in violence and social upheaval.

Although, young people are not an homogeneous group, they often bear a heavy burden of negative criticism for their perceived idleness, especially those without a source of income. This is particularly so in urban centres where many believe that those who live in cities must work to be there legitimately. This is despite the fact that many are there not necessarily of their own choice, but were born there or were brought there when young by their parents. There are few opportunities to earn money in the urban centres, in the formal or informal sectors, but this also the situation in rural communities. In addition to a lack of suitable expertise for conceptualising, planning and running a small business, the young find it difficult to access the money needed to start such a venture. Such enterprises are also hamstrung by poor transport infrastructure that makes accessing markets very difficult (see Section 2.5.2.).

Despite the PNG government and parents being keen for youth to be educated, this often holds out false hopes. Even when students do manage to complete their schooling, the prospects of this leading to paid employment are bleak, in both rural and urban contexts. Even when jobs are available, the "wantok" system often prevents the most qualified applicant from being employed in favour of people from the same group. Failure to complete schooling, or to find employment having done so, means the young often carry a heavy burden of guilt, since their parents have expended much time and effort in acquiring money for school fees. Parents resent having had to work so hard for something that has not seen any benefit flow back to themselves. "Useless" was a word

that came up often in our discussions. Parents apply this designation to youth, who also apply it to themselves.

Understandably, many young people question the point of being educated if nothing comes at the end of it. Naturally, this results in very high levels of anger and frustration. Anger with a capital A, was how it was described by Sister Gaye Lennon.<sup>79</sup> As Hona Javati commented, it is “causing them to do what negative things they are doing in the community now.”<sup>80</sup>

We put them through school and they fail. Some of the parents don't pay their school fees and they can't attend school. They return to the village and live, but it is very hard for them, since school has been their life. If school is their life, how do they now live in the village? They need money and they think about doing other things like drinking 'home brew'. They either want to die or they want forget everything by getting drunk.

While the situation regarding youth was a concern in all the field-sites we visited, this seemed particularly acute in Bougainville. One by-product of the “krisis,” as the Bougainville conflict is called, is a whole generation of young men who have little or no education. This applies particularly to those born during the conflict. These young men lack the skills needed to survive in the modern world and they have not acquired the values and morality needed to co-exist in a village community.

One man commented that this generation has no fear and are in a state of constant anger. He thought the situation was getting worse and that total disregard for others (*pasin bikhed*) is becoming common. The origin, he believed, was the Bougainville conflict:

The crisis gave rise to all kinds of thoughts among the youth. Their arrogance towards others has its basis in the crisis. Before, it wasn't like this. When the crisis came this kind of way also arrived. The crisis also gave birth to home brew. The knowledge on how to make home brew came up during the crisis. The crisis gave rise to all this kind of thinking among men. The arrogance of the youth is because they've held guns and they like to be rough. They've learnt how to kill and are prepared to kill. They won't listen to the village chiefs.

When drunk on “home brew,” said this man, such men often make threats to get their guns and kill when involved in arguments. While some such threats are obviously posturing, since many do not have guns, it is certain that some were not handed in to authorities after the peace process. Much like the respondent in Chimbu cited above and the one quoted below, this man believed another crisis was approaching.

### **3.3. Masculinity, Alcohol and Marijuana**

One consequence of the anger and frustration felt by men, and especially young men, is recourse to the consumption of alcohol and marijuana, as this quotation from Chimbu illustrates:

Now there is a crisis in the country and it is running down and at this time there is a lot of violence in PNG. The youth roam around the streets, because there isn't any money for school fees. They steal, some are angry and smoke marijuana, they drink beer and

“home brew” and create all kinds of trouble. They are angry with the government, but who in the government will find money for them?<sup>81</sup>

We discussed the role of alcohol in domestic violence earlier (Section 2.4.), but return to it now in relation to masculinity, since it one way that young men are asserting their masculine identity. Although some women drink in PNG, it is generally seen as a quintessentially masculine pursuit.<sup>82</sup> Indeed, we were told in Bougainville that “when men are drunk they like to show they are real men (*trupela man*).”

### 3.3.1. *Defying Conventions*

As others have noted, alcohol has a disinhibitory effect which means that people say things that they normally would not or should not.<sup>83</sup> Thus, alcohol has the effect of allowing things that normally would, and probably should, be left unsaid to be spoken, bringing them out into the open. Such public revelations have social consequences and can give rise to conflicts, that readily descend into violence.

Similarly, alcohol weakens the constraints of social conventions so that under its influence people disregard the shame and respect that normally govern behaviour. This encourages the expression of aggression, physical or verbal, and unsuitable attempts to redress resentments and perceived injuries. Consumption of alcohol as, Mac Marshall says in another Pacific context, “allows for an altered state of conscience in which one can get away with behaviours not normally permitted” (1979: 53). In the Micronesian context he describes, drunkenness inevitably leads to fighting in which young men try to prove their martial prowess, drawing on a traditional repertoire of techniques, supplemented by kung fu learned from watching movies.

Drinking among men in PNG is often accompanied by masculine bravado, especially when excessive amounts are consumed, which is the norm rather than the exception. In such contexts men show off or “*kusa!*” as it is sometimes called. This showing that he is a “real man” can involve parading with tape-recorder at full blast or dancing on the road, or other the kinds of public performance which involve creating considerable noise and aggressive behaviour, enraging others in the community. On Buka Island, people considered that home brew alcohol was “out of hand” and the consumers were considered to be a “show off group” who need to “make a lot of noise so people will notice them.” A comment by one woman was typical of all the places we visited: “Lots of the youth drink ‘home brew.’ They drink this and fight amongst themselves. This brings lots of problems into the community.” According to people on Buka “home brew” is the choice of those who are more impulsive and who drink whenever they can raise a little money. Beer drinkers were considered less impulsive and more rational, since they planned to drink on a particular day and cut copra or cocoa to raise money for the occasion.

### 3.3.2. *Marijuana*

Marijuana is also a problem in the communities we visited, more so in Chimbu than elsewhere, as we noted above (Section 2.4.). The effects of marijuana are less dramatic than alcohol, since it tends to make it’s consumers lethargic. In Chimbu its consumption was associated with some petty crime, such as stealing chickens, dogs and garden

produce. This was mainly because heavy users were not able to provide food for themselves and became reliant on theft to survive.<sup>84</sup>

Much as with the stimulant betel nut, many people see the production and sale of “home brew” and marijuana as opportunities to earn some money in contexts where few other options are available (see also Halvaksz 2006). Efforts by village leaders in some of the communities we visited to arrest the production of “home brew” by handing the stills over to police have been largely unsuccessful, for as one still is closed another starts up elsewhere. This is likely to continue until other more attractive forms of cash crop are available.

### **3.4. Men’s Houses and Male Initiation**

Throughout PNG, in the past, men’s houses ranged from simply places where men and boys slept and might learn about tradition in an informal way, to those where highly elaborate rites of passage were carried out.<sup>85</sup> In Western, Chimbu and Bougainville, various rituals of manhood or initiation were included, but the extent to which they still exist varies. Some men’s houses remain in Chimbu and on Buka Island, but few if any in Western Province, at least where we visited. In the places where they do still exist, they are a rarity and seem largely shorn of the initiation ceremonies that had once been a major part of their purpose. They had been abandoned for a much longer time in Western Province, there being only a few men still alive who have knowledge of this tradition.

#### **3.4.1. Chimbu Men’s Houses and Initiation**

In Chimbu previously, a considerable amount of effort in men’s houses went into teaching the young appropriate social values, such as respect and how to be a good member of the community by following the customary and traditional laws (see Appendix 4 for an early account). This kind of “school,” or training acquired in the men’s house was called *Kakadenai*. Sometimes this seems to have been little more than a form of chastisement, which warned the young to behave themselves or suffer the consequences. As one man in remarked, “if you cause trouble, the money and pigs you have accumulated will go outside,” meaning they would be lost in compensation payments. In addition to learning how to behave, boys were taught various aspects of traditional culture, through songs and stories. An important element of the initiation rituals in Chimbu was a form of blood-letting, which involved having sticks rammed into the inner septum of the nose until it bled, the significance of which is explained below.

Traditionally, the ceremonies connected with initiation were everywhere kept secret from women.<sup>86</sup> Indeed, women who saw the process of bloodletting, above, would be killed (Nilles 1950/51: 49). Knowledge of the flutes or *koa*, which the initiates were shown and taught how to play, were also kept secret. Aside from being blown in the context of initiation, these flutes were particularly associated with other highly masculine pursuits. They were blown, for example, after a successful raid upon the enemy or after killing a big man in battle or through sorcery.<sup>87</sup>

Historically, it appears that men’s houses changed over a short period of time, so that many of the practices that emphasised radical separateness from women were abandoned. This appeared to be the case in upper Chimbu where, according to the



accounts of Father Nilles, the aspects given up included the more physically demanding aspects of the initiation such as the nasal blood-letting and cleansing of the throat with nettles, and also the food taboos that had accompanied the initiation. The changes also reduced initiation to the smaller context of the family, when previously it was associated with large clan groups and large pig killing ceremonies. The secrecy surrounding the flutes also dissipated and women no longer feared them, as they had precolonially (Nilles 1953/54: 128). In Bougainville, the various practices disappeared fairly rapidly after World War Two, although some are still practised today in Wakunai.

### *3.4.2. Bougainville Men's Houses and Initiation*

In Bougainville, the tradition of men's houses and their initiation rituals varied. Initiation was less formal and less ritualised in the south than in the north, where it involved a strict segregation of young boys from women, right up to the time of marriage. Across the whole region some similarities to the highlands existed, in particular an emphasis on "sexual antagonism," with its segregation of women, and status differentiation amongst men. In the south, however, as we have noted, relations among men and women were less antagonistic.

In both areas, men's houses were associated with a formalised ranking system with chiefs striving to improve their position through competitive feasting, involving the ritual killing and distribution of large numbers of pigs, and other highly formalised ceremonies. Slit gongs were a very important aspect of the ceremonial and symbolic display through which renown was increased. During his lifetime, a man strove to increase the size and status of his men's house, building larger ones when he was able to provide the feast that was an indispensable part of the ceremony. The status of a house was determined by the number of its supporting posts, the maximum achievement being ten. Similarly, the maximum number of slit gongs to be achieved was laid down as nine. (For a more detailed description of past men's houses and initiations in Bougainville, see Appendices 5, 6 & 7).

### *3.4.3. Western Province Men's Houses and Initiation*

Of the three provinces we visited during the fieldwork, Western Province has the most cultural variation across its language groups, and consequently the most variation in the types of male initiation undertaken there. In the North Fly District where the fieldwork was undertaken, there are four main language groups — the Yonggom, the Awin (also called Aekyom), the Min (also called Mountain Ok) and the Bedamini.<sup>88</sup> It appears that in some remote parts these male practices are still being carried out, though it is difficult to judge to what extent from the available literature.<sup>89</sup>

Among the Yonggom, the male initiation ceremony is called *Yawat* (Kirsch 1991: 264-316).<sup>90</sup> Much like the initiations carried out in north Bougainville and Buka Island, it involved the temporary seclusion of the initiates, the revelation of secret knowledge and imposition of restrictions on what the initiates could eat and do.

The initiates ranged in age from about ten to sixteen years old and the rituals were usually held in conjunction with a pig feast. (Kirsch 1991: 264). Like the initiations on north Bougainville and Buka Island, the Yonggom initiation involved the use of bullroarers, and like those in the Chimbu, the use of flutes. Key element in the Yonggom

ritual was the enactment of a myth and the revealing of the secret of the origins of the musical instruments. These were originally found or invented and owned by women from whom the men stole them. This story, with local variations, features widely in initiation rituals throughout PNG. (For more details about past Yonggom initiation rituals, see Appendix 8).

### **3.5. Reviving Men's Houses**

Though most people were positive about the idea of reviving the “haus man” tradition, some said it would not be easy, and not without many difficulties. For some this was because many other things were now happening in communities. A local councillor in Chimbu explained that the current “mixed” culture, where the young have been exposed to new forms of entertainment, would inevitably distract the youth: “there is video, there is television, there are dances and this home brew, they won't concentrate on the hausman.” It was difficult to turn back the clock, he suggested, and predicted that if men's houses were built the young men would not necessarily visit them. This opinion was voiced by others in Chimbu, and also in the other provinces, where it was thought that as the youth have already acquired other interests, it is more feasible to start with those who have not, such as young boys who have not yet attended school. Indeed, this more akin to the traditional practice, since in the past boys were approximately seven years of age when they first entered the men's house.

There was a very clear recognition, however, that modern schooling is failing —not only are the young not being able to obtain employment when their education is finished, but they are not gaining the appropriate skills to live a village life either. As one man in Chimbu said somewhat despairingly, “Now we don't build men's houses anymore and we don't teach the children. They go to school. We send them to school and when they come back to the village, there isn't anything to help them settle down properly. As a result they fly about and about (travel around restlessly).”<sup>91</sup>

This man was more optimistic than some about reviving the men's house, since as he noted there was only a small minority of youth who are who the source of problems in the community:

Before during the time of kastam, it was good, very good. But now it has gone completely bad. Those of us who are still alive and who received schooling from our fathers in the men's house, listened to what we were taught and continue to use this kind of knowledge today. But our children are ruined. When they finished school they didn't get any work. Now they just roam around, drinking beer and going to and from town, and behaving like rascals (criminals). When they came back from school they didn't receive any schooling in the men's house, so they don't know how to build houses, work the ground, hold a shovel or a machete, or go hunting in the forest. They don't know. When they have to work, they get tired quickly, since they don't know how to do it. They aren't able to settle properly in the village. ... Our children are wasting away, wasting away. Even if they wanted to settle down properly in the village they are unable. There isn't anything to help them do this. We must revive the men's house and bring all the children together inside and teach them, young boys and young girls together. If we revive the traditional ways it will be alright. The traditions of the past were very good.

The view of service providers on the issue of men's houses was mixed. Some saw positive aspects, but others wondered whether it would be workable in the contemporary context of competing needs and interests. Sister Gaye Lennon, who works in Goroka, noted that many men have said to her that they considered the men's house their pride and that as a young person going to it they felt proud that they had come to another stage in life. She is trying to develop something along the lines of the "hausman" that is culturally appropriate and also with good resources. She was envisaging piloting this initiative, though at the time of our fieldwork this had not commenced.<sup>92</sup>

Naomi Yupae of Family Voice commented that since a lot of the cultural values have been lost, but there are difficulties in going back to them:

For the young people you can not go back. ... The concept is good, but how do you do what has to be done in a way that is really helping young people. At the moment there is really nothing for young people. But the concept of having a place where young people come to do learning, sharing of ideas, addressing issues that affect the community that is good. That's how the hausman was modelled, so if you can get concepts out of that and adapt it to the current situation that is good.<sup>93</sup>

The difficulty, she thought, was how to merge the concept of "hausman" with the idea of bringing in information which is empowering young people and teaching them how to treat each other in a decent way. Rather than having a "hausman" for the sake of it, she thought that it required thinking through the concept and possibly developing a model that merged traditional and modern concepts, since the social environment of today is less communal than it was in the past and a revived tradition will not necessarily meet the needs of the community. Recently, the Governor of the Eastern Highlands Province initiated a program called "kirapim hauslain" which is encouraging communities to organise to build resource centres, which some people wish to call "hausman."<sup>94</sup> As we spent a very limited amount of time in Goroka, we were unable to know whether this initiative is meeting with success. But, as Naomi Yupae commented, such ideas must have community ownership if they are to be successful. "We want to bring in resources to the community, but we've got to let the community take ownerships of that and see the value of having those things rather than having somebody like the Governor coming from outside," she remarked.<sup>95</sup>

While another service provider saw a need for more discipline, which he believed parents were very keen for, since they had lost control of their children, he was not sure that women would welcome a return to the "hausman" system, as it meant men "had their way."<sup>96</sup> In many ways this speaker is right to question a system that was intended to consolidate men's privilege. Indeed, as men's houses in the past promoted the radical separation of men from women, encouraging what is sometimes referred to as "sexual antagonism," one of the difficulties in reviving them is how to avoid promoting an anti-woman philosophy. For example, the process of bloodletting that was undertaken in Chimbu, was conceptualised as removing the powerful and antithetical female blood that a man had acquired from his mother when in her womb. Moreover, a central aim of men's houses was to create male solidarity, in preparation for warfare, intergroup rivalry and conflict (Brown 1988: 124).<sup>97</sup>

Despite the difficulties we have cited, there have been successful revivals that are modelled on past cultural practices. One such is cited by Nicole Haley, referring to Lake Kopiago in the Southern Highlands where a project to revive the Palena Nane bachelor cult (which had not been practiced since the 1960s) was initiated in 2003 by a traditional leader (2005: 55). The project involved community leaders taking young boys and young men into the bush and teaching them about their cultural history — traditional dances, stories and songs. Importantly, the cult promoted restrained sexuality, proper sociality and respect for women and was considered to be a culturally appropriate way to combat local law and order problems. An essential part of its success was that it was designed and developed locally, valuing local knowledge and cultural resources. This meant that it had wide community support.

## Part Four

### Interventions

#### ***4.0. Interventions against Gender-Based Violence***

The Declaration on the Elimination of all forms of Violence Against Women calls for states and civil society to: “develop in a comprehensive way, preventive approaches and all those measures of a legal, political, administrative and cultural nature that promote the protection of women against any form of violence” (DEVAW 1993). PNG has made little headway in many of these areas, as we have noted (see AI 2006; Section 1.0). In this, there is at least the advantage that mistakes made elsewhere can be recognised and bypassed.

There has, in the past, been a strong tendency to interpret the issue of gender equality narrowly as a women’s issue — a matter of helping women to change their circumstances. Even the gender and development approach, adopted in the 1990s, tended to focus largely on women. As we argue below, we do not advocate the removal of the focus on woman, but rather the addition of a strong and constructive focus on men.

The woman-centred viewpoint has meant that programmes to eliminate gender-based violence have concentrated on women as victims or potential victims. Men, meanwhile, have generally been taken for granted as the problem, and excluded from any positive consideration. The problem posed by men was addressed mainly in negative terms, particularly the need for greater criminal justice interventions such as restraining orders and prosecution (UN DAW 2005: 30-31). In PNG, for example, most of the solutions recommended by the Law Reform Commission focussed on legal changes intended to extend the protection of the law to women (Counts 1990: 245; Bradley 2000: 34). Otherwise in PNG, men have been more positively addressed, but mainly as targets of public education campaigns seeking to increase knowledge, understanding and opposition to violence rather than as active participants (see Appendix 6).

While there is an obvious need for a much stronger law and justice sector approach, gender-based violence is a complex problem which cannot be solved by this alone (see also SPC 2003: 8; Flood 2002-2003: 25). This is not simply because much gender-based violence is not brought to the notice of the law and justice sector but because legal and judicial measures do not address the root causes of violence.

Similarly, in PNG at least, helping women to gain greater financial independence and to be more assertive of their rights seems to bring more rather than less domestic violence. This is not to say that legal measures and assistance to women to improve their economic situation and their self-confidence are not necessary, but to stress that deeper cultural changes are needed to end the violence. It is important that our call for more work with men does not mean that resources are simply removed from women’s initiatives and given to men’s.

##### ***4.0.1. Challenging Dominant Forms of Masculinity***

Internationally, there is now a recognition that if gender-based violence is to cease, fundamental changes are needed in men’s attitudes and beliefs about women and their

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roles in society (Michau 2005: 2). Indeed, Michael Flood, speaking generally, argues that efforts to prevent violence against women will fail unless they “undermine the cultural and collective supports for physical and sexual assault found among many men” (2002-2003: 25).

These and many other researchers are saying that an essential way to deal with unequal gender relations and violence against women is to challenge and change dominant models of masculinity (UN DAW 2005: 32). In other words, the relationships between violence, masculinity and gender must be understood and challenged. Furthermore, the role of men and boys in challenging and changing unequal power relations is essential to this (UN DAW 2005: 3; Barker 2001: 94). Michael Flood agrees, saying that if gender-based violence is to be seriously tackled and eliminated, men and boys *must* be included in the project, since they are not only part of the problem, they are part of the solution (2001: 42). In short, the aim must be to inspire men and boys to take responsibility for their actions and to adopt more constructive and cooperative behaviour.

Lori Michau calls for the implementation of a primary prevention approach that focuses on preventing violence *before* it occurs. This means not only creating a legal and policy environment supportive of women’s rights, but fostering a culture which promotes non-violence and relationships based on equity, and supporting individuals to take a public stand against abuse (2005: 3). This, says Lori Michau, requires moving beyond programs that focus on one sector (health, police, education, judiciary, etc) or one group (policy makers, battered women, youth, etc), since effective change requires a critical mass of institutions and people who aspire to these ideals and are prepared to put their beliefs into practice. An essential first step, she argues, is to develop a gender-based analysis of why domestic violence occurs and to recognise that women’s low status, the imbalance of power, and rigid gender roles are root causes of domestic violence (Michau 2005: 3).

#### *4.0.2. Community Education Campaign Strategies*

Internationally, according to Michael Flood, community education campaigns directed at men have adopted three broad strategies. The first of these was to promote alternative constructions of masculinity which displace the positive cultural association between violence and masculinity. This has meant appropriating the cultural expectations of manhood to give non-violence a masculine face. He refers to this as a “rescripting” of masculinity. An example of this effort to redefine violence as unmanly was the production of the slogan: “Real men don’t bash or rape women.”

The second strategy Michael Flood identifies draws on stereotypically masculine culture, particularly sport, to appeal to men. The New South Wales slogan, “Violence Against Women – It’s against the rules,” is an instance of this. The third strategy has been to show men speaking out, or standing together, against violence. Such campaigns have sometimes used men who have a public profile, such as celebrities or sporting figures, whose opposition to violence, it is hoped, will be emulated (Flood 2002-2003: 28). Other campaigns have sought to appeal to ordinary men by utilising unknown men who have no public profile, but with whom men are likely to identify because of their ordinariness.

As Michael Flood's analysis of the three strategies shows, in designing a campaign aimed at men, it is not easy to avoid encouraging the very aspects of masculinity that one is trying to displace. For example, he cautions against approaches that appeal to men's sense of "real" manhood or invite them to "prove themselves as *men*," since they may in fact actually intensify men's investment in male identity. These are even more problematic if they represent certain qualities as uniquely male, thus assigning particular qualities such as strength and courage to men and effectively denying them to women (Flood 2002-2003: 27). Similarly, sport often promotes dominant masculine values, such as extreme competitiveness and aggression (Flood 2002-2003: 28).

From this discussion, we have derived an important general principle:

- All strategies aiming to reduce male violence should foster a view of men and women as equal human beings and allies, who respect, cooperate with and support each other. Strategies should not, therefore, point to, or reinforce, perceived differences between men and women.

So, neither the ideals of manhood nor the ideals of womanhood should be appealed to. Further, to maximise their chances of success, it is extremely important that all proposed strategies and campaigns be examined for subtle, underlying messages, to ask what conclusions people are likely to draw from them. These are sometimes very far from the intended message.

#### *4.0.3. Beyond Community Education Campaigns*

Although there is some merit in using posters and other media to raise initial awareness about the issue of gender-based violence, since many people in PNG simply do not know this is a crime, this should not be seen as a substitute for more comprehensive programmes aiming to reform gender conceptions and relations. While public education campaigns are important in lessening the social supports for violence in the community, it must be recognised that gender-based violence is based on deeply ingrained cultural attitudes that will not be changed by seeing a poster or hearing a message on the radio or television. Rather, it requires fundamental changes in men's lives, gendered power relations and the social construction of masculinity (Flood 2001: 42; Kaufman 2001: 10).

Public education campaigns in PNG are confronted by many problems, not the least being making messages culturally meaningful in a country characterised by great cultural and linguistic diversity. Further, campaigns that are successful in a country like Australia will not necessarily be successful in PNG. This is not a simple question of translation or literacy, but concerns the difficulty of translating concepts from one culture to another. How do you make culturally relevant and meaningful concepts that are foreign and have no comparable points of reference or resemblance within the culture? For example, the image of an upheld hand used in anti-violence T-shirts may well have relevance if people are familiar with traffic police, but this is not necessarily the case in PNG, where most people rarely see police, let alone traffic police. Other posters showing couples holding hands or with arms around each other are also unlikely to convey the intended message, since couples in PNG simply do not show these forms of affection in public. Unless people can identify with the images employed in posters, they will be dismissed as not relevant, or misinterpreted. (see Appendix 9 for a description of some of the posters that have been used in PNG).

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#### **4.1. Working with Men to Reduce Gender-Based Violence**

As we have argued, men and boys need to be actively involved in confronting the issue of violence against women (Kaufman 2001: 10; Chattopadhyay 2004; Berkowitz 2004a & 2004b). Men and boys should be seen as allies and partners who will participate in redefining manhood (Kaufman 2001: 10). In this positive approach, men should not be seen as the problem or as criminals who should be punished but as participants in solving the problem (UN DAW 2005: 32).

In general, we do not endorse the negative, punitive approach adopted by some programs targeting men's violence, particularly in the United States. In these programs, which are mandatory for those charged and sentenced for violence against women, men are labelled as "perpetrators," "batterers" and "violent" (Hurst 2001: 100). Based as they are on a language of stigmatization and marginalization, such programmes do not encourage men to embrace positive change but merely to drop out or resist, creating further backlash against women. As Dale Hurst points out, the language used by domestic violence interventions with men has a major impact on engagement rates, which are critical to long term change (2001: 100). Positive messages are more successful because "men are more receptive to positive messages outlining what can be done than to negative messages that promote fear or blame" (Berkowitz 2004b: 2).

##### *4.1.1. Lessons Learnt from Working with Men Internationally*

A number of lessons can be learned from overseas experiences in running workshops on men and violence. These include the need to present men as partners who wish to play a positive role in the health and well being of their partners, families and communities. Despite high levels of male violence against women, it is important to recognize that many men care deeply about the women in their lives, including their partners, family members, co-workers, neighbours and community members.

According to Alan Berkowitz, practitioners who work with men to prevent violence have concluded that effective violence prevention programs share some or all of the following assumptions:

"Men must assume responsibility for preventing men's violence against women.

Men need to be approached as partners in solving the problems rather than as perpetrators.

Workshops and other activities are more effective when conducted by peers in small, all-male groups because of the immense influence that men have on each other and because of the safety all-male groups provide.

Discussions should be interactive and encourage honest sharing of feelings, ideas, and beliefs.

Opportunities should be created to discuss and critique prevailing understandings of masculinity and men's discomfort with them, as well as men's misperceptions of other men's attitudes and behavior.



Positive anti-violence values and healthy aspects of men's experience should be strengthened, including teaching men to intervene in other men's behavior.

Work with men must be in collaboration with and accountable to women working as advocates, educators, and prevention specialists" (2004a: 2-3).

In many parts of the world initiatives have been developed for involving men in analysing and challenging gender inequality, concepts of masculinity and gender-based violence. Mostly these have the aim of involving men in issues such as reproductive health, countering violence against women and HIV/AIDS. Many of the most recent initiatives have been in the area of HIV/AIDS. An important start in this process was the 2000-2001 World AIDS Campaign, "Men can make a difference," which recognised the need to involve men and boys in stemming the pandemic. One consequence of the global HIV/AIDS pandemic has been a renewed interest in gender. Not only the feminisation of the pandemic — that women and young girls are increasingly being infected — has been noted, but also the way that many aspects of masculinity contribute to the spread of the virus and prevent people seeking testing. Gender-based violence, in particular, plays a leading role in the spread of HIV.<sup>98</sup>

#### *4.1.2. Men as Partners*

One useful initiative is the South African Men as Partners (MAP) program (MAP n.d.a; n.d.b & 2002; Peacock n.d.; Peacock & Levack 2004).<sup>99</sup> This program grew out of the recognition that there was an urgent need to develop constructive male involvement in strategies to respond to the twin epidemics of HIV/AIDS and violence against women threatening the lives of millions of South Africans (MAP 2002: 1). The aim of MAP is to challenge the attitudes and behaviours of men that compromise their own health and safety as well as the health and safety of women and children, and to encourage men to become actively involved in countering gender based violence and the spread of HIV (MAP 2002: 2). The program is based on the following three fundamental premises:

- 1) that current gender roles often give men the ability to influence and/or determine the reproductive health choices made by women;
- 2) that current gender roles also compromise men's health by encouraging men to equate a range of risky behaviors with being manly, while encouraging them to view health-seeking behaviors as a sign of weakness; and
- 3) that men have a personal investment in challenging the current gender order for their own health as well as for women placed at risk of violence and ill-health by these gender roles (MAP 2002: 2).

MAP preferred to work with groups of men in a workshop setting, as opposed to a more broad-reaching public awareness campaign that relied on traditional media, such as posters and advertisements. Since men are socialized in groups, it was considered more effective to provide an alternative group socialization experience that challenged existing gender roles and relations (Peacock n.d.; see also UN DAW 2005: 17).

These workshops employed a process that was participatory and nondirective. Based on the principles of adult learning, this acknowledges and values the experiences of all

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the participants. A key component of all MAP workshops is a discussion of gender, including: “reflections on gender, examination of traditional gender roles, understanding gender power dynamics, assessing gender stereotypes, and sharing male and female perspectives on gender” (MAP 2002: 2; Peacock & Levack 2004: 7). All of the activities in MAP workshops strive to increase men’s awareness of the inequities that exist between men and women.<sup>100</sup>

Information on HIV/AIDS prevention, healthy relationships, sexual rights, sexual violence and domestic violence follow the initial activities, and these refer back constantly to the subject of gender (Peacock & Levack 2004: 7). For example, an activity about HIV will explore the ways in which gender roles can increase the likelihood that men will not practise safe sex. Similarly, role plays are used to examine men’s attitudes to health seeking behaviour and challenge the idea that a “real man” only uses health services when seriously ill. A question that workshop facilitators often put to participants is: how does any particular issue affect men and women differently (n.d.: 41).

However, great care was necessary when discussing issues of gender and violence with men, as sometimes men’s responses, far from challenging negative gender attitudes, merely reinforced them. For example, after an hour-long session, one of the male participants thanked the facilitator and said: “It is very helpful to talk about rape. Some men here have raped women. By talking about it, men won’t feel bad about what they have done” (MAP 2002: 3).<sup>101</sup>

The MAP program has expanded its activities over the past several years and now also works more broadly to promote gender equality. Their work now incorporates all of the following:

- continuing the workshops aimed at changing knowledge, attitudes and behaviour;
- mobilising men to take action in their own communities;
- working with media to promote changes in social norms;
- collaborating closely with other nongovernmental organisations and grassroots community-based organisations to strengthen their ability to implement MAP programs, and
- advocating for increased governmental commitment to promoting positive male involvement (Peacock & Levack 2004: 3).

In response to the fact that men often cite unemployment as a cause of violence against women, MAP is developing a set of activities intended to facilitate discussion among men about their experiences of unemployment. This will include exploring possible links between perceived loss of self worth and increased sexual risk taking (Peacock & Levack 2004: 8).

#### **4.2. Involving Men in the Pacific**

Some initiatives along these lines have occurred in the Pacific, though they appear not to be developed to the same extent, nor documented as well as those in South Africa. The UNFPA developed a Men as Partners pilot project for Fiji in 2001, though this seemed to have less of a focus on HIV and violence than the South African case.<sup>102</sup> The

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focus was mainly on improving the reproductive health status of people in Fiji by enhancing the role of men in reproductive health, sexual health and family planning. This included improving men's knowledge of reproductive health issues but, importantly, the project's objectives also included increasing awareness of gender issues among men, enhancing non-restrictive gender roles and enhancing communication skills among couples.<sup>103</sup>

### **4.3. Involving Men in Papua New Guinea**

As Dame Carol Kidu has commented, men have not been addressed at the policy level in PNG.<sup>104</sup> However, a few specific practical initiatives have been developed, some of which address violence against women. Besides several public awareness initiatives, the Care and Counselling component of the National AIDS Council Secretariat (NACS) has been addressing men's violence against women in the context of the HIV epidemic. In each of the past four years, they have sent six different men to attend a month-long workshop on men and gender-based violence conducted by the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre. These are men who have already completed the NACS counselling course.

During June 2006, ten men were also sent to the East Sepik for a week-long men's workshop, *Men and Boys Behaviour Change*, organised by HELP Resources (see Appendix 2). It is hoped that these men will become male advocacy trainers for NACS. However, although the issue of gender is examined in some sections of this course, the predominant focus is on health and reproductive/sexual health issues, ranging from pregnancy to erectile dysfunction. The course appears to have been adapted from material intended for a wider Pacific audience and not thoroughly adapted for PNG. For example, some of the health issues canvassed (diabetes, heart disease) are more relevant to other parts of the Pacific where such life-style diseases predominate, as opposed to PNG where communicable diseases predominate. Despite the stated aim of the course (to educate males about the gendered aspect of HIV/AIDS), apart from a half-hour section on rape, no other aspect of gender-based violence appear to be covered.

According to Sharon Walker and Bessie Maruia, it is envisaged that the Care and Counselling component of NACS will develop a national curriculum on men and boys that is more relevant to PNG.<sup>105</sup> However, as the AusAID funded project NHASP (which funds Sharon Walker's position) is being replaced by a new support project, it is unclear whether such initiatives will receive the same attention in the future.

A number of Men against Violence (MAV) workshops organised by the former Youth Commissioner, Robert Titi, and sponsored by the Family and Sexual Violence Action Committee, were undertaken in 2005.<sup>106</sup> These focussed more directly on violence, as the convener, Robert Titi, noted in his report on the training:

The MAV training emphasizes only the PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE. The program is an EDUCATIONAL training program, targeting the CAUSE OF VIOLENCE; The PERPETRATOR is the Primary target population. The program is PREVENTIVE rather curative.

The program provided practical information and skills on preventing and defusing anger and violence. The program also provides information and skills in conflict resolution to

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enable the participants to be effective advocates of MAV programs (Titi 2005: 3 his emphasis).

Although focussed on the issue of men against violence, these workshops were not restricted to men, and included a number of women (25%). The rationale for including women was that “women also have the potential for anger and violence. ... [and] because of the women’s role in the family as the primary and the main trainer in the homes” (Titi 2005: 6). The general consensus in the literature on anti-violence interventions among men suggests that addressing men’s violence against women is accomplished more effectively with male facilitators in all-male groups (Berkowitz 2004a: 4). Experience from overseas has found there is a general reluctance by men and women to broach issues of gender-based violence in mixed settings. This is especially the case with sexual violence, such as rape, which men are less likely to acknowledge as a serious issue in mixed workshops. This is also likely to apply in PNG, where a great deal of shame is associated with sex and there is great reluctance talk openly about issues that concern it. We do not, however, suggest that there is never a role for women in men’s programs, since there is a need for men to be fully aware of the effects upon women of their violence.

Significantly, the list of topics covered in the MAV training course run by Robert Titi indicates that very little analysis of gender is included (see Appendix 3). Given the widespread taking for granted of dominant gender roles in many of the communities we visited, serious discussion of gender is an essential part of any workshop that addresses violence. To show what this might cover, we cite Benedito Medrado, who suggests that applying a gender perspective involves: “a) engaging men in discussion of gender inequalities; b) encouraging men to take on childcare responsibilities; c) assuming responsibility in issues of sexual and reproductive health; d) encouraging non-violent means of resolving conflict” (2003: 5).

We repeat: Given the extent to which cultural constructions of masculinity in PNG encourage forms of aggression and violence, any workshop that fails to address gender more generally and masculinity specifically, will not seriously address the problem of violence.

#### **4.4. Involving Catholic Men**

The Catholic Church in PNG has attempted to create a male equivalent of the Catholic Women’s Federation, in the form of the papa group, with the intention that these would examine what men can do together to address the issue of violence. Though there was some response in Mt Hagen, Kundiwa, Mendi and Bougainville, overall the proposal has not been embraced by men in the church and no national movement has emerged. The General Secretary of the Catholic Bishop’s Conference, Lawrence Stephens, thought that the failure was partly because the suggestion came largely from within the church hierarchy.<sup>107</sup> In other words, the idea came from above and was not initiated by the church members. Some of the more successful examples seem to have been guided by Catholic Brothers, but when they were no longer involved the movement fell away. In such circumstances people have no investment in the organisation, since it does not reflect their wishes or thinking. Lawrence Stephens also thought that the project was not

embraced because there is less emphasis on the non-liturgical side by men in the church, an area that has traditionally seen women particularly active.

The lack of success of men's groups can also be attributed to the way they and other groups are conceptualised and structured within the Church. The Tok Pisin expression *papa* also means father, so the naming of the group presupposes that its members are fathers; it would, thus, have limited appeal to young unmarried men. Certainly from the field research it was evident that *papa* groups are entirely dominated by men in their 50s, 60s and older. Where young men are involved in church groups, it is usually in the youth group, which as a mixed group, does not necessarily address masculinity or issues to do with being a young man in contemporary PNG. Indeed, this could also be said of some of the *papa* groups, which rather than challenging traditional conceptions of manhood, seem to be reinforcing them. This was evident from discussions with a number of key figures organising men's groups on Bougainville. One chairman of a men's group, or men's association as he called it, conceptualised the need for men's groups through the model of the family, with the father as the disciplining head of the household. Seeing the church as a family, he said that since there were women's and youth groups, there was a corresponding need for men's groups, since the father is the head of the family. He remarked, "The father is the head of the family and the father has all the rights over things in the family. His family must behave themselves, all the children must behave themselves and follow Christian ways." Another key person in men's groups in Bougainville also conceived of men's groups in terms of men's leadership as heads of the family. He saw the task of men's groups as strengthening men's role in organising, disciplining and bringing family members into line. For both men, men's groups were not about redefining gender, not about men learning new ways of relating to women (and other men), nor about developing more equal relationships within the family, but about reasserting masculine authority. This suggests that there is a very great need for capacity building in the area of gender analysis.

## Part Five

### Conclusions, Suggestions and Recommendations

#### 5.0. Preamble :

As this report is funded by, and written for, Caritas Australia, we have limited our suggestions and recommendations to those that may be most effective and practicable for Caritas.

However, a number of important reports written over the last several years are available for consultation. These have made numerous and specific recommendations addressing the issue of gender-based violence in PNG, and violence against women in particular. They include: the Law Reform Commission's *Final report on domestic violence* (1992); the Institute of National Affairs', *Proceedings of the family violence workshop* (2001) and its *Family and sexual violence in PNG: An integrated long-term strategy* (2001); Human Rights Watch's "*Making their own rules": Police beatings, rape, and torture of children in Papua New Guinea* (2005) and their *Still making their own rules: Ongoing impunity for police beatings, rape, and torture in Papua New Guinea* (2006); and Amnesty International's *Papua New Guinea violence against women: Not inevitable, never acceptable!* (2006).

These reports make suggestions about what the state should be doing through legislative reform and the law and justice sector to address the problem, and about support mechanisms the state should provide for the victims of violence. Neither our terms of reference, nor the time we had available, allowed us to consider the worthwhileness of pressing the government to take action. There is no doubt that such measures are necessary and important. If Caritas Australia wishes to lobby the PNG government (or even AusAID and bilateral donor agencies), either on its own or in concert with other churches or NGOs, the reports listed above provide the necessary information and reasoned discussion.

None of these reports, however, focuses on the issue of masculinity or recognises the need to work closely with men and boys in addressing the problem of gender-based violence, despite the emerging international consensus that this is essential. Caritas Australia, on the other hand, commissioned this report in the recognition that the struggle to eliminate violence against women cannot be successful without the involvement of men. Our investigations confirm this view.

It needs to be recognised that the effort to change the ingrained beliefs and the power structures that underlie gender violence will require great effort and determination over a very long period. With persistence, the strategies we recommend will, we hope, eventually spread and take hold in PNG.

#### 5.1. Capacity Building:

The need for training cannot be overstressed. Overwhelmingly, the evidence we gathered shows that by far the greatest and most fundamental need is for a better understanding of the attitudes that underlie gender conflict, together with an understanding that these are not immutable but can be changed (See Sections 2.1.4; 3.0.1.). Over and over, we found that gender roles and stereotypes are simply taken for

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granted. This applies not only at the general village level, but to those people who might provide leadership in any project intended to reduce levels of violence. It even includes some people already teaching gender awareness, showing that this is an issue that cannot be dealt with cursorily but needs careful planning and considerable resources.

We have also argued repeatedly that it is impossible to reduce gender violence significantly unless the dominant gender roles are questioned and replaced with more respect and cooperation between men and women, and between boys and girls. Unless this fundamental aspect of the problem is addressed, other initiatives will not be greatly effective.

***We recommend that Caritas give priority to capacity building initiatives for improving gender awareness among leaders and potential leaders.***

Further, we believe that the people generally need access to well-designed materials for increasing their understanding of gender issues.

***We recommend the development of suitable gender self-audit tools, such as guides and manuals, suitable for wide distribution.***

As we have shown (Section 4.0.2.), such material needs to be particularly sensitive to cultural specificities and not be open to misinterpretation.

Given the commitment of *National Pastoral Plan for the Catholic Church* (2006) to the empowerment of women, there is scope for working closely with the Catholic Bishop's Conference on these initiatives.

## **5.2. Working with Men and Boys:**

### *5.2.1. Catholic Men's Groups:*

Section 4.4. deals with the various weaknesses research identified in the papa groups which are intended to address male violence. The most fundamental problem is that, without good guidance and capacity building, these groups are only too likely to operate simply as a reinforcement of traditional conceptions of male authority. This is totally counteractive to efforts to encourage a redefinition of gender within the family, to bring about more harmonious and equal relationships.

***We recommend that the Catholic men's groups be completely reconceptualised and restructured to better foster gender equity.***

A useful approach to the process of reconceptualising men's groups would be to select highly motivated and competent non-violent men who have shown a desire to become positive role models, to participate in training workshops (see below). The most capable of these men should also undergo a course in the leadership and training of others, so that they can provide skilful leadership and run workshops in their own locality. Acting as male advocates and role models, these men could eventually facilitate a more effective men's group network that is grounded in the community and that appeals to young men (who at present are uninterested).

***We envisage that the workshops given by the trained leaders would reach out beyond men's groups into the wider community.***

It is important that the idea of gender equality is “sold” — that its positive benefits are promoted, rather than having recourse to moral chastisement. Men have a lot to gain, for they too are victims of the dominant model of masculinity. As we say in Section 1.0., everyone — men, women, children and society in general — will benefit from greater gender equality and an end to violence.

Our review in Section 4.3. of some of the gender awareness training of men and boys undertaken in PNG indicates a need for curricula to be closely tailored to the PNG context, where health issues, particularly HIV/AIDS, are fundamentally linked to the issues of gender and violence.

The Men as Partners initiatives in South Africa provide a good model for men’s groups and workshops (Section 4.1.2.). MAP recognise that gender-based violence serves to maintain strict gender roles and unequal relationships. They stress the sharing of problems, responsibilities and solutions between husband and wife in equal relationships. They take particular care not to encourage men to see themselves as the head of the family (see Sections 2.1.4.; 2.2.1.; 3.0.4.).

***We recommend that Caritas develop a PNG-focussed workshop on the model of Men as Partners, possibly in partnership with other suitable organisations.*** The NHASP Care and Counselling Component may be a good starting point (see Section 4.3.).

***We recommend that Caritas develop courses in leadership and training skills for gender awareness trainers.***

#### *5.2.2. Men’s Houses and the Initiation of Young Males:*

In the past, men’s houses were important places where the young learned from respected elders the values of respect and shame that governed behaviour and the skills and customary ways of the village. They provided an important context for mentoring of the young by the older, wiser and more powerful men, something which is often lacking in today’s village.

The re-establishment of men’s houses has been considered or initiated by several groups, both inside and outside the Catholic Church. Some of these initiatives appear more advanced in some provinces than others. Our Sections 3.4. 3.5. explain the history of these cultural institutions in the three provinces visited and also how respondents and service providers view the idea of their revival. People generally found the idea appealing, but they could see a major obstacle: young men today had many modes of distraction and would not find a men’s house attractive. An alternative suggested was that boys should be introduced to the men’s houses at an early age, before their taste for other entertainment had developed. This, in fact, conforms to the past, when the process of initiation began at an early age. It also reaches young boys before they are cast in the dominant masculine mould.

The idea of re-establishment has serious advantages and serious disadvantages.

On the positive side, a men’s house could help instil a much-needed sense of pride in the community and its previous culture. It could serve as a place where social bonds are



formed, where a sense of obligation, accountability and responsibility to one's family and neighbours is fostered, and where practical skills are passed on to the young.

On the negative side, there is the danger that the values promoted will not improve, but will merely reinforce, the present gender inequities. In the past men's houses promoted male bonding and solidarity amongst men through a profound opposition and antagonism towards women.

The unproblematic revival of these institutions, without adapting them, not simply to the modern world, but also towards more progressive attitudes towards gender equity, risks promoting violence against women rather than diminishing it. This, we feel, would require much thought and creative effort.

***We strongly recommend that initiatives to revive men's houses and initiations be cautiously supported only when certain conditions can be met .***

An essential pre-requisite is that such initiatives are grounded in a gender-based analysis of why violence occurs and recognises that women's low status, imbalances of power, and rigid gender roles are the root causes of this (see Section 3.0). Another essential to success is that such projects must be designed and developed locally, with due regard to local knowledge and cultural history (see Section 3.5).

Since many of the men who are currently involved in papa groups have very little gender awareness, it is necessary that men who lead and promote the setting up of men's houses have undergone training in gender awareness and are skilled in leading discussions on the issue. It is essential that such an initiative promote alternative models of masculinity which challenge the dominant varieties. Otherwise the result will be effort expended to intensify the problem.

***We suggest that initiatives to revive men's houses begin with as pilot projects in carefully selected locations, so that problems can be identified and solutions found prior to any full-scale scheme.***

### **5.3. Other recommendations:**

#### *5.3.1. Fight Fees:*

***We recommend that "fight fees" be opposed.*** Through advocacy within the Catholic Bishop's Conference and Catholic Health Services, Caritas should seek to have the "fight fee" abolished. Fees imposed on by health services on people seeking treatment for injuries sustained in conflicts impose an unnecessary burden on the victims of violence (Section 2.0.). Since the fee causes many people to conceal the true cause of their injuries, the collection of accurate data on violence related injuries is not possible. Perhaps more profoundly, this causes violence to become a secret, shameful issue. Health service providers should, rather, be encouraging open and frank discussion of the subject.

#### *5.3.2. Public Advocacy against Gender Based Violence:*

Many people in PNG are unaware that violence against women is a crime. Neither do they know that marital rape is a crime. Many people continue to believe that violence is

an entirely legitimate tool for disciplining wives. Many believe that family violence is a private issue that should remain private.

There is a great need for advocacy efforts, particularly campaigns that convey the unacceptability of violence against women and that seek to delegitimise it.

***We recommend that Caritas advocate for more widespread involvement in international campaigns to end violence against women.***

A central day in the international campaign is White Ribbon Day on November 25 each year, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. Accompanying this is a global campaign entitled “16 Days of activism against gender-based violence against women”, between 25 November and 10 December. While the cultural salience of white ribbons is doubtful, this context for community action provides a good opportunity to link with other interested NGOs, CBOs, FBOs and other service providers.

There are already many resources, which could be considered for distribution through the church network, such as leaflets, posters and videos produced by the various agencies and NGOs.<sup>108</sup>

### *5.3.3. Working with Women:*

We welcome the new focus on masculinity and men as highly necessary. However, we would be critical of an approach that simply transfers funds and effort from working with women to working with men. Work to help women to understand gender inequities and to unite to assert their human rights continues to be vital. Women who accept the traditional notion that women should be submissive to men are supporting the system of power that brings their own abuse and that of their daughters.

Indeed the recent UN Secretary General’s report, *In-depth study on all forms of violence against women*, notes that “the perspectives and voices of women, particularly victims/survivors, are central to the development of prevention strategies” (UN 2006: 96). Thus a necessary requirement of working with men and boys is that women be included in the development of these programs. This is intended to ensure that these issues are presented to men from a women’s human rights perspective and not trivialised.

***We recommend that women be consulted about the development of programs for men.***

It should not be assumed that women’s problems have been, or are being, sufficiently addressed. Our fieldwork showed that women often feel themselves to blame for the violence directed at them and that they accept it with little question. Thus women referred to the events that could give rise to beatings as “mistakes” on their own part. Women are the other half of the equation, and there is a need for more widespread gender training, for women as well as men. ***We recommend the development of more initiatives to encourage more gender analysis among women.*** For example, the workshops that we have suggested for training men could be adapted to suit women.

There is a need for women to be encouraged to unite in support of their human rights. Some initiatives are already in place. For example, in Denglagu Parish an interdominational women's group acts as a forum where women can meet and consult and support each other. More such initiatives are needed. ***We recommend that initiatives that encourage women to form local support groups be encouraged and supported.***

#### *5.3.4. Spreading the Load:*

Besides Caritas, several sources of influence exist in the community. In particular, school teachers and medical workers are potentially able to assist in bringing about change. It is important that both groups be trained to understand the underlying causes of gender violence. Preferably this would occur during their professional training courses.

***We recommend that Caritas consider how it might promote the inclusion of enlightened material on gender equity in the training of teacher and medical staff.***

***Further, we recommend that, when possible, leading figures in communities, such as teachers, medical workers and priests, be invited to participate in training courses that Caritas sponsors.***

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<sup>1</sup>. For a more detailed history of the developing legal and policy frameworks than we can offer here, see UN (2006: 13-17).

<sup>2</sup>. For more detail on what it is not possible to document here, see Amnesty International (2006: 26-7). Some legislative reforms have been successively introduced by Lady Carol Kidu, though the majority of the LRC recommendations are yet to be implemented (AI 2006: 27).

<sup>3</sup>. It is not the intention of this report to duplicate reports that have more closely scrutinised the state's response to gender-based violence. The recent reports by Amnesty International (2006) and Human Rights Watch (2005 and 2006) detail the failures of the state to deal adequately with violence against women and children.

<sup>4</sup>. Papua New Guinea ratified the convention in January 12, 1995. So far, PNG has not submitted its initial report or subsequent reports as required of signatories. For a more detailed account of PNG's other commitments, see Bradley (2001: 4-5) and Amnesty International (2006: 25-6).

<sup>5</sup>. Including the Pacific Platform for Action on Women and Sustainable Development, in 1994, and the Revised Pacific Platform for Action on the Advancement of Women and Gender Equality, in 2004.

<sup>6</sup>. In the research conducted as part of the Port Moresby Community Crime Survey in 2004, women stated that their movements were curtailed in response to the threat of crime and this meant that they avoided walking at night, or going to the shops, or using PMVs at any time (Public Motor Vehicles) (NRI 2005: 6). Some suggest that as many as 70 per cent fear such tasks, due to the likelihood of rape and physical assault (McLeod 2005: 115).

<sup>7</sup>. In some contexts, though, women are very successful users of village courts. See, Goddard (2004); Scaglione & Rose Whittingham (1985) and Westermark (1985).

<sup>8</sup>. See Edbrooke & Peters (2005: 2-3). Data collection is also hampered by the lack of standardised ways of collecting information. This is evident in some of the surveys that have been conducted recently, where the types of questions asked make insightful comparisons extremely difficult. According to Fiona Hukula of the NRI, the intention is to repeat the quantitative surveys of the LRC. This would enable comparisons to be made and show more definitively whether violence is increasing or decreasing.

<sup>9</sup>. Of course, as Toft & Bonnell rightly point out, acceptability must not be confused with desirability (1985: 14).

<sup>10</sup>. There is no longer any uniformity in the terminology used to describe gender-based violence and a considerable array of terms is currently in use, including marital violence, domestic violence, wife-beating, wife-battering, gender-based violence, family violence, violence against women and intimate partner violence. A great deal of debate surrounds the use of some of this language and caution needs to be exercised in the choice of words, since this can have political effects on how violence is understood and responded to. For example, while the term marital violence refers to violence that occurs between a married or defacto couple, the expression carries an air of neutrality, implying that either partner is equally likely to be the perpetrator (Bradley 1985: 39). This belies the reality of the situation in PNG, where by far the most marital violence is inflicted by men on women (Bradley 1985: 39).

<sup>11</sup>. Gender-based violence can occur in same-sex relationships, for example.

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<sup>12</sup>. The Declaration has been criticised for being somewhat arbitrary, unspecific and vague. It thus fails to provide sufficient guidance on controversial issues — for example whether male control over a woman's reproductive rights constitutes gender-based violence (Farouk 2005).

<sup>13</sup>. Interview with Naomi Yupae (and Jona Havati), Family Voice, 9 June 2006.

<sup>14</sup>. This research, which involved interviewing a total of 1191 men and 1203 women, was undertaken in two stages between 1982 and 1986 and was based on three major questionnaire surveys, including a rural survey covering 19 villages in 16 provinces, a survey of urban poor in Port Moresby and a postal survey of urban elites and their wives. This was supplemented with data from a survey of two squatter settlements in Port Moresby, a study of domestic violence victims seeking treatment at Lae's Angau hospital, case studies of beaten wives, and three anthropological studies (Bradley 2001: 7).

<sup>15</sup> There is a general reluctance to report crimes to the police. Although there is some variation across the data, more than half of the victims of crime fail to report an incident to the police. The Port Moresby Community Crime Survey in September and October 2004 found that only 36% of crime victims reported the crime to the police (NRI 2005: 47). A survey conducted in the NCD during 2005, as part of the *PNG Armed Violence Assessment*, found that only 48% of victims reported to the police (Haley 2005: 23). It is likely that rates of reporting for rural areas would be even lower, since distance from police stations and lack of transportation would have effects. Indeed, research in the Highlands suggests that only a fraction of the crimes occurring there are ever reported (Haley 2005: 5). The research of *PNG Armed Violence Assessment* found that less than a third (29%) of violent crimes occurring in and around the provincial headquarters, in the six months prior to the survey, were reported, and that the overall reporting rate for the Southern Highlands was 16%. In the more remote Hela region of the Southern Highlands (which includes the following districts: Komo-Magarima, Tari-Pori, Koroba-Lake Kapiago and Porgera-Lagaip) this dropped to 10% (Haley 2005: 26).

<sup>16</sup>. Funded by the National Coordinating Mechanism of the Law and Justice Sector of the PNG Government and undertaken by the National Research Institute, the NCD survey interviewed 1003 people aged 15 years and over in 354 households (NRI 2004: 2).

<sup>17</sup>. Given the fairly focussed nature of that research the extent to which these results are generalisable across the Port Moresby population is doubtful.

<sup>18</sup>. There are no longer LLG's in Bougainville. Formerly one LLG covered the whole of Buka Island. There are also no districts, Bougainville now being divided into three regions - North, Central, South.

<sup>19</sup>. In some places, we found that some people, especially those actively involved in church groups, tended to overstate their successes, as a way of improving their position in the local hierarchy.

<sup>20</sup>. People said that he didn't intentionally set out to kill her, but she died from injuries sustained in the beating. The man was not prosecuted.

<sup>21</sup>. This same nurse said that she had not seen any cases of sexual violence presenting at the health centre either and thought they must be treated in the village if treatment was required.

<sup>22</sup>. Allegations of *sangguma* (Kumo) or witchcraft following early or premature deaths are responsible for some horrific injuries from knife attacks. Fighting among men when drunk appears to be common, though not as common as domestic violence. Working with one of the nurses through the last sixteen more serious injuries presenting at the health centre (from

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24/11/04-14/03/05), only one appeared to be from domestic violence. Of these, ten were admitted to the health centre and six referred to the hospital. The females injured were a nine year old girl with a fractured tibia, sustained when a tree fell on her leg, a forty-eight year old with a soft-tissue injury sustained in a motor vehicle accident, and a woman with deep lacerations to the elbow and bone and a severed artery. This last case was due to the violent response of the husband to her alleged adultery. This woman was from the village where a village leader denied during a group meeting that there was any domestic violence in the community (Section 1.6.3). The remaining thirteen cases were all male injuries, due to fights between men, or attacks by men upon men.

<sup>23</sup>. There was one outbreak in 2005 between the villages Bomkane and Womatne, which saw the road blocked until compensation was paid.

<sup>24</sup>. One of the health centre nurses remarked that during her three years in Denglagu Parish she hadn't seen a gun. She was from Kerowagi where she said they are very common: "little boys to adults have them."

<sup>25</sup>. During 2004 there was another rape and murder at the Buka airport, after which the girl's relatives killed the culprit.

<sup>26</sup>. An Australian doctor working with Australian Doctors International who had been doing medical patrols into the more remote parts of the province also considered domestic violence to be very common. She reported that many of the women she saw on her patrols carried injuries (such as bones not set properly) from violence. Interview with Dr. Emily Densley, Australian Doctors International, 28 June 2006.

<sup>27</sup>. Interview with Sister Julianne, Good Samaritan Care Centre, Kiunga, 27 June 2006 and interview with Sister Denise Hamman, Matkomnai, 21 June 2006.

<sup>28</sup>. There was, however, some misreading of this by people we spoke to, who when asked what was meant by equality, seemed to think it entailed the equal right to tell one's partner what to do, regardless of whether male or female. Rather than seeing equality as being founded on a process of discussion and dialogue between partners, it was still conceptualised within a model of opposition and dominance.

<sup>29</sup>. Interview Father Mathius and Father Edi, Kiunga, 21 June 2006.

<sup>30</sup>. Female respondents gave less priority to the wife's failure to meet obligations (36.4%) and more to sexual jealousy (69.4%) (Toft & Bonnell 1985: 20).

<sup>31</sup>. This idea about violence being used to correct errant behaviour also underlies much of the violence used against children.

<sup>32</sup>. This example of a trigger was recounted by a man who had observed a family in which the husband, who had received no formal school education, but whose wife had completed year 10, punched in the face if she ever dared to speak English in his presence.

<sup>33</sup>. Sometimes these triggers are outside of the realm of disobedience, such as when a woman is infertile and unable to bear children. Though, there is an element of not living up to the husband's expectations here, much as not doing as one is told, the husband actually beats the wife to hasten the dissolution of the marriage.

<sup>34</sup>. Interview Bessie Maruia (and Sharon Walker), 8 June 2006. A sister at the Denglagu Sub-Health Centre also said that this was a very common reason, though women often disguised this by saying their husband beat them because of their failure to cook for him.

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<sup>35</sup>. Interview with Sharon Walker (and Bessie Maruia), 8 June 2006.

<sup>36</sup>. Indeed, Josephides goes so far as to argue that the marital situation is inherently violent since it is based on an unequal relationship between husband and wife that is sustained by physical force and the threat of violence (1985: 102).

<sup>37</sup>. In upper Chimbu, among a people he refers to as the Kuman, Father John Nilles remarks of bride-wealth exchange: "In a restricted sense only do we speak here of a bride's price or 'purchase marriage,' for these presents which are being handed over to the girl's group on the day of the ceremony are not given as payment for the girl; the girl's party must present the equivalent amount partly on the day of the ceremonies and partly in the near future. The boy's party must present the full amount at the marriage ceremony. The girl's party has the advantage in being able to defer payment. During this time they might procure goods through work or increase of stock, as in the case of pigs, though at the time these do not exist. Yet they must eventually repay to the very last shell" (1950-51: 36). Father Nilles spent over ten years in upper Chimbu and documented this in several papers. See Nilles (1942-45; 1943-44; 1950-51; 1953; 1968-69; 1977).

<sup>38</sup>. Interview with Bessie Maruia (and Sharon Walker), 8 June 2006.

<sup>39</sup>. Interview with Jona Havati (and Naomi Yupae), Family Voice, 9 June 2006.

<sup>40</sup>. Interview with Sharon Walker (and Bessie Maruia), 8 June 2006. This research collaboration between Sharon Walker, Bessie Maruia and Ione Lewis titled, *Examining the links between violence against women and HIV transmission*, was funded by NHASP through the Research Advisory Committee of the NACS. The results were not available at the time of this report being written.

<sup>41</sup>. Polygamy means marriage to more than one person, and so can be practised by either men or women. Strictly speaking, the correct term for PNG is polygyny (polygamy practised by men) since female polygamy is unknown. However, here we follow the common usage.

<sup>42</sup>. Paula Brown suggested that before missionisation the rate was about 50% for Chimbu (1969: 92). On Bougainville, Jill Nash cites the following percentage figures: Buin 9%; Siwai 16%; Nagovisi 14% , though it is unclear whether missionisation was having an impact yet or not (1981: 122).

<sup>43</sup>. Interview with Naomi Yupae (and Jona Havati), Family Voice, 9 June 2006.

<sup>44</sup>. Interview with Sister Gaye Lennon, 9 June 2006.

<sup>45</sup>. Shown in accounts from upper Chimbu, written in the early 1950s by the Father John Nilles who also mentions that every woman "knows and practises magical spells in order to keep to herself alone the love of her husband" (1950-51: 29-30). Interestingly, he also mentions cursing spells accompanied with blows which a wife inflicts on her rival to drive her away (1950-51: 30).

<sup>46</sup>. Naomi Yupae said that she generally sees about 50 cases per month, of which eighty percent concern neglect and desertion of women and children by men.

<sup>47</sup>. This has also been noted in other Pacific Island contexts. See Counts (1990: 243-244); Nero (1990: 85-86); SPC (2003: 7). On the relationship between alcohol, violence and masculinity, see Marshall (1979).

<sup>48</sup>. It differs from the kind of home brew beer that people make in countries like Australia or New Zealand since, although both have a fermentation process using yeast and sugar, the liquid

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produced in PNG is distilled. This greatly increases the alcohol content, which would be in the order of 40%, whereas home made beer would have an alcohol of about 10%.

<sup>49</sup>. It has, for example, been blamed for tribal fighting and other forms of violence in the Highlands. For discussions on this aspect see, Dernbach & Marshall (2001: 5); Iamo & Ketan (1992).

<sup>50</sup>. Interview with Naomi Yupae (and Jona Havati), Family Voice, 9 June 2006.

<sup>51</sup>. Interview with Sharon Walker (and Bessie Maruia), 8 June 2006.

<sup>52</sup>. Such prohibitory approaches, including the periodic banning of the sale and consumption of alcohol, have been instituted in various Highlands provinces, as a response to the law and order problems, and most especially, tribal fighting. See, for example, Dernbach & Marsall (2001).

<sup>53</sup>. As a teenage girl from Buka remarked: "The good side of "home brew" is that it is a source of money to help parents pay for school fees or their other needs, such as medicine when they are ill. But unfortunately, people don't use it wisely. They drink too much and cause problems." Some communities in Chimbu and Buka have endeavoured to eliminate the problem of "home brew" by destroying the brewing sites, but the producers simply hide it elsewhere.

<sup>54</sup>. These service providers also remarked that child abuse and child sexual abuse are also increasing, though there is an absence of data. On this issue see, Human Rights Watch (2005 & 2006), UNICEF (2005) & HELP Resources (2005).

<sup>55</sup>. Interview with Father John Ryan, 9 June 2006.

<sup>56</sup>. The use of weapons in domestic violence has always been a problem and still appears to be. Weapons of varying kinds are utilised and can inflict horrendous injuries on the victims. The LRC Interim Report noted that more than half (57%) of rural beaten wives surveyed claimed to have been hit with a weapon or implement (1987: 3). Similar high levels of weapon use have been reported from recent research. The more recent research by the *PNG Armed Violence Assessment*, revealed that in the assessed areas domestic and family violence is more likely than not to involve the use of a weapon. Of those households reporting this kind of violence, 63% in SHP and 77% in NCD involved the use of a weapon such as a firearm, bush knife, blunt instrument, fire or "red hot" metal (Haley 2005: 30). Though we didn't hear of guns or "red hot" metal being used in the field sites we visited, there was a readiness to use weapons in domestic conflicts. Generally, the choice of weapon was determined by what was close of hand (see Toft & Bonnell 1985: 47).

<sup>57</sup>. The school fees in Denglagu Parish for the primary school were 50 Kina for years 3, 4, 5, 6, K170 for years 7-8, and for the high school K500 (for day school students) and K800 (for boarders). In St John Parish in Western, fees were K80 for elementary school (grades 1 & 2), K110 for years 3, 4, 5 and K150 for years 6, 7 and 8 of primary school. In Buka, fees were K70 for elementary school, but for primary school it depended on which year (K50 for grade 3, K60 for grade 4, K70 for grade 5, K80 for grade 6, K90 for grade 7, K100 for grade 8). For high school (grades 9 & 10) it was K1500 per year.

<sup>58</sup>. Interview Sister Gaye Lennon, 9 June 2006.

<sup>59</sup>. Paula Brown, who worked in the region later, is more specific and suggests that disputes "concerned land, theft, adultery, separation or divorce, debts, and revenge for deaths attributed to witchcraft, sorcery, or warfare" (Brown 1982: 4; see also 1972: 62).



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- <sup>60</sup>. There are over hundred thousand rubber trees planted in Western Province. During June 2006 people reported that the price of rubber was 60 toea/kg.
- <sup>61</sup>. Indeed, one informant went so far as to say that the government should be paying everybody a wage.
- <sup>62</sup>. Interview with Sharon Walker (and Bessie Maruia), 8 June 2006.
- <sup>63</sup>. Drawing on the work of Wayne Warry and other accounts of tribal fighting in the Highlands during the 1980s, Katherine Dernbach and Mac Marshall speculated that, although more beer may be consumed during the months of the coffee flush, people may have been too busy to engage in tribal fights during this time (2001: 13). Small scale domestic and intravillage disputes increased during the time of coffee harvesting, but larger inter-clan or inter-community fights increased in the months outside of this time.
- <sup>64</sup>. In the LRC research also, more women (34.3%) than men (26.6%) saw domestic violence as a problem (Toft & Bonnell 1985: 20).
- <sup>65</sup>. Recent studies of gender have shown that gender identity is not as fixed and predictable as has often been assumed. Rather, gender varies from place to place, and from era to era (Gottlieb 2002: 168). This is true all over the world, including Papua New Guinea where considerable diversity in the way that gender is understood and practiced has been documented. See for example Bamford (1998); Bercovitch (1998); Clark & Hughes (1995); Gelber (1996); Lederman (1989); Lepowsky (1993); Leavitt (1991); Lutkehaus (1995); Meigs (1990); Strathern (1972, 1988 & 1987); Sturzenhofecker (1998). Since it is now recognised that the way gender is realised varies according to the context in which it is produced, it has become necessary to think of gender as plural, speaking where appropriate of masculinities and femininities.
- <sup>66</sup>. There is an account of the Hahalis Welfare Society, with a few scattered references that are relevant. See Rimoldi & Rimoldi (1992).
- <sup>67</sup>. According to Jill Nash, the Nagovisi put great stress on balance and reciprocity, with individuals motivated to maintain parity and balance in a variety of contexts and have no desire to be superior or inferior to others (1987: 152, 154). However, they did apply a male-female distinction to differences involving physical strength. For example, the right hand is said to be male, because it is stronger (1987: 156). The result is that Nagovisi men are responsible for the heavy horticultural work, as was the case more widely in Bougainville (Nash 1987: 158). Oliver also reports that physical strength was considered a form of "vitality" that occurred in women to only a moderate degree and the expression "weak as a woman" was frequently on men's lips (1955: 73, 82).
- <sup>68</sup>. Douglas Oliver, who also carried out fieldwork in the south of Bougainville, among the Siuai, in the late 1930s, also reported that rape was "practically nonexistent" (1955: 82).
- <sup>69</sup>. Some these changes are by no means recent and have been going on for many years. Paula Brown for example mentions that men and women were increasingly living together in the 1960s (1967: 95).
- <sup>70</sup>. The ethnographic picture we have from the south of Bougainville is similar, but with some slight variations. Douglas Oliver reports that the Siuai garden becomes a woman's affair after the plot is cleared and estimated that women work in the gardens four times as long as men (1955: 131). The situation in Buin is marked by the same kind of division of labour (R. Thurnwald

1934: 120). Sago is also a subsistence crop for the Buin, with its cutting and washing being exclusively men's work (R. Thurnwald 1934: 120).

<sup>71</sup>. Douglas Oliver noted many years ago that men can sometimes acquire the skills of women (for example, garden cultivating, domestic cookery, and certain kinds of plaiting), though he noted that women were "barred" from practicing many male skills (1955: 82). This kind of role reversal was actually embraced for a time by the Hahalis Welfare Society in post WWII Buka. In the early years of this movement, the leaders said that it was time for men to do women's work to lighten women's load: "The men would work in the gardens and carry the garden produce back to the village. Then they had to go and get firewood. Back at the village they lit fires, peeled the sweet potatoes and taro and cooked the evening meal. The women just sat and smoked. Some of the women telling the story said that they felt no pity for men because they had to be taught a lesson. As time went on, the women took back much of their work but they said the situation never reverted to the extremes of the past" (Rimoldi & Rimoldi 1992: 148).

<sup>72</sup>. Indeed, as Abby McLeod notes for the Kerowagi, women "do not equate pig production and distribution solely with the domestic realm, but rather, they characterise it as an integral aspect of local politics, negating the existence of clearly defined domestic and public and political realms. Furthermore, women exercise agency by offering and withdrawing support in accordance with their own priorities and needs" (2002: 44).

<sup>73</sup>. Despite such valuation women are not immune from de-humanising characterisations, see Section 2.2.

<sup>74</sup>. On a number of occasions, women, as well as service providers, told us that many women fear being exposed to HIV by their husbands' sexual liaisons outside of marriage.

<sup>75</sup>. Rituals of manhood or male cults have attracted great interest and generated numerous studies. See Allen (1967); Bateson (1958[1936]); Errington (1974); Herdt (1981, 1982, 1984, 1987, 1992); Juillerat (1992); Silverman (2001); Tuzin (1980); Whitehouse (1996).

<sup>76</sup>. A number of writers have drawn attention to what Irwin refers to as the "liability complex" (1972) or what Trompf refers to as "payback" (1994) — the need to avenge or compensate for wrongs and injuries. For more recent work, see Strathern & Stewart (2000); van Amstel & van der Geest (2004).

<sup>77</sup>. In addition to using magical powder, it is said that when they killed others with knives, some men would place some of the dead person's blood on their tongues, saying the "strong" of the deceased would make them more fierce and they would not be afraid to cut people with knives. This, the respondent remarked, seemed to be the case with some of the combatants who had not finished school.

<sup>78</sup>. There is an increasing amount of concern about the "youth bulge" in the Pacific, with the youth demographic in some countries being close to one fifth of the total population. In addition to PNG, youth in the Solomon Islands also comprises nearly 20% of the population whereas in other Pacific Island countries it averaged 17% of the population (NZ Herald July 2006). Nearly two fifths (37.8%) of the population are under the age of fifteen.

<sup>79</sup>. Interview Sister Gaye Lennon, 9 June 2006.

<sup>80</sup>. Interview with Jona Havati (and Naomi Yupae), Family Voice, 9 June 2006.

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<sup>81</sup>. There is also a sense of being abandoned by the Church. As one man in the Catholic Youth Group in Chimbu said: “The parish doesn’t think of the youth, the Bishop doesn’t think about the youth.”

<sup>82</sup>. In some parts of PNG, it is unheard of for women to drink and to do so is considered shameful, such women often being considered prostitutes.

<sup>83</sup>. For a more comprehensive discussion of alcohol than we can offer here, see Dernbach & Marshall (2001); Iamo & Ketan (1992) and especially the volume by Marshall (1982).

<sup>84</sup>. Research among perpetrators in Port Moresby found that of those who admitted to committing crimes, 22% were under influence of alcohol, 13% under the influence of drugs and 11% under the influence of both alcohol and drugs (UN Habitat 2004: 52).

<sup>85</sup>. There is a considerable literature on men’s initiation rituals in PNG. See references cited in endnote 75.

<sup>86</sup>. Girls did not have an equivalent set of rituals, since as is the often case in such contexts, females were thought to mature much faster than males. In Chimbu, some celebrations marked first menstruation and a girl was instructed in the changes in her body and, as Nilles notes: “given the social code of a grown-up member of her group and clan; made conversant with the etiquette regarding her relatives and the rules regarding her behaviour towards the opposite sex” (Nilles 1950/51: 32).

<sup>87</sup>. They were also blown in preparation for the pig-killing festival and at the burial of a male who died suddenly and who hadn’t seen their *koa* when alive. Moreover, a man could blow another man’s *koa* in order to insult him, an act which was regarded as theft (Nilles 1950/51: 61).

<sup>88</sup>. The Yonggom, whose members comprise many of the West Papuan refugees living in Kiunga and in the dozen or so camps in Western Province, are from an area of land to the west of Kiunga straddling the West Papuan border. The Awin or Aeykom live in an area to the East and North East of Kiunga, ranging from the Ok Tedi River in the west to the Strickland River in the east. The Mountain Ok or Min live in the mountains north of the Awin, in an area extending from the other side of the West Papuan border to the Strickland river in the east and as far north as the Sepik River headwaters. Many anthropologists have written about the different Mountain Ok groups — see for example, Barth (1975); Gardner (1981); Bercovitch (1989); Jorgensen (1981). From the east of the Strickland River to Mount Bosavi is a further language group, the Bosavi, which includes several dialects, such as the Gebusi, Etoro, Kubor, Samo, Kaluli and Onabasulu. Like the Min, these have been extensively documented by anthropologists, among the many being Knauff (1985); Schieffelin (1977) and Shaw (1990).

<sup>89</sup>. Reporting on visit to the Gebusi language area near Nomad in the eastern part of Western Province, Bruce Knauff, says that male initiation was still being carried out in a few of the more isolated villages (2002: 224).

<sup>90</sup>. This also means menstruation (Kirsch 1991: 265).

<sup>91</sup>. This contrasts with the optimism about Western education that many felt early in the colonial period. This is evident in a statement of a leader recorded by Nilles at an initiation ceremony: “These are the rules of our clan inherited from our ancestors and always handed down to our young people on this occasion. To-day, however, the school has come to us. If you go to school regularly, you will learn there the same precepts and others besides, showing you how to become useful members of our clan” (Nilles 1953/54: 122).

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<sup>92</sup>. Interview Sister Gaye Lennon, 9 June 2006.

<sup>93</sup>. Interview with Naomi Yupae and (Jona Havati), Family Voice, 9 June 2006.

<sup>94</sup>. Much as the Governor of the Eastern Highlands Province has been encouraging a return to tradition, the Bishop of Chimbu advocated at the 2005 General Assembly that the “hausman” tradition be revived in his diocese. People we spoke to in Chimbu were aware of this but were not sure whether any had been initiated yet.

<sup>95</sup>. Interview with Naomi Yupae and (Jona Havati), Family Voice, 9 June 2006.

<sup>96</sup>. Interview with Father John Ryan, 9 June 2006.

<sup>97</sup>. In fact some men’s cults celebrated masculinity with the sexual abuse of widows and other women with no male protection (Zimmer-Tamakoshi 1997: 540).

<sup>98</sup>. On the issue of violence and HIV/AIDS, see for example, Rothenberg & Paskey (1995); WHO (2004); Nduwimana (2004); Maman et al (2000); Jewkes et al (2003).

<sup>99</sup>. One of the problems in assessing programs aimed at promoting a more gender equitable behaviour among men, is that few have documented their experiences (Chege 2005: 118).

<sup>100</sup>. Ideally MAP workshops consist of about 20 participants and run for five days, entailing a total of 35 hours of educational activities. Day One looks at the gender socialization process and power imbalances between men and women. Day Two examines how gender issues impact on sexuality, parenting and relationships between the sexes. Day Three looks at the intersection between gender socialization, health-seeking behaviours, and HIV transmission. Day Four focuses on domestic and sexual violence. Day Five focuses on ways that men can redefine masculinity and play an active role in their communities to address gender inequality, responsible fatherhood, HIV/AIDS and gender-based violence (Peacock & Levack 2004: 9).

<sup>101</sup>. Similar responses have occurred in PNG. See Appendix 9 for the example of a senior police officer reacting to an anti-violence poster that depicted a beaten woman by saying, “It is good to see that men are still in control.”

<sup>102</sup>. This project appears to have been part of a long line of initiatives that focussed on Male Involvement in Reproductive Health (MIRH) that arose after the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo. The FIJI project was funded through a grant from NZODA, executed by New Zealand Family Planning Association (NZFPA) and implemented by the Reproductive and Family Health Association of Fiji (RFHAF).

<sup>103</sup>. A total 30 workshops were conducted among mine workers, soldiers and communities in a number of areas in Fiji.

<sup>104</sup>. Interview with Lady Carol Kidu, 8 June 2006.

<sup>105</sup>. Interview with Sharon Walker and Bessie Maruia, 8 June 2006.

<sup>106</sup>. As we were unable to interview Robert Titi in person, we have relied on the cited report.

<sup>107</sup>. Interview with Lawrence Stephens, 6 June 2006.

<sup>108</sup>. The Family and Sexual Violence Action Committee has produced a number of leaflets on rape and the law in relation to rape: *Rape, incest, child abuse ... The PNG laws have changed!* and *What to do about rape* (also in Tok Pisin); Save the Children has produced a booklet on children’s rights: *Children’s rights and responsibilities* (both in English and Tok Pisin) and The National HIV/AIDS Support Project (NHASP) has produced a number of posters and have

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reprinted a leaflet originally produced by the Women and Law Committee: *Lo i tambuim pasin paitim meri*. Videos have been produced in PNG on the subject and may be suitable for distribution if still available. In 1988, the Women and Law Committee produced a video *Stap isi* (Take it easy), that was popular and which would make a useful resource for advocates. The Health Promotion Branch of the National Department of Health more recently has produced *Anton*, which focuses on alcohol and domestic violence.

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## **Appendix 1. Men's Focus Group Guide:**

NB. Other research tools used based on this.

*A number of key themes should be touched on during the sessions. These include: (1) types of violence; (2) causes of violence, especially underlying causes; (3) the effects and costs of violence; (4) gender roles and expectations; (5) ways to reduce and prevent violence.*

As an introductory exercise and icebreaker, get the participants to list the problems that they see confronting the community. If violence is listed, ask how big a problem this is. If it is not mentioned, ask whether violence is a problem in the community. Then ask how bad this is.

### **1. Types of Violence**

*The aim here is to get the participants to identify the types of violence they are exposed to and how they define violence. Start by getting them to develop a list and then get them to rank these.*

Can you name the kinds of violence and victimisation that are being experienced by this community and the people in it? Which are the most common in the community? (Try elucidate how violence is defined. Get discussion around the ones that seem non-conventional. Prompt on things like shouting, swearing, nonconsensual sex if they don't come up.) Are weapons used? Which kinds of violence are the most cause for concern?

Who are the perpetrators and who are the victims? (Try to get break down – men against women, men/women against children, men against men, women against women, women against men.) Is violence against men a problem? *Prompt:* What types of violence do men experience? Who commits the violence? Is violence against women a problem? *Prompt:* What types of violence do women experience? Is violence against children a problem? *Prompt:* What types of violence do children experience? What about violence between relatives? For example, do brothers sometimes beat their sisters?

Is there more violence today than before – than in the colonial or precolonial period? *Prompt:* Why do you think that is? *Prompt:* Can you elaborate a bit more? Is life different now? Is it easier or harder? Are people different now? In what ways? Why is this?

### **2. Causes of Violence**

*The aim here is to get the participants to identify what are the causes of violence in the community. (1) Get the participants to list the key causes of violence inside their community. After the listing exercise, ask them to rank the causes in order of significance. Then consider each item in order, asking whether they can think of any deeper underlying causes.*

*(2) Also ask about violence between communities.*

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What are the causes of violence in the community? [rank them]

Why are some people more violent than others? Why do some people experience more violence than others?

What things or kinds of behaviour do you think incites violence? *Prompt: Why?*

Do you think violence is appropriate in some circumstances? *Prompt: Which ones? Why? Prompt: What happens if a woman doesn't obey her father, husband? Is it okay to hit her? Why is it okay? Is it ever not okay? Is it alright for a woman to hit her husband? Or parents to hit their children? How often? How hard? How do you think a man feels when he has injured his wife? What kind of men are too violent? Is rape sometimes okay? When? When is it not okay? Do you think many men rape women — half of all men? More? Less? Why do you think these men rape women? Are there deeper reasons? What kinds of men are more violent than others? Suppose a man is happy, has a good marriage, healthy children and plenty of food, is he any less likely to be violent to his family, or to other people?*

What are the causes of violence between communities? [rank them] Are there deeper causes?

### **3. The Effects and Costs of Violence**

*The aim here is to get the participants to identify the key personal, social and economic effects and costs of violence, both in terms of the community and the family. For example, What happens in a family if the wife is unhappy? What if she is sick or injured because of violence? (Prompts: Less productive? Work not well done? Children disobedient? Children get into trouble? Violence in the family may give rise to family breakup? Loss of brideprice? A death might require compensation – loss of money, resources. Warfare with another community may mean can't access markets. Might need to prompt on issues that are not so obvious (such as mobility; inability to access health services; inability to sell crops etc).*

What are the consequences of violence for men and their families? What are the consequences of violence for women and their families? What are the consequences of rape?

### **4. Gender roles and expectations**

*Here we are trying to get people thinking and talking about gender roles and expectations. How men and women are defined and what they are supposed to do and especially any changes that are occurring that impact on violence.*

What characteristics define a good man? What kind of behaviour is expected of a man? When he is single? When he is married? *Prompt: Are there any kastom or bible stories that you remember about what makes a good man? Do people agree with these stories? What characteristics define a good woman? What kind of behaviour is expected of a woman? When she is single? When she is married? Prompt: Are there any kastom or bible stories that you remember about what makes a good women? Do women agree*

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with these stories? Are women different now than in earlier times? How? Why? Is this a problem?

What characteristics define a good child? What characteristics define a good husband? What characteristics define a good wife? Get as much elaboration on these as you can, looking for changes and contradictions between the old ways and the new.

What are the advantages of being a man? What are the disadvantages of being a man? What kinds of changes are happening today that are making it difficult for men? Is it harder for men today than previously? Do you think there are any advantages for women? What about disadvantages? Is it harder for women today?

Are there *kastom* ways for schooling men? Were there in the past? If, yes: what was the aim of these? What did they involve?

Why do you think men are violent? How could this be changed? What would make men less violent?

### **5. Ways to Reduce Violence**

*Here we are trying to get people thinking and talking about how violence in their communities might be reduced, what hurdles there are, and how to identify appropriate interventions they might be involved in.*

*How might violence be reduced in the community? What alternatives to violence were there in the past? Were there any ways to prevent violence in the community and between communities in the past? (For example could wars be prevented by peacemaking ceremonies, exchanges etc) (Try to get detail as much detail on these things).*

Are there any ways to prevent violence in the community today? For example: Can people intervene to stop a fight? *Prompt:* Relatives? Village leaders? Church workers? Priest? Are there any circumstances under which people can intervene? Does intervention really help or is something else needed to stop the violence? What might help?

Does the village court have any role in stopping violence among married couples? Can women leave their husbands if they are violent? Does this happen very often? Is there a custom way of dissolving the marriage?

What kinds of things prevent people from dealing with violence? *Prompt:* What are the hurdles to the resolution of violent conflicts? Between communities? Within communities? (things like shame, silence, no police etc)

*Who has a role to play in reducing violence.* Who do you think should be taking a leading role in helping people or showing them how to prevent violence? (Whether this is between communities or within.) Who would be the best to deliver messages about violence to the community? Would messages really help reduce the violence? What would?



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*Prompt:* Does the school have a role in this? What role does the church have in this? What role do the police have in this?

What do you think are the most effective methods for reducing violence in this community? Do men have a role in reducing/preventing violence in the community? Would it be good if women joined together to say no to violence? Would it be better if men and women said no to violence?

*Ask them to make a list of all the ways they can think of of preventing violence. Then ask them to rank them in order of likely effectiveness.*

### **Appendix 2. Men and Boys Behaviour Change – HELP Resources Men’s Course**

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Introduction	Recabe	Recabe	Recabe	Recabe
Why life skills	Traditional stories	Keeping our men alive	Problem tree	Background
Empathy	Gender roles	Issues affect the men the most	Sex and relationship	What is adolescence?
Effective communication	Stage of manhood	Heart disease	Sex myths and facts	Knowledge, attitude and practice
Value clarification	Men attitude to sex	What is diabetes?	Pregnancy basic	Being man
Interpersonal relationship	Talking about sex	What are men reluctant to health services?	Pregnancy and childbirth	Rape
Coping with stress	Sex terms	Men and contraceptive	How can dads help	Good man Good leaders
Problem solving	Male reproductive system	Contraceptive choice	When I was a youth	Men as decision makes
Creative thinking	Testical examination	Vasectomy	Fathers of daughter	Alcohol and drugs

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Critical thinking	Erectile dysfunction	Discussion groups	Fathers of son	STI, HIV & AIDS
Making decision	Premature ejaculation	Healthy and unhealthy relationship	Guiding young man	Evaluation

### ***Appendix 3. Men Against Violence Training***

#### **Training Course Topics**

1. General Information.
2. Introduction to MAV Training Program.
3. Participants expectation of MAV Program.
4. 'The Millennium Tug-of-War'
5. Understanding of 'Man' as the main actor in anger and violence.
6. Understanding anger and violence (Concept).
7. Understanding dynamic of anger and violence.
8. Understanding causes of anger and violence.
9. Understanding anger and violence in intimate relationships.
10. Understanding the effects of anger and violence.
10. Understanding social costs of anger and violence.
11. Skills to prevent violence.
12. Planning MAV advocacy programs.
13. Registration of MAV advocate groups.
14. Formation of MAV advocate groups.
15. Certificate presentation.

### ***Appendix 4. Men's Initiation in Chimbu – an account by Father John Nilles:***

The boy leaves the mother's house at the age of seven and moves into the man's house and group of his joint family. The social conscience complex formed in the small family circle will be soon enlarged by the group among which he has to now live. But with

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advancing years the boy's reasoning abilities emerge, and his individuality and self-interest express themselves; consequently, he may wish to cast off this social restriction. Thus he may spend most of his time roaming and hunting, and getting into mischief by thieving. He may even leave his father's group place and change to that of his mother's joint family group. However the social code is impressed upon him wherever he goes and he will begin to realize that it will be the only conceivable assurance of his own welfare and that of the group and clan. In this time of indecision he passes through the ordeal of initiation. It is in this ceremony that his social (group and clan) conscience is more or less stabilized.

The initiation ceremony among the Kuman people is a joint-family affair on a small scale; yet at times of great festivities when all the young men of the clan are initiated as a group, it is a sub-clan or clan affair. Its purpose is to elevate the boy from the state of childhood to that of manhood, by entrusting him with the cultural heritage, prestige and secrets of his group.

The day before the ceremony the young man to be initiated withdraws to the men's house, away from the crowd. After dark all the initiated members of the group assemble in the same house. The leader calls for silence and then begins to explain the importance of ceremony to the young men. He refers to their past life, scolds the young men for their misdeeds, and gives instructions for their future behaviour. Any other member who wishes to join in the criticism may do so. Those to be initiated may not object in any way. Then follows an instruction in clan spirit and loyalty, and in defence of the clan against enemies. They are encouraged to hate and kill enemies. They are to increase the economic prosperity of the clan through their work.

They are then shown the flutes which heretofore they had been forbidden to gaze upon. The flutes, called *koa*, when blown in pairs are believed to represent a benevolent spiritual being, similar to a guardian spirit. As each single family possesses a special flute, each boy is shown his own flute by his father or elder brother. Those performing the initiation ceremonies begin to blow the flutes outside the house, enter through the door and surround the group of initiates who are sitting on the floor with their heads bowed and eyes closed. They are then commanded by the leader to look up and behold their *koa* while he calls the name of each family flute. Throughout the remainder of the night each boy is instructed in the melodies to be played on his *koa*. ...

The following morning the boys are led out of the house and far away into the bush. Before they reach their destination the young men are forced to go through high grass and reeds, and made to climb small trees to test their physical strength and power. Having reached a special spot usually close to a small rivulet, they approach one by one a group of three or four men. One man holds two sticks and he inserts these into the nostrils and strikes the inner septum of the nose of each candidate, till the blood flows profusely. The young man must then hold his head over the water for about two minutes and let the blood run into the creek. He then raises his head and thus stops the run of blood. As was explained to me by an older man of the Chiambugla clan, this is done to release the bad blood accumulated since he was in his mother's womb, his inheritance from the woman. The ordeal is very painful and frequently the candidates faint during it.

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A case is known when a young man lost his eyesight through it. After the ceremony each candidate is given a bit of “medicine” to eat, a piece of sliced pork. (This blood-letting is also done later in life by the man himself on the occasion of dances and festivals. They say it makes the face and eyes of the man shine brightly). The entire party then returns to the men’s house to the accompaniment of the playing of the flutes. The next day a large amount of food is prepared and laid out with cooked pig. Women and children assemble around the men’s house and shout with joy as at a given moment their sons and brothers come out of the house, carrying the bow and arrow or spear, their bodies glistening with pig grease and laden with ornaments. These are the newborn corps of the group and all are proud and rejoice with them. It is a day in the community life of highest vitality; a feast that will never be deleted from the young men’s memory. Only the males among the Kuman are initiated (Nilles 1950/51: 37-38).

### ***Appendix 5. Men’s Houses in Bougainville***

In the south of Bougainville, men’s houses, or club houses as they are often called in the literature, were developed into a ranked system, competitive feasting being the means of progress up the ranking (Oliver 1955: 377). These houses were an important cultural resource for leaders and no man achieved renown until he owned one. An important feature of men’s houses were the slit-gongs, which also brought renown to the leader. The ideal number of these was nine, and they ranged in size from three feet long and one foot in diameter to fifteen feet long and five feet in diameter (Oliver 1955: 379). The men’s houses were located away from where people lived, and women avoided them. It was said that a “demon” associated with the club-house would kill any woman who went near (Oliver 1955: 105). Unlike many men’s houses in PNG, these in the south required no formal initiation into them, a boy being accepted as a member as soon as he left women’s company and began to frequent, and participate in, the club-house activities (Oliver 1955: 109). However, some elements of initiation did occur, though not as elaborated as in the north of Bougainville or Buka. The main rituals involved the formal introduction of the eldest son of the leader to various activities with the accompaniment of ceremonies and feasts. For example, he was introduced to possum hunting, to neighbours and to his first dance at the club-house (Oliver 1955: 189). There was also a ritual through which a leader introduced his eldest son to fighting. This began with the leader’s neighbours taking the eldest son to the coast to show him the sea for the first time. On their return they were intercepted by men from a nearby settlement, who engaged in a mock battle with the boy’s companions, introducing him to “warfare” (Oliver 1955: 377).

There were comparable men’s houses in north Bougainville. As in the south, these had slit gongs and were connected to competitive feasting, involving the killing and distribution of large numbers of pigs. Progressing through successive phases of the ranking required the building of a new house, with the final goal a ten-post clubhouse (Rimoldi & Rimoldi 1992: 74). Unlike those in the south, these men’s houses were

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located in the village. This tradition is still alive in some parts of Buka, though the initiation rituals that accompanied them no longer appear to be practised (see Photo 2).



Photo 2. Chief's Gabriel Rokou & Albert Thomas in front of their *Tuhana* or men's house at Talinga, Buka Island.

### ***Appendix 6. Men's Initiations in Bougainville***

In the north of Bougainville, the far more elaborate initiation rituals involved men taking young boys from their mothers and secluding them in the forest, where they avoided all contact with females, followed various food taboos and allowed their hair to grow. After approximately one year, after rituals including frightening displays of masked figures and the noise of whirling bullroarers, the boys returned to the village wearing a special hat, which concealed their hair. There they slept in a men's house and formed a close cohort of bachelors. During this time of several years, they kept their hats on and were not allowed to enter any houses where women lived. Finally, after other stages in the

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ceremonies, the last stage was reached when the boys' hair was cut and they were considered adults, ready for marriage within a few years. A detailed account of this, by Michael Allen, is included below.

The ritually important paraphernalia, the bullroarers and the masks, have their ultimate origins with women, a common characteristic throughout initiations in PNG (as was the case with the *koa* flutes in Chimbu). Whether discovered by women or made by them, women were judged by men not to have been able to use them properly and men confiscated them for their own use, keeping their origins secret from women. For example, in the accounts from north Bougainville, the bullroarer was discovered by a woman, who while chopping firewood in the forest, heard a woodchip make a noise as it flew through the air. The woman attached some fibre to a piece of wood and began whirling it and the bullroarer was born. When the men discovered what the woman had produced, they killed her and all the women except some small girls, keeping the knowledge of the bullroarer to themselves (Blackwood 1935: 215-16; Rimoldi & Rimoldi 1992: 41; Thomas 1931: 231).

By far the most detailed account of north Bougainville initiations is provided by Beatrice Blackwood (which Allen uses – Appendix 7), based on fieldwork in Kurtachi, a village on the north coast in 1930. There is some discussion in Rimoldi and Rimoldi of the situation at Hanahan in Halia and this seems very similar to the description from Blackwood, though the *Ruko* is the name given to the masked figure, the bullroarer and the ceremonies themselves (1992: 39). There is also an account from the 1930s by Gordon Thomas from Pororan Island off Buka, in this case the ceremonies are referred to as *Ndook* (1931: 226-31).

***Appendix 7. Men's Initiation in North Bougainville - An account by Michael Allen***  
(from Beatrice Blackwood 1935).

The rites consist of three main stages. The first (*wapi*) is performed jointly for all of the boys aged eight to nine from a group of neighbouring villages. The men take the lads from their mothers amidst much ritual wailing and seclude them in the bush. During this period they avoid all contact with females, let their hair grow, observe numerous food taboos, and live a restricted and highly regulated existence. After a year some of the men don carved masks (*urar*), said to represent dead ancestors, and show themselves to the women at a distance while other men sound bullroarers. They tell the women that the figures are supernatural beings who have come to eat the novices, and the sound of the bullroarers represents the voices of the spirits. It seems that the story is believed and that the women are truly terrified. ... They go to elaborate lengths of deception and even cut down or mutilate valuable trees as evidence of the presence of the ancestral beings.

The masked men then descend on the boys, gesticulate over them, and carry them into a shed full of *urar* masks. Here a pantomime of death and rebirth is performed. The men place special conical hats (*upi*) on the resurrected novices, to conceal the hair that has

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grown during their seclusion. After a number of minor ceremonies, during which the novices' guardians throw stinging water over the mothers, the boys return to the village.

For about four or five years the youths, though no longer secluded, are subject to numerous restrictions and regulations. They must sleep in the men's club and refrain from entering any house where a woman lives. They live apart and form a closely knit bachelor association. They never remove their *upi* hats; indeed the main reason for the cycle of ceremonies seems to be the secret growth of as much hair as possible.

In the second stage (*watawut*), which is performed in the bush a few years after the *wapi*, the novices remove their hats, climb trees and show their long tresses to the assembled men, and then don new decorated *upi*. After a brief visit to the village during which the novices ceremonially enter the huts of the married couples, they return to the bush, and exchange the *upi* for plain hats. Once again they return to the men's club in the village and resume normal activities, though still avoiding women and their houses.

The third ceremony (*wasipsip*), commences with a few days' seclusion in the bush and ends with the ceremonial discarding of the *upi* hats. During the night the guardians conduct the novices back from the bush to the village, where they secretly enter a special enclosure. The men present the boys with new hats and at dawn lead them to a tree with much shouting and blowing of big pipes. Each lad takes off his *upi* and ascends to the top of the tree to show his hair to the assembled people, particularly the women, who watch from a distance outside the palisade. Various minor ceremonies follow, including the burning of the *upi*, and the cutting of the hair. The novices are now counted as adult and marry within a few years (Allen 1967: 81-2).

### **Appendix 8. Men's initiation in Western Province - Yonggom**

The initiation ritual, called the Yawat, took place in a secluded area in the forest, away from human settlement. Once the ritual has finished, the initiates returned to the village and lived in a separate house for a period of several weeks (Kirsch 1991: 276). This house should not have been lived by women, and so a newly built house, a bachelor's house or a temporary shelter were used, the structure being marked with red and yellow clay. Several men lived with the initiates and prepared their food. Otherwise, women might prepare the food but it had to be given to the men before being handed to the initiates. During their time in this men's house, the boys went to the forest daily and were taught various skills, such as how to use the bow and arrow and how to hunt. They were also instructed in what they should do to maintain their health and the various food and other restrictions they must follow. As the initiates and men who returned from the Yawat ritual were considered dangerous, they were told not to come close to other people or use their belongings. After several weeks living in seclusion in this house, they returned to their own homes, but had to enter and exit through an opening cut into the side of the house (Kirsch 1991: 285). The initiates still had to follow most of the restrictions for several months, some even being observed for several years, or longer. Since the initiation corresponded with an important pig feast that could include

participants from other groups, such as the Awin, men from these groups could also attend the Yonggom initiation.

Some of the other male initiations that occurred among other groups in the North Fly District were more complex and institutionalised than the Yonggom ritual. These took place in permanent men's houses, as was the case among the Min, who had special cult houses and a very complex ritual process. Like the Yonggom ritual, this was founded on myth, though the Min had a large corpus of myth about a female ancestor figure.

### ***Appendix 9: Posters that have been used in Papua New Guinea***

Some of the recent campaigns against domestic violence in PNG have mirrored international efforts. For example, a recent poster produced by the National AIDS Council Secretariat features a high profile rugby league player from Australia speaking out against violence against women. Some campaigns in PNG simply employ declarative statements; for example, a t-shirt produced by NACS has a red hand on a yellow background with the statement "Stop the Violence Against Women." The Health Promotion Branch of the PNG National Department of Health uses a similar design in its campaign against tuberculosis. It also resembles a slogan used internationally: Stop Violence against Women.

Save the Children have produced two posters that involve the kind of "rescripting" of masculinity that reinforces gender difference (see Section 4.0.). These feature a married couple on one, and young couple on the other, with the couples in very close, intimate proximity. Both carry the main message of "*Bel isi imas stap oltaim*," which translates as Calmness must always remain. The poster with a married couple is about wife-beating, with man saying that when he and his wife have a disagreement they sit down and sort it out ("*Taim mitupela igat bel hevi, mitupela i save sindaun isi na stretim*"). He adds, "I'm a real man, I don't beat women" ("*Mi trupela man, mi no save paitim meri*").

The website of *The National* newspaper used a similar slogan on its Weekender page during 2006. In this case, the message, "Real men don't hit women" was superimposed on a photo of a young woman with a thick bandage on her right eye and her arm in a sling. The newspaper had used the same photograph previously on a poster distributed with the printed version, but bearing the words, "This could be your sister ... wife bashing is wrong!" On seeing this poster, a senior police officer at a meeting with others working in the Law and Justice sector in Buka, remarked, "It is good to see that men are still in control" (reported by an Australian Advisor who was present at the meeting). Given such attitudes, it is easy to see why many women do not believe that it is worthwhile to report domestic violence to the police.

The second poster, showing the young couple, addresses the issue of non-consensual sex or rape, with the man saying, "If she says no, I say that's alright, we're together on that" ("*Taim en tok nogat mi tok em orait, wanbel i stap*"). This poster also uses the notion of what constitutes a real man by declaring that "I'm a real man, I don't ruin (rape) women" ("*Mi trupela man, mi no save bagarapim meri*"). There is also a third poster,

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featuring a married couple and a young girl, which addresses the issue of violence against children. This one does not seek to redefine masculinity as the other two posters do.

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