



# WOMEN, GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE PACIFIC: KEY ISSUES

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## **Introduction: Conflict and Peacemaking: Gender perceptions**

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To date the international literature has given little consideration to the way gender and social structure relate to conflict, peacemaking and peacekeeping. This is true of the Pacific, where internal conflict in Bougainville, Solomon Islands, Fiji, Timor-Leste and West Papua have shattered a long held illusion of a peaceful Pacific. Escalating violence and the very different roles women and men have played in dealing with it have highlighted the need for a deeper understanding of ways in which conflict might be reduced in the future, how peace can be achieved more quickly, and better support provided for victims of conflict.

### **Impact of conflict**

These papers highlight the complexities that underlie national conflicts and that hardship and trauma do not end with a peace agreement. Alice Pollard, Ruth Liloqula, Dalcy Paina and Helen Hakena describe the displacement, food shortages, increase in female headed households, chronic physical and psychological trauma and teenage pregnancies that have been the result of conflict in Bougainville and Solomon Islands. They discuss ways to address the long term impact of a generation without education, the increased fear, mistrust and destruction of the economy and infrastructure. All will take many years to overcome. Their papers show very graphically that women and children are the major victims of Pacific Island conflicts and that women are the major, but largely unseen and unacknowledged, instigators of peace. These papers include the personal stories of Pacific Island people – all deeply involved in the violence and conflicts of Bougainville, other parts of Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Fiji.

### **Causes of conflict**

Several very clear themes emerge from the papers presented. The causes of conflict, while complex, do not differ greatly from those in other developing countries, most particularly countries with a strong colonial heritage, when, as Bronwen Douglas discusses, the creation of new nation states incorporated very different tribal and ethnic groups. Some causes are universal, including perceived grievances between ethnic groups — usually over resources and power. These are often linked to historical differences and demands by minority ethnic groups to maintain their language, culture and identity. Identity may include demands for a state based on a specific religious affiliation. In terms of the importance of ethnic or tribal identity, the Pacific situation mirrors that of Sub Saharan Africa described by Gebre Selassie.

In the Pacific, the major underlying cause of conflict is unequal access to resources, particularly to land and paid employment, and lack of involvement in decision making and authority. This is brought about by a complex web of population pressure, internal migration and urbanisation; colonial regimes that favoured one ethnic group over others; weak national governments; perceived lack of government concern with, or ability to listen to, demands of the people; centralisation of resources and infrastructure; lack of employment; relative deprivation; and a rapidly increasing gap between a small wealthy elite and a growing number of poor. The situation is exacerbated in the Pacific by a breakdown, or weakening, of traditional methods of dispute resolution and peacemaking. When this is combined with the ready availability of powerful weapons and a 'Rambo'

culture among young men, the likelihood of large scale, open warfare increases dramatically, as Patrick Howley, Carol Kidu and Helen Hakena discuss.

### **Communication and conflict**

A range of factors related to communication also underlie the emergence and escalation of conflict, as well as the possibilities for effective peacemaking. Lack of information about political processes and legislation can lead to conflict. For example, in Fiji, lack of public information and discussion about the content of the 1997 Constitution helped fuel conflict. Although the new 1997 Constitution protected the land and rights of ethnic Fijians, most people were unaware of this, as Moses Waqa's paper shows. He and Sharon Bhagwan Rolls discusses events in Fiji from an information and media perspective. Lack of knowledge among women of their rights, including their democratic right to vote and their legal rights regarding rape and domestic violence, encourages an escalation of both democratic and personal abuse.

### **Violence and the media**

For the last 30 years, the impact of media violence on young people has been widely discussed with recent acknowledgement among medical professionals in the United States that it can encourage violent behaviour among young people. Discussion in both the symposium and the workshop highlighted growing concerns in Pacific Island communities about the popularity of violent videos, the growing acceptability of sexual violence and the glorification of the 'Rambo' gun toting, macho image as a role model for young men. Patrick Howley critically examines the Pacific 'Rambo' role, its growth and impact. He and Martha Macintyre agree that true peace will only come about when men decide not only to give up their guns but to clear guns and the Rambo image from their minds.

### **Domestic violence and national conflict**

The relationship between domestic violence, a growing culture of violence and national conflict is widely discussed by the authors. Carol Kidu and Martha Macintyre both look at the relationship between increasing domestic violence and national conflict in their discussions of the Papua New Guinean situation. Socialisation of children, particularly boys, is an issue of concern. Women's status, women's roles, and national and international legislation and the way it is interpreted and implemented, are all underlying factors that relate to an increase in conflict.

Control of political, religious, economic and social processes in the Pacific Region, including in Australia, are still overwhelmingly male. The growing culture of violence which usually starts in the home and includes abuse of children, combined with the lack of legislation or will to police domestic violence, augers ill for the future. A recent AusAID appraisal of violence against children in the Pacific outlines the likelihood of child abuse escalating to more widespread conflict. This is borne out by research in Melanesia and Australia which shows that abused children often become abusive teenagers and often violent adults.<sup>1</sup>

### **Pacific women and peacemaking**

In the Pacific, women have had a vital role in peacemaking although they have been neither consulted, nor included, in formal peace talks. Alice Pollard, Dalcy Paina, Helen Hakena, Ruth Liloqula and Sharon Bhagwan Rolls write of their experiences working

with women's groups, NGOs and church women's groups in their attempts to stop the conflict and alleviate its terrible impact on women and children. All night vigils, expressions of women's solidarity across the Pacific, lobbying political leaders and commanders of the warring factions, going behind the 'army' lines to speak with soldiers, running the gauntlet of the rebel no-go zones in the Solomons, getting food into Honiara, providing information to Fijian women and addressing the social and economic devastation of 10 years of war in Bougainville are just some of the crucial roles these and other women have played in their efforts for genuine and lasting peace.

### **The United Nations and international law**

The role of Pacific Island women as peacemakers over the last 10 years was reflected in the historic United Nations Security Council meeting in October which, for the first time, focused on gender equality, peace and security. The resolutions include concerns that 'civilians, particularly women and children, account for the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict' and 'reaffirms the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding, and stressing the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security' (Security Council Resolution S/2000/1044 - A/S-23/10/Res.1).

### **Donor assistance in conflict resolution and maintaining peace**

Donor assistance in peacemaking, peacekeeping and/or restorative justice has not always been as effective as it could have been. Workshop discussion indicated that frequently the outsiders involved have not been aware of all factors underlying a conflict, or have not understood the situation and perceptions of both parties concerned. The role of the parties around a peace table is frequently not clearly understood by anybody. Agreement as to the nature and function of these roles needs careful negotiation by donors, the parties in conflict and all other stakeholders.

There is a perception that donor agencies feel that their role ends when a peace agreement has been signed when, in reality, their major role should just be starting. The aid response needs to support peace negotiations, military peacekeeping where it is needed, humanitarian relief and peacemaking development on a timely basis. While there is recognition that donors are limited by their agency requirements, there is a great need for flexibility and realism about what can be achieved and how long it will take. There is a need for immediate humanitarian intervention that is based on a 'do no harm' ideology, followed by support for government, NGOs and communities to rebuild and relocate. Throughout the Pacific, community development training in conflict avoidance, conflict resolution, mediation and restorative justice skills, is felt to be required. This should be available at all levels of society, including in schools. Communication between government, local government and civil society must be facilitated. There needs to be support for community groups to access information on governance issues as well as on social and economic development. A free press is a vital factor in an informed public.

### **Policy recommendations**

The major policy recommendations that emerged from the 'Conflict and Peacemaking' workshop were for:

- donors and Pacific Island governments to adopt a human rights approach to conflict avoidance, peacemaking and restorative justice and include both women and men in these processes;
- marginalised groups, in particular women and ethnic minorities, to be brought into mainstream political and economic discussion and development activities;
- donor support to help rebuild infrastructure without creating dependency;
- humanitarian relief to be based on the principle of 'do no harm'; and
- donors to be consistent in their social and economic policies and projects to ensure that development outcomes work towards overall stability in Pacific Island countries rather than creating and/or supporting inequalities or maintaining an unequal status quo.

## Notes

- 1 See Sinclair Dinnen, 2000 in Sinclair Dinnen and Allison Ley (eds) *Reflections on violence in Melanesia*, Hawkins Press, Sydney Jane Anderson, 2000 'Innocents betrayed' *Courier Mail*, April 27, p1

Elizabeth Cox, 1992, Campaigning against domestic violence: an evaluation of the PNG Women and Law Committee's Campaign against Domestic Violence, UNICEF report, Port Moresby

Government of Australia 2000, *Young people say DV – no way*, Evaluation of the National Domestic Violence Prevention Workshops for Young People, Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, Canberra

Government of Australia 2000, 'Young people and domestic violence', Fact sheet from national research on young people's attitudes and experience of domestic violence, Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, and the Attorney-General's Department, Canberra.

Wood, M, & Charlesworth, C, 2000. 'Women and conflict resolution in international law', *Development Bulletin*, no. 53, pp. 7-9.

## **Women and conflict resolution in international law**

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What are the connections between conflict and the continued exclusion of 'half the world's resources'<sup>1</sup> from effective participation in conflict resolution and peace processes? Apart from the inefficiency and injustice of the failure to involve women in the resolution of international conflicts, it is also clear that an international legal system that systematically ignores the voices and actions of women is seriously flawed.

International law has come to be incorporated as an integral part of a system of international relations and institutional regulation whose central(ised) body is the United Nations. Although the UN Charter declares the maintenance of international peace and security to be the primary purpose of the UN, much of the international law relating to the use of force focuses upon legal justifications for the use of force by individual states, most notably self-defence. This focus is perhaps at its most striking in the statement of the International Court of Justice in its *Nuclear Weapons Advisory Opinion* in 1996 that it could not conclude 'definitively whether the threat or use of nuclear weapons would be lawful or unlawful in an extreme circumstance of self-defence in which the very survival of a State would be at stake.'<sup>2</sup>

The obligation upon states to seek peaceful settlement of disputes is stipulated in article 2 (3) of the UN Charter and is reiterated in numerous General Assembly resolutions. Chapter VI of the Charter provides the framework for the peaceful settlement of disputes while Chapter VII provides for 'Action with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression.' Peacemaking options available to the Security Council under Chapter VI merge with its powers under Chapter VII.

In his blueprint *An Agenda for Peace* and its 1995 *Supplement*, the then Secretary-General of the UN, Boutros Boutros-Ghali sought to improve the effectiveness of cooperative action within the framework of the Charter for dispute and conflict prevention, containment and resolution. He built upon the provisions of the UN Charter and the practice of peacekeeping evolved by UN organs during the cold war to articulate the associated concepts of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding.<sup>3</sup> The objectives of preventive diplomacy, averting the eruption of disputes and the spread of conflict demand pre-emptive action. Peacemaking attempts to bring disputing parties to agreement, essentially through Chapter VI processes. Peacekeeping involves the deployment of military, police and civilian personnel, under the auspices of the UN or a regional organisation, in the troubled area, traditionally with the consent of all parties. Post-conflict peacebuilding attempts to prevent repetition by establishing structures to 'strengthen and solidify peace.'

The Security Council has recognised the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding, and has stressed the importance of their increased participation in all aspects of the conflict prevention and resolution process.<sup>4</sup> Various reports, resolutions and declarations by the Security Council, including the recent Brahimi Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (S/2000/809), the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming Gender in

Peace Support Operations, have underscored the UN's recognition that the involvement of women in peace-building and dispute resolution is essential to a lasting solution to conflict and sustainable economic development. Indeed very recently, in an unprecedented open debate on the topic of women, peace and security by the Security Council on 24 and 25 October 2000, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, was quick to acknowledge the 'invaluable support women provide to our peacekeepers by organizing committees, non-governmental organizations and church groups that help ease tensions, and by persuading their menfolk to accept peace'.<sup>5</sup>

The recognition that women play an unsung role in supporting peace initiatives in many situations is welcome. However the Secretary-General's comments do not deal with either of the two major issues about women and conflict resolution: the (often complete) absence of women from the 'public' arenas of peacemaking; and the gendered notions of peace and security on which international law depends.

### **Absence of women**

The absence of women in representative or mediating roles in formally convened and internationally supported conflict resolution fora is well documented. It is also readily acknowledged in recent times by members of the UN Secretariat as representing a significant problem, in terms of equity at least. However, the problem surpasses concerns about equity. The absence or minority presence of women in discussions about conflict resolution, or the implementation of outcomes of such discussions, has a bearing on the long-term viability of solutions to issues that invariably represent deep-seated local or regional social dissension. Despite the reality that women account for the majority of conflict victims as objects of rape, assault, abduction, sex slavery, and forced human movement, 'the concerns and priorities of women in conflict resolution are ignored in most peace talks as well as in the development of most post-conflict reconstruction programs.'<sup>6</sup> The most obvious and arguably effective way for women's concerns and priorities to be expressed is for national governments and international bodies alike to take measures to ensure that a large number of women are directly involved in formal conflict resolution procedures, rather than continuing to remain as relatively powerless community members.

It is unusual for women, or women-specific issues, to be perceived as integral to an international dispute. For example, trafficking has increased as a consequence of reduced government commitment to social expenditure as part of the transition to a free market economy in Eastern Europe and of structural adjustment programmes. Economic hardship, organised criminal rings, fraud and violence have fostered the international trafficking of women and children. These issues, however, are not considered the stuff of international disputes, or to be sufficient for the exercise of extra-territorial jurisdiction. By contrast, claims of General Noriega's involvement in international drug trafficking supported the United States' use of force against Panama in 1989 which resulted in his arrest and conviction within the United States. Similarly the United States has justified its violation of the territorial sovereignty of Mexico as necessary to arrest another alleged drug trafficker. Extra-territorial jurisdiction has also been asserted to protect the commercial interests of American nationals against the expropriation of their property by the Castro regime in Cuba.<sup>7</sup>

The invisibility of women in international affairs, the widespread acceptance of religious and cultural justifications for the unequal treatment of women, and the lack of international significance attached to women's lives explain the marginalisation of women in international affairs. Even where women are major actors in an international

incident, this reality is rarely identified in dispute settlement. For example, trans-border refugee flows frequently both provoke, and are the consequence of, international disputes. Although women constitute large numbers of refugees, they do not figure separately in negotiations about resettlement. Other forms of discrimination, by contrast, have been at the core of significant international disputes. Events in the 1990s, such as those surrounding the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia, genocide in Rwanda and the treatment of the Kurdish and Shiite minorities in Iraq, indicate that race discrimination is significant in contributing to international tension. The multiple discriminations of race, ethnicity and sex suffered by women are not, however, seen as part of these disputes, or as relevant to their resolution.

### **Gendered concepts**

One result of the absence of women in the process of international conflict resolution is that basic concepts in the field have been developed in a very limited way. Take, for example, the concept of 'collective security' in international law. Security orthodoxy has seen security as protecting the political and physical integrity of sovereign states and it has promoted the idea of peace through national strength. Liberal internationalists such as Boutros-Ghali have extended this idea to human security and have pointed to the need to respond to large scale violence within states.

In a similar spirit, the former Australian Foreign Minister, Gareth Evans, promoted an idea of 'cooperative security' as a substitute for collective security.<sup>8</sup> Cooperative security is broader than the idea of military security, including threats to a state's economic well-being, political stability and social harmony, to its citizen's health, and to its environment. But even these relatively progressive accounts of security are centred on the preservation of the sovereign state from external threats and the activities of other states. They do not investigate the way that power relations work within states and how these power relations affect a state's 'external' activities. An example of the limitations of this genre of security analysis lies in Gareth Evans' book, *Cooperating for Peace*, with his nomination of the Gulf War (1990–91) as a paradigm of successful collective security through the UN. Indeed, Evans claims that the Gulf War allowed Chapter VII of the UN Charter to be used 'exactly as had been intended' by its drafters in expelling the Iraqi forces from Kuwait. This account of the successes of collective security pays no heed to certain very significant and enduring effects (disproportionately suffered by women) of the Gulf War. For example, the Gulf War action was accompanied by significant sexual assault and abuse of women both in Iraq and Kuwait and within the United States military forces.<sup>9</sup> The economic sanctions placed on Iraq at the end of the war have had particularly bad effects on Iraqi women and children, while the aftermath of the war has revived militarism in the United States, which has direct and deleterious impacts on women's lives.<sup>10</sup> The 'liberation' of Kuwait also re-installed an autocratic government of men that denied women the vote. UN action in the Gulf War, then, delivered a very circumscribed and sectional form of security.

### **Conclusion**

The absence of women in international dispute resolution has resulted in injustice, ineffective peace agreements and impoverished ideas about the meaning of peace and security. What is deemed to constitute a dispute that warrants the condemnation or intervention of the international community is informed by gendered values that selectively emphasise types and instances of discrimination. Further, the diverse skills, perspectives and knowledge that women bring to informal or community-level peace-

building is often overlooked by nations and the United Nations itself in decisions about who to send to conflict resolution fora. The exclusion of women at formal conferences to resolve international disputes is not an issue that international law deems relevant or addresses in any way, other than by the occasional exhortatory comment by a member of the UN Secretariat that more women should be engaged in decision making or peace-brokering capacities at international levels.

Thus the UN system of collective security is inadequate not only on its own terms, but also at a deeper level because its culture and system of meaning are based on a gendered view of the world. Collective security through the UN will never be feasible unless it is reconceived. This goes beyond the important task of redressing the very low participation of women in peacekeeping. It is most importantly 'the commitment and ability to develop, explore, rethink and revalue those ways of thinking that would make a difference. For that to happen, men too, would have to be central participants.'<sup>11</sup> Thus the challenge is to explore further, and apply the insights gleaned from this exploration, about how some knowledge is privileged and other knowledge is silenced and devalued in collective security discourse.

## Notes

1. A. King, statement at the 4208th meeting of the Security Council, 24 October 2000, UN Doc. SC/6937.
2. *Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons* 1996 ICJ Rep. 226 (Adv. Op. 8 July), reprinted in 35 *International Legal Materials* (1996) 809 at para. 105. This conclusion was reached by seven votes to seven, with the casting vote of the President of the Court.
3. *An Agenda for Peace, Preventative Diplomacy, Peace-making and Peacekeeping*, Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to the Statement adopted by the Summit Meeting of the Security Council on 31 January 1992, 17 June 1992, UN Doc. A/47/277 at para. 15.
4. See, for example, UN Doc. S/PRST/2000/25.
5. K. Annan, statement at the 4208th meeting of the Security Council, 24 October 2000, UN Doc. SG/SM/7598.
6. M. Britt Theorin, 'Gender Aspects of Conflict Resolution: A View from the European Parliament', *Gender Policy Review* (September 2000) at <http://gender-policy.tripod.com/backissues/sept.html>
7. Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (Libertad) Act 1996, 22 UCSA 6021-6091, commonly known as the Helms-Burton Act.
8. Gareth Evans, *Cooperating for Peace: The Global Agenda for the 1990s and Beyond* (Allen & Unwin, Sydney 1993).
9. A. Orford, 'The Politics of Collective Security', 17 *Michigan Journal of International Law* (1996) p.373 et seq., at pp.377-9.
10. Lori Buck et al, 'Sanctions as a Gendered Instrument of Statecraft: the Case of Iraq', 24 *Review of International Studies* (1998), p.69.
11. Carol Cohn, 'War, Wimps and Women: Talking Gender and Thinking War' in Miriam Cooke and Angela Woolacott, eds., *Gendering War Talk* (Princeton University Press, Princeton 1993) p.239.

Douglas, B, 2000. 'Conflict, gender, peacemaking, and alternative nationalisms in the Western Pacific', *Development Bulletin*, no. 53, pp. 10-13.

## **Conflict, gender, peacemaking, and alternative nationalisms in the Western Pacific**

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A historical and anthropological approach to governance takes account of particular histories, foregrounds indigenous cultures and grassroots groups, and focuses as much on actual people, their practices and relationships as on formal institutions. Such an approach questions the conventional wisdom that naturalises abstractions like 'state' and 'society' as if they are real, rather than concepts with particular histories: 'the state', for example, is not a human universal but implies the territorial nation-state that emerged in Western Europe and the United States from the end of the eighteenth century. That may not be the most appropriate model for former colonies on the margins of the global system (Douglas 2000).

### **Ambiguous legacies**

For more than thirty years I have done research on Melanesian histories and cultures, with particular interests in indigenous patterns of fighting and peacemaking and more recently in the significance of Christianity and gender. I reject as racist, self-fulfilling prophecy the stereotypes that depict the indigenous people and states of Melanesia as *inherently* 'violent', 'unstable', 'conflict-ridden' and 'male-dominated'. Melanesians are not 'naturally', 'racially', 'culturally' or 'psychologically' locked into violence and misogyny any more than anyone else is, nor are they less capable of resolving their differences. However, their past experiences (especially colonial and post-colonial histories) and present actualities may converge with racial or cultural stereotypes to inhibit or obscure longstanding, flexible indigenous arrangements to avoid, manage and resolve conflict and violence.

Similarly, the contemptuous cliché of 'weak state', routinely applied to Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, takes inadequate account of histories and circumstances. These modern states emerged very recently out of rickety colonial regimes which lacked indigenous precedents or *raison d'être*. The arbitrary borders, dubious local legitimacy and general internal invisibility of the colonial states bestowed an unfortunate legacy on their independent post-colonial successors, which are further burdened by global capitalist encompassment that ensures ongoing economic dependence on external aid and transnational resource extraction. Alone in Melanesia, Fiji could lay plausible historical claim to having been a 'natural' geographic and cultural unit, though certainly lacking pre-colonial political unity. However, the indigenous Fijian illusion of cultural uniformity is shattered by twin colonial legacies: a multi-ethnic populace, and, less obvious but at least as significant in the current crisis, an ethnic Fijian community increasingly divided along class and regional lines, thanks in part to the colonially sanctioned entrenchment in government, bureaucracy and military of an eastern Fijian chiefly élite with interests often opposed to those of other ethnic Fijians, such as ambitious businessmen, young male urban dwellers, and western Fijians generally.

To acknowledge that independent states in Melanesia trace many present problems to recent colonialism and ongoing neocolonialism is not to depict Melanesians or

Melanesian states as passive victims of dominated pasts and unequal presents. Corruption, for instance, however seemingly embedded in cultures, histories and structures, is also a personal choice. It is certainly seen as such by Melanesian villagers, who these days almost universally condemn *politik*, or 'national politics', and criticise politicians. They do so from the perspective of what are represented as the organic indigenous social values of kinship, community and reciprocity, rather than from a voluntarist, individualist conception of civil society. The most common accusation made against politicians and the state by ordinary villagers is of ignoring, abusing or denying the reciprocal obligations expected in social relations. The anthropologist Jeffrey Clark suggests that, in Southern Highlands Province of Papua New Guinea, people see themselves not as citizens but as 'followers of the state', which is 'personified as a 'big man . . . bound by . . . reciprocity to look after and redistribute resources to his followers'. Yet rather than the personified state returning in services the loyalty and taxes paid by its citizens, in national settings in Melanesia reciprocity tends to be the domain of individual, pork-barrelling politicians (Clark 1997:74, 81–2, 86–8, Stewart and Strathern 1998:134). Given people's expectations and resources, it makes little sense to *reduce* the capacity of the state to serve its citizens, as is usually the outcome of structural reform programmes.

### **Reciprocity in indigenous violence and conflict management**

There were no states in pre-colonial Melanesia, even in Fiji where a series of fairly bloody wars between expanding rival chiefdoms punctuated the first half of the nineteenth century. Elsewhere, there was spectacular diversity and marked political fragmentation. Autonomous groups were mostly small, but often linked in complex, sometimes farflung exchange, ritual and trade networks. Such groups engaged in frequent, but relatively low-key, fighting with some of their neighbours and were in shifting alliances with others. Massacres were not unknown, but by and large violence was pragmatically contained by smallness of scale and the imperative of group survival, which required mutual vigilance, avoidance, retreat in adversity and often adoption of the vanquished. The value placed on reciprocity and equivalence provided a major spur to war, because injury and insult to group members demanded indiscriminate vengeance against the offender's group, provoking an escalating cycle of group vengeance; but reciprocity and equivalence also provided the means to break the cycle of violence and negotiate peace through ritual, exchanges and compensation.

Everywhere in Melanesia, pacification was either willingly embraced as people converted to Christianity, or was enforced by colonial regimes. Men in particular gained the opportunity to broaden their horizons by recruiting as labourers or becoming mission teachers and catechists. The mostly male labouring experience provided the basis for widening identities beyond the purely local to the island or the region and was the breeding ground for the several creole languages which are now lingua franca in the independent states of Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. Reciprocity remains a cardinal value: vengeance (payback) is still a major *raison d'être* for violence; exchange and compensation are necessary ways to resolve it. However, in parts of Papua New Guinea, the far larger scale and sophisticated weaponry of modern clan fighting is resistant to indigenous modes of peacemaking, as was the protracted war in Bougainville for a long time, although here indigenous peacemaking, in conjunction with Christianity, is proving critical in reconciliation and reconstruction. In urban areas, notably Port Moresby but also in the recent crises in Suva and Honiara, well-armed criminal opportunists and alienated young gang members make an equal mockery of

indigenous compensation practices and modern law enforcement, where it operates at all.

### **Gender, Christianity and conflict management**

Melanesian women are stereotyped as powerless, downtrodden 'beasts of burden' and as the passive victims of indiscriminate male violence. Like all stereotypes, these are caricatures which deny any agency to the persons thus depicted. This is not the self-image of any Melanesian woman I know. The situation and status of women vary widely across the region, but everywhere they are proud of working hard and productively to support their families. They regard themselves and are often represented (and exploited) by men as the moral and economic backbone of local societies. Sexual and domestic violence is a widespread, serious and apparently worsening problem, especially in urban settlements, as it is in many parts of the world, but women are usually not just passive victims. In rural areas, women's groups try to support abused women and to mobilise public opinion to shame violent men; in town, women's crisis centres and national councils of women adopt familiar human rights tactics of consciousness-raising, training, counselling and provision of refuge and legal assistance to sufferers, although they do so in mostly unsympathetic environments, with very limited resources.

The position of Melanesian women has been transformed under the impact of Christianity, pacification and modernity, in both positive and negative ways that I do not have space to detail here. Today almost all Melanesians are committed Christians. Women have very little presence in the clergy or formal church decision making, but church women's wings are increasingly visible and women are highly active and significant at parish-level – in congregations and local church women's groups. Except to some extent in Fiji, women are largely absent from national and provincial politics in Melanesian states. There is only a handful in the upper echelons of the bureaucracies – almost all in women's affairs and health – or of national non government organisations (NGOs), apart from those dedicated to women's issues. The broad picture, then, is that women are economically and morally critical in local and domestic spheres in Melanesia, but they participate minimally in national affairs and enjoy few advantages from citizenship.

In Melanesia, as elsewhere, the practice and politics of war are regarded as primarily men's business. Women, though, have always taken a keen interest in war, as daughters, sisters, wives and mothers, and have been actively involved in fighting and peacemaking in ways that differ across the region and over time. By way of example, I shall say a little about Kanak women in New Caledonia, where I have done detailed ethnohistorical research on indigenous fighting (Douglas 1998:113–58). Kanak warriors were always male and more often than not their fights were about control of women's bodies and their productive and reproductive capacities. But women were evidently more than just the objects of men's conflicts. An early Polynesian Christian evangelist, writing in the 1840s, described what Kanak women did during battles:

All the women accompany them to the battle but do not actually take part in the fight. They remain at a distance and when each side meets to fight each party of women stays behind its own side. They take baskets on carrying poles to fetch the slain. Even when one of their own side is killed they rush forward to carry the body away from the battlefield . . . When an enemy is taken . . . [the men] grab him and chop him up in pieces and give him to the womenfolk who carry him back to their houses [to be cooked and eaten]. (Ta'unga 1968:87, 90)

Women also 'stirred up the warriors' with encouragement and taunts, and if the enemy fled they ransacked the gardens and carried away the loot in triumph (Leconte 1847:835, Rivière 1881:211). Defeat usually meant the loss of women to the victors. Indeed, women were the main prize of war: appropriating an enemy group's women meant that you gained, and they simultaneously lost, wives, in-laws, mothers, their potential offspring, and ultimately ancestors, who would protect and assist the group. This was very good politics. Kanak women, then, provided motives and incentives for war and supported men *in* war.

However, women were central actors in peacemaking. Restraint was an important pragmatic value in indigenous Kanak war. The exercise of restraint often hinged on women's initiatives and readiness to take extreme action, even cursing or witchcraft or betrayal of the whereabouts of their menfolk, to force them to negotiate peace when the costs of continued fighting had become unbearable.

Today, Melanesian women's groups and church groups work to broker peace in conflict situations; women participate in reconciliation ceremonies that combine indigenous and Christian symbols; they help to 'bring back home' and rehabilitate alienated young men for whom violence has become a way of life (Saovana-Spriggs 2000). There seems to be a common, repeated pattern that, when things get bad enough, women take decisive action for peace and men eventually listen and respond. One of the most worrying aspects of the crisis in the Solomons is the refusal so far of the warring factions to allow women and the churches, as representatives of civil society, to participate in negotiations for peace. Efforts are being made by the women to ensure that their moral authority in local and domestic spheres and in crisis situations is mobilised at island, provincial and national levels to enable them to participate and contribute effectively as citizens.

### **Conclusion: negative and alternative nationalisms in Melanesia**

I mentioned above the contrived and arbitrary nature of the inherited boundaries of Melanesian states other than Fiji. Recent research, especially by anthropologists, reports that national cultures are locally weak and that in many hinterland areas, especially in Papua New Guinea, the nation is often hardly known or is regarded very negatively (Robbins 1998). Some question the viability or even the necessity of the state in Melanesia, given the 'political and economic integrity of local communities' (Clark 1997, Foster 1995:25–6, Jacobsen 1995, Kelly 1995:263–5, Otto and Thomas 1997:1). For many rural people, their church is more meaningful than the state: churches are embedded in village life and are often the main providers of education and health services, while Christianity has long offered Melanesians membership in pan-Pacific and global moral communities that transcend the doubtful legitimacy of the state.

Increasingly, the opposition of the local and the national in Melanesian states is giving rise to regional identifications, such as to island, province or ethnic group, which people feel are homegrown and more responsive to reciprocal obligations (see, for example, Jorgensen 1996, Nash and Ogan 1990). It is precisely on behalf of assertions to translocal, but subnational, identity that violent assaults have been made on the integrity of the nation-state in Bougainville, Solomon Islands, West Papua and, incipiently, Fiji. The attraction and threat of such identities have seen embattled state authorities adopt 'decentralisation' and 'local empowerment' as goals in recent reform programmes. The gap between 'state' and 'nation' in Melanesia seems to be growing, as local communities away from major centres are less and less engaged in state affairs, and as rival centres for 'national' commitment grow in confidence and legitimacy. In this situation it is vital

that donors, international agencies, NGOs and academics listen to what Melanesians themselves are saying and respond positively to their initiatives and expressed needs, rather than preach to them.

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## **Strengthening communities for peace in Bougainville**

*Helen Hakena, Executive Director, Leitana Nehan Women's Development Agency*

### **Brief history of the conflict**

The armed conflict on Bougainville caused a lot of pain and suffering for innocent people. Atrocities were committed by the armed forces and an estimated 10,000 to 15,000 people were killed. All administrative, social and economic services came to a standstill at the height of the conflict in 1999. Nearly ten years of war have resulted in the almost total destruction of the island's economic and social infrastructures. Health centres and school buildings were burnt to ashes. Government infrastructures were an easy target.

The Bougainville conflict initially started as a land issue among the landowners from Panguna copper mine. There was disagreement about how royalties were being paid. As a result, Francis Ona led a faction which was not happy with the operation of the mine and which demanded more royalties from it. Other major issues included environment concerns, compensation for damage done to the land, employment, and maximum participation of Bougainville in business spinoffs.

Right from the early stages of the mining project, landowners were totally opposed to it. At the same time, there was no proper negotiation between the government, developer and resource owners. The agreements signed did not take on board the real wishes of the resource owners.

In addition, the issue of secession is not new for Bougainville. In the late 1960s, it petitioned the United Nations for the island to be administered by the United States. Many people had a long-harboured resentment against the colonial administration. They felt that Bougainville was getting less attention from the central government and little government service. The lack of genuine response from the national government resulted in the province declaring its independence on 1 September 1975.

At the political level, the Bougainville people realised earlier in the 1960s that the Australian colonial administration was highly centralised and that its decision making processes were dominated by the bureaucracy. Bougainville leaders wanted to see the political process brought closer to their people.

Since it began in 1988, the conflict has escalated to unexpected political, economic and social complexities. It has crippled the nation financially, greatly sabotaging the national economy in the early 1990s. Our people did not expect that such an upheaval would cause so many deaths, suffering and destruction. We were indeed puzzled that what was a land rights struggle could cause the loss of many lives.

### **Experience of women during the conflict**

Women were the victims from day one of the conflict. At its height, freedom of movement to attend to family needs – for example, to go to the garden and collect food – was very much restricted.

The well-being and advancement of women and their important social and economic role was suppressed during the ten-year conflict. There were many unwanted

pregnancies. Many women died during childbirth. It was heartbreaking to see a woman die in front of you. You were helpless to do anything, except cry and cry, even if there was a qualified nurse with you. What could she do with no medicine? Our women were simply not safe and secure, even at home.

The armed conflict had an immense impact on the women of Bougainville. Women felt the most pain, trauma and loss because of their place in the society, for example:

- rape, torture and abuse were inflicted by the armed forces;
- freedom of movement and speech was very restricted. Women were not free to express their views openly on issues affecting them;
- many women died during childbirth;
- many women lost their loved ones (husbands, sons, daughters);
- there was an increase in the number of single mothers;
- many wives were deserted by their husbands; and
- there was a total breakdown of family values.

### **Women's involvement in the peace process**

As a result of the countless problems they encountered, the women have taken an active role in the process of finding a lasting solution to the conflict. The war has taught us many lessons. I am sure the government, churches and private sector have taken stock of all the failures that it created. Women's groups also are very much aware of the lessons of the conflict and many of them are now involved in a number of community rehabilitation programmes.

The conflict has brought about many changes and challenges. New roles are being imposed on our women. In short, new roles need new approaches. We need a new vision that can be put into practice for the betterment of our women. This is an important task that needs expertise and funding. Bougainville will not be the same again politically, economically or socially.

Our women have a special place in our society. They are mothers, teachers, owners of land. They have traditional values and responsibilities. This is to name only a few of their important roles. Bougainville is predominantly a matrilineal society. Under the traditional system, women are responsible for making decisions on the use of the land. The cultural rights of women have been suppressed since foreign colonisation of the island. Women are naturally well placed in the Bougainville social system so that they are well respected by men. This means that women are also in a better position to influence our leaders to restore peace.

There is a great need to strengthen the reconciliation programmes. Also, psychological services for the counselling and healing of women are required. A survey has revealed an alarming statistic: there are more than 2,000 widows in the province. This disadvantaged group needs assistance to support their families and to equally participate in the development of Bougainville. All women need to be given the chance to be involved in decisions that affect their lives.

### **The Leitana peace plan**

The Leitana Nehan Women's Development Agency came into existence as a result of the pain, suffering and violence inflicted on women during the conflict. It is a non government organisation (NGO) based on Bougainville and is registered with the investment promotion authority of Papua New Guinea.

The main aim of the organisation is to reduce gender violence on Bougainville. To this end, it organises workshops and campaigns, carries out community education awareness and advocates on behalf of women on issues affecting them. It also encourages increased support for women's programmes at the national and provincial government levels.

Since the agency was established in 1992 it has helped women and children in the areas of humanitarian relief, rehabilitation, skills training and working for peace and development. Through its network on Bougainville, it provides counselling to women victims of the armed conflict. Simultaneously and in a small way, it provides in-house counselling to women affected by domestic violence. The majority of cases are domestic violence, rape and child abuse victims, but incest, and verbal and sexual harassment are also common. I believe that there are a lot of women on Bougainville who are in need of help but who are unfortunately not able to present themselves for counselling by trained counsellors.

The agency places more emphasis on preventive rather than curative measures. It advocates a non-violent approach to conflict resolution. The following activities are carried out in the effort to reduce the high rate of violence against women:

- raising social awareness about the consumption of homebrew alcohol (this is a major concern related to gender and community violence);
- provision of counselling and support for victims of gender, family and community violence;
- advocacy work to increase awareness of the roles of women in decision making about issues affecting their lives; and
- facilitating community workshops on gender sensitivity.

Women have played a very active role in working alongside government and village elders in attempting to find a peaceful solution to the Bougainville conflict. Their involvement in many peace initiatives has been witnessed by numerous peace ceremonies throughout the island. Women were able to organise themselves and talk to the armed forces on the island to lay down arms. This had proven to be a successful process in most cases.

### **Strengthening Communities for Peace project**

Leitana Nehan Women's Development Agency is currently involved in the Strengthening Communities for Peace project in Bougainville, funded by AusAID and co-managed by the agency and the International Women's Development Agency. Under a two-year agreement (2000–01), the project entails the following programmes: homebrew awareness; counselling; violence against women; advocacy on women's rights; and integral human development. The other programmes carried out by the agency are youth mobilisation and skills training.

The first year of the project (2000) involves volunteers visiting communities and schools and carrying out workshops on homebrew alcohol awareness, violence against women, and counselling. In the second year (2001), the agency will mainly focus on integral human development. The volunteers are located in all areas on Bougainville, supported by the communities.

### **Existing programmes**

The work of rehabilitation and reconciliation on the island is a mammoth task for all parties, including NGOs, who are using their own resources to find a lasting solution to

the conflict. The following groups are heavily involved in the peace process: national and provincial governments; Council of Chiefs; youth; women; churches; and NGOs. Assistance is also provided by Australia and New Zealand and others too numerous to mention.

## **Conclusion**

A lot remains to be done on the peace process. There has to be personal and community reconciliation. I believe that not enough effort is being put into these very important areas in order for Bougainville to enjoy a safe and peaceful future. More rehabilitation and healing programmes are needed.

Although there will always be day-to-day problems and crises along the path towards a lasting peace, it is worth reflecting on just how far the parties have come in barely two years since the peace process started: there has been no fighting during that time.

People are now going about their daily lives without fear, attending to family needs and travelling more widely on the island. The economy is showing the first signs of activity. There is now a ray of hope for the peace process. Things are slowly returning to normal. Children are going back to school, and health centres are providing much-needed health services to the rural masses.

Bougainville women fully support the work done by the national government and Bougainville leaders in finding a lasting peace solution to the conflict. We, the women of Bougainville, endorsed the non-violent approach to the peace process taken by the ex-combatants.

We also very much appreciate, and consider essential, the presence of the Peace Monitoring Group, comprising Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and Vanuatu. The United Nations representatives have done an excellent job and their presence has helped to build confidence throughout the province.

The fragile peace has to be nurtured carefully but we are moving in the right direction. After nine years of fighting, Bougainvilleans have been able to come together and discuss the overall process with open hearts and minds.

Saovana-Spriggs, R, 2000. 'The peace process in Bougainville during the ceasefire period: 1999-2000', *Development Bulletin*, no. 53, pp. 20-22.

## **The peace process in Bougainville during the ceasefire period: 1999-2000**

*Ruth Saovana-Spriggs, Australian National University*

### **Introduction**

This paper considers the sustainability of the peace process within the ceasefire period from 1998 until now. In exploring the peace process, this paper addresses the following questions:

1. If peace continues what are the forces behind its sustainability?
2. What could be the potential destabilising forces?
3. What impact might these forces have on peace?

In early November 2000, media reports within and outside the country have highlighted dissatisfaction over the slow progress on negotiations on the part of the Papua New Guinea government as expressed by the Bougainville leaders and their people.

'Bougainville leaders have expressed that the peace process on the island may collapse if the national leaders and island leaders do not get back to the negotiating table soon to resume the stalled negotiations on the future of the province ...In spite of ten rounds of negotiations over the past 17 months (nine since December 1999), the positions of the National Government and Bougainville on almost all of the key issues remain far apart.'

'In particular, the many joint meetings of officials have made only limited progress towards bridging most of the serious differences between the two positions [highest autonomy and a referendum on independence for Bougainville].'

'Mr. Momis and Mr. Kabui said that the Bougainville leaders were very worried about the growing anger and frustration among Bougainvilleans about the slow progress in the talks. The leaders said that they acknowledge the efforts that the prime minister and his government have made towards resolving the Bougainville conflict. But lack of progress in the political talks over the past few months is eroding the people's confidence. Mr Momis and Mr Kabui said that it has become clear that the officials are unable to resolve the major outstanding differences'. (*The National*, 7 November 2000).

'Guerilla hardliners are urging a pull-out from negotiations here with the Papua New Guinea government...In Gizo, Solomon Islands, the commander of the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA), "General" Ishmael Toroama, has warned that his force will abandon the peace process unless it gains a mutually agreed and iron-clad agreement.' (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 October 2000).

### **Stabilising and destabilising forces**

#### **Stabilising forces**

It is the people who either make or break the peace process. The local and international institutions merely accommodate and provide security and strength to people.

Metaphorically speaking, institutions are power generating storehouses, which continue to energise people as they persevere to maintain the peace process.

Notably, women as a powerful force are one group of people that are seen as the backbone of the process. In contemporary Bougainville, the church institutions form the core of 'what life is all about'. The separation between secular and spiritual lives does not exist in any significant or practical way. Most women's groups are based within the churches. The churches therefore are deeply and intimately connected with women's roles and activities in the peace process. The relationship is one of interconnectedness and inter-dependence.

In an interview this year, a woman from Siwai in South Bougainville passionately related how she and her small group of women turned to the church for direction in how to deal with the young men fighting for Bougainville's independence as members of the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA).

'The fear of harassment and intimidation permeated the area and so no one could publicly express or discuss their opinions and feelings with one another. No one should say anything to anyone and so the women were living in fear. But the women had to break the cycle, they had to be brave, we had to show courage and we knew the Lord was with us, we knew, we knew!'

Prior to this courageous intervention, a small group of women went into a week of what she called 'meditation'. A Catholic Father encouraged and supported them during this time. At the time of the initial meeting with a group of BRA men, the young fighters surrounded them and threatened them by putting bush knives to their necks, calling them 'PNG Army spies' and 'accusing them of pretending to be peacemakers.' But the women stood their ground and requested their attention.

The spokeswoman told the young men, 'We are your Siwai mothers, we are your mothers.' Such a statement was not in any way convincing to the young men because they have mothers of their own. However, the speaker insisted, 'Regardless of that, I am still your Siwai mother.' Of course she was speaking on behalf of the women and broadly implying what the gender female stands for and what it means to them. The peaceful settlement that followed was not just a one-off brave confrontation. Things took many weeks of negotiations but on this occasion, the men calmed down. The speaker attributed the change of behaviour to the work of the power of the Holy Spirit and the support of the church.

Men, old and young, play very important complementary and supportive roles to those of the women but in more public positions. The warring factions also play a very vital role in stabilising and maintaining peace through their efforts and participation in the whole process.

The Bougainville Peoples' Congress formed through a democratic election early 1999 captured and held together the different peace and unity efforts that people were establishing at different parts of the island at different times. It is the body that embraced everyone: the civilians, the BRA, the Resistance —the local militia that sided with the PNG Security Forces — the churches, the youths, and women.

It highlighted:

- Everyone's willingness and determination to establish and maintain peace so that people can begin resettling, rebuilding and re-establishing relationships.
- The incredibly high tolerance and patience Bougainvilleans have shown and continue to exercise considering the delayed and prolonged negotiations between the two parties.

In brief, it is the people and the traditional cultural and introduced institutions, including churches and the Melanesian Peace Foundation, that provide the pillar on which the peace process stands and survives. There are also other organisations such as the international NGOs, the Peace Monitoring Group and the UN Observers' Mission but these are secondary and play a mainly supportive role in the process.

### **Destabilising forces**

One of the major concerns of Bougainville leaders and people is the delaying and bullying tactics used by the Government of Papua New Guinea to stall the peace process. It may not be the government's intention to stall the peace process but it could be a way of telling the Bougainville people that 'Bougainville is an integral part of Papua New Guinea' as reiterated on many occasions in past meetings. Because of this belief and political integrity, there can be no substantial progress on further negotiations. This will be the contesting ground over the years. The problem is 'the lack of recognition of the people's act of will—the freedom to choose'. Here, and well before Papua New Guinea's independence, Bougainville's act of choice has not been adhered to. This is where the heart of the problem lies.

Secondly, time and time again over the years, the Government of Papua New Guinea has reiterated the fact that the Constitution of the nation cannot be changed in any way. This implied that the Bougainville people's demands could not be met because the national Constitution cannot be changed to accommodate their wishes.

This is in spite of numerous changes each successive government has made to the Constitution over the years. These include the provincial government system—an initiative led by the people of Bougainville which caused the very first constitutional crisis before and soon after PNG's newly declared independence; a political settlement between Bougainville and PNG government, when Bougainville threatened to secede from PNG in 1975; and the introduction of a 'Call Out Order' to deploy troops in Bougainville. So how could the Government of Papua New Guinea continue to behave hypocritically towards the people on the island. This stance will be another major stumbling block to stabilising peace on the island.

Thirdly, there has been an insistent requirement by the Government of PNG that the Bougainville people establish a utopian society before the government could give Bougainville substantial political and economic powers. This requirement relates to the law and order problems in Bougainville, which the PNG Government perceives to be a hindrance to normalcy. So the pressure is on the people to fix the law and order problems—in particular the high rate of consumption of home brewed alcohol commonly known as 'jungle juice'. Widespread consumption of alcohol creates havoc in the families and the community and hampers peace.

The problem with this demand is that it does not take into consideration that the country's most notorious law and order problems are in Port Moresby. This paradoxical situation weakens the national government's integrity. Years of corruption amongst leaders of successive governments, heads of departments, and other prominent national institutions provide another startling example of the many paradoxes that loom over PNG. The abuse of power at the highest level results in people's complete lack of trust and confidence in their leaders.

Fourthly, there has been the imposition of reconstruction and rehabilitation programs. These include education reform programs, political reform systems, and now economic reform and the introduction of the free trade zone concept recently agreed to in the parliament. Bougainville is intended as one of the major free trade zones, but this

decision was made without consultation with Bougainvillean leaders (*The National*, 7 November 2000). In none of these developments have the people been consulted. This is in complete contrast to the consultative mechanism introduced and practised in Bougainville in the pre-crisis period. The people are bound to react to these impositions. What is implicated in this behaviour is the fact that, democracy, cooperation and equal participation does not feature in the minds of the bureaucrats and parliamentarians. This is just another major violation of the people's right to decision making.

An example of lack of consultation has been the decision to introduce Australian rabbits as a means of reducing protein deficiency in people's diets. However, Australian rabbits could introduce unknown diseases to both human and domestic animals and breaches the basic principles of Australian quarantine. Although the concept was for the rabbits to be raised in captivity the practical experience elsewhere is that rabbits escape and breed phenomenally quickly. Rabbits' uncontrolled reproductive habits would no doubt lead to destruction of food gardens, the land and the environment generally.

### **Concluding remarks**

There are a number of factors that could undermine the peace process.

First, an underlying objective of the PNG government appears to be to force Bougainvilleans to 'comply' to the Constitution and the current thinking of the national government. This is miscalculated.

Secondly, the concept and practice of democracy is at stake. The number of programs and changes in education, politics and the economy imposed on the population are likely to backfire. There have already been numerous complaints and dissatisfaction about how programs are not meeting the expectations and the aspirations of the people.

Thirdly, there is the issue of power and authority, and ownership of various developmental projects and programs. It is human nature to want to control and direct change, to feel and have the ownership of something, to have authority and exercise it accordingly. This is what the people want to regain from the Government of Papua New Guinea. In their minds and belief, the people own what is known as Bougainville: the land, the resources and the sea. They desire to control these within their own means and not from Port Moresby.

The establishment of the Panguna copper mine is a story of power and authority successfully taken away from the people.

Where does this leave Bougainville and its people in the pursuit of peace? In brief, the bottom line is independence for Bougainville.

## **Restorative justice in Bougainville**

*Patrick Howley, State Society and Governance in Melanesia Project, Australian National University*

### **PEACE Foundation Melanesia**

Bernard Narokobi established PEACE Foundation in 1988 when he was the PNG Minister for Justice. Ever since the Constitution of Papua New Guinea was written in 1973, Narokobi had been searching for ways to bring the law of the land closer to the law of the village – custom law.

PEACE Foundation developed three courses:

- *People skills* provides people with communication skills, tools to study their lives and relationships, and the confidence to discuss and develop ideas of importance to them in their personal lives and village meetings.
- *Conflict resolution* provides skills of facilitation, how to get the best out of a team, win-win mediation for dealing with conflicts such as land disputes, and finally restorative justice for handling conflicts where there is a victim and an offender.
- *Community development* is provided to assist communities to think through their values and priorities and how to go about achieving their goals.

All courses run for two weeks. The training process is adult learning/workshop style and is carried out in the villages. The courses are very popular and there is no difficulty in getting people to attend. Ideally, each course aims to include 30 participants, including village leaders and equal numbers of men and women. We have fallen short on our aims. Village women have more duties in childcare and garden work than men and, often enough, village chiefs find it beneath their dignity to attend courses where the ordinary villager is accepted.

The first courses began in Buka in 1994. In 1995 training began on the mainland, but renewed fighting interrupted courses for a year. On average, the Foundation conducted about 60 courses each year for the period 1994–99. Some people have attended only one course, some two and some three.

PEACE Foundation has divided Bougainville into 13 districts, with coordinators who organise and oversee the training in their districts. We have trained about 50–70 people who are available to conduct courses, and they are supported by more than 500 trained mediators who are capable of handling winwin mediation and restorative justice situations. (I do not have a figure on how many of these mediators are active.) We have found that our female mediators are generally more understanding in the area of restorative justice but, because of their workload, they are not so readily available. More than two-thirds of our mediators are men.

### **Constraints on peace in Bougainville**

In Bougainville, at present, the visitor to Arawa is shocked by the damage to public buildings and infrastructure. The loss of life, and the human rights abuses which occurred during the crisis, are matters which attract the media, and the people in Arawa township and in the villages are frustrated by the anarchy resulting from the activities of

young criminals with guns and by damage to the community and individual health caused by 'homebrew' (also known as 'JJ' or 'jungle juice').

There is another side effect of the crisis which, while not being overlooked, is not gaining the attention that it deserves. Post traumatic stress is a threat which I believe is both enduring and a major danger to the health and economic future of Bougainville.

### **'Rambos'**

Before the crisis began, many young Bougainvilleans around Arawa township and the mine turned to crime as a way of life. On leaving their villages they were cut off from the controls of their community and were challenged by the behaviour of unemployed squatter rascals to make a living from crime. Joe Berenke, the PEACE Foundation coordinator, said of them: 'They were criminals before the crisis, they were criminals during the crisis and they are still criminals'. As the crisis developed, others of like mind joined them. The Nasioi called these people 'Rambos'. As a group they were responsible for most of the extra-judicial killings and torture of the civil war.

### **Resistance and BRA**

Young men who were members of the BRA or the Resistance, even though they fought against each other, see themselves as both patriots and freedom fighters. For the BRA, their worst memories of the crisis are that Bougainvilleans fought against other Bougainvilleans: 'He was black and I am black and he was trying to kill me'. For the Resistance, their greatest trauma arises from the fact that other Bougainvilleans killed and tortured their parents, friends and relatives and that, in self-defence, they joined the Army, not to assist the PNG Government but to protect themselves.

### **Home guard and civilians**

There were many young men who remained civilians, either because they chose to do so or because their parents forbade them to join up. Some of these are suffering post traumatic stress (PTS) because they feel guilty that they took no part with their friends who fought for one side or the other and were killed in the fighting. The home guard, who acted to protect their villages at the request of their own communities, are less affected by PTS because they still have the support and approval of their communities.

### **Children**

Children who were exposed to the worst effects of camp life and the torture inflicted on communities by Rambos took no part in the fighting but are probably the most traumatised group. They were present while their parents and their significant elders were stripped, beaten, dragged behind motor vehicles and subjected to severe humiliation, but because they were not yet even teenagers they did nothing to stop it. Now they are suffering enormous stress because their feelings of shame and guilt are a block to their accepting that, ten years ago, they were weak children, not the strong and healthy adults that they are today.

### **Care centres**

Women who lived in the care centres were horrified at the resulting psychological damage to their children:

They were terrible places. People were crowded together with no privacy; their village groupings were broken up; the network of mutual relationships, associations, interaction

and mutual social obligations was suspended. The cultural glue that binds the villages and people together was lost for ten years. Values were lost and it was impossible to provide the children with the social conditioning which is the basis of behaviour in our villages. Without this glue many people, especially the young, lost their sense of respect and shame. Adultery, stealing, domestic violence, lack of respect for elders and the customs and traditions such as one never experienced in the traditional village became so commonplace that people scarcely remarked on them. The soldiers who administered the camps were often inconsistent and violent when thwarted. They killed suspect BRA and used their position to steal things and demand women to sleep with. Only now are we seeing the moral damage of the camps in our children who are growing up lacking the values of our society. (Maria Kopiku)

In the camps controlled by the BRA, the damage was probably worse. Army choppers hunted BRA hideouts and they had to hide and leave no trace of their presence. This placed severe restrictions on the women particularly. It was most difficult for them to find food for their children. BRA camps were fighting camps and the effect on the children has been worse in terms of conditioned violence and trauma.

### **Anarchy**

Peter Meriki, Chairman of the North Nasioi Council of Chiefs, believes that the greatest problem that Bougainville suffers today is the anarchy brought about by the loss of traditional village values. Young Rambos with guns are still able to act with impunity and use force to take anything they want. Nothing is sacred any more. Favourite targets are government properties, schools, hospitals, motor vehicles and desirable private property. Until the guns are collected, this situation will remain and, until the Rambos are disarmed, there cannot be healing or forgiveness for them.

### **Youths suffering from post traumatic stress**

Ken McDonald is a trained trauma counsellor and headmaster of a new high school at Marbiri which caters for about 50 male students, aged 20–25, in Grades 9 and 10. Most of the students were involved in the fighting during the crisis years Ken McDonald says:

Most of the fifty students here are traumatised. Killing in clean fighting produces the least PTS but extra-judicial killing, torture or being forced to watch while parents and relatives were raped or tortured takes a long time for recovery. Young men suffering from PTS are easily triggered into rage and violence by a word or an act. At school where they have support and understanding, it is not too bad but when they are at home on holidays they drink home brew and when triggered, they act out their stress with house burning, threats backed by violence and violent sex bordering on rape. They are not criminals; rather they are victims of stresses that they are unable to control. This is difficult and painful for the village people to understand and accept and there are people who advocate punishment, jail or expulsion from the community. However recovery depends on their being accepted back by the community. If the community rejects them because of their behaviour they will never recover. Instead of recovery and becoming a useful citizen they will always remain a threat to the village.

### **Restorative justice**

Restorative justice is the most suitable method for dealing with PTS. It is carried out in full view of the community and is monitored by the chiefs. It recognises and condemns the crime but treats the offender as a person who is aware of the harm he has inflicted on the community. It provides him with an opportunity to express his shame and ask the

community to forgive him for what he has done in his frustration and rage. The victim and the community are then able to place on him some ritual penalty to pay for the damage done and to provide a ceremony of forgiveness and reconciliation.

A comparison of the processes used by courts and by restorative justice methods shows that the latter are more likely to meet the needs of youth suffering from PTS.

Of particular importance is the part played by the whole community.

- The village people with their chief, the offender and the victims do not ignore the offence or merely suffer it without response. The victim and community have a safe community structure where they can confront the offender and place him on notice that his behaviour is not acceptable.
- The hurt done to the victim is not ignored. The victim is in a position to express the injury suffered because of the behaviour of the offender. Without the recognition of the victim, there can be no forgiveness, no reintegration of the offender back into the community, and no healing.
- In his 'acting-out', the youth knows that he is doing wrong but feels incapable of restraining himself. When he recovers, he is consumed with shame at his behaviour and has an urgent need to purge himself of the shame. In this condition of mind, the offender welcomes the meeting with the victim and the community because it is in purging himself, doing penance and being forgiven and reconciled with the community that he is able to recover his mental health.
- Finally, the episode provides the community with a forum where they are able to publicly restate their values and draw the ethical boundaries for all to see. By forgiving the offender (but not his behaviour), they are able to get on with their lives in the hope that the community has been reconstituted and strengthened. The act of the offender is used to strengthen the community rather than damage it.

The court system, on the other hand, makes no distinction between offender and behaviour. Once guilt is established, the court goes about punishing the offender, with little reference to his willingness to reform. The court sees the offence as having been committed against the state and it is the state that demands justice. It is hardly surprising, then, that the court scarcely recognises the damage, loss and hurt suffered by the victim or the community.

### **PEACE Foundation mediation activities**

Typical of PEACE Foundation mediation is the one carried out in Buin. In 1996, Francis Kakapona and Joe Nakota (Buin) brokered a ceasefire between Thomas Tarii's BRA and the Resistance. The fighting had left 19 dead and three villages burned to the ground. Francis and Joe shuttled back and forth between the two groups for a fortnight to bring about the ceasefire. Next they arranged an agreement, which included gifts and food to wipe away the bad feelings. When the details were complete, the final ceremony was presided over by the chiefs. Two hundred BRA and Resistance lined up on each side of the table, exchanged their gifts, listened to the speeches and then mingled to shake hands.

Ordinary mediation work is carried out in the villages every day and includes cases such as stealing, insulting language, attempted rape, adultery, runaway children, church fights, families angry at people who fled the crisis, arguments over sawmills and timber, and even murder. Ideally, restorative justice operates in conjunction with the chief's court and the wrongdoer is given the alternative of going to the chief's court or to the

mediator. Unfortunately, there are no chief 's courts because of the presence of guns and the prevailing anarchy. Wrongdoers who choose to defy the community and the chiefs cannot at this time be brought to any kind of judgement.

Tonissen, M, 2000. 'The relationship between development and violence against women in post-conflict Bougainville', *Development Bulletin*, no. 53, pp. 26-28.

## **The relationship between development and violence against women in post-conflict Bougainville**

*Michelle Tonissen, Community Aid Abroad—Oxfam Australia*

### **Introduction**

The number of conflicts fought between and within countries has risen since World War II. One consequence of conflict is increasing violence, especially violence against women. As Sorenson (1997:26) suggests, 'organised violence may be linked to increases in domestic violence, and women may experience an escalation of violence as a result of conflict'. It is, therefore, an important topic of investigation because violence against women is not only a social issue, in health and human rights terms, but also a development issue. This paper examines these issues, using Bougainville as an example of a society that has experienced conflict and where violence against women is prevalent. Key issues will be discussed in the context of the wider Pacific region.

### **Recognition of the development–violence connection**

During the United Nations Decade for Women (1976–85), violence, and particularly violence against women, was acknowledged as an important element in development discussions, not only economically but also socially and culturally. A general definition of violence against women includes domestic verbal and physical abuse, rape and sexual assault, incest, and female genital mutilation (de Bruyn 1995:11). When the UN Conference on Women met in Beijing in September 1995, the issue of violence against women formed a key part of the discussions.

There is little doubt that violence against women is a cost to development in terms of health and loss of productivity, and there are other costs that are not so obvious but that are equally important. Violence prevents women from exercising their rights to achieving social and economic equality, hampers their ability to organise and, ultimately, is a major obstacle to their empowerment and full participation in shaping the economic, social and political life of their countries.

There are still relatively few documented studies on this connection between development and violence against women, and even fewer in the context of a post-conflict society, so there is very little literature from which to draw conclusions. This is particularly the case for Bougainville, which is emerging from nine years of conflict.

Post-conflict violence can follow not only overt warfare but also human rights violations, political violence, or economic and social crises. In post-conflict societies, violence against women in particular may be viewed less importantly, as violence becomes generally pervasive and legitimised. Whether Bougainville is 'post-conflict' is still being debated. According to Harris (1999:40), a post-conflict environment may be characterised by a signed peace accord, a process of political transition through elections or a coup, increased levels of security (broadly defined), and a perception that there is a real opportunity for peace and recovery. Bougainville has elements of all of these key characteristics.

## **Gender relations in Bougainville**

The people of Bougainville can be divided into 19 distinct groups, each with its own language, customs and traditional practices, and a further 35 dialects. These cultural differences were probably closer to the geography and associated patterns of contact with other language groups or islands. Conflict between different groups was commonplace and varied between cultural groupings, but evidence suggests that violence between women and men was less prevalent than in other Pacific societies. A partial explanation may be the matrilineal structure of many of the groups (for example, the Nasioi). Most Bougainvilleans trace their clan through their mothers, and land ownership in most communities is traced through the mother. Although the roles and status of women varied considerably between language and culture groups, the idea of balance and the practice of reciprocity held social responsibilities for both women and men. Because they had designated roles, women and men understood their place in society.

The onset of armed conflict in Bougainville (1988–97) changed many things, not least the roles and responsibilities of women, men and children, and, more importantly, gender relations. Women, in particular, have suffered as a result of the conflict, through the loss of family and friends, reduced levels of trust and security in their society, and the increasing violence against them. Violence in many forms is far more prevalent than before 1988, so much so that there are fears that high levels of violence may be a long-term consequence of the nine-year conflict. Accordingly, there is concern about how best to sustain long-term peace, security and development in Bougainville.

## **Elsewhere in the Pacific**

The end of a war does not automatically lead to the end of insecurity for populations affected by armed conflict. In some parts of the island, especially in central and south Bougainville, the hindrance to the restoration programme is exacerbated by continuing violence. In addition, it appears that women are suffering the consequences of men's disillusionment with change. As El-Bushra and Lopez (1993:7) state: 'in post-war situations, the reintegration of (mostly male) ex-combatants into society gives rise to problems of self-esteem and sense of responsibility for men, who may take out their problems on their women-folk'. This appears to be especially the case in Bougainville, (and more broadly in the Pacific Region). With little or no education, few employment opportunities, boredom and homebrew alcohol in plentiful supply, the level of law and order problems have intensified. Included in this is the issue of violence against women.

Although the following excerpt is about Bougainville, there are rising concerns that this may be becoming an all-too-familiar scene throughout the Pacific:

Power at the barrel of a gun is being misused and abused. It has enabled young men to settle traditional scores which has resulted in in-fighting within families, relatives and clans. Women and children are of course once again in the thick of this confusing state, in some cases being used as shields for protection and to stop the violence.

Men (in Bougainville) vent their frustrations and feelings of helplessness on mothers and children, they become very aggressive and violent, abusive and in most cases bash up their wives and children. (Savaona-Spriggs 1993)

This example highlights the consequences of the interaction between young men, alcohol, guns and conflict, the most serious of which is increased violence against women. Often, the conflict is divided along religious and ethnic lines, which further

intensifies tensions between individuals and villages. Women are often the victims in the campaigns against the 'other side', creating an environment of fear and uncertainty. There is no doubt that social, economic and individual factors have contributed to the intensity of violence against women in Bougainville. People have suffered not only physically, economically, socially and politically, but psychologically as well. If violence against women is to be significantly reduced, then men, women and children will need to examine and adapt their attitudes and behaviours.

Violence against women is now being debated and discussed at national and regional levels in several Pacific Islands. Some of the practical achievements over the last 15 years to address the issue include increased services, law reform, training, research, campaigning and community education. Twenty-three crisis counselling, community education and advocacy programmes have been established in the region, including ones relating to the impact of alcohol and unemployment. In Papua New Guinea, the Simbu Counselling Centre and the Individual and Community Rights Advocacy Forum deliver services for women who are victims/survivors of violence. Similarly, in Fiji, the Women's Crisis Centre has three new branches to cater for increased demand for services. Members of the Pacific Women's Network Against Violence Against Women, such as Leitana Nehan Women's Development Agency (see Helen Hakena's article in this issue), are in complete agreement that the issue of violence against women cannot be adequately addressed without education to change attitudes towards women.

### **Leitana's approach**

Leitana, a Bougainville non government organisation (NGO), is attempting to find ways to challenge the individuals and organisations that have used violence in the past, and not allow them to rationalise its use in the future. Almost all the communities that Leitana works with have common problems relating to violence and alcohol. Leitana works on the assumption that homebrew leads to aggression and violence within the home. Violence is being openly discussed in ways it has not been in the past, in terms of the physical effect – in particular, the abuse and domestic violence towards women – and the consequences this has upon society as a whole. By understanding the influences that have shaped gender relations in Bougainville, organisations like Leitana are better placed to plan policies that address the constraints that hinder women's participation in the development process.

### **Key issues for the future**

Of particular importance to research in societies under stress is the integration of gender analysis into the development process. Success will be achieved if a combination of community-driven decision making and organisational development is implemented. Furthermore, it is important to take a more inclusive approach to human rights and gender in the post-conflict setting and to include women's social, economic and political rights in the discussion. There are several reasons why there should be further support for research and thinking in gender analysis in post-conflict situations. The effects of armed conflict on any community are often devastating in social, economic and cultural terms. Other elements include changes in population balance between men and women, and subsequent changes in the division of labour, often resulting in gender relations being contested, such as increased urban and domestic violence and women being excluded from peace negotiations.

Therefore, it is important to examine gender issues in peace-building initiatives, because conflict is a gendered activity and because women and men experience conflict

differently. Women, as well as men, have a fundamental stake in building peaceful communities. Peace is a prerequisite for achieving the goal of gender equality and women's empowerment and some would argue that such equality is necessary for true peace (broadly defined). A gender and development analysis should, therefore, be an automatic element in the planning of strategies, as it would seek to trace the ways in which changes in the rebuilding of society impact upon gender relations. In particular, it would look at the extent to which women's marginalisation is increased during and after conflict, as well as whether there are opportunities for improving their position as a result of the changing situation.

There are many factors that may enhance, support or detract from the work of organisations like Leitana, in particular, the role that bilateral agencies, NGOs, governments (national and provincial), and structural, cultural and religious actors have in development projects. Funding arrangements may constrain local NGOs, who are often dependent upon outside assistance. External donors may favour an approach that is in contrast to the complexities of the local situation. There is an urgent need to get governments and institutions in power to acknowledge the importance of women in development, by addressing structures that contribute to a continuation of the status quo. This is especially significant in Papua New Guinea, where one province – Bougainville – is attempting cultural change (that is also part of an independence movement), when changes in attitudes towards women are not taking place or are doing so at a slow pace.

Despite what Leitana has achieved in Bougainville, the lack of established structures, particularly in government, church, and law, to deal with gender violence provides another major obstacle to eliminating violence against women. It was not until the late 1980s that the World Council of Churches acknowledged the problem as an issue needed to address, and attempted to create a more active role in implementing the human rights of women within religions and religious institutions.<sup>1</sup> Religious institutions have, until recently, been slow to respond to issues relating to violence against women. In the late 1990s, several publications sought to challenge the silence of the churches around the world in ignoring the issue, and the negative impact that this has upon the development of societies as a whole. In Bougainville, Sister Lorraine and colleagues of the Bougainville Inter-Church Forum are attempting to address issues relating to women and gender through trauma counselling and discussion groups.

Despite positive advances, the most overwhelming impediment is the lack of acknowledgement of the unequal power relations between men and women. Structural change is ultimately influenced by policy planners, the majority of whom are men, who may not be willing to give up their positions of power. Governments must accept that women are part of the development process and must find ways that combine traditional and modern authority, in order to accommodate both men and women and achieve a balance in the political economy of a new Bougainville.

## **Conclusion**

The representation of violence is a fundamental feature of education strategies for violence or against violence, and is particularly important in Bougainville, where violence has been a way of life for over a decade. The work of organisations like Leitana illustrates the creativity and commitment that staff and volunteers have towards raising awareness on issues of violence and development. Women, and their communities, will benefit directly from projects that promote women's rights, address violence against them, and tackle the growing problem of increased use of homebrew and alcoholism.

Leitana is attempting to define a new approach to development, one that is holistic and appropriate in post-conflict Bougainville. To think of development in opposition to culture and tradition will ensure that policy will not be as effective as articulating an approach that has been developed locally.

A post-conflict environment creates new social structures and ways of working, and the political solution it brings may open up new possibilities for development. Violence against women and women in development are important issues of research in their own right, especially when one considers the links between them. It is vital, then, to focus on the relationship between violence and development, particularly as it relates to women in a post-conflict situation.

## Notes

This paper is an edited version of a Minor Thesis, submitted to the University of Melbourne as part of a Masters in Development Studies (Gender and Development).

1. This was acknowledged in the first report written by the UN's Special Rapporteur on violence against women by Christian human rights groups prior to Beijing 1995 (Dutch Human Rights Platform 1995:13, *Violence against women: A Violation of women's human rights*, report of a workshop held during the ECE-NGO Forum, Vienna, October 17–21 1994) and, in the Pacific region, in *Action for equality, development and peace: A challenge to the Christian communities* (1995, World Association for Christian Communication, Pacific Region: Suva).

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## **Reflections on change, ethnicity and conflict: Family and ethnic violence in Papua New Guinea**

*Carol Kidu, Member of Parliament, Port Moresby*

### **Background**

The problem that is crippling development in Papua New Guinea was articulated recently by the Speaker of the National Parliament, the Hon. Bernard Narokobi, when he was launching the UNDP 2000 Human Development Report (UNDP 2000):

Papua New Guinea suffers from a culture of violence which abuses all known human rights . . . [these] abuses often occur outside the accepted legal order, sometimes coinciding with wrong political and cultural practices that [are] now accepted as a way of life.

This is the worrying reality now facing Papua New Guinea: violence and destruction of property have become the common response to conflict situations. This culture of violence sees women getting beaten to death without redress and property being burnt and destroyed in blind payback as people take the law into their own hands. There is increasing frustration at many levels over the inability of the justice system to cope with the enormous complexities of the situation.

To try to understand these complexities, we need to look to our past and our present. I would contend that missionary influence and colonial impact, although well-intentioned and dedicated, had a disempowering effect in many areas. People found that they were no longer truly in control of their lives and a feeling of dependence developed. On top of that has been both the positive and negative impact of Western culture and technology and the growing concern about unmanaged globalisation.

It is 25 years since Papua New Guinea's independence and the enactment of our Constitution. Sadly, we are a long way from achieving the ideals in the Preamble, considering the complexities of:

- a nation of over 800 different languages and tribal groups;
- a nation that is entering the world of modern science and technology in one gigantic leap from technologies based on stone, wood, and shell implements;
- a nation in which traditional, subsistence villages are coming face to face with the bulldozers of globalisation;
- a nation faced with the difficult task of marrying worthy customs and traditional wisdoms of over 800 tribes with the values and customs of foreign cultures; and
- a nation with a widening gap between rich and poor, with growing health and education needs, and with law and order problems.

Since Independence, many people have been progressively marginalised as population increase outstripped the nation's capacity to provide formal education. The pressure on the education system has been building up for many years and stems from the dilemma about how to provide a relevant education for many different sections of society, each with different needs and expectations. In my low-income urban electorate, this is an area of major concern for me:

Firstly, there are approximately 85% of the population who will remain in their own communities. Their major source of employment will be their own subsistence and small community based commercial enterprises. The second group is the 15% or so who will find

formal employment in the slowly increasing government, business and service industries. Further to those two major groups there are the small number of children, who, like those from any other country in the world, have the ability to perform at top international standards. It is vitally important that this group, however small, continue to receive the education that they require to fully realise their potential. The final group is the small but growing number of landless urban youth who are alienated from their village links yet have no prospects of formal employment. This is the group that poses the greatest potential for political instability. It is often argued that the increasing law and order problem in the country, in particular in Port Moresby, has been caused by the inability of the education system to adequately cater for this group of people. (Government of Papua New Guinea, 1999 p.13)

## **Violence and the Constitution**

In the past two decades, family violence, particularly violence against women, has been recognised as a major human rights issue. In June 1993, the World Conference on Human Rights recognised gender based violence as incompatible with the dignity and worth of the human person. In December 1993, the UN General Assembly proclaimed the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women. Domestic violence is not just a Papua New Guinean, or developing country, issue. It is a human rights issue, affecting women, men and children worldwide, that each society must deal with in its own cultural context.

Any form of violence is clearly contrary to the spirit of the PNG Constitution:

- The Preamble states that 'we reject violence and seek consensus as a means of solving our common problems'.
- Section 1 states that the first goal of the National Goals and Directive Principles shall be for 'every person to be dynamically involved in the process of freeing himself or herself from every form of domination or oppression so that each man or woman will have the opportunity to develop as a whole person in relationship with others'.
- Goal No. 2(12) affirms 'recognition of the principles that a complete relationship in marriage rests upon equality of rights and duties of the partners and that responsible parenthood is based on that equality'.
- Under Section 55(1), 'all citizens have the same rights, privileges, obligations, and duties irrespective of race, tribe, place of origin, political opinion, colour, creed, religion, or sex'.
- Section 36(1) provides that no person shall be submitted 'to treatment or punishment (whether physical or mental) that is cruel or otherwise inhuman, or is inconsistent with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person'.
- Schedule 2.1(2) states that a custom which is inconsistent with the Constitution or a statute, or is 'repugnant to the general principles of humanity . . . shall not be applied or enforced'.

That is the answer that must be stated very loudly and very clearly to people who excuse violent behaviour by saying '*pasin bilong* Papua New Guinea' or '*ita eda kara*' (PNG way). The Constitution was framed by the Founding Fathers to protect *all* human rights. In theory, it is more powerful than customary law.

Theory and reality are very different, however, and the reality is that violence and conflict have become major problems in our homes, villages and urban areas. It must be stressed, though, that there are marked differences between ethnic groups and between rural and urban areas.

Anecdotal evidence and limited research indicate an increase in wife beating, child abuse, and rape (including marital rape), in line with the general increase of violence in society. There is a need for much more research (both quantitative and qualitative) so that we can gain a better understanding of the changing nature and incidence of violence, as a basis for policy formulation and for planning interventions that will reverse this worrying trend.

### **Possible causes of increasing domestic violence**

Causal analysis is difficult when it has to be based on anecdotal evidence, as is the case with a lot of family violence, but there are several likely contributing factors:

- Abuse of custom: Brideprice was traditionally an exchange of wealth between clans or tribes which established mutual obligations and 'protocols'. In many areas, it was actually a protection for women but nowadays it is a commercialised transaction that can turn them into mere chattels to be bought. Polygamy has become serial marriage in many places, with women and children being the victims, often of physical violence. And *pasin bilong yumi* is being used to sanction male dominance.
- Breakdown of traditional protective customs: Women (for example, senior aunts) used to act as peacemakers but are now rarely used in conflict resolution; chaperoning is disappearing; and peacemaking customs within extended families (for example, *badu hereva*) are breaking down.
- Introduction of mass media with too much violence.
- Alcohol and drugs.
- Frustration, anger and resentment/jealousy.
- Inability of present structures and procedures to deal with the situation in a restorative way.
- Continuing attitudes of male dominance and differential rates of social change.
- Increasing rapid urbanisation that dislocates people.

### **Progress in dealing with domestic violence**

In the early 1980s, domestic violence was recognised as a matter of public importance and the then Minister for Justice, Tony Bais MP, asked the Law Reform Commission to report to him on the issue. A lot of research and work was undertaken and the commission's final report (Report No. 14) was presented to Narokobi (then Minister for Justice) in 1992. The ten-year period was marked by some excellent public awareness campaigns, extensive surveys and proposed amendments to existing legislation. The Domestic Violence Report made 54 recommendations.

Unfortunately, since then the momentum has slowed. The legislative as well as the social recommendations of the original report have recently been reviewed. But neither review has yet been to parliament, although one of my recommended legislative amendments has been passed as a private member's bill.

The YWCA is playing a very strong advocacy role and, with assistance from various donor agencies, has been conducting public forums and other activities to raise awareness of the worrying levels of violence. These are gaining good media coverage and are undoubtedly having a subtle influence on public thinking.

As one of the activities to commemorate Papua New Guinea's Silver Jubilee in September, a two-day workshop on domestic violence was held, with the aim of coordinating all the past workshops, reports and activities into a more integrated

approach to deal with the problem. This workshop, instigated by the Institute of National Affairs, was funded with help from the British High Commission and AusAID. Its report is not yet ready, but follow-up preparation of an action plan is receiving funding assistance from the British High Commission and possibly other sources. It should be successful in moving the whole issue forward, because it is running parallel with and in consultation with bureaucratic developments but is NGO, church and private sector driven.

### **Proposed domestic violence legislation**

A submission concerning the legislative recommendations of the Domestic Violence Report has been prepared by the Law Reform Commission for the minister to take to cabinet. It is anticipated that this will be enacted as government legislation in the near future.

A private member's bill from Narokobi (when Leader of the Opposition) proposed making polygamy in any form illegal. This bill has now been taken up by the Hon. Stephen Pokawin since the original sponsor became Speaker. However, I believe it is unlikely to be passed in its present form for a variety of reasons.

I have a private member's bill on child sexual abuse, plus some amendments to the present legislation on rape, in preparation for review and further amendments before it goes to parliament.

My amendment to the Village Court Act, making it mandatory for each village court to include at least one female village magistrate, was unanimously passed in July 2000. It now needs to be publicised through the women's networks so that they can lobby for its implementation on the ground.

### **Violence in communities**

Narokobi's contention that Papua New Guinea suffers from all forms of violence is certainly true in the capital city of Port Moresby. Besides family violence, the rapidly increasing urban population is faced with the violence of 'rascalism', based in a youth gang culture, and with the tensions of ethnic violence, based in customary responses to conflict situations. It cannot be denied that containing the escalating breakdown in law and order is perhaps our greatest challenge to sustainable development.

The situation we are facing is largely a result of many years of what I call the 'violence of neglect', which has left people frustrated, disempowered and increasingly poorer. This violence of neglect is not something that I will develop here, except to state the urgent need for integrated and comprehensive community based development programmes designed for maximum impact at minimum cost. It is going to need a gigantic effort at both the community level, to break the cargo-cult dependency syndrome that has developed, and at the political and bureaucratic level, to make decision making and service delivery responsive to people's real needs and accountable to principles of good governance.

### **'Rascalism'**

Youth gang subcultures have been a reality in Papua New Guinea, particularly Port Moresby, for over two decades. They are perhaps a by-product of the inability of the system to provide education opportunities for all. They began as a nuisance, with gangs claiming 'territorial areas' and sustaining themselves through criminal activity. They have grown to become highly organised and sometimes ruthlessly violent gangs, who

basically hold everyone to ransom through the atmosphere of fear that now permeates society.

Papua New Guinea is a young nation and it is a nation made up of young people. Youth make up almost half of our population and until we address this reality effectively, in terms of ensuring opportunities and a sense of hope, we will be sharpening only one side of a double-edged sword. There is no point in planning policies for peace if we do not address the violence of neglect.

During my visit to Bomana prison for Independence celebrations, the prisoners, most of whom are youth, spoke frankly and honestly of their belief that Papua New Guinea has two sets of laws in terms of implementation nowadays. They were rightly critical of the fact that some leaders have 'stolen' large sums of public money by misappropriation and mismanagement for pure greed, whereas people stealing for survival are treated very harshly.

The reality for most youth in PNG is well expressed in this poem:

One world, two worlds, And I stand in between.

Old world and new world, I am your divided child.

It is a reality that has serious implications for the mental health of our youth, who create their own fantasy world with false empowerment from abuse of alcohol and drugs (mainly marijuana) combined with guns and violence.

### **Changing nature of ethnic violence**

There is no one country in Papua New Guinea . . . There are hundreds of countries in Papua New Guinea and we are trying to make them into one great country.

Tribal fighting was the traditional response to conflict between groups in Papua New Guinea. Whereas the longer 'pacifying' influence of missionaries and colonial rule in coastal areas brought a virtual end to tribal fighting, in the Highlands region it remains a major problem in many areas.

With the increasing rural-to-urban drift, ethnic enclaves are developing throughout Port Moresby, and tribal customary law is regularly imposed outside the parameters of the legal system, sometimes blatantly ignoring the basic principles of universal justice that are needed in a cosmopolitan city.

The difficulty lies not in the new ideas but in escaping from the old ones, which ramify, for those brought up as most of us have been, into every corner of our minds. This difficulty is compounded by the fact that what is practised now is a new version of old customs. Tribal and clan fighting was traditionally regulated and stage-managed by adherence to strict rules imposed by the elders. Nowadays, the elders cannot control situations, the rules are being ignored and high-powered weapons have been introduced to tribal fighting, with money and politics having a big influence.

During debate on the passage of the Intergroup Fighting (Amendment) Bill in March 2000, the seriousness of the situation to human life and to stopping the development process was well illustrated by many MPs. Baki Reipa, Kainantu MP, described the harsh reality of tribal fighting in part of his electorate:

- about 40 people have been killed in the ongoing conflict;
- K470,000 of electorate development funds allocated to assist police is still insufficient to deal with the situation;
- several schools have been closed;
- the only health centre has been closed;
- the Okapa road has been closed;

- women are dying in childbirth and children are dying of preventable diseases because there is no access to medical help; and
- there are continuing problems with gun trading.

Some Highlands MPs have called for greater regional control on law and order enforcement to allow for public hangings in lawless situations.

In urban electorates such as mine, the incidence of ethnic clashes and senseless killings and destruction of property is growing with the increased rate of unmanaged urbanisation. Recently, we had serious incidents in three different communities. I spent all afternoon in one community in my electorate in an attempt to defuse the volatile situation but felt complete frustration over the inadequacies of the formal legal system to deal with such situations. It prompted me to ask a Question Without Notice in parliament, emphasising the need for us to address the problems of the conflict between custom and the law in tribal clashes.

On a positive note, however, on the same day, the Minister for Justice presented to parliament a progressive policy document from the law and justice sector. It has some excellent recommendations on restorative justice. I hope that these recommendations will receive both political and bureaucratic support and the necessary resource allocations for implementation. Without genuine support from the state to communities, there is little hope of turning the tide of violence and the breakdown in law and order in Papua New Guinea. This policy document on restorative justice is a major step forward.

### **Peacemaking policies**

It is important to take a multisectoral, integrated approach in developing peacemaking policies, because the issues involved are extremely complex and the law enforcement agencies cannot be expected to deal with all of them. I make a few general suggestions:

- Training for transformation in communities and developing principles of good governance at all levels of society must be pivotal in the whole process of peacemaking – peace and good governance are two sides of one coin.
- Comprehensive community based programmes for individual and community empowerment and sustainable development must be part of the process. Civil society must break free from the dependency syndrome and introduce community strengthening and capacity building. The violence of neglect must be reversed – peacemaking and poverty reduction through empowerment are two sides of another coin.
- The peacemaking process must be inclusive and the role of women and youth must be clearly defined, mainstreamed and visible.

It is important to note that a lot of good work is being done. Many churches have established social concerns committees, and several NGOs are working in urban settlements and villages. PEACE Foundation Melanesia, for example, has been running courses on people skills, conflict resolution, and community planning.

Maxine Pitts emphasises the necessity for both informal and formal methods of crime control:

In view of public expressions concerning crime, I conclude that the control of crime in PNG is not just a 'social' issue as politicians suggest. It is more a leadership issue which links with resource equity and availability. I also conclude that informal methods of crime control which preserve human rights will not work in isolation from state controls and that to be sustained they need a variety of state services and other resources. Universally, citizens want their leaders to lead and create order. PNG citizens admire strength and consistency

in those leaders who have the courage of their convictions, high moral codes of behaviour and provide visions that translate into practical benefits.

My research points repeatedly to the fact that informal methods of crime control will be enhanced when the public sector is diligent in basic administrative practice and are supported by politicians in their efforts . . . In a transparent environment I believe resources will increase to communities and PNG citizens will have greater incentive to maintain social order and become enthusiastic practitioners of crime control strategies that respect shared values and beliefs and link with state driven initiatives to preserve human rights. (Pitts 1999)

## **Conclusion**

Although our Constitution states that 'we reject violence and seek consensus as a means of solving our common problems', we seem to be further from that ideal than ever before:

Our challenge is to move forward from articulating the ideals in the Constitution and from juridical legal postulates of 'thou shalt nots', to a vision of hope, a set of values all of us will cherish as dear to our hearts . . . A massive national campaign to persuade everyone to accept human rights as a statement of faith and hope is most urgent.

We must urgently face the fact that British common law, which was imposed and which is in fact inappropriate and *not* common, is a superficial veneer that has worn thin. We must develop an acceptable Melanesian common law, based in custom but adhering to universally accepted principles of human rights and justice.

This is a complex and difficult issue, because facts become confused with emotions in any volatile situation and because commonsense and reason are often forgotten. But it is an issue that must be addressed at all levels of society because, as long as there is conflict in our communities, the processes of sustainable development cannot take place.

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## **Violence and peacemaking in Papua New Guinea: A realistic assessment of the social and cultural issues at grassroots level**

*Martha Macintyre, Centre for the Study of Health and Society, The University of Melbourne*

### **Introduction**

These are my own observations drawn from my experiences of living and working in Papua New Guinea over the last 22 years. I am not speaking *for* any of the women with whom I have lived and worked – I know that some would agree with some of my views and others would not. Some of my ideas have developed in the context of discussions of the problem that violence poses for women in their everyday lives. In conversations I have often been struck by the force with which women have articulated their suffering at the hands of men. But such vehemence is rarely enunciated publicly. Women's public status, condoned male violence, the law – both formal and traditional – and the ways in which it is interpreted and implemented, are crucial elements in the lack of attention paid to women's views and opinions.

The growing gap between young people and their parents and grandparents, and the ways in which young people are exposed to images and values that glorify violence, are underlying factors in the generation of this 'culture of violence' that permeates the lives of the impoverished urban poor in Papua New Guinea. While there is much talk about the success of Melanesian traditions of negotiation, compromise and solving problems by talking them out, there are numerous instances where these methods have conspicuously failed to bring about peace and harmony. Continuing local tensions in Bougainville, in areas of the Highlands and in other rural areas reveal the lack of culturally accepted alternatives for attaining political ends and settling disagreements that have arisen in the context of economic and social change in an independent nation.

Papua New Guinea is a violent society. There are some areas of the country where tribal warfare is now endemic, resulting in the deaths of many men and the loss of houses, gardens, coffee plantations and livestock. International comparative studies of crimes of violence indicate that Papua New Guinea ranks third in the world in terms of victim rates. Police killings and police violence against suspected offenders are common occurrences. The majority of public complaints against police are for acts of violence. Some have attempted to modify this image by contrasting rates and incidence with other 'first world' countries, but these games with figures cannot obscure the fact that most urban Papua New Guineans live in fear of violence and many rural people do too. The crime rates of Queensland – where records are kept, where members of the public report offences expecting them to be acted upon, where most killings are recorded as crimes – look high, and for those who want to present a rosy picture of Papua New Guinea by drawing parallels such contrasts can serve them well. But, once we acknowledge the fact that most crimes, especially those of violence against women, are unreported, that police records are often inaccurate, that most crimes are dealt with by 'rough justice' or not at all, the situation in Papua New Guinea is bleak.

In towns such as Port Moresby and Lae, women live in fear of rape and assault. The statistics estimating violence against women indicate that as many as 70 per cent of all women are beaten by their husbands. The most common place for assault is inside the

home. This violence is largely condoned by men and accepted by women. Men condone it because they believe that they are entitled to physically punish a wife who has, in their eyes, committed some wrong. Women accept it for a variety of reasons: because they are economically dependent on their husbands; because they do not want to break up the family; because they accept the right of a husband to beat them; or because they have nowhere to go to escape.

## **Responses to violence**

The response to violence varies from place to place in Papua New Guinea. In some areas, there are cultural constraints whereby people readily intervene whenever violence breaks out. Traditionally, in the region of Milne Bay, where I have done research, women, especially older women, could stop men from fighting or prevent the death of a war captive by stepping between them and either holding up one of her skirts or laying it on the shoulders of the captive. Similarly in some areas of Bougainville, women could surround a person who was being attacked and so prevent further injury. But I thought too of the Guadalcanal woman in Solomons who refused to hand over her niece to be raped by Malaitan men – she was violently assaulted.

Recently on television, I saw a film clip of women confronting armed soldiers in Chiapas in Mexico. There were hundreds of them and they held up their children, daring the soldiers to shoot unarmed women and children as they would have shot their menfolk. I wondered about this action – one that has many precedents in many different countries, but not in Papua New Guinea. I discussed this with some of the women working on the project with me and they said simply that, in their experience of reprisal raids by mobile squads, when women did attempt to stop the destruction, they were attacked too. Rules of chivalry did not apply. In tribal fights, women are as much the targets of attacks as men and rape is often a major way of attacking.

It appears to be now very rare for women to attempt to actively prevent or stop public violence. When men are armed with weapons, women fear for their own lives. Few *men* intervene to prevent violence against women, even when the woman is a sister. Many police report that women were beaten while others, including other family members, looked on. My own interviews with women in Port Moresby revealed numerous cases where a woman was assaulted in a public place and nobody came to her assistance. Sometimes, people stand and watch an assault as if it is a form of entertainment.

The taste for violence as an exciting activity is constantly fostered in contemporary Papua New Guinea, with videos and TV shows that depict and glorify violence being the most popular forms of entertainment. It is not just the raskols who long to be 'Rambos'; just look at the members of the defence force in Bougainville, the police mobile squad members, the men fighting tribal wars in the Eastern Highlands, the disaffected unemployed youth in small towns, the Malaitan and Guadalcanal men swaggering around with bandanas and baggy army clothes – all emulate the style of dress and the arrogant stance familiar from advertisements and films. Violence is glamorous masculinity in Melanesia.

In recent years, I have often sat in houses while a video is on – Bruce Lee, Sylvester Stallone, assorted other musclemen whose main activity and aim in life is to take the law into their own hands by inflicting injury and death on those who have in some way offended them. The women of the household usually sit quietly and watch with interest and without comment. On the occasions when I have asked women what they think of these films, they have shrugged or expressed some puzzlement. While I sit grossly offended by the values, the violence and the glorification of brute force, most of the

women accept these films as something that belongs to the world of men. Few appear troubled by the ways in which their sons imitate the behaviours they observe.

A whole generation of young men has grown up without learning the skills of gardening and nor do they want to do so. The life of a fighter, the thrill of combat and the glamour of swaggering around as a 'Rambo' are hard to lay aside. Men disarm under orders from their male leaders, not because of the prayers and pleas of their mothers and wives. They make 'jungle juice' and sit around reliving the glories of warriorhood. They get in a banana boat (probably bought with aid money) and go down to Gizo in Western Solomons, strutting around the town brandishing their weapons and spoiling for a fight. The fighting between Malaitans and Guadalcanal people becomes their excuse for threatening to murder Malaitans, for killing a man and then dashing back to Bougainville.

The cultural acceptance of male violence as a response to anger or frustration and the social acceptability of violent punishments underlie the problems facing peacemakers. Working in an area where there is a goldmining project, I have on several occasions observed meetings where decisions to blockade, or otherwise take a confrontational stance, have been made. Women do not usually attend these meetings; if they do, they sit in at the back, quietly. When the heady, angry talk is raging and men are whipping up emotions and threatening violence, women are absent, or their voices are silent.

### **Women's lack of representation**

The exclusion of women from public political decision making in traditional societies is well-documented for Papua New Guinea. In a modern nation-state which enshrines equal rights for all men and women, the lack of women in political roles is discriminatory and unjustifiable. Whereas it was accepted that in the past men, as husbands and brothers, adequately represented the interests of their wives and sisters in political processes, such a view is untenable in the modern context. If this were true, the Bougainville conflict would not have dragged on for a decade. Men listened to women when they finally got sick of fighting – not when their wives died in childbirth because of the lack of hospital facilities; not when women were being routinely raped by soldiers, police and other Bougainvillean men; not when women had to struggle to find food for their families away from their villages. Women had no political presence when so-called peace talks were foundering. Violence by men was constantly met by counter-violence. Rapes were avenged by rapes, killings by killings.

Even now, as the slow process of reconstruction has begun and various non government organisations (NGOs) attempt to assist in transforming the devastation, the rhetoric about women's centrality is belied by the reality on the ground. This is not to deny the significance of the roles of some women, but to insist that these few women not be seen as typifying the situation of women. Reading the NGO reports, listening to the stories of women who are involved in projects, two things stand out: that women's organisations are heavily dependent on outside funding, and that, in projects aimed at reconstruction and development, men are the major decision makers and beneficiaries. One woman, working on the community policing project, recounted how often she had to press for women's views to be elicited and how scornful the men were about her insistence. In many villages, the burden of subsistence work falls heavily on women. They do not have time to be involved in development projects. They have to produce food, collect firewood and water, wash clothes and look after the needs of their families.

The separation of men's and women's spheres of authoritative action is regularly appealed to in Melanesia. Men use it to justify the exclusion of women from political decision making; women use it to cling on to the notion that they have influence within the domestic, familial sphere that can be indirectly applied to other areas. Yet there is little evidence of this influence in the modern political process. Women on Bougainville were praying for peace almost from the moment that fighting broke out. The destruction of roads, hospitals and aid posts meant that they suffered. The burning of schools and other government buildings meant that their children suffered. They were powerless to protect their interests and those of their children in the face of destructive male violence.

It is in the area of women's health that their lack of representation in political decision making and in the implementation processes manifests itself most negatively. Papua New Guinean women's health defies the 'rule' that economic development results in an improvement in maternal health. The death rates and the life expectancy of women are worse in Papua New Guinea than in Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, which are poorer countries with lower literacy rates. National health policies have for years observed the poor health of women and been committed to improving it. The policies are there but, when budget decisions are made, health gets cut.

Similarly with law reform and police policies. There is constant talk about government responses to 'law and order' but no funding for improvements in policing. It is no use training people and stressing improved performance and response when the basic facilities are inadequate – phone bills unpaid mean that station phones are cut off and people cannot contact the police by phone. A person can call and their report will be taken, but there are no vehicles so there is no immediate response. Delays in response mean that people commit crimes knowing that their chances of getting away with it are good. In Port Moresby, crime pays. For many young men it is their livelihood. The funds required to improve police performance are simply never forthcoming. The training of police in community policing strategies will lead nowhere if police never have enough vehicles to go outside their stations.

### **Can violence be addressed?**

Papua New Guinea has had extensive 'awareness' campaigns on the problems of domestic violence. The term itself is recognised by women who know only a little pidgin. Police are all familiar with the idea and the slogan that domestic violence is a crime, yet the problems of police inaction, of sending women complainants away, persist. Policemen themselves are among the worst perpetrators of domestic violence.

Most recently, my work has involved assisting community policing officers in conducting workshops on crimes against women. The majority of people attending are women, the solutions that we arrive at invariably involve actions by men – men are the problem, after all – but the institutional authority to implement policies that would improve the situation lies in men's hands and they do not see the solutions as being in their interests.

The separation of spheres of influence and activity based on customary gender role distinctions creates some interpretative problems for outside observers. Over the years, working on different projects, I have often been struck by the ways in which women can analyse and articulate the social problems they face. In the context of their own organisations, they often appear to have better political skills than many Papua New Guinean men. They are dignified, intelligent and articulate in their ways of interaction with each other and with Europeans with whom they are working. I often leave such

meetings feeling incredibly inspired and filled with admiration for such women. They work tirelessly in NGOs and other groups, trying to improve the lives of other women.

But these extraordinary talents are rarely exercised jointly with men. Integrating women into development projects has proven very difficult; if there is any money around, men find ways of getting it and women can always be sidelined. In meetings when men are present, these wonderful articulate women often remain silent or their voices are drowned out by those of the men.

Even worse, from the perspective of trying to work out projects that will improve the lives of women, the political tensions between different women and their organisations often hinder and obstruct implementation. Differences of opinion and struggles over funding often fragment women's organisations, rendering them ineffective. Men are often obstructive – refusing to allow women to attend meetings or to travel, insisting that they control the money that women earn. The failure of income-generating projects for women and the tensions associated with women's organisations are issues that are inadequately dealt with by agencies supporting these organisations.

Peacemaking in wars is reacting to situations that have, in the main, been created by men who refuse to compromise and youths who are caught up in the glamour of violence, who enjoy the freedom from constraint. The prevention of conflict and the refusal to accept or tolerate violence are a much more difficult political task, mainly because women's voices are usually outside the political arena. At present in Papua New Guinea, women's interests are subsumed by men's. Men fight because they perceive that there are political gains to be made. Many of the women with whom I work think that the economic and social costs of those political gains are too great, but they remain excluded from the institutions that define political interests and so they are unable to change the circumstances that give rise to conflict and violence.

## **Conclusion**

The title of my article refers to a 'realistic assessment'. Realism requires interventionist responses that are going to be very difficult, and before any real peacemaking can occur in the most profound ways – those that bring about a peaceful society – there needs to be a realistic assessment of the social and cultural origins of the problem and the ways in which male violence is now enacted with powerful weapons. The material advantages that men have gained by controlling weapons must be acknowledged. There needs to be disarmament both literally, in the case of the Solomons, Bougainville and various other parts of Papua New Guinea, and figuratively, in respect of those men who see themselves as entitled to inflict violence on other men and on their women. There also needs to be a recognition that raising awareness among women is only part of the solution; the socialisation of boys and men is the other, more problematic dimension of this issue.

The peacemaking activities of women demonstrate their political abilities, just as they enable women to develop ideals of the ways in which they want their society to improve and change. Twenty-five years after Independence, women are still not equal participants in the political, social and economic processes that will determine improvements in the future. Peacemaking is mopping up after the men have made a mess of things; the real task is trying to ensure women's full political representation and participation so that these messes do not arise.

Lipset, D, 2000. 'Gender, culture and conflict resolution among the Murik of the Sepik River, Papua New Guinea', *Development Bulletin*, no. 53, pp. 38-40.

## **Gender, culture and conflict resolution among the Murik of the Sepik River, Papua New Guinea**

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### **Introduction**

One of the main empirical contributions of cultural anthropology to the study of conflict resolution in Papua New Guinea has been to report on fine-grained case studies of the management or regulation of disputes, many of which involved sexual jealousies or domestic violence. Theoretically, many cultural anthropologists have followed a Durkheimian framework. That is, they have sought to relate conflict to remedies and legal processes, not from above (for example, to the monopoly of legitimate violence held by a state) but from below (for example, to the relative solidarity of disputants). They have stressed, for instance, the social range of their relationship, measured in terms of power differentials, wealth, group size and so forth (see, for example, Koch et al. 1977, Malinowski 1926).

In my book *Mangrove Man* (Lipset 1997), I sought to bring another kind of anthropological expertise to bear on the question of conflict resolution – namely, to explicate a ritual remedy as a cultural system of meaning. In doing so, I argued that, among the Murik Lakes people of the 1980s and early 1990s, a major source of conflict continually arose from tensions between men and women over alienated affection. The ritual resolution of these tensions symbolically recreated a moral image of nurturant generosity, of a good mother feeding dependent children. In other words, the construction of moral order in Murik culture drew upon a feminised image of maternity to which either gender might appeal when the need arose. Conflict typically resulted from the sexual rivalries of men over women, and vice versa, and conflict resolution, as I watched it during this time, recreated an ideal of nurture and quietism that the Murik implicitly associate with the dependency of children upon their mothers. The relationship of gender to the culture of social control among the Murik could not be any more comprehensive.

### **Murik society**

The Murik live in small, kinship based villages that are located on the edge of a big system of brackish lagoons at the mouth of the Sepik River. In the 1980s and early 1990s, their society remained relatively isolated from the state and its judicial systems. Since Independence (in 1975), therefore, the people have found themselves largely left to their own devices, with respect to conflict management.

My research began in 1981 and has since continued on an intermittent basis. In the 1980s, during which I made three field trips to the Murik Lakes, the villages were repeatedly divided by conflicts that had broken out because of sexually motivated rivalries among male youth about women.

I concluded that, as a system of cultural meaning among the Murik, reproduction, conflict and conflict resolution are nothing more than a recreation of each other. The same process that is constantly enacted between men and women during reproduction is symbolically recreated when conflict breaks out and is ritually resolved. And, reciprocally, the process of conflict and conflict resolution is recreated during the sexual

reproduction of children. I admit that this assertion is somewhat counter-intuitive to Western ears. But I have watched the (public parts of the) two processes unfold many times over the years. Let me explain what I mean more fully.

Following intercourse, a woman's body becomes pregnant. It is held to be beset by mystical impurities and it becomes vulnerable to sorcery attack. A woman must then be quarantined from the public. She stays home and removes herself from collective life after her pregnancy becomes visible. The culmination of gestation – birthing – at once threatens and reproduces moral order. The woman is sent to a birth-house, located on the edge of the community. This exclusion is meant to protect men, in particular, from contact with the very toxic impurities of childbirth. Just after a baby is born, a knot is tied above its body in order to secure the soul. Mother and child are then sequestered at home for several more months, until the newborn is brought down from the house and introduced to the village by his mother's brother or father's sister, depending upon the baby's gender. He or she is decorated in ceremonial regalia at this time and the male cult prepares a sacred porridge for the pleasure of the community.

### **The Murik process of conflict and conflict resolution**

The Murik ethnotheory of the process of conflict and conflict resolution advances in four discrete and quite explicit phases:

- 1 'private' tensions between coeval youths arise from sexual jealousies, which often come to a head when a girl becomes pregnant;
- 2 these tensions may escalate into wider violence and go on until
- 3 they are suspended by the institution of avoidance relations that may be
- 4 resolved by the exchange of reciprocal feasts and the display of ceremonial regalia, should the parties agree.

Symbolically, in the course of this process, mystical pollution becomes transformed into a pure image of the body, adorned with regalia, bound with knots, weighted down by abundant prestations and renewed commensality. Ridding the body of pollution symbolically recapitulates the process of procreative reproduction as it is locally understood.

The avoidance phase of the conflict resolution process is their equivalent of the defiled, 'gestative' phase of pregnancy, when the maternal body is withdrawn from the community. Like pregnant women, the parties may not eat together during this period. They must restrict all domestic contact until they have renewed their relationship by exchanging reciprocal feasts, that is, until they have been reborn and have 'mothered' each other via ritual acts of nurture, and recreated their relations as moral, as between 'mothers and children'. An exchange of tobacco and betel-nuts may also re-establish moral relations between conflicting parties, particularly if the dispute has been between individuals and not allied groups.

During an extended truce/avoidance period that was established between feuding villages in 1981–82, the parties physically turned when paddling past the community of their rival so as not to cast their eyes upon it. The major toll of the avoidance was felt by kin and affines in the two villages, who would have otherwise engaged in ongoing trade relations of foodstuffs during which time they would have enjoyed generous commensality, or 'visiting trade' as it is commonly known. Thus, the avoidance relationship that is instituted between parties creates a ban on eating together, which taboo is then lifted during the peacemaking rite.

## The role of food in resolving conflict

In addition to dyadic rivalries, all levels or scales of conflict may be and are settled through the exchange of food – for example, between in-laws, between senior and junior generations of a community over leadership issues, between the directors and the members of a fishing cooperative over decision making, among a sago-processing work group, between birth and adoptive parents. But the solution to conflict is one and the same:

- In 1980, Lady had an affair with Malai and soon afterwards split up with her husband, William Aumbe. The two youths got into a fistfight on the sidelines of a soccer game some weeks later. Over a brief period of several weeks, their conflict escalated until two entire villages were pitted against each other. A meeting took place in the male spirit-house of a neutral village. A taboo was instituted which was meant to be observed until the two villages exchanged reciprocal pig feasts. Eighteen months passed. The visitors tied ginger leaves on the piles of all the buildings of their hosts and were treated to a day-long feast. Individual hosts made compensation payments. Speeches were made revealing common ancestry, ceremonial regalia and other cross-cutting relationships. Peace resumed immediately (see Lipset 1997).
- Sembu had a verbal fight with Bilau, her daughter's husband. 'I have not eaten fish he has shot since we argued', she told me. In 1982, in order to conclude the period of avoidance they had observed, Bilau gave his mother-in-law a fish, which she cooked and ate, and she presented him with a meal of fish and sago-pudding.
- In 1982, a work group had gone to process sago near a neighbouring village of trading partners. A feeling of bitterness arose that they were gone overly long. After they returned, food was brought to the men's spirit-house that was sponsored by the workers. The meal was said 'to silence their complaints'. The village counsellor stood to explain that the work group had faced several problems while away. Their hosts had asked them to help clear away overgrowth in a channel that connected the two villages. The plates were divided in half to be consumed by people who had been complaining and by the work group. A senior man, representing the former, stood and declared, 'Thank you for preparing food for us. We are very happy indeed.'
- In 1981, tension developed within a fishing cooperative. The directors had asked the villagers to contribute their catch without being paid in order to help the cooperative to pay off some debts. This plan was changed by the directors without the knowledge of the villagers, who complained bitterly. Some fishermen were paid while others were not. Early in the morning, a long, tense discussion ensued in the men's spirit-house about the inconsistency of the directors. Later in the afternoon, food began to arrive in the men's house. A large number of plates of fish and rice, and fish and sago pudding, covered the central area of the large floor. It was then divided in half, 'one for the people and the other for the directors'. People got up and moved across the floor: the directors moved to the side of the room where the people had been sitting, and the people walked over and sat down in the space which the directors had formerly occupied.

Why do I say that the Murik associate food-giving with motherhood and therefore avoidance relations as a denial of it? There are several other contexts in which food-giving stands as the definitive role of important statuses in the culture. One of the

primary duties of ceremonial leaders is to make feasts and offer hospitality to visiting dignitaries, important trading partners, and the like. The primary duty of elder siblings is similarly to provide for every request of younger brothers and sisters, of which the most common is food-giving. Both of these roles, which stand as moral exemplars in Murik society, are explicitly likened by Murik informants to that of 'mothers'.

This maternal analogy is evident in the expression for the guidance an elder may offer a younger man who is organising his first feast. Such advice is said 'to give' the junior man 'strength' to stage-manage the delicate event. Idiomatically, the elder is said to be giving him 'suckle from his breast', suckling him with his counsel rather than with his fluids. For the Murik, the peace, pleasure and intoxicated satisfaction which they value in the bliss of infantile satiation at the breast of a mother is one of their quintessential images of morality. As a powerful ideal of indulgent nurture, this view of motherhood stresses the elements of aid, dependency, security and solidarity.

Who, on the other hand, are not expected to mother or nurture others? Younger siblings and, to a certain extent, men. Both of these categories of people receive food and both are expected to be aggressive and demanding. When do people forgo food? When a child is adopted, during mourning and after conflict – in other words, when relationships are suspended, broken or lost.

## **Conclusion**

I have been trying to suggest that the meaning of a social process, such as conflict resolution, is no less subject to cultural definition than, say, Trobriand kula valuables or the art painted on the gables of Abelam men's houses. But it is harder, I should think, to see and recognise how this kind of dynamic is locally understood than it is to see and recognise the construction of items of material culture. It requires an appreciation of local metaphors and tacit expectations which are difficult to grasp in the absence of long-term, qualitative research. For the Murik, the process of conflict resolution draws upon local understanding of motherhood, which is to say that, although it may be practised by men, or by both men and women, its end is to privilege the feminine, as the feminine is constructed in Murik.

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## **Resolving conflict in Solomon Islands: The Women for peace approach**

*Alice A Pollard, Leader, Women for Peace*

### **Introduction**

Conflict in Solomon Islands is not a new phenomenon. Its regular occurrence has given the people knowledge and skills to resolve conflict in a manner that is fair and responsive to their culture and environment. However, the current so-called ethnic tension conflict is too big and life-threatening and involves modern weapons.

The roles that women have played in the present conflict can be traced back to their hands-on skills and traditional knowledge, to biblical doctrines regarding responses to conflict, and to their love for their nation. In fact, they have expertise in their own right: love, culture and Christianity have equipped women to respond appropriately to tension.

Different cultures in Solomon Islands provide for women's participation in conflict resolution in different forms. For example, in the Areare culture, women intervene by using their clothes, words or body contact. A woman can stand between two warring parties and challenge them by uttering words such as: 'Enough is enough, stop fighting, if you continue to fight after my words, you have walked over my legs'. Among the Areare, any male contact with or over a woman's body is *tambu* (forbidden) and would require compensation, especially if they are in-laws or brothers and sisters. The fighting has to stop immediately and negotiations for reconciliation and compensation begin.

The Bible, too, provides examples of women's role in conflict. Abigail helped to bring peace to her nation through face-to-face dialogue and the sharing of food (1 Samuel 25:1-44).

Also, as mothers of the nation, Solomon Islands women are committed to offering time and gifts in order to ensure a lasting peace.

Love, culture and Christianity demonstrate peaceful and non-violent ways of resolving conflicts. These methods have enabled women in Solomon Islands to play various roles in contributing to the peace process.

### **Women for Peace group**

The ethnic tension and violence in Solomon Islands has affected women and children the most. Because of the inability of the central government to provide security and basic social services to provinces that are not party to the present conflict, it has also threatened and weakened the cords that bind the country together.

Women in Honiara held a roundtable discussion in May 2000, resulting in the Women's Communiqué on Peace. It contains activities that women set for themselves in order to contribute constructively and meaningfully to the peace process. The events of June 2000 constituted the biggest hostage-taking conflict in the history of Solomon Islands. It challenged the current methods and mechanisms designed by and for Solomon Islanders.

Something had to be done, so the Women for Peace (WFP) group was formed. The group consists of women of all ages, religions, walks of life, and provinces, who reside in Honiara, and includes the sisters of the Catholic Church and Church of Melanesia. It is

committed to working on a voluntary basis for peace and takes a motherly approach in doing so. The group also recognises the difficulties of Guadalcanal and Malaita women, and encourages them to take an active and leading role in activities.

The group is independent of any political, religious or ethnic movement and welcomes voluntary support from all committed women of Solomon Islands. It works in collaboration with the Malaita Eagle Force (MEF), Isatabu Freedom Movement (IFM), churches, non government organisations, community leaders, chiefs, government and the international community.

### **Objectives of Women for Peace**

The overall objective of WFP is to actively and effectively support and encourage women's initiatives at all levels, in the search for a peaceful solution to the political crisis. The main message is that having peace within yourself will enhance your ability to give peace to others.

Since it started, the WFP group has encouraged various sectors within the government and the communities to work together and settle differences at the negotiation table. It has also made contact with a number of government officials to brief them on the group's objectives and planned activities, to discuss matters of concern, and to make positive suggestions.

The major objectives of Women for Peace are:

- to build trust and confidence with the two militant groups, through listening and exchanging views, in an attempt to restore peace and get them to meet;
- to convince the fighting parties to lay down their arms and thus open the way to democracy and good governance in Solomon Islands;
- to make known to the militants, and the government, the impact of the tension on children, mothers, and other vulnerable groups;
- to share women's views on compensation, law and order and security, and the need for politicians to be united and work together;
- to build trust and confidence with the provincial governments of Malaita and Guadalcanal;
- to mobilise women, chiefs, elders, village leaders, parliamentarians, provincial members, church leaders, and foreign governments to unite and speak with one voice—the voice of peace and reconciliation;
- to join in fellowship with the victims of the tension;
- to meet with government leaders and share women's perspectives on the tension and at the same time offer assistance in the peace process; and
- to alert foreign development partners to the need for their continued assistance, especially in building up the confidence of the police force and in supervising the laying down of arms.

### **Women for Peace activities**

In working towards the fulfilment of the group's objectives and purposes, WFP members have been involved in various activities:

- meeting with militants, government and police representatives;
- representation at ceasefire talks;
- weekly prayer meetings, including the Women's Plea for Peace which was broadcast live throughout the nation;
- forums and conferences;

- visits to displaced families, the hospital and provincial communities, particularly to encourage the re-integration of young militants;
- organised exchange of baskets of essential goods; and
- the wearing of a distinctive uniform: scarves of green, yellow and blue, representing the national flag.

Listening to the views expressed during visits has given the group a deeper understanding of the root causes of the current tension.

Women of the group have donated willingly and lovingly from their own pockets and wardrobes. They have dug deep into their baskets. Because of the work they are doing, the communities continue to donate funds to help meet transport and communication expenses.

Women for Peace utilise non-violent and peaceful methods in making their views heard. The challenge is whether this approach can be effective in an armed conflict situation such as the current one. The women believe that these methods have worked in the cultural and biblical context and that they can contribute to the way forward and will be crucial to sustainable community living and human development. But, for this to come about, peace must be achieved and work must start now by all men, women and the church.

### **Participation in the peace process**

Some general observations can be made about the participation of women in the search for a lasting solution to the current social unrest. It is clear that the encouragement of cultural diversity and social integration in Solomon Islands, while difficult, can be achieved with respect, love, care, sharing and understanding.

It is also clear, in the work that WFP has carried out, that people want to maintain their roots and cultural diversity while feeling socially integrated. One of the main reasons for the current conflict is that people feel that the political system is not responsive to their needs, and that the legal system has not afforded equal protection to all people in society. These are fundamental requirements for harmony and security and the means by which the social and cultural capital of a community of different ethnic groups can be enriched.

While there is political support for the efforts of women, this has not been translated into practical action to allow for their participation, which partially results from the stereotyping of men and women and the lack of acceptance of all people and their contribution towards peace being equally deserving.

### **Donor assistance to the peace process**

During the last 20 months Solomon Islanders have wrecked the economy, directly by their involvement in the conflict and indirectly by being silent about the impact of the crisis on the country. In the year 2001 Solomon Islands will be fighting for the survival of its children and future generations. It is estimated that \$188 million will be raised by the government in 2001. Of this, \$168 million will be required for debt servicing and only about \$20 million will be left to fund services. Given this situation for the next three years, aid from donor countries will have to finance all government investment and recurrent expenditure.

Those managing the assistance must ensure that aid does not create any more mistakes that will lead to further conflict. In the past, economic growth has not always been a donor priority. For relief and rehabilitation to work, assistance needs to be

carefully aimed at sound economic management at all levels within the government machinery, the private sector and civil society. Aid projects must also be properly appraised and monitored to ensure that they are sustainable and do not duplicate the work of others. More importantly, good economic policies are needed to make aid work for the country and these policies must be soundly administered. Outside assistance therefore needs to address root causes of the ethnic tension, national unity, nation building and the creation of opportunities and incentives throughout the country to enable people to remain in their land/locality and still be economically viable. It needs to expand people's capacity and capabilities. It also needs to take into account that concentration of economic and political power may lead to non-sustainable policies at the expense of natural systems upon which the poor rely.

It is important to acknowledge in all of this work that a sense of belonging is an important source of personal fulfilment, well-being, enjoyment, purpose and meaning.

## **Conclusion**

The current conflict between migrants demonstrates the importance of addressing complex problems of urbanisation. Approximately 48 per cent of the population are under the age of 14 years and about 75 per cent are under 30 years. With only 2.4 per cent of the population over 55 years of age, many children and young people are without the guidance of old people in urban centres.

The transmission of knowledge and wisdom to the younger generation has always been a very important part of community living, culture and general socialisation in Solomon Islands. Many of these urban children have less opportunity to learn customary norms and practices or the language of their parents' place of origin. The smaller number of adults has to cope with a great deal of pressure as income earners who provide the basic needs of their children, young people and extended families. The children of intermarriages are experiencing new family structures. This in itself presents a profound cultural and social problem which young urban people are facing. A growing number of young people and children have less security – less land security and emotional security.

Outside threats, culture, social capital, leadership, ethnicity, language, religion and ideology are the social glue that help the system cohere. Our experience in Solomon Islands has demonstrated that such factors, either combined or by themselves, are not enough in dealing with armed conflict. Because of the internal pressures caused by the failure of government policies and strategies, high unemployment and ethnic conflict, the social disintegration that we now see was inevitable. We have turned on ourselves and are tearing ourselves apart on the basis of ethnicity and perceived privilege. A situation of fractured, multi-polar interests has unfolded which now places great demands on the systems of governance. Because the institutions of governance are weak and less durable, ethnic tensions have erupted through society's thin crust more easily and frequently, now that there is no law and order.

Religion and culture have, in the past, often had a humanising effect on society because of their emphasis on ethical values and concern for the well-being of others. However, it has been demonstrated in the current crisis that ethnic separatism can also gain momentum under these circumstances. When only a small minority benefit from economic growth while more than 80 per cent of the people experience real-wage reductions, the ordinary person has looked for easily identifiable scapegoats. For most of the young people involved in the ethnic tension, ethnicity has served as a convenient means of allocating blame and gathering allies.

We must all reach mutual understanding and agreement on quick and effective means for dealing with the profound threat of the tension to the well-being of our country. In armed conflict, outside assistance is a must and we, the Women for Peace, present our appeal for peace to all, but the situation has deteriorated. There is real concern for the fate of many women and children if outside assistance is not forthcoming for the Solomons Islands' conflict.

### **Note**

The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and not necessarily those of Women for Peace.

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## **Peacemaking in Solomon Islands: The experience of Guadalcanal Women for Peace movement**

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### **Introduction**

Guadalcanal is the largest of the nine provinces that make up Solomon Islands. It was famous at one stage in history because of the bloody battle fought there between the Americans and the Japanese during World War II. The province represents 19 per cent of Solomon Island's total land mass and 19 per cent of its total population of 400,000 plus (excluding the population of Honiara city). Approximately 95 per cent of people in the province are Melanesian. This paper briefly describes gender and gender roles in Guadalcanal; the underlying causes of the unrest, according to the people of Guadalcanal; and, finally, the role of Guadalcanal women in the effort to find a lasting solution to the conflict.

### **Gender and culture**

Gender and gender roles in Guadalcanal are culturally structured according to the traditional values and beliefs of each local community. Roles are positively reinforced at a very early age: immediately after a child is born and the gender identified, the child is raised accordingly. Usually, a boy child is valued more than a girl child, despite the fact that lineage and land are inherited through females. Thus, a boy child is taught to hunt and fish and to be aggressive, while girls are taught the basic roles of the domestic sector and are rewarded for being neat, ladylike, and so forth. In most societies on Guadalcanal, traditionally, an adolescent girl's body is regarded as taboo and not to be touched by any male. During the childhood years, she is allowed to play with her father, her brothers and other males. After the age of 10, she is taught to keep away from the opposite sex. When she is married and has children, her name is not used by her immediate and extended family members; instead, she is named with her first child (for example, 'John's mother').

This is a sign of respect and also helps to avoid incest. Usually, when a fight breaks out between her male family members, she can stop it by using words that relate to any part of her body (for example, stepping over her thighs, head) and, because the boys cannot do that, they will stop fighting. If they don't, a large amount of compensation has to be paid to the woman's female family members as a result.

The gender equality preached by women's organisations in Solomon Islands is sneered upon by Guadalcanal men. To them, it is a threat to their dominance and power over women. Any women's organisations, apart from the church women's groups have a negative stigma attached to them. When men were interviewed, they admitted that they believe that a woman's role is in the kitchen and that she should not take over the role of head of the family, as supported by the Bible. Gender equality is thus never promoted in Guadalcanal. Our men are very resistant to changing their outlook on the role of women. Thus, in any big decision making process, such as the sale of family land or other matters, women can attend and contribute but it is the men who have the final say. But,

once a conflict arises because of a bad decision, the women are sought to help resolve the crisis. However, thanks to Christianity and education, this is slowly changing.

### **Causes and effects of the conflict**

The Honiara Peace Accord that was signed by the warring parties (Guadalcanal and Malaita), the government and the Commonwealth Special Envoy (Major Sitiveni Rabuka) recognised several root causes of the conflict:

- Land demands – Guadalcanal leaders wanted all alienated land titles, which had been leased to government and to individual developers, to be returned to landowners (including any other land acquired illegally).
- Political demands – Guadalcanal wanted the establishment of a state government in order to have control over: the sale or use of local land; the distribution of wealth derived from local natural resources; and the migration of people in and out of the province.
- Compensation demands – Guadalcanal wanted payment for the lives of its indigenous people, who have been brutally murdered for their lands or for other reasons.

Finally, the Guadalcanal Revolutionary Army (GRA) – now known as Isatabu Freedom Movement (IFM) – was formed as a result of frustrations over the failure of successive governments to address the demands of the people of Guadalcanal Province.

In the last 20 months, this unrest has created a lot of hardships for Guadalcanal people who are not involved in the conflict. Innocent people have been bashed, tortured and killed, starved and deprived of medical help, education, and so forth. International humanitarian assistance was not permitted to give help to Guadalcanal people. The most affected are women (that is, pregnant and lactating mothers), children and young people. Youths were forced at gunpoint to join the militants. Schools (both primary and secondary) have been closed because they have not received any food or school materials from Honiara. Three-quarters of the clinics on Guadalcanal have also closed down, due to shortages of medical supplies. Babies are being born in the bush and cannot be vaccinated against deadly diseases like whooping cough, TB, polio, and measles. Food shortages are also being experienced because a lot more people have gone back to the villages. Mothers as primary caregivers forgot their fears and walked miles to town in order to buy or get food and medical supplies for their families and relatives from the Red Cross and other charity organisations.

While the Guadalcanal people's current needs are numerous, psycho-social support is identified as a priority among the population. They have lived in continuous fear for the last 20 months, and many of them, especially women and children, have become disorientated and cannot live normal lives. Young pregnant mothers, admitted to hospital during labour, are unable to care for their newborn babies. However, thanks to the support of the extended family network, the relatives are able to do so.

### **Guadalcanal Women for Peace**

Guadalcanal Women for Peace was established in early August 2000, in close collaboration with the overall Solomon Islands Women for Peace group that was established in May 2000. This group comprises women who are currently residing in town either because they are working or because they are married to men outside of Guadalcanal Province. The group was established because we realised that, since movement in and out of the capital is restricted, we have to engage in some form of activity that will enable us to provide moral support in this time of hardship, especially to

our youths, women and children. Although we believe that women need to take a leading role in promoting peace throughout the province, doing so poses a lot of challenges in a male-dominant society. We manage as a team by meeting once a week for prayers and fellowship. It is our ultimate goal to make our men realise that a non-violent solution to this conflict should be a priority.

The group's aims are as follows:

- To make contact with Guadalcanal leaders and women to share experiences and to gain trust and confidence in each other.
- To provide encouragement and comfort to women through fellowship and prayers.
- To listen, share and exchange information and views by women.
- To discuss our roles as mothers in promoting peace throughout the province.
- To assist and strengthen linkages with Women for Peace to carry out peace plans.
- To strengthen and establish links between Women for Peace and Guadalcanal leaders and women to promote peace in families, communities, societies and the nation as a whole.

Since Guadalcanal is made up of four area constituencies (Tasimauri, Tasimate, Bolomona and Geana), the women were divided into four groups, according to the area constituency they are originally from. This is for security purposes and also so that we can communicate with people we meet in our own languages. Letters and verbal messages were sent in advance (prior to the proposed touring dates for each group) to leaders (chiefs, church leaders, women's groups) to inform them of our coming and the purpose of the visits, and to seek permission from them to visit the areas.

On 16 September 2000, the first group boarded the plane for the southeastern part of Guadalcanal. Unfortunately, they never landed, because Harold Keke (an IFM commander) and his members took the Solomon Islands Airlines plane and pilot hostage on the northwestern side of Guadalcanal. For this reason, the groups closest to where the plane was being held decided to postpone their visit until the situation was resolved. The women from Bolomona visited their area between 29 September and 6 October. On their way, they witnessed a woman giving birth in the truck that they were travelling in. She was trying to get to the nearest clinic but could not reach it in time. This group's survey report confirmed that schools and clinics have been closed. They also reported that they were supported by men to carry on the work. However, a compensation demand for \$1,000 was forwarded to the group's leader, because two of the members who joined them are from Malaita and have been also displaced from Guadalcanal plains. This demand was met by the parliament members (from the Guadalcanal plains) on behalf of our women.

Also, it is also our intention to make use of women at the grassroots level because we strongly believe that, in sustaining peace, capacity building within the local communities must be developed and maintained.

Further, we propose to work closely with community leaders (chiefs, church leaders and women leaders), who also hold other key functions that play vital roles in strengthening and maintaining the relationship among the local communities and civil societies at large. Also, we want to revitalise traditional values, such as communal working together (such as the rebuilding of schools and clinics), to support any activity that will improve the quality of life of Guadalcanal women, children and youths.

Finally, the group's short-term goals are to give moral support to our women, to talk to IFM members about disbanding and returning home to their families, and to identify

areas of need among the local communities. Our long-term goals are to conduct awareness programmes on sexual harassment, rape, incest, domestic violence and gender equality. It is our hope to empower Guadalcanal women from all levels to work cooperatively as a team, and to alleviate the suppression of a male-dominant society and make life more bearable for women, children and youths on Guadalcanal.

### **Conclusion**

While conflict is a gendered activity, sustainable peace in any country cannot be maintained unless there is cooperation between government, NGOs and civil society at large. Further, we should work together to fight the injustices that threaten our people, so that everybody can live and enjoy their lives to the fullest potential.

## **Approaches to conflict resolution in Fiji**

*Moses T Waqa, Pacific and Fiji Director of Adventist Development and Relief Agency, Suva*

### **Introduction**

The three coups in Fiji are symptomatic of the unresolved conflicts within its society, especially between the two major ethnic groups (indigenous Fijians, and those of Indian descent). This is the product of a cadre of leadership that, over the years, seemed to lose the plot in preparing their communities for global change, or in providing visionary leadership that might give unifying meaning and purpose to the people of Fiji in their search for a place in the global village.

### **The structure of Fiji society**

To understand status in the Fiji context, we need to look at the main cultural components and social structure that give status its content and orientation, and which give gender its effectiveness.

### **Kinship system**

Relationships in Fiji are predominantly based on kinship and its extended family orientation. Your place in society is thus often prescribed at a very early age. Although formal education and choice of profession may contribute to their status in the long term, people are fundamentally unchanged in their preconceptions of themselves and others, as defined by their kinship biases and preferences. While the wider ethnic prescription of identity is significant, maintaining and protecting kinship relations is often equated with permanence, stability and purpose. Coupled with this is the hierarchical and gender-biased nature of kinship relationships that dictates control. Those who are on the top of the heap usually do not give opportunities for personal growth to those who are younger, or who are disadvantaged (for example, females). In a conservative society that has to survive in a modern world of access to opportunities, local communities and their leaders in Fiji are constantly challenged with the need to adapt their ways to new realities. While the relational problems in these contexts multiply in number and complexity, and ideas for solutions are numerous, solutions that actually work seem to evade many in practice.

Kinship is considered sacred. Crimes and misdemeanours are committed within this 'comfort zone', and there seems to be little or no impetus towards improving the quality of relationships so that there is dignity and growth.

The custom regarding legitimacy, control of resources, and succession in Fiji is based on the premise that the kinship based family (nuclear and extended) is the centre for transmission of economic, political, religious and other powers. Groups like women, children and youth do not usually factor much. It is often assumed that those at the top of the hierarchy will cater for their needs. Over time, after generations, local communities lose many who find opportunities outside their immediate extended family setting that give them real choices for a better quality of life.

## **Other groups and associations**

Fiji also has a variety of community based groups and civil societies that have attempted to mobilise local human resources to meet community-felt needs. These associations, formed outside the kinship arena, can be work-related, specialised services, based on human rights or general interests. Apart from meeting other needs, such groups provide alternative forums for building one's status and affirming one's gender. While they have growth in numbers, they are still not as pervasive in their influence as the traditional social groups based on religion and ethnicity.

## **Economic system**

The existence of a fully-fledged market sector ('formal') alongside a subsistence sector ('informal') reflects the two worlds in which people find themselves. Fiji's economic system is already straining at the seams in the effort to effectively utilise resources for the production of goods and services and for their distribution to meet the wider needs of the community. The pressing and sometimes desperate need for paid employment, for access to quality education, health and food, and for disaster preparedness has been the subject of deliberation by many national, regional and international groups/organisations. No solution seems to be able to provide a win-win situation for people in the different sectors of the economy. Over time, more and more people become poor and disadvantaged because they fall through the social networks with their inherent prejudices. These often include women, children and the aged.

## **Other cultural elements**

There are other elements that are common to all local cultures but which differ in expression or practice.

Formal and informal enculturation (education and socialisation) is very prescriptive and does not encourage people to be thinkers. Human resources are often narrowly defined as literacy and numeracy capabilities, with little or no regard to virtues like human dignity, creativity, honesty, purity or unconditional love, which guide our motives. There is an overemphasis on 'having', with little regard for the sense of 'being' of our current and future generations.

Religious beliefs are important in that they are sources of values and give meaning to people's relation to the world in which they live. However, a combination of religious and ethno-nationalistic posturing can make religion a tool for oppression. Here there is little or no room for accepting diversity. There is often a forced unity dictated from the top, and consent is manufactured by working on the fears and prejudices of a group. So, in place of acceptance of others who are 'different from us', we socially engineer their ultimate exclusion.

Language is important in so far as it encapsulates the worldview of a person, and ideas that emanate from that personal perspective, and its cultural setting. It is an essential tool in the provision of meaning. Being able to speak each other's language is fundamental to being able to understand each other. Fiji has not decided whether real communication and understanding are necessary. Hence, it has always shelved the idea of giving permission to its children and future generations to come together through discourse.

## **The interaction of social structure and social change**

The subject of social control is an important one in the current Fiji situation, where an interim administration is based on the racial prejudice of superiority, which is at odds with universal measures of equality and human dignity.

Our process of socialisation has inculcated many patterns of normative behaviour that, on the whole, remain unchallenged. The spheres of learning and affirmation in the family, church, school, workplace and chosen social circles are largely ethnically and gender biased, and thus loaded with the shortcomings associated with such a narrow social exposure. A tradition of prescription based on a hierarchical social system does not allow much room for openness, dialogue and the pursuit of otherness. The culture of dissent on matters that hit hard on core beliefs is promptly responded to with a combination of mild to very strong persuasion to comply with the norms, of verbal abuse and physical harm, and even of alienation from the group. When one's social status and gender become the target of that barrage of social control that denies the right to choice, very few who go through that experience remain true to a liberating cause.

While the modern economy provides an opportunity for people to cross traditional boundaries and comfort zones in pursuance of their careers, when it comes to political convictions and civic duties they are still largely uncritical in terms of ethnicity, religion or both, and have little awareness of what professionalism entails. Middle and upper management since Independence in 1970 have increasingly become filled with graduates with Masters and PhD degrees (thanks to foreign development assistance through scholarships). This has not led to real productivity in the workplace or to the acceptance of civic responsibilities outside the office as an educated person. The social orientation of the wider society condones and nurtures bureaucratic systems that do not encourage critical thinking. Every problem has to be passed up, or horizontally, through kinship-style pressure groups, with little or no chance of personal responsibility and accountability. The buck stops somewhere else.

## **Factors operative in social change**

Ideology, contact with other cultures, demographic factors, the relationship between economic factors and social stability, collective behaviour and public opinion all affect social change.

One would think that access to the global system of cultures, ideas and their different proponents would bring about a healthy attitude of inquisitiveness to know what others have gone through and what they have to offer for local application. Fiji has not been successful in nurturing a cadre of critical thinkers who can take an honest look at our society and bring to the fore summations that can then be debated and discussed with the purpose of helping Fiji to critically assess its past and come up with a vision for the future. Intellectuals have a social duty to think, to be critical of their own thinking, and to disseminate their thoughts. Our culture of silence needs to be broken. While the print media have been successful in providing a certain latitude in freedom of expression, society as a whole still does not encourage open forums at a more grassroots level. The outcomes of traditional forums/meetings are largely predictable.

Fiji has a much younger population than it did 15 years ago. This puts access to quality education and health services, and to real opportunities for economic well-being, higher on the list of public demands. At the same time, the three coups have led to the migration of a significant proportion of highly skilled people to Australia, New Zealand and the North American continent. This has affected the capacity of both the private and

the public sector to sustain effective changes in rendering quality service. The meagre economic growth since the 1987 coup has been further frustrated by the May 19 coup, leading to a situation of an increasingly small ratio of regular income earners in relation to numbers of dependents.

Survival within a modern user-pays society requires having real possibilities to earn an income for meeting basic needs, in a way that affirms one's dignity and self-worth. Having a paid job provides status. Failure to achieve this leads to personal instability. The coup this year, and the events that led to the formation of the interim administration, produced social and political instability. The main perpetrators had perceived major economic benefits in acquiring power and thus dictating the distribution and use of the country's limited resources. Some of them had incurred substantial financial losses through the policies of the democratically elected Chaudhry government.

The signs seem to be clear that the people of Fiji still do not know what they really want out of this crisis. Even if they did, there is not the collective determination and resilience to pursue the dream for the long haul. This pathetic situation has given strength to the very few who have illegally and inhumanely acquired leadership. It has bred boldness in these self-appointed few in manufacturing consent on decisions of great import that affect the people and future generations of Fiji.

### **Possibilities for conflict resolution and peacemaking**

The realities outlined above do not exist in a void. They are experienced in the wider flow of social dynamics within Fiji as an increasingly exposed island state within a fast-changing world. At the end of the day, the people of Fiji have to decide their own destiny. In the regional and global setting, the reality is that this chosen destiny has to find resonance in the minds and hearts of its international partners if that dream is to be achievable.

### **What opportunities for peacemaking?**

What are the possibilities for conflict resolution and peacemaking in Fiji?

I believe that civil societies are in a unique position to start the process of reconciliation between the different communities for the greater good of the nation as a whole. There are key leaders in the local communities who could be positive agents of change in their areas of influence. At the same time, the NGO Coalition is the only effective forum that provides a real alternative to the interim administration, grounded as it is on the universal principles of freedom, equality and brotherhood/sisterhood.

Civil societies could contribute to the development of concepts and options on the formation of a Government of National Unity. They could help politicians to address the many problems of the relationship between communities. They could also suggest ways to promote dialogue and reconciliation at the parliamentary and civil service levels, as well as in civil society organisations, trade unions and businesses, cities, towns, provinces and local communities, schools, churches and religious organisations.

But, first, it is vital to create a Government of National Unity. To the people of Fiji, symbolism is everything. For matters of national import, it gives ultimate legitimacy to status and meaning to what is acceptable. Such a government would establish the environment for more effective initiatives in other areas. Reconciliation at the state level would encourage people to develop attitudes that are more receptive to dialogue and the resolution of conflicts, grievances and hurts. The NGO Coalition on Human Rights could consider, for example, leading an initiative to reconcile the Fijian communities and the

evicted Indo-Fijian tenants at Muaniweni who are now camped at the Girit Centre in Lautoka. A widely publicised achievement of communal reconciliation could have a positive effect in encouraging others to pursue similar initiatives elsewhere.

The NGO Coalition, in co-partnership with selected representatives of local communities, could embark on an education programme on multiculturalism and human rights. It could act as a think-tank and facilitator, in concert with other better resourced and effective organisations, including the interim administration and foreign governments. All people need to know that there are universally accepted principles for relating to one another, despite diverse differences. We can no longer assume that people know what is right. We should at least give them the opportunity to be aware of their prejudices and to develop healthy attitudes towards others.

Some form of demilitarisation is also necessary. The Fiji Military Force has a long history of international involvement, first during the world wars and then later in peacekeeping duties in some of the most volatile regions of the world. It is more than 90 per cent ethnically Fijian and male dominated, and all too often it is influenced by kinship tradition. Given its involvement in the past coups, there is need to review its role in the wider context of a gender sensitive, multicultural and more democratic desired future. We need to move away from the very narrow definition of conflict resolution through militarism, and to explore options that empower people through peaceful means.

It is important to look anew at the role of the Great Council of Chiefs in the context of the need for quality leadership and for nation building. Membership of the Council could be made more representative to enable more effective participation by a wider cross-section of the indigenous communities. This could be done without compromising the Council's traditional role of symbolic indigenous leadership. This would make it more accountable to the people, and less vulnerable to manipulation by groups that do not represent the majority.

The overwhelming majority of the people of Fiji subscribe to a religion or some philosophy of life. There is, however, a distinct absence of inclusiveness in the practice of these religious and philosophical convictions. Local religious leaders, intellectuals and media leaders need to join forces to raise awareness of the universal principles of unity in diversity and of the inclusive nature of truth, and to give permission for the demonstration of these principles privately and publicly. The very meaning of 'unity' means unity in diversity. Very often, one finds that graduates come out more confused about life than with a unified vision of their place in the world, one that is respectful of others' rights and dignity.

## **Conclusion**

History has shown that we can achieve the seemingly impossible. The process of dialogue, debate, discussion and consensus building that led to the acceptance of the 1997 Constitution was a historical achievement well beyond the expectations of the overwhelming majority of the people of Fiji. Perhaps all parties were so hasty in withdrawing afterwards to their old comfort zones of exclusive political and religious persuasions that they forgot one very important thing. What they had agreed upon were still only ideas on paper. Although the symbolism was significant, local constituencies needed then to be educated about these desired principles of good governance. Instead, political expediency by all parties followed. Hastily formed coalitions competed for political ascendancy to the throne of leadership under the new guidelines. New governance was doomed from the beginning.

We can begin again in nation building. This time, the civil societies can play a central role in bringing together community leaders to help find a more sure way of resolving conflicts and sustaining peace in Fiji. At the forefront in these coalitions of NGOs and civil societies are women and a few men who have generally secured their status under more inclusive worldviews and who have a common desire to work together in understanding the issues and looking for solutions. This can be the beginning of a wider democratic movement that focuses on making sure that the democratic ideal of government – by the people, for the people and with the people – becomes a living reality, one that will permeate the very fabric of Fiji's society and become part of the psyche of its people.

Bhagwan Rolls, S, 2000. 'Gender and the role of the media in conflict and peacemaking: The Fiji experience', *Development Bulletin*, no. 53, pp. 62-64.

## **Gender and the role of the media in conflict and peacemaking: The Fiji experience**

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### **Introduction**

An environment that maintains peace and promotes and protects human rights, democracy and peaceful reconciliation is an important factor for the advancement of women. Peace is inextricably linked with equality between women and men, and with development. As we have experienced recently in Fiji, the equal access to and full participation of women in power structures and in the prevention and resolution of conflicts are essential for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. Despite the progress made since the proclamation of the decade for women in 1975, gender disparities and unacceptable inequalities still remain. What is more, these negative conditions are further exacerbated by conflict.

Although women have begun to play an important role in conflict resolution, peacekeeping, and defence and foreign affairs mechanisms, they are still underrepresented in decision making processes. Therefore, if women are to play an equal part in securing and maintaining peace, they must not be showered with 'political rhetoric' but be encouraged to find empowerment through workable, culturally appropriate economic activity, to be able to afford to take the responsibilities of participation in decision making. People will respond to strategies which offer tangible, life-changing opportunities. (I equate the process with some of the simplest, most cost-effective yet successful advertising campaigns.)

### **The media *is* our affair**

As a response to the lack of women-centred stories in the mainstream media, fem'LINKpacific: Media Initiatives for Women has been established. It is a stand-alone women's non government organisation (NGO) that will work specifically to ensure that women's voices are heard, by trying to balance the scales in pursuit of equality and social justice and by critically looking, through the eyes of women, at the current developments in our country.

We are empowered by the call to action for NGOs through the strategic objectives outlined in Section J of the Beijing Platform for Action: to increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision making in and through the media and new technologies; and to promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media. Thus, fem'LINKpacific has undertaken to:

- advocate/facilitate the increased participation of women in media decision making to promote a gender-sensitive media content;
- work for increased access by women in new communications technologies;
- promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media;
- facilitate media ownership by women through the fem'LINKpacific Trust; and
- ensure women have access to a wide range of media products, as both producers and consumers.

There is an urgent need for a democratic people to think clearly, without the distortions due to unconscious and unrecognised bias. It is a concern that remains with many women's NGOs today because we work to strengthen democratic structures and to increase representative, participatory decision making, particularly where it is lacking for women and minorities. We are called upon, more and more, to pay attention to the huge influence that media has on our societies and the world. We need to be able to decode messages, interpret issues, and understand how they hinder or help our goals of achieving gender equity and social and economic justice.

During the past decade, advances in information technology have facilitated a global communications network that transcends national boundaries and has an impact on public policy, private attitudes and behaviour, especially of children and young adults. Everywhere the potential exists for the media to make a far greater contribution to the advancement of women, but despite the increasing number of women employed in the media industry few have attained positions at the decision making level to have the capacity or opportunity to influence media policy. The lack of gender sensitivity in the media is evidenced by the failure to eliminate the gender based stereotyping found in public and private local, national and international media organisations.

### **The Fiji experience**

The National Council of Women Fiji (NCWF) was established in 1968 to address the desire of women in Fiji to have a national coordinating body for the various multi-ethnic women's groups that were being established to address the social, economic and political issues emerging during the period of pre-independence.

Since then, the NCWF has spearheaded a range of activities designed to improve the status of women at all community levels. Forging a strong partnership with government (even prior to the establishment of the Ministry of Women and Culture in 1987) and working with a large network of affiliate members, the NCWF has been an effective go-between for both the government and civil society, providing an avenue to protect women's interests and ensuring their participation in development.

The movement for gender equality the world over has been one of the defining developments of our time. The Women's Agenda has been at the forefront of many national achievements in the last 30 years of independence in Fiji. The NCWF can look proudly at the development and progress of our country 'through women's eyes' and continue in its initial role as an umbrella organisation, bringing together affiliates with common concerns while also addressing specific needs and interests.

On 20 May 2000, the NCWF issued its first media statement denouncing the 19 May coup and began mobilising members for a peace and prayer vigil, which began on 21 May. This vigil became our key Women in Community action in response to the coup and the illegal detention of the members of parliament. The vigil, held in Holy Trinity Anglican Cathedral, brought together women, men and children in a peaceful demonstration and with a collective and unified voice:

- to denounce the actions of 19 May 2000;
- to call for the immediate and safe release of the hostages;
- to call for the restoration of the democratic process, as outlined in the 1997 Constitution; and
- to reaffirm the need for all Fiji Islanders to unify in peaceful solidarity for the future of our country.

Why a peace and prayer vigil? Significantly, this was the most appropriate form of demonstration at the time. The ongoing violence and the threat of violence meant that

public protest demonstrations were impossible. There was also a general feeling of shock and dismay that everyone needed to deal with before we tackled the situation from any other angle.

The vigil brought together not only members of the NCWF affiliates but also the women's movement generally, as well as the greater community. The response was very positive, considering the situation – we had not expected that the vigil would gather such momentum.

We began the Women in Black campaign and the Candlelight of Hope initiative that first weekend – and we found, with each day, that we were able to collectively face what was happening to our country. As we began to meet the family members of the hostages, we realised that they too were drawing strength from the vigil. This motivated us further and saw the development of the Women's Action for Democracy and Peace Initiative/Campaign within the framework of the NCWF. I believe that keeping focused on the principles and purpose of the daily vigils kept the campaign on track. The Blue Ribbon Initiative has become a very important symbol for our future actions.

We also recognised that this was a very important time to continue the work of the NCWF, particularly to integrate a gender advocacy perspective into the media coverage of and since 19 May, and to communicate NCWF concerns to international partners and associates to seek support for the Women's Action for Democracy and Peace/Vigil Action.

## **Strategies for the future**

### **Women's Action for Democracy and Peace**

In the midst of the May crisis, the NCWF established the Women's Action for Democracy and Peace (WAD'aP) campaign/steering committee to continue to address the long-term impact and consequences of the crisis and to maintain a gender perspective in the future developments of the period of reconciliation and reconstruction.

WAD'aP recognised the need to focus attention in a number of specific areas for the long term. The working groups hope to be able to address, wherever possible, the particular needs of members and affiliates around the country, in partnership with other women NGOs and civil society partners. The overall objectives of WAD'aP are:

- to identify actions that will promote the fundamental freedom and human rights of every citizen of Fiji;
- to promote multiculturalism throughout the community, and especially through the existing networks of affiliates and other civil societies;
- to inform the international community of (a) actions and initiatives undertaken by the council and other affiliates in response to the current crisis, and (b) seek their support of identified actions;
- to continue to inform the authorities and relevant bodies of the official position of the council and other affiliates in response to the current crisis;
- to undertake post-conflict rehabilitation programmes through existing networks of affiliates and other civil societies; and
- to publicise through the media the initiatives taken by affiliates and civil societies in promoting multiculturalism, reconciliation and healing.

As the national umbrella body for women's organisations, in partnership with many other women's NGOs and civil society partners, the NCWF will remain proactive and responsive to the social, political, economic and spiritual needs of women and children in Fiji, through programmes and activities identified and designed by members of the

Human Rights and Peace, Multiculturalism, Good Governance and Women's Economic Rights working groups.

The WAD'aP Kids: Fiji of the Future creative expression project, assisted by the Canada Fund, will be a pilot project based on promoting peace and multiculturalism through 'art'in 40 primary schools. This activity, like future WAD'aP projects, will also involve concerned young women and mothers from our membership to ensure effective implementation.

### **fem'LINKpacific: Media Initiatives for Women**

Many women's NGOs outside the Pacific region have already successfully established a range of feminist media initiatives to assist in the further advancement of women, such as Radio Sagarmatha, Nepal; Sister Namibia; Milenia, the feminist collective radio station in Lima, Peru; FemNet in Africa; and FemPress in Latin America. There was no such media initiative in the Pacific prior to 19 May.

Fem'LINKpacific will be a permanent Communications/Documentation NGO, 'linking women's organisations with the media' through the documentation and production of specific media outputs, including:

- a quarterly women's newspaper supplement in the Fijian, Hindi and English languages;
- monthly women's radio programmes in the English, Fijian and Hindustani languages;
- a quarterly women's 'life' video magazine for distribution to NGOs to generate discussion and dialogue at all levels of society; and
- ongoing documentation of women's programmes: not only those developed in response to 19 May but also historical accounts of the women's movement in Fiji.

### **Conclusion**

The World Association of Christian Communicators Global Media Monitoring Report highlighted the fact that the particular significance of women's absence from news lies in the increasingly central role played by the news media in setting the agenda for public debate. By prioritising certain topics and ignoring others completely, and by giving a voice to certain social or political actors and not to others, the dominant news agenda tells us who and what is important. It creates pictures in our heads, pictures from which entire areas of experience are effectively blanked out. Studies in a limited number of countries have shown that the picture of the world provided by today's news media is one in which women barely exist. It is a world structured and inhabited overwhelmingly by men.

So, even though women are a major demographic in advertising promotions by the media industry, which casts them in limited roles and objectifies them to influence the community to choose one product or service over another, they are not yet sufficiently represented in the media hierarchy to influence the industry, which recognises woman-power but hesitates to use it at decision making levels.

While Fiji boasts a high proportion of women in newsrooms and in radio and television production, pertinent issues in feminist media scholarship remain extremely relevant today. This revolves around the relationship between the gender of journalists or media practitioners, and the gender of news actors. Underlying a great deal of debate about women's participation in the news has been the assumption that, if more women

were employed in the media, media content might change. The hypothesis that a greater number of female journalists or practitioners would lead to a differing ordering of priorities in news selection, or to a larger proportion of female news actors and interviewees, has yet to be proven. Current data are still unable to answer the question of whether female journalists consciously seek out women as interviewees, or whether they deliberately make an effort to cover stories of special concern to women.

Furthermore, many research studies have also shown that women are rarely called upon to give 'expert' opinion. The provision of expert opinion in the news is a relatively male prerogative. When women's opinion is sought on a particular issue, it tends to be in terms of their role as 'ordinary people' or 'persons in the street' whose occupation may be considered unimportant to the opinion they are asked to express. Because men are more frequently consulted as authorities, their occupations are more frequently specified. And, even when these occupations are not actually relevant to the issue being discussed, studies of media content have found that job titles are more likely to be provided in the case of male than of female contributors.

In order to make the media work for us, we must continue to lobby the media industry to develop people-centred and gender-mainstream policies and to become more accountable to their target audience – upon whom their 'return on investment' is based. At the same time, we must continue to develop *our own* media initiatives to:

- accelerate the promotion of peaceful conflict resolution, reconciliation and tolerance;
- promote 'best practice' education, training, community actions and youth programmes which can be shared by likeminded NGOs;
- encourage the further development of peace research, involving the participation of women;
- examine the impact of conflict on women and children;
- document the nature and contribution of women's participation in national, regional and international peace movements; and
- engage in research and identify innovative mechanisms for containing violence.

Leslie, H, 2000. 'Conceptualising and addressing the mental health impacts of gender roles in conflict and peacemaking', *Development Bulletin*, no. 53, pp. 65-69.

## **Conceptualising and addressing the mental health impacts of gender roles in conflict and peacemaking**

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### **Introduction**

There is no doubt that women experience conflict and peace in ways that relate directly to the social construction of their gender in any given context (Cooke and Woollacott 1993, Zalewski 1995). While these experiences will obviously vary according to situated cultural constructions, a common gender role in conflict that emerges consistently in the literature and in Pacific women's stated experiences of conflict in Solomon Islands, Bougainville and Papua New Guinea is that of vulnerability to gender-related violence (GRV).

In this paper, a model of healing, drawn from the author's recent fieldwork with women survivors of conflict in El Salvador and from seminal literature on gender and development practice, will be presented as a way of conceptualising and addressing the mental health impacts of GRV inflicted upon women in recent Melanesian conflicts. This model of healing recognises the inherently disempowering effects of GRV for women and draws on the theory of empowerment to aid women in the reconstruction of their shattered identities and societies.

### **The mental health impacts**

GRV, or violence that is enacted against women because they are women and because of what they represent as women (Richters 1994),<sup>1</sup> embodies the power imbalances that exist in patriarchal societies (El-Bushra and Piza Lopez 1993:1–2). As GRV in conflict is most often of a sexual nature, it is consciously designed to violate a woman's dignity and identity (Bunster-Burotto 1994:158). GRV acts to disempower women not only by terrorising them into submission, but also by instilling in them the impossibility of struggling for social change.

In the recent armed conflicts that have taken place in Solomon Islands and Bougainville, women have been specific targets of GRV. Rape is a common form of 'payback' in many conflict situations in Melanesia. As a result, countless women and girls were raped and sexually assaulted as rival factions fought for supremacy in the Solomons and as the Papua New Guinean army acted to suppress the sovereignty claims of the Bougainvillean people with increasingly brutal repression.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR 1995) contends that psychological trauma is a universal experience for victims of GRV. They experience intense feelings of worthlessness, self-disgust and powerlessness, which can lead in some cases to more chronic psychological disturbances such as depression and suicidal behaviour. The trauma may also be expressed through psychosomation – that is, through the constant physical ailments, such as headaches, sore backs and gastrointestinal disturbances, that often plague victims of GRV. Allodi and Stiansny's (1990) study of 28 tortured women from Central and South America, for example, revealed that these women were suffering from physical symptoms such as insomnia, headaches, body pains, stomach discomfort and lack of appetite, in addition to their

affective symptoms of depression, fear, feelings of hopelessness, loss of self-esteem, crying, irritability, and sexual anxiety/avoidance.

In attempting to understand the dynamics of trauma following torture in Chile, Agger and Jensen (1996) identified the psychological dynamics of dissociation and victimisation as concepts useful in understanding not only the experience of torture but also a person's subsequent reactions to it. Dissociation, or 'turning yourself off', during the torture process is a common psychological survival mechanism necessary to avoid an 'overwhelming anxiety which would lead to total disintegration' (Weinstein and Lira 1987:49 in Agger and Jensen 1996:92).

Victimisation, as conceived by Agger and Jensen (1996), refers to the consequences of the power relationship established between the torturer and the tortured. Through physical and psychological methods, the tortured are made to betray their families and friends, thus transforming themselves into the position of the torturer by delivering their families and friends into the hands of certain torture and perhaps even death. Having made this choice of physical over psychological survival, the tortured then suffer a kind of moral death resulting from the privileging of themselves or their families over the strength of their political beliefs.

The trauma resulting from GRV thus extends beyond the individual (Herman 1997). As Martín-Baró (1988) stresses, the nature of repression that took place in the political conflicts of Latin America, for example (silencing of opposition, rape, torture, disappearance, massacres, displacement, isolation, economic pauperisation), was also responsible for the traumatising of families and of society in general. It is then a 'psychosocial' trauma – that is, the 'traumatic crystallisation in persons and groups of inhuman social relations' (Martín-Baró 1988:138).

Judith Zur (1993), in her study of the psychosocial effects of 'La Violencia' (a period of government-sponsored terrorism, in 1980–83, directed against the civilian population during the 30-year civil war) on widows in El Quiché, Guatemala, attests further to the wider implications of GRV for society:

What the violence and loss meant for widows was a virtual reformulation of family life. This took place at various levels, from the roles taken up by women and children to replace those of missing male kin, to attitudinal changes regarding the security that one could expect from the family. The threat to the family meant that members had to disperse spatially in order to survive . . . as a result of witnessing relatives being massacred, and being unable to respond, women's images of themselves as mothers and wives and of carers and complementary partners, respectively, were destroyed. (Zur 1993:29)

As women in Latin America often derive their identity from their roles as mothers and protectors of the family unit (Bunster-Burotto 1994), the inability to provide adequately for their families led widows, and other women who had been abandoned by their partners, to experience feelings of anxiety and powerlessness. Given the ideological campaign of appropriate motherhood that was waged throughout Latin America during the era of authoritarian rule, these feelings were further compounded by the guilt women were made to feel for transgressing society's role of a good mother – that is, one who is able to protect her loved ones from death and disappearance (Hollander 1996:67–8).

The physical consequences of GRV impact, in addition, on women's psychological states. Through rape and other forms of GRV, women are exposed to HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. They are also, quite obviously, exposed to unwanted and often highly traumatic pregnancies (given the damage to their reproductive tract because of GRV) and as a result may attempt dangerous abortions (Byrne 1996). It is hard to imagine how such consequences of GRV could not result in psychological

traumatisation. Even for those women who are successful in dissociating themselves from their experiences, the cultural constructions of women in many societies result in their being held responsible for GRV and thus ostracised from society (Byrne 1996, El-Bushra and Piza Lopez 1994).

Since the early 1980s, with the publication of the American Psychiatric Association's third edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for Mental Disorders (DSM-III) (MacDonald 1996), psychiatrists have often identified the types of psychological effects discussed above as post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD):

a response, sometimes delayed, to an overwhelming event or events which takes the form of repeated, intrusive hallucinations, dreams, thoughts or behaviours stemming from the event, along with numbing that may have been begun during or after the experience, and possibly also increased arousal to (and avoidance of) stimuli recalling the event (Caruth 1995:4).

A diagnosis of PTSD is made when an individual is shown to experience a certain number of standardised symptoms, listed under the categories: re-experiencing the trauma, avoidance of behaviour and numbing of responsiveness, increased arousal, duration of the disorders, and functional impairment (American Psychiatric Association 1994).

Defining the psychological trauma of GRV in such a universal way, however, has major problems. Experts in the fields of psychology, psychiatry and social sciences have argued that the effects of violence, its manifestation, and the recovery from its psychological impacts are largely determined by factors that are context-specific (Bracken and Petty 1998). It is not always appropriate, then, to view the psychological impacts of conflict in medicalised terms, when they are 'more than and different from a disease condition even though [they have] physiological effects . . . The experience itself is characteristically cultural, elaborated in ways that differ from its development in other societies' (Kleinman 1995:185).

Viewing the impacts of GRV as a 'disease' or 'disorder' also acts to remove the political, social and economic forces from which trauma has arisen. Women who experience psychological trauma in conflict situations are the victims of a political project intentionally aimed at harming them. Hence, while women victims of GRV do often suffer traumatic symptoms as a result of this systematic harming, it would be dangerously remiss to say that they are suffering from a disease condition.

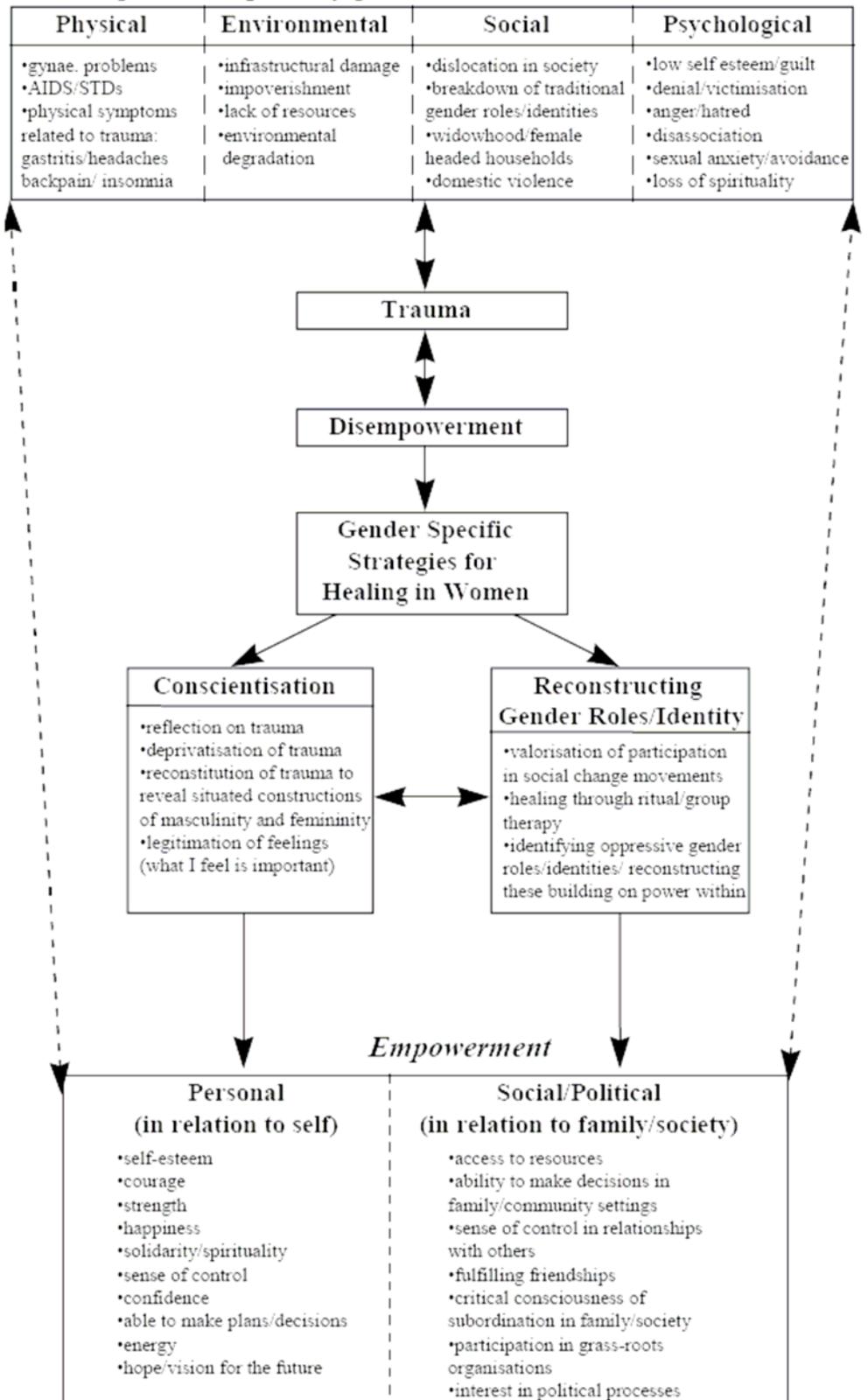
There are, therefore, many issues related to the labelling and subsequent treatment of victims who are suffering the psychological effects of GRV. What must not be lost in the complexities of these issues, however, is that these effects are a major challenge for conflict resolution and peacemaking. Because women's active participation in reconciliation and reconstruction is essential for sustainable development in post-conflict societies, efforts must be made to heal the women so that they have both the motivation and the capacity to participate in these activities.

These factors are of utmost significance to the efforts taking place in the Pacific to negotiate and sustain peaceful solutions to the recent conflicts in Solomon Islands and Bougainville. As Pacific women have long been recognised for their roles as peacemakers, it is important that there be purpose-built programmes put in place to alleviate the psychological trauma that they have suffered, so that they are able to participate more fully in efforts to reconcile and reconstruct their own identities and those of their peoples.

## **Healing the impacts of gender-related violence**

Figure 1 summarises the aforementioned effects of GRV and presents a way of addressing some of its impacts that may affect Pacific women as their societies struggle to emerge from protracted armed conflict. The model adapts Friedmann (1992) and Rowlands (1997) views

*Figure 1: Impacts of gender-related violence on women*



of empowerment in context with the author's research with women in El Salvador.

This model of healing explicitly identifies the linkages between the disempowering impacts of GRV during conflict, and the empowering outcomes of gender-specific approaches to healing the traumatic impacts of this violence. These approaches recognise the importance of deprivatising political trauma through conscientisation, or reflection, and the reconstruction of shattered gendered identities. Such gender-specific methods enable women survivors to heal themselves and their communities in ways that will contribute to the breaking down of the very same patriarchal structures (militarisation, authoritarianism, and machismo) from which their disempowerment has arisen.

As empowerment is not a linear process whereby a disempowered individual necessarily experiences empowerment through gender-specific healing strategies, a dashed line has been used in the model to show the relationship between the impacts of GRV and empowerment. This highlights the fact that empowering outcomes often contribute to the further perpetuation of GRV against women because of the conflict engendered by those empowered women who challenge the status quo.

Consonant with the impacts of GRV, the levels of empowerment shown in the model are also fluid and interrelated. While, for sake of clarity, empowerment has been delineated into personal and social/political levels, the reality for many women throughout the world is that changes relating to the self are simultaneously social and political. Personal empowerment outcomes such as self-esteem and happiness have spinoff effects into the realms of the social and political. Women who have a sense of personal potency are, for example, more likely to participate in development initiatives aimed at promoting structural change in society, while women who feel in control of their own lives are more likely to develop a critical consciousness of their subordination within their families and society at large.

## **Conclusion**

The implementation of a model of healing that is rooted in the empowerment approach is of clear importance to conflict resolution and reconciliation, not only in Latin America, where the author's research took place, but also in the current conflict and post-conflict environments of the Pacific. As GRV is a universal phenomenon which causes significant psychological impacts, women in the Pacific must be given the opportunity to heal their trauma in ways that recognise its inherently social nature. Such approaches have been successful in healing the trauma of Salvadorean women and empowering them to participate in post-conflict reconstruction activities. Pacific women, and Pacific societies, also deserve this opportunity.

## **Note**

1. It can be argued that women are targeted in conflict situations because of their position in the community as bearers of cultural identity (Byrne 1996:34, Moghadam 1995:137, Seifert 1993:10–12). Consequently, as Byrne stresses, 'the rape of women in conflict situations is intended not only as violence against women, but as an act of aggression against a nation or community'.

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## **The UN Transitional Administration in East Timor: Gender affairs**

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### **Introduction**

When the United Nations Security Council established the Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) in late October 1999, following the intervention by Interfet to secure peace and stability, its main objectives were, and still remain:

. . . to provide security and maintain law and order throughout the territory of East Timor; and to establish an effective administration. It was also to assist in the development of civil and social services; and to ensure the coordination and delivery of humanitarian assistance, rehabilitation and development assistance; to support capacity-building for self-government; as well as assisting in the establishment of conditions for sustainable development. (UNTAET, Security Council Resolution 1271, 25 October 1999)

In the regulation establishing the authority of UNTAET, it was stipulated that:

. . . in exercising their functions, all persons undertaking public duties or holding public office in East Timor shall observe internationally recognized human rights standards, as reflected in particular in: The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women . . . They shall not discriminate against any person on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion. (Regulation No.1999/1: Authority of UNTAET)

Such objectives have very much set the direction of this UN peacekeeping mission which, coming under the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in the UN Secretariat, is also subject to the international standards, human rights conventions, and outcomes of UN conferences that apply system-wide throughout the United Nations.

### **Gender mainstreaming**

The first directive, regarding a systematic approach to integration of gender, was contained in the *Platform for Action* agreed on at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. This was the first UN document to call for a political commitment to work towards equality between women and men and to pursue 'gender mainstreaming' as a strategy for achieving it. It said:

. . . to ensure effective implementation of the Platform for Action and to enhance the work of the advancement of women . . . the United Nations system and all other relevant organizations should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective, inter alia, in the monitoring and evaluation of all policies and programmes, so that before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects on women and men, respectively. (Para.292)

The *Agreed Conclusions 1997/2*, adopted at the meeting of the UN Economic and Social Council in 1997, addressed mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the UN system. It defined 'mainstreaming a gender perspective' as:

. . . the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of

the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.

### **The Gender Affairs Unit**

When the original structure of UNTAET was being considered, a Gender Affairs office was to be established in the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), with a mandate to mainstream gender throughout all areas of the administration. To have been located at the apex of decision making would have provided UNTAET from the beginning with a rare opportunity for peacekeeping missions to design public institutions which mainstream a gender based rights approach in institutional and human resource planning, policies and programming.

However, the proposed office was not retained. The SRSG decided, instead, to appoint two senior gender advisers: one to be located in Civil Affairs (the Governance and Public Administration pillar), and the other in the Human Rights Unit. When the former post was filled at the end of March, it came under the Deputy SRSG for Governance and Public Administration (GPA), and it was recommended that the three staff in Gender Affairs set up an office reporting to the Deputy SRSG.

At this stage GPA was establishing a functioning administration, consisting of Judicial Affairs (judicial reform and administration, penal management, and legal training); Civilian Police (operations and administration); Social Services (health, education, youth, sport, culture, social affairs, labour); Infrastructure (telecommunications, post, electricity, water and sanitation, transport, port management and civil aviation); Financial Development and Economic Affairs (budget, treasury, tax, customs and immigration, internal audit, trade and commerce); Agricultural Affairs (fisheries and forestry, food and agriculture, agricultural research and extension); Civil Service Commission; Environmental Protection Unit; Research and Census; Land and Property Commission; and District Administration.

According to the *Report of the Secretary-General on the Situation of East Timor to the Security Council (S/1999/1024)* of 4 October 1999, GPA was charged with overseeing the development of governance, administrative and rule of law institutions to serve East Timor. One of its main objectives was to lay the foundations for sustainable institutions and to design an agenda for sustainable economic and social development.

As stated in the report, 'in all elements of the functioning of the governance and public administration elements of UNTAET, the United Nations will work on the basis of the principles of participation and capacity-building', which has involved assigning 'East Timorese to serve in positions inside the administrative structures together with international counterparts and deliver sufficient training and capacity-building to enable these persons gradually to replace international staff'. Such an approach 'will allow a cadre of well-trained East Timorese capable of performing the administrative and public service functions necessary to support an independent East Timor' to be developed.

### **Objectives of the Gender Affairs Unit**

Given the relocation of the Gender Affairs Unit, in light of the above functions of the GPA pillar, its objectives became twofold: notably, to advocate for gender equity and equality, as upheld by the United Nations and as expressed in the East Timorese women's Platform for Action. *The Platform for Action for the Advancement of Women of Timor Loro Sae* was adopted by the First Congress of Women of Timor Loro Sae, held in Dili

on 14–17 June 2000. It is the first attempt to analyse the situation of East Timorese women and to devise policy and strategies for their empowerment.

The congress was held at a time of great challenges for Timor Loro Sae as it undertakes the road from transition to independence after more than 24 years of occupation and armed conflict. It is a time when the only constant is change and when difficult choices are being made regarding nation building, reconciliation, justice, democracy, and reconstruction and development.

The issues which the women prioritised have also become areas of special focus for the Gender Affairs Unit: participation in decision making; the establishment of a gender-sensitive legal and justice system with compensation and reparations for women victims of violence experienced in the last 24 years of Indonesian military occupation; the development of an inclusive constitution; a special focus on vulnerable groups; and the implementation of health programmes to cover all aspects of women's health throughout life. Other needs highlighted were education and literacy programmes for women and girls; a people based economic system, strengthened from the bottom up, in which women have equal rights to land, employment and investment opportunities; and increased participation in and access to expression and decision making in and throughout the media and new communication technologies.

With both the UN mandates and the outcomes of the women's national congress providing the underpinning, the mission of the Gender Affairs Unit is to ensure the participation of women as equal partners with men, by promoting women as equal participants in and beneficiaries of sustainable development, peace and security, governance and human rights. The Unit undertakes advocacy, communication, coordination and monitoring of policy and programme implementation. It strives to stimulate the mainstreaming of a gender perspective both within and outside UNTAET. In so doing, the institutions, policies and programmes created, and later administered, by the Timorese government will be more viable, sustainable and able to serve better the Timorese population in a non-discriminatory, just and equitable fashion. Outreach is also made to stakeholders and partners, such as international agencies, non government organisations (NGOs), East Timorese civil society and community organisations.

### **Capacity building**

The Gender Affairs Unit, in conjunction with key partners in UNTAET, is facilitating capacity-building for gender mainstreaming within the Transitional Administration. Mechanisms have been established at headquarters and district levels, and workshops held to introduce both international and national staff to concepts of gender and gender mainstreaming. Training resources, tools and guidelines are being developed to influence gender-responsiveness programming throughout all areas of the Transitional Administration. Civilian Police and Gender Affairs have established a working relationship to promote gender awareness in policing policies, services and training. This is being undertaken through a process of consultation, information exchange, technical assistance and joint missions.

One of the aims of the Unit is to facilitate the formulation and implementation of government policies on equality between women and men in the Transitional Administration, to develop appropriate strategies and methodologies, and promoting coordination and cooperation within the central and district Transitional Administration in order to ensure mainstreaming of a gender perspective. This is being undertaken by the promotion and establishment of cooperative relationships with departments and units

within GPA at the headquarters and district levels, and by enabling NGOs, especially women's organisations, to work closely with the Transitional Administration.

Gender Affairs is also undertaking gender analysis of proposed/existing policies/laws to ensure early and effective intervention in policy making and preparing policy papers on issues of concern to women and thus the development of position and policy alternatives. Given that UNTAET is establishing new structures to enhance Timorese participation in decision making, the Unit is directly involving the East Timorese Women's Network (REDE) in consultations regarding the development of draft legal instruments with regard, inter alia, to the Constitution, criminal law, prisons, police procedures, conditions of employment, health, property, and equal opportunity in education.

In order to be able to provide informed advice, Gender Affairs is also developing the capacity to ensure the availability and accessibility of data/information for gender-responsive policy making, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. This is being achieved by creating a more gender-responsive statistical system to improve statistics on gender issues, with an initial focus on education and returning refugees.

## **Conclusion**

What is being established here in the East Timorese Transitional Administration is a unique experiment in UN peacekeeping missions, and one that has become increasingly essential with the growing complexity of such operations. Both here in East Timor and in Kosovo, national governments are being established, and the creation of a sustainable Gender Affairs office has the potential to become the national machinery for women.

In last October's first historic debate in the Security Council which addressed the issue of women, peace and security, Noeleen Heyzer, the Executive Director of UNIFEM (UN Development Fund for Women) stated:

. . . the placement of gender advisers in Sierra Leone, Kosovo and East Timor may present a new model, if they are adequately supported. But all such arrangements must involve women and provide gender experts in their design and implementation . . . Unless a country's constitutional, legal, judicial and electoral frameworks deal with gender equality, then no matter what happens after conflict, no matter how peaceful a transition, the entire country will never have a fair chance at development. During the transition to peace, a unique opportunity exists to put in place a gender responsive framework for a country's reconstruction. Nowhere is this more possible than in East Timor. Last week during my visit there, I saw a country struggling to rebuild. I was inspired by the efforts of East Timorese women, together with UNTAET, working to improve legislation and to strengthen local capacity to advocate for gender sensitive laws and policies. (UN Security Council Open Debate on Women and Peace and Security, 24 October 2000)

# Women and peacemaking

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## **Theoretical approaches to women and peace**

The traditional association between women and peace asserts that women are more peaceful than men and therefore, within the objectives of peace research and activism, women – or at the very least ‘feminine’ values and behaviours – are more suited to enacting peace.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, precisely this perspective can be seen to have informed much of the collective organisation of women’s peace activism.<sup>2</sup> The association between women and peace draws on larger stereotypes of men and women and ideas of masculinity and femininity in order to create an image of ‘women’ as mothers, nurturing, caring, egalitarian and cooperative, and ‘men’ as competitive, aggressive, hierarchical and risk-taking (Marshall 2000:7–8). Men and men’s activities are therefore viewed as the ‘root causes of war’, whereas women ‘can bring peace, if only men will let them’ (Burguières 1990:4).

However, a ‘women’s perspective’ on peacemaking need not be based on such a ready acceptance of this traditional association between women and peace. Indeed, certain strands of feminist analysis suggest that the acceptance of this stereotypical portrayal of men and women is not desirable, nor are the limited strategies for peacemaking that it entails. An anti-militarist feminist approach to peace insists that traditional images of masculinity and femininity reinforce both militarism and sexism (Burguières 1990:6). The traditional perspective that places value in the imagery of women as ‘peaceful’ caretakers, nurturers or mothers in fact fails to challenge the very conceptions of femininity and masculinity that perpetuate patriarchal militarism.<sup>3</sup> In particular, it obscures ‘the role caretakers often play in supporting war and warriors, thereby *discouraging* women from examining the part they play in maintaining and reproducing warist society’ (Kaplan 1994:124).

According to anti-militarist feminism, therefore, the model of ‘caring women’ represents an insufficient strategy for peacemaking. Acceptance of the women-and-peace connection implied that the incorporation of ‘women’ – or at least ‘feminine’ values, traits and attributes – into peacemaking processes should be the primary strategy towards peacebuilding. Anti-militarist feminism, however, insists that the primary strategy lies with ‘a dismantling of all systems and structures of domination and oppression’ and the conceptions of masculinity and femininity that sustain them (Kaplan 1994:129). Clearly, therefore, this perspective implies significantly more than merely embracing a ‘women’s perspective’ on peacemaking, or incorporating either women or women’s organisations into peacemaking processes. Burguières (1990:8) provides a useful summary of anti-militarist feminism and its implications for the roles of women in peacemaking:

The ‘feminism versus militarism’ approach to peace rejects both masculine and feminine stereotypes. Instead, it argues for the role of feminism in dismantling the imagery which underlies patriarchy and militarism. In practical terms, this means that both men and women are responsible for changing existing structures in which warfare is a central component and for opening paths to nonviolent interaction between peoples and states. Women have no superior moral claim to being bearers of peace. They can, however, begin to set the mechanisms of transformation in motion by refusing to fall into well established

patterns of either feminine or masculine behaviour. The process toward a post-patriarchal, post-military society is according to these feminists, a joint male and female effort.

### **Peacemaking in practice: women's views**

In order to contextualise these theoretical approaches, it is necessary to ascertain the standing of a 'women's perspective' on peacemaking and to relate this to the theoretical debates over the women-and-peace connection. The women's views presented here were mainly sourced from the postings to the Women and Armed Conflict Working Group (see *Women and Armed Conflict List Archives*).<sup>4</sup> This group was an on-line discussion group, convened by WomenWatch, United Nations, in the lead-up to the Beijing Plus 5 conference.

The working group sought to share ideas on a number of themes related to women and armed conflict, including the 'participation of women and women's organisations in peace processes and peace-building and strengthening of women's organisations working for peace' (*Women and Armed Conflict List* moderator, 11 October 1999). Participation in the group was open to anyone who subscribed to the e-mail listserver. In general, the contributors ranged from representatives of non government organisations, community policy-making bodies, grassroots peace movements or activist groups, peace research academics, and journalists.<sup>5</sup>

The range of views expressed on the question of whether women peacemakers have a distinctive approach to the peace process largely echo the theoretical debate over the question of a unique 'women's perspective'. In one contribution, the women-and-peace connection was revived once more through the hypnotic imagery of women as nurturing mothers:

I think women develop peace as they nurture a rose in their garden, it comes from the ground up and like with their children they give the process gentle nurturing, they use poetical words in politics like tenderness, love, sadness, joy. (Haber, 26 October 1999)

Another contributor attempted to avoid this essentialising of 'every woman' and 'every man' while, at the same time, generalising the stances of women's political groups as 'more concerned with survival issues overall' than men's groups (Pinto, 9 November 1999).

Overall, the remaining contributors on this question tended to veer away from any essentialising of the nature of 'women' and towards the idea that a women's perspective, if indeed it exists at all, is drawn from the position of women as 'oppressed members of society' (for example, Cockburn, 22 October 1999; Kraham, 26 October 1999; Sharoni, 25 October 1999). What is distinctive about this approach is its emphasis on structures of oppression, unequal power relations and the constructions of masculinity and femininity in processes of conflict and peacemaking. As one contributor stressed, it is not being a 'woman' but, rather, 'feminism' that provides a distinctive approach to peace (Sharoni, 25 October 1999).

Another contributor offered this summary of the working group's discussion, a summary which largely reflects the feminist anti-militarist perspective described above:

The recent posts on women's differing voices point out the paramount importance of exploring and documenting not only the roles of women in conflict and peacebuilding, but the role played by the constructions of gender, both masculinity and femininity, in conflict and peacebuilding. Katha Pollitt's evocation of the 'macho gun mystique' underscores the importance of conceptualizations of masculinity in the creation of militaristic societies; we also need to look at how conceptualizations of masculinity and femininity affect multiple

aspects of women in armed conflict. For example, in our discussions of violence against women, we have neglected to discuss the role played by hyper-militarised masculinities in both enabling this to happen, and allowing non-prosecution of crimes afterwards. (Hamilton, 29 October 1999)

## **Involving women in peacebuilding**

Despite the debates over whether women bring a unique perspective to peacemaking, there is a clear consensus among the contributors that women should become increasingly involved in the peacebuilding process (for example, Cockburn, 22 October 1999; Haber, 27 October 1999; Kraham, 26 October 1999). The general assertion is that such involvement would, at the very least, create a more inclusive and reflective society – ‘less biased toward the perspectives or behaviours of only one segment’. Interestingly, the contributors critically questioned the idea that ‘peace would necessarily result if men were replaced by women as leaders’. However, some were willing to indicate a hope that women’s involvement would lead to a positive redefinition of what constitutes politics and about how best to conduct genuine peacemaking (Cockburn, 22 October 1999).<sup>6</sup>

These views indicate that women and their organisations make use of innovative strategies for peace negotiation, peacemaking and peacebuilding. Indeed, their main strategies suggest not only alternative means of doing politics and peacemaking, but also alternative understandings of politics and peacemaking.<sup>7</sup> For example, their activities are frequently at the grassroots or community movement and organisation level. Cynthia Cockburn (22 October 1999) hopes that such involvement may change the notion of ‘peace negotiations’

in such a way that it is no longer seen as something top people do in top places. But rather it comes to be seen as a continuum, that parallels the continuum of violence. In other words, that more people might come to see peace as a way of doing daily life, economic life, political life, even military life. And if we women learn well within our own organisations, form our own successes and failures working together, we could transmit the idea that democracy, the way we cross the space between us, the choices we make about speaking, listening, waiting, acting, deciding, is peace in process.

Women’s peace activism through ‘bottom-up’ community processes is not merely the result of obstacles to their access to formal political processes and official peace negotiations. It reflects also the inadequacy of traditional approaches to conflict resolution that are grounded in a narrow definition of peace and a militarised, state-centric notion of security:

Genuine peace is not a mere absence of war (‘negative peace’) . . . It is the process and reality where life-affirming, self-determined, environmentally sustainable ends are sought and accomplished through coalitionary, interactive, cooperative means. (Warren and Cady 1994:6)

Therefore, genuine peace is sought at all levels of society and needs to involve the ‘people whose lives are affected by conflict and the mutual animosity and conflicting goals that drive it’ (Marshall 2000:4). Further, peace is a process. Genuine peace requires the continually active pursuit of human security and a disbanding of structures of oppression and inequalities in people’s access to power.

## **Conclusion**

The views of women active in both the theoretical and practical processes of peacemaking suggest the need to move beyond simply incorporating a ‘women’s

perspective' and towards a transformation of the processes and strategies employed for genuine peacemaking. While anti-militarist feminism rejects the idea of a women-and-peace connection, it nonetheless recognises and encourages the role of women's and feminist activism in attempting to transform existing structures and processes of war and peace. In fact, anti-militarist feminist Micaela Di Leonardo (1985:614) argues that women are in a somewhat unique position when it comes to understanding the threat of militarism:

Because gender analysis exposes the contradictions of militarism, it makes sense for women to organise separately in order to understand how militarism affects their daily lives. Militarism's impact on women is distinct. Because they are both ideologically defined as outside of the military, and yet so palpably affected by it, they are more likely to experience the nuclear/militarist threat and to be willing to protest against it. This explanation of both the rise and effectiveness of separate women's antimilitarist organisations focuses on women's social positions rather than on their presumed characteristics.

The position of women in relation to war and peace varies and thus problematises the traditional conception of women as connected to the project of peace. Nonetheless, the actual roles and involvement of women in processes of peacemaking highlight and reinforce the importance of a gendered analysis of war and peace – but not to ask whether women are more peaceful than men but, rather, to question the role of constructions of masculinity and femininity in sustaining militarism and obstructing genuine peacemaking.

## Notes

1. This approach to theorising the relationship between women, peace and strategies for peacemaking can be found in a number of works, for example: B. Brock-Utne, *Educating for peace* (Pergamon, New York, 1985); D. Thompson (ed.), *Over our dead bodies: Women against the bomb* (Virago Press, London, 1983); P. McAllister (ed.), *Reweaving the web of life: Feminism and nonviolence* (New Society Publishing, Philadelphia, 1982); and B. Reardon, *Sexism and the war system* (Columbia University, New York, 1985).
2. Some examples of women's collective peace activist groups are: Women's Pentagon Action, Greenham Common Women, Women's Peace Union, and Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.
3. I have used the term 'patriarchal militarism' to highlight the centrality of conceptions of masculinity and femininity to militarism. In this I am following Kaplan (1994:124).
4. In the following discussion, where source material is derived from the contributions to this list, the material is referenced only by the contributor's name and the date of posting to the list. These references are mostly given in parentheses in the text with the format (author, date).
5. Two international symposiums on closely related themes and with a similar range of participants and contributors were also convened in 1999 (for reports on them, see Marshall 2000 and Manchanda 1999).
6. See also Marshall (2000:7–10); Manchanda (1999); and *Women and Armed Conflict List Archives*: Kraham (26 October 1999), Haber (27 October 1999) and Lee (1 November 1999).
7. For examples, see Manchanda (1999), Marshall (2000, esp. chs 2 and 4), and *Women and Armed Conflict List Archives*: moderator (28 October 1999).

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## **Gendering conflict and conflict management in the Solomon Islands**

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### **Introduction**

During the recent conflict in the Solomon Islands, in which unprecedented economic and political suffering occurred, it was the women who bore the heaviest burden. Because of their combined gender roles as mothers, housewives, breadwinners and keepers of the family or clan (Pollard 2000a), Solomon Islands women suffered considerably from the destruction of the social and economic fabric of their society. In not being able to access medical attention for their children because hospitals and medical centres were closed, for example, some women suffered a form of trauma related to a sense of loss of gender identity. Other women were victims of rape and domestic violence, while still others were unable to maintain the economic activities that enabled their families to adequately subsist.

Along with these forms of disempowerment experienced by women, the recent conflict in the Solomons also acted to empower women to work for peace and security. Evoking cultural and historical constructions of women as 'peacemakers', women's organisations such as the Women for Peace group (WFP) in Guadalcanal worked to bring the warring factions together, and to build a culture of peace in Solomon Islands society. Despite the efforts of this group and others, Solomon Islands women were excluded from participating in the official peace process in Townsville, and appear to remain excluded from political decision making at national level after the conflict. There were no women members voted into office in the December 2001 elections, for example (Roughan 2001c).

This lack of recognition of women's efforts, and the apparent unwillingness of the authorities to ensure the adequate representation of women in political decision making processes, flies in the face of current development research and practice, which shows that empowered women are the key to sustainable development in society. Development efforts that ignore women, target solely women's welfare, or focus on integrating women into existing (male-centred) development processes have not been effective in ensuring that society is transformed in ways which promote security and sustainability. The empowerment of women therefore becomes crucial to building a culture of peace in society after a conflict.

### **Theorising women's roles in conflict and peace**

In recent years, the opportunity armed conflict offers to disrupt sex role stereotypes for women has been the topic of intense scholarship. It has been shown, for example, that conflict acts to open up spaces previously closed to women, as the community tends to be preoccupied more with the external threat, and less with internal social ordering (Ridd 1986). It has also been shown that women's involvement in community and political activism during such periods has been an enormous source of empowerment for many (Byrne 1996; Turshen 1998; Jorgensen 1994).

Paradoxically, however, recent scholarship has also shown how discourses of gender in times of conflict have correspondingly sought to entrench traditional expectations and

stereotypes (Lake and Damousi 1995; Byrne 1996). Just as 'Rosy the riveter', that famous Second World War American icon, was exalted for her contribution to the war effort, a conservative lexicon stressing the importance of women's place in the home existed alongside this emancipatory discourse to define and undermine women's war work outside the home (Montgomerie 1996). This conservative lexicon was generally found to continue after the conflict such that, in the case of Britain, for example, women resuming their place in the home became an important signifier of prewar order (Lake and Damousi 1995).

That is not to say, however, that women's intra- and postwar experiences are necessarily uniform. Moser and Clark (2001:1–2) have argued against simplistic views and divisions of gender roles in violent conflict, pointing out that, 'under- or misrepresentation of the gendered causes, costs and consequences of violence has resulted in insufficient recognition of women's involvement and participation, both unavoidable and deliberate'. Instead, scholarship in the field of gender and conflict should recognise the diversity of women's experiences, so that women's agency is not denied or distorted in ways that reinforce mechanisms of power and domination (Marchand 1995).

### **The diversity of women's experiences**

A recent volume on the gendered dynamics of armed conflict (Moser and Clark 2001), illustrates several themes reflecting the diversity of women's experiences. The first is that, during times of violent conflict, women suffer victimisation, most commonly sexual violence and abuse, at the hands of men. This gender-related violence is in itself both complex and diverse, mirroring cultural constructions of masculinity and femininity in society, with consequences that affect such factors as family structure and economic survival (Moser and Clark 2001).

The second theme concerns women's agency and power during times of violent conflict. It is argued that the actions of women in violent conflict situations throughout the world contest the notion that they are necessarily powerless and passive during such periods. The agency that women exhibit, through their roles as armed combatants and members of social movements, can be a cohesive or a disintegrative force (in that women's collective struggle against patriarchy and oppression can often be divided across religious and ethnic lines) and is influenced by gender roles and expectations (Moser and Clark 2001).

The last theme is that of women's active participation in building sustainable peace in society. While women tend to be ignored in male-dominated official peace negotiations, there is no doubt that gender plays an important role in negotiating and building peace. By emphasising gender rather than political identity in their work, women's organisations have been able to mobilise around a variety of peace-building initiatives, such as social welfare and community development, in times of conflict and peace. As women's organisations tend to engender higher levels of trust than those dominated by men, their work also has important implications for decisions about which organisations will be more successful in 'building social capital' in peacemaking processes (Moser and Clark 2001:10).

Despite the current interest in gender and conflict evidenced by a number of recent publications in the field, theorising on the gendered dynamics of conflict and peace has generally been limited to feminist scholarship and practice (Moser and Clark 2001). Moreover, despite the obvious linkages that can be made between the gender dimensions of conflict and peace and those of development, very little analysis attempts

to make such linkages (Leslie 1999). This is an oversight which has important implications not only for development assistance, but also for the design and implementation of reconstruction programs after conflicts (Moser and Clark 2001).

### **The importance of women's empowerment**

From the mid-1980s, gender and development (GAD) has emerged as the predominant approach to both development theory and practice. Previously, approaches and theories concerned with the 'women question' in international development regimes had focused solely on women, ignoring the cultural relationships that exist between men and women and the corresponding effects that these have on women's social and economic development. The hallmark of the GAD approach has been the empowerment of women.

### **The empowerment approach**

Empowerment suggests a process whereby power is generated in order to achieve individual or collective goals (Rowlands 1997). In an empowerment process, varying notions of power are confronted at different levels, such as internal or psychological, and situational or social levels. Empowerment should not be seen, however, as a panacea for marginalised groups. As power is generally viewed as power over a thing or person, the pursuit of power for women and other subordinated groups will usually generate conflict among those individuals, groups and institutions from whom power is being sought (Rowlands 1997). Efforts to empower can lead, therefore, to disempowerment, as alterations in power relations can result in forms of sanctioning by those who have power.

In conflict and in peacetime, development programs should therefore promote women's empowerment, while confronting the disempowerment that women experience through projects that contribute to more equitable gender relations in society. Despite the fact that there are many examples of such projects operating at the grassroots level, official humanitarian intervention in complex emergencies has rarely developed specific strategies to meet women's needs and rights (El Bushra and Mukarubuga 1995). Development programs must begin, therefore, to recognise 'women's role in maintaining the fabric of community interaction ... alongside their potential to promote reconciliation and peace' (El Bushra and Mukarubuga 1995:22).

## **Gendering conflict and conflict management in the Solomon Islands**

### **Background to the crisis**

The violent conflict in the Solomon Islands has its historical antecedents in the struggle for land resources and power that accompanied the internal migration of peoples throughout the archipelago. Prior to colonisation, the movement of people outside of blood and land ties took place as a result of arranged marriages or through compensatory mechanisms resulting from wars between various tribes or islands. Upon colonisation and with the declaration of independence from Britain in 1978, however, the movement of people between islands and provinces increased dramatically, resulting in growing urbanisation and pressure for land in Guadalcanal (Liloqula 2000).

Despite a period of optimism between late 1997 and early 1999, when a change in political leadership saw reform in public services and natural resource policy, longstanding issues of governance and corruption led to various attempts to derail the Solomon Islands Alliance for Change government, and set in place the mechanisms

through which violent conflict could emerge (Roughan 2001). By late 1998, Guadalcanal youths had formed the Guadalcanal Revolutionary Army, soon to become the Isatabu Freedom Movement (IFM), and had begun a campaign of terror to chase non-indigenous Guadalcanal settlers from areas in and around Honiara. By June 1999, the militants had killed up to 100 people and displaced more than 20,000, mainly Malaitan, settlers (Roughan 2001; Kabutaulaka 2000).

In response to this violence, Malaitan men formed the Malaita Eagle Force (MEF) and, with stolen police equipment and weapons, began to pressurise the government to pay compensation for the consequences of the IFM's uprising. While the government did attempt to respond to these demands, its compensation payments and reconciliation gestures did little to address the root causes of the conflict. Meanwhile, the national economy was disintegrating and some provinces were beginning to articulate a desire to form separate states (Roughan 2001). On 5 June, any hope of resolving the conflict through peaceful means was dashed when MEF militants, supported by some sectors of the police, staged a civilian coup, sacking the government led by Bartholomew Ulufa'alu and replacing it with their own parliamentary proxies (Kabutaulaka 2000).

Military campaigns and reprisals against the IFM and Guadalcanal civilians increased around this time, and further attempts to broker peace were shortlived. When a cease-fire occurred with the signing of the Townsville peace agreement in October 2000, it was clear that, unless fundamental social and economic change and a more equitable distribution of the benefits of development was put in place, the prospects for sustainable peace would be bleak (Kabutaulaka 2000).

### **Women's roles and experiences of conflict and peacemaking**

Women were part of the civilian population that was tortured, starved and killed, and women were the ones who suffered the most from the closure of medical clinics and schools throughout Guadalcanal. It was women who were forced to give birth to their babies in the bush, and feel the guilt and fear of not being able to vaccinate their children against deadly diseases such as TB and whooping cough (Paina 2000). While men also suffered from such losses and deprivations, women were arguably more disempowered because of the guilt that their inability to fulfil gender responsibilities created.

It is not surprising, therefore, that psychosocial support has been identified as a priority need by much of the population of Guadalcanal (Paina 2000). The civilian population lived in a state of fear for over 20 months, and this caused ruptures in the entire social fabric. First-hand experiences of such terror and disintegration provided women leaders in Guadalcanal with the impetus to fight for peace such that, shortly after May 2000, the Women for Peace group was formed (Pollard 2000b).

Peacemaking is not a new role for women in the Solomon Islands. In fact, Melanesian women have a long history of intervening in violent conflict when the costs of such become insupportable (Douglas 2000). Traditionally, women in some parts of the Solomons were able to intervene in conflict by evoking cultural laws and values. As it is forbidden in the Areare culture for a man to step over any part of a women's body, for example, a woman could stop fighting by proclaiming that any further skirmishes occurring would be akin to walking over her legs. The fighting would therefore cease and negotiations for compensation and reconciliation would begin (Pollard 2000b).

The WFP group draws on such traditional values and beliefs in their quest to find a lasting solution to the violent conflict. Comprising a diverse range of Honiara women, WFP is an independent body committed to working with traditional leaders, churches,

community organisations, militant groups, national government and the international community to enhance women's ability to engender peace.

During the conflict, WFP realised its objectives in many ways. Delegates attended conferences and forums, met with militant groups, the government and police representatives, participated in weekly prayer meetings for peace, visited rural communities to facilitate the return of child militants and provided essential goods to families in need (Pollard 2000b).

The Guadalcanal Women for Peace movement worked in similar ways to promote peace throughout Guadalcanal province. Formed shortly after and in close collaboration with the WFP, the Guadalcanal Women for Peace movement comprised women who were living in Honiara owing to work commitments or marriage to men from outside the province (Paina 2000). Its ultimate goal was convincing men to search for non-violent solutions to the conflict. In the long term, the movement hopes to empower women by raising awareness about domestic violence, incest, rape and gender equality, and to alleviate the oppression women experience in a male-dominated society (Paina 2000).

## **Conclusion**

With growing theoretical and practical awareness of both the need to understand women's experiences of conflict, and the importance of an empowerment approach to women's development in conflict and post-conflict situations, Solomon Islands women's organisations such as the WFP and the Guadalcanal Women for Peace movement should be well placed to work towards their goal of building lasting peace in the Solomon Islands. Yet, despite this awareness and the historical and cultural precedents of women's peacemaking in the archipelago, women's work for peace has not been recognised or encouraged in official peacemaking efforts.

Recent events in the Solomon Islands have shown that the fragile peace brokered in Townsville is at grave risk of becoming unravelled. While the June 2002 weapons amnesty was heralded as a partial success (Associated Press 2002), lasting peace will not be achieved through the surrender of weapons alone. Lawlessness and violence is currently endemic and many Solomon Islands citizens have little faith in the government that was elected to power in December 2001. Recent reports point to a return by politicians to the corrupt and alienating ways of old (Roughan 2001b), and many citizens believe that the present government is nothing more than a government of the gun (many men aligned to the coup masters have been voted into power). There is, unfortunately, little that can be done to restore legitimacy in the political process until social and economic conditions improve for the majority of the people.

Whether official recognition and encouragement of the participation of women in peacemaking initiatives would have resulted in a different form of peace is certainly a matter of debate. Women's organisations must be given the chance, however, in this crucial post-conflict period, to prove that through the empowerment of women, social capital can be built and fundamental transformations of society achieved. Development initiatives are at present focusing on infrastructural projects which do not directly affect village life and have the potential to foster government corruption and mismanagement (Roughan 2001a). Future research by this author will aim to provide concrete evidence of the need to rethink post-conflict reconstruction, and of the consequences of investing in women's needs and capacities.

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## **United Nations Security Council Resolution on Women, Peace and Security**

*New York, October 31, 2000*

A resolution on Women, Peace and Security was passed unanimously by the UN Security Council on October 31, 2000.

A coalition of five organizations, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), International Alert, Amnesty International, Women's Commission for Women Refugees and Girls and the Hague Appeal for Peace, joined with UNIFEM to draft a resolution that would call for gender sensitivity in all UN missions including peace-keeping, for women to equally participate at all negotiating tables and for the protection of women and girls during armed conflict.

The full text of the resolution reads as follows:

"The Security Council,

Recalling its resolutions 1261 (1999) of 25 August 1999, 1265 (1999) of 17 September 1999, 1296 (2000) of 19 April 2000 and 1314 (2000) of 11 August 2000, as well as relevant statements of its President and recalling also the statement of its President, to the press on the occasion of the United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace of 8 March 2000 (SC/6816),

Recalling also the commitments of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (A/52/231) as well as those contained in the outcome document of the twenty-third Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the twenty-first century" (A/S-23/10/Rev.1), in particular those concerning women and armed conflict,

Bearing in mind the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the primary responsibility of the Security Council under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security,

Expressing concern that civilians, particularly women and children, account for the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict, including as refugees and internally displaced persons, and increasingly are targeted by combatants and armed elements, and recognizing the consequent impact this has on durable peace and reconciliation,

Reaffirming the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, and stressing the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution,

Reaffirming also the need to implement fully international humanitarian and human rights law that protects the rights of women and girls during and after conflicts,

Emphasizing the need for all parties to ensure that mine clearance and mine awareness programmes take into account the special needs of women and girls,

Recognizing the urgent need to mainstream a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations, and in this regard noting the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations (S/2000/693),

Recognizing also the importance of the recommendation contained in the statement of its President to the press of 8 March 2000 for specialized training for all peacekeeping personnel on the protection, special needs and human rights of women and children in conflict situations,

Recognizing that an understanding of the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, effective institutional arrangements to guarantee their protection and full participation in the peace process can significantly contribute to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security,

Noting the need to consolidate data on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls,

- 1 Urges Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict;
- 2 Encourages the Secretary-General to implement his strategic plan of action (A/49/587) calling for an increase in the participation of women at decision-making levels in conflict resolution and peace processes;
- 3 Urges the Secretary-General to appoint more women as special representatives and envoys to pursue good offices on his behalf, and in this regard calls on Member States to provide candidates to the Secretary-General, for inclusion in a regularly updated centralized roster;
- 4 Further urges the Secretary-General to seek to expand the role and contribution of women in United Nations field-based operations and especially among military observers, civilian police, human rights and humanitarian personnel;
- 5 Expresses its willingness to incorporate a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations and urges the Secretary-General to ensure that, where appropriate, field operations include a gender component;
- 6 Requests the Secretary-General to provide to Member States training guidelines and materials on the protection, rights and the particular needs of women, as well as on the importance of involving women in all peacekeeping and peacebuilding measures, invites Member States to incorporate these elements as well as HIV/AIDS awareness training into their national training programmes for military and civilian police personnel in preparation for deployment and further requests the Secretary-General to ensure that civilian personnel of peacekeeping operations receive similar training;
- 7 Urges Member States to increase their voluntary financial, technical and logistical support for gender-sensitive training efforts, including those undertaken by relevant funds and programmes, inter alia, the United Nations Fund for Women and United Nations Children's Fund, and by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other relevant bodies;
- 8 Calls on all actors involved, when negotiating and implementing peace agreements, to adopt a gender perspective, including, inter alia:
  - a The special needs of women and girls during repatriation and resettlement and for rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction;
  - b Measures that support local women's peace initiatives and indigenous processes for conflict resolution, and that involve women in all of the implementation mechanisms of the peace agreements;
  - c Measures that ensure the protection of and respect for human rights of women and girls, particularly as they relate to the constitution, the electoral system, the police and the judiciary;
- 9 Calls upon all parties to armed conflict to respect fully international law applicable to the rights and protection of women and girls as civilians, in particular the obligations

applicable to them under the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Additional Protocols thereto of 1977, the Refugee Convention of 1951 and the Protocol thereto of 1967, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979 and the Optional Protocol thereto of 1999 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 and the two Optional Protocols thereto of 25 May 2000, and to bear in mind the relevant provisions of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court;

- 10 Calls on all parties to armed conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, and all other forms of violence in situations of armed conflict;
- 11 Emphasizes the responsibility of all States to put an end to impunity and to prosecute those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes including those relating to sexual violence against women and girls, and in this regard, stresses the need to exclude these crimes, where feasible from amnesty provisions;
- 12 Calls upon all parties to armed conflict to respect the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps and settlements, and to take into account the particular needs of women and girls, including in their design, and recalls its resolution 1208 (1998) of 19 November 1998;
- 13 Encourages all those involved in the planning for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration to consider the different needs of female and male ex-combatants and to take into account the needs of their dependants;
- 14 Reaffirms its readiness, whenever measures are adopted under Article 41 of the Charter of the United Nations, to give consideration to their potential impact on the civilian population, bearing in mind the special needs of women and girls, in order to consider appropriate humanitarian exemptions;
- 15 Expresses its willingness to ensure that Security Council missions take into account gender considerations and the rights of women, including through consultation with local and international women's groups;
- 16 Invites the Secretary-General to carry out a study on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, the role of women in peace-building and the gender dimensions of peace processes and conflict resolution, and further invites him to submit a report to the Security Council on the results of this study and to make this available to all Member States of the United Nations;
- 17 Requests the Secretary-General, where appropriate, to include in his reporting to the Security Council, progress on gender mainstreaming throughout peacekeeping missions and all other aspects relating to women and girls;
- 18 Decides to remain actively seized of the matter."

International Women's Summit, 2000. 'Final Statement of the International Women's Summit to Redefine Security', *Development Bulletin*, no. 53, pp. 96-97.

## **Final Statement of the International Women's Summit to Redefine Security**

*Okinawa, Japan, June 22-25, 2000*

This statement was produced by the International Women's Summit to Redefine Security on the occasion of the G-8 Summit in Okinawa, Japan, June 22-25, 2000. The ratification of the International Criminal Court is included as one of its demands.

On the eve of the annual meeting of the G-8 leaders, held in Okinawa, July 21-23, 2000, ninety-one members of the East Asia-US Women's Network Against Militarism, coming from the Philippines, Puerto Rico, South Korea, Japan, U.S., mainland Japan, and Okinawa, convened the International Women's Summit to Redefine Security. We are activists, teachers, students, researchers, elected officials, survivors of physical, sexual, and emotional violence; we are daughters, mothers, and wives. The purpose of this meeting was to challenge the principle of "national security" on which the economic policies of the G-8 are based. These economic policies can never achieve genuine security. Rather, they generate gross insecurity for most peoples of the world and devastate the natural environment. These economic policies are inextricably linked to increasing militarization throughout the world. Militaries reap enormous profits for multinational corporations and stockholders through the development, production, and sale of weapons of destruction. Moreover, militaries maintain control of local populations and repress those who oppose the fundamental principles on which the world economic system is based. The current economic system depends on deep-seated attitudes and relationships characterized by greed, fear, domination and the objectification of "others" expressed through racism, sexism, imperialism, and the desire to control the physical environment. Vested interests, routine ways of thinking, prejudice, ignorance, and inertia also play their part in maintaining entrenched systems of economic, social, and political inequality.

This Women's Summit built on the earlier meetings of the East Asia-US Women's Network in Naha, Okinawa (1997) and Washington, DC (1998) which sought to build a strong international network of women who oppose militarism and are working to define an agenda for true global security and peace. Throughout our four-day gathering, we affirmed that genuine security is based on the following four key tenets:

- the environment in which we live must be able to sustain human and natural life;
- people's basic survival needs for food, clothing, shelter, health care, and education must be met;
- people's fundamental human dignity and respect for cultural identities must be honored;
- people and the natural environment must be protected from avoidable harm.

By these standards, there are no truly secure societies in the world and none that are fully committed to achieving genuine security. Yet many detailed alternative proposals to creating and maintaining true security have been developed by international peace and human rights organizations. These include specific proposals for non-violent conflict resolution, early-warning procedures, mediation services, and the restoration and rebuilding of devastated lands and communities. Development for genuine security must be economically and environmentally sustainable.

Participants in the International Women's Summit shared experiences of the impact of this militarized economy on lives. We see demilitarization as a process of incremental

steps by which governments must reduce military operations, expenditures, and cultures while simultaneously expanding non-military alternatives. Toward our goal of achieving true security, we issue the following demands to the leaders of G-8 nations and to the leaders of nations that we represent:

- Stop the bombing on Vieques, Puerto Rico; cease the war in Mindanao, Philippines; end the Korean War and support efforts to reunify Korea; stop plans for new or replacement bases in Okinawa, e.g. the proposed heliport at Henoko. These immediate steps would be the basis for ultimate removal of military presence from these communities and return the land to local control.
- Revise the unequal Status of Forces Agreements (SOFA) and Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA), a first step toward the total removal of US bases from Okinawa, mainland Japan, Korea, and the Philippines.
- Oppose the new US-Japan Defense Guidelines that require Japan to provide facilities and personnel to support US military activities in the region. The Guidelines constitute a violation of Article 9 of the Japanese constitution.
- Ratify the International Criminal Court, which will provide a mechanism for ordinary people to take action against military crimes.
- Compensate host countries and individual victims and survivors of military toxic waste and of violent acts against women and children that are results of the US military presence specifically:
  - 1 adopt the Host Country Bill of Rights as ratified in the International Grassroots Summit for Military Toxics (October 1999, Washington, DC);
  - 2 provide full accountability and compensation for violence against women that includes violence against women in host communities, sexual harassment of women in the military and domestic violence in military families.
    - Take responsibility for social, economic and political development of Amerasian children by the US and governments of host countries.
    - Immediately decrease military spending by developing specific plans and timelines for overall demilitarization, specifically:
      - 1 eliminate Japan's "Sympathy Budget" that supports US presence in Japan;
      - 2 commit to ongoing cumulative reduction of military spending for example, 5% per year) and reallocate these resources toward compensation and redress for victims and survivors of military operations;
      - 3 develop alternatives to military conflict resolution;
      - 4 provide housing, food, shelter, health care and education, which are basic survival needs;
        - Stop new weapons design development, and testing; end sales of weapons .
        - The perspectives, leadership and issues of women be central to all matters of peace and security, including planning and decision-making of base closures and conversion.
        - Women's organizations must be included at all levels of peace negotiations and national reconstruction. A pressing case is the dialogues beginning between North and South Korea.
        - Conversion of military systems and military land must promote and reflect programs and projects that meet local community needs and are culturally relevant.

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## Organisations

### **Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)**

The WILPF was founded in 1915 during World War I, with Jane Addams as its first president (the first U.S. woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize.) WILPF's foremothers rejected the theory that war was inevitable and defied all obstacles to their plan to meet together in wartime. They assembled more than 1,000 women from warring and neutral nations to work out a plan to end WWI and lay the basis for a permanent peace. Out of this meeting the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom was born. WILPF works to achieve through peaceful means world disarmament, full rights for women, racial and economic justice, an end to all forms of violence, and to establish those political, social, and psychological conditions which can assure peace, freedom, and justice for all. WILPF works to create an environment of political, economic, social and psychological freedom for all members of the human community, so that true peace can be enjoyed by all. WILPF have sections in 44 countries as well as branches in 110 cities in the United States, working to create peace and justice from the community level to the international level. Members of WILPF become part of this global network, connected to women working for peace all over the world and receive a free subscription to WILPF's bi-monthly magazine "Peace Freedom", which includes action alerts and updates on issues related to WILPF's campaigns and programs.

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### **The Collaborative for Development Action**

The Collaborative for Development Action is a small consulting firm based in Cambridge, Massachusetts in the USA, specializing in issues of economic development, primarily in less-developed countries. Current Projects include: Local Capacities for Peace Project; Reflecting on Peace Practice Project and Assistance to the UNHCR People Oriented Planning Training Programme. In 1994/95 Mary B. Anderson laid out the issues that were to become the LCPP in four Issues Papers. Beginning in January 1995, the LCPP produced 15 Case Studies. Some of these are currently online. In the summer of 1996, the LCPP published the booklet "Do No Harm: Supporting Local Capacities for Peace through Aid." From October 1996 through July 1997 the LCPP conducted 23 Feedback Workshops. The Local Capacities for Peace Project publishes a quarterly newsletter, intended for submissions on articles about anything relating to the issues: problems, creative solutions, vignettes, case studies, etc. and will serve to connect all those who are interested in the LCPP and its ideas. The newsletter should appear on the web-site, but can be emailed. Send LCPP a note with your email address to be on the mailing list.

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### **The Center for Asia-Pacific Women in Politics (CAPWIP)**

CAPWIP is a non-partisan, non-profit and non-governmental regional organization (NGO) dedicated to promoting equal participation of women in politics and decision-making. CAPWIP was established in 1992 by a group of women from the Asia-Pacific region who share a vision of governance that affirms gender equality, integrity and accountability, excellence, sustainable development and peace. CAPWIP advocates transformative politics which is the use of power to create change towards economic, social and political equity between sexes and among sectors within the context of shaping a society that is just, humane and promotes a sustainable way of life. CAPWIP operates through a network of national affiliates clustered into 5 sub-regional groupings: Central Asia, East Asia, Pacific, Southeast Asia, and South Asia. The sub-regional focal points and national affiliates are autonomous organizations actively involved in women's political empowerment in their respective countries. CAPWIP has committed itself to supporting its network through technical assistance in organizational and program planning, training, research and information sharing. The center is currently based in the Philippines. CAPWIP receives administrative and program support from voluntary contributions from its Board of Trustees and other individuals, annual membership fees and grants from bilateral and multilateral aid agencies. CAPWIP goals are: to create a critical mass of competent, committed and effective women politicians in elective and appointed positions in government; to develop a responsible female citizenry; and to influence female politicians and electorate to work together to transform politics and governance for the common good.

Promoting the political empowerment of women is crucial in order to realize CAPWIP's vision of Transformative Politics. A plan of action is based on a framework of transformative politics that proposes to achieve women's political empowerment through a) getting more women into leadership positions at all levels and b) developing an effective and responsible women electorate. This plan of action was formulated by and for Asia-Pacific women in the world of male-dominated politics to as a guide to achieving the political advancement of women. CAPWIP organizes congresses that serve as a venue for women all over the Asia-Pacific region to share their experiences, discuss issues and articulate priority areas for action. In training, CAPWIP develops modules and training programs for women's leadership and responsible citizenship based on the framework of transformative politics; conducts trainers' training for women's political empowerment and transformative politics. Other functions include: undertaking policy analysis and various types of research on women in politics including needs assessment impact studies, documentation and analysis of best practices in politics; establishing data banks on women's political participation and resources on women's political empowerment and transformative politics; managing an interactive web network and producing publications on women's political empowerment and transformative politics.

CAPWIP has formed the Global Network of Women in Politics (GLOBALNET).

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### **United Nations (UN) Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD)**

United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) is an autonomous agency engaging in multi-disciplinary research on the social dimensions of contemporary development problems. UNRISD was established in 1963 with a mandate “to conduct research into problems and policies of social development and relationships between various types of social development and economic development during different phases of economic growth.” The Secretary-General’s Bulletin that set up the Institute also called on UNRISD to carry out research and studies which are “urgent and important” to the work of the United Nations Secretariat as well as to regional and national institutes working in the fields of economic and social development. UNRISD is an autonomous UN agency engaging in multidisciplinary research on the social dimensions of contemporary problems affecting development. Its work is guided by the conviction that, for effective development policies to be formulated, an understanding of the social and political context is crucial. The Institute attempts to provide governments, development agencies, grassroots organisations and scholars with a better understanding of how development policies and processes of economic, social and environmental change affect different social groups. Working through an extensive network of national research centres, UNRISD aims to promote original research and strengthen research capacity in developing countries. Current research themes include: The Challenge of Rebuilding War-torn Societies (see separate entry on War-Torn Societies Project); Integrating Gender into Development Policy; Environment, Sustainable Development and Social Change; Crisis, Adjustment and Social Change; and Volunteer Action and Local Democracy: A Partnership for a Better Urban Future. New research is beginning on: Follow-Up to the Social Summit; Business Responsibility for Sustainable Development; New Information and Communications Technologies (Infotech); Culture and Development; Gender, Poverty and Well-Being; and Public Sector Reform and Crisis-Ridden States.

Recent research programmes have included: Ethnic Conflict and Development; Socio-Economic and Political Consequences of the International Trade in Illicit Drugs; Political Violence and Social Movements; and Participation and Changes in Property Relations in Communist and Post-Communist Societies. UNRISD research projects focused on the 1995 World Summit for Social Development included Rethinking Social Development in the 1990s; Economic Restructuring and Social Policy; Ethnic Diversity and Public Policies; and Social Integration at the Grassroots: The Urban Dimension.

Information services include:

(a) WWW service: includes information on UNRISD research programmes; publications catalogue allowing online ordering; full text of UNRISD briefing papers and occasional papers for the World Summit for Social Development; full text of Gender Focus newsletter and occasional papers on gender; full text of Social Development News bulletin.

(b) WWW site for its War Torn Societies Project (see separate entry)

Connection details:

WWW: <http://www.unrisd.org/>

Selected documents also available on GreenNet conference [unrisd.docs.en](http://unrisd.docs.en)

Type of resource: WWW Discussion list: GreenNet

Address: UNRISD, Palais des Nations, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

Email: [info@unrisd.org](mailto:info@unrisd.org)

Tel: (41 22) 9173020

Fax: (41 22) 9170650

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### **Centre for Development Research (CDR)**

The CDR is an independent institution under the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The mandate of the CDR is to carry out social science development research on issues and conditions relating to Third World development processes. One of the four research areas that the Centre focuses on is Managing Development: People, States and International Organisations. This research theme centres on development interventions (broadly defined) undertaken by a variety of domestic and international actors. The theme aims to understand the interventions in the complex reality of local, state and international actions and reactions. Thus, the theme is motivated by the lack of understanding of how donor agencies and other external actors interact with domestic forces such as states, decentralised public institutions, NGOs and societal groups and individuals. The theme examines development interventions, including relations, processes, organisations and resources, and at the same time the outcomes and consequences for people and domestic institutions.

For more information contact:

Centre for Development Research

Gammel Kongevej 5

DK – 1610 Copenhagen V

Denmark

Tel: +45 3385 4600

Fax: +45 3325 8110

E-mail [cdr@cdr.dk](mailto:cdr@cdr.dk)

Web <http://www.cdr.dk>

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### **The Consortium on Peace Research, Education And Development (COPRED)**

COPRED is a community of educators, activists and researchers working on alternatives to violence and war. Founded in 1970 by a small group of teachers and scholars, COPRED has grown to almost 500 institutional and individual members, including K-12 educators, peace activists, conflict resolution practitioners, university professors and clergy and has become a central hub for over 300 university degree programs in the study of peace and nonviolence around the world. COPRED provides: bibliographies, syllabi collections, curriculum services, a speaker's bureau, an annual conference, a

quarterly academic journal *Peace & Change*, a networking newsletter *The Peace Chronicle*, materials for the media, a Global Directory of Peace Studies Programs at various colleges and universities and works continuously with libraries to establish peace collections. Members promote nonviolence in an increasingly violent world.

For more information, contact:

the Executive Director, Simona Sharoni:  
The Consortium on Peace Research, Education and Development,  
c/o The Evergreen State University,  
Mailstop: Seminar 3127, Olympia, WA 98505 USA  
(360)866-6000 ext 6196 voice fax  
email:sharonis@evergreen.edu  
<http://www.evergreen.edu/user/copred/>

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### **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute**

This Institute conducts research on questions of conflict and cooperation for international peace and security, with the aim of contributing to an understanding of the conditions for peaceful solutions of international conflicts and for a stable peace. In order to facilitate access to information, a public website is provided where researchers, policy makers and the interested public can browse through the results of our research activities. Research projects, publications and activities are listed. Library database is also available online.

Contact details:

Stockholm International Peace Research Institute,  
Signalistgatan 9, SE-169 70 Solna, Sweden  
Tel: +46-8-655 97 00,  
Fax: +46-8-655 97 33  
E-mail: sipri@sipri.org  
<http://www.sipri.se>  
<http://www.sipri.org>

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### **International Labour Organisation**

Since its creation in 1919, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) has always attached particular importance to its standard-setting activities. Its 174 Conventions, and 181 Recommendations cover areas that include basic human rights, employment, social policy, labour relations, labour administration, working conditions and social protection.

ILO  
4 route des Morillons  
CH-1211 Geneva 22  
Switzerland  
e-mail: [bibl@ilo.org](mailto:bibl@ilo.org)

For further information, contact:

Bureau of Public  
Information (PRESSE)  
Tel: +41 22 799-7940  
Fax: +41 22 799-8577  
<http://www.ilo.org/public/>

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## **United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service**

The United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service (NGLS) is an unit that specialises in development education and information work on North-South development issues that facilitate dialogue and co-operation between development NGOs and the UN. They publish newsletters and other documents that can be requested from their offices:

UN-NGLS  
Palais des Nations  
CH-1211 Geneva 10  
Switzerland  
Tel: +41 22 917.20.76  
Fax: +41 22 917.00.49  
email: [ngls@unctad.org](mailto:ngls@unctad.org)  
<http://ngls.tad.ch>  
UN-NGLS  
Rm. 6015, 866 UN Plaza  
New York, NY 10017  
USA  
Tel: +1 212 963 3125  
Fax: +1 212 963 8712  
email: [ngls@un.org](mailto:ngls@un.org) or  
[gls@undp.org](mailto:gls@undp.org)

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## **Division for the Advance-ment of Women**

Grounded in the vision of equality of the United Nations Charter, the Division for the Advancement of Women, as part of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, advocates the improvement of the status of the women of the world and the achievement of their equality with men. It aims to ensure the participation of women as equal partners with men in all aspects of human endeavour. It promotes women as equal participants and beneficiaries of sustainable development, peace and security, governance and human rights. It strives to stimulate the mainstreaming of a gender perspective both within and outside the United Nations system.

United Nations  
Division for the  
Advancement of Women  
2 UN Plaza, DC2-12th Floor  
New York, NY 10017, USA  
Fax +1-212-963-3463  
email: [daw@un.org](mailto:daw@un.org)  
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw>

## **United Nations Development Programme**

Since 1990, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has annually published a Human Development Report which contains the Human Development Index (HDI). The HDI attempts to measure the relative socio-economic progress of nations. The 1998 issue focuses on consumption patterns and its harmful trends to human development, insofar the environmental resource base is being undermined, inequalities are being exacerbated and the dynamics of the consumption-poverty-inequality-

environment nexus are accelerating. As from 1995, the eradication of poverty has been first priority for UNDP programmes. Amongst the many publications issued on the subject is "New Commitments, New Opportunities", a guide for NGOs published jointly by UNDP and NGLS. Focusing on the Social Summit for Social Development and on the issue of poverty eradication, it aims at promoting NGO participation in the implementation of the WSSD agreements.

Contact address:

United Nations Publications  
New York, New York 10017, USA

Much of the UNDP's public information, as well as UN conference documents are available through the Internet at: <http://www.undp.org/>

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### **United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)**

UNIFEM promotes women's empowerment and gender equality. It works to ensure the participation of women in all levels of development planning and practice, and acts as a catalyst within the UN system, supporting efforts that link the needs and concerns of women to all critical issues on the national, regional and global agendas.

United Nations Development Fund for Women  
304 East 45th Street, 15th floor  
New York, NY 10017  
Tel: 212/906-6400  
Fax: 212/906-6705  
Website: <http://www.unifem.undp.org>  
e-mail: [unifem@undp.org](mailto:unifem@undp.org)

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### **Latin American and the Caribbean Committee for the Defense of Women's Rights**

The Latin American and the Caribbean Committee for the Defense of Women's Rights is a network of women's organizations aimed at joining efforts to achieve an effective defense of women's rights in the region.

Jr. Estados Unidos 1295,  
Jesús Maria, Lima 11, PERU  
Teléfono: (51 1) 4639237.  
Fax: (51 1) 4635898.  
E-mail: [cladem@chavin.rcp.net.pe](mailto:cladem@chavin.rcp.net.pe)  
<http://www.derechos.org/cladem/>

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**CIDSE** is an alliance of 16 Catholic development organisations from Europe, North America and New Zealand. Since 1968, CIDSE member organisations share a common strategy on development projects and programmes, development education and advocacy.

Secretariat: Rue Stévin 16,  
B-1000, Brussels,  
Belgium  
Tel: +32-2-230 7722,  
Fax: 230 7082  
E-mail: [postmaster@cidse.be](mailto:postmaster@cidse.be)

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### **Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era**

This group aims at spotting the causes of gender, class and race inequalities, through research, analysis, education and international relations, and works towards the building of alternative views and strategies.

For further information contact:

Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era  
c/o Women and Development Unit  
UWI School of Continuing Studies  
Pinelands, St. Michael  
Barbados  
Fax: +1 246 426-3006  
web: <http://www.dawn.org.fj>  
e-mail: [dawn@is.com.fj](mailto:dawn@is.com.fj)

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### **Ecumenical Coalition for Economic Justice**

A project of Canadian churches working together for a just, moral and sustainable "economy of hope".

947 Queen Street East,  
Suite 208,  
Toronto, Ontario,  
CANADA M4M 1J9  
Tel: 416-462-1613  
E-mail: [ecej@accessv.com](mailto:ecej@accessv.com)

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### **International Confederation of Free Trade Unions**

International Confederation of Free Trade Unions is a confederation of national trade union centres, each of which links together the trade unions of that particular country. Membership is open to bone fide trade union organisations, that are independent of outside influence, and have a democratic structure.

5 Boulevard du Roi Albert II, Bte 1  
1210 Brussels  
Belgium  
Tel: +32-2 224 0211  
Fax: +32-2 201 5815  
E-mail: [internetpo@icftu.org](mailto:internetpo@icftu.org)  
<http://www.icftu.org/>

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### **The International Council For Social Welfare**

This is an international non governmental organisation operating throughout the world for the cause of social welfare, social justice and social development. It publishes "Social Development Review" which focuses on the monitoring of governmental and non-governmental action referred to the World Summit on Social Development.

More information may be obtained from:

ICSW General Secretariat  
380 St-Antoine St. West, Suite 3200  
Montreal, Quebec, H2Y 3X7  
Canada  
Fax: +1 514 987-1557

web: <http://www.icsw.org/>  
e-mail [icswintl@colba.net](mailto:icswintl@colba.net)

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### **The Institute for Development Studies (IDS)**

The IDS in Sussex and the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) in London, do a great deal of research on social development.

Publications:

Brighton BN1 9RE  
UK  
Tel: + 44 127 360-6261  
web: <http://www.oneworld.org/odi>  
e-mail: [odi@odi.org.uk](mailto:odi@odi.org.uk)  
web: <http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids>  
e-mail [ids@ids.ac.uk](mailto:ids@ids.ac.uk)

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### **World Council of Churches**

This fellowship of churches, now has 337 members in more than 120 countries in all continents from virtually all christian traditions.

P.O. Box 2100, 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland.  
Tel.: (+41 22) 791 6111;  
Fax: (+41 22) 791 0361;  
E-mail: [info@wcc-coe.org](mailto:info@wcc-coe.org)  
<http://www.wcc-coe.org/>

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### **Worldwatch Institute**

Worldwatch Institute is a nonprofit public policy research organization dedicated to informing policymakers and the general public about emerging global problems and trends, and the complex links between the world economy and its environmental support systems. It publishes *The State of the World 2000* that shines a sharp light on the great challenge our civilization faces: how to use our political systems to manage the difficult and complex relationships between the global economy and the Earth's ecosystems.

The *State of the World 2000* Report is available on-line at:

<http://www.worldwatch.org/pubs/sow/sow00/index.html>  
web: <http://www.worldwatch.org/>